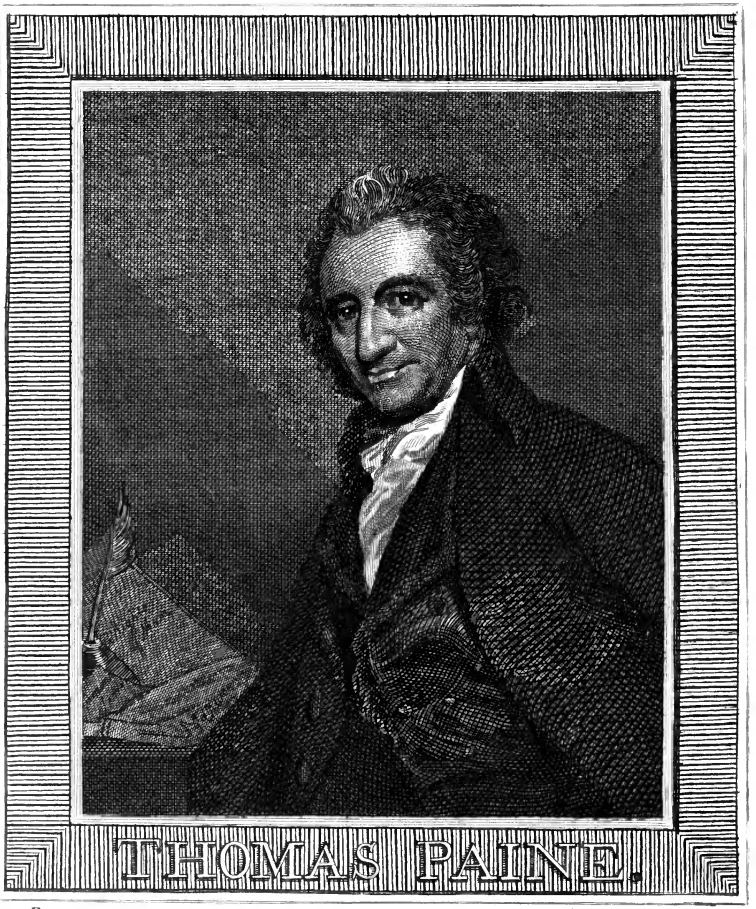


*Romney pinx.t*

*Engraved From the Original Painted in England 1791.*

THE

# Political and Miscellaneous

# WORKS

OF

# THOMAS PAINE.

*IN TWO VOLUMES.*

VOL. I.

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1819.

# Life

OF

# THOMAS PAINE.

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The present Memoir is not written as a thing altogether necessary, or what was much wanted, but because it is usual and fitting in all collections of the writings of the same Author to accompany such collection with a brief account of his life; so that the reader might at the same time be furnished with a key to the Author's mind, principles, and works. On such an occasion it does not become the Compiler to seek after either the adulation of friends, or the slander of enemies; it is equally unnecessary to please or perplex the reader with either, for when an author has passed the bar of nature, it behoves us not to listen to any tales about what he was, or what he did, but to form our judgments of the utility or non-utility of his life, by the writings he has left behind him. Our business is with the spirit or immortal part of the man, if his writings be calculated to render him immortal, we have nothing to do with the body that is earthly and corruptible, and passes away into the common mass of regenerating matter. Whilst the man is living, we are justified in prying into his actions to see whether his example corresponds with his precept, but when dead, his writings must stand or fall by the test of reason and its influence on public opinion. The excess of

admiration and vituperation has gone forth against the name and memory of the Author of these works, but it shall be the endeavour of the present Compiler to steer clear of both, and to draw from the reader an acknowledgement that here the Life and Character of Paine is fairly stated, and that here the enquirer after truth may find that which he most desires—an unvarnished statement.

Thomas Paine was born at Thetford, in the county of Norfolk, in England, on the 29th of January, 1737. He received such education as the town could afford him, until he was thirteen years of age, when his father, who was a staymaker, took him upon the shop-board. Before his twentieth year, he set out for London to work as a journeyman, and from London to the coast of Kent. Here he became inflamed with the desire of a trip to sea, and he accordingly served in two privateers, but was prevailed upon by the affectionate remonstrances of his father, who had been bred a Quaker, to relinquish the sea-faring life. He then set up as a master staymaker at Sandwich, in the county of Kent, when he was about twenty-three years of age. It appears that he had a thorough distaste for this trade, and having married the daughter of an exciseman, he soon began to turn his attention to that office. Having qualified himself he soon got appointed, but from some unknown cause his commission scarcely exceeded a year. He then filled the office of an usher at two different schools in the suburbs of London, and by his assiduous application to study, and by his regular attendance at certain astronomical and mathematical lectures in London, he became a proficient in those sciences, and from this moment his mind, which was correct and sound, began to expand, and here that lustre began to sparkle, which subsequently burst into a blaze, and gave light both to America and Europe.

He again obtained an appointment in the Excise,

and was stationed at Lewes, in Sussex, and in this town the first production of his pen was printed and published. He had displayed considerable ability in two or three poetical compositions, and his fame beginning to spread in this neighbourhood, he was selected by the whole body of excisemen to draw up a case in support of a petition they were about to present to Parliament for an increase of salary. This task he performed in a most able and satisfactory manner, and although this incident drew forth his first essay at prose composition, it would have done honour to the first literary character in the country; and it did not fail to obtain for Mr. Paine universal approbation. The "Case of the Officers of Excise" is so temperately stated, the propriety of increasing their salaries, which were then but small, urged with such powerful reasons and striking convictions, that although we might abhor such an inquisitorial system of excise as has long disgraced this country, we cannot fail to admire the arguments and abilities of Paine, who was then an exciseman, in an endeavour to increase their salaries. He was evidently the child of nature from the beginning, and the success of his writings was mainly attributable to his never losing sight of this infallible guide. In his recommendation to Government to increase the salaries of excisemen, he argues from natural feelings, and shows the absolute necessity of placing a man beyond the reach of want, if honesty be expected in a place of trust, and that the strongest inducement to honesty is to raise the spirit of a man, by enabling him to make a respectable appearance.

This "Case of the Officers of Excise" procured our author an introduction to Oliver Goldsmith with whom he continued on terms of intimacy during his stay in England. His English poetical productions consisted of "The Death of Wolfe," a song; and the humorous narrative, about "The Three Justices

and Farmer Short's Dog." At least, these two pieces are all that we now have in print. I have concisely stated Mr. Paine's advance to manhood and fame: considering the act but infantile in being elaborate upon the infancy and youth of a public character who displays nothing extraordinary until he reaches manhood. My object here is not to make a volume, but to compress all that is desirable to know of the Author, in as small a compass as possible. Mr. Paine was twice married, but obtained no children: his first wife he enjoyed but a short time, and his second he never enjoyed at all, as they never cohabited, and before Mr. Paine left England they separated by mutual consent, and by articles of agreement. Mr. Paine often said, that he found sufficient cause for this curious incident, but he never divulged the particulars to any person, and, when pressed to the point, he would say that it was nobody's business but his own.

In the autumn of 1774, being then out of the Excise, he was introduced to the celebrated Dr. Franklin, then on an embassy to England respecting the dispute with the Colonies, and the Doctor was so much pleased with Mr. Paine, that he pointed his attention to America as the best mart for his talents and principles, and gave him letters of recommendation to several friends. Mr. Paine took his voyage immediately, and reached Philadelphia just before Christmas. In January he had become acquainted with a Mr. Aitkin, a bookseller, who it appears started a magazine for the purpose of availing himself of Mr. Paine's talents. It was called the Pennsylvania Magazine, and, from our Author's abilities, soon obtained a currency that exceeded any other work of the kind in America. Many of Mr. Paine's productions in the papers and magazines of America have never reached this country so as to be republished, but such as we have are extremely beautiful, and compel us to admit, that his literary produc-

tions are as admirable for their style, as his political and theological are for principle.

From his connection with the leading characters at Philadelphia, Mr. Paine immediately took a part in the politics of the Colonies, and being a staunch friend to the general freedom and happiness of the human race, he was the first to advise the Americans to assert their independence. This he did in his famous pamphlet, intitled "Common Sense," which for its consequences and rapid effect was the most important production that ever issued from the press. This pamphlet appeared at the commencement of the year 1776, and it electrified the minds of the oppressed Americans. They had not ventured to harbour the idea of independence, and they dreaded war so much as to be anxious for reconciliation with Britain. One incident which gave a stimulus to the pamphlet "Common Sense" was, that it happened to appear on the very day that the King of England's speech reached the United States, in which the Americans were denounced as rebels and traitors, and in which speech it was asserted to be the right of the Legislature of England to bind the Colonies in all cases whatsoever! Such menace and assertion as this could not fail to kindle the ire of the Americans, and "Common Sense" came forward to touch their feelings with the spirit of independence in the very nick of time.

On the 4th of July, in the same year, the independence of the United States, was declared, and Paine had then become so much an object of esteem, that he joined the army, and was with it a considerable time. He was the common favourite of all the officers, and every other liberal-minded man, that advocated the independence of his country, and preferred liberty to slavery. It does not appear that Paine held any rank in the army, but merely assisted with his advice and presence as a private individual. Whilst with the army, he began, in December of the same

year, to publish his papers intitled "The Crisis." These came out as small pamphlets and appeared in the newspapers, they were written occasionally, as circumstances required. The chief object of these seems to have been to encourage the Americans, to stimulate them to exertion in support and defence of their independence, and to rouse their spirits after any little disaster or defeat. Those papers, which also bore the signature of "Common Sense," were continued every three or four months until the struggle was over.

In the year 1777, Paine was called away from the army by an unexpected appointment to fill the office of Secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs. In this office, as all foreign correspondence passed through his hands, he obtained an insight into the mode of transacting business in the different Courts of Europe, and imbibed much important information. He did not continne in it above two years, and the circumstance of his resignation seems to have been much to his honour as an honest man. It was in consequence of some peculation discovered to have been committed by one Silas Deane who had been a commissioner from the United States to some part of Europe. The discovery was made by Mr. Paine, and he immediately published it in the papers, which gave offence to certain members of the Congress, and in consequence of some threat of Silas Deane, the Congress shewed a disposition to censure Mr. Paine without giving him a hearing, and he immediately protested against such a proceeding, and resigned his situation. However Paine carried no pique with him into his retirement, but was as ardent as ever in the cause of independence and a total separation from Britain. He published several plans for an equal system of taxation to enable the Congress to recruit the finances and to reinforce the army, and in the most clear and pointed manner, held out to the inhabitants of the United

States, the important advantages they would gain by a cheerful contribution towards the exigencies of the times, and at once to make themselves sufficiently formidable, not only to cope with, but to defeat the enemy. He reasoned with them on the impossibility of any army, that Britain could send against them, being sufficient to conquer the Continent of America. He again and again explained to them that nothing but fortitude and exertion was necessary on their part to annihilate in one campaign the forces of Britain, and put a stop to the war. It is evident, and admitted on all sides, that these writings of Mr. Paine became the main spring of action in procuring independence to the United States.

Notwithstanding the little disagreement that he had with the Congress it was ready at the close of the war to acknowledge his services by a grant of three thousand dollars, and he also obtained from the State of New York, the confiscated estate of some slavish tory and royalist, situate at New Rochelle. This estate contained three hundred acres of highly cultivated land, and a large and substantial stone built house. The State of Pennsylvania, in which he first published "Common Sense" and "The Crisis," presented him with £500 sterling; and the State of Virginia had come to an agreement for a liberal grant, but in consequence of Mr. Paine's interference and resistance to some claim of territory made by that State, in his pamphlet, intitled "Public Good," he lost this grant by a majority of one vote. This pamphlet is worthy of reading, but for this single circumstance, and nothing can more strongly argue the genuine patriotism and real disinterestedness of the man, than his opposing the claims of this State at a moment when it was about to make him a more liberal grant than any other State had done.

It was in the year 1779, that Mr. Paine resigned his office as Secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, and in the year 1781, he was, in conjunction

with a Colonel Laurens, dispatched to France to try to obtain a loan from that government. They succeeded in their object, and returned to America with two millions and a half of livres in silver, and stores to the united value of sixteen millions of livres. This circumstance gave such vigour to the cause of the Americans, that they shortly afterwards brought the Marquis Cornwallis to a capitulation. Six millions of livres were a present from France, and ten millions were borrowed from Holland on the security of France. In this trip to France, Mr. Paine not only accomplished the object of his embassy, but he also made a full discovery of the traitorous conduct of Silas Deane, and on his return fully justified himself before his fellow citizens, in the steps he had taken in that affair, whilst Deane was obliged to shelter himself in England from the punishment due to his crimes.

In a number of the Crisis, Mr. Paine says, it was the cause of independence to the United States, that made him an author; by this it has been argued, that he could not have written "The Case of the Officers of Excise" before going to America, but this I consider to be easy of explanation. As the latter pamphlet was published by the subscriptions of the officers of excise, and as it was a mere statement of their case, drawn up at their request and suggestion, Mr. Paine might hardly consider himself intitled to the name of author for such a production which had but a momentary and partial object. He might have considered himself as the mere amanuensis of the body of excisemen, and, to have done nothing more than state their complaint and sentiments. It does not appear that the pamphlet was printed for sale, or that the writer ever had, or thought to have, any emolument from it. It must have been in this light that Mr. Paine declined the character of an Author on the account of that pamphlet, for no man need be ashamed to father it either for principle or

style. In the same manner might be considered his song "On the Death of General Wolfe," his "Reflections on the Death of Lord Clive," and several other essays and articles that appeared in the Pennsylvania Magazine, and the different newspapers of America, all of which had obtained celebrity as something superior to the general rank of literature, that had appeared in the Colonies, and yet even on this ground he also relinquished the title of an author. To be sure a man who writes a letter to his relatives or friends is an author, but Mr. Paine thought the word of more import, and did not call himself an author until he saw the benefits he had conferred on his fellow-citizens and mankind at large, by his well-timed "Common Sense" and "Crisis."

During the struggle for independence, the Abbe Raynal, a French author, had written and published what he called a History of the Revolution, or Reflections on that History, in which he had made some erroneous statements, probably guided by the errors, wilful or accidental, in the European newspapers. Mr. Paine answered the Abbe in a letter, and pointed out all his misstatements, with a hope of correcting the future historian. This letter is remarkably well written, and abounds with brilliant ideas and natural embellishments. Ovid's classical and highly admired picture of Envy, can scarcely vie with the picture our Author has drawn of Prejudice in this letter. It will be sure to arrest the reader's attention, therefore I will not mar it by an extract. Mr. Paine never deviated from the path of nature, and he was unquestionably as bright an ornament as ever our Common Parent held up to mankind. He studied Nature in preference to books, and thought and compared as well as read.

The hopes of the British Government having been baffled in the expected reduction of the Colonies, and being compelled to acknowledge their indepen-

dence, Mr. Paine had now leisure to turn to his mechanical and philosophical studies. He was admitted a member of the American Philosophical Society, and appointed Master of Arts, by the University of Philadelphia, and we find nothing from his pen in the shape of a pamphlet until the year 1786. He then published his "Dissertations on Governments, the Affairs of the Bank, and Paper Money." The object of this pamphlet was to expose the injustice and ingratitude of the Congress in withdrawing the charter of incorporation from the American Bank, and to show, that it would rather injure than benefit the community. The origin of this Bank having been solely for the carrying on of the war with vigour, and to furnish the army with necessary supplies, at a time when the want of food and clothing threatened a mutiny; Mr. Paine condemned the attempt to suppress it as an act of ingratitude. At a moment when the United States were overwhelmed with a general gloom by repeated losses and disasters, and by want of vigour to oppose the enemy, Mr. Paine proposed a voluntary contribution to recruit the army, and sent his proposal, and five hundred dollars as a commencement, to his friend Mr. M'Clenaghan. The proposal was instantly embraced, and such was the spirit by which it was followed, that the Congress established the leading subscribers into a Bank Company, and gave them a charter. This incident might be said to have saved America for that time, and as Mr. Paine has fairly shown that the Bank was highly advantageous to the interest of the United States at the time of its suppression, and that the act proceeded from party spleen; we cannot fail to applaud the spirit of this pamphlet, although it was an attack on the conduct of the Congress. It forms another proof that our Author never suffered his duty and principle to be biassed by his interest.

In the year 1787, Mr. Paine returned to Europe,

and first proceeded to Paris, where he obtained considerable applause by a model of an iron bridge, which he presented to the Academy of Sciences. The iron bridge is now becoming in general use, in almost all new erections, and will doubtless, in a few years, supersede the more tedious and expensive method of building bridges with stone. How few are those who walk across the bridge of Vauxhall and call to mind that Thomas Paine was the first to suggest and recommend the use of the iron bridge: he says, that he borrowed the idea of this kind of bridge from seeing a certain species of spider spin his web!

From Paris Mr. Paine returned to England after an absence of thirteen years, in which time he had lost his father, and found his mother in distress. He hastened to Thetford to relieve her, and settled a small weekly sum upon her to make her comfortable. He spent a few weeks in his native town, and wrote the pamphlet, intitled "Prospects on the Rubicon, &c." at this time, which appears to have been done as mueh for amusement and pastime as any thing else, as it has no peculiar object, like most of his other writings, and the want of that object is visible throughout the work. It is more of a general subject than Paine was in the habit of indulging in, and its publication in England produced but little attraction. France, at this moment, had scarcely begun to indicate her determination to reform her government; England was engaged in the affairs of the Stadtholder of Holland; and there seemed a confusion among the principal governments of Europe, but no disposition for war.

Mr. Paine having become intimate with Mr. Walker, a large iron-founder, of Rotheram, in Yorkshire, retired thither for the purpose of trying the experiment of his bridge. The particulars of this experiment, with an explanation of its success, the reader will find fully developed in his letter to Sir

George Staunton. This letter was sent to the Society of Arts in the Adelphi, and was about to be printed in their transactions, but the appearance of the First Part of the "Rights of Man," put a stop to its publication in that shape, and afforded us a lesson that bigotry and prejudice form a woeful bar to science and improvement. For the expence of this bridge Mr. Paine had drawn considerable sums from a Mr. Whiteside, an American merchant, on the security of his American property, but this Mr. Whiteside becoming a bankrupt, Mr. Paine was suddenly arrested by his assignees, but soon liberated by two other American merchants becoming his bail, until he could make arrangements for the necessary remittances from America.

During the American war, Mr. Paine had felt a strong desire to come privately over to England, and to publish a pamphlet on the real state of the war, and display to the people of England the atrocities of that cause they were so blinded to support. He had an impression that this step would have more effect to stop the bloody career of the English Government, than all he could write in America and transmit to the English newspapers. It was with difficulty that his friends got him to abandon this idea, and after he had succeeded in obtaining the loan from the French Government, he proposed to Colonel Laurens to return alone, and let him go to England for this purpose. The Colonel, however, positively refused to return without him, and in this purpose he was overcome by the force of friendship. Still the same idea lingered in his bosom after the Americans had won their independence. Paine loved his country and countrymen, and he was anxious to assist them in reforming their Government. The attack which Mr. Burke made upon the French Revolution soon gave him an opportunity of doing this.

The friend and companion of Washington and

Franklin could not fail to obtain an introduction to the leading political characters in England. Burke had been the opponent of the English Government during the American war, and was admired as the advocate of constitutional freedom. Pitt, the most insidious and most destructive man that ever swayed the affairs of England, saw the necessity of tampering with Burke, and found him venal. It was agreed between them that Burke should receive a pension in a fictitious name, but outwardly continue his former character, the better to learn the dispositions of the leaders in the opposition, as to the principles they might imbibe from the American revolution, and the approaching revolution in France. This was the master-piece of Pitt's policy, he bought up all the talent that was opposed to his measures, but instead of requiring a direct support, he made such persons continue as spies on their former associates, and thus was not only informed of all that was passing, but, by his agents, was enabled to stifle every measure that was calculated to affect him, by interposing the advice of his bribed opponents and pseudo-patriots.

It was thus that Mr. Paine was drawn into the company of Burke, and even a correspondence with him on the affairs of France; and it was not until Pitt saw the necessity of availing himself of the avowed apostasy of Burke, and of getting him to make a violent attack upon the French revolution, that Mr. Paine discovered his mistake in the man. It is beyond question that Burke's attack on the French revolution had a most powerful effect in this country, and kindled a hatred without shewing a cause for it, but still as honest principle will always outlive treachery it drew forth from Mr. Paine his "Rights of Man," which will stand as a lesson to all people in all future generations whose government might require reformation. Vice can triumph

but for a moment, whilst the triumph of virtue is perpetual.

The laws of England have been a great bar to the propagation of sound principles and useful lessons on Government, for whatever might have been the disposition and abilities of authors, they have been compelled to limit that disposition and those abilities, to the disposition and abilities of the publisher. Thus it has been difficult for a bold and honest man to find a bold and honest publisher; even in the present day it continues to be the same, and the only effectual way of going to work is, for every author to turn printer and publisher as well. Without this measure every good work has to be mangled according to the humour of the publisher employed. It was thus Mr. Paine found great difficulty to find a publisher even for his First Part of "Rights of Man." It was thus the great and good Major Cartwright found it necessary during the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus to take a shop and sell his own pamphlets. I do not mean to say that there is a fault in publishers, the fault lays elsewhere, for it is well known that as soon as a man finds himself within the walls of a gaol for any patriotic act, those outside trouble themselves but little about him. It is the want of a due encouragement which the nation should bestow on all useful and persecuted publishers. I may be told that this last observation has a selfish appearance, but let the general statement be first contradicted, then I will plead guilty to selfish views.

Mr. Paine had been particularly intimate with Burke, and I have seen an original letter of Burke to a friend, wherein he expressed the high gratification and pleasure he felt at having dined at the Duke of Portland's with Thomas Paine, the great political writer of the United States, and the author of "Common Sense." Whether the English minis-

ters had formed any idea or desire to corrupt Paine by inviting him to their tables, it is difficult to say, but not improbable; one thing is certain, that, if ever they had formed the wish, they were foiled in their design, for the price of £1000, which Chapman, the printer of the Second Part of "Rights of Man," offered Mr. Paine for his copyright, is a proof that he was incorruptible on this score. Mr. Paine was evidently much pleased with his intimacy with Burke, for it appears he took considerable pains to furnish him with all the correspondence possible on the affairs of France, little thinking that he was cherishing a viper, and a man that would hand those documents over to the minister; but such was the case, until Mr. Burke was compelled to display his apostasy in the House of Commons, and to bid his former associates beware of him.

Mr. Paine promised the friends of the French Revolution, that he would answer Burke's pamphlet, as soon as he saw it advertised; and it would be difficult to say, whether Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution," or Paine's "Rights of Man," had the more extensive circulation. One thing we know, Burke's book is buried with him, whilst the "Rights of Man," still blazes and obtains an extensive circulation yearly, since it has been republished. I have circulated near 5000 copies within the last three years.

The publication of "Rights of Man," formed as great an era in the politics of England, as "Common Sense" had done in America: the difference is only this, the latter had an opportunity of being acted upon instantly, whilst the former has had to encounter corruption and persecution; but that it will finally form the base of the English Government, I have neither fear or doubt. Its principles are so self-evident, that they flash conviction on the most unwilling mind that gives the work a calm perusal. The First Part of "Rights of Man" passed unno-

ticed, as to prosecution, neither did Burke venture a reply. The proper principles of Government, where the welfare of the community is the object of that Government, as the case should always be, are so correctly and forcibly laid down in "Rights of Man," that the book will stand, as long as the English language is spoken, as a monument of political wisdom and integrity.

It should be observed, that Mr. Paine never sought profit from his writings, and when he found that "Rights of Man" had obtained a peculiar attraction he gave up the copyright to whomsoever would print it, although he had had so high an offer for the Second Part of it. He would always say that they were works of principle, written solely to ameliorate the condition of mankind, and as soon as published they were common property to any one that thought proper to circulate them. I do not concur in the propriety of Mr. Paine's conduct on this occasion, because, as he was the Author, he might as well have put the Author's profit into his pocket, as to let the bookseller pocket the profit of both. His pamphlets were never sold the cheaper for his neglecting to take his profit as an Author; but, it is now evident that Mr. Paine, by neglecting that affluence which he might have honestly and honourably possessed, deprived himself in the last dozen years of his life of the power of doing much good. It is not to be denied that property is the stamina of action and influence, and is looked up to by the mass of mankind in preference to principle in poverty. But there comes another danger and objection, that is, that the holders of much property are but seldom found to trouble themselves about principle. Their principle seldom goes a step beyond profession: but where principle and property does unite, the individual becomes a host.

The First Part of "Rights of Man," has not that methodical arrangement which is to be found in the

Second Part, but an apology arises for it, and that is, that Mr. Paine had to tread the "wilderness of rhapsodies," that Burke had prepared for him. The part is, however, interspersed with such delightful ornaments, and such immutable principles, that the path does not become tedious. Perhaps no other volume whatever has so well defined the causes of the French Revolution, and the advantages that would have arisen from them had France been free from the corrupting influence of foreign powers. But I must recollect that my business here is to sketch the Life of Mr. Paine, I wish to avoid any thing in the shape of quotation from his writings, as I am of opinion, that the reader will glean their beauties from the proper source with more satisfaction; and no Life of Paine that can be compiled will ever express half so much of the man, as his own writings, as a whole, speak for themselves, and almost seem to say "*the hand that made us is divine.*"

After some difficulty a publisher was found for "Rights of Man" in Mr. Jordan, late of 166, Fleet Street. The First Part appeared on the 13th of March, 1791, and the Second Part on the 16th of February in the following year. The Government was paralyzed at the rapid sale of the First Part, and the appearance of the Second. The attempt to purchase having failed, the agents of the Government next set to work to ridicule it, and to call it a contemptible work. Whig and Tory members in both Houses of Parliament affected to sneer at it, and to laud our glorious constitution as a something impregnable to the assaults of such a book. However, Whig and Tory members had just began to be known, and their affected contempt of "Rights of Man," served but as advertisements, and greatly accelerated its sale. In the month of May, 1792, the King issued his proclamation, and the King's Devil his ex officio information, on the very same day, against "Rights of Man." This in some measure

impeded its sale, or occasioned it to be sold in a private manner; through which means it is impossible to give effectual circulation to any publication. One part of the community is afraid to sell and another afraid to purchase under such conditions. It is not too much to say, that if "Rights of Man" had obtained two or three years free circulation in England and Scotland, it would have produced a similar effect to what "Common Sense" did in the United States of America. The French Revolution had set the people of England and Scotland to think, and "Rights of Man" was just the book to furnish materials for thinking. About this time he also wrote his "Letter to the Addressers," and several letters to the Chairmen of different County Meetings, at which those addresses were voted.

Mr. Paine had resolved to defend the publication of "Rights of Man" in person, but in the month of September, a deputation from the inhabitants of Calais waited upon him to say, that they had elected him their deputy to the National Convention of France. This was an affair of more importance than supporting "Rights of Man," before a political judge and a packed jury, and, accordingly, Mr. Paine set off for France with the deputation, but not without being exposed to much insult at Dover; where the Government spies had apprized the Custom House Officers of his arrival, and some of those spies were present to overhaul all his papers. It was said, that Mr. Paine had scarcely embarked twenty minutes before a warrant came to Dover, from the Home Department, to arrest him. Be this as it may, Mr. Paine had more important scenes allotted him. On reaching the opposite shore the name of Paine was no sooner announced than the beach was crowded;—all the soldiers on duty were drawn up; the officer of the guard embraced him on landing, and presented him with the national cockade, which a handsome young woman, who was

standing by, begged the honour of fixing in his hat, and returned it to him, expressing a hope that he would continue his exertions in the behalf of Liberty, France, and the Rights of Man. A salute was then fired from the battery, to announce the arrival of their new representative. This ceremony being over, he walked to Deissein's, in the Rue de l'Egalite (formerly Rue de Roi), the men, women, and children crowding around him, and calling out "Vive THOMAS PAINE!" He was then conducted to the Town Hall, and there presented to the Municipality, who with the greatest affection embraced their representative. The Mayor addressed him in a short speech, which was interpreted to him by his friend and conductor, M. Audibert, to which Mr. Paine laying his hand on his heart, replied, that his life should be devoted to their service.

At the inn, he was waited upon by the different persons in authority, and by the President of the Constitutional Society, who desired he would attend their meeting of that night: he cheerfully complied with the request, and the whole town would have been there, had there been room: the hall of the '*Minimes*' was so crowded that it was with the greatest difficulty they made way for Mr. Paine to the side of the President. Over the chair he sat in, was placed the bust of Mirabeau, and the colours of France, England, and America united. A speaker acquainted him from the tribune with his election, amidst the plaudits of the people. For some minutes after this ceremony, nothing was heard but "Vive la Nation! Vive THOMAS PAINE" in voices male and female.

On the following day, an extra meeting was appointed to be held in the church in honour of their new Deputy to the Convention, the *Minimes* being found quite suffocating from the vast concourse of people which had assembled on the previous occasion. A play was performed at the theatre on the

evening after his arrival, and a box was specifically reserved " for the Author of the 'Rights of Man,' the object of the English Proclamation."

Mr. Paine was likewise elected as deputy for Abbeville, Beauvais, and Versailles, as well as for the department of Calais, but the latter having been the first in their choice, he preferred being their representative.

On reaching Paris, Mr. Paine addressed a letter to the English Attorney General, apprizing him of the circumstances of his departure from England, and hinting to him, that any further prosecution of " Rights of Man," would form a proof that the Author was not altogether the object, but the book, and the people of England who should approve its sentiments. A hint was also thrown out that the events of France ought to form a lesson to the English Government, on its attempt to arrest the progress of correct principles and wholesome truths This letter was in some measure due to the Attorney General, as Mr. Paine had writen to him in England on the commencement of the prosecution, assuring him, that he should defend the work in person. Notwithstanding the departure of Mr. Paine, as a member of the French National Convention, the information against " Rights of Man" was laid before a jury, on the 2d of December in the same year, and the Government, and its agents, were obliged to content themselves with outlawing Mr. Paine, and punishing him, in effigy, throughout the country. Many a faggot have I gathered in my youth to burn old Tom Paine! In the West of England, his name became quite a substitute for that of Guy Faux. Prejudice, so aptly termed by Mr. Paine, the spider of the mind, was never before carried to such a height against any other individual; and what will future ages think of the corrupt influence of the English Government at the close of the eighteenth century, when it could excite the rancour of a ma-

jority of the nation against such a man as Thomas Paine!

We now find Mr. Paine engaged in new and still more important scenes. His first effort as a member of the National Convention, was to lay the basis of a self-renovating constitution, and to repair the defects of that which had been previously adopted: but a circumstance very soon occurred, which baffled all his good intentions, and brought him to a narrow escape from the guillotine. It was his humane and strenuous opposition to the putting Louis the XVIth to death. The famous or infamous manifesto issued by the Duke of Brunswick, in July 1792, had roused such a spirit of hatred towards the Royal Family of France, and all other Royal Families, that nothing short of their utter destruction could appease the majority of the French nation. Mr. Paine willingly voted for the trial of Louis, as a necessary exposure of Court intrigue and corruption; but when he found a disposition to destroy him at once, in preference to banishment, he exposed the safety of his own person in his endeavour to save the life of Louis. Mr. Paine was perfectly a humane man, he deprecated the punishment of death on any occasion whatever. His object was to destroy the monarchy, but not the man who had filled the office of monarch.

The following anecdote is another unparalleled instance of humanity and the moral precept of returning good for evil. Mr. Paine happened to be dining one day with about twenty friends at a Coffee House in the Palais Egalite, now the Palais Royal, when unfortunately for the harmony of the company, a Captain in the English service contrived to introduce himself as one of the party. The military gentleman was a strenuous supporter of the constitution in church and state, and a decided enemy of the French Revolution. After the cloth was drawn, the conversation chiefly turned on the state of affairs in

England, and the means which had been adopted by the government to check the increase of political knowledge. Mr. Paine delivered his opinion very freely, and much to the satisfaction of every one present, with the exception of Captain Grimstone, who returned his arguments by calling him a traitor to his country, with a variety of terms equally opprobrious. Mr. Paine treated his abuse with much good humour, which rendered the Captain so furious, that he walked up to the part of the room where Mr. Paine was sitting, and struck him a violent blow, which nearly knocked him off his seat. The cowardice of this behaviour from a stout young man towards a person of Mr. Paine's age (he being then upwards of sixty) is not the least disgraceful part of the transaction. There was, however, no time for reflections of this sort; an alarm was instantly given, that the Captain had struck a Citizen Deputy of the Convention, which was considered an insult to the nation at large; the offender was hurried into custody, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Mr. Paine prevented him from being executed on the spot.

It ought to be observed, that an act of the Convention had awarded the punishment of death to any one who should be convicted of striking a deputy: Mr. Paine was therefore placed in a very unpleasant situation. He immediately applied to Barrere, at that time President of the Committee of Public Safety, for a passport for his imprudent adversary, who after much hesitation complied with his request. It likewise occasioned Mr. Paine considerable personal inconvenience to procure his liberation; but even this was not sufficient; the Captain was without friends, and pennyless, and Mr. Paine generously supplied him with money to defray his travelling expences.

Louis fell under the guillotine, and Mr. Paine's deprecation of that act brought down upon him the hatred of the whole Robespierrean party. The

reign of terror now commenced in France; every public man who breathed a sigh for the fate of Louis was denounced as a traitor to the nation, and as such was put to death. Every man who complained of the despotism and violence of the party in power, was hurried to a prison, or before the Revolutionary Tribunal and to immediate execution. Mr. Paine, although a Member of the Convention, was first excluded on the ground of being a foreigner, and then thrown into prison because he had been born in England! His place of confinement was the Luxembourg; the time, about eleven months, during which he was seized with a most violent fever, that rendered him insensible to all that was passing, and to which circumstance he attributes his escape from the guillotine.

About this period Mr. Paine wrote his first and second part of Age of Reason. The first part was written before he went to the Luxembourg, as in his passage thither he deposited the manuscript with Joel Barlow. The second part he wrote during his confinement, and at a moment when he could not calculate on the preservation of his life for twenty-four hours: a circumstance which forms the best proof of his sincerity, and his conviction of the fallacy and imposture of all established religions. Throughout this work he has also trod the path of nature, and has laid down some of the best arguments to shew the existence of an Omnipotent Being, that ever were penned. Those who are in the habit of running down every thing that does not tally with their antiquated opinions, or the prejudices in which they have been educated, have decried Paine as an Atheist! Of all the men who ever wrote, Paine was the most remote from Atheism, and has advanced stronger arguments against the belief of no God, than any who have gone before him, or have lived since. If there be any chance of the failure of Paine's theological writings as a standard work, it

will be on the ground of their being more superstitious than otherwise. However, their beauties, I doubt not, will at all times be a sufficient apology for a few trifling defects. Mr. Paine has been taxed with inconsistency in his theological opinions, because that in his Common Sense, and other political writings, he has had recourse to Bible phrases and arguments to illustrate some of his positions. But this can be no proof of hypocrisy, because his Common Sense, and his other political writings, were intended as a vehicle for political principles only, and they were addressed to the most superstitious people in the world. If Mr. Paine had published any of his Deistical opinions in Common Sense or the Crisis, he would have defeated the very purpose for which he wrote. The Bible is a most convenient book to afford precedents; and any man might support any opinion or any assertion by quotations from it. Mr. Paine tells us in his first Crisis that he has no superstition about him, which was a pretty broad hint of what his opinions on that score were at that time, but it would have been the height of madness to have urged any religious dissension among the inhabitants of the United States during their hostile struggle for independence. Such is not a time to think about making converts to religious opinions. Mr. Paine has certainly made use of the common hack term, "Christian this" and "Christian that," in many parts of his political writings; but let it be recollected to whom he addressed himself, and the object he had in view, before a charge of inconsistency be made. He first published his Age of Reason in France, where all compulsive systems of religion had been abolished, and here, certainly, he cannot be charged with being a disturber of religious opinions, because his work was translated and reprinted in the English language. He could have no objection to see it published in England, but it was by no means his own act, and he has expressly

stated that he wrote it purposely for the French nation and the United States. But Truth will not be confined to a nation, nor to a continent, and there can never be an inconsistency in proceeding from wrong to right, although there must naturally be a change.

After the fall of Robespierre and his faction, and the arrival of Mr. Monroe, a new minister from America, Mr. Paine was liberated from his most painful imprisonment, and again solicited to take his seat in the Convention, which he accordingly did. Again his utmost efforts were used to establish a constitution on correct principles and universal liberty, united with security both for person and property. He wrote his "Dissertation on the First Principles of Government," and presented it to the Convention, accompanied with a speech, pointing out the defects of the then existing constitution. Intrigue is the natural characteristic of Frenchmen, and they never appeared to relish any thing in the shape of purity or simplicity of principle. Their intrigue being always attended with an impetuosity, has been aptly compared by Voltaire to the joint qualities of the monkey and the tiger. Of all countries on the face of the earth, perhaps France was the least qualified to receive a pure Republican Government. The French nation had been so long dazzled with the false splendours of its grand monarch, that a Court seemed the only atmosphere in which the real character of Frenchmen could display itself. At least, the Court had assimilated the character of the whole nation to itself. The French Revolution was altogether financial, and not the effect of good triumphing over bad principles. At various periods the people assumed various attitudes, but they were by no means prepared for a Republican form of Government. Political information had made no progress among the mass of the people, as is the case in Britain at this moment. There were

but few Frenchmen amongst the literate part of the community who had any notion of a representative system of Government. The United States had scarcely presented any thing like correct representation, and the boasted constitution of England is altogether a mockery of representation. The people of England have no more direct influence over the Legislature than the horses or asses of England. Paine saw this, both in France and England, and, at the same time, saw the necessity of inculcating correct notions of Government through all classes of the community. He struggled in vain during his own life-time, but the seed of his principles has taken root and is now beginning to shoot forth.

France, by a series of successful battles with the monarchs of Europe, began to assume a military character—the very soul of Frenchmen, but the bane of Republicanism. Hence arose a Buonaparte, and hence the fall of France, and the restoration of the hated Bourbons.

Mr. Paine found it impossible to do any good in France, and he sighed for the shores of America. The English cruizers prevented his passing during the war; but immediately after the peace of Amiens he embarked and reached his adopted country. Before I follow him to America, I should notice his attack on George Washington. It is evident from all the writings of Mr. Paine that he lived in the closest intimacy with Washington up to the time of his quitting America in 1787, and it further appears, that they corresponded up to the time of Mr. Paine's imprisonment in the Luxembourg. But here a fatal breach took place. Washington having been the nominal Commander-in-Chief during the struggle for independence, obtained much celebrity, not for his exertions during that struggle, but in laying down all command and authority immediately on its close, and in retiring to private life, instead of assuming any thing like authority or dictation in the

Government of the States, which his former situation would have enabled him to do if he had chosen. This was a circumstance only to be paralleled during the purest period of the Roman and Grecian Republics, and this circumstance obtained for Washington a fame to which his Generalship could not aspire. Mr. Paine says, that the disposition of Washington was apathy itself, and that nothing could kindle a fire in his bosom—neither friendship, fame, or country. This might in some measure account for the relinquishment of all authority, at a time when he might have held it, and, on the other hand, should have moderated the tone of Mr. Paine in complaining of Washington's neglect of him whilst confined in France. The apathy which was made a sufficient excuse for the one case, should have also formed a sufficient excuse for the other. This was certainly a defect in Mr. Paine's career as a political character. He might have attacked the conduct of John Adams, who was a mortal foe to Paine and all Republicanism and purity of principle, and who found the apathy and indifference of Washington a sufficient cloak and opportunity to enable him to carry on every species of Court and monarchical intrigue in the character of Vice-President. I will, however, state this case more simply. During the imprisonment of Mr. Paine in the Luxembourg, and under the reign of Robespierre, Washington was President of the United States, and John Adams was Vice-President. John Adams was altogether a puerile character, and totally unfit for any part of a Republican Government. He openly avowed his attachment to the monarchical system of Government: he made an open proposition to make the Presidency of the United States hereditary in the family of Washington, although the latter had no children of his own; and even ran into an intrigue and correspondence with the Court and Ministry of England, on the subject of his diabolical purposes.

All this intelligence burst upon Paine immediately on his liberation from a dreadful imprisonment, and at a moment when the neglect of the American Government had nearly cost him his life. The slightest interference of Washington would have saved Paine from several months unjust and unnecessary imprisonment, for there was not the least charge against him, further than being born an Englishman; although he had actually been outlawed in that country for supporting the cause of France and of mankind!

If all the charges which Mr. Paine has brought against Washington be true, and some of them are too palpable to be doubted, his character has been much overrated, and Mr. Paine has either lost sight of his duty in the arms of friendship, by giving Washington too much applause, or he has suffered an irritated feeling to overcome his prudence by a contradictory and violent attack. The letter written by Mr. Paine from France to Mr. Washington stands rather as a contrast to his former expressions, but he who reads the whole of Mr. Paine's writings can best judge for himself. Some little change might have taken place in the disposition of each of those persons towards the close of life, but I will not allow for a moment that Paine ever swerved in political integrity and principle. This letter seems to stand rather as a blur in a collection of Mr. Paine's writings, and every reader will, no doubt, exercise his right to form his own opinion between Paine and Washington. I am of opinion, that one Paine is worth a thousand Washingtons in point of utility to mankind.

We must now follow Mr. Paine to America, and here we find him still combating every thing in the shape of corruption, of which no small portion seems to have crept into the management of the affairs of the United States. He now carries on a paper war with the persons who called themselves Federalists;

a faction which seems to have been leagued for no other purpose but to corrupt and to appropriate to their own use the fruits of their corruption. Mr. Paine published various letters and essays on the state of affairs, and on various other subjects, after his return to America, the whole of which convince us that he never lost an iota of his mental and intellectual faculties, although he was exposed to much bodily disease and lingering pain. He found a very different disposition in the United States on his return to what he had left there when he first went to France. Fanaticism had made rapid strides, and to a great portion of the inhabitants Mr. Paine's theological writings were a dreadful sore. He had also to combat the Washington and John Adams party, who were both his bitter enemies, so that instead of retiring to the United States to enjoy repose in the decline of life, he found himself molested by venomous creatures on all sides. His pen, however, continued an overmatch for the whole brood, and his last essay will be read by the lover of liberty with the same satisfaction as the first.

Mr. Paine was exposed to many personal annoyances by the fanatics of the United States, and it may not be amiss to state here a few anecdotes on this head. On passing through Baltimore he was accosted by the preacher of a new sect called the New Jerusalemites. "You are Mr. Paine," said the preacher. "Yes."—"My name is Hargrave, Sir; I am minister of the New Jerusalem Church here. We, Sir, explain the Scripture in its true meaning. The key has been lost above four thousand years, and we have found it."—"Then," said Mr. Paine in his usual sarcastic manner, "it must have been very rusty." At another time, whilst residing in the house of a Mr. Jarvis, in the city of New York, an old lady, habited in a scarlet cloak, knocked at the door, and inquired for Thomas Paine. Mr. Jarvis told her he was asleep. "I am very sorry for that,"

she said, "for I want to see him very particularly." Mr. Jarvis, having some feeling for the age and the earnestness of the old lady, took her into Mr. Paine's bed-room and waked him. He arose upon one elbow, and with a stedfast look at the old lady, which induced her to retreat a step or two, asked her, "What do you want?"—"Is your name Paine?"—"Yes."—"Well, then, I am come from Almighty God to tell you, that if you do not repent of your sins, and believe in our blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ, you will be damned, and ——"—"Poh, poh, it is not true. You were not sent with any such impertinent message. Jarvis, make her go away. Pshaw, he would not send such a foolish, ugly old woman as you are about with his messages. Go away, go back, shut the door." The old lady raised her hands and walked away in mute astonishment.

Another instance of the kind happened about a fortnight before his death. Two priests, of the name of Milledollar and Cunningham, came to him, and the latter introduced himself and his companion in the following words, "Mr. Paine, we visit you as friends and neighbours. You have now a full view of death; you cannot live long, and 'whosoever does not believe in Jesus Christ will assuredly be damned.'"—"Let me," replied Mr. Paine, "have none of your Popish stuff. Get away with you. Good morning, good morning." Mr. Milledollar attempted to address him, but he was interrupted with the same language. A few days after those same priests had the impudence to come again, but the nurse was afraid to admit them. Even the doctor who attended him in his last minutes took the latest possible opportunity to ask him, "Do you wish to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" to which Mr. Paine replied, "I have no wish to believe on the subject." These were his last words, for he died the following morning about

nine o'clock, about nine hours after the Doctor had left him.

Mr. Paine, over and above what might have been expected of him, seemed much concerned about what spot his body should be laid in some time before his death. He requested permission to be interred in the Quaker's Burial Ground, saying that they were the most moral and upright sect of Christians; but this was peremptorily refused to him in his life-time, and gave him much uneasiness, or such as might not have been expected from such a man. On this refusal he ordered his body to be interred on his own farm, and a stone placed over it with the following inscription;

THOMAS PAINE,

AUTHOR OF

COMMON SENSE,

DIED JUNE 8, 1809, AGED 72 YEARS AND FIVE MONTHS.

Little did Mr. Paine think when giving this instruction, that the Peter Porcupine who had heaped so much abuse upon him, beyond that of all other persons put together (for Porcupine was the only scribbling opponent that Mr. Paine ever deigned to mention by name) little did he think that this Peter Porcupine, in the person of William Cobbett, should have become his second self in the political world, and should have so far renounced his former opinions and principles as to resent the indifference paid to Paine by the majority of the inhabitants of the United States, as actually to remove his bones to England. I consider this mark of respect and honest indignation, as an ample apology for all the abuse heaped upon the name and character of Paine by Mr. Cobbett. It is a volume of retractation, more ample and more convincing than his energetic pen could have produced. For my own part whilst we

have his writings. I should have felt indifferent as to what became of his bones; but there was an open retractation due from Mr. Cobbett to the people of Britain, for his former abuse of Paine, and I for one am quite content with the apology made.

I shall now close this Memoir, and should the reader think the sketch insufficient, I would say to him that his own writings fill up the deficiency, as he was an actor as well as a writer in all the subjects on which he has treated. Wherever I have lightly touched an incident, the works themselves display the *minutiæ* and when the reader has gone through the Memoir, and the Works too, he will say, "I am satisfied."

R. CARLILE.

DORCHESTER GAOL,
NOVEMBER, 1820.

# PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

TO THE

## EDITION OF 1817-18.

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The circumstances under which the present edition of the Political Works of Paine has been laid before the Public, require from the Publisher an explanation of the motives by which he has been actuated. It must have been painful to the feelings of every honest man to think that the writings of Mr. Paine, which have been dreaded only by the supporters of Monarchical Despotism, and its inseparable concomitant, priestcraft, should have been so near a total extinction as to be found no where for sale, but in a clandestine manner, and at an exorbitant price. Prior to the appearance of the present edition, no price was considered too high; various sums, from ten to twenty guineas, were paid for an imperfect collection when compared with the present. The public have now a complete and uniform edition,

and that at a price which will enable the working classes of the community to become acquainted with the principles of the celebrated author.

The satisfaction that is felt by the Publisher in sending forth to the people of England so complete an edition of so grand and interesting a collection of political knowledge at so important a crisis, when Despotism trembles at the thought of being resisted, is trebly increased at the numerous expressions of approbation he has received from that portion of the people, whose meed is free, genuine, and impressive, not fulsome but stimulant, not adulatory but admonitory, not servile but conducive to the general interest.

The Publisher feels it incumbent on him to say, that he has met with no opposition in the progress of this edition, save from those who were the pretended friends of freedom, but who dreaded the circulation of his principles lest their self-interested theories should find exposure in the simple and effectual instructions contained in the pages of Paine —the one cries out it is flying in the face of a jury— the errors of a jury should be respected: (let it be recollected that that jury was packed) another says, you will put a stop to all the political writings of the day, and like Othello, we may exclaim, "our occupation's gone;"—be it so. The writings of Paine are alone sufficient to become the political guide, and to inculcate those notions of government, the

adoption of which would extend the greatest share of good to the greatest portion of the community: that man only should be thought worthy of our admiration and imitation who explodes the idea of hereditary right in priests, nobles, and princes, and hereditary wrong in the people.

The time and circumstances under which the present edition has made its appearance are peculiar; and at some future period it might be deemed doubtful, or even incredible, that when the Ministers of the Regent had thought proper to dictate to him, and their tools the Houses of Lords and Commons (so called) the necessity of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, for the avowed purpose of stopping the progress of political information, in defiance of threats held out, many actually suffering imprisonment and torture, and all persons concerned in the circulation of political information expecting a similar fate, the "Rights of Man" and "Letter to the Addressers," which seemed to have attracted the particular attention of the Harpies of the Crown on their first appearance, were actually published, and many thousands of them sold before the repeal of that suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. The Works are now before the public in their completed state; whether an abandoned Administration may consider them as fit subjects for legal discussion, remains yet to be known, nor is it of much consequence to the Publisher. He is perfectly aware of

the strong desire which exists in certain quarters to revive the reign of terror and persecution, but conscious of the rectitude of his intentions, he is totally indifferent as to the measures which the Solomons of the Law may finally adopt. Whatever may be attempted, he will wait the result with composure, and with the consciousness of having performed a public duty; a consideration of more importance to him than either the mercy or the vengeance, the moderation or the persecution, of a tyrannical Ministry.

# PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

TO THE

## PRESENT EDITION.

It is with much pleasure, heightened by some few difficulties and struggles, that the Publisher is enabled to lay before the Public, an improved and more complete edition of the Political Works of Thomas Paine, than has hitherto appeared. The Publisher has spared no pains or expence in getting up the present edition, and it will be found to contain more than a hundred pages of miscellaneous matter, beyond what has hitherto been published in this country. We are indebted to the exertions of Mr. William Clark for many of those pieces, who has ransacked the United States to gather up the valuable fragments of so celebrated an author. As Mr. Paine's exertions with the pen were so wide and extensive, and that too during the revolutionary moments of America and France, many

valuable scraps and essays have been lost, or are laying obscure; and what is still more painful, from the servile state of Englishmen and the English Press, many of his pieces have been printed imperfect, which the Publisher has strove in vain to complete and perfect according to the originals. The aristocracies and monarchies of all countries have made war upon Thomas Paine as their common enemy, so that they not only tormented his last moments by their agents, but, no doubt, they have greatly curtailed the progress of his pen. However, enough is done to shew the enlightened part of mankind, and the industrious classes, that he was their common friend.

In addition to the augmented collection of his writings, the Publisher has procured a portrait that excels any of the small portraits that are extant, in execution and resemblance. It will be found to be the most perfect model of Sharp's large engraving, and even superior to Sharp's small portrait. With this additional expence, and from the peculiar situation of the Publisher, a price somewhat high has been put upon his edition. But the candid mind must acknowledge, that the contribution thus laid upon the purchaser, is justifiable under present circumstances, and the Publisher pledges himself, that his first object is to acquire the means of being further useful, and not to hoard money. In fact, he

actually stands in need of a liberal and extensive purchase of this work to enable him to proceed to some other object.

Whatever pieces are imperfect in this edition are acknowledged, with the exception of one, and that is the piece intitled "To Forgetfulness," which was first published in England in Redhead Yorke's "Travels through France." This piece is strangely mangled, and for what purpose it is difficult to say. In the present edition, a note has been copied, which ought not to have been, in page 128 of the Miscellaneous Works, in the above mentioned article. The Publisher could have no scruples to publish any thing which Mr. Paine had written for publication, the note belongs to the copy, and not to the present edition. It is not generally known, but it should be known, that Redhead Yorke made his last tour through France as an agent of the English Government. The Publisher can vouch for the accuracy of this statement, and he has thought proper to make it, lest apostasy should have been mistaken for integrity; as Mr. Redhead Yorke has not left us an avowal of his change of opinions and principles, although the family, into which he married, boast of that change. He was confined for two years in this Gaol of Dorchester, and after quitting it, he married the sister of the present keeper.

There are some few literal and verbal errors in this edition, but they are so trifling that it has not been deemed necessary to publish a list of *errata.* The reader cannot fail to mark them as he passes on, and no where is a sentence confused or unintelligible by them. The Publisher now throws himself, and the present edition, on the public favour and support, as a proof, that a prison cannot deter him, whilst he perceives a further opportunity to make an effort for the spread of useful and liberal principles.

DORCHESTER GAOL,
NOV. 12, 1820.

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# COMMON SENSE,

ADDRESSED TO THE

## Inhabitants of America,

ON THE FOLLOWING

## INTERESTING SUBJECTS:

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II. Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession.

III. Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs.

IV. Of the Present Ability of America, with some Miscellaneous Reflections.

To which is added, an APPENDIX; together with an Address to the People called QUAKERS.

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BY THOMAS PAINE.

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London:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY R. CARLILE, 55, FLEET STREET.

1819.

# INTRODUCTION.

PERHAPS the sentiments contained in the following pages are not *yet* sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favour; a long habit of not thinking a thing *wrong*, gives it a superficial appearance of being *right*, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defence of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason.

As a long and violent abuse of power is generally the means of calling the right of it in question, (and in matters too which might never have been thought of, had not the sufferers been aggravated into the inquiry) and as the King of England hath undertaken in his *own right*, to support the Parliament in what he calls *theirs*, and as the good people of this country are grievously oppressed by the combination, they have an undoubted privilege to inquire into the pretensions of both, and equally to reject the usurpation of either.

In the following sheets the author hath studiously avoided every thing which is personal among ourselves. Compliments as well as censure to individuals make no part thereof. The wise, and the worthy, need not the triumph of a pamphlet; and those whose sentiments are injudicious, or unfriendly,

will cease of themselves, unless too much pains are bestowed upon their conversion.

The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances hath, and will arise, which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all lovers of mankind are affected, and in the event of which their affections are interested. The laying a country desolate with fire and sword, declaring war against the natural rights of all mankind, and extirpating the defenders thereof from the face of the earth, is the concern of every man to whom nature hath given the power of feeling; of which class, regardless of party censure, is

THE AUTHOR.

*Philadelphia, Feb.* 14, 1776.

# COMMON SENSE.

*Of the Origin and Design of Government in general; with concise Remarks on the English Constitution.*

SOME writers have so confounded Society with Government, as to leave little or no distinction between them: whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and Government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively*, by uniting our affections: the latter *negatively*, by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.

Society, in every state, is a blessing, but Government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state, an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries *by a Government*, which we might expect in a country *without Government*, our calamity is heightened by reflecting, that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of Paradise. For, were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform, and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which, in every other case, advises him out of two evils to choose the least. *Wherefore*, security being the true design, and end of Government, it

unanswerably follows, that whatever *form* thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us with the least expence and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.

In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of Government, let us suppose a small number of persons settled in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest; they will then represent the first peopling of any country, or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, Society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto; the strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance and relief of another, who in his turn requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness: but *one* man might labour out the common period of his life without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger in the mean time would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way. Disease, nay even misfortune, would be death; for though neither might be mortal, yet either would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might be rather said to perish than to die.

Thus, necessity, like a gravitation power, would soon form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which would supersede and render the obligations of Law and Government unnecessary while they remained perfectly just to each other; but as nothing but Heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen, that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other; and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of Government to supply the defect of moral virtue.

Some convenient tree will afford them a State-house, under the branches of which the whole colony may assemble to deliberate on public matters. It is more than probable that their first laws will have the title only of REGULATIONS, and be enforced by no other penalty than public disesteem. In this first Parliament every man by natural right will have a seat.

But as the colony increases, the public concerns will increase likewise, and the distance at which the members may be separated, will render it too inconvenient for all of

them to meet on every occasion as at first, when their number was small, their habitations near, and the public concerns few and trifling. This will point out the convenience of their consenting to leave the legislative part to be managed by a select number chosen from the whole body, who are supposed to have the same concerns at stake which those have who appointed them, and who will act in the same manner as the whole body would act, were they present. If the colony continue increasing, it will become necessary to augment the number of the Representatives; and that the interest of every part of the colony may be attended to, it will be found best to divide the whole into convenient parts, each part sending its proper number; and that the *elected* might never form to themselves an interest separate from the *electors*, prudence will point out the necessity of having elections often; because, as the *elected* might by that means return and mix again with the general body of the *electors* in a few months, their fidelity to the public will be secured by the prudent reflection of not making a rod for themselves. And as this frequent interchange will establish a common interest with every part of the community, they will mutually and naturally support each other: and on this (not on the unmeaning name of King) depends the *strength of Government, and the happiness of the governed.*

Here, then, is the origin and rise of Government; namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too is the design and end of Government, viz. Freedom and Security. And however our eyes may be dazzled with show, or our eyes deceived by sound; however prejudice may warp our wills, or interest darken our understanding, the simple voice of nature and of reason will say, it is right.

I draw my idea of the form of Government from a principle in nature, which no art can overturn, viz. that the more simple any thing is, the less liable it is to be disordered, and the easier repaired when disordered: and with this maxim in view, I offer a few remarks on the so-much-boasted Constitution of England. That it was noble for the dark and slavish times in which it was erected, is granted. When the world was over-run with tyranny, the least remove therefrom was a glorious risque. But that it is imperfect, subject to convulsions, and incapable of producing what it seems to promise, is easily demonstrated.

Absolute Governments, (though the disgrace of human nature) have this advantage with them, that they are simple;

if the people suffer, they know the head from which their suffering springs, know likewise the remedy, and are not bewildered by a variety of causes and cures. But the Constitution of England is so exceedingly complex, that the Nation may suffer for years together without being able to discover in which part the fault lies; some will say in one, and some in another, and every political physician will advise a different medicine.

I know it is difficult to get over local or long standing prejudices; yet if we will suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English Constitution, we shall find them to be the base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new republican materials.

*First.*—The remains of Monarchical Tyranny in the person of the King.

*Secondly.*—The remains of Aristocratical Tyranny in the persons of the Peers.

*Thirdly.*—The new Republican Materials in the persons of the Commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.

The two first being hereditary, are independent of the People; wherefore, in a *constitutional sense*, they contribute nothing towards the Freedom of the State.

To say that the Constitution of England is a *union* of three powers, reciprocally *checking* each other, is farcical; either the words have no meaning, or they are flat contradictions.

To say that the Commons are a check upon the King, presupposes two things:

*First.*—That the King is not to be trusted without being looked after, or, in other words, that a thirst for absolute power is the natural disease of Monarchy.

*Secondly.*—That the Commons, by being appointed for that purpose, are either wiser or more worthy of confidence than the Crown.

But as the same Constitution which gives the Commons power to check the King, by withholding the Supplies, gives afterwards the King a power to check the Commons by empowering him to reject their other Bills, it again supposes that the King is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity!

There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of Monarchy; it first excludes a man from the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgment is required. The state of a King shuts

him from the world, yet the business of a King requires him to know it thoroughly; wherefore the different parts, by unnaturally opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.

Some writers have explained the English Constitution thus: the King, they say, is one, the People another: the Peers are an House in behalf of the King, the Commons in behalf of the People; but this hath all the distinctions of an house divided against itself; and though the expressions be pleasantly arranged, yet when examined, they appear idle and ambiguous; and it will always happen, that the nicest construction that words are capable of, when applied to the description of something which either cannot exist, or is too incomprehensible to be within the compass of description, will be words of sound only, and though they may amuse the ear, they cannot inform the mind; for this explanation includes a previous question, viz. "How came the King by a power which the People are afraid to trust, and always obliged to check?" Such a power could not be the gift of a wise people, neither can any power *which needs checking* be from God; yet the provision which the Constitution makes supposes such a power to exist.

But the provision is unequal to the task; the means either cannot or will not accomplish the end, and the whole affair is a *felo de se;* for as the greater weight will always carry up the less, and as all the wheels of a machine are put in motion by one, it only remains to know which power in the Constitution, has the most weight, for that will govern; and though the others, or a part of them, may clog, or, as the phrase is, check the rapidity of its motion, yet so long as they cannot stop it, their endeavours will be ineffectual; the first moving power will at last have its way; and what it wants in speed, is supplied by time.

That the Crown is this overbearing part of the English Constitution, needs not be mentioned, and that it derives its whole consequence merely from being the giver of Places and Pensions is self-evident; wherefore, though we have been wise enough to shut and lock a door against absolute Monarchy, we at the same time have been foolish enough to put the Crown in possession of the key.

The prejudice of Englishmen in favour of their own Government, by King, Lords, and Commons, arises as much or more from national pride than reason. Individuals are, undoubtedly, safer in England than in some other countries, but the *will* of the King is as much the *law* of the land in

Britain as in France, with this difference, that instead of proceeding directly from his mouth, it is handed to the People under the more formidable shape of an Act of Parliament. For the fate of Charles the First hath only made Kings more subtle—not more just.

Wherefore, laying aside all national pride and prejudice in favour of modes and forms, the plain truth is, that it is *wholly owing to the Constitution of the People, and not to the Constitution of the Government*, that the Crown is not as oppressive in England as in Turkey.

An inquiry into the *constitutional errors* in the English form of Government is at this time highly necessary; for as we are never in a proper condition of doing justice to others, while we continue under the influence of some leading partiality, so neither are we capable of doing it to ourselves while we remain fettered with an obstinate prejudice. And as a man who is attached to a prostitute, is unfitted to choose or judge a wife, so any prepossession in favour of a rotten Constitution of Government will disable us from discerning a good one.

## *Of Monarchy and hereditary Succession.*

MANKIND being originally equals in the order of creation, the equality could only be destroyed by some subsequent circumstances; the distinctions of rich and poor, may in a great measure be accounted for, and that without having recourse to the harsh and ill-sounding names of oppression and avarice. Oppression is often the *consequence*, but seldom the *means* of riches; and though avarice will preserve a man from being necessitously poor, it generally makes him too timorous to be wealthy.

But there is another and greater distinction, for which no truly natural or religious reason can be assigned, and that is, the distinction of men into KINGS and SUBJECTS. Male and female are the distinctions of Nature, good and bad, the distinctions of Heaven; but how a race of men came into the world so exalted above the rest, and distinguished like some new species, is worth inquiring into, and whether they are the means of happiness or of misery to mankind.

In the early ages of the world, according to the Scripture Chronology, there were no Kings; the consequence of which was, there were no Wars. It is the pride of Kings which throws mankind into confusion. Holland, without a King, hath enjoyed more peace for this last century than any of the Monarchical Governments in Europe. Antiquity favours the same remark; for the quiet and rural lives of the first patriarchs hath a happy something in them, which vanishes away when we come to the history of Jewish royalty.

Government by Kings was first introduced into the world by the Heathens, from whom the children of Israel copied the custom. It was the most prosperous invention the devil ever set on foot for the promotion of Idolatry. The Heathens paid divine honours to their deceased Kings, and the Christian world hath improved on the plan, by doing the same to their living ones. How impious is the title of sacred Majesty applied to a worm, who in the midst of his splendour is crumbling into dust!

As the exalting one man so greatly above the rest cannot be justified on the equal Rights of Nature, so neither can it be defended on the authority of Scripture; for the will of

the Almighty has declared by Gideon and the prophet Samuel, expressly disapproves of Government by Kings. All anti-monarchical parts of the scripture have been very smoothly glossed over in Monarchical Governments, but they undoubtedly merit the attention of countries which have their Governments yet to form. "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," is the scripture doctrine of Courts, yet it is no support of Monarchical Government, for the Jews at that time were without a King, and in a state of vassalage to the Romans.

Near three thousand years passed away from the Mosaic account of the Creation, till the Jews, under a national delusion, requested a King. Till then, their form of Government (except in extraordinary cases, where the Almighty interposed) was a kind of Republic, administered by a Judge and the Elders of the Tribes. Kings they had none, and it was held sinful to acknowledge any being under that title but the Lord of Hosts. And when a man seriously reflects on the idolatrous homage which is paid to the persons of Kings, he need not wonder that the Almighty, ever jealous of his honour, should disapprove of a form of Government which so impiously invades the prerogative of Heaven.

Monarchy is ranked in Scripture as one of the sins of the Jews, for which a curse in reserve is denounced against them. The history of that transaction is worth attending to.

The children of Israel being oppressed by the Midianites, Gideon marched against them with a small army, and victory, through the Divine interposition, decided in his favour. The Jews, elate with success, and attributing it to the generalship of Gideon, proposed making him a King, saying, "Rule thou over us, thou and thy son, and thy son's son." Here was temptation in its fullest extent: not a kingdom only but an hereditary one. But Gideon, in the piety of his soul, replied, "I will not reign over you, neither shall my son rule over you; THE LORD SHALL RULE OVER YOU." Words need not be more explicit. Gideon doth not decline the honour, but denieth their right to give it; neither doth he compliment them with invented declarations of his thanks, but in the positive style of a prophet charges them with disaffection to their proper Sovereign, the King of Heaven.

About one hundred and thirty years after this, they fell again into the same error. The hankering which the Jews had for the idolatrous customs of the Heathens, is something exceedingly unaccountable; but so it was, that laying

hold of the misconduct of Samuel's two sons, who were entrusted with some secular concerns, they came in an abrupt and clamourous manner to Samuel, saying, "Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a King to judge us, like all the other nations.' And here we cannot but observe, that their motives were bad, viz. that they might be *like* unto other nations, *i. e.* the Heathens; whereas their true glory laid in being as much *unlike* them as possible. "But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a King to judge us; and Samuel prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, THAT I SHOULD NOT REIGN OVER THEM. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even unto this day; wherewith they have forsaken me and served other gods; so do they also unto thee. Now, therefore, hearken unto their voice, howbeit protest solemnly unto them, and shew the manner of a King that shall reign over them," (*i. e.* not of any particular King, but the general manner of the Kings of the earth, whom Israel was so eagerly copying after. And notwithstanding the great difference of time and distance of manners, the character is still in fashion.) "And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people, that asked of him a King. And he said, This shall be the manner of the King that shall reign over you; he will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen, and some shall run before his chariots, (this description agrees with the present mode of impressing men) and he will appoint them captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots: and he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers, (this describes the expence and luxury, as well as the oppression of Kings) and he will take your fields and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants; and he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give them to his officers and to his servants, (by which we see that bribery, corruption, and favouritism, are the standing vices of Kings;) and he will take the tenth of your men servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work; and

he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants; and ye shall cry out in that day because of your King which ye shall have chosen, AND THE LORD WILL NOT HEAR YOU IN THAT DAY."

This accounts for the continuation of Monarchy; neither do the characters of the few good Kings which have lived since, either sanctify the title, or blot out the sinfulness of the origin; the high encomium given of David, takes no notice of him *officially as a King*, but only as a *Man* after God's own heart. "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel, and they said, Nay, but we will have a King over us, that we may be like all the Nations, and that our King may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles." Samuel continued to reason with them, but to no purpose: he set before them their ingratitude, but all would not avail; and seeing them fully bent on their folly, he cried out "I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain (which then was a punishment, being in the time of wheat harvest,) that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, IN ASKING YOU A KING. So Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God that we die not, for WE HAVE ADDED UNTO OUR SINS THIS EVIL, TO ASK A KING." These portions of Scripture are direct and positive. They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath there entered his protest against Monarchical Government is true, or the Scripture is false. And a man hath good reason to believe that there is as much of king-craft as priestcraft, in withholding the Scripture frow the public in Popish countries. For Monarchy in every instance is the Popery of Government.

To the evil of Monarchy we have added that of Hereditary Succession; and as the first is a degradation and lessening of ourselves, so the second, claimed as a matter of right, is an insult and imposition on posterity. For all men being originally equals, no *one* by *birth* could have a right to set up his own family in perpetual preference to all others for ever; and though himself might deserve *some* decent degree of honours of his contemporaries, yet his descendants might be far too unworthy to inherit them. One of the strongest *natural* proofs of the folly of Hereditary Right in Kings is,

that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule by giving mankind *an ass for a lion.*

Secondly, as no man at first could possess any other public honours than were bestowed upon him, so the givers of those honours could have no right to give away the right of posterity. And though they might say, "We choose you for our head," they could not, without manifest injustice to their children, say, "that your children, and your children's children shall reign over *ours* for ever," because such an unwise, unjust, unnatural compact might, perhaps, in the next succession, put them under the government of a rogue or a fool. Most wise men, in their private sentiments, have ever treated Hereditary Right with contempt; yet it is one of those evils which, when once established, is not easily removed; many submit from fear, others from superstition, and the most powerful part shares with the King the plunder of the rest.

This is supposing the present race of Kings in the world to have had an honourable origin; whereas it is more than probable, that could we take off the dark covering of antiquity, and trace them to their first rise, that we should find the first of them nothing better than the principal ruffian of some restless gang, whose savage manners, or pre-eminence in subtilty, obtained him the title of chief among plunderers; and who, by increasing in power, and extending his depredations, overawed the quiet and defenceless to purchase their safety by frequent contributions. Yet his electors could have no idea of giving Hereditary Right to his descendants, because such a perpetual exclusion of themselves was incompatible with the free and unrestrained principles they professed to live by. Wherefore hereditary succession in the early ages of Monarchy could not take place as a matter of claim, but as something casual or complimental; but as few or no records were extant in those days, and traditionary history stuffed with fables, it was very easy, after the lapse of a few generations, to trump up some superstitious tale, conveniently timed, Mahomet like, to cram Hereditary Right down the throats of the vulgar. Perhaps the disorders which threatened, or seemed to threaten, on the decease of a leader, and the choice of a new one (for elections among ruffians could not be very orderly) induced many at first to favour hereditary pretensions; by which means it happened, as it hath happened since, that what at first was

submitted to as a convenience, was afterwards claimed as a right.

England, since the conquest, hath known some few good Monarchs, but groaned beneath a much larger number of bad ones, yet no man in his senses can say that their claim under William the Conqueror is a very honourable one. A French bastard landing with an armed banditti, and establishing himself King of England, against the consent of the natives, is, in plain terms, a very paltry, rascally original. It certainly hath no divinity in it. However, it is needless to spend much time in exposing the folly of Hereditary Right; if there are any so weak as to believe it, let them promiscuously worship the ass and the lion, and welcome; I shall neither copy their humility, nor disturb their devotion.

Yet I should be glad to ask, how they suppose Kings came at first? The question admits but of three answers, viz. either by lot, by election, or by usurpation. If the first King was taken by lot, it establishes a precedent for the next, which excludes hereditary succession. Saul was by lot, yet the succession was not hereditary, neither does it appear from that transaction, there was any intention it ever should. If the first king of any country was by election, that likewise establishes a precedent for the next; for to say that the right of all future generations is taken away by the act of the first electors, in their choice, not only of a king but of a family of Kings for ever, hath no parallel in or out of Scripture, but the doctrine of original sin, which supposes the free will of all men lost in Adam; and from such comparison (and it will admit of no other,) hereditary succession can derive no glory. For as in Adam all sinned, and as in the first electors all men obeyed; as in the one all mankind are subjected to Satan, and the other to Sovereignty; as our innocence was lost in the first, and our authority in the last; and as both disable us from re-assuming some further state and privilege, it unanswerably follows, that original sin and hereditary succession are parallels. Dishonourable rank! Inglorious connection! Yet the most subtle sophist cannot produce a juster simile.

As to usurpation, no man will be so hardy as to defend it; and that William the Conqueror was an usurper, is a fact not to be contradicted. The plain truth is, that the antiquity of English Monarchy will not bear looking into.

But it is not so much the absurdity as the evil of hereditary succession which concerns mankind. Did it insure a

race of good and wise men, it would have the seal of divine authority; but as it opens a door to the *foolish*, the *wicked*, and the *improper*, it hath in it the nature of oppression. Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent; selected from the rest of mankind, their minds are easily poisoned by importance, and the world they act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed to the Government, are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions.

Another evil which attends hereditary succession is, that the throne is liable to be possessed by a minor at any age; all which time the regency, acting under the cover of a king, have every opportunity and inducement to betray their trust. The same national misfortune happens, when a king, worn out with age and infirmity, enters the last stage of human weakness. In both these cases, the public becomes a prey to every miscreant, who can tamper with the follies either of age or infancy.

The most plausible plea which hath ever been offered in favour of hereditary succession, is that it preserves a nation from civil wars; and were this true, it would be weighty; whereas, it is the most barefaced falsity ever imposed upon mankind. The whole history of England disowns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have reigned in that distracted kingdom since the Conquest, in which time there have been (including the Revolution) no less than eight civil wars and nineteen rebellions. Wherefore, instead of making for peace, it makes against it, and destroys the very foundation it seems to stand on.

The contest for monarchy and succession, between the houses of York and Lancaster, laid England in a scene of blood for many years. Twelve pitched battles, besides skirmishes and sieges, were fought between Henry and Edward. Twice was Henry prisoner to Edward, who in his turn was prisoner to Henry. And so uncertain is the fate of war, and temper of a nation, when nothing but personal matters are the ground of a quarrel, that Henry was taken in triumph from a prison to a palace, and Edward obliged to fly from a palace to a foreign land; yet, as sudden transitions of temper are seldom lasting, Henry in his turn was driven from the throne, and Edward recalled to succeed him: the Parliament always following the strongest side.

This contest began in the reign of Henry the Sixth, and was not entirely extinguished till Henry the Seventh: in whom the families were united; including a period of sixty-seven years, viz. from 1422 to 1489.

In short, monarchy and succession have laid, not this or that kingdom only, but the world in blood and ashes. It is a form of Government which the word of God bears testimony against, and blood will attend it.

If we inquire into the business of a king, we shall find that in some countries they have none; and after sauntering away their lives without pleasure to themselves or advantage to the nation, withdraw from the scene, and leave their successors to tread the same idle ground. In absolute monarchies the whole weight of business, civil and military, lies on the king; the children of Israel in their request for a king, urged this plea, "that he may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles." But in countries where he is neither a judge, nor a general, a man would be puzzled to know what *is* his business.

The nearer any Government approaches to a republic, the less business there is for a king. It is somewhat difficult to find a proper name for the Government of England. Sir William Meredith calls it a republic; but in its present state it is unworthy of the name, because the corrupt influence of the Crown, by having all the places in its disposal, hath so effectually swallowed up the power, and eaten out the virtue of the House of Commons (the republican part of the constitution) that the Government of England is nearly as monarchical as that of France or Spain. Men fall out with names without understanding them: for it is the republican, and not the monarchical part of the constitution of England, which Englishmen glory in, viz. the liberty of choosing an House of Commons from out of their own body; and it is easy to see, that when republican virtue fails, slavery ensues. Why is the constitution of England sickly, but because monarchy hath poisoned the Republic, the Crown hath engrossed the Commons?

In England the king hath little more to do than to make war and give away places; which, in plain terms, is to impoverish the nation and set it together by the ears. A pretty business, indeed, for a man to be allowed eight hundred thousand sterling a year for, and worshipped into the bargain! Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived.

## *Thoughts on the present State of American Affairs.*

In the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense; and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his feelings to determine for themselves; that he will put *on*, or rather that he will not put *off* the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy from different motives, and with various designs: but all have been ineffectual, and the period of debate is closed. Arms, as the last resource, decide the contest: the appeal was the choice of the king, and the continent hath accepted the challenge.

It hath been reported of the late Mr. Pelham, who though an able minister, was not without his faults, that on his being attacked in the House of Commons, on the score, that his measures were only of a temporary kind, replied, "*they will last my time.*" Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the colonies in the present contest, the name of ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. It is not the affair of a city, a county, a province, or of a kingdom, but of a continent—of, at least, one eighth part of the habitable globe. It is not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected, even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seed-time of continental union, faith, and honour. The least fracture now, will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak: the wound will enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new era for politics is struck, a new method of thinking hath arisen. All plans, proposals, &c. prior to the nineteenth of April, i. e. to the commencement of hostilities, are like the

almanacks of the last year, which, though proper then, are superseded and useless now. Whatever was advanced by the advocates on either side of the question then, terminated in one and the same point, viz. an union with Great Britain; the only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one proposing force, the other friendship; but it hath so far happened, that the first hath failed, and the second hath withdrawn her influence.

As much hath been said of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, hath passed away and left us as we were, it is but right that we should view the contrary side of the argument, and inquire into some of the many material injuries which these colonies sustain, and always will sustain, by being connected with, and dependent on, Great Britain. To examine that connection and dependence, on the principles of nature and common sense, to see what we have to trust to, if separated, and what we are to expect, if dependent.

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America had flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert, that because a child has thriven upon milk, it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives are to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true, for I answer roundly, that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power had any thing to do with her. The commerce by which she hath enriched herself, are the necessaries of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe.

But she has protected us, say some. That she has engrossed us, is true, and defended the continent at our expence as well as her own, is admitted; and she would have defended Turkey from the same motive, viz. the sake of trade and dominion.

Alas! we have been long led away by ancient prejudices, and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted of the protection of Great Britain, without considering that her motive was *interest* not *attachment;* that she did not protect us from our *enemies* on *our account*, but from *her enemies* on *her own account*, from those who had no quarrel with us on any *other account*, and who will always be our enemies on the *same account*. Let Britain wave her preten-

sions to the continent, or the continent throw off the dependence, and we should be at peace with France and Spain were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover last war, ought to warn us against connections.

It has lately been asserted in Parliament, that the colonies have no relation to each other but through the parent country, i. e. that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister colonies by the way of England; this is certainly a very round-about way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enemyship, if I may so call it. France and Spain never were, nor perhaps never will be, our enemies as *Americans*, but as our being the *subjects of Great Britain.*

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war on their families: wherefore the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach; but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase *parent* or *mother country* hath been jesuitically adopted by the king and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty in *every part* of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

In this extensive quarter of the globe, we forget the narrow limits of three hundred and sixty miles, (the extent of England) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European Christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount the force of local prejudice, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the world. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes, will naturally associate with his fellow-parishioner, because their interests in many cases will be common, and distinguish him by the name of *neighbour;* if he meet him but a few miles from home, he salutes him by the name of *townsman;* if he travel out of the county, and meet him in any other, he forgets the minor divisions of street and town, and calls him *countryman*, i. e. *countyman;* but if in their foreign excursions they should

associate in France, or any other part of *Europe*, their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of *Englishman*. And by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are *countrymen;* for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on the larger scale, which the divisions of street, town, and country, do on the smaller ones: distinctions too limited for continental minds. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province, are of English descent. Wherefore I reprobate the phrase of parent or mother country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow, and ungenerous.

But admitting that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing. Britain being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title; and to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first king of England of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the Peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the colonies; that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world. But this is mere presumption: the fate of war is uncertain: neither do the expressions mean any thing: for this continent never would suffer itself to be drained of inhabitants, to support the British arms in either Asia, Africa, or Europe.

Besides, what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is the interest of all Europe to have America a *free port*. Her trade will always be a protection, and her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation, to shew a single advantage this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain; I repeat the challenge, not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for, buy them where you will.

But the injuries and disadvantages we sustain by that connection, are without number; and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instructs us to renounce the alliance, because any submission to, or dependence on, Great

Britain, tends to involve this continent in European wars and quarrels, and sets us at variance with nations, who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do, while by her dependence on Britain she is made the makeweight in the scale of British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, *because of her connection with Great Britain.* The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now, will be wishing for a separation then, because neutrality, in that case, would be a safer convoy than a man of war. Every thing that is right or natural pleads for a separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof, that the authority of the one over the other was never the design of Heaven. The time, likewise, at which the continent was discovered, adds to the weight of the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled increases the force of it. The reformation was preceded by the discovery of America, as if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety.

The authority of Great Britain over this continent is a form of government, which sooner or later must have an end: and a serious mind can draw no true pleasure by looking forward, under the painful and positive conviction, that what he calls "the present constitution" is merely temporary. As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that *this government* is not sufficiently lasting to ensure any thing which we may bequeath to posterity: and by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it, otherwise we use them meanly and pitifully. In order to discover the line of our duty rightly, we should take our children in our hands, and fix our station a few years farther into life; that eminence will present a prospect which a few present fears and prejudices conceal from our sight.

Though I would carefully avoid giving unnecessary

offence, yet I am inclined to believe, that all those who espouse the doctrine of reconciliation, may be included within the following descriptions. Interested men, who are not to be trusted; weak men, who *cannot* see; prejudiced men, who *will not* see; and a certain set of moderate men, who think better of the European world than it deserves; and this last class, by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this continent than all the other three.

It is the good fortune of many to live distant from the scene of sorrow; the evil is not sufficiently brought to *their* doors to make *them* feel the precariousness with which all American property is possessed. But let our imaginations transport us for a few moments to Boston; that seat of wretchedness will teach us wisdom, and instruct us for ever to renounce a power in whom we can have no trust: the inhabitants of that unfortunate city, who but a few months ago were in ease and affluence, have now, no other alternative than to stay and starve, or turn out to beg. Endangered by the fire of their friends if they continue within the city, and plundered by the soldiery if they leave it. In their present condition they are prisoners without the hope of redemption, and in a general attack for their relief, they would be exposed to the fury of both armies.

Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offences of Britain, and still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, "*Come, come, we shall be friends again for all this.*" But examine the passions and feelings of mankind, bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me, whether you can hereafter love, honour, and faithfully serve the power which hath carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then you are only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon posterity. Your future connexion with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honour, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse more wretched than the first. But if you say you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, Hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or child by their hands, and you yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you a judge of those who have? But if you have, and still can shake hands with the

murderers, then you are unworthy the name of husband, father, friend, or lover; and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, by trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which we should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it. I mean not to exhibit horror for the purpose of provoking revenge, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. It is not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she do not conquer herself by delay and timidity. The present winter is worth an age, if rightly employed, but if neglected, the whole continent will partake of the misfortune; and there is no punishment which that man will not deserve, be he who or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

It is repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things, to all examples of former ages, to suppose that this continent can longer remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain does not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan short of separation, which can promise the continent a year's security. Reconciliation is *now* a fallacious dream. Nature has deserted the connection, and art cannot supply her place: for as Milton wisely expresses, "Never can true reconcilement grow, where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep."

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and only tended to convince us, that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in kings, more than repeated petitioning—and nothing hath contributed more than that very measure to make the kings of Europe absolute; witness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore, since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake, let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting of throats, under the violated, unmeaning names of parent and child.

To say, they will never attempt it again, is idle and visionary; we thought so at the repeal of the Stamp Act, yet a year or two undeceived us: as well may we suppose that

nations, which have been once defeated, will never renew the quarrel.

As to government matters, it is not in the power of Britain to do this Continent justice: the business of it will soon be too weighty and intricate to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience, by a power so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which when obtained, requires five or six more to explain it, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness:—there was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands, not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something very absurd in supposing a Continent to be perpetually governed by an Island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet; and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverse the common order of nature, it is evident they belong to different systems; England to Europe; America to itself.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment, to espouse the doctrine of separation and independence. I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded, that it is the true interest of the Continent to be so; that every thing short of *that* is merely patch-work, that it can afford no lasting felicity, that it is leaving the sword to our children, and slinking back at a time, when a little more, a little farther, would have rendered the Continent the glory of the earth.

As Britain hath not manifested the least inclination towards a compromise, we may be assured that no terms can be obtained worthy the acceptance of the Continent, or any ways equal to the expence of blood and treasure we have been already put to.

The object contended for ought always to bear some just proportion to the expence. The removal of North, or the whole detestable junto, is a matter unworthy the millions we have expended. A temporary stoppage of trade was an inconvenience which would have sufficiently balanced the repeal of all the acts complained of, had such repeals been obtained: but if the whole Continent must take up arms, if every man must be a soldier, it is scarcely worth our while

to fight against a contemptible Ministry only. Dearly, dearly do we pay for the repeal of the acts, if that is all we fight for; for in a just estimation, it is as great a folly to pay a Bunker's-hill price for law as for land. As I have always considered the Independence of the Continent as an event which sooner or later must arise, so from the late rapid progress of the Continent to maturity, the event could not be far off. Wherefore, on the breaking out of hostilities, it was not worth while to have disputed a matter which time would have finally redressed, unless we meant to be in earnest; otherwise it is like wasting an estate on a suit at law, to regulate the trespasses of a tenant, whose lease is just expiring. No man was a warmer wisher for reconciliation than myself, before the fatal nineteenth* of April, 1775, but the moment the event of that day was made known, I rejected the hardened, sullen-tempered Pharaoh of England for ever, and disdained the wretch, that with the pretended title of Father of his People, can unfeelingly hear of their slaughter, and composedly sleep with their blood upon his soul.

But admitting that matters were now made up, what would be the event? I answer the ruin of the Continent. And that for several reasons.

*First.*—The powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the King, he will have a negative over the whole legislation of this Continent. And as he hath shewn himself such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for arbitrary power, is he, or is he not, a proper man to say to these Colonies, "*You shall make no Laws but what I please!*" And is there any inhabitant in America so ignorant as not to know, that according to what is called the *present Constitution*, this Continent can make no Laws but what the King gives leave to: and is there any man so unwise, as not to see (considering what has happened) he will suffer no law to be made here, but such as suits *his* purpose? We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made in England. After matters are made up (as it is called,) can there be any doubt, but the whole power of the Crown will be exerted to keep this Continent as low and as humble as possible? Instead of going forward, we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarrelling, or ridiculously petitioning. We

* Lexington.

are already greater than the King wishes us to be, and will he not endeavour to make us less? To bring the matter to one point; is the power who is jealous of our prosperity, a proper power to govern us? Whoever says *no* to this question is an *independent;* for independency means no more than whether we shall make our own laws, or whether the King (the greatest enemy this Continent hath or can have) shall tell us, "There shall be no Laws but such as I like."

But the King, you will say, has a negative in England; the People there can make no laws without his consent. In point of right and good order, there is something very ridiculous, that a youth of twenty-one (which hath often happened) shall say to several millions of people, older and wiser than himself,—I forbid this or that act of yours to be law. But in this place I decline this sort of reply, though I will never cease to expose the absurdity of it, and only answer, that England being the King's residence, and America not so, makes quite another case. The King's negative *here* is ten times more dangerous and fatal than it can be in England; for *there* he will scarcely refuse his consent to a bill for putting England into as strong a state of defence as possible, and in America he would never suffer such a bill to be passed.

America is only a secondary object in the system of British politics. England consults the good of this country no farther than it answers her own purpose. Wherefore her own interest leads her to suppress the growth of *ours* in every case which doth not promote her advantage, or in the least interfere with it. A pretty state we should soon be in under such a second-hand Government, considering what has happened! Men do not change from enemies to friends, by the alteration of a name: and in order to shew that reconciliation *now* is a dangerous doctrine, I affirm, *that it would be policy in the King at this time to repeal the Acts, for the sake of reinstating himself in the Government of the Provinces;* in order that he may accomplish by craft and subtlety, in the long-run, what he cannot do by force and violence in the short one. Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related.

*Secondly.*—That as even the best terms which we can expect to obtain, can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of Government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the colonies come of age, so the general face and state of things, in the interim, will be unsettled and unpromising. Emigrants of property will not choose to come to a country whose form of Government

hangs but by a thread, and who is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance, and numbers of the present inhabitants would lay hold of the interval to dispose of their effects, and quit the Continent.

But the most powerful of all arguments, is, that nothing but Independence, *i. e.* a Continental Form of Government, can keep the peace of the Continent, and preserve it inviolate from Civil Wars. I dread the event of a reconciliation with Britain now, as it is more than probable that it will be followed by a revolt somewhere or other; the consequences of which may be far more fatal than all the malice of Britain.

Thousands are already ruined by British barbarity! thousands more will probably suffer the same fate! Those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. All they *now* possess is Liberty; what they before enjoyed is sacrificed to its service; and having nothing more to lose, they disdain submission. Besides, the general temper of the Colonies towards a British Government, will be like that of a youth who is nearly out of his time; they will care very little about her. And a Government which cannot preserve the peace, is no Government at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing; and pray what is it Britain can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil tumult break out the very day after reconciliation? I have heard some men say, many of whom, I believe, spoke without thinking, that they dreaded an Independence, fearing it would produce Civil Wars. It is but seldom that our first thoughts are truly correct, and that is the case here; for there are ten times more to dread from a patched-up connection, than from Independence. I make the sufferer's case my own, and I protest, that were I driven from house and home, my property destroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that, as a man, sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby.

The Colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to Continental Government, as is sufficient to make every reasonable person easy and happy on that head. No man can assign the least pretence for his fears, on any other ground than such as are truly childish and ridiculous, viz. that one colony will be striving for superiority over another.

Where there are no distinctions there can be no superiority: perfect equality affords no temptation. The Repub-

lies of Europe are all, and we may say always, at Peace. Holland and Switzerland are without wars, foreign and domestic: Monarchical Governments, it is true, are never long at rest; the Crown itself is a temptation to enterprising *ruffians* at *home;* and that degree of pride and insolence, ever attendant on Regal Authority, swells into a rupture with foreign powers, in instances where a Republican Government, by being formed on more natural principles, would negociate the mistake.

If there is any true cause of fear respecting Independence, it is because no plan is yet laid down: men do not see their way out. Wherefore, as an opening to that business, I offer the following hints; at the same time modestly affirming, that I have no other opinion of them myself, than that they may be the means of giving rise to something better. Could the straggling thoughts of individuals be collected, they would frequently form materials for wise and able men to improve into useful matter.

Let the Assemblies be annual, with a President only. The Representation more equal; their business wholly domestic, and subject to the authority of a Continental Congress.

Let each Colony be divided into six, eight, or ten convenient districts, each district to send a proper number of Delegates to Congress, so that each Colony send at least thirty. The whole number at Congress will be at least 390. Each Congress to sit *** and to choose a President by the following method: When the Delegates are met, let a Colony be taken from the whole thirteen Colonies by lot; after which let the whole Congress choose, by ballot, a President from out of the Delegates of *that* Province. In the next Congress, let a Colony be taken by lot from twelve only, omitting that Colony from which the President was taken in the former Congress, so proceeding on till the whole thirteen shall have had their proper rotation. And in order that nothing may pass into a law, but what is satisfactorily just, not less than three-fifths of the Congress to be called a majority. He that will promote discord under a Government so equally formed as this, would have joined Lucifer in his revolt.

But as there is a peculiar delicacy, from whom, and in what manner this business must first arise; and as it seems most agreeable and consistent that it should come from some intermediate body between the governed and the governors, that is, between the Congress and the People, let a CONTI-

NENTAL CONFERENCE be held, in the following manner, and for the following purpose:—

A Committee of twenty-six members of Congress, viz. two for each County. Two Members from each House of Assembly or Provincial Convention; and five Representatives of the People at large, to be chosen in the capital city or town of each Province, for and in behalf of the whole Province, by as many qualified voters as shall think proper to attend from all parts of the Province for that purpose; or, if more convenient, the Representatives may be chosen in two or three of the most populous parts thereof. In this Conference, thus assembled, will be united the two grand principles of business, *knowledge* and *power*. The Members of Congress, Assemblies or Conventions, by having had experience in National concerns, will be able and useful counsellors; and the whole, empowered by the People, will have a truly legal authority.

The conferring Members being met, let their business be to frame a CONTINENTAL CHARTER, or Charter of the United Colonies, answering to what is called the Magna Charta of England; fixing the number and manner of choosing Members of Congress, Members of Assembly, with their date of sitting, and drawing the line of business and jurisdiction between them; always remembering, that our strength is continental, not provincial; securing freedom and property to all men; and, above all things, the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; with such other matter as is necessary for a Charter to contain. Immediately after which, the said Conference to dissolve, and the bodies which shall be chosen conformable to the said Charter to be the Legislators and Governors of this Continent for the time being: whose peace and happiness may God preserve! *Amen.*

Should any body of men be hereafter delegated for this or some similar purpose, I offer them the following extract from that wise observer on Governments, *Dragonetti:* "The "science," says he, "of the politician consists in fixing the "true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would "deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a Mode "of Government that contained the greatest sum of individual "happiness, with the least national expence."—*Dragonetti on Virtue and Rewards.*

But where, some say, is the King of America? I will tell you, friend, he reigns above, and does not make havoc of mankind, like the Royal Brute of Britain. Yet that we

may not appear to be defective even in earthly honours, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the Charter; let it be brought forth, placed on the Divine Law, the Word of God: let a crown be placed thereon, by which the world may know that so far we approve of Monarchy, that in America, THE LAW IS KING. For as in absolute Governments the King is Law, so in free countries the Law *ought* to be King; and there ought to be no other. But lest any ill use should afterwards arise, let the Crown, at the conclusion of the ceremony, be demolished, and scattered among the People, whose right it is.

A Government of our own is our natural right; and when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance. If we omit it now, some Massaniello* may hereafter arise; who laying hold of popular disquietudes, may collect together the desperate and discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of Government, may sweep away the liberties of the Continent like a deluge. Should the Government of America return again to the hands of Britain, the tottering situation of things will be a temptation for some desperate Adventurer to try his fortune; and in such a case, what relief can Britain give? Ere she could hear the news, the fatal business might be done; and ourselves suffering, like the wretched Britons, under the oppression of the Conqueror. Ye that oppose Independence now, ye know not what ye do; ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny.

There are thousands and tens of thousands, who would think it glorious to expel from the Continent that barbarous and hellish power, which hath stirred up the Indians and Negroes to destroy us; the cruelty hath a double guilt, it is dealing brutally by us, and treacherously by them.

To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections, wounded through a thousand pores, instruct us to detest, is madness and folly. Every day wears out the little remains of kindred between

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* Thomas Aniello, otherwise Massaniello, a fisherman of Naples, who, after spiriting up his countrymen in the public market-place, against the oppression of the Spaniards, to whom the place was then subject, prompted them to revolt, and in the space of a day became King.

us and them, and can there be any reason to hope, that as the relationship expires, the affection will increase; or that we shall agree better, when we have ten times more and greater concerns to quarrel over than ever?

Ye that tell us of harmony and reconciliation, can ye restore to us the time that is past? Can you give to prostitution its former innocence? Neither can you reconcile Britain and America. The last cord now is broken, the People of England are presenting Addresses against us. There are injuries which nature cannot forgive; she would cease to be nature if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the Continent forgive the murderers of Britain. The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes. They are the guardians of his image in our hearts. They distinguish us from the herd of common animals. The social compact would dissolve, and justice be extirpated the earth, or have only a casual existence, were we callous to the touches of affection. The robber and the murderer would often escape unpunished, did not the injuries which our temper sustains, provoke us into justice.

O ye that love mankind; ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth; every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia and Africa have long expelled her, Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O receive the fugitive! and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

*On the present Ability of America, with some Miscellaneous Reflections.*

I HAVE never met with a man, either in England or America, who hath not confessed his opinion, that a separation between the two countries would take place one time or other: and there is no instance in which we have shewn less judgment, than in endeavouring to describe, what we call the ripeness or fitness of the Continent for Independence.

As all men allow the measure, and vary only in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavour, if possible, to find out the *very* time. But we need not go far, the inquiry ceases at once, for the *time hath found us.* The general concurrence, the glorious union of all things prove the fact.

It is not in numbers, but in unity, that our great strength lies; yet our present numbers are sufficient to repel the force of all the world. The Continent hath, at this time, the largest body of armed and disciplined men of any power under Heaven, and is just arrived at that pitch of strength in which no single colony is able to support itself, and the whole, when united, can accomplish the matter; and either more or less, than this might be fatal in its effects. Our land force is already sufficient, and as to naval affairs, we cannot be insensible that Britain would never suffer an American man of war to be built, while the Continent remained in her hands, wherefore we should be no forwarder an hundred years hence in that branch, than we are now; but the truth is, we shall be less so, because the timber of the country is every day diminishing, and that which will remain at last, will be far off and difficult to procure.

Were the Continent crowded with inhabitants, her sufferings under the present circumstances would be intolerable. The more sea-port towns we had, the more should we have both to defend and to lose. Our present numbers are so happily proportioned to our wants, that no man need to be idle. The diminution of trade affords an army, and the necessities of an army create a new trade.

Debts we have none, and whatever we may contract on this account, will serve as a glorious memento of our virtue. Can we but leave posterity with a settled form of Government, an independent Constitution of its own, the purchase at any price will be cheap. But to expend millions for the sake of getting a few vile acts repealed, and routing the present ministry only, is unworthy the charge, is using posterity with the utmost cruelty; because it is leaving them the great work to do, and a debt upon their backs, from which they derive no advantage. Such a thought is unworthy a man of honour, and is the true characteristic of a narrow heart, and a pedling politician.

The debt we may contract doth not deserve our regard, if the work be but accomplished. No nation ought to be without a debt; a National Debt is a National Bond, and when it bears no interest, is in no case a grievance. Britain is oppressed with a debt of upwards of one hundred and fifty millions sterling, for which she pays upwards of four millions interest. As a compensation for the debt, she has a large navy; America is without a debt, and without a navy; yet for the twentieth part of the English National Debt, could have a navy as large again. The Navy of England is not worth more at this time, than three millions and a half sterling.

The first and second editions of this pamphlet were published without the following calculations, which are now given as proof that the above estimation of the navy is a just one. *See Entic's Naval History, Introduction*, p. 56.

The charge of building a ship of each rate, and furnishing her with masts, yards, sails, and rigging, together with a proportion of eight month's boatswain's and carpenter's sea stores, as calculated by Mr. Burchett, Secretary to the Navy, is as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| For a ship of | 100 guns - - | £35,553 |
| | 90 - - - - | 29,886 |
| | 80 - - - - | 23,638 |
| | 70 - - - - | 17,785 |
| | 60 - - - - | 14,197 |
| | 50 - - - - | 10,606 |
| | 40 - - - - | 7,855 |
| | 30 - - - - | 5,846 |
| | 20 - - - - | 3,710 |

And from hence it is easy to sum up the value, or cost rather, of the whole British navy, which in the year 1757,

when it was at its greatest glory, consisted of the following ships and guns:

| | | £ | £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 100 | 35,553 | 213,318 |
| 12 | 90 | 29,886 | 358,632 |
| 12 | 80 | 23,638 | 283,656 |
| 43 | 70 | 17,785 | 764,755 |
| 35 | 60 | 14,197 | 496,895 |
| 40 | 50 | 10,606 | 424,240 |
| 45 | 40 | 7,758 | 340,110 |
| 58 | 20 | 3,710 | 251,180 |
| 85 sloops, bombs, and fire-ships, one with another | | 2,000 | 170,000 |
| | | Cost | 3,266,786 |
| | | Remains for guns | 233,214 |
| | | | £3,500,000 |

No country on the globe is so happily situated, or so internally capable of raising a fleet, as America. Tar, timber, iron, and cordage, are her natural produce. We need go abroad for nothing. Whereas the Dutch, who make large profits by hiring out their ships of war to the Spaniards and Portuguese, are obliged to import most of the materials they use. We ought to view the building a fleet as an article of commerce, it being the natural manufactory of this country. It is the best money we can lay out. A navy, when finished, is worth more than it cost; and is that nice point in national policy, in which commerce and protection are united. Let us build; if we want them not we can sell; and by that means replace our paper currency with ready gold and silver.

In point of manning a fleet, people in general run into great errors; it is not necessary that one fourth part should be sailors. The Terrible privateer, Captain Death, stood the hottest engagement of any ship last war, yet had not twenty sailors on board, though her complement of men was upwards of two hundred. A few able and social sailors will soon instruct a sufficient number of active landmen in the common work of a ship. Wherefore we never can be more capable to begin on maritime matters than

now, while our timber is standing, our fisheries blocked up, and our sailors and shipwrights out of employ. Men of war of seventy and eighty guns were built forty years ago in New England, and why not the same now? Ship building is America's greatest pride, and in which she will in time excel the whole world. The great empires of the east are mostly inland, and consequently excluded from the possibility of rivalling her. Africa is in a state of barbarism, and no power in Europe hath either such an extent of coast, or such an internal supply of materials. Where nature hath given the one, she has withheld the other: to America only hath she been liberal in both. The vast empire of Russia is almost shut out from the sea; wherefore, her boundless forests, her tar, iron, and cordage, are only articles of commerce.

In point of safety, ought we to be without a fleet? We are not the little people now, which we were sixty years ago; at that time we might have trusted our property in the street, or field rather, and slept securely without locks or bolts to our doors or windows. The case now is altered, and our methods of defence ought to improve with our increase of property. A common pirate, twelve months ago, might have come up the Delaware, and laid the city of Philadelphia under instant contribution for what sum he pleased, and the same might have happened to other places. Nay, any daring fellow, in a brig of fourteen or sixteen guns, might have robbed the whole continent, and carried off half a million of money. These are circumstances which demand our attention, and point out the necessity of naval protection.

Some, perhaps, will say, that after we have made it up with Britain, she will protect us. Can we be so unwise as to mean that she shall keep a navy in our harbours for that purpose? Common sense will tell us, that the power which hath endeavoured to subdue us, is of all others the most improper to defend us. Conquest may be effected under the pretence of friendship; and ourselves, after a long and brave resistance, be at last cheated into slavery. And if her ships are not to be admitted into our harbours, I would ask, how is she to protect us? A navy three or four thousand miles off can be of little use, and, on sudden emergencies, none at all. Wherefore, if we must hereafter protect ourselves, why not do it for ourselves? Why do it for another?

The English list of ships of war is long and formidable,

but not a tenth part of them are at any one time fit for service; numbers of them not in being, yet their names are pompously continued in the list, if only a plank be left of the ship; and not a fifth part of such as are fit for service can be spared on any one station at one time. The East and West Indies, Mediterranean, Africa, and other parts, over which Britain extends her claim, make large demands upon her navy. From a mixture of prejudice and inattention, we have contracted a false notion respecting the navy of England, and have talked as if we should have the whole of it to encounter at once, and for that reason supposed, that we must have one as large; which not being instantly practicable, has been made use of by a set of disguised Tories, to discourage our beginning thereon. Nothing can be farther from truth than this; for if America had only a twentieth part of the naval force of Britain, she would be by far an overmatch for her, because, as we neither have, nor claim any foreign dominion, our own force will be employed on our own coast, where we should, in the long run, have two to one the advantage of those who had three or four thousand miles to sail over before they could attack us, and the same distance to return in order to refit and recruit. And although Britain, by her fleet, hath a check over our trade to Europe, we have as large a one over her trade to the West Indies, which by laying in the neighbourhood of the continent, is entirely at its mercy.

Some method might be fallen on to keep up a naval force in the time of peace, if we should not judge it necessary to support a constant navy. If premiums were to be given to merchants, to build and employ in their service, ships mounted with twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty guns (the premiums to be in proportion to the loss of bulk to the merchants) fifty or sixty of those ships, with a few guardships on constant duty, would keep up a sufficient navy, and that without burdening ourselves with the evil so loudly complained of in England, of suffering their fleet, in time of peace, to lie rotting in the docks. To unite the sinews of commerce and defence is sound policy; for when our strength and our riches play into each other's hand, we need fear no external enemy.

In almost every article of defence we abound. Hemp flourishes even to rankness, so that we need not want cordage. Our iron is superior to that of other countries. Our small arms equal to any in the world. Cannon we can cast at pleasure. Saltpetre and gunpowder we are every

day producing. Our knowledge is hourly improving. Resolution is our inherent character, and courage hath never yet forsaken us. Wherefore what is it we want? Why is it that we hesitate? From Britain we expect nothing but ruin. If she is once admitted to the government of America again, this continent will not be worth living in. Jealousies will be always arising; insurrections will be constantly happening; and who will go forth to quell them? Who will venture his life to reduce his own countrymen to a foreign obedience? The difference between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, respecting some unlocated lands, shews the insignificance of a British Government, and fully proves, that nothing but continental authority can regulate continental matters.

Another reason why the present time is preferable to all others, is, that the fewer our numbers are, the more land there is yet unoccupied, which, instead of being lavished by the King on his worthless dependants, may be hereafter applied, not only to the discharge of the present debt, but to the constant support of Government. No Nation under heaven hath such an advantage as this.

The infant state of the colonies, as it is called, so far from being against, is an argument in favour of independence. We are sufficiently numerous, and were we more so, we might be less united. It is a matter worthy of observation, that the more a country is peopled, the smaller their armies are. In military numbers the ancients far exceeded the moderns; and the reason is evident, for trade being the consequence of population, men become too much absorbed thereby to attend to any thing else. Commerce diminishes the spirit both of patriotism and military defence: and history sufficiently informs us, that the bravest atchievements were always accomplished in the non-age of a Nation. With the increase of commerce, England hath lost its spirit. The city of London, notwithstanding its numbers, submits to continued insults with the patience of a coward. The more men have to lose, the less willing they are to venture. The rich are in general slaves to fear, and submit to courtly power with the trembling duplicity of a spaniel.

Youth is the seed-time of good habits, as well in Nations as in individuals. It might be difficult, if not impossible, to form the continent into one Government half a century hence. The vast variety of interests, occasioned by the increase of trade and population, would create confusion.

Colony would be against colony. Each being able, might scorn each other's assistance; and while the proud and foolish gloried in their little distinctions, the wise would lament that the union had not been formed before. Wherefore, the *present time* is the *true time* for establishing it. The intimacy which is contracted in infancy, and the friendship which is formed in misfortune, are of all others the most lasting and honourable. Our present union is marked with both these characters: we are young, and we have been distressed; but our concord hath withstood our troubles, and fixes a memorable era for posterity to glory in.

The present time, likewise, is that peculiar time which never happens to a Nation but once; viz. the time of forming itself into a Government. Most Nations have let slip the opportunity, and by that means have been compelled to receive laws from their conquerors, instead of making laws for themselves. First, they had a king, and then a form of Government; whereas, the articles or charter of Government should be formed first, and men delegated to execute them afterwards: but from the errors of other Nations, let us learn wisdom, and lay hold of the present opportunity—*To begin Government at the right end.*

When William the Conqueror subdued England, he gave them law at the point of the sword; and until we consent, that the seat of Government in America be legally and authoritatively occupied, we shall be in danger of having it filled by some fortunate ruffian, who may treat us in the same manner; and then, Where will be our freedom? Where our property?

As to religion, I hold it to be the indispensable duty of all Governments to protect all conscientious professors thereof, and I know of no other business which Government hath to do therewith. Let a man throw aside that narrowness of soul, that selfishness of principle, which the niggards of all professions are so unwilling to part with, and he will be at once delivered of his fears on that head. Suspicion is the companion of mean souls, and the bane of all good society. For myself, I fully and conscientiously believe, that it is the will of the Almighty that there should be a diversity of religious opinions among us; it affords a larger field for our Christian kindness. Were we all of one way of thinking, our religious dispositions would want matter for probation; and on this liberal principle, I look on the various denominations among us to be like children of the same family, differing only in what is called their Christian names.

In page thirty-two I threw out a few thoughts on the propriety of a Continental Charter, (for I only presume to offer hints, not plans) and in this place I take the liberty of re-mentioning the subject, by observing, that a charter is to be understood as a bond of solemn obligation, which the whole enters into to support the right of every separate part, whether of religion, personal freedom, or property. A firm bargain and a right reckoning make long friends.

In a former page I likewise mentioned the necessity of a large and equal representation, and there is no political matter which more deserves our attention. A small number of electors, or a small number of representatives, are equally dangerous: but if the number of the representatives be not only small, but unequal, the danger is increased. As an instance of this, I mention the following: When the Associators' petition was before the House of Assembly of Pennsylvania, twenty-eight members only were present; all the Bucks county members, being eight, voted against it, and had seven of the Chester members done the same, this whole Province had been governed by two counties only, and this danger it is always exposed to. The unwarrantable stretch, likewise, which that House made in their last sitting, to gain an undue authority over the Delegates of that Province, ought to warn the people at large, how they trust power out of their own hands. A set of instructions for the Delegates were put together, which, in point of sense and business, would have dishonoured a school-boy; and after being approved by a *few*, a *very few*, without doors, were carried into the House, and there passed *in behalf of the whole Colony;* whereas, did the whole Colony know with what ill-will that House hath entered on some necessary public measures, they would not hesitate a moment to think them unworthy of such a trust.

Immediate necessity makes many things convenient, which, if continued, would grow into oppressions. Expedience and right are different things. When the calamities of America required a consultation, there was no method so ready, or at that time so proper, as to appoint persons from the several Houses of Assembly for that purpose; and the wisdom with which they have proceeded, hath preserved this continent from ruin. But as it is more than probable that we shall never be without a CONGRESS, every well-wisher to good order must own, that the mode for choosing members of that body, deserves consideration,

And I put it as a question to those who make a study of mankind, whether *representation* and *election* are not too great a power for one and the same body of men to possess? When we are planning for posterity, we ought to remember, that virtue is not hereditary.

It is from our enemies that we often gain excellent maxims, and are frequently surprised into reason by their mistakes. Mr. Cornwall, one of the Lords of the Treasury, treated the petition of the New York Assembly with contempt, because *that* House, he said, consisted but of twenty-six members: which trifling number, he argued, could not with decency be put for the whole. We thank him for his involuntary honesty.*

To conclude; however strange it may appear to some, or however unwilling they may be to think so, matters not; but many strong and striking reasons may be given, to shew that nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously, as an open and determined Declaration for Independence. Some of which are:

*First.* It is the custom of Nations, when any two are at war, for some other powers, not engaged in the quarrel, to step in as mediators, and bring about the preliminaries of a peace; but while America calls herself the subjects of Great Britain, no power, however well disposed she may be, can offer her mediation. Wherefore, in our present state, we may quarrel on for ever.

*Secondly.* It is unreasonable to suppose that France or Spain will give us any kind assistance, if we mean only to make use of that assistance for the purpose of repairing the breach, and strengthening the connection between Britain and America, because those powers would be sufferers by the consequences.

*Thirdly.* While we profess ourselves the subjects of Britain, we must, in the eye of foreign nations, be considered as rebels. The precedent is somewhat dangerous to *their peace*, for men to be in arms under the name of subjects; we, on the spot, can solve the paradox; but to

* Those who would fully understand of what great consequence a large and equal Representation is to a State, should read Burgh's Political Disquisitions.

unite resistance and subjection, requires an idea much too refined for common understandings.

*Fourthly.* Were a manifesto to be published, and dispatched to foreign Courts, setting forth the miseries we have endured, and the peaceable methods we have ineffectually used for redress; declaring, at the same time, that not being able any longer to live happily or safely under the cruel disposition of the British Court, we have been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connection with her; at the same time assuring all such Courts of our peaceable disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them; such a memorial would produce more good effects to this continent, than if a ship were freighted with petitions to Britain.

Under our present denomination of British subjects, we can neither be received nor heard abroad; the custom of all Courts is against us, and will be so, until, by an independence, we take rank with other nations.

These proceedings may at first appear strange and difficult; but, like other steps which we have already passed over, will in a little time become familiar and agreeable; and until an independence is declared, the continent will feel itself like a man who continues putting off some unpleasant business from day to day, yet knows it must be done, hates to set about it, wishes it over, and is continually haunted with the thoughts of its necessity.

# APPENDIX.

SINCE the publication of the first edition of this pamphlet, or rather on the same day on which it came out, the King's Speech made its appearance in this city. Had the spirit of prophecy directed the birth of this production, it could not have brought it forth at a more seasonable juncture, or a more necessary time. The bloody-mindedness of the one, shews the necessity of pursuing the doctrine of the other. Men read by way of revenge. And the Speech, instead of terrifying, prepared a way for the manly principles of Independence.

Ceremony, and even silence, from whatever motive they may arise, have a hurtful tendency, when they give the least degree of countenance to base and wicked performances:—wherefore, if this maxim be admitted, it naturally follows, that the King's Speech, as being a piece of FINISHED VILLAINY, deserved, and still deserves, a general execration both by the Congress and the People. Yet, as the domestic tranquillity of a nation depends greatly on the *chastity* of what may properly be called NATIONAL MANNERS, it is often better to pass some things over in silent disdain, than to make use of such new methods of dislike, as might introduce the least innovation on that guardian of our peace, and safety. And, perhaps, it is chiefly owing to this prudent delicacy, that the King's speech hath not, before now, suffered a public execration. The speech, if it may be called one, is nothing better than a wilful, audacious libel against the truth, the common good, and the existence of mankind; and is a formal and pompous method of offering up human sacrifices to the pride of tyrants. But this general massacre of mankind is one of the privileges, and the certain consequence of kings; for as *Nature* knows them *not*, they know *not her;* and although they are beings of our *own* creating, they know not *us*, and are become the gods of their creators. The speech hath one good quality, which is, that it is not calculated to deceive; neither can we, even if we would, be deceived by it; brutality and tyranny appear on the face of

it. It leaves us at no loss: and every line convinces, even in the moment of reading, that he, who hunts the woods for prey, the naked and untutored Indian, is less a savage than the King of Britain.

Sir John Dalrymple, the putative father of a whining, jesuitical piece, fallaciously called, "*The Address of the People of* ENGLAND *to the Inhabitants of* AMERICA," hath, perhaps, from a vain supposition that the People *here* were to be frightened at the pomp and description of a king, given (though very unwisely on his part) the real character of the present one. "But," says this writer, "if you are "inclined to pay compliments to an administration, which "we do not complain of," (meaning the Marquis of Rockingham's, at the repeal of the Stamp Act) "it is very unfair "in you to withhold them from that Prince, *by whose* NOD "ALONE *they were permitted to do any thing.*" This is Toryism with a witness! Here is idolatry even without a mask; and he who can calmly hear and digest such doctrine, hath forfeited his claim to rationality—an apostate from the order of manhood; and ought to be considered—as one, who hath not only given up the proper dignity of man, but sunk himself beneath the rank of animals, and contemptibly crawls through the world like a worm.

It is *now* the interest of America to provide for herself. She hath already a large and young family, whom it is more her duty to take care of, than to be granting away her property, to support a power who is become a reproach to the names of men and Christians.—YE, whose office it is to watch over the morals of a Nation, of whatsoever sect or denomination ye are of, as well as ye, who are more immediately the guardians of the public liberty, if ye wish to preserve your native country uncontaminated by European corruption, ye must in secret wish a separation. But leaving the moral part to private reflection, I shall chiefly confine my further remarks to the following heads:

*First.* That it is the interest of America to be separated from Britain.

*Secondly.* Which is the easiest and most practicable plan, RECONCILIATION OR INDEPENDENCE: with some occasional remarks.

In support of the first, I could, if I judged it proper, produce the opinion of some of the ablest and most experienced men on this continent; and whose sentiments on that head are not yet publicly known. It is in reality a self-evident position; for no nation in a state of foreign depen-

dence limited in its commerce, and cramped and fettered in its legislative powers, can ever arrive at any material eminence. America doth not yet know what opulence is; and although the progress which she hath made stands unparalleled in the history of other nations, it is but childhood, compared with what she would be capable of arriving at, had she, as she ought to have, the legislative power in her own hands. England is, at this time, proudly coveting what would do her no good, were she to accomplish it; and the Continent hesitating on a matter, which will be her final ruin if neglected. It is the commerce and not the conquest of America, by which England is to be benefited; and that would in a great measure continue, were the countries as independent of each other as France and Spain; because, in many articles, neither can go to a better market. But it is the independence of this country on Britain or any other, which is now the main and only object worthy of contention; and which, like all other truths discovered by necessity, will appear clearer and stronger every day.

*First.* Because it will come to that one time or other.

*Secondly.* Because the longer it is delayed, the harder it will be to accomplish.

I have frequently amused myself, both in public and private companies, with silently remarking, the specious errors of those who speak without reflecting. And among the many which I have heard, the following seems the most general, viz. That had this rupture happened forty or fifty years hence, instead of *now*, the Continent would have been more able to have shaken off the dependence. To which I reply that our military ability *at this time*, arises from the experience gained in the last war, and which, in forty or fifty years time would have been totally extinct. The continent would not, by that time, have had a general, or even a military officer left; and we, or those who may succeed us, would have been as ignorant of martial matters as the ancient Indians. And this single position, closely attended to, will unanswerably prove, that the present time is preferable to all others. The argument turns thus: At the conclusion of the last war we had experience, but wanted numbers, and forty or fifty years hence we shall have numbers without experience; wherefore, the proper point of time must be some particular point between the two extremes, in which a sufficiency of the former remains, and a proper increase of the latter is obtained: and that point of time is the present time.

The reader will pardon this digression, as it does not properly come under the head I first set out with, and to which I shall again return by the following position, viz.

Should affairs be patched up with Britain, and she to remain the governing and sovereign power of America, (which, as matters are now circumstanced, is giving up the point entirely) we shall deprive ourselves of the very means of sinking the debt we have or may contract. The value of the back lands, which some of the provinces are clandestinely deprived of, by the unjust extension of the limits of Canada, valued only at five pounds sterling per hundred acres, amount to upwards of twenty-five millions, Pennsylvania currency: and the quit-rents at one penny sterling per acre, or two millions yearly.

It is by the sale of those lands that the debt may be sunk, without burden to any, and the quit rent reserved thereon, will always lessen, and in time will wholly support the yearly expence of Government. It matters not how long the debt is in paying, so that the lands, when sold, be applied to the discharge of it; and for the execution of which, the Congress, for the time being, will be the continental trustees.

I proceed now to the second head, viz. Which is the easiest and most practicable plan, RECONCILIATION or INDEPENDENCE? with some occasional remarks.

He who takes nature for his guide is not easily beaten out of his argument, and on that ground, I answer *generally—that* INDEPENDENCE *being a* SINGLE SIMPLE LINE, *contained within ourselves; and Reconciliation, a matter exceedingly perplexed and complicated, and in which a treacherous, capricious Court is to interfere, gives the answer without a doubt.*

The present state of America is truly alarming to every man who is capable of reflection. Without law, without government, without other mode of power than what is founded on, and granted by courtesy; held together by an unexampled concurrence of sentiment, which is nevertheless subject to change, and which every secret enemy is endeavouring to dissolve. Our present condition is, legislation without law, wisdom without a plan, a constitution without a name; and what is strangely astonishing, perfect independence contending for dependence. The instance is without a precedent; the case never existed before; and who can tell what may be the event? The property of no man is secure in the present unbraced system of things;

the mind of the multitude is left at random; and seeing no fixed object before them, they pursue such as fancy or opinion starts. Nothing is criminal; there is no such thing as treason, wherefore, every one thinks himself at liberty to act as he pleases. The Tories dared not to have assembled offensively, had they known that their lives, by that act, were forfeited to the laws of the State. A line of distinction should be drawn between English soldiers taken in battle, and inhabitants of America taken in arms. The first are prisoners, but the latter traitors. The one forfeits his liberty, the other his head.

Notwithstanding our wisdom, there is a visible feebleness in some of our proceedings which gives encouragement to dissensions. The Continental belt is too loosely buckled; and if something be not done in time, it will be too late to do any thing, and we shall fall into a state, in which neither *Reconciliation* nor *Independence* will be practicable. The Court and its worthless adherents are got at their old game of dividing the Continent; and there are not wanting among us printers, who will be busy in spreading specious falsehoods. The artful and hypocritical letters which appeared, a few months ago, in two of the New York papers, and likewise in two others, are an evidence, that there are men who want either judgment or honesty.

It is easy getting into holes or corners, and talking of reconciliation: but do such men seriously consider, how difficult the task is; and how dangerous it may prove, should the Continent divide thereon? Do they take within their view all the various orders of men, whose situations and circumstances, as well as their own, are to be considered therein? Do they put themselves in the place of the sufferer whose *all* is *already* gone, and of the soldier who hath quitted *all* for the defence of his country? If their ill-judged moderation be suited to their own private situations only, regardless of others, the event will convince them, "that they are reckoning without their host."

Put us, say some, on the footing we were on in sixty-three. To which I answer, the request is not *now* in the power of Britain to comply with, neither will she propose it; but if it were, and even should be granted, I ask, as a reasonable question, By what means is such a corrupt and faithless Court to be kept to its engagements? Another Parliament, nay, even the present, may hereafter repeal the obligation, on the pretence of its being violently obtained, or unwisely granted; and in that case, Where is our redress?

No going to law with Nations; cannon are the barristers of crowns; and the sword, not of justice but of war, decides the suit. To be on the footing of sixty-three, it is not sufficient that the laws only be put on the same state, but that our circumstances, likewise, be put on the same state; our burnt and destroyed towns repaired or built up, our private losses made good, our public debts (contracted for defence) discharged; otherwise, we shall be millions worse than we were at that enviable period. Such a request, had it been complied with a year ago, would have won the heart and soul of the Continent—but it is now too late, "the Rubicon is passed."

Besides, the taking up arms merely to enforce the repeal of a pecuniary law, seems as unwarrantable by the Divine law, and as repugnant to human feelings, as the taking up arms to enforce obedience thereto. The object on either side doth not justify the means; for the lives of men are too valuable to be cast away on such trifles. It is the violence which is done and threatened to our persons; the destruction of our property by an armed force; the invasion of our country by fire and sword, which conscientiously qualifies the use of arms; and the instant in which such a mode of defence became necessary, all subjection to Britain ought to have ceased; and the independency of America should have been considered as dating its era from, and published by *the first musket that was fired against her.* This line is a line of consistency, neither drawn by caprice, nor extended by ambition, but produced by a chain of events, of which the colonies were not the authors.

I shall conclude these remarks with the following timely and well intended hints. We ought to reflect that there are three different ways, by which an independency can hereafter be effected; and that *one* of those *three* will one day or other be the fate of America, viz. By the legal voice of the people in Congress, by a military power, or by a mob. It may not always happen that our soldiers are citizens, and the multitude a body of reasonable men; virtue, as I have already remarked, is not hereditary, neither is it perpetual. Should an independency be brought about by the first of those means, we have every opportunity and every encouragement before us, to form the noblest, purest constitution on the face of the earth. We have it in our power to begin the world over again. A situation, similar the present, hath not happened since the days of Noah till now. The birth-day of a new world is at hand, and a race

of men, perhaps as numerous as all Europe contains, are to receive their portion of freedom from the event of a few months. The reflection is awful—and in this point of view, how trifling, how ridiculous, do the little paltry cavillings of a few weak or interested men appear, when weighed against the business of a world.

Should we neglect the present favourable and inviting period, and an independence be hereafter effected by any other means, we must charge the consequence to ourselves, or to those rather, whose narrow and prejudiced souls are habitually opposing the measure, without either enquiring or reflecting. There are reasons to be given in support of independence, which men should rather privately think of, than be publicly told of. We ought not now to be debating whether we shall be independent or not, but, anxious to accomplish it on a firm, secure, and honourable basis, and uneasy rather that it is not yet began upon. Every day convinces us of its necessity. Even the Tories (if such beings yet remain among us) should, of all men, be the most solicitous to promote it: for, as the appointment of committees at first, protected them from popular rage, so a wise and well established form of government will be the only certain means of continuing it securely to them. *Wherefore*, if they have not virtue enough to be WHIGS, they ought to have prudence enough to wish for Independence.

In short, independence is the only BOND that can tie and keep us together: we shall then see our object, and our ears will be legally shut against the schemes of an intriguing as well as cruel enemy. We shall then, too, be on a proper footing to treat with Britain; for there is reason to conclude, that the pride of that court will be less hurt by treating with the American States for terms of peace, than with those whom she denominates "rebellious subjects," for terms of accommodation. It is our delaying it that encourages her to hope for conquest, and our backwardness tends only to prolong the war. As we have, without any good effect therefrom, withheld our trade to obtain a redress of our grievances, let us *now* try the alternative, by *independently* redressing them ourselves, and then offering to open the trade. The mercantile and reasonable part in England will be still with us, because, peace *with* trade, is preferable to war *without* it; and if this offer be not accepted, other courts may be applied to.

On these grounds I rest the matter. And as no offer hath yet been made to refute the doctrine contained in the for-

mer editions of this pamphlet, it is a negative proof, that either the doctrine cannot be refuted, or, that the party in favour of it are too numerous to be opposed. Wherefore, instead of gazing at each other with suspicious or doubtful curiosity, let each of us hold out to his neighbour the hearty hand of friendship, and unite in drawing a line, which like an act of oblivion, shall bury in forgetfulness every former dissension. Let the names of Whig and Tory be extinct; and let none other be heard among us, than those of *a good citizen, an open and resolute friend, and a virtuous supporter of the* RIGHTS *of* MANKIND, *and of the* FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES OF AMERICA.

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*To the Representatives of the Religious Society of the People called Quakers, or to so many of them as were concerned in publishing a late Piece intituled,* "*The* Ancient Testimony "*and* Principles *of the people called* Quakers *renewed, with* "*respect to the* King *and* Government, *and touching the* "Commotions *now prevailing in these and other parts of* "America, *addressed to the* People *in* England."

THE writer of this is one of those few, who never dishonours religion, either by ridiculing or cavilling at any denomination whatsoever. To God, and not to man, are all men accountable on the score of religion. Wherefore this epistle is not so properly addressed to you, as a religious, but as a political body, dabbling in matters, which the professed quietude of your principles instruct you not to meddle with.

As you have, without a proper authority for so doing, put yourselves in the place of the whole body of the Quakers, so the writer of this, in order to be on an equal rank with yourselves, is under the necesstiy of putting himself in the place of all those who approve the very writings and principles, against which your testimony is directed; and he hath chosen this singular situation, in order that you might discover in him that presumption of character which you cannot see in yourselves. For neither he nor you can have any claim or title to *political representation.*

When men have departed from the right way, it is no wonder that they stumble and fall. And it is evident from the manner in which ye have managed your testimony, that

politics (as a religious body of men) is not your proper walk; however well adapted it might appear to you, it is, nevertheless, a jumble of good and bad put unwisely together, and the conclusion drawn therefrom, both unnatural and unjust.

The two first pages, (and the whole doth not make four) we give you credit for, and expect the same civility from you, because the love and desire of peace is not confined to Quakerism, it is the *natural* as well as the religious wish of all denominations of men. And on this ground, as men labouring to establish an independent constitution of our own, do we exceed all others in our hope, end, and aim. *Our plan is peace for ever.* We are tired of contention with Britain, and can see no real end to it but in final separation. We act consistently, because, for the sake of introducing an endless and uninterrupted peace, do we bear the evils and burdens of the present day. We are endeavouring, and will steadily continue to endeavour, to separate and dissolve a connection, which hath already filled our land with blood; and which, while the name of it remains, will be the fatal cause of future mischiefs to both countries.

We fight neither for revenge nor conquest; neither from pride nor passion; we are not insulting the world with our fleets and armies, nor ravaging the globe for plunder. Beneath the shade of our own vines are we attacked; in our own houses, and in our own land, is the violence committed against us. We view our enemies in the character of highwaymen and housebreakers: and having no defence for ourselves in the civil law, are obliged to punish them by the military one, and apply the sword, in the very case where you have before now applied the halter. Perhaps we feel for the ruined and insulted sufferers in all and every part of the continent, with a degree of tenderness which hath not yet made its way into some of your bosoms. But be ye sure that ye mistake not the cause and ground of your testimony. Call not coldness of soul, religion; nor put the *Bigot* in the place of the *Christian.*

O ye partial ministers of your own acknowledged principles! If the bearing arms be sinful, the first going to war must be more so, by all the difference between wilful attack and unavoidable defence. Wherefore, if ye really preach from conscience, and mean not to make a political hobby-horse of your religion, convince the world thereof, by proclaiming your doctrine to our enemies, *for they likewise bear* ARMS. Give us a proof of your sincerity by publishing it

at St. James's, to the commanders in chief at Boston, to the admirals and captains who are piratically ravaging our coasts, and to all the murdering miscreants who are acting in authority under the Tyrant whom ye profess to serve. Had ye the honest soul of *Barclay*,* ye would preach repentance to *your* King; ye would tell the Despot of his is sins, and warn him of eternal ruin. Ye would not spend your partial invectives against the injured and the insulted only, but, like faithful ministers would cry aloud and *spare none.* Say not that ye are persecuted, neither endeavour to make us the authors of that reproach, which ye are bringing upon yourselves, for we testify unto all men, that we do not complain against ye because ye are *Quakers*, but because ye pretend *to be*, and *are not*, Quakers.

ALAS! it seems by the particular tendency of some part of your testimony, and other parts of your conduct, as if all sin was reduced to, and comprehended in, *the act of bearing arms*, and that by the *people only.* Ye appear to us to have mistaken party for conscience; because the general tenour of your actions wants uniformity; and it is exceedingly difficult to us to give credit to many of your pretended scruples; because we see them made by the same men, who, in the very instant that they are exclaiming against the mammon of this world, are nevertheless hunting after it with a step as steady as time, and an appetite as keen as death.

The quotation which ye have made from Proverbs, in the third page of your testimony, that, when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh "even his enemies to be at "peace with him," is very unwisely chosen on your part; because it amounts to a proof that the Tyrant whom ye are

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* "Thou hast tasted of prosperity and adversity! thou knowest "what it is to be banished thy native country, to be overruled as "well as to rule, and set upon the throne; and being *oppressed*, "thou hast reason to know how hateful the *oppressor* is both to "God and man: If, after all these warnings and advertisements, "thou dost not turn unto the Lord with all thy heart, but forget "him who remembered thee in thy distress, and give up thyself to "follow lust and vanity, surely great will be thy condemnation.— "Against which snare, as well as the temptation of those who may "or do feed thee, and prompt thee to evil, the most excellent and "prevalent remedy will be to apply thyself to that light of Christ "which shineth in thy conscience, and which neither can, nor will "flatter thee, nor suffer thee to be at ease in thy sins."

BARCLAY'S ADDRESS TO CHARLES II.

so desirous of supporting, does *not* please the Lord, otherwise his reign would be in peace.

I now proceed to the latter part of your testimony, and that for which all the foregoing seems only an introduction, viz.

"It hath ever been our judgment and principle, since "we are called to profess the light of Christ Jesus, mani-"fested in our consciences unto this day, that the setting up "and putting down kings and governments, is God's pecu-"liar prerogative for causes best known to himself; and "that is not our business to have any hand or contrivance "therein; nor to be busy-bodies above our station, much "less to plot and contrive the ruin, or overturn of any of "them, but to pray for the king and safety of our nation "and good of all men; that we might live a peaceable "and quiet life, in all godliness and honesty; *under the* "*Government which God is pleased to set over us.*" If these are *really* your principles, why do ye not abide by them? Why do ye not leave that which ye call God's work, to be managed by himself? These very principles instruct you to wait with patience and humility for the event of all public measures, and to receive *that event* as the Divine will towards you. *Wherefore*, what occasion is there for your *political testimony*, if you fully believe what it contains? And therefore publishing it, proves, that either ye do not believe what ye profess, or have not virtue enough to practice what ye believe.

The principles of Quakerism have a direct tendency to make a man the quiet and inoffensive subject of any and every Government *which is set over him.* And as the setting up and putting down of kings and Governments is God's peculiar prerogative, he most certainly will not be robbed thereof by us: wherefore the principle itself leads you to approve of every thing which ever happened, or may happen to kings, as being his work. OLIVER CROMWELL thanks you. CHARLES, then, died not by the hands of men; and should the present Proud Imitator of him come to the same untimely end, the writers and publishers of the testimony are bound, by the doctrine it contains, to applaud the fact. Kings are not taken away by miracles, neither are changes in Governments brought about by any other means than such as are common and human; and such as we are now using. Even the dispersion of the Jews, thoug' foretold by our Saviour, was effected by arms. Wherefore, as ye refuse to be the means on one side, ye ought not to

meddlers on the other, but to wait the issue in silence; and unless ye can produce divine authority, to prove that the Almighty, who hath created and placed this *new* world at the greatest distance it could possibly stand, east and west, from every part of the old, doth, nevertheless, disapprove of its being independent of the corrupt and abandoned Court of Britain; unless, I say, ye can shew this, how can ye on the ground of your principles justify the exciting and stirring up the People "firmly to unite in the *abborrence* of "all such *writings* and *measures* as evidence a desire and "design to break off the *happy* connection we have hitherto "enjoyed with the kingdom of Great Britain, and our just "and necessary subordination to the King and those who "are lawfully placed in authority under him." What a slap of the face is here! the men, who, in the very paragraph before, have quietly and passively resigned up the ordering, altering, and disposal of Kings and Governments into the hands of God, are now recalling their principles, and putting in for a share of the business. Is it possible that the conclusion, which is here justly quoted, can any ways follow from the doctrine laid down? The inconsistency is too glaring not to be seen; the absurdity too great not to be laughed at; and such as could only have been made by those whose understandings were darkened by the narrow and crabby spirit of a despairing political party, for ye are not to be considered as the whole body of the Quakers, but only as a factional, or fractional part thereof.

Here ends the examination of your testimony, (which I call upon no man to abhor, as ye have done, but only to read and judge of fairly,) to which I subjoin the following remark: "That the setting up and putting down of Kings," must certainly mean the making him a King, who is yet not so, and the making him no King who is already one. And pray what hath this to do in the present case? We neither mean to *set up* nor to *put down*, neither to *make* nor to *unmake*, but to have nothing to *do* with them. Wherefore, your testimony, in whatever light it is viewed, serves only to dishonour your judgment, and for many other reasons had better have been left alone than published.

First, Because it tends to the decrease and reproach of all religion whatever, and is of the utmost danger to society, to make it a party in political disputes.

Secondly, Because it exhibits a body of men, numbers of whom disavow the publishing political testimonies, as being concerned therein and approvers thereof.

Thirdly, Because it hath a tendency to undo that continental harmony and friendship which yourselves by your late liberal and charitable donations have lent a hand to establish, and the preservation of which is of the utmost consequence to us all.

And here, without anger or resentment, I bid you farewell. Sincerely wishing, that as men and Christians, ye may always fully and uninterruptedly enjoy every civil and religious right, and be in your turn the means of securing it to others; but that the example which ye have unwisely set, of mingling religion with politics, *may be disavowed and reprobated by every inhabitant of* AMERICA.

END OF COMMON SENSE.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

BY

THOMAS PAINE.

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1819.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

## No. I.

THESE ARE THE TIMES THAT TRY MEN'S SOULS. The summer-soldier and the sun-shine patriot, will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it *now*, deserves the thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered: yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheaply, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to set a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated. Britain, with an army to enforce her tyranny has declared that she has a right, not only to tax, but "to bind us in all cases whatsoever;" and if being bound in that manner is not slavery, there is no such thing as slavery upon earth. Even the expression is impious; for so unlimited a power can belong only to God.

Whether the independence of the continent was declared too soon, or delayed too long, I will not now enter into as an argument: my own simple opinion is, that had it been eight months earlier, it would have been much better. We did not make a proper use of last winter; neither could we, while we were in a dependent situation. However, the fault, if it were one, was all our own.* But no great deal is lost yet. All that Howe has been doing for this month past, is rather a ravage than a conquest, which the spirit of the Jerseys, a year ago, would have quickly repulsed, and which time and a little resolution will soon recover.

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* The present winter is worth an age, if rightly employed; but if lost or neglected, the whole continent will partake of the evil; and there is no punishment that man does not deserve, be he who or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

I have as little superstition in me as any man living; but my secret opinion has ever been, and still is, that God will not give up a people to military destruction, or leave them unsupported to perish, who had so earnestly and so repeatedly sought to avoid the calamities of war, by every decent method which wisdom could invent. Neither have I so much of the infidel in me, as to suppose that he has relinquished the government of the world, and given us up to the care of devils; and as I do not, I cannot see on what grounds the King can look up to heaven for help against us. A common murderer or highwayman has as good a pretence as he.

It is surprising to see how rapidly a panic will sometimes run through a country. All Nations and ages have been subject to them. Britain has trembled like an ague, at the report of a French fleet of flat-bottomed boats; and in the fourteenth century, the whole English army, after ravaging the Kingdom of France, was driven back, like men petrified with fear; and this brave exploit was performed by a few broken forces, collected and headed by a woman, Joan of Arc. Would that heaven might inspire some Jersey maid to spirit up her countrymen, and save her fair fellow-sufferers from ravage and ravishment! Yet panics, in some cases, have their uses: they produce as much good as hurt. Their duration is always short: the mind soon grows through them, and acquires a firmer habit than before. But their peculiar advantage is, that they are the touchstones of sincerity and hypocrisy, and bring things and men to light, which might otherwise have lain for ever undiscovered. In fact, they have the same effect upon secret traitors, which an imaginary apparition would upon a private murderer. They sift out the private thoughts of man, and hold them up in public to the world. Many a disguised tory has lately shewn his head, that shall penitentially solemnize with curses the day on which Howe arrived upon the Delaware.

As I was with the troops at Fort Lee, and marched with them to the edge of Pennsylvania, I am well acquainted with many circumstances, which those who live at a distance, know but little or nothing of. Our situation there was exceedingly cramped, the place being on a narrow neck of land, between the North river and the Hackinsack. Our force was inconsiderable, being not one fourth so great as Howe could bring against us. We had no army at hand to have relieved the garrison, had we shut ourselves up, and stood on the defensive. Our ammunition, light artillery, and the best part of our stores had been removed, upon the ap-

prehension that Howe would endeavour to penetrate the Jerseys, in which case Fort Lee could have been of no use to us; for it must occur to every thinking man, whether in the army or not, that these kind of field-forts are only fit for temporary purposes, and last in use no longer than the enemy directs his force against the particular object which such forts were raised to defend. Such was our situation and condition at Fort Lee, on the morning of the 20th of November, when an officer arrived with information, that the enemy, with two hundred boats, had landed about seven or eight miles above. Major-General Green, who commanded the garrison, immediately ordered them under arms, and sent express to his Excellency General Washington, at the town of Hackinsack, distant, by way of the ferry, six miles. Our first object was to secure the bridge over the Hackinsack, which lay up the river, between the enemy and us, about six miles from us, and three from them. General Washington arrived in about three quarters of an hour, and marched at the head of his troops to the bridge, which place I expected we should have a brush for. However, they did not choose to dispute it with us: and the greatest part of the troops went over the bridge, the rest over the ferry, except some which passed at a mill, on a small creek, between the bridge and the ferry, and made their way through some marshy grounds, up to the town of Hackinsack, and there passed the river. We brought off as much baggage as the waggons could contain; the rest was lost. The simple object was to bring off the garrison, and to march them on till they could be strengthened by the Jersey Pennsylvania militia, so as to be enabled to make a stand. We staid four days at Newark, collected in our out-posts, with some of the Jersey militia, and marched out twice to meet the enemy, on information of their being advancing, though our numbers were greatly inferior to theirs. General Howe, in my opinion, committed a great error in generalship, in not throwing a body of forces off from Staten Island through Amboy, by which means he might have seized all our stores at Brunswick, and intercepted our march into Pennsylvania. But if we believe the power of hell to be limited, we must likewise believe that their agents are under some providential controul.

I shall not now attempt to give all the particulars of our retreat to the Delaware. Suffice it, for the present, to say, that both officers and men, though greatly harrassed and fatigued, frequently without rest, covering, or provision, the

inevitable consequences of a long retreat, bore it with a manly and a martial spirit. All their wishes were one; which was, that the country would turn out, and help them to drive the enemy back. Voltaire has remarked, that King William never appeared to full advantage, but in difficulties and in action. The same remark may be made on General Washington, for the character fits him. There is a natural firmness in some minds, which cannot be unlocked by trifles, but which, when unlocked, discovers a cabinet of fortitude; and I reckon it among those kind of public blessings which we do not immediately see, that God hath blessed him with uninterrupted health, and given him a mind that can even flourish upon care.

I shall conclude this paper with some miscellaneous remarks on the state of our affairs; and shall begin with asking the following question. Why is it that the enemy hath left the New England provinces, and made these middle ones the seat of war? The answer is easy. New England is not infested with Tories, and we are. I have been tender in raising the cry against these men, and used numberless arguments to shew them their danger: but it would not do to sacrifice a world to either their folly or their baseness. The period is now arrived, in which either they or we must change our sentiments, or one or both must fall. And what is a Tory? Good God! what is he? I should not be afraid to go with an hundred Whigs against a thousand Tories, were they to attempt to get into arms. Every Tory is a coward, for a servile slavish, self-interested fear is the foundation of Toryism: and a man under such influence, though he may be cruel, can never be brave.

But before the line of irrevocable separation may be drawn between us, let us reason the matter together. Your conduct is an invitation to the enemy; yet not one in a thousand of you has heart enough to join him. Howe is as much deceived by you, as the American cause is injured by you. He expects you will all take up arms, and flock to his standard with muskets on your shoulders. Your opinions are of no use to him, unless you support him personally; for it is soldiers, and not Tories, that he wants.

I once felt all that kind of anger which a man ought to feel against the mean principles that are held by the Tories. A noted one, who kept a tavern at Amboy, was standing at his door, with as pretty a child in his hand, about eight or nine months old, as most I ever saw; and after speaking his mind as freely as he thought was prudent, finished with the

unfatherly expression, "Well, give me peace in my days." Not a man lives on the continent, but fully believes that separation must some time or other finally take place, and a generous parent would have said, "if there must be trou-"ble, let it be in my days, that my child may have peace;" and this single reflection, well applied, is sufficient to awaken every man to duty. Not a place upon earth might be so happy as America. Her situation is remote from all the wrangling world, and she has nothing to do but to trade with them. A man may easily distinguish in himself between temper and principle, and I am as confident, as I am that God governs the world, that America never will be happy till she gets clear of foreign dominion. Wars, without ceasing, will break out till that period arrives, and the continent must, in the end, be conqueror; for though the flame of liberty may sometimes cease to shine, the coal never can expire.

America did not, nor does not want force; but she wanted a proper application of that force. Wisdom is not the purchase of a day, and it is no wonder we should err at first setting off. From an excess of tenderness, we were unwilling to raise an army, and trusted our cause to the temporary defence of a well-meaning militia. A summer's experience has now taught us better; yet with those troops, while they were collected, we were able to set bounds to the progress of the enemy; and, thank God, they are again assembling. I always considered a militia as the best troops in the world for a sudden exertion, but they will not do for a long campaign. Howe, it is probable, will make an attempt on this city; should he fail on this side of the Delaware, he is ruined; if he succeeds, our cause is not ruined. He stakes all on his side against a part on ours; admitting he succeeds, the consequences will be, that armies from both ends of the continent will march to assist their suffering friends in the middle states; for he cannot go every where; it is impossible. I consider Howe as the greatest enemy the tories have; he is bringing a war into their own country, which, had it not been for him, and partly for themselves, they had been clear of. Should he now be expelled, I wish, with all the devotion of a christian, that the names of Whig and Tory may never more be mentioned; but should the tories give him encouragement to come, or assistance if he come, I as sincerely wish that our next year's arms may expel them from the continent, and the Congress appropriate their possessions to the relief of those who have suffered in well-

doing. A single successful battle next year will settle the whole. America will carry on a two-years' war, by the confiscation of the property of disaffected persons, and be made happy by their expulsion. Say not that this is revenge; call it rather the soft resentment of a suffering people, who, having no object in view but the good of all, have staked their own all upon a seemingly doubtful event. Yet it is folly to argue against determined hardness. Eloquence may strike the ear, and the language of sorrow draw forth the tear of compassion, but nothing can reach the heart that is steeled with prejudices.

Quitting this class of men, I turn, with the warm ardour of a friend, to those who have nobly stood, and are yet determined to stand the matter out. I call not upon a few, but upon all; not on this state, or that state, but on every state. Up and help us. Lay your shoulders to the wheel. Better have too much force than too little, when so great an object is at stake. Let it be told to the future world, that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet and to repulse it. Say not that thousands are gone: turn out your tens of thousands: throw not the burden of the day upon providence, but shew your faith by your good works, that God may bless you. It matters not where you live, or what rank of life you hold; the evil or the blessing will reach you all. The far and the near, the home counties and the back, the rich and the poor, shall suffer or rejoice alike. The heart that feels not now, is dead. The blood of his children shall curse his cowardice, who shrinks back at a time when a little might have saved the whole, and made them happy. I love the man that can smile in trouble—that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. It is the business of little minds to shrink: but he, whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death. My own line of reasoning is to myself, as straight and clear as a ray of light. Not all the treasures of the world, so far as I believe, could have induced me to support an offensive war, for I think it murder; but if a thief break into my house—burn and destroy my property, and kill, or threaten to kill me and those that are in it, and to "bind me in all cases whatsoever," to his absolute will, am I to suffer it? What signifies it to me, whether he who does it, is a King or a common man; my countryman, or not my countryman; whether it is done by an in-

dividual villain, or an army of men? If we reason to the root of things we shall find no difference; neither can any just cause be assigned, why we should punish in the one case, and pardon in the other. Let them call me rebel, and welcome; I feel no concern from it; but I should suffer the misery of devils, were I to make a whore of my soul, by swearing allegiance to one whose character is that of a sottish, stupid, stubborn, worthless, brutish man. I conceive, likewise, a horrid idea in receiving mercy from a being who, at the last day, shall be shrieking to the rocks and mountains to cover him, and fleeing with terror from the orphan, the widow, and the slain of America.

There are cases which cannot be overdone by language; and this is one. There are persons, too, who see not the full extent of the evil that threatens them. They solace themselves with hopes, that the enemy, if they succeed, will be merciful. It is the madness of folly, to expect mercy from those who have refused to do justice; and even mercy, where conquest is the object, is only a trick of war. The cunning of the fox is as murderous as the violence of the wolf, and we ought to be equally on our guard against both. Howe's first object is partly by threats, and partly by promises, to terrify or seduce the people to give up their arms, and receive mercy. The Ministry recommended the same plan to Gage; and this is what the Tories call making their peace—"a peace which passeth all understanding," indeed. A peace which would be the immediate forerunner of a worse ruin than any we have yet thought of. Ye men of Pennsylvania, do reason upon these things! Were the back countries to give up their arms, they would fall an easy prey to the Indians, who are all armed. This, perhaps, is what some Tories would not be sorry for. Were the home counties to deliver up their arms, they would be exposed to the resentment of the back counties, who would then have it in their power to chastise their defection at pleasure. And were any one state to give up its arms, that state must be garrisoned by all Howe's army of Britons and Hessians, to preserve it from the anger of the rest. Mutual fear is a principal link in the chain of mutual love, and woe be to that state that breaks the compact. Howe is mercifully inviting you to a barbarous destruction, and men must be either rogues or fools that will not see it. I dwell not upon the vapours of imagination; I bring reason to your ears, and in language as plain as A, B, C, hold up truth to your eyes.

I thank God, that I fear not. I see no real cause for fear.

I know our situation well, and can see the way out of it. While our army was collected, Howe dared not risk a battle; and it is no credit to him, that he decamped from the White Plains, and waited a mean opportunity to ravage the defenceless Jerseys; but it is great credit to us, that, with an handful of men, we sustained an orderly retreat, for near an hundred miles, brought off our ammunition, all our field-pieces, the greatest part of our stores, and had four rivers to pass. None can say, that our retreat was precipitate; for we were near three weeks in performing it, that the country might have time to come in. Twice we marched back to meet the enemy, and remained out till dark. The sign of fear was not seen in our camp; and had not some of the cowardly and disaffected inhabitants spread false alarms through the county, the Jerseys had never been ravaged. Once more, we are again collected and collecting. Our new army, at both ends of the Continent, is recruiting fast; and we shall be able to open the next campaign with sixty thousand men, well armed and clothed. This is our situation—and who will, may know it. By perseverance and fortitude we have the prospect of a glorious issue; by cowardice and submission, the sad choice of a variety of evils—a ravaged country—a depopulated city—habitations without safety—and slavery without hope—our homes turned into barracks and bawdy-houses for Hessians—and a future race to provide for, whose fathers we shall doubt of! Look on this picture, and weep over it! and if there yet remains one thoughtless wretch, who believes it not, let him suffer it unlamented.

COMMON SENSE.

*December*, 1776.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

No. II.

## To Lord Howe.

"What's in the name of lord, that I should fear
"To bring my grievance to the public ear?"

Churchill.

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Universal empire is the prerogative of a writer. His concerns are with all mankind, and though he cannot command their obedience, he can assign them their duty. The republic of letters is more ancient than monarchy, and of far higher character in the world than the vassal court of Britain. He that rebels against reason is a real rebel, but he that in defence of reason, rebels against tyranny, has a better title to "defender of the faith" than George the Third.

As a military man, your lordship may hold out the sword of war, and call it the "*ultima ratio regum*,"—the last reason of Kings; we in return can shew you the sword of justice, and call it, "the best scourge of tyrants." The first of these two may threaten, or even frighten, for a while, and cast a sickly languor over an insulted people, but reason will soon recover the debauch, and restore them again to tranquil fortitude. Your Lordship, I find, has now commenced author, and published a Proclamation; I too have published a Crisis; as they stand, they are the antipodes of each other; both cannot rise at once, and one of them must descend; and so quick is the revolution of things, that your Lordship's performance, I see, has already fallen many degrees from its first place, and is now just visible on the edge of the political horizon.

It is surprising to what a pitch of infatuation, blind folly, and obstinacy will carry mankind, and your Lordship's drowsy Proclamation is a proof that it does not even quit them in their sleep. Perhaps you thought America too was

taking a nap, and therefore chose, like Satan to Eve, to whisper the delusion softly, lest you should awaken her. This Continent, Sir, is too extensive to sleep all at once, and too watchful, even in its slumbers, not to startle at the unhallowed foot of an invader. You may issue your Proclamations, and welcome, for we have learned to "reverence ourselves," and scorn the insulting ruffian that employs you. America, for your deceased brother's sake, would gladly have shewn you respect, and it is a new aggravation to her feelings, that Howe should be forgetful, and raise his sword against those who, at their own charge, raised a monument to his brother. But your master has commanded, and you have not enough of nature left to refuse. Surely there must be something strangely degenerating in the love of monarchy that can so completely wear a man down to an ingrate, and make him proud to lick the dust that kings have trod upon. A few more years, should you survive them, will bestow on you the title of an old man, and in some hour of future reflection, you may probably find the fitness of Wolsey's despairing penitence: "Had I served my God as faithfully as I have served my King, he would not thus have forsaken me in my old age."

The character you appear to us in is truly ridiculous. Your friends, the Tories, announced your coming with high descriptions of your unlimited powers; but your Proclamation has given them the lie, by shewing you to be a commissioner without authority. Had your powers been ever so great, they were nothing to us, farther than we pleased; because we had the same right which other nations had, to do what we thought was best. "The United States of America," will sound as pompously in the world, or in history, as "the Kingdom of Great Britain;" the character of General Washington will fill a page with as much lustre as that of Lord Howe; and the Congress have as much right to command the King and Parliament of London to desist from legislation, as they or you have to command the Congress. Only suppose how laughable such an edict would appear from us, and then, in that merry mood, do but turn the tables upon yourself, and you will see how your Proclamation is received here. Having thus placed you in a proper position, in which you may have a full view of your folly, and learn to despise it, I hold up to you, for that purpose, the following quotation from your own lunarious Proclamation. "And we (Lord Howe and General Howe) do command (and in his Majesty's name forsooth), all such persons as are assem-

bled together under the name of general or provincial congresses, committees, conventions, or other associations, by whatever name or names known or distinguished, to desist and cease from all such treasonable actings and doings."

You introduce your Proclamation by referring to your declarations of the 14th of July and 19th of September. In the last of these, you sunk yourself below the character of a private gentleman. That I may not seem to accuse you unjustly, I shall state the circumstance. By a verbal invitation of yours, communicated to Congress by General Sullivan, then a prisoner on his parole, you signified your desire of conferring with some members of that body as private gentlemen It was beneath the dignity of the American Congress to pay any regard to a message that at best was but a genteel affront, and had too much of the ministerial complexion of tampering with private persons; and which might probably have been the case, had the gentlemen, who were deputed on that business, possessed that easy kind of virtue which an English courtier is so truly distinguished by. Your request, however, was complied with, for honest men are naturally more tender of their civil than their political fame. The interview ended as every sensible man thought it would; for your Lordship knows, as well as the writer of the Crisis, that it is impossible for the King of England to promise the repeal, or even the revisal, of any acts of parliament; wherefore, on your part you had nothing to say, more than to request, in the room of demanding, the entire surrender of the Continent; and then, if that was complied with, to promise that the inhabitants should escape with their lives. This was the upshot of the conference. You informed the conferees that you were two months in soliciting these powers. We ask, what powers? for, as commissioner, you have none. If you mean the power of pardoning, it is an oblique proof, that your master was determined to sacrifice all before him; and that you were two months in dissuading him from his purpose. Another evidence of his savage obstinacy! From your own account of the matter, we may justly draw these two conclusions: first, that you serve a monster; and secondly, that never was a commissioner sent on a more foolish errand than yourself. This plain language may perhaps sound uncouthly to an ear vitiated by courtly refinements; but words were made for use, and the fault lies in deserving them, or the abuse in applying them unfairly.

Soon after your return to New York, you published a very

illiberal and unmanly hand-bill against the Congress; for it was certainly stepping out of the line of common civility, first to screen your national pride by soliciting an interview with them as private gentlemen, and in the conclusions to endeavour to deceive the multitude by making an hand-bill attack on the whole body of the Congress; you got them together under one name, and abused them under another. But the King you serve, and the cause you support, afford you so few instances of acting the gentleman, that out of pity to your situation, the Congress pardoned the insult by taking no notice of it.

You say in that hand-bill, "that they, the Congress, disavowed every purpose for reconciliation not consonant with their extravagant and inadmissible claim of independence."

Why, God bless me! what have you to do with our independence? we asked no leave of yours to set it up, we asked no money of yours to support it; we can do better without your fleets and armies than with them; you may soon have enough to do to protect yourselves, without being burthened with us. We are very willing to be at peace with you, to buy of you and sell to you, and, like young beginners in the world, to work for our own living; therefore, why do you put yourselves out of cash, when we know you cannot spare it, and we do not desire you to run into debt? I am willing, Sir, you should see your folly in every view I can place it, and for that reason descend sometimes to tell you in jest, what I wish you to see in earnest. But to be more serious with you, why do you say "their" independence? To set you right, Sir, we tell you, that the independency is ours, not theirs. The Congress were authorized, by every state on the Continent, to publish it to all the world, and in so doing are not to be considered as the inventors, but only as the heralds that proclaimed it, or the office from which the sense of the people received a legal form; and it was as much as any, or all their heads were worth, to have treated with you, on the subject of submission, under any name whatever. But we know the men in whom we have trusted;—can England say the same of her parliament?

I come now more particularly to your Proclamation of the 30th of November last. Had you gained an entire conquest over all the armies of America, and then put forth a Proclamation, offering (what you call) mercy, your conduct would have had some specious shew of humanity; but to creep by surprise into a province, and there endeavour to

terrify and seduce the inhabitants from their just allegiance to the rest, by promises which you neither meant nor were able to fulfil, is both cruel and unmanly: cruel in its effects, because, unless you can keep all the ground you have marched over, how are you, in the words of your Proclamation, to secure to your proselytes "the enjoyment of their property?" What are to become either of your newly-adopted subjects, or your old friends the Tories, in Burlington, Bordentown, Trenton, Montholly, and many other places, where you proudly lorded it for a few days, and then fled with the precipitation of a pursued thief? What, I say, are to become of those wretches? What are to become of those who went over to you from this city and state? What more can you say to them than "shift for yourselves?" Or what more can they hope for than to wander like vagabonds over the face of the earth? You may now tell them to take their leave of America, and all that once was theirs. Recommend them, for consolation, to your master's court: there perhaps they may make a shift to live on the scraps of some dangling parasite, and choose companions among thousands like themselves. A traitor is the foulest fiend on earth.

In a political sense we ought to thank you for thus bequeathing estates to the Continent; we shall soon, at this rate, be able to carry on a war without expence, and grow rich by the ill policy of Lord Howe, and the generous defection of the Tories. Had you set your foot into this city, you would have bestowed estates upon us which we never thought of, by bringing forth traitors we were unwilling to suspect. "But these men," you will say, "are his Majesty's most faithful subjects;" let that honour then be all their fortune, and let his Majesty take them to himself.

I am now thoroughly disgusted with them; they live in ungrateful ease, and bend their whole minds to mischief. It seems as if God had given them over to a spirit of infidelity, and that they are open to conviction in no other line but that of punishment. It is time to have done with tarring, feathering, carting, and taking securities for their future good behaviour. Every sensible man must feel a conscious shame at seeing a poor fellow hawked for a shew about the streets, when it is known, that he is only the tool of some principal villain, biassed into his offence by the source of false reasoning, or bribed thereto through sad necessity. We dishonour ourselves by attacking such trifling characters, while greater ones are suffered to escape. It is our duty to

find them out, and their proper punishment would be to exile them from the Continent for ever. The circle of them is not so great as some imagine. The influence of a few has tainted many who are not naturally corrupt. A continual circulation of lies among those who are not much in the way of hearing them contradicted, will in time pass for truth; and the crime lies not in the believer, but in the inventor. I am not for declaring war against every man that appears not so warm as myself. Difference of constitution, temper, habit of speaking, and many other things, will go a great way in fixing the outward character of a man, yet simple honesty may remain at bottom. Some men have naturally a military turn, and can brave hardships and the risk of life, with a cheerful face; others have not; no slavery appears to them so great as the fatigue of arms, and no terror so powerful as that of personal danger. What can we say? We cannot alter nature; neither ought we to punish the son, because the father begot him in a cowardly mood. However, I believe most men have more courage than they know of, and that a little at first, is enough to begin with. I knew the time when I thought that the whistling of a cannon-ball would have frightened me almost to death; but I have since tried it, and find I can stand it with as little discomposure, and, I believe, with a much easier conscience than your Lordship. The same dread would return to me again, were I in your situation; for my solemn belief of your cause, is, that it is hellish and damnable; and under that conviction, every thinking man's heart must fail him.

From a concern, that a good cause should be dishonoured by the least disunion among us, I said in my former paper, No. I. that "should the enemy now be expelled, I wish, with all the sincerity of a Christian, that the names of Whig and Tory might never more be mentioned;" but there is a knot of men among us, of such a venomous cast, that they will not admit even one's good wishes to act in their favour. Instead of rejoicing that heaven had, as it were, providentially preserved this city from plunder and destruction, by delivering so great a part of the enemy into our hands, with so little effusion of blood, they stubbornly affected to disbelieve it, until within an hour, nay half an hour, of the prisoners arriving; and the Quakers* put forth a testimony, dated

* I have ever been careful of charging offences upon whole so-

the 20th of December, signed John Pemberton, declaring their attachment to the British Government. These men are continually harping on the great sin of our bearing arms: but the King of Britain may lay waste the world in blood and famine, and they, poor fallen souls, have nothing to say.

In some future paper, I intend to distinguish between the different kinds of persons who have been denominated Tories, for this I am clear in, that all are not so, who have been called so, nor all men Whigs, who were once thought so; and as I mean not to conceal the name of any true friend, when there shall be occasion to mention him, neither will I that of an enemy, who ought to be known, let his rank, station, or religion be what it may.

Much pains have been taken by some, to set your Lordship's private character in an amiable light; but as it has chiefly been done by men who know nothing about you, and who are no ways remarkable for their attachment to us, we have no just authority for believing it. George the Third was imposed upon us by the same arts; but time has at length done him justice, and the same fate may probably attend your Lordship. Your avowed purpose here, is, to kill, conquer, plunder, pardon, and enslave, and the ravages of your army, through the Jerseys, have been marked with as much barbarism, as if you had openly professed yourself the prince of ruffians. Not even the appearance of humanity has been preserved either on the march, or the retreat of your troops. No general order, that I could ever learn, has ever been issued to prevent or even forbid your troops from robbery wherever they came; and the only instance of justice, if it can be called such, which has distinguished you for impartiality, is that you treated and plundered all alike. What could not be carried away, have been destroyed; and mahogany furniture has been deliberately laid on the fire for fuel,

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cieties of men, but as the paper referred to is put forth by an unknown set of men, who claim to themselves the right of representing the whole; and while the whole society of Quakers admit its validity by a silent acknowledgement, it is impossible that any distinction can be made by the public; and the more so, because the New York paper, of the 30th of December, printed by permission of our enemies, says, that "the Quakers begin to speak openly of their attachment to the British Constitution." We are certain that we have many friends among them, and wish to know them.

rather than the men should be fatigued with cutting wood.* There was a time, when the Whigs confided much in your supposed candour, and the Tories rested themselves on your favour. The experiments have now been made, and failed; and every town, nay, every cottage, in the Jerseys, where your arms have been, is a testimony against you. How you may rest under this sacrifice of your character, I know not: but this I know, that you sleep and rise with the daily curses of thousands upon you. Perhaps, the misery which the Tories have suffered by your proffered mercy, may give them some claim to their country's pity, and be in the end the best favour you could shew them. In a folio general order-book belonging to Colonel Rahl's battalion, taken at Trenton, and now in the possession of the Council of Safety for this state, the following barbarous order is frequently repeated: "His Excellency, the Commander-in-Chief, orders that all inhabitants which shall be found with arms, not having an officer with them, shall be immediately taken and hung up." How many you may thus have privately sacrificed, we know not; and the account can only be settled in another world. Your treatment of prisoners, in order to distress them, to enlist into your infernal service, is not to be equalled by any instance in Europe. Yet this is the humane Lord Howe, and his brother, whom the Tories, and their three-quarter kindred, the Quakers, or some of them at least, have been holding up for patterns of justice and mercy!

A bad cause will ever be supported by bad means and bad men; and whoever will be at the pains of examining strictly into things, will find that one and the same spirit of opposition and impiety, more or less, governs through your whole party in both countries. Not many days ago, I accidentally fell in company with a person of this city noted for espousing your cause; and on my remarking to him that it appeared clear to me, by the late providential turn of affairs, that God Almighty was visibly on our side: he replied, we care nothing for that; you may have him, and welcome; if

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* As some people may doubt the truth of such wanton destruction, I think it necessary to inform the world that one of the people called Quakers, who lives at Trenton, gave me this information at the house of Mr. Michael Hutchinson, one of the same profession, who lives near to Trenton ferry, on the Pennsylvania side, Mr. Hutchinson being present.

we have but enough of the devil on our side, we shall do. However carelessly this be spoken, matters not; it is still the insensible principle that directs all your conduct, and will, at last, most assuredly deceive and ruin you.

If ever a nation was mad and foolish, blind to its own interest, and bent on its own destruction, it is Britain. There are such things as national sins; and though the punishment of individuals may be reserved to another world, national punishment can only be inflicted in this world. Britain, as a nation, is, in my inmost belief, the greatest and most ungrateful offender against God on the face of the whole earth. Blessed with all the commerce she could wish for, and furnished by a vast extent of dominion, with the means of civilizing both the eastern and western world, she has made no other use of both, than proudly to idolize her own "thunder," and rip up the bowels of whole countries, for what she could get. Like Alexander, she has made war her sport, and inflicted misery for prodigality sake. The blood of India is not yet repaid, nor the wretchedness of Africa yet requited. Of late, she has enlarged her list of national cruelties, by her butcherly destruction of the Caribbs of St. Vincent's, and in returning an answer by the sword, to the meek prayer for "peace, liberty, and safety." These are serious things; and whatever a foolish tyrant, a debauched Court, a trafficking Legislature, or a blinded people, may think, the national account with heaven must some day or other be settled. All countries have, sooner or later, been called to their reckoning. The proudest empires have sunk, when the balance was struck; and Britain, like an individual penitent, must undergo her day of sorrow, and the sooner it happens to her the better. As I wish it over, I wish it to come, but, withal, wish that it may be as light as possible.

Perhaps your Lordship has no taste for serious things. By your connections in England, I should suppose not; therefore I shall drop this part of the subject, and take it up in a line in which you will better understand me.

By what means, may I ask, do you expect to conquer America? If you could not effect it in the summer, when our army was less than yours, nor in the winter, when we had none, how are you to do it? In point of generalship, you have been outwitted; and in point of fortitude, outdone: your advantages turn out to your loss, and shew us that it is in our power to ruin you by gifts. Like a game of drafts, we can move out of one square, to let you come in, in order

that we may afterwards take two or three for one; and as we can always keep a double corner for ourselves, we can always prevent a total defeat. You cannot be so insensible, as not to see that we have two to one the advantage of you, because we conquer by a drawn game, and you lose by it. Burgoyne might have taught your Lordship this knowledge; he has been long a student in the doctrine of chances.

I have no other idea of conquering countries than by subduing the armies which defend them: have you done this, or can you do this? If you have not, it would be civil in you to let your Proclamations alone for the present; otherwise, you will ruin more Tories by your grace and favour than you will Whigs by your arms.

Were you to obtain possession of this city, you would not know what to do with it, more than to plunder it. To hold it, in the manner you hold New York, would be an additional dead weight upon your hands; and if a general conquest is your object, you had better be without the city than with it. When you have defeated all our armies, the cities will fall into your hands of themselves; but to creep into them in the manner you got into Princetown, Trenton, &c. is like robbing an orchard in the night, before the fruit be ripe, and running away in the morning. Your experiment in the Jerseys is sufficient to teach you that you have something more to do than barely to get into other people's houses; and your new converts to whom you promised all manner of protection, and seduced into new guilt by pardoning them from their former virtues, must begin to have a very contemptible opinion both of your power and policy. Your authority in the Jerseys is now reduced to the small circle which your army occupies, and your Proclamation is no where else seen, unless it be to be laughed at. The mighty subduers of the Continent are retreated into a nut-shell, and the proud forgivers of our sins are fled from those they came to pardon; and all this at a time when they were dispatching vessel after vessel to England, with the great news of every day. In short, you have managed your Jersey expedition so very dexterously, that the dead only are conquerors, because none will dispute the ground with them. In all the wars you have formerly been concerned in, you had only armies to contend with; in this case, you have both an army and a country to combat with. In former wars, the countries followed the fate of their capitals; Canada fell with Quebec; and Minorca, with Port Mahon or St. Philip's; by subduing those, the conquerors

opened a way into, and became masters of the country: here it is otherwise: if you get possession of a city here, you are obliged to shut yourself up in it, and can make no other use of it, than to spend your country's money in. This is all the advantage you have drawn from New York; and you would drew less from Philadelphia, because it requires more force to keep it, and is much farther from the sea. A pretty figure you and the Tories would cut in this city, with a river full of ice, and a town full of fire; for the immediate consequence of your getting here would be, that you would be cannonaded out again, and the Tories be obliged to make good the damage: and this, sooner or later, will be the fate of New York.

I wish to see the city saved, not so much from military, as from natural motives. It is the hiding-place of women and children, and Lord Howe's proper business is with our armies. When I put all the circumstances together which ought to be taken, I laugh at your notion of conquering America. Because you lived in a little country, where an army might run over the whole in a few days, and where a single company of soldiers might put a multitude to the rout, you expected to find it the same here. It is plain that you brought over with you all the narrow notions you were bred up with, and imagined that a Proclamation in the King's name was to do great things; but Englishmen always travel for knowledge, and your Lordship, I hope, will return, if you return at all, much wiser than you came.

We may be surprised by events we did not expect, and in that interval of recollection you may gain some temporary advantage: such was the case a few weeks ago: but we soon ripen again into reason, collect our strength, and while you are preparing for a triumph, we come upon you with a defeat. Such it has been, and such it would be were you to try it an hundred times over. Were you to garrison the places you might march over, in order to secure their subjection (for remember you can do it by no other means), your army would be like a stream of water running to nothing. By the time you reached from New York to Virginia, you would be reduced to a string of drops not capable of hanging together; while we by retreating from state to state, like a river turning back upon itself, would acquire strength in the same proportion as you lost it, and in the end be capable of overwhelming you. The country in the mean time would suffer; but it is a day of suffering, and we ought to expect it. What we contend for is worthy

the affliction we may go through. If we get but bread to eat, and any kind of raiment to put on, we ought, not only to be contented, but thankful: more than that we ought not to look for; and less than that, heaven has not yet suffered us to want. He that would sell his birth-right for a little salt, is as worthless as he who sold it for pottage without salt: and he that would part with it for a gay coat, or a plain coat; ought for ever to be a slave in buff. What are salt, sugar, and finery, to the inestimable blessings of "Liberty and Safety?" Or what are the inconveniences of a few months to the tributary bondage of ages? The meanest peasant in America, blessed with these sentiments, is a happy man, compared with a New York Tory; he can eat his morsel without repining, and when he has done, can sweeten it with a repast of wholesome air; he can take his child by the hand and bless it, without feeling the conscious shame of neglecting a parent's duty.

In publishing these remarks, I have several objects in view. On your part they are, to expose the folly of your pretended authority, as a commissioner—the wickedness of your cause in general—and the impossibility of your conquering us at any rate. On the part of the public, my meaning is, to shew them their true and solid interest; to encourage them to their own good; to remove the fears and falsities, which bad men had spread and weak men had encouraged; and to excite in all men a love for union, and a cheerfulness for duty.

I shall submit one more case to you, respecting your conquest of this country, and then proceed to new observations.

Suppose our armies in every part of the Continent immediately to disperse, every man to his home, or where else he might be safe, and engage to re-assemble again on a certain future day. It is clear that you would then have no army to contend with; yet you would be as much at a loss as you are now: you would be afraid to send your troops in parties over the Continent, either to disarm, or prevent us from assembling, lest they should not return: and while you kept them together, having no army of ours to dispute with, you could not call it a conquest. You might furnish out a pompous page in the London Gazette, or the New York paper; but when we returned at the appointed time, you would have the same work to do you had at first.

It has been the folly of Britain to suppose herself more

than she really is, and by that method has arrogated to herself a rank in the world she is not entitled to: for more than this century past, she has not been able to carry on a war without foreign assistance. In Marlborough's campaigns, and from that day to this, the number of German troops and officers assisting her, have been about equal to her own. Ten thousand Hessians were sent to England last war, to protect her from a French invasion; and she would have cut but a poor figure in her Canadian and West Indian expeditions, had not America been lavish of her men, and money, to help her along. The only instance, in which she was engaged singly, that I can recollect, was against the rebellion in Scotland in 1745, and 1746, and in that, out of three battles, she was twice beaten; till by thus reducing their numbers, (as we shall yours), and taking a supply ship, that was coming to Scotland, with clothes, arms, and money (as we have often done), she was at last enabled to defeat them.

England was never famous by land. Her officers have generally been suspected of cowardice, have more of the air of a dancing-master than a soldier; and by the sample we have taken prisoners, we begin to give the preference to ourselves. Her strength of late has laid in her extravagance; but as her finances and her credit are now low, her sinews in that line begin to fail fast. As a nation, she is the poorest in Europe; for were the whole kingdom, and all that is in it, to be put up to sale, like the estate of a bankrupt, it would not fetch as much as she owes. Yet this thoughtless wretch must go to war, and with the avowed design, too, of making us beasts of burden, to support her in riot and debauchery, and to assist her afterwards in distressing those nations who are now our best friends. This ingratitude may suit a Tory, or the unchristian peevishness of a fallen Quaker, but none else.

It is the unhappy temper of the English, to be pleased with any war, right or wrong, be it but successful; but they soon grow discontented with ill fortune: and it is an even chance, that they are as clamorous for peace next summer, as the King and his Ministers were for war last winter. In this natural view of things, your Lordship stands in a very ugly, critical situation. Your whole character is staked upon your laurels: if they wither, you wither with them. If they flourish, you cannot live long to look at them: and at any rate, the black account hereafter is not far off. What lately appeared to us misfortunes, were only blessings in disguise; and the seeming advantages on your side have

turned out to our profit. Even our loss of this city, as far as we can see, might be a principal gain to us. The more surface you spread over, the thinner you will be, and the easier wiped away: and our consolation, under that apparent disaster, would be, that the estates of the Tories would be securities for the repairs. In short, there is no old ground we can fail upon, but some new foundation rises again to support us. "We have put, Sir, our hands to the plough—and cursed be he that looketh back."

Your King, in his speech to Parliament, last spring, declared to them, that "he had no doubt but the great force they had enabled him to send to America would effectually reduce the rebellious Colonies." It has not—neither can it. But it has done just enough to lay the foundation of its own next year's ruin. You are sensible that you left England in a divided distracted state of politics, and, by the command you had here, you became a principal prop in the Court party: their fortunes rest on yours: by a single express, you can fix their value with the public, and the degree to which their spirits shall rise or fall. They are in your hands as stock, and you have the secret of the Alley with you. Thus situated, and connected, you become the unintentional, mechanical instrument of your own and their overthrow. The King and his Ministers put conquest out of doubt, and the credit of both depended on the proof. To support them in the interim, it was necessary that you should make the most of every thing; and we can tell by Hugh Gaine's New York paper, what the complexion of the London Gazette is. With such a list of victories, the nation cannot expect you will ask new supplies; and to confess your want of them, would give the lie to your triumphs, and impeach the King and his Ministers of treasonable deception. If you make the necessary demand at home, your party sinks: if you make it not, you sink yourself. To ask it now, is too late, and to ask it before, was too soon, and unless it arrive quickly, will be of no use. In short, the part you have to act, cannot be acted: and I am fully persuaded, that all you have to trust to is, to do the best with what force you have got, or little more. Though we have greatly excelled you in point of generalship, and bravery of men, yet, as a people, we have not entered into the full soul of enterprize: for I, who know England, and the disposition of the people well, am confident, that it is easier for us to effect a revolution there, than you a conquest here. A few thousand men, landed in England, with the declared design of

deposing the present King, bringing his Ministers to trial, and setting up the Duke of Gloucester in his stead, would assuredly carry their point, while you were grovelling here ignorant of the matter. As I send all my papers to England, this, like Common Sense, will find its way there: and though it may put one party on their guard, it will inform the other, and the nation in general, of our design to help them.

Thus far, Sir, I have endeavoured to give you a picture of present affairs: you may draw from it what conclusion you please. I wish as well to the true prosperity of England as you can, but I consider independence as America's natural right and interest, and never could see any real disservice it would be to Britain. If an English merchant receives an order, and is paid for it, it signifies nothing to him who governs the country. This is my creed of politics. If I have any where expressed myself over warmly, it is from a fixed immoveable hatred I have, and ever had, to cruel men, and cruel measures. I have likewise an aversion from monarchy, as being too debasing to the dignity of man; but I never troubled others with my notions till very lately, nor ever published a syllable in England in my life. What I write is pure nature, and my pen and my soul have ever gone together. My writings I have always given away, reserving only the expence of printing and paper, and sometimes not even that. I have never courted either fame, or interest, and my manner of life, to those who know it, will justify what I say. My study is, to be useful, and if your Lordship love mankind as well as I do, you would, seeing you cannot conquer us, cast about and lend your hand towards accomplishing a peace. Our independence, with God's blessing, we will maintain against all the world: but as we wish to avoid evil ourselves, we wish not to inflict it on others. I am never over inquisitive into the secrets of the cabinet, but I have some notion, if you neglect the present opportunity, that it will not be in our power to make a separate peace with you afterwards; for whatever treaties or alliances we form, we shall most faithfully abide by: wherefore you may be deceived, if you think you can make it with us at any time. A lasting independent peace is my wish, end, and aim; and to accomplish that, "I pray God the Americans may never be defeated, and I trust while they have good officers, and are well commanded, and willing to be commanded, that they never will."

COMMON SENSE.

*Philadelphia, Jan.* 13, 1777.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

No. III.

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In the progress of politics, as in the common occurrences of life, we are not only apt to forget the ground we have travelled over, but frequently neglect to gather up experience as we go. We expend, if I may so say, the knowledge of every day on the circumstances that produce it, and journey on in search of new matter and new refinements: but as it is pleasant, and sometimes useful, to look back, even to the first periods of infancy, and trace the turns and windings through which we have passed, so we may likewise derive many advantages by halting awhile in our political career, and taking a review of the wondrous complicated labyrinth of little more than yesterday.

Truly, may we say, that never did man grow old in so short a time! We have crowded the business of an age into the compass of a few months, and have been driven through such a rapid succession of things, that, for the want of leisure to think, we unavoidably wasted knowledge as we came, and have left nearly as much behind us as we brought with us: but the road is yet rich with fragments, and, before we fully lose sight of them, will repay us for the trouble of stopping to pick them up.

Were a man to be totally deprived of memory, he would be incapable of forming any just opinion; every thing about him would seem a chaos; he would even have his own history to ask from every one; and by not knowing how the world went on in his absence, he would be at a loss to know how it *ought* to go on when he recovered, or rather returned to it again. In like manner, though in a less degree, a too great inattention to past occurrences retards and bewilders our judgment in every thing; while, on the contrary, by comparing what is past with what is present, we frequently hit on the true character of both, and become wise with very little trouble. It is a kind of countermarch, by which we get into the rear of Time, and mark the movements and

meaning of things as we make our return. There are certain circumstances, which, at the time of their happening, are a kind of riddles; and as every riddle is to be followed by its answer, so those kind of circumstances will be followed by their events, and those events are always the true solution. A considerable space of time may elapse between, and unless we continue our observations from the one to the other, the harmony of them will pass away unnoticed; but the misfortune is, that partly from the pressing necessity of some instant things, and partly from the impatience of our tempers, we are frequently in such a hurry to make out the meaning of every thing as fast as it happens, that we thereby never truly understand it; and not only start new difficulties to ourselves by so doing, but, as it were, embarrass Providence in her good designs.

I have been civil in stating this fault on a large scale; for as it now stands, it does not appear to be levelled against any particular set of men; but were it to be refined a little further, it might afterwards be applied to the Tories with a degree of striking propriety. Those men have been remarkable for drawing sudden conclusions from single facts. The least apparent mishap on our side, or the least seeming advantage on the part of the enemy, has determined the fate of a whole campaign. By this hasty judgment they have converted a retreat into a defeat; mistook generalship for error, while every little advantage purposely given the enemy, either to weaken their strength by dividing it, embarrass their councils by multiplying their objects, or to secure a greater post by the surrender of a less, has been instantly magnified into a conquest. Thus, by quartering ill policy upon ill principles, they have frequently promoted the cause they designed to injure, and injured that which they intended to promote.

It is probable the campaign may open before this number comes from the press. The enemy have long lain idle, and amused themselves with carrying on the war by proclamations only. While they continue their delay, our strength increases; and were they to move to action now, it is a circumstantial proof they have no reinforcement coming; wherefore, in either case, the comparative advantage will be ours. Like a wounded, disabled whale, they want only time and room to die in: and though in the agony of their exit, it may be unsafe to live within the flapping of their tail, yet every hour shortens their date, and lessens their power of mischief. If any thing happens while this

number is in the press, it will afford me a subject for the last pages of it. At present I am tired of waiting; and as neither the enemy, nor the state of politics, have yet produced any thing new, I am thereby left in the field of general matter, undirected by any striking or particular object. This Crisis, therefore, will be made up rather of variety than novelty, and consist more of things useful, than things wonderful.

The success of the cause, the union of the people, and the means of supporting and securing both, are points which cannot be too much attended to. He who doubts of the former is a desponding coward, and he who wilfully disturbs the latter is a traitor. Their characters are easily fixed, and under these short descriptions I leave them for the present.

One of the greatest degrees of sentimental union which America ever knew, was in denying the right of the British Parliament "TO BIND THE COLONIES IN ALL CASES WHATSOEVER." The declaration is in its form an almighty one, and is the loftiest stretch of arbitrary power that ever one set of men, or one country claimed over another. Taxation was nothing more than putting the declared right into practice; and this failing, recourse was had to arms, as a means to establish both the right and the practice, or to answer a worse purpose, which will be mentioned in the course of this number. And in order to repay themselves the expences of an army, and to profit by their own injustice, the Colonies were, by another law, declared to be in a state of actual rebellion, and of consequence all property therein would fall to the conquerors.

The Colonies, on their part, first denied the right; secondly, they suspended the use of taxable articles, and petitioned against the practice of taxation; and these failing, they, thirdly, defended their property by force, as soon as it was forcibly invaded; and in answer to the declaration of rebellion and non-protection, published their declaration of independence, and right to self-protection.

These, in a few words, are the different stages of the quarrel; and the parts are so intimately and necessarily connected with each other, as to admit of no separation. A person to use a trite phrase, must be a Whig or a Tory in the lump. His feelings, as a man, may be wounded; his charity, as a Christian, may be moved; but his political principles must go through all the cases on one side or the other. He cannot be a Whig in *this* stage, and a Tory in *that*. If

he says, he is against the United Independence of the Continent, he is, to all intents and purposes, against her in all the rest; because *this last* comprehends the whole; and he may just as well say, that Britain was right in declaring us rebels; right in taxing us; and right in declaring her "RIGHT TO BIND THE COLONIES IN ALL CASES WHATSOEVER." It signifies nothing what neutral ground of his own creation, he may skulk upon for shelter; for the quarrel in no stage of it hath afforded any such ground: and either we, or Britain, are absolutely right, or absolutely wrong through the whole.

Britain, like a gamester nearly ruined, hath now put all her losses into one bet, and is playing a desperate game for the total. If she win it, she wins from me MY life; she wins the Continent as the forfeited property of rebels; the right of taxing those that are left as reduced subjects: and the power of binding them as slaves. And the single die which determines this unparalleled event is, whether we support our independence, or she overturn it. This is coming to the point at once. Here is the touch-stone to try men by. *He that is not a supporter of the Independent States of America, in the same degree that his religious and political principles would suffer him to support the Government of any other country, of which he called himself a subject, is, in the American sense of the word, A TORY; and the instant that he endeavours to bring his Toryism into practice, he becomes A TRAITOR.* The first man can only be detected by a general test, and the law hath already provided for the latter.

It is unnatural and impolitic to admit men who would root up our independence to have any share in our legislature, either as electors or representatives; because the support of our independence rests in a great measure on the vigour and purity of our public bodies. Would Britain, even in time of peace, much less in war, suffer an election to be carried by men who professed themselves not to be her subjects, or allow such to sit in Parliament? Certainly not.

But there are certain species of Tories with whom conscience or principle hath nothing to do, and who are so from avarice only. Some of the first fortunes in the Continent, on the part of the Whigs, are staked on the issue of our present measures. And shall disaffection only be rewarded with security? Can any thing be a greater inducement to a miserly man, than the hope of making his mammon safe? And though the scheme be fraught with every

character of folly, yet, so long as he supposes that by doing nothing materially criminal against America on one part, and by expressing his private disapprobation against independence, as a palliative with the enemy on the other part, he stands thereby in a safe line between both: while I say, this ground be suffered to remain, craft and the spirit of avarice will point it out, and men will not be wanting to fill up this most contemptible of all characters.

These men, ashamed to own the sordid cause from whence their disaffection springs, and thereby add meanness to meanness, by endeavouring to shelter themselves under the mask of hypocrisy; that is, they had rather be thought to be Tories from *some kind of principle*, than Tories by having *no principle at all*. But till such time as they can shew some real reason, natural, political, or conscientious, on which their objections to independence are founded, we are not obliged to give them credit for being Tories of the first stamp, but must set them down as Tories of the last.

In the second number of the CRISIS, I endeavoured to shew the impossibility of the enemy making any conquest of America, that nothing was wanting on our part but patience and perseverance, and that, with these virtues, our success, as far as human speculation could discern, seemed as certain as fate. But as there are many among us, who, influenced by others, have regularly gone back from the principles they once held, in proportion as we have gone forward; and as it is the unfortunate lot of many a good man to live within the neighbourhood of disaffected ones; I shall, therefore, for the sake of confirming the one, and recovering the other, endeavour, in the space of a page or two, to go over some of the leading principles in support of independence. It is a much pleasanter task to prevent vice, than to punish it; and however our tempers may be gratified by resentment, or our national expences eased by forfeited estates, harmony and friendship is nevertheless the happiest condition a country can be blessed with.

The principal arguments in support of independence may be comprehended under the four following heads:

Firstly—The Natural Right of the Continent to independence.

Secondly—Her interest in being independent.

Thirdly—The necessity—and

Fourthly—The moral advantages arising therefrom.

I. The Natural Right of the Continent to independence, is a point which never yet was called in question. It will

not even admit of a debate. To deny such a right, would be a kind of atheism against nature, and the best answer to such an objection would be, "*The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.*"

II. The interest of the Continent in being independent is a point as clearly right as the former. America, by her own internal industry, and unknown to all the powers of Europe, was, at the beginning of the dispute, arrived at a pitch of greatness, trade, and population, beyond which it was the interest of Britain not to suffer her to pass, lest she should grow too powerful to be kept subordinate. She began to view this country, with the same uneasy, malicious eye, with which a covetous guardian would view his ward whose estate he had been enriching himself by for twenty years, and saw him just arriving to manhood. And America owes no more to Britain for her present maturity, than the ward would to his guardian for being twenty-one years of age. That America hath flourished *at the time* she was under the Government of Britain, is true; but there is every natural reason to believe, that had she been an independent country from the first settlement thereof, uncontrouled by any foreign power, free to make her own laws, regulate and encourage her own commerce, she had by this time been of much greater worth than now. The case is simply this. The first settlers in the different Colonies were left to shift for themselves, unnoticed and unsupported by any European Government; but as the tyranny and persecution of the old world daily drove numbers to the new, and, as by the favour of heaven, on their industry and perseverance, they grew into importance, so, in a like degree, they became an object of profit to the greedy eyes of Europe. It was impossible, in this state of infancy, however thriving and promising, that they could resist the power of any armed invader that should seek to bring them under his authority. In this situation, Britain thought it worth her while to claim them, and the Continent received and acknowledged the claimer. It was, in reality, of no very great importance who was her master, seeing that from the force and ambition of the different powers of Europe, she must, till she acquired strength enough to assert her own right, acknowledge some one. As well, perhaps, Britain as another; and it might have been as well to be under the States of Holland as any. The same hopes of engrossing and profiting by her trade, by not oppressing it too much, would have operated alike with any master, and produced to the Colonies the same effects. The

clamour of protection likewise, was all a farce; because, in order to make *that* protection necessary, she must first, by her own quarrels, create us enemies. Hard terms indeed!

To know whether it be the interest of the Continent to be independent, we need only ask this easy, simple question: Is it the interest of a man to be a boy all his life? The answer to one will be the answer to both. America hath been one continued scene of legislative contention from the first King's representative to the last; and this was unavoidably founded in the natural opposition of interest between the old country and the new. A Governor sent from England, or receiving his authority therefrom, ought never to have been considered in any other light than that of a genteel commissioned spy, whose private business was information, and his public business a kind of civilized oppression. In the first of these characters he was to watch the tempers, sentiments, and disposition of the people, the growth of trade, and the increase of private fortunes; and in the latter, to suppress all such acts of the assemblies, however beneficial to the people, which did not directly or indirectly throw some increase of power or profit into the hands of those who sent him.

America, till now, could never be called a *free country*, because her legislation depended on the will of a man three thousand miles distant, whose interest was in opposition to theirs, and who, by a single "no," could forbid what law he pleased.

The freedom of trade, likewise, is, to a trading country, an article of such vast importance, that the principal source of wealth depends upon it; and it is impossible that any country can flourish, as it otherwise might do, whose commerce is engrossed, cramped, and fettered, by the laws and mandates of another—yet these evils, and more than I can here enumerate, the Continent has suffered by being under the government of Great Britain. By an independence we clear the whole at once; put an end to the business of unanswered petitions and fruitless remonstrances—exchange Britain for Europe—shake hands with the world—live at peace with mankind—and trade to any market where we best can buy and sell.

III. The necessity, likewise, of being independent, even before it was declared, became so evident and important, that the Continent run the risk of being ruined every day she delayed it. There were reasons to believe that Britain would endeavour to make an European matter of it, and

rather than lose the whole, would dismember it like Poland, and dispose of her several claims to the highest bidder. Genoa, failing in her attempts to reduce Corsica, made a sale of it to the French, and such traffics have been common in the old world. We had at that time no ambassador in any part of Europe, to counteract her negociations, and by that means she had the range of every foreign Court, uncontradicted on our part. We even knew nothing of the treaty for the Hessians till it was concluded, and the troops ready to embark. Had we been independent before, we had probably prevented her obtaining them. We had no credit abroad, because of our rebellious dependency. Our ships could claim no protection in foreign ports, because we afforded them no justifiable reason for granting it to us. The calling ourselves subjects, and at the same time fighting against the power we acknowledged, was a dangerous precedent to all Europe. If the grievances justified our taking up arms, they justified our separation; if they did not justify our separation, neither could they justify our taking up arms. All Europe was interested in reducing us as rebels, and all Europe (or the greatest part at least) is interested in supporting us as independent states. At home our condition was still worse. Our currency had no foundation, and the fall of it would have ruined Whig and Tory alike. We had no other law than a kind of moderated passion; no other civil power than an honest mob; and no other protection than the temporary attachment of one man to another. Had independence been delayed a few months longer, this Continent would have been plunged into irrecoverable confusion. Some violent for it, some against it, till, in the general cabal, the rich would have been ruined, and the poor destroyed. It is to independence that every Tory owes the present safety he lives in; for by that, and that only, we emerged from a state of dangerous suspense, and became a regular people.

The necessity, likewise, of being independent, had there been no rupture between Britain and America, would in a little time have brought one on. The increasing importance of commerce, the weight and perplexity of legislation, and the entangled state of European politics, would daily have shewn to the Continent the impossibility of continuing subordinate; for, after the coolest reflections on the matter, this must be allowed, that Britain was too jealous of America to govern it justly; too ignorant of it, to govern it well; and too distant from it, to govern it at all.

IV. But, what weigh most with all men of serious re-

flection are the MORAL ADVANTAGES arising from independence. War and desolation are become the trades of the Old World; and America neither could nor can be under the government of Britain without becoming a sharer of her guilt, and a partner in all the dismal commerce of death. The spirit of duelling, extended on a national scale, is a proper character for European wars. They have seldom any other motive than pride, or any other object than fame. The conquerors, and the conquered, are generally ruined alike, and the chief difference at last is, that the one marches home with his honours, and the other without them. It is the natural temper of the English to fight for a feather, if they suppose that feather to be an affront; and America, without the right of asking why, must have abetted in every quarrel and abided by its fate. It is a shocking situation to live in, that one country must be brought into all the wars of another, whether the measure be right or wrong, or whether she will or not; yet this, in the fullest extent was, and ever would be, the unavoidable consequence of the connection. Surely the Quakers forgot their own principles, when in their late testimony they called this connection, with these military and miserable appendages hanging to it, "The happy Constitution."

Britain, for centuries past, has been nearly fifty years out of every hundred at war with some power or other. It certainly ought to be a conscientious as well as political consideration with America, not to dip her hands in the bloody work of Europe. Our situation affords us a retreat from their cabals, and the present happy union of the states bids fair for extirpating the future use of arms from one quarter of the world; yet such have been the irreligious politics of the present leaders of the Quakers, that, for the sake of they scarce knew what, they would cut off every hope of such a blessing by tying this Continent to Britain, like Hector to the chariot-wheel of Achilles, to be dragged through all the miseries of endless European wars.

The connection, viewed from this ground, is distressing to every man who has the feelings of humanity. By having Britain for our master, we became enemies to the greatest part of Europe, and they to us; and the consequence was, war inevitable. By being our own masters, independent of any foreign one, we have Europe for our friends, and a prospect of an endless peace among ourselves. Those who were advocates for the British govern-

ment over these colonies, were obliged to limit both their arguments and their ideas to the period of an European peace only: the moment Britain became plunged in war, every supposed convenience to us vanished away, and all we could hope for was not to be ruined. Could this be a desirable condition for a young country to be in?

Had the French pursued their fortune immediately after the defeat of Braddock, last war, this city and province had then experienced the woeful calamities of being a British subject. A scene of the same kind might happen again; for America, considered as a subject to the crown of Britain, would ever have been the seat of war, and the bone of contention between the two powers.

On the whole, if the future expulsion of arms from one quarter of the world be a desirable object to a peaceable man;—if the freedom of trade to every part of it can engage the attention of a man of business;—if the support or fall of millions of currency can affect our interest;—if the entire possession of estates, by cutting off the lordly claims of Britain over the soil, deserves the regard of landed property;—and if the right of making our own laws, uncontrouled by Royal or Ministerial spies or mandates, be worthy our care as freemen;—then are all men interested in the support of independence; and may he that supports it not, be driven from the blessing, and live unpitied, beneath the servile sufferings of scandalous subjection!

We have been amused with the tales of ancient wonders; we have read, and wept over, the histories of other nations; applauded, censured, or pitied, as their cases affected us.—The fortitude and patience of the sufferers—the justness of their cause—the weight of their oppressions and oppressors—the object to be saved or lost—with all the consequences of a defeat or a conquest—have, in the hour of sympathy, bewitched our hearts and chained it to their fate: but where is the power that ever made war upon petitioners? Or where is the war on which a world was staked till now?

We may not, perhaps, be wise enough to make all the advantages we ought of our independence; but they are, nevertheless, marked and presented to us with every character of GREAT, and GOOD, and worthy the hand of Him who sent them. I look through the present trouble to a time of tranquillity, when we shall have it in our power to set an example of peace to all the world. Were the Quakers really impressed and influenced by the quiet principles they profess to hold, they would, however they

might disapprove the means, be the first of all men to approve of INDEPENDENCE, because, by separating from the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, it affords an opportunity, never given to man before, of carrying their favourite principle of peace into general practice, by establishing Governments that shall hereafter exist without wars. Oh, ye fallen, cringing, priest, and Pemberton-ridden people! what more can we say of ye, than that a religious Quaker is a valuable character, and a political Quaker a real Jesuit.

Having thus gone over some of the principal points in support of independence, I must now request the reader to return back with me to the period when it first began to be a public doctrine, and to examine the progress it has made among the various classes of men. The era I mean to begin at, is the breaking out of hostilities, April 19th, 1775. Until this event happened, the Continent seemed to view the dispute as a kind of law-suit for a matter of right, litigating between the old country and the new; and she felt the same kind and degree of horror, as if she had seen an oppressive plaintiff, at the head of a band of ruffians, enter the court, while the cause was before it, and put the judge, the jury, the defendant, and his counsel to the sword. Perhaps a more heart-felt convulsion never reached a country with the same degree of power and rapidity before, and never may again. Pity for the sufferers, mixed with indignation at the violence, and heightened with apprehensions of undergoing the same fate, made the affair of Lexington the affair of the Continent. Every part of it felt the shock, and all vibrated together. A general promotion of sentiment took place. Those who had drank deeply into Whiggish principles, that is, the right and necessity not only of opposing, but wholly setting aside the power of the Crown as soon as it became practically dangerous (for in theory it was always so) stept into the first stage of independence; while another class of Whigs, equally sound in principle, but not so sanguine in enterprize, attached themselves the stronger to the cause, and fell close in with the rear of the former; their partition was a mere point. Numbers of the moderate men, whose chief fault, at that time, arose from their entertaining a better opinion of Britain than she deserved, convinced now of their mistake, gave her up and publicly declared themselves good Whigs. While the Tories, seeing it was no longer a laughing matter, either sunk into silent obscurity, or contented themselves with coming forth and abusing General Gage: not a single advocate

appeared to justify the action of that day; it seemed to appear to every one with the same magnitude, struck every one with the same force, and created in every one the same abhorrence. From this period we may date the growth of independence.

If the many circumstances which happened at this memorable time, be taken in one view, and compared with each other, they will justify a conclusion which seems not to be attended to, I mean a fixed design in the King and Ministry of driving America into arms, in order that they might be furnished with a pretence for seizing the whole Continent, as the immediate property of the Crown. A noble plunder for hungry courtiers!

It ought to be remembered that the first petition from the Congress was at this time unanswered on the part of the British King. That the motion called Lord North's motion, of the 20th of February, 1775, arrived in America the latter end of March. This motion was to be laid, by the several Governors, then in being, before the Assembly of each province; and the first Assembly before which it was laid, was the Assembly of Pennsylvania in May following. This being a just state of the case, I then ask, why were hostilities commenced between the time of passing the resolve in the House of Commons, of the 20th of February, and the time of the Assemblies meeting to deliberate upon it? Degrading and infamous as that motion was, there is, nevertheless, reason to believe that the King and his adherents were afraid the Colonies would agree to it, and lest they should, took effectual care they should not, by provoking them with hostilities in the interim. They had not the least doubt at that time of conquering America at one blow; and what they expected to get by a conquest being infinitely greater than any thing they could hope to get either by taxation or accommodation, they seemed determined to prevent even the possibility of hearing each other, lest America should disappoint their greedy hopes of the whole, by listening even to their own terms. On the one hand they refused to hear the petition of the Continent, and on the other hand took effectual care the Continent should not hear them.

That the motion of the 20th of February, and the orders for commencing hostilities were both concerted by the same person, or persons, and not the latter by General Gage, as was falsely imagined at first, is evident from an extract of a letter of his to the Administration, read among other papers in the House of Commons, in which he informs his masters

*That though their idea of his disarming certain counties was a right one, yet it required him to be master of the country, in order to enable him to execute it.* This was prior to the commencement of hostilities, and, consequently, before the motion of the 20th of February could be deliberated on by the several Assemblies.

Perhaps it may be asked, why was the motion passed, if there was at the same time a plan to aggravate the Americans not to listen to it? Lord North assigned one reason himself, which was, a hope of dividing them. This was publicly tempting them to reject it: that if in case the injury of arms should fail of provoking them sufficiently, the insult of such a declaration might fill it up. But by passing the motion and getting it afterwards rejected in America, it enabled them, in their wretched idea of politics, among other things, to hold up the Colonies to foreign powers with every possible mark of disobedience and rebellion. They had applied to those powers not to supply the Continent with arms, ammunition, &c. and it was necessary they should incense them against us by assigning on their own part, some seeming reputable reason why. By dividing, it had a tendency to weaken the states, and likewise to perplex the adherents of America in England. But the principal scheme, and that which has marked their character in every part of their conduct, was a design of precipitating the Colonies into a state which they might afterwards deem rebellion, and under that pretence put an end to all future complaints, petitions, or remonstrances, by seizing the whole at once. They had ravaged one part of the globe, till it could glut them no longer; their prodigality required new plunder, and through the East Indian article, TEA, they hoped to transfer their rapine from that quarter of the world to this. Every designed quarrel has its pretence; and the same barbarian avarice accompanied the plant to America, which ruined the country that produced it.

That men never turn rogues, without turning fools, is a maxim, sooner or later, universally true. The commencement of hostilities, being in the beginning of April, was of all times, the worst chosen. The Congress were to meet the 10th of May following, and the distress the Continent felt at this unparalleled outrage, gave a stability to that body which no other circumstance could have done. It suppressed too, all inferior debates, and bound them together by a necessitous affection, without giving them time to differ upon trifles. The suffering, likewise, softened the whole

body of the people into a degree of pliability, which laid the principal foundation-stone of union, order, and government; and which, at any other time, might only have fretted, and then faded away unnoticed and unimproved. But Providence, who best knows how to time her misfortunes, as well as her immediate favours, chose this to be the time. And who dares dispute it?

It did not seem the disposition of the people at this crisis to heap petition upon petition, while the former remained unanswered. The measure, however, was carried in Congress, and a second petition was sent, of which I shall only remark, that it was submissive even to a dangerous fault, because the prayer of it appealed solely to what is called the prerogative of the Crown, while the matter in dispute was confessed to be Constitutional. But even this petition, flattering as it was, was still not so harmonious as the chink of cash, and, consequently, not sufficiently grateful to the Tyrant, and his Ministry. From every circumstance it is evident, that it was the determination of the British Court to have nothing to do with America, but to conquer it fully and absolutely. They were certain of success, and the field of battle was to be the only place of treaty. I am confident that there are thousands and tens of thousands in America who wonder they should ever have thought otherwise: but the sin of that day was the sin of civility, yet it operated against our present good in the same manner that a civil opinion of the devil would against our future peace.

Independence was a doctrine scarce and rare, even towards the conclusion of the year seventy-five. All our politics had been founded on the hope or expectation of making the matter up—a hope which, though general on the side of America, had never entered the head or heart of the British Court. Their hope was conquest and confiscation. Good Heavens! what volumes of thanks does America owe to Britain! What infinite obligations to the tool that fills, with paradoxical vacancy, the throne! Nothing but the sharpest essence of villainy, compounded with the strongest distillation of folly, could have produced a menstruum that would have effected a separation. The Congress in seventy-four administered an abortive medicine to independence, by prohibiting the importation of goods, and the succeeding Congress rendered the dose still more dangerous by continuing it. Had independence been a settled system with America (as Britain has advanced) she ought to have doubled her importation, and prohibited in some degree her ex-

portation. And this single circumstance is sufficient to acquit America, before any jury of nations, of having a Continental plan of independence in view; a charge which, had it been true, would have been honourable, but is so grossly false, that either the amazing ignorance, or the wilfull dishonesty of the British Court, is effectually proved by it.

The second petition, like the first, produced no answer. It was scarcely acknowledged to be received. The British Court were too determined in their villainy even to act it artfully, and in their rage for conquest, neglected the necessary subtilties for obtaining it. They might have divided, distracted, and played a thousand tricks with us, had they been as cunning as they were cruel.

This last indignity gave a new spring to independence. Those who knew the savage obstinacy of the King, and the jobbing, gambling spirit of the Court, predicted the fate of the petition, as soon as it was sent from America; for the men being known, their measures were easily foreseen. As politicians, we ought not so much to ground our hope on the reasonableness of the thing we ask, as on the reasonableness of the person of whom we ask it. Who would expect discretion from a fool, candour from a tyrant, or justice from a villain?

As every prospect of accommodation seemed now to fail fast, men began to think seriously on the matter; and their reason being thus stripped of the false hope which had long encompassed it, became approachable by fair debate; yet still the bulk of the people hesitated; they startled at the novelty of independence, without once considering that our getting into arms at first was a more extraordinary novelty, and that all other nations had gone through the work of independence before us. They doubted, likewise, the ability of the Continent to support it, without reflecting, that it required the same force to obtain an accommodation by arms as an independence. If the one was acquirable, the other was the same; because, to accomplish either, it was necessary that our strength should be too great for Britain to subdue; and it was too unreasonable to suppose, that, with the power of being masters, we should submit to be servants.* Their caution at this time, was exceedingly mis-

* In this state of political suspense, the pamphlet COMMON SENSE, made its appearance, and the success it met with does not

placed; for if they were able to defend their property and maintain their rights by arms, they consequently were able to defend and support their independence; and in proportion as these men saw the necessity and rightness of the measure, they honestly and openly declared and adopted it; and the part they have acted since, has done them honour, and fully established their characters. Error, in opinion, has this peculiar advantage with it, that the foremost point of the contrary ground may at any time be reached by the sudden exertion of a thought; and it frequently happens in sentimental differences, that some striking circumstance, or some forcible reason, quickly conceived, will effect, in an instant, what neither argument, nor example, could produce in an age.

I find it impossible, in the small compass I am limited to, to trace out the progress which independence has made on the minds of the different classes of men, and the several reasons by which they were moved. With some, it was a passionate abhorrence against the King of England and his Ministry, as a set of savages and brutes; and these men, governed by the agony of a wounded mind, were for trusting every thing to hope and heaven, and bidding defiance at once. With others, it was a growing conviction that the scheme of the British Court was to create, ferment, and drive on a quarrel for the sake of confiscated plunder. Men of this

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become me to mention. Dr. Franklin, Mr. Samuel, and John Adams were severally spoken of as the supposed author. I had not, at that time, the pleasure either of personally knowing, or being known to the two last gentlemen. The favour of Dr. Franklin's friendship I possessed in England, and my introduction to this part of the world was through his patronage. I happened, when a school-boy, to pick up a pleasing Natural History of Virginia, and my inclination from that day of seeing the western side of the Atlantic never left me. In October, seventy-five, Dr. Franklin proposed giving me such materials as were in his hands, towards completing an history of the present transactions, and seemed desirous of having the first volume out the next spring. I had then formed the outlines of COMMON SENSE, and finished nearly the first part; and as I supposed the Doctor's design in getting out a history, was to open the new year with a new system, I expected to surprise him with a production on that subject, much earlier than he thought of; and without informing him of what I was doing, got it ready for the press as fast as I conveniently could, and sent him the first pamphlet that was printed off.

cast ripened into independence in proportion as the evidence increased. While a third class conceived it was the true interest of America, internally and externally, to be her own master, gave their support to independence, step by step, as they saw her abilities to maintain it enlarge. With many, it was a compound of all these reasons; while those who were too callous to be reached by either, remained, and still remain Tories.

The legal necessity of being independent, with several collateral reasons, is pointed out in an elegant, masterly manner, in a charge to the grand jury for the district of Charlestown, by the Hon. William Henry Drayton, Esq. Chief Justice of South Carolina. This performance, and the address of the convention of New York, are pieces, in my humble opinion, of the first rank in America.

The principal causes why independence has not been so universally supported as it ought, are fear and indolence; and the causes why it has been opposed, are, *avarice, downright villainy*, and *lust of personal power*. There is not such a being in America, as a Tory from conscience; some secret defect or other is interwoven in the character of all those, be they men or women, who can look with patience on the brutality, luxury, and debauchery of the British Court, and the violations of their army here. A woman's virtue must sit very lightly on her, who can even hint a favourable sentiment in their behalf. It is remarkable that the whole race of prostitutes in New York were Tories; and the schemes for supporting the Tory cause, in this city, for which several are now in gaol, and one hanged, were concerted and carried on, in common bawdy-houses, assisted by those who kept them.

The connection between vice and meanness, is a fit object for satire, but when the satire is a fact, it cuts with the irresistible power of a diamond. If a Quaker, in defence of his just rights, his property, and the chastity of his house, takes up a musket, he is expelled the meeting; but the present King of England, who seduced and took into keeping a sister of their society, is reverenced and supported with repeated testimonies, while the friendly noodle from whom she was taken, and who is now in this city, continues a drudge in the service of his rival, as if proud of being cuckolded by a creature called a King.

Our support and success depend on such a variety of men and circumstances, that every one, who does but wish well, is of some use. There are men who have a

strange awkwardness to arms, yet have hearts to risk every shilling in the cause, or in support of those who have better talents for defending it. Nature in the arrangement of mankind, has fitted some for every service in life: were all soldiers, all would starve, and go naked; and were none soldiers, all would be slaves. As disaffection to independence is the badge of a Tory, so affection to it, is the mark of a Whig; and the different services of the Whigs down from those who nobly contribute every thing, to those who have nothing to render but their wishes, tend all to the same centre, though with different degrees of merit and ability. The larger we make the circle, the more we shall harmonise, and the stronger we shall be: all we want to shut out is disaffection, and, that excluded, we must accept from each other such duties as we are best fitted to bestow. A narrow system of politics, like a narrow system of religion, is calculated only to sour the temper, and, live at variance with mankind.

All we want to know in America is simply this, who is for independence, and who is not? Those who are for it will support it, and the remainder will undoubtedly see the reasonableness of their paying the charges; while those who oppose, or seek to betray it, must expect the more rigid fate of the gaol and the gibbet. There is a bastard kind of generosity, which, by being extended to all men, is as fatal to society, on one hand, as the want of true generosity is on the other. A lax manner of administering justice, falsely termed moderation, has a tendency both to dispirit public virtue, and promote the growth of public evils. Had the late Committee of Safety taken cognizance of the last testimony of the Quakers, and proceeded against such delinquents as were concerned therein, they had, probably, prevented the treasonable plans which have been concerted since. When one villain is suffered to escape, it encourages another to proceed, either from a hope of escaping likewise, or an apprehension that we dare not punish. It has been a matter of general surprise, that no notice was taken of the incendiary publication of the Quakers, of the 20th of November last; a publication evidently intended to promote sedition and treason, and encourage the enemy, (who were then within a day's march of this city,) to proceed on, and possess it. I here present the reader with a memorial, which was laid before the Board of Safety a few days after the testimony appeared. Not a member of that Board, that I conversed with, but expressed the highest detestation of

the perverted principles and conduct of the Quaker junto, and that the Board would take the matter up; notwithstanding which, it was suffered to pass away unnoticed, to the encouragement of new acts of treason, the general danger of the cause, and the disgrace of the state.

*To the Honourable the Council of Safety of the State of Pennsylvania.*

At a meeting of a reputable number of the inhabitants of the city of Philadelphia, impressed with a proper sense of the justice of the cause which this Continent is engaged in, and animated with a generous fervour for supporting the same, it was resolved, that the following be laid before the Board of Safety:

"We profess liberality of sentiment to all men: with this distinction only, that those who do not deserve it, would become wise, and seek to deserve it. We hold the pure doctrine of universal liberty of conscience, and conceive it our duty to endeavour to secure that sacred right to others, as well as to defend it for ourselves; for we undertake not to judge of the religious rectitude of tenets, but leave the whole matter to Him who made us.

"We persecute no man, neither will we abet in the persecution of any man for religion's sake; our common relation to others, being that of fellow-citizens and fellow-subjects of one civil community; and in this line of connection we hold out the right hand of fellowship to all men. But we should conceive ourselves to be unworthy members of the FREE and INDEPENDENT STATES OF AMERICA, were we unconcernedly to see, or suffer any treasonable wound, public or private, directly or indirectly, to be given against the peace and safety of the same. We inquire not into the rank of the offenders, nor their religious persuasion: we have no business with either; our part being only to find them out, and exhibit them to justice.

"A printed paper, dated the 20th of November, and signed '*John Pemberton*,' whom we suppose to be an inhabitant of this city, has lately been dispersed abroad, a copy of which accompanies this. Had the framers and publishers of that paper conceived it their duty to exhort the youth, and others, of their society, to a patient submission under the present trying visitations, and humbly to wait the event of heaven towards them, they had therein shewn a

Christian temper, and we had been silent: but the anger, and political virulence, with which their instructions are given, and the abuse with which they stigmatize all ranks of men, not thinking like themselves, leave no doubt on our minds from what spirit their publication proceeded: and it is disgraceful to the pure cause of truth, that men can dally with words of the most sacred import, and play them as mechanically off, as if religion consisted only in contrivance. We know of no instance in which the Quakers have been compelled to bear arms, or to do any thing which might strain their consciences; wherefore their advice, 'to withstand and refuse to submit to the arbitrary instructions and ordinances of men,' appears to us a false alarm, and could only be treasonably calculated to gain favour with our enemies, when they were seemingly on the brink of invading this state, or, what is still worse, to weaken the hands of our defence, that their entrance into this city might be made practical and easy.

"We disclaim all tumult and disorder in the punishment of offenders; and wish to be governed not by temper but by reason, in the manner of treating them. We are sensible that our cause has suffered by the two following errors: first, by ill-judged lenity to traitorous persons in some cases; and secondly, by only a passionate treatment of them in others. For the future, we disown both, and wish to be steady in our proceedings, and serious in our punishment.

"Every State in America has, by the repeated voice of its inhabitants, directed and authorized the Continental Congress to publish a formal Declaration of Independence of, and separation from, the oppressive King and Parliament of Great Britain; and we look on every man as an enemy, who does not, in some line or other, give his assistance towards supporting the same; at the same time we consider the offence to be heightened to a degree of unpardonable guilt, when such persons, under the shew of religion, endeavour, either by writing, speaking, or otherwise, to subvert, overturn, or bring reproach upon the independence of this Continent, as declared by Congress.

"The publishers of the paper, signed 'John Pemberton,' have called, in a loud and passionate manner, on their friends and connections, 'to withstand and refuse' obedience to whatever 'instructions or ordinances' may be published, not warranted by (what they call) 'that happy Constitution under which they and others long enjoyed tranquillity and

peace.' If this be not treason, we know not what may properly be called by that name.

"To us it is a matter of surprise and astonishment, that men with the word 'peace, peace,' continually on their lips, should be so fond of living under, and supporting a Government, and at the same time calling it 'happy,' which is never better pleased than when at war—that hath filled India with carnage and famine—Africa with slavery—and tampered with Indians and Negroes to cut the throats of the freemen of America. We conceive it a disgrace to this State, to harbour or wink at such palpable hypocrisy. But as we seek not to hurt the hair of any man's head, when we can make ourselves safe without, we wish such persons to restore peace to themselves and us, by removing themselves to some part of the King of Great Britain's dominions, as by that method they may live unmolested by us, or we by them; for our fixed opinion is, that those who do not deserve a place among us, ought not to have one.

"We conclude, with requesting the Council of Safety to take into their consideration the paper signed 'John Pemberton;' and if it shall appear to them to be of a dangerous tendency, or of a treasonable nature, that they would commit the signer, together with such other persons as they can discover were concerned therein, into custody, until such time as some mode of trial shall ascertain the full degree of their guilt and punishment; in the doing of which, we wish their judges, whoever they may be, to disregard the man, his connections, interest, riches, poverty, or principles of religion, and to attend to the nature of his offence only."

The most cavilling sectarian cannot accuse the foregoing with containing the least ingredient of persecution. The free spirit on which the American cause is founded, disdains to mix with such an impurity, and leave it a rubbish fit only for narrow and suspicious minds to grovel in. Suspicion and persecution are weeds of the same dunghill, and flourish best together. Had the Quakers minded their religion and their business, they might have lived through this dispute in enviable ease, and none would have molested them. The common phrase with these people is, "*Our principles are peace.*" To which may be replied, *and your practices are the reverse;* for never did the conduct of men oppose their own doctrine more notoriously than the present race of Quakers. They have artfully changed themselves into a different sort of people to what they used to be, and yet have

the address to persuade each other they are not altered: like antiquated virgins, they see not the havoc deformity hath made upon them, but pleasantly mistaking wrinkles for dimples, conceit themselves yet lovely, and wonder at the stupid world for not admiring them.

Did no injury arise to the public by this apostasy of the Quakers from themselves, the public would have nothing to do with it; but as both the design and consequences are pointed against a cause in which the whole community is interested, it is, therefore, no longer a subject confined to the cognizance of the meeting only, but comes as a matter of criminality before either the authority of the particular State *in which* it is acted, or of the Continent *against which* it operates. Every attempt now to support the authority of the King and Parliament of Great Britain over America, is treason against *every* state: therefore, it is impossible that *any one* can pardon or screen from punishment, an offender against *all.*

But to proceed. While the infatuated Tories of this and other States were last spring talking of commissioners, accommodating, making the matter up, and the Lord knows what stuff and nonsense, their good King and Ministry were glutting themselves with the revenge of reducing America to *unconditional submission*, and solacing each other with the certainty of conquering it in *one campaign.* The following quotations are from the Parliamentary Register of the debates of the House of Lords, March the 5th, 1776.

"The Americans," says Lord *Talbot*,* "have been obstinate, undutiful, and ungovernable, from the very beginning, from their first early and infant settlement; and I am every day more and more convinced that this people will never be brought back to their duty, and the subordinate relation they stand in to this country, till *reduced to an unconditional effectual submission; no concession on our part, no lenity, no endurance*, will have any other effect but that of increasing their insolence."

"The struggle," says Lord *Townsend*,† "is now a struggle for power; the die is cast, and the ONLY POINT which now remains to be determined, is, in what manner the

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* Steward of the King's household.

† Formerly General Townsend at Quebec, and late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

war can be most effectually prosecuted and speedily finished, in order to procure that *unconditional submission*, which has been so ably stated by the noble Earl with the white staff," meaning Lord *Talbot;* "and I have no reason to doubt that the measures now pursuing will put an end to the war in the course of a SINGLE CAMPAIGN. Should it linger longer, we shall then have reason to expect that some foreign power will interfere, and take advantage of our domestic troubles and civil distractions."

Lord *Littelton.* "My sentiments are pretty well known. I shall only observe now, that lenient measures have had no other effect than to produce insult after insult; that the more we conceded, the higher America rose in her demands, and the more insolent she has grown. It is for this reason that I am now for the most effective and decisive measures; and am of opinion, that no alternative is left us, but to relinquish America for ever, or finally determine to compel her to acknowledge the legislative authority of this country; and it is the principle of an *unconditional submission* I would be for maintaining."

Can words be more expressive than these? Surely the Tories will believe the Tory lords! The truth is, they *do believe them*, and know as fully as any Whig on the Continent knows, that the King and Ministry never had the least design of an accommodation with America, but an absolute, unconditional conquest. And the part which the Tories were to act, was, by downright lying, to endeavour to put the Continent off its guard, and to divide and sow discontent in the minds of such Whigs as they might gain an influence over. In short, to keep up a distraction here, that the force sent from England might be able to conquer in "*one campaign.*" They and the Ministry were, by a different game, playing into each others hands. The cry of the Tories in England was, "*No reconciliation, no accommodation,*" in order to obtain a greater military force; while those in America were crying nothing but "*reconciliation and accommodation,*" that the force sent might conquer with the less resistance.

But this "*single campaign*" is over, and America not conquered. The whole work is yet to do, and the force much less to do it with. Their condition is both despicable and deplorable. Out of cash—out of heart, and out of hope. A country furnished with arms and ammunition, as America now is, with three millions of inhabitants, and three

thousand miles distant from the nearest enemy that can approach her, is able to look, and laugh them in the face.

Howe appears to have two objects in view, either to go up the North-river, or come to Philadelphia. By going up the North-river, he secures a retreat for his army through Canada, but the ships must return, if they return at all, the same way they went: and as our army would be in the rear, the safety of their passage down is a doubtful matter. By such a motion, he shuts himself from all supplies from Europe, but through Canada, and exposes his army and navy, to the danger of perishing. The idea of his cutting off the communication between the eastern and southern States, by means of the North-river, is merely visionary. He cannot do it by his shipping; because no ship can lay long at anchor in any river within reach of the shore; a single gun would drive a first rate from such a station. This was fully proved last October, at forts Washington and Lee, where one gun only, on each side of the river, obliged two frigates to cut and be towed off in an hour's time. Neither can he cut it off by his army; because the several posts they must occupy would divide them almost to nothing, and expose them to be picked up by ours like pebbles on a river's bank: but admitting he could, where is the injury? Because, while his whole force is cantoned out, as sentries over the water, they will be very innocently employed, and the moment they march into the country the communication opens.

The most probable object is Philadelphia, and the reasons are many. Howe's business in America is to conquer it, and in proportion as he finds himself unable to the task, he will employ his strength to distress women, and weak minds, in order to accomplish, through *their fears*, what he cannot effect by his *own force*. His coming, or attempting to come to Philadelphia, is a circumstance that proves his weakness; for no General, that felt himself able to take the field and attack his antagonist, would think of bringing his army into a city in the summer time; and this mere shifting the scene from place to place, without effecting any thing, has feebleness and cowardice on the face of it, and holds him up in a contemptible light to any one who can reason justly and firmly. By several informations from New York, it appears that their army in general, both officers and men, have given up the expectation of conquering America; their eye is now fixed upon the spoil. They suppose Philadelphia to be rich with stores, and as

they think to get more by robbing a town than by attacking an army, their movement towards this city is probable. We are not now contending against an army of soldiers, but against a band of thieves, who had rather plunder than fight, and have no other hope of conquest than by cruelty.

They expect to get a mighty booty, and strike another general panic, by making a sudden movement and getting possession of this city; but unless they can march *out* as well as *in*, or get the entire command of the river, to remove off their plunder, they may probably be stopped with the stolen goods upon them. They have never yet succeeded wherever they have been opposed but at Fort Washington. At Charleston their defeat was effectual. At Ticonderago they run away. In every skirmish at Kingsbridge and the White-Plains they were obliged to retreat, and the instant our arms were turned upon them in the Jerseys, they turned likewise, and those that turned not were taken.

The necessity of always fitting our internal police to the circumstances of the times we live in, is something so strikingly obvious, that no sufficient objection can be made against it. The safety of all societies depends upon it: and where this point is not attended to, the consequences will either be a general languor or a tumult. The encouragement and protection of the good subjects of any State, and the suppression and punishment of bad ones, are principal objects for which all authority is instituted, and the line in which it ought to operate. We have in this city a strange variety of men and characters, and the circumstances of the times require they should be publicly known; it is not the number of Tories that hurts us, so much as the not finding out who they are: men must now take one side or the other, and abide by the consequences. The Quakers, trusting to their short-sighted sagacity, have, most unluckily for them, made their declaration in their last testimony, and we ought *now* to take them at their word. They have voluntarily read themselves out of the continental meeting, and cannot hope to be restored to it again, but by payment and penitence. Men whose political principles are founded on avarice, are beyond the reach of reason, and the only cure of Toryism of this cast, is to tax it. A substantial good drawn from a real evil, is of the same benefit to society, as if drawn from a virtue: and where men have not public spirit to render themselves serviceable, it ought

to be the study of Government to draw the best possible use from their vices. When the governing passion of any man or set of men is once known, the method of managing them is easy; for even misers, whom no public virtue can impress, would become generous, could a heavy tax be laid upon covetousness.

The Tories have endeavoured to insure their property with the enemy, by forfeiting their reputation with us: from which may be justly inferred, that their governing passion is avarice. Make them as much afraid of losing on one side as the other, and you stagger their Toryism; make them more so, and you reclaim them; for their principle is to worship any power they are most afraid of.

This method of considering men and things together, opens into a large field for speculation, and affords me opportunity of offering some observations on the state of our currency, so as to make the support of it go hand in hand with the suppression of disaffection, and the encouragement of public spirit.

The thing which first presents itself in inspecting the state of the currency is, that we have too much of it, and there is a necessity of reducing the quantity, in order to increase the value. Men are daily growing poor by the very means they take to get rich: for in the same proportion that the prices of all goods on hand are raised, the value of all money laid by, is reduced. A simple case will make this clear, Let a man have one hundred pounds cash, and as many goods on hand as will to-day sell for twenty pounds, but not content with the present market price, he raises them to forty pounds, and by so doing, obliges others in their own defence to raise cent. per cent. likewise; in this case, it is evident that his hundred pounds laid by, is reduced fifty pounds in value; whereas, had the markets dropped cent per cent, his goods would have sold but for ten, but his hundred pounds would have risen in value to two hundred, because it would then purchase as many goods again, or support his family as long again as before. And strange as it may seem, he is one hundred and fifty pounds the poorer for raising his goods, to what he would have been had he lowered them; because the forty pounds his goods sold for, is by the general rise of the markets, cent. per cent., rendered of no more value than the ten pounds would be, had the market fallen in the same proportion: and, consequently, the whole difference of gain or loss is on the different value of the hundred pounds laid by, viz.

from fifty to two hundred. This rage for raising goods is, for several reasons, much more the fault of the Tories than the Whigs; and yet the Tories (to their shame and confusion ought they to be told of it) are by far the most noisy and discontented. The greatest part of the Whigs, by being now either in the army, or employed in some public service, are *buyers* only, and not *sellers;* and as this evil has its origin in trade, it cannot be charged on those who are out of it.

But the grievance is now become too general to be remedied by partial methods, and the only effectual cure is to reduce the quantity of money; with half the quantity we should be richer than we are now, because the value of it would be doubled, and consequently our attachment to it increased; for it is not the number of dollars a man has, but how far they will go, that makes him either rich or poor.

These two points being admitted, viz. that the quantity of money is too great, and that prices of goods can be only effectually reduced by reducing the quantity of the money; the next point to be considered is, the method how to reduce it.

The circumstances of the times, as before observed, require that the public characters of all men should *now* be fully understood, and the only general method of ascertaining it, is by an oath or affirmation, renouncing all allegiance to the King of Great Britain, and to support the independency of the United States, as declared by Congress. Let at the same time, a tax of ten, fifteen, or twenty per cent. per annum, to be collected quarterly, be levied on all property. These alternatives, by being perfectly voluntary, will take in all sorts of people. Here is the test; here is the tax. He who takes the former, conscientiously proves his affection to the cause, and binds himself to pay his quota by the best *services* in his power, and is thereby justly exempt from the latter; and those who chuse the latter, pay their quota in money, to be excused from taking the former; or, rather, it is the price paid to us for their supposed, though mistaken, insurance with the enemy.

But this is only a part of the advantage which would arise by knowing the different characters of men. The Whigs stake every thing on the issue of their arms, while the Tories, by their disaffection, are sapping and undermining their strength, and, of consequence, the property of the Whigs is the more exposed thereby; and whatever, in-

jury their estates may sustain by the movements of the enemy, must either be borne by themselves, who have done every thing which has yet been done, or by the Tories, who have not only done nothing, but have, by their disaffection, invited the enemy on.

In the present crisis, we ought to know square by square, and house by house, who are in real allegiance with the United Independent States, and who are not. Let but the line be made clear and distinct, and all men will then know what they are to trust to. It would not only be good policy, but strict justice, to raise fifty or a hundred thousand pounds, or more, if it be necessary, out of the estates and property of the King of England's votaries, resident in Philadelphia, to be distributed, as a reward to those inhabitants of the city and state, who should turn out and repulse the enemy, should they attempt their march this way; and likewise, to bind the property of all such persons to make good the damages which that of the Whigs might sustain. In the undistinguishable mode of conducting a war, we frequently make reprisals at sea, on the vessels of persons in England who are friends to our cause, compared with the residentiary Tories among us.

In every former publication of mine, from Common Sense, down to the last Crisis, I have generally gone on the charitable supposition, that the Tories were rather a mistaken than a criminal people, and have applied argument after argument, with all the candour and temper I was capable of, in order to set every part of the case clearly and fairly before them, and, if possible, to reclaim them from ruin to reason. I have done my duty by them, and have now done with that doctrine, taking it for granted, that those who yet hold their disaffection, are either a set of avaricious miscreants, who would sacrifice the Continent to save themselves, or a banditti of hungry traitors, who are hoping for a division of the spoil. To which may be added, a list of crown or proprietary dependants, who, rather than go without a portion of power, would be content to share it with the devil. Of such men their is no hope; and their obedience will only be according to the danger that is set before them, and the power that is exercised over them.

A time will shortly arrive, in which, by ascertaining the characters of persons now, we shall be guarded against their mischiefs then; so in proportion as the enemy despair of conquest, they will be trying the arts of seduction and

the force of fear, by all the mischiefs they can inflict. But in war we may be certain of these two things, viz. that cruelty in an enemy, and motions made with more than usual parade, are always signs of weakness. He that can conquer, finds his mind too free and pleasant to be brutish; and he that intends to conquer, never makes too much show of his strength.

We now know the enemy we have to do with. While drunk with the certainty of victory, they disdained to be civil; and in proportion as disappointment makes them sober, and their apprehensions of an European war alarm them, they will become cringing and artful: honest they cannot be.

But our answer to them, in either condition they may be in, is short and full: "As free and independent States, we are willing to make peace with you to-morrow, but we can neither hear, nor reply, in any other character."

If Britain can conquer us, it proves, that she is neither able to govern or protect us, and our particular situation now is such, that any connexion with her would be unwisely exchanging a half defeated enemy for two powerful ones. Europe, by every appearance and information, is now on the eve, nay, on the morning twilight of a war, and any alliance with *George the Third*, brings *France* and *Spain* upon our backs; a separation from him attach them to our side; therefore, the only road to peace, honour, and commerce, is INDEPENDENCE.

Written this fourth year of the UNION, *which* GOD *preserve.*

COMMON SENSE.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

## No. IV.

*Philadelphia, Sept.* 12, 1777.

THOSE who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it. The event of yesterday is one of those kinds of alarms which is just sufficient to rouse us to duty, without being of consequence enough to depress our fortitude. It is not a field of a few acres of ground, but a cause we are defending; and whether we defeat the enemy in one battle, or by degrees, the consequence will be the same.

Look back at the events of last winter and the present year; there you will find that the enemy's successes have always contributed to reduce them. What they have gained in ground, they have paid so dearly for in numbers, so that their victories have in the end amounted to defeats. We have always been masters at the last push, and always shall, while we do our duty. Howe, has been once on the banks of the Delaware, and from thence driven back with loss and disgrace; and why not be again driven from the Schuylkill? His condition and ours are very different. He has every body to fight, we have only his *one army* to cope with, and which wastes away at every engagement; we can not only reinforce, but can redouble our numbers; he is cut off from all supplies, and must, sooner or later, inevitably fall into our hands.

Shall a band of ten or twelve thousand robbers, who are this day fifteen hundred or two thousand men less in strength than they were yesterday, conquer America, or subdue even a single State? The thing cannot be, unless we sit down and suffer them to do it. Another such a brush, notwithstanding we lost the ground, would, by still reducing the enemy, put them in a condition to be afterwards totally defeated.

Could our whole army have come up to the attack at one time, the consequences had probably been otherwise; but our having different parts of the Brandywine creek to guard, and the uncertainty which road to Philadelphia the enemy would attempt to take, naturally afforded them an opportunity of passing with their main body at a place where only a party of ours could be posted: for it must strike every thinking man with conviction, that it requires a much greater force to oppose an enemy in several places, than is sufficient to defeat them in any one place.

Men who are sincere in defending their freedom, will always feel concern at every circumstance which seems to make against it; it is the natural and honest consequence of all affectionate attachments, and the want of it is a vice. But the dejection lasts only for a moment; they soon rise out of it with additional vigour; the glow of hope, courage, and fortitude, will, in a little time, supply the place of every inferior passion, and kindle the whole heart into heroism.

There is a mystery in the countenance of some causes, which we have not always present judgment enough to explain. It is distressing to see an enemy advancing into a country, but it is the only place in which we can beat them, and in which we have always beaten them, whenever they have made the attempt. The nearer any disease approaches to a crisis, the nearer it is to a cure. Danger and deliverance make their advances together, and it is only in the last push that one or the other takes the lead.

There are many men who will do their duty when it is not wanted; but a genuine public spirit always appears most when there is most occasion for it. Thank God! our army, though fatigued, is yet entire. The attack made by us yesterday, was under many disadvantages, naturally arising from the uncertainty of knowing which route the enemy would take; and from that circumstance, the whole of our force could not be brought up together time enough to engage all at once. Our strength is yet reserved; and it is evident that Howe does not think himself a gainer by the affair, otherwise he would this morning have moved down, and attacked General Washington.

Gentlemen of the city and country, it is in your power, by a spirited improvement of the present circumstance, to turn it to a real advantage. Howe is now weaker than before, and every shot will contribute to reduce him. You are more immediately interested than any other part of the Continent; your all is at stake; it is not so with the ge-

neral cause; you are devoted by the enemy to plunder and destruction. It is the encouragement which Howe, the chief of plunderers, has promised his army. Thus circumstanced, you may save yourselves by a manly resistance, but you can have no hope in any other conduct. I never yet knew our brave general, or any part of the army, officers or men, out of heart, and I have seen them in circumstances a thousand times more trying than the present. It is only those that are not in action, that feel languor and heaviness, and the best way to rub it off, is to turn out, and make sure work of it.

Our army must undoubtedly feel fatigue, and want reinforcement of rest, though not of valour. Our own interest and happiness call upon us to give them every support in our power, and make the burden of the day, on which the safety of this city depends, as light as possible. Remember, gentlemen, that we have forces both to the northward and southward of Philadelphia, and if the enemy be but stopped till those can arrive, this city will be saved, and the enemy finally routed. You have too much at stake to hesitate. You ought not to think an hour on the matter, but to spring to action at once. Other states have been invaded, and have likewise driven off the invader. Now our time and turn is come, and perhaps the finishing stroke is reserved for us. When we look back on the dangers we have been saved from, and reflect on the success we have been blessed with, it would be sinful either to be idle, or to despair.

I close this paper with a short address to General Howe. You, Sir, are only lingering out the period that shall bring with it your defeat. You have yet scarce began upon the war, and the farther you enter, the faster will your troubles thicken. What you now enjoy is only a respite from ruin; an invitation to destruction: something that will lead on to our deliverance at your expence. We know the cause we are engaged in, and though a passionate fondness for it may make us grieve at every injury that threatens it, yet, when the moment of concern is over, the determination to duty returns. We are not moved by the gloomy smile of a worthless King, but by the ardent glow of true patriotism. We fight not to enslave, but to set a country free, and to make room upon the earth for honest men to live in. In such a case we are sure we are right; and we leave to you, the despairing reflection of being the tool of a miserable tyrant.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

No. V.

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## To General Sir William Howe.

*Lancaster, March* 1, 1778.

To argue with a man who has renounced the use and authority of reason, and whose philosophy consists in holding humanity in contempt, is like administering medicines to the dead, or endeavouring to convert an atheist by scripture. Enjoy, Sir, your insensibility of feeling and reflecting. It is the prerogative of animals. And no man will envy you those honours, in which a savage only can be your rival, and a bear your master.

As the generosity of this country rewarded your brother's services last war, with an elegant monument in Westminster Abbey, it is consistent that she should bestow some mark of distinction upon you. You certainly deserve her notice, and a conspicuous place in the catalogue of extraordinary persons. Yet it would be a pity to pass you from the world in state, and consign you to magnificent oblivion among the tombs, without telling the future beholder why. Judas is as much known as John, yet history ascribes their fame to very different actions.

Sir William hath undoubtedly merited a monument; but of what kind? or with what inscription? where placed? or how established? are questions that would puzzle all the heralds of St. James's, in the profoundest mood of historical deliberation. We are at no loss, Sir, to ascertain your real character, but somewhat perplexed how to perpetuate its identity, and preserve it uninjured from the transformations of time or mistake. A statuary may give a false expression to your bust, or decorate it with some equivocal emblems, by which you may happen to steal into reputation, and impose upon the hereafter traditionary world. Ill-nature, or

ridicule, may conspire, or a variety of accidents combine to lessen, enlarge, or change Sir William's fame; and no doubt but he who has taken so much pains to be singular in his conduct, would choose to be as singular in his exit, his monument, and his epitaph.

The usual honours of the dead, to be sure, are not sufficiently sublime to escort a character like yours to the republic of dust and ashes; for, however men may differ in their ideas of grandeur or government here, the grave is nevertheless a perfect republic. Death is not the monarch of the dead, but of the dying. The moment he obtains a conquest, he loses a subject, and, like the foolish King you serve, will, in the end, war himself out of all dominion.

As a proper preliminary towards the arrangement of your funeral honours, we readily admit your new rank of *knighthood.* The title is perfectly in character, and is your own, more by merit than creation. There are knights of various orders, from the knight of the windmill, to the knight of the post. The former is your pattern for exploits, and the latter will assist you in settling your accounts. No honorary title could be more happily applied! The ingenuity is sublime! And your royal master has discovered more genius in fitting you therewith, than in generating the most finished figure for a button, or descanting on the properties of a button-mould.

But how, Sir, shall we dispose of you? The invention of a statuary is exhausted, and Sir William is yet unprovided with a monument. America is anxious to bestow her funeral favours upon you, and wishes to do it in a manner that shall distinguish you from all the deceased heroes of the last war. The Egyptian method of *embalming* is not known to the present age, and hieroglyphical pageantry hath outlived the science of decyphering it. Some other method, therefore, must be thought of to immortalize the new knight of the windmill and post. Sir William, thanks to his stars, is not oppressed with very delicate ideas. He has no ambition of being wrapt up and handed about in myrrh, aloes, and cassia. Less chargeable odours will suffice; and it fortunately happens, that the simple genius of America hath discovered the art of preserving bodies, and embellishing them too, with much greater frugality than the ancients. In a balmage, Sir, of humble tar, you will be as secure as Pharaoh, and in an hieroglyphic of feathers, you will rival, in finery, all the mummies of Egypt.

As you have already made your exit from the moral

world, and by numberless acts both of passionate and deliberate injustice, engraved an "*Here lyeth*" on your deceased honour, it must be mere affectation in you to pretend concern at the humours or opinions of mankind respecting you. What remains of you may expire at any time. The sooner the better; for he who survives his reputation, lives out of spite to himself, like a man listening to his own reproach.

Thus entombed and ornamented, I leave you to the inspection of the curious, and return to the history of your yet surviving actions. The character of Sir William hath undergone some extraordinary revolutions since his arrival in America. It is now fixed and known; and we have nothing to hope from your candour, or to fear from your capacity. Indolence and inability have too large a share in your composition ever to suffer you to be any thing more than the hero of little villainies and unfinished adventures. That which to some persons appeared moderation in you at first, was not produced by any real virtue of your own, but by a contrast of passions dividing and holding you in perpetual irresolution. One vice will frequently expel another without the least merit in the man, as powers in contrary directions reduce each other to rest.

It became you to have supported a dignified solemnity of character; to have shewn a superior liberality of soul; to have won respect by an obstinate perseverance in maintaining order, and to have exhibited on all occasions, such an unchangeable graciousness of conduct, that while we beheld in you the resolution of an enemy, we might admire in you the sincerity of a man. You came to America under the high sounding titles of commander and commissioner; not only to suppress what you called rebellion by arms, but to shame it out of countenance by the excellence of your example. Instead of which, you have been the patron of low and vulgar frauds, the encourager of Indian cruelties, and have imported a cargo of vices, blacker than those you pretended to suppress.

Mankind are not universally agreed in their determination of right and wrong; but there are certain actions which the consent of all nations and individuals hath branded with the unchangeable name of MEANNESS. In the list of human vices we find some of such a refined constitution, that they cannot be carried into practice without seducing some virtue to their assistance; but *meanness* hath neither alliance nor apology. It is generated in the dust and sweepings of other

vices, and is of such a hateful figure that all the rest conspire to disown it. Sir William, the commissioner of George the Third, hath at last vouchsafed to give it rank and pedigree. He has placed the fugitive at the council-board, and dubbed it companion of the order of knighthood.

The particular act of meanness which I allude to in this description, is forgery. You, Sir, have abetted and patronized the forging, and uttering counterfeit Continental bills. In the same New York newspapers in which your own Proclamation under your master's authority was published, offering, or pretending to offer, pardon and protection to the inhabitants of these states, there were repeated advertisements of counterfeit money for sale, and persons who have come officially from you, and under sanction of your flag, have been taken up in attempting to put them off.

A conduct so basely mean in a public character is without precedent or pretence. Every nation on earth, whether friends or enemies, will unite in despising you. It is an incendiary war upon society, which nothing can excuse or palliate. An improvement upon beggarly villainy—and shews an inbred wretchedness of heart, made up between the venomous malignity of a serpent, and the spiteful imbecility of an inferior reptile.

The laws of any civilized country would condemn you to the gibbet without regard to your rank or title, because it is an action foreign to the usage and custom of war; and should you fall into our hands, which pray God you may, it will be a doubtful matter whether we are to consider you as a military prisoner, or a prisoner for felony.

Besides, it is exceedingly unwise and impolitic in you, or any persons in the English service, to promote, or even to encourage, or wink, at the crime of forgery in any case whatever. Because, as the riches of England, as a nation, are chiefly in paper, and the far greater part of trade among individuals is carried on by the same medium, that is, by notes and drafts on one another, they, therefore, of all people in the world, ought to endeavour to keep forgery out of sight, and, if possible, not to revive the idea of it. It is dangerous to make men familiar with a crime which they may afterwards practice to much greater advantage against those who first taught them. Several officers in the English army have made their exit at the gallows for forgery on their agents; for we all know, who know any thing of England, that there is not a more necessitous body of men, taking them generally, than what the English officers are. They

contrive to make a shew at the expence of the tailor, and appear clean at the charge of the washer-woman.

England hath at this time nearly two hundred millions of pounds sterling of public money in paper, for which she hath no real property, besides a large circulation of bank notes, bank post bills, and promissory notes and drafts of private bankers, merchants, and tradesmen. She hath the greatest quantity of paper currency, and the least quantity of gold and silver of any nation in Europe; the real specie, which is about sixteen millions sterling, serves only as change in large sums, which are always made in paper, or for payment in small ones. Thus circumstanced, the nation is put to its wits' end, and obliged to be severe almost to criminality, to prevent the practice and growth of forgery. Scarcely a session passes at the Old Bailey, or an execution at Tyburn, but witnesseth this truth. Yet you, Sir, regardless of the policy which her necessity obliges her to adopt, have made your whole army intimate with the crime. And as all armies, at the conclusion of a war, are too apt to carry into practice the vices of the campaign, it will probably happen, that England will hereafter abound in forgeries, to which art, the practitioners were first initiated under your authority in America. You, Sir, have the honour of adding a new vice to the military catalogue; and the reason perhaps, why the invention was reserved for you, is, because no General before you was mean enough even to think of it.

That a man whose soul is absorbed in the low traffic of vulgar vice, is incapable of moving in any superior region, is clearly shewn in you by the event of every campaign. Your military exploits have been without plan, object, or decision. Can it be possible that you or your employers can suppose the possession of Philadelphia to be any way equal to the expence or expectation of the nation which supports you? What advantages does England derive from any atchievements of yours? *To her*, it is perfectly indifferent what place you are in, so long as the business of conquest is unperformed, and the charge of maintaining you remains the same.

If the principal events of the three campaigns be attended to, the balance will appear strongly against you at the close of each; but the last, in point of importance to us, hath exceeded the former two. It is pleasant to look back on dangers past, and equally as pleasant to meditate on present ones, when the way out begins to appear. That period is now arrived, and the long doubtful winter of war is changing

to the sweeter prospects of victory and joy. At the close of the campaign in seventy-five, you were obliged to retreat from Boston. In the summer of seventy-six, you appeared with a numerous fleet and army in the harbour of New York. By what miracle the Continent was preserved in that season of danger, is a subject of admiration. If instead of wasting your time against Long Island, you had run up the North River, and landed any where above New York, the consequence must have been, that either you would have compelled General Washington to fight you with very unequal numbers, or he must have suddenly evacuated the city, with the loss of nearly all the stores of the army, or have surrendered for the want of provisions; the situation of the place naturally producing one or other of these events.

The preparations made to defend New York were, nevertheless, wise and military; because your forces were then at sea, their numbers uncertain; storms, sickness, or a variety of accidents might have disabled their coming, or so diminished them on their passage, that those which survived would have been incapable of opening the campaign with any prospect of success; in which case, the defence would have been sufficient, and the place preserved; for cities that have been raised from nothing with an infinitude of labour and expence, are not to be thrown away on the bare probability of their being taken. On these grounds, the preparations made to maintain New York were as judicious as the retreat afterwards. While you, in the interim, let slip the very opportunity, which seemed to put conquest in your power.

Through the whole of that campaign you had nearly double the forces which General Washington immediately commanded. The principal plan, at that time, on our part, was to wear away the season with as little loss as possible, and to raise the army for the next year. Long Island, New York, Forts Washington and Lee, were not defended, after your superior force was known, under any expectation of their being finally maintained, but as a range of out-works, in the attacking of which, your time might be wasted, your numbers reduced, and your vanity amused by possessing them on our retreat. It was intended to have withdrawn the garrisom from Fort Washington, after it had answered the former of those purposes; but the fate of that day put a prize into your hands without much honour to yourselves.

Your progress through the Jerseys was accidental; you had it not even in contemplation, or you would not have

sent so principal a part of your force to Rhode Island before hand. The utmost hope of America in the year seventy-six reached no higher than that she might not *then* be *conquered*. She had no expectation of defeating you in that campaign. Even the most cowardly Tory allowed, that, could she withstand the shock of *that summer*, her independence would be past a doubt. You had *then* greatly the advantage of her. You were formidable. Your military knowledge was supposed to be complete. Your fleets and forces arrived without an accident. You had neither experience nor reinforcements to wait for. You had nothing to do but to begin, and your chance lay in the first vigorous onset.

America was young and unskilled. She was obliged to trust her defence to time and practice; and hath, by mere dint of perseverance, maintained her cause, and brought her enemy to a condition, in which she is now capable of meeting him on any ground.

It is remarkable that in the campaign of seventy-six, you gained no more, notwithstanding your great force, than what was given you by consent of evacuation, except Fort Washington; while every advantage obtained by us was by fair and hard fighting. The defeat of Sir Peter Parker was complete. The conquest of the Hessians at Trenton, by the remains of a retreating army, which but a few days before you affected to despise, is an instance of heroic perseverance, very seldom to be met with: and the victory over the British troops at Prince-town, by a harrassed and wearied party, who had been engaged the day before, and marched all night without refreshment, is attended with such a scene of circumstances and superiority of generalship, as will ever give it a place on the first line in the history of great actions.

When I look back on the gloomy days of last winter, and see America suspended by a thread, I feel a triumph of joy at the recollection of her delivery, and a reverence for the characters which snatched her from destruction. To doubt *now*, would be a species of infidelity, and to forget the instruments which saved us *then*, would be ingratitude.

The close of that campaign left us with the spirits of conquerors. The northern districts were relieved by the retreat of General Carleton over the lakes. The army under your command was hunted back, and had its bounds prescribed. The Continent began to feel its mili-

tary importance, and the winter passed pleasantly away in preparations for the next campaign.

However confident you might be on your first arrival, the course of the year seventy-six gave you some idea of the difficulty, if not of the impossibility of conquest. To this reason I ascribe your delay in opening the campaign in seventy-seven. The face of matters on the close of the former year, gave you no encouragement to pursue a discretionary war as soon as the spring admitted the taking of the field: for, though conquest in that case would have given you a double portion of fame, yet the experiment was too hazardous. The Ministry, had you failed, would have shifted the whole blame upon you, charged you with having acted without orders, and condemned, at once, both your plan and execution.

To avoid those misfortunes, which might have involved you, and your money accounts in perplexity, and suspicion, you prudently waited the arrival of a plan of operations from England, which was, that you should proceed to Philadelphia by the way of Chesapeake, and that Burgoyne, after reducing Ticonderago, should take his route by Albany, and, if necessary, join you.

The splendid laurels of last campaign have flourished in the north. In that quarter, America hath surprised the world, and laid the foundation of her this year's glory. The conquest of Ticonderago (if it may be called a conquest) has, like all your other victories, led on to ruin. Even the provisions taken in that fortress, (which by General Burgoyne's return were sufficient in bread and flour for nearly five thousand men, for ten weeks, and in beef and pork, for the same number of men for one month) served only to hasten his overthrow, by enabling him to proceed for Saratoga, the place of his destruction. A short review of the operations of the last campaign will shew the condition of affairs on both sides.

You have taken Ticonderago, and marched into Philadelphia. These are all the events which the year hath produced on your part. A trifling campaign indeed, compared with the expences of England, and the Continent. On the other side, a considerable part of your northern force has been routed by the New York militia, under General Herkemer. Fort Stanwix hath bravely survived a compounded attack of soldiers and savages, and the besiegers have fled. The battle of Bennington has put a thousand prisoners into

our hands, with all their arms, stores, artillery and baggage. General Burgoyne in two engagements has been defeated; himself, his army, and all that were his, and theirs, are now ours. Ticonderago and Independence are retaken, and not the shadow of an enemy remains in all the northern districts. At this instant we have upwards of eleven thousand prisoners, between sixty and seventy pieces of brass ordnance, besides small arms, tents, stores, &c. &c.

In order to know the real value of those advantages, we must reverse the scene, and suppose General Gates and the force he commanded, to be at your mercy as prisoners, and General Burgoyne with his army of soldiers and savages to be already joined to you in Pennsylvania. So dismal a picture can scarcely be looked at. It hath all the traces and colourings of horror and despair, and excites the most swelling emotions of gratitude, by exhibiting the miseries we are so graciously preserved from.

I admire this distribution of laurels around the Continent. It is the earnest of future union. South Carolina has had her day of suffering and of fame; and the other southern States have exerted themselves in proportion to the force that invaded or insulted them. Towards the close of the campaign in seventy-six, these middle States were called upon, and did their duty nobly. They were witnesses to the almost expiring flame of human freedom. It was the close struggle of life and death; the line of invisible division, and on which the unabated fortitude of a Washington prevailed, and saved the spark, that has since blazed in the north with unrivalled lustre.

Let me ask, Sir, what great exploits have you performed? Through all the variety of changes and opportunities which this war hath produced, I know no one action of yours that can be styled masterly. You have moved in and out, backward and forward, round and round, as if valour consisted in a military jig. The history and figure of your movements would be truly ridiculous, could they be justly delineated. They resemble the labours of a puppy pursuing his tail; the end is still at the same distance, and all the turnings round must be done over again.

The first appearance of affairs at Ticonderago wore such an unpromising aspect, that it was necessary, in July, to detach a part of the forces to the support of that quarter, which were otherwise destined or intended to act against you, and this, perhaps, has been the means of postponing

your downfal to another campaign. The destruction of one army at a time is work enough. We know, Sir, what we are about, what we have to do, and how to do it.

Your progress from Chesapeake was marked by no capital stroke of policy or heroism. Your principal aim was to get General Washington between the Delaware and Schuylkill, and between Philadelphia and your army. In that situation, with a river on each of his flanks, which united about five miles below the city, and your army above him, you could have intercepted his reinforcements and supplies, cut off all his communication with the country, and, if necessary, have dispatched assistance to open a passage for General Burgoyne. This scheme was too visible to succeed, for had General Washington suffered you to command the open country above him, I think it a very reasonable conjecture that the conquest of Burgoyne would not have taken place, because you could, in that case, have relieved him. It was therefore necessary, while that important victory was in suspense, to trepan you into a situation, in which you could only be on the defensive, without the power of affording him assistance. The manœuvre had its effect, and Burgoyne was conquered.

There has been something unmilitarily passive in you from the time of your passing the Schuylkill, and getting possession of Philadelphia, to the close of the campaign. You mistook a trap for a conquest, the probability of which had been made known to Europe, and the edge of your triumph taken off by our own information long before.

Having got you into this situation, a scheme for a general attack upon you at German-town was carried into execution on the 4th of October, and though the success was not equal to the excellence of the plan, yet the attempting it proved the genius of America to be on the rise, and her power approaching to superiority. The obscurity of the morning was your best friend, for a fog is always favourable to an hunted enemy. Some weeks after this, you, likewise, planned an attack on General Washington while at Whitemarsh. You marched out with infinite parade, but on finding him preparing to attack you the next morning, you prudently cut about, and retreated to Philadelphia, with all the precipitation of a man conquered in imagination.

Immediately after the battle of German-town, the probability of Burgoyne's defeat gave a new policy to affairs in Pennsylvania, and it was judged most consistent with the general safety of America, to wait the issue of the northern

campaign. Slow and sure is sound work. The news of that victory arrived in our camp on the 18th of October, and no sooner did the shout of joy, and the report of the thirteen cannon reach your ears, than you resolved upon a retreat, and the next day, that is, on the 19th, withdrew your drooping army into Philadelphia. This movement was evidently dictated by fear; and carried with it a positive confession that you dreaded a second attack. It was hiding yourself among women and children, and sleeping away the choicest part of a campaign in expensive inactivity. An army in a city can never be a conquering army. The situation only admits of defence. It is a mere shelter; and every military power in Europe will conclude you to be eventually defeated.

The time when you made this retreat, was the very time you ought to have fought a battle, in order to put yourself in a condition of recovering in Pennsylvania, what you had lost at Saratoga. And the reason why you did not, must be either prudence or cowardice; the former supposes your inability, and the latter needs no explanation. I draw no conclusions, Sir, but such as are naturally deduced from known and visible facts, and such as will always have a being while the facts which produced them remain unaltered.

After this retreat, a new difficulty arose, which exhibited the power of Britain in a very contemptible light, that was the attack and defence of Mud Island. For several weeks did that little unfinished fortress stand out against all the attempts of Admiral and General Howe. It was the fable of Bendar, realized on the Delaware. Scheme after scheme, and force upon force, were tried and defeated. The garrison, with scarce any thing to cover them but their bravery, survived in the midst of mud, shot, and shells, and were at last obliged to give it up, more to the powers of time and gunpowder, than to the military superiority of the besiegers.

It is my sincere opinion, that matters are in a much worse condition with you, than what is generally known. Your master's speech at the opening of Parliament is like a soliloquy on ill-luck. It shews him to be coming a little to his reason, for sense of pain is the first symptom of recovery, in profound stupefactions. His condition is deplorable. He is obliged to submit to all the insults of France and Spain, without daring to know, or resent them, and thankful for the most trivial evasions, to the most humble remon-

strances. The time *was* when he could not *deign an answer* to a petition from America, and the time now *is* when he dare not *give* an answer to an affront from France. The capture of Burgoyne's army will sink his consequence as much in Europe as in America. In his speech, he expresses his suspicions at the warlike preparations of France and Spain, and he has only the one army which you command to support his character in the world with; it remains very uncertain when, or in what quarter it will be most wanted, or can be best employed; and this will partly account for the great care you take to keep it from action and attacks, for should Burgoyne's fate be yours, which it probably will, England may take her endless farewell, not only of all America, but of all the West Indies.

Never did a nation invite destruction upon itself with the eagerness and ignorance with which Britain has done. Bent upon the ruin of a young and unoffending country, she hath drawn the sword that hath wounded herself to the heart, and, in the agony of her resentment, hath applied a poison for a cure. Her conduct towards America is a compound of rage and lunacy; she aims at the Government of it, yet preserves neither dignity nor character in her methods to obtain it. Were Government a mere manufacture, or article of commerce, immaterial by whom it should be made or sold, we might as well employ her, as another; but when we consider it as the fountain from whence the general manners and morality of a country take their rise, that the persons entrusted with the execution thereof are by their serious example and authority to support those principles, how abominably absurd is the idea of being hereafter governed by a set of men who have been guilty of forgery, perjury, treachery, theft, and every species of villainy, which the lowest wretches on earth could practice or invent. What greater public curse can befal any country, than to be under such authority, and what greater blessing, than to be delivered therefrom? The soul of any man of sentiment would rise in brave rebellion against them, and spurn them from the earth.

The malignant, and venomous tempered General Vaughan, has amused his savage fancy in burning the whole town of Kingston, in York Government, and the late governor of that state, Mr. Tryon, in his letter to General Parsons, has endeavoured to justify it, and declared his wish to burn the houses of every committee-man in the country. Such a declaration from one who was once entrusted with the

powers of civil Government, is a reproach to the character. But it is the wish and the declaration of a man whom anguish and disappointment have driven to despair, and who is daily decaying into the grave with constitutional rottenness.

There is not, in the compass of language, a sufficiency of words to express the baseness of your King, his ministry, and his army. They have refined upon villainy till it wants a name. To the fiercer vices of former ages, they have added the dregs and scummings of the most finished rascality, and are so completely sunk in serpentine deceit, that there is not left among them *one* generous enemy.

From such men, and such masters, may the gracious hand of Heaven preserve America! And though her sufferings are heavy and severe, they are like straws in the wind, compared to the weight of evils she would feel under the Government of your King, and his pensioned Parliament.

There is something in meanness which excites a species of resentment that never subsides, and something in cruelty which stirs up the heart to the highest agony of human hatred. Britain has filled up both these characters till no addition can be made, and hath not reputation left with us to obtain credit for the slightest promise. The will of God hath parted us, and the deed is registered for eternity. When she shall be a spot scarcely visible among nations, America shall flourish, the favourite of Heaven, and the friend of mankind.

For the domestic happiness of Britain, and the peace of the world, I wish she had not a foot of land, but what is circumscribed within her own island. Extent of dominion hath been her ruin, and instead of civilizing others, hath brutalized herself. Her late reduction of India, under Clive and his successors, was not so properly a conquest, as an extermination of mankind. She is the only power who could practice the prodigal barbarity of tying men to the mouths of loaded cannon and blowing them away. It happens that General Burgoyne, who made the report of that horrid transaction in the House of Commons, is now a prisoner with us, and, though an enemy, I can appeal to him for the truth of it, being confident that he neither can nor will deny it. Yet Clive received the approbation of the last Parliament.

When we take a survey of mankind, we cannot help cursing the wretch who, to the unavoidable misfortunes of nature, shall wilfully add the calamities of war. One would

think there were evils enough in the world without studying to increase them, and that life is sufficiently short, without shaking the sand that measures it. The histories of Alexander, and Charles of Sweden, are the histories of human devils; a good man cannot think of their actions without abhorrence, nor of their deaths without rejoicing. To see the bounties of Heaven destroyed, the beautiful face of nature laid waste, and the choicest works of creation and art tumbled into ruin, would fetch a curse from the soul of piety itself. But in this country the aggravation is heightened by a new combination of affecting circumstances, America was young, and, compared with other countries, was virtuous. None, but an Herod of uncommon malice, would have made war upon infancy and innocence; and none but a people of the most finished fortitude, dared, under those circumstances, to have resisted the tyranny. The natives, or their ancestors, had fled from the former oppressions of England, and with the industry of bees, had changed a wilderness into an habitable world. To Britain they were indebted for nothing. The country was the gift of Heaven, and God alone is their Lord and Sovereign.

The time, Sir, will come, when you, in a melancholy hour, shall reckon up your miseries by your murders in America. Life, with you, begins to wear a clouded aspect. The vision of pleasurable delusion is wearing away, and changing to the barren wild of age and sorrow. The poor reflection of having served your King, will yield you no consolation in your parting moments. He will crumble to the same undistinguishable ashes with yourself, and have sins enough of his own to answer for. It is not the farcical benedictions of a bishop, nor the cringing hypocrisy of a court of chaplains, nor the formality of an Act of Parliament, that can change guilt into innocence, or make the punishment of *one* pang the less. You may, perhaps, be unwilling to be serious, but this destruction of the goods of Providence, this havock of the human race, and this sowing the world with mischief, must be accounted for to him who made and governs it. To us they are only present sufferings, but to him they are deep rebellions.

If there be a sin superior to every other, it is that of wilful and offensive war. Most other sins are circumscribed within other limits, that is, the power of *one* man cannot give them a very general extension, and many kind of sins have only a mental existence, from which no infection arises; but he

who is the author of a war, lets loose the whole contagion of hell, and opens a vein that bleeds a nation to death.

We leave it to England, and Indians, to boast of these honours; we feel no thirst for such savage glory; a nobler flame, a purer spirit animates America. She hath taken up the sword of virtuous defence; she hath bravely put herself between tyranny and freedom, between a curse and a blessing, determined to expel the one, and protect the other.

It is the object only of war that makes it honourable. And if ever there were a *just* war, since the world began, it is this which America is now engaged in. She invaded no land of yours. She hired no mercenaries to burn your towns, nor Indians to massacre their inhabitants. She wanted nothing from you, and was indebted for nothing to you; and thus circumstanced, her defence is honourable, and her prosperity is certain.

Yet it is not on the *justice* only, but likewise on the *importance* of this cause, that I ground my seeming enthusiastical confidence of our success. The vast extension of America, makes her of too much value in the scale of Providence, to be cast like a pearl before swine, at the feet of an European island; and of much less consequence would it be, that Britain were sunk in the sea, than that America should miscarry. There has been such a chain of extraordinary events in the discovery of this country at first, in the peopling and planting it afterwards, in the rearing and nursing it to its present state, and in the protection of it through the present war, that no man can doubt, but Providence hath some nobler end to accomplish than the gratification of the petty Elector of Hanover, or the ignorant and insignificant King of Britain.

As the blood of the martyrs hath been the seed of the Christian church, so the political persecutions of England will, and hath already, enriched America with industry, experience, union, and importance. Before the present æra she was a mere chaos of uncemented colonies, individually exposed to the ravages of the Indians, and the invasion of any power that Britain should be at war with. She had nothing she could call her own. Her felicity depended upon accident. The convulsions of Europe might have thrown her from one conqueror to another, till she had been the slave of all, and ruined by every one; for until she had spirit enough to become her own master, their was no knowing to which master she should belong. *That* period, thank God, is past, and she is no longer the dependent, disunited co-

lonies of Britain, but the Independent, and United States of America, knowing no master but Heaven, and herself.

You, or your King, may call this "Delusion," "Rebellion," or what name you please. To us it is perfectly indifferent. The issue will determine the character, and time will give it a name as lasting as his own.

You have now, Sir, tried the fate of three campaigns, and can fully declare to England, that nothing is to be got on your part, but blows and broken bones; and nothing on hers, but waste of trade and credit, and an increase of poverty and taxes. You are now only where you might have been two years ago without the loss of a single ship, and yet not a step the forwarder towards the conquest of the Continent; because, as I have already hinted, "An army in a city can never be a conquering army." The full amount of your losses since the beginning of the war exceeds twenty thousand men, besides millions of treasure, for which you have nothing in exchange. Our expences, though great, are circulated within ourselves. Yours is a direct sinking of money, and that from both ends at once, first, in hiring troops out of the nation, and in paying them afterwards, because the money in neither case can return again to Britain. We are already in possession of the prize, you only in pursuit of it. To us it is a real treasure, to you it would only be an empty triumph. Our expences will repay themselves with ten-fold interest, while yours entail upon you everlasting poverty.

Take a review, Sir, of the ground you have gone over, and let it teach you policy, if it cannot honesty. You stand upon a very tottering foundation. A change of the ministry in England may probably bring your measures into question, and your head to the block. Clive, with all his successes, had some difficulty in escaping, and yours, being all a war of losses, will afford you less pretensions, and your enemies more ground for impeachment.

Go home, Sir, and endeavour to save the remains of your ruined country by a just representation of the madness of her measures. A few moments well applied, may yet preserve her from political destruction. I am not one of those who wish to see Europe in a flame, because I am persuaded, such an event will not shorten the war. The rupture, at present, is confined between the two powers of America and England. England finds she cannot conquer America, and America has no wish to conquer England. You are fighting for what you can never obtain, and we defending what we

mean never to part with. A few words, therefore, settles the bargain. Let England mind her own business, and we will mind ours. Govern yourselves, and we will govern ourselves. You may then trade where you please unmolested by us, and we will trade where we please unmolested by you; and such articles as we can purchase of each other better than elsewhere, may be mutually done. If it were possible that you could carry on the war for twenty years, you must still come to this point at last, or worse, and the sooner you think of it, the better it will be for you.

My official situation enables me to know the repeated insults which Britain is obliged to put up with from foreign powers, and the wretched shifts she is driven to, to gloss them over. Her reduced strength, and exhausted coffers in a three years' war with America, have given a powerful superiority to France and Spain. She is not now a match for them.——But, if neither counsels can prevail on her to think, nor sufferings awaken her to reason, she must e'en go on, till the honour of England becomes a proverb of contempt, and Europe dub her the land of fools.

I am, Sir,

With every wish for an honourable Peace,

Your Friend, Enemy, and Countryman,

COMMON SENSE.

## To the Inhabitants of America.

With all the pleasure with which a man exchanges bad company for good, I take my leave of Sir William, and return to you. It is now nearly three years since the tyranny of Britain received its first repulse by the arms of America. A period, which has given birth to the New World, and erected a monument to the folly of the old.

I cannot help being sometimes surprised at the complimentary references, which I have seen and heard made to ancient histories and transactions. The wisdom of Civil Governments, and sense of honour of the States of Greece and Rome, are frequently held up as objects of excellence and imitation. Mankind have lived for very little purpose, if, at this period of the world, they must go two or three thousand years back for lessons and examples. We do dishonorary injustice to ourselves, by placing them in such a superior line. We have no just authority for it, neither can we tell why it is that we should suppose ourselves inferior.

Could the mist of antiquity be taken away, and men and things viewed as they then really were, it is more than probable that they would admire us, rather than we them. America has surmounted a greater variety, and combination of difficulties, than, I believe, ever fell to the share of any one people in the same space of time, and has replenished the world with more useful knowledge, and sounder maxims of Civil Government, than were ever produced in any age before. Had it not been for America, there had been no such thing as freedom left throughout the whole universe. England has lost hers, in a long chain of right reasoning from wrong principles, and it is from this now she must learn the resolution to redress herself, and the wisdom how.

The Grecians and Romans were strongly possessed of the *spirit* of liberty, but not the *principle*, for at the time they were determined not to be slaves themselves, they employed their power to enslave the rest of mankind. But this distinguished æra is blotted by no one misanthropical vice. In short, if the principle on which the cause is founded, the universal blessings that are to arise from it, the difficulties that accompanied it; the wisdom with which it has been debated, the fortitude by which it has been supported, the strength of the power we had to oppose, and the condition in which we undertook it, be all taken in one view, we

may justly style it, the most virtuous and most illustrious revolution that ever graced the history of mankind.

A good opinion of ourselves is exceedingly necessary in private life, but absolutely necessary in public life; and of the utmost importance in supporting national character. I have no notion of yielding the palm of the United States to any Grecians or Romans that were ever born. We have equalled the bravest in times of danger, and excelled the wisest in the construction of civil Government, *no one in America excepted.*

From this agreeable eminence, let us take a review of present affairs. The spirit of corruption is so inseparably interwoven with British politics, that their ministry suppose all mankind are governed by the same motive. They have no idea of a people submitting even to a temporary inconvenience, from an attachment to rights and privileges. Their plans of business are calculated *by* the hour, and *for* the hour, and are uniform in nothing but in the corruption which give them birth. They never had, neither have they at this time, any regular plan for the conquest of America by arms. They know not how to go about it, neither have they the power to effect it, if they could know. The thing is not within the compass of human practicability, for America is too extensive either to be fully conquered, or passively defended. But she may be actively defended, by defeating or making prisoners of the army that invades her. And this is the only system of defence that can be effectual in a large country.

There is something in a war carried on by invasion, which makes it differ in circumstances from any other mode of war, because, he who conducts it cannot tell whether the ground he gains be for him, or against him, when he first makes it. In the winter of seventy-six, General Howe marched with an air of victory through the Jerseys, the consequence of which was his defeat, and General Burgoyne, at Saratoga, experienced the same fate from the same cause. The Spaniards, about two years ago, were defeated by the Algerines in the same manner, that is, their first triumphs became a trap, in which they were totally routed. And whoever will attend to the circumstances and events of a war carried on by invasion, will find, that any invader, in order to be finally conquered, must begin first to conquer.

I confess myself one of those who believe the loss of Philadelphia to be attended with more advantages than

injuries. The case stood thus. The enemy imagined Philadelphia to be of more importance to us than it really was; for we all know that it had long ceased to be a port; not a cargo of goods had been brought into it for near a twelve-month, nor any fixed manufactories, nor even ship-building carried on in it: yet, as the enemy believed the conquest of it to be practicable, and, to that belief, added the absurd idea, that the soul of all America was centered there, and would be conquered there, it naturally follows that their possession of it, by not answering the end proposed, must break up the plans they had foolishly gone upon, and either oblige them to form a new one, for which their present strength is not sufficient, or to give over the attempt.

We never had so small an army to fight against, nor so fair an opportunity of final success as *now*. The death wound is already given. The day is our own, if we follow it up. The enemy by his situation is within our reach, and by his reduced strength is within our power. The Ministers of Britain may rage as they please, but our part is to conquer their armies. Let them wrangle and welcome, but let it not draw our attention from the *one* thing needful. *Here*, in *this* spot is our business to be accomplished; our felicity secured. What we have now to do, is as clear as light, and the way to do itis as straight as a line. It needs not be commented upon, yet, in order to be perfectly understood, I will put a case that cannot admit of a mistake.

Had the armies under Generals Howe and Burgoyne been united and taken post at German-town, and had the northern army, under General Gates, been joined to that under General Washington, at Whitemarsh, the consequence would have been a general action; and, if in that action, we had killed and taken the same number of officers and men, that is, between nine and ten thousand, with the same quantity of artillery, arms, stores, &c. as have been taken at the northward, and obliged General Howe with the remains of his army, that is, with the same number he now commands, to take shelter in Philadelphia, we should certainly have thought ourselves the greatest heroes in the world; and should as soon as the season permitted, have collected together all the force of the Continent and laid siege to the city, for it requires a much greater force to besiege an enemy in a town, than to defeat them in the field. The case *now* is just the same, as if it had been produced by the means I have here supposed. Between nine and ten thousand have

been killed and taken, all their stores are in our possession, and General Howe in consequence of that victory, has thrown himself for shelter into Philadelphia. He, or his trifling friend, Galloway, may form what pretences they please, yet no just reason can be given for their going into winter quarters so early as the 19th of October, but their apprehensions of a defeat if they continued out, or their conscious inability to keep the field with safety. I see no advantage which can arise to America, by hunting the enemy from State to State. It is a triumph without a prize, and wholly unworthy the attention of a people determined to conquer. Neither can any State promise to itself security, while the enemy remains in a condition to transport themselves from one part of the Continent to another. Howe, likewise, cannot conquer where we have no army to oppose, therefore any such removals in him are mean and cowardly, and reduce Britain to a common pilferer. If he retreats from Philadelphia he will be despised: if he stay, he may be shut up and starved out, and the country, if he advances into it, may become his Saratoga. He has his choice of evils, and we of opportunities. If he moves early, it is not only a sign, but a proof that he expects no reinforcement, and his delays will prove that he either waits for the arrival of a plan to go upon, or force to execute it, or both: in *which* case, our strength will increase more than his, therefore, in *any* case, we cannot be wrong, if we do but proceed.

The particular condition of Pennsylvania deserves the attention of all the other States. Her military strength must not be estimated by the number of inhabitants. Here are men of all nations, characters, professions, and interests. Here are the firmest Whigs, surviving, like sparks in the ocean, unquenched and uncooled, in the midst of discouragement and disaffection. Here are men losing their all with cheerfulness, and collecting fire and fortitude from the flames of their own estates. Here are others skulking in secret; many making a market of the times; and numbers, who are changing Whig, and Tory, with the circumstances of every day.

It is by mere dint of fortitude and perseverance, that the Whigs of this State have been able to maintain so good a countenance, and do even what they have done. We want help, and the sooner it can arrive, the more effectual it will be. The invaded State, be it which it may, will always feel an additional burthen upon its back, and be hard set to support its civil power with sufficient authority: and this

difficulty will always rise, or fall, in proportion as the other States throw in their assistance to the common cause.

The enemy will most probably make many manœuvres at the opening of this campaign, to amuse and draw off the attention of the several States from the *one thing needful.*

We may expect to hear of alarms, and pretended expeditions to *this* place, and *that* place: to the southward, the eastward, and the northward, all intended to prevent our forming into one formidable body. The less the enemy's strength is, the more subtleties of this kind will they make use of. Their existence depends upon it, because the force of America, when collected, is sufficient to swallow their present army up. It is therefore our business to make short work of it, by bending our whole attention to *this one principal point*, for the instant that the main body under General Howe is defeated, all the inferior alarms throughout the Continent, like so many shadows, will follow his downfal.

The only way to finish a war with the least possible bloodshed, or perhaps without any, is to collect an army, against the power of which the enemy shall have no chance. By not doing this, we prolong the war, and double both the calamities and the expences of it. What a rich and happy country would America be, were she, by a vigorous exertion, to reduce Howe, as she hath reduced Burgoyne. Her currency would rise to millions beyond its present value. Every man would be rich, and every man would have it in his power to be happy. And why not do these things? What is there to hinder? America is her own mistress, and can do what she pleases.

If we had not at this time a man in the field, we could, nevertheless, raise an army in a few weeks, sufficient to overwhelm all the force which General Howe at present commands. Vigour and determination will do any thing and every thing. We began the war with this kind of spirit, why not end it with the same? Here, Gentlemen, is the enemy. Here is the army. The interest, the happiness of all America is centered in this half ruined spot. Come on and help us. Here are laurels, come and share them. Here are Tories, come and help us to expel them. Here are Whigs that will make you welcome, and enemies that dread your coming.

The worst of all policy is that of doing things by halves. Penny wise and pound foolish, have been the ruin of thousands. The present spring, if rightly improved, will free us

from all our troubles, and save us the expence of millions. We have now only one army to cope with. No opportunity can be fairer; no prospect more promising. I shall conclude this paper, with a few outlines of a plan either for filling up the battalions with expedition, or for raising an additional force, for any limited time, on any sudden emergency.

That in which every man is interested, is every man's duty to support. And any burthen which falls equally on all men, and from which every man is to receive an equal benefit, is consistent with the most perfect ideas of liberty. I would wish to revive something of that virtuous ambition which first called America into the field. Then every man was eager to do his part, and perhaps the principal reason why we have in any degree fallen therefrom, is, because we did not set a sufficient value by it at first, but left it to blaze out of itself, instead of regulating and preserving it by just proportions of rest and service.

Suppose any State, whose number of effective inhabitants was eighty thousand, should be required to furnish three thousand two hundred men towards the defence of the Continent on any sudden emergency.

First, Let the whole number of effective inhabitants be divided into hundreds; then if each of those hundreds turn out four men, the whole number of three thousand two hundred will be had.

Secondly, Let the names of each hundred men be entered in a book, and let four dollars be collected from each man, with as much more as any of the gentlemen whose abilities can afford it, shall please to throw in, which gifts shall likewise be entered against the donors' names.

Thirdly, Let the sums so collected be offered as a present, over and above the bounty of twenty dollars, to any four who may be inclined to propose themselves as volunteers; if more than four offer, the majority of the subscribers present shall determine which; if none offer, then four out of the hundred shall be taken by lot, who shall be entitled to the said sums, and shall either go, or provide others that will, in the space of six days.

Fourthly, as it will always happen, that on the space of ground on which an hundred men shall live, there will be always a number of persons, who, by age and infirmity, are incapable of doing personal service, and as such persons are generally possessed of the greatest part of the property in any country, their portion of service, therefore, will be to

furnish each man with a blanket, which will make a regimental coat, jacket, and breeches, or clothes in lieu thereof, and another for a watch-cloak, and two pair of shoes—for however choice people may be of these things, matters not in cases of this kind. Those who live always in houses, can find many ways to keep themselves warm, but it is a shame and a sin to suffer a soldier in the field to want a blanket while there is one in the country.

Should the clothing not be wanted, the superannuated or infirm persons possessing property, may, in lieu thereof, throw in their money subscriptions, towards increasing the bounty; for though age will naturally exempt a personal service, it cannot exempt him from his share of the charge, because the men are raised for the defence of property and liberty jointly.

There never was a scheme against which objections might not be raised. But this alone is not a sufficient reason for rejection. The only line to judge truly upon, is, to draw out and admit all the objections which can fairly be made, and place against them all the contrary qualities, conveniences, and advantages; then by striking a balance, you come at the true character of any scheme, principle, or position.

The most material advantages of the plan here proposed, are ease, expedition, and cheapness; yet the men so raised get a much larger bounty than is, any where, at present given; because all the expences, extravagance, and consequent idleness of recruiting are saved or prevented. The country incurs no new debt, nor interest thereon; the whole matter being all settled at once, and entirely done with. It is a subscription answering all the purposes of a tax, without either the charge or trouble of collecting. The men are ready for the field with the greatest possible expedition, because it becomes the duty of the inhabitants themselves, in every part of the country, to find up their proportion of men, instead of leaving it to a recruiting serjeant, who, be he ever so industrious, cannot know always where to apply.

I do not propose this as a regular digested plan, neither will the limits of this paper admit any further remarks upon it. I believe it to be a hint capable of much improvement, and as such submit it to the public.

COMMON SENSE.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

## No. VI.

*To the Earl of Carlisle, General Clinton, and William Eden, Esq. British Commissioners, at New York.*

*Philadelphia, October* 20, 1778.

THERE is a dignity in the warm passions of a Whig, which is never to be found in the cold malice of a Tory. In the one, nature is only heated—in the other she is poisoned. The instant the former has it in his power to punish, he feels a disposition to forgive; but the canine venom of the latter, knows no relief but revenge. This general distinction will, I believe, apply in all cases, and suit as well the meridian of England as America.

As I presume your last Proclamation will undergo the strictures of other pens, I shall confine my remarks to only a few parts thereof. All that you have said might have been comprised in half the compass. It is tedious and unmeaning, and only a repetition of your former follies, with here, and there, an offensive aggravation. Your cargo of pardons will have no market. It is unfashionable to look at them. Even speculation is at an end. They are become a perfect drug, and no way calculated for the climate.

In the course of your proclamation you say, "The policy, as well as the BENEVOLENCE OF GREAT BRITAIN, have thus far checked the extremes of war. When they tended to distress a people, still considered as their fellow-subjects, and to desolate a country shortly to become again a source of mutual advantage." What you mean by "the BENEVOLENCE of Great Britain," is to me inconceivable. To put a plain question—Do you consider yourselves men or devils? For until this point is settled, no determinate sense can be put upon the expression. You have already equalled, and in many places excelled, the savages

of either Indies; and if you have yet a cruelty in store, you must have imported it unmixed, with every human material, from the original warehouse of hell.

To the interposition of Providence, and her blessings on our endeavours, and not to BRITISH BENEVOLENCE, are we indebted for the short chain that limits your ravages. Remember, you do not at this time command a foot of land on the Continent of America. Staten Island, York Island, a small part of Long Island, and Rhode Island, circumscribe your power; and even those you hold at the expence of the West Indies. To avoid a defeat, and prevent a desertion of your troops, you have taken up your quarters in holes and corners of inaccessible security; and in order to conceal what every one can conceive, you now endeavour to impose your weakness upon us for an act of mercy. If you think to succeed, by such shadowy devices, you are but infants in the political world; you have the A, B, C, of stratagem yet to learn, and are wholly ignorant of the people you have to contend with. Like men in a state of intoxication, you forget that the rest of the world have eyes, and that the same stupidity which conceals you from yourselves, exposes you to their satire and contempt.

The paragraph I have quoted stands as an introduction to the following: "But when that country (America) professes the unnatural design, not only of estranging herself from us, but of mortgaging herself and her resources to our enemies, the whole contest is changed, and the question is, how far Great Britain may, by every means in her power, destroy or render useless a connection contrived for her ruin, and the aggrandizement of France. Under such circumstances, the law of self-preservation must direct the conduct of Britain, and if the British Colonies are to become an accession to France, will direct her to render that accession of as little avail as possible to her enemy." I consider you, in this declaration, like madmen biting in the hour of death. It contains, likewise, a fraudulent meanness; for, in order to justify a barbarous conclusion, you have advanced a false position. The treaty we have formed with France, is open, noble, and generous. It is true policy, founded on sound philosophy, and neither a surrender or mortgage, as you would scandalously insinuate. I have seen every article, and speak from positive knowledge. In France, we have found an affectionate friend, a faithful ally; from Britain, nothing but tyranny, cruelty, and infidelity.

But the happiness is, that the mischief you threaten is

not in your power to execute; and if it were, the punishment would return upon you in a tenfold degree. The humanity of America hath hitherto restrained her from acts of retaliation, and the affection she retains for many individuals in England, who have fed, clothed, and comforted her prisoners, has, to the present day, warded off her resentment, and operated as a screen to the whole. But even these considerations must cease, when national objects interfere and oppose them. Repeated aggravations will provoke a retort, and policy justify the measure. We mean now to take you seriously up, upon your own ground and principles, and as you do, so shall you be done by.

You ought to know, Gentlemen, that England and Scotland are far more exposed to incendiary desolation than America, in her present state, can possibly be. We occupy a country with but few towns, and whose riches consist in land and annual produce. The two last can suffer but little, and that only within a very limited compass. In Britain it is otherwise. Her wealth lies chiefly in cities and large towns, the repositories of manufactures, and fleets of merchantmen. There is not a nobleman's country seat but may be laid in ashes by a single person. Your own may probably contribute to the proof. In short, there is no evil which cannot be returned, when you come to incendiary mischief. The ships in the Thames may certainly be easily set on fire, as the temporary bridge was a few years ago; yet of that affair no discovery was ever made; and the loss you would sustain by such an event, executed at a proper season, is infinitely greater than any you can inflict. The East India House, and the Bank, neither are, nor can be secure from this sort of destruction; and, as Dr. Price justly observes, a fire at the latter would bankrupt the nation. It has never been the custom of France and England, when at war, to make those havocs on each other, because the ease with which they could retaliate, rendered it as impolitic as if each had destroyed his own.

But think not, Gentlemen, that our distance secures you, or our invention fails us. We can much easier accomplish such a point than any nation in Europe. We talk the same language, dress in the same habit, and appear with the same manners as yourselves. We can pass from one part of England to another unsuspected; many of us are as well acquainted with the country as you are, and should you impoliticly provoke our will, you will most assuredly lament the effects of it. Mischiefs of this kind require no army

to execute them. The means are obvious, and the opportunities unguardable. I hold up a warning-piece to your senses, if you have any left, and "to the unhappy people likewise, whose affairs are committed to you*." I call not with the rancour of an enemy, but with the earnestness of a friend, on the deluded people of England, lest between your blunders and theirs, they sink beneath the evils contrived for us.

"He who lives in a glass-house," says the Spanish proverb, "should never begin throwing stones." This, Gentlemen, is exactly your case, and you must be the most ignorant of mankind, or suppose us so, not to see on which side the balance of accounts will fall. There are many other modes of retaliation, which, for several reasons, I choose not to mention. But, be assured of this, that the instant you put a threat in execution, a counter-blow will follow it. If you openly profess yourselves savages, it is high time we should treat you as such: and if nothing but distress can recover you to reason, to punish will become an office of charity.

While your fleet lay last winter in the Delaware, I offered my service to the Pennsylvanian navy-board, then at Trenton, as one who would make a party with them, or any four or five gentlemen, on an expedition down the river, to set fire to it, and though it was not then accepted, nor the thing personally attempted, it is more than probable, that your own folly will provoke a much more vulnerable part. Say not, when the mischief is done, that you had not warning, and remember that we did not begin it, but mean to repay it. Thus much for your savage and impolitic threat.

In another part of your Proclamation, you say. "But f the honours of a military life, are become the objects of the Americans, let them seek those honours under the banners of their rightful Sovereign, and in fighting the battles of the united British empire, against our late mutual and natural enemies." Surely! The union of absurdity with madness, was never marked with more distinguishable lines than these. Your rightful Sovereign, as you call him, may do well enough for you, who dare not inquire into the humble capacities of the man; but we, who estimate persons and things by their real worth, cannot suffer our judgments to be so imposed upon; and, unless it is your wish to see him exposed,

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* General Clinton's Letter to Congress.

it ought to be your endeavour to keep him out of sight. The less you have to say about him the better. We have done with him, and that ought to be answer enough. You have often been told so. Strange! that the answer must be so often repeated. You go a begging with your King as with a brat, or with some unsaleable commodity you were tired of; and though every body tells, no, no, still you keep hawking him about. But there is one who will have him in a little time, and as we have no inclination to disappoint you of a customer, we bid you nothing for him.

The impertinent folly of the paragraph I have just quoted, deserves no other notice than to be laughed at, and thrown by, but the principle on which it is founded, is detestable. We are invited to submit to a man who has attempted by every cruelty to destroy us, and to join him in making war against France, who is already at war against him for our support.

Can Bedlam, in concert with Lucifer, form a more mad and devilish request? Were it possible a people could sink into such apostasy, they would deserve to be swept from the earth, like the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. The proposition is an universal affront to the rank which man holds in the creation, and an indignity to him who placed him there. It supposes him made up without a spark of honour, and under no obligation to God or man.

What sort of men, or Christians, must you suppose the Americans to be, who, after seeing their most humble petitions insultingly rejected, the most grievous laws passed to distress them in every quarter, an undeclared war let loose upon them, and Indians and Negroes invited to the slaughter; who after seeing their kindred murdered, their fellow citizens starved to death in prisons, and their houses and property destroyed and buried; who after the most serious appeals to Heaven, and most solemn adjuration by oath of all Government connected with you, and the most heart-felt pledges and protestations of faith to each other: and who, after soliciting the friendship, and entering into alliances with other nations, should at last break through all these obligations, civil and divine, by complying with your horrid and infernal proposal? Ought we ever after to be considered as a part of the human race? Or, ought we not rather to be blotted from the society of mankind, and become a spectacle of misery to the world? But there is something in corruption, which, like a jaundiced eye, transfers the

colour of itself to the object it looks upon, and sees every thing stained and impure; for unless you were capable of such conduct yourselves, you could never have supposed such a character in us. The offer fixes your infamy. It exhibits you as a nation without faith, with whom oaths and treaties are considered as trifles, and the breaking them, as the breaking of a bubble. Regard to decency or to rank, might have taught you better, or pride inspired you, though virtue could not. There is not left a step in the degradation of character to which you can now descend; you have put your foot on the ground floor, and the key of the dungeon is turned upon you.

That the invitation may want nothing of being a complete monster, you have thought proper to finish it with an assertion which has no foundation, either in fact or philosophy; and as Mr. Ferguson, your secretary, is a man of letters, and has made civil society his study, and published a treatise on that subject, I address this part to him.

In the close of the paragraph which I last quoted, France is styled the "natural enemy" of England, and by way of lugging us into some strange idea, she is styled the "late mutual and natural enemy" of both countries. I deny that she ever was the natural enemy of either, and that there does not exist in nature such a principle. The expression is an unmeaning barbarism, and wholly unphilosophical, when applied to beings of the same species, let their station in the creation be what it may. We have a perfect idea of a natural enemy when we think of the devil, because the enmity is perpetual, unalterable, and unabateable. It admits neither of peace, truce, or treaty; consequently the warfare is eternal, and therefore it is natural. But man with man cannot arrange in the same opposition. Their quarrels are accidental and equivocally created. They become friends or enemies at the change of temper, as the cast of interest inclines them. The Creator of Man did not constitute them the natural enemy of each other. He has not made any one order of beings so. Even wolves may quarrel, still they herd together. If any two nations are so, then must all nations be so, otherwise it is not nature, but custom, and the offence frequently originates with the accuser. England is as truly the natural enemy of France, as France is of England, and, perhaps, more so. Separated from the rest of Europe, she has contracted an unsocial habit of manners, and imagines in others the jealousy she creates in herself. Never long satisfied with peace, she

supposes the discontent universal, and buoyed up with her own importance, conceives herself the only object pointed at. The expression has been often used, and always with a fraudulent design; for when the idea of a natural enemy is conceived, it prevents all other enquiries, and the real cause of the quarrel is hidden in the universality of the conceit. Men start at the notion of a natural enemy, and ask no other question. The cry obtains credit like the alarm of a mad dog, and is one of those kind of tricks, which, by operating on the common passions, secures their interest through their folly.

But we, Sir, are not to be thus imposed upon. We live in a large world, and have extended our ideas beyond the limits and prejudices of an island. We hold out the right hand of friendship to all the universe, and we conceive there to be a sociality in the manners of France, which is much better disposed to peace and negociation than that of England, and until the latter becomes more civilized, she cannot expect to live long at peace with any power. Her common language is vulgar and offensive, and children, with their milk, suck in the rudiments of insult.—"The arms of Britain! The mighty arm of Britain! Britain that shakes the earth to its centre and its poles! The scourge of France! The terror of the world! That governs with a nod, and pours down vengeance like a god." This language neither makes a nation great or little; but it shows a savageness of manners, and has a tendency to keep national animosity alive. The entertainments of the stage are calculated to the same end, and almost every public exhibition is tinctured with insult. Yet England is always in dread of France. Terrified at the apprehension of an invasion. Suspicious of being outwitted in a treaty, and privately cringing, though she is publicly offending. Let her, therefore, reform her manners, and do justice, and she will find the idea of a natural enemy, to be only a phantom of her own imagination.

Little did I think, at this period of the war, to see a Proclamation which could promise you no one useful purpose whatever, and tend only to expose you. One would think you were just awakened from a four years dream, and knew nothing of what had passed in the interval. Is this a time to be offering pardons, or renewing the long forgotten subjects of charters and taxation? Is it worth your while, after every force has failed you, to retreat under the shelter of argument and persuasion? Or, can you think that we, with

nearly half your army prisoners, and in alliance with France, are to be begged or threatened into a submission by a piece of paper? But as commissioners, at a hundred pounds sterling a week each, you conceive yourselves bound to do something, and the genius of ill-fortune told you, you must write.

For my own part I have not put pen to paper these several months. Convinced of your superiority by the issue of every campaign, I was inclined to hope, that that which all the rest of the world now see, would become visible to you, and therefore felt unwilling to ruffle your temper by fretting you with repetitions and discoveries. There have been intervals of hesitation in your conduct, from which it seemed a pity to disturb you, and a charity to leave you to yourselves. You have often stopt, as if you intended to think, but your thoughts have ever been too early or too late.

There was a time when Britain disdained to answer, and even to hear a petition from America. That time is past, and she, in her turn, is petitioning our acceptance. We now stand on higher ground, and offer her peace: and the time will come, when she, perhaps in vain, will ask it from us. The latter case is as probable as the former ever was. She cannot refuse to acknowledge our independence with greater obstinacy than she before refused to repeal her laws; and if America alone could bring her to the one, united with France she will reduce it to the other. There is something in obstinacy which differs from every other passion, whenever it fails it never recovers, but either breaks like iron, or crumbles sulkily away like a fractured arch. Most other passions have their periods of fatigue and rest; their sufferings and their cure; but obstinacy has no resource, and the first wound is mortal. You have already begun to give it up, and you will, from the natural construction of the vice, find yourselves both obliged and inclined to do so.

If you look back you see nothing but loss and disgrace. If you look forward, the same scene continues, and the close is an impenetrable gloom. You may plan and execute little mischiefs, but are they worth the expence they cost you, or will such partial evils have any effect on the general cause? Your expedition to Egg-Harbour will be felt, at a distance, like an attack upon a hen-roost, and expose you in Europe with a sort of childish phrensy. Is it well worth while to keep an army to protect you in writing Proclama-

tions, or to get once a year into winter quarters? Possessing yourselves of towns is not conquest, but convenience, and in which you will, one day or the other, be trepanned. Your retreat from Philadelphia was only a timely escape, and your next expedition may be less fortunate.

It would puzzle all the politicians in the universe to conceive what you stay for, or why you should have staid so long. You are prosecuting a war in which you confess you have neither object nor hope, and that conquest, could it be effected, would not repay the charges. In the mean while, the rest of your affairs are running into ruin, and a European war kindled against you. In such a situation, there is neither doubt nor difficulty; the first rudiments of reason will determine the choice, for if peace can be procured with more advantages than even a conquest can be obtained, he must be an idiot indeed that hesitates.

But you are probably buoyed up by a set of wretched mortals, who, having deceived themselves, are cringing with the duplicity of a spaniel for a little temporary bread. Those men will tell you just what you please. It is their interest to amuse, in order to lengthen out their protection. They study to keep you amongst them for that very purpose; and in proportion as you disregard their advice, and grow callous to their complaints, they will stretch into improbability, and pepper off their flattery the higher. Characters like these are to be found in every country, and every country will despise them.

COMMON SENSE.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

No. VII.

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## To the People of England.

*Philadelphia, November* 21, 1778.

There are stages in the business of serious life, in which, to amuse, is cruel; but, to deceive, is to destroy; and it is of little consequence, in the conclusion, whether men deceive themselves, or submit, by a kind of mutual consent, to the impositions of each other. That England has been long under the influence of delusion, or mistake, needs no other proof than the unexpected and wretched situation she is now involved in. And so powerful has been the influence, that no provision was ever made or thought of, against the misfortune, because the possibility of its happening was never conceived.

The general and successful resistance of America, the conquest of Burgoyne, and a war with France, were treated in Parliament, as the dreams of a discontented opposition, or a distempered imagination. They were beheld as objects unworthy of a serious thought, and the bare intimation of them afforded the Ministry a triumph of laughter. Short triumph indeed! For every thing which has been predicted, has happened; and all that was promised have failed. A long series of politics, so remarkably distinguished by a succession of misfortunes, without one alleviating turn, must certainly have something in it systematically wrong. It is sufficient to awaken the most credulous into suspicion, and most obstinate into thought. Either the means in your power are insufficient, or the measures ill-planned; either

execution has been bad, or the thing attempted impracticable; or, to speak more emphatically, either you are not able, or Heaven is not willing. For, why is it that you have not conquered us? Who, or what has prevented you? You have had every opportunity you could desire, and succeeded to your utmost wish in every preparatory means. Your fleets and armies have arrived in America, without an accident. No uncommon misfortune hath intervened. No foreign nation hath interfered, until the time you had allotted for victory was past. The opposition, either in or out of Parliament, neither disconcerted your measures, retarded, or diminished your force. They only foretold your fate. Every Ministerial scheme was carried with as high a hand as if the whole nation had been unanimous. Every thing wanted was asked for, and every thing asked for was granted. A greater force was not within the compass of your abilities to send, and the time you sent it, was, of all others, the most favourable. You were then at rest with the whole world beside. You had the range of every Court in Europe, uncontradicted by us. You amused us with a tale of Commissioners of peace, and, under that disguise, collected a numerous army, and came almost unexpectedly upon us. The force was much greater than we looked for; and that which we had to oppose it with, was unequal in numbers, badly armed, and poorly disciplined; besides which, it was embodied only for a short time, and expired within a few months after your arrival. We had Governments to form; measures to concert; an army to raise and train; and every necessary article to import, or to create. Our non-importation-scheme had exhausted our stores, and your command by sea, intercepted our supplies. We were a people unknown, and unconnected with the political world, and strangers to the disposition of foreign powers. Could you possibly wish for a more favourable conjunction of circumstances? Yet all these have happened and passed away, and, as it were, left you with a laugh. They are likewise, events of such an original nativity as can never happen again, unless a new world should arise from the ocean.

If any thing can be a lesson to presumption, surely the circumstances of this war will have their effect. Had Britain been defeated by any European power, her pride would have drawn consolation from the importance of her conquerors; but, in the present case, she is excelled by those she affected to despise, and her own opinion retorting on

herself, become an aggravation of her disgrace. Misfortune and experience are lost upon mankind, when they produce neither reflection nor reformation. Evils, like poisons, have their uses, and there are diseases which no other remedy can reach. It has been the crime and folly of England to suppose herself invincible, and that, without acknowledging or perceiving, that a full third of her strength was drawn from the country she is now at war with. The arm of Britain has been spoken of as the arm of the Almighty, and she has lived of late, as if she thought the whole world created for her diversion. Her politics, instead of civilizing, have tended to brutalize mankind, and under the vain, unmeaning title of "Defender of the Faith," she has made war, like an Indian, against the religion of humanity. Her cruelties in the East Indies will NEVER, NEVER be forgotten; and it is somewhat remarkable, that the produce of that ruined country, transported to America, should there kindle up a war to punish the destroyer. The chain is continued, though with a kind of mysterious uniformity, both in the crime and the punishment. The latter runs parallel with the former; and time and fate will give it a perfect illustration.

Where information is withheld, ignorance becomes a reasonable excuse; and one would charitably hope, that the people of England do not encourage cruelty from choice, but from mistake. Their recluse situation, surrounded by the sea, preserves them from the calamities of war, and keeps them in the dark as to the conduct of their own armies. They see not, therefore they feel not. They tell the tale that is told them, and believe it; and accustomed to no other news than their own, they receive it, stripped of its horrors, and prepared for the palate of the nation, through the channel of the London Gazette. They are made to believe, that their generals and armies differ from those of other nations, and have nothing of rudeness or barbarity in them. They suppose them what they wish them to be. They feel a disgrace in thinking otherwise, and naturally encourage the belief from a partiality to themselves. There was a time when I felt the same prejudices, and reasoned from the same errors; but experience, sad and painful experience, has taught me better. What the conduct of former armies was, I know not; but what the conduct of the present is, I well know. It is low, cruel, indolent, and profligate; and had the people of America no other cause for

separation than what the army has occasioned, that alone is cause enough.

The field of politics in England is far more extensive than that of news. Men have a right to reason for themselves, and though they cannot contradict the intelligence in the London Gazette, they can frame upon it what sentiments they please. But the misfortune is, that a general ignorance has prevailed over the whole nation respecting America. The Ministry and the Minority have both been wrong. The former was always so; the latter, only lately so. Politics to be executively right, must have a unity of means and time, and a defect in either overthrows the whole. The Ministry rejected the plans of the Minority, while they were practicable, and joined in them, when they became impracticable. From wrong measures they got into wrong time, and have now completed the circle of absurdity by closing it upon themselves.

It was my fate to come to America a few months before the breaking out of hostilities. I found the disposition of the people such, that they might have been led by a thread, and governed by a reed. Their suspicion was quick and penetrating, but their attachment to Britain was obstinate, and it was, at that time, a kind of treason to speak against it. They disliked the Ministry, but they esteemed the nation. Their idea of grievance operated without resentment, and their single object was reconciliation. Bad as I believed the Ministry to be, I never conceived them capable of a measure so rash and wicked as the commencing of hostilities; much less did I imagine the nation would encourage it. I viewed the dispute as a kind of law-suit, in which I supposed the parties would find a way either to decide or settle it. I had no thoughts of independence, or of arms. The world could not then have persuaded me, that I should be either a soldier or an author. If I had any talents for either, they were buried in me, and might ever have continued so, had not the necessity of the times dragged and driven them into action. I had formed my plan of life, and conceiving myself happy, wished every body else so. But when the country into which I had just put my foot, was set on fire about my ears, it was time to stir. It was time for every man to stir. Those who had been long settled, had something to defend; those who had just come had something to pursue; and the call and the concern was equal and universal. For in a country where all men were

once adventurers, the difference of a few years in their arrival could make none in their right.

The breaking out of hostilities opened a new suspicion in the politics of America, which, though at that time very rare, has since been proved to be very right. What I allude to, is, " A secret and fixed determination in the British cabinet to annex America to the Crown of England as a conquered country." If this be taken as the object, then the whole line of conduct pursued by the Ministry, though rash in its origin, and ruinous in its consequences, is nevertheless uniform and consistent in its parts. It applies to every case, and resolves every difficulty. But if taxation, or any thing else be taken in its room, then there is no proportion between the object and the charge. Nothing but the whole soil and property of the country can be placed as a possible equivalent against the millions which the Ministry expended. No taxes raised in America could possibly repay it. A revenue of two millions sterling a year, would not discharge the sum and interest accumulated thereon in twenty years.

Reconciliation never appears to have been the wish or the object of Administration, they looked on conquest as certain and infallible, and under that persuasion, sought to drive the Americans into what they might style a general rebellion, and then crushing them with arms in their hands, reap the rich harvest of a general confiscation, and silence them for ever. The dependants at Court were too numerous to be provided for in England. The market for plunder in the East Indies was over; and the profligacy of Government required that a new mine should be opened, and that mine could be no other than America conquered and forfeited. They had no where else to go. Every other channel was drained; and extravagance, with the thirst of a drunkard, was gaping for supplies.

If the Ministry deny this to have been their plan, it becomes them to explain what was their plan. For either they have abused us in coveting property they never laboured for, or they have abused you in expending an amazing sum upon an incompetent object. Taxation, as I mentioned before, could never be worth the charge of obtaining it by arms; and any kind of formal obedience which America could have made, would have weighed with the lightness of a laugh against such a load of expence. It is, therefore, most probable, that the Ministry will at last justify their policy by their dishonesty, and openly declare, that their original design was conquest. And, in this case,

it well becomes the people of England, to consider how far the nation would have been benefited by the success.

In a general view, there are few conquests that repay the charge of making them, and mankind are pretty well convinced, that it can never be worth their while to go to war for profit sake. If they are made war upon, their country invaded, or their existence at stake, it is their duty to defend and preserve themselves; but in every other light, and from every other cause, is war inglorious and detestable. But to return to the case in question.

When conquests are made of foreign countries, it is supposed that the COMMERCE and DOMINION of the country which made them are extended. But this could neither be the object nor the consequence of the present war. You enjoyed the whole commerce before. It could receive no possible addition by a conquest, but on the contrary, must diminish as the inhabitants were reduced in numbers and wealth. You had the DOMINION over the country which you used to have, and had no complaint to make against her for breach of any part of the compact between you and her, or contending against any established custom, commercial, political, or territorial. The country and commerce were both your own, when you BEGAN to conquer, in the same manner and form as they had been your own an hundred years before. Nations have sometimes been induced to make conquests for the sake only of reducing the power of their enemies, or bringing it to a balance with their own. But this could be no part of your plan. No foreign authority was claimed here, neither was any such authority suspected by you, or acknowledged, or imagined by us. What then, in the name of Heaven, could you go to war for? or what chance could you possibly have in the event, but either to hold the same country which you held before, and that in a much worse condition, or to lose with an amazing expence what you might have retained without a farthing charges.

War never can be the interest of a trading nation, any more than quarrelling can be profitable to a man in business. But to make war with those who trade with us, is like setting a bull-dog upon a customer at the shop-door. The least degree of common sense shews the madness of the latter, and it will apply with the same force of conviction to the former. Piratical nations, having neither commerce or commodities of their own to lose, may make war upon all the world, and lucratively find their account in it. But it is quite otherwise with Britain. For, besides the stoppage of trade in time of war, she exposes more of her own pro-

perty to be lost, than she has the chance of taking from others. Some Ministerial gentlemen in Parliament have mentioned the greatness of her trade, as an apology for the greatness of her loss. This is miserable politics indeed! because it ought to have been given as a reason for her not engaging in a war at first. The coast of America commands the West India trade, almost as effectually as the coast of Africa does that of the Streights, and England can no more carry to the former, without the consent of America, than she can the latter, without a Mediterranean pass.

In whatever light the war with America is considered upon commercial principles, it is evidently the interest of the people of England not to support it; and why it has been supported so long against the clearest demonstrations of truth and national advantage, is to me, and must be to all the reasonable world, a matter of astonishment. Perhaps it may be said, that I live in America, and write this from interest. To this I reply, that my principles are universal. My attachment is to all the world, and not to any particular part: and, if what I advance is right, no matter where, or who it comes from. We have given the Proclamation of your Commissioners a currency in our newspapers, and I have no doubt but you will give this a place in yours. To oblige and be obliged is fair.

Before I dismiss this part of my address, I shall mention one more circumstance in which I think the people of England have been equally mistaken; and then proceed to other matter.

There is such an idea existing in the world, as that of NATIONAL HONOUR, and this, falsely understood, is oftentimes the cause of war. In a Christian and philosophical sense, mankind seem to have stood still at individual civilization, and to retain, as nations, all the original rudeness of nature. Peace by treaty, is only a cessation of violence, for a reformation of sentiment. It is a substitute for a principle that is wanting, and ever will be wanting till the idea of NATIONAL HONOUR be rightly understood. As individuals, we profess ourselves Christians, but as nations, we are heathens, Romans, and what not. I remember the late Admiral Saunders declaring in the House of Commons, and that in the time of peace, "That the city of Madrid laid in ashes, was not a sufficient atonement for the Spaniards taking off the rudder of an English sloop of war." I do not ask whether this is Christianity or morality, I ask whether it is decency? whether it is proper language for a

nation to use? In private life we should call it by the plain name of bullying, and the elevation of rank cannot alter its character. It is, I think, exceedingly easy to define, what ought to be understood by national honour, for that which is the best character for an individual, is the best character for a nation; and wherever the latter exceeds or falls beneath the former, there is a departure from the line of true greatness.

I have thrown out this observation with a design of applying it to Great Britain. Her idea of national honour seems devoid of that benevolence of heart, that universal expansion of philanthrophy, and that triumph over the rage of vulgar prejudice, without which, man is inferior to himself, and a companion of common animals. To know whom she shall regard or dislike, she asks what country they are of, what religion they profess, and what property they enjoy. Her idea of national honour seems to consist in national insult, and that to be a great people, is to be neither a Christian, a philosopher, or a gentleman, but to threaten with the rudeness of a bear, and to devour with the ferocity of a lion. This, perhaps, may sound harsh and uncourtly, but it is too true, and the more is the pity.

I mention this only as her general character. But towards America she has observed no character at all, and destroyed by her conduct what she assumed in her title. She set out with the title of Parent or Mother Country. The association of ideas which naturally accompanies this expression, are filled with every thing that is fond, tender, and forbearing. They have an energy particular to themselves, and overlooking the accidental attachment of common affections, apply with peculiar softness to the first feelings of the heart. It is a political term which every mother can feel the force of, and every child can judge of. It needs no painting of mine to set it off, for nature only can do it justice.

But has any part of your conduct to America corresponded with the title you set up? If in your general national character you are unpolished and severe, in this you are inconsistent and unnatural; and you must have exceeding false notions of national honour, to suppose that the world can admire a want of humanity, or that national honour depends on the violence of resentment, the inflexibility of temper, or the vengeance of execution.

I would willingly convince you, and that with as much temper as the times will suffer me to do, that as you opposed your own interest by quarrelling with us, so likewise your

national honour, rightly conceived and understood, was no way called upon to enter into a war with America. Had you studied true greatness of heart, the first and fairest ornament of mankind, you would have acted directly contrary to all that you have done, and the world would have ascribed it to a generous cause; besides which, you had (though with the assistance of this country) secured a powerful name by the last war. You were known and dreaded abroad; and it would have been wise in you to have suffered the world to have slept undisturbed under that idea. It was to you a force existing without expence. It produced to you all the advantages of real power, and you were stronger through the universality of that charm than any future fleets and armies may probably make you. Your greatness was so secured and interwoven with your silence, that you ought never to have awakened mankind, and had nothing to do but to be quiet. Had you been true politicians, you would have seen all this, and continued to draw from the magic of a name, the force and authority of a nation.

Unwise as you were in breaking the charm, you were still more unwise in the manner of doing of it. Sampson only told the secret, but you have performed the operation: you have shaven your own head, and wantonly thrown away the locks. America was the hair from which the charm was drawn that infatuated the world. You ought to have quarrelled with no power; but with her upon no account. You had nothing to fear from any condescension you might make. You might have humoured her, even if there had been no justice in her claims, without any risk to your reputation; for Europe, fascinated by your fame, would have ascribed it to your benevolence, and America, intoxicated by the great, would have slumbered in her fetters.

But this method of studying the progress of the passions, in order to ascertain the probable conduct of mankind, is a philosophy in politics, which those who preside at St. James's have no conception of. They know no other influence than corruption, and reckon all their probabilities from precedent. A new case, is to them a new world, and while they are seeking for a parallel, they get lost. The talents of Lord Mansfield can be estimated, at best, no higher than those of a sophist. He understands the subtleties, but not the elegance of nature; and by continually viewing mankind through the cold medium of the law, never thinks of penetrating into the warmer region of the mind. As for Lord North, it is his happiness to have in him more philosophy

than sentiment, for he bears flogging like a top, and sleeps the better for it. His punishment becomes his support, for while he suffers the lash for his sins, he keeps himself up by twirling about. In politics he is a good arithmetician, and in every thing else, nothing at all.

There is one circumstance which comes so much within Lord North's province as a financier, that I am surprised it should escape him, which is, the different abilities of the two countries in supporting the expence; for, strange as it may seem, England is not a match for America in this particular. By a curious kind of revolution in accounts, the people of England seem to mistake their poverty for their riches: that is, they reckon their national debt as part of their national wealth. They make the same kind of error, which a man would do, who, after mortgaging his estate, should add the money borrowed to the full value on the estate, in order to count up his worth, and, in this case, he would conceit that he got rich by running into debt. Just thus it is with England. The Government owed, at the beginning of this war, one hundred and thirty-five millions sterling; and though the individuals to whom it was due had a right to reckon their shares as so much private property, yet to the nation, collectively, it was so much poverty. There are as effectual limits to public debts, as to private ones; for when once the money borrowed is so great as to require the whole yearly revenue to discharge the interest thereon, there is an end to a farther borrowing; in the same manner as when the interest of a man's debts amounts to the yearly income of his estate, there is an end to his credit. This is nearly the case with England, the interest of her present debt being, at least equal to one half of her yearly revenue, so that out of ten millions, annually collected by taxes, she has but five she can call her own.

The very reverse of this was the case with America; she began the war without any debt upon her, and in order to carry it on, she neither raised money by taxes, nor borrowed it upon interest, but created it; and her situation at this time, continues so much the reverse of yours, that taxing would make her rich, whereas it would make you poor. When we shall have sunk the sum which we have created, we shall then be out of debt; be just as rich as when we began; and all the while we are doing it, shall feel no difference, because the value will rise as the quantity decreases.

There was not a country in the world so capable of bearing the expence of a war as America; not only because she was not in debt when she began, but because the country is young, and capable of infinite improvement, and has an almost boundless tract of new lands in store; whereas, England has got to her extent of age and growth, and has no unoccupied land, or property in reserve. The one is like a young heir, coming to a large improveable estate, the other like an old man, whose chances are over, and his estate mortgaged for half its worth.

In the second number of the Crisis, which, I find, has been re-published in England, I endeavoured to set forth the impracticability of conquering America. I stated every case, that I conceived could possibly happen, and ventured to predict its consequence. As my conclusions were drawn not artfully, but naturally, they have all proved to be true. I was upon the spot; knew the politics of America, her strength, and resources; and by a train of services, the best in my power to render, was honoured with the friendship of the Congress, the army, and the people. I considered the cause a just one. I know, and feel it a just one, and under that confidence, never made my own profit or loss an object. My endeavour was, to have the matter well understood on both sides; and I conceived myself tendering a general service. by setting forth to the one the impossibility of being conquered, and to the other, the impossibility of conquering. Most of the arguments made use of by the Ministry, for supporting the war, are the very arguments that ought to have been used against supporting it; and the plans by which they thought to conquer, are the very plans, in which they were sure to be defeated. They have taken every thing up at the wrong end. Their ignorance is astonishing, and were you in my situation you would see it. They may, perhaps, have your confidence; but I am persuaded, they would make very indifferent members of Congress. I know what England is, and what America is; and, from the compound of knowledge, am better enabled to judge of the issue, than what the King, or any of his Ministers can be.

In this number, I have endeavoured to shew the ill policy and disadvantages of the war. I believe many of my remarks are new. Those which are not so, I have studied to improve, and place in a manner that may be clear and striking. Your failure is, I am persuaded, as certain as fate. America is above your reach. She is, at least, your

equal in the world, and her independence, neither rests upon your consent, or can be prevented by your arms. In short, you spend your substance in vain, and impoverish yourself without a hope.

But suppose you had conquered America, what advantage, collectively or individually, as merchants, manufacturers, or conquerors, could you have looked for? This is an object you seem never to have attended to. Listening for the sound of victory, and led away by the phrensy of arms, you neglected to reckon either the cost, or the consequences. You must all pay towards the expence; the poorest among you must bear his share, and it is both your right and duty to weigh seriously the matter. Had America been conquered, she might have been parcelled out in grants to the favourites at Court, but no share of it would have fallen to you. Your taxes would not have been lessened, because, she would have been in no condition to have paid any towards your relief. We are rich by a contrivance of our own, which would have ceased, as soon as you became masters. Our paper money will be of no use in England, and silver and gold we have none. In the last war you made many conquests; but were any of your taxes lessened thereby? On the contrary, were you not taxed to pay for the charge of making them, and have not the same been the case in every war?

To the Parliament, I beg to address myself in a particular manner. They appear to have supposed themselves partners in the chase, and to have hunted with the lion from an expectation of a right in the booty; but in this, it is most probable they would, as legislators, have been disappointed. The case is quite a new one, and many unforeseen difficulties would have arisen thereon. The Parliament claimed a legislative right over America, and the war originated from that pretence. But the army is supposed to belong to the Crown, and if America had been conquered through their means, the claims of the Legislature would have been suffocated in the conquest. Ceded, or conquered countries, are supposed to be out of the authority of Parliament. Taxation is exercised over them by prerogative, and not by law. It was attempted to be done in the Grenades a few years ago, and the only reason why it was not done, was, because the Crown had made a prior relinquishment of its claim. Therefore, Parliament have been all this while supporting measures for the establishment of their authority, in the issue of which, they would have been triumphed over by pre-

rogative. This might have opened a new and interesting opposition between the Parliament and the Crown. The Crown would have said that it conquered for itself, and that to conquer for Parliament was an unknown case. The Parliament might have replied, that America, not being a foreign country, but a country in rebellion, could not be said to be conquered, but reduced; and thus continued their claim, by disowning the term. The Crown might have rejoined, that, however America might be considered at first, she became foreign at last, by a declaration of independence, and a treaty with France; and that her case being, by that treaty, put within the law of Nations, was out of the law of Parliament. The Parliament might have maintained, that as their claim over America had never been surrendered, so, neither, could it be taken away. The Crown might have insisted, that though the claim of Parliament could not be taken away, yet being an inferior, might be superseded; and that, whether the claim was withdrawn from the object, or the object taken from the claim, the same separation ensued; and that America being subdued after a treaty with France, was, to all intents and purposes, a regal conquest, and, of course, the sole property of the King. The Parliament, as the legal delegates of the people, might have contended against the term "inferior," and rested the case upon the antiquity of power; and this would have brought on a set of very interesting and rational questions.

First, What is the original fountain of power and honour in any country?

Secondly, Whether the prerogative does not belong to the people?

Thirdly, Whether there is any such thing as the English Constitution?

Fourthly, Of what use is the crown to the people?

Fifthly, Whether he who invented a crown was not an enemy to mankind?

Sixthly, Whether it is not a shame for a man to spend a million a year, and do no good for it, and whether the money might not be better applied?

Seventhly, Whether such a man is not better dead than alive?

Eighthly, Whether a Congress constituted like that of America, is not the most happy and consistent form of Government in the world?—With a number of others of the same import.

In short, the contention about the dividend might have

distracted the nation; for nothing is more common than to agree in the conquest, and quarrel for the prize; therefore it is, perhaps, a happy circumstance, that our successes have prevented the dispute.

If the Parliament had been thrown out in their claim, which it is most probable they would, the nation likewise would have been thrown out in their expectation; for as the taxes would have been laid by the crown, without the Parliament, the revenue arising therefrom, if any could have arose, would not have gone into the Exchequer, but into the privy purse, and so far from lessening the taxes, would not even have been added to them, but served only as pocket money to the crown. The more I reflect on this matter, the more I am astonished at the blindness and ill-policy of my countrymen, whose wisdom seems to operate without discernment, and their strength without an object.

To the great bulwark of the nation, I mean the mercantile and manufacturing part thereof, I likewise present my address. It is your interest to see America an independent country, and not a conquered one. If conquered, she is ruined; and if ruined, poor; consequently the trade will be a trifle, and her credit doubtful. If independent, she flourishes, and from her flourishing, must your profits arise. It matters nothing to you, who governs America, if your manufactures find a consumption there. Some articles will consequently be obtained from other places, and right they should; but the demand of others, will increase by the great influx of inhabitants which a state of independence and peace will occasion, and on the final event you may be enriched. The commerce of America is perfectly free, and ever will be so. She will consign away no part of it to any nation. She has not to her friends, and certainly will not to her enemies, though it is probable that your narrow-minded politicians, thinking to please you thereby, may sometime or other make such an unnecessary proposal. Trade flourishes best when it is free, and it is weak policy to attempt to fetter it. Her treaty with France is on the most liberal and generous principles, and the French, in their conduct towards her, have proved themselves to be philosophers, politicians, and gentlemen.

To the Ministry I likewise address myself. You, gentlemen, have studied the ruin of your country, from which it is not within your abilities to rescue her. Your attempts to recover are as ridiculous, as your plans, which involved her, are detestable. The commissioners being about to

depart, will probably bring you this, and with it my sixth number to them; and in so doing they carry back more COMMON SENSE than they brought, and you will likewise have more than when you sent them.

Having thus addressed you severally, I conclude by addressing you collectively. It is a long lane that has no turning. A period of sixteen years of misconduct and misfortune, is certainly long enough for any one nation to suffer under; and upon a supposition that war is not declared between France and you, I beg to place a line of conduct before you that will easily lead you out of all your troubles. It has been hinted before, and cannot be too much attended to.

Suppose America had remained unknown to Europe till the present year, and that Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander, in another voyage round the world, had made the first discovery of her in the self same condition she is now in, of arts, arms, numbers, and civilization. What, I ask, in that case, would have been your conduct towards her, for THAT will point out what it ought to be now? The problems and their solutions are equal, and the right line of the one is the parallel of the other. The question takes in every circumstance that can possibly arise. It reduces politics to a simple thought, and is moreover a mode of investigation, in which, while you are studying your interest, the simplicity of the case will cheat you into good temper. You have nothing to do but to suppose you have found America, and she appears found to your hand, and while, in the joy of your heart, you stand still to admire her, the path of politics rises straight before you.

Were I disposed to paint a contrast, I could easily set off what you have done in the present case, against what you would have done in THAT case, and, by justly opposing them, conclude a picture that would make you blush. But, as when any of the prouder passions are hurt, it is much better philosophy to let a man slip into a good temper, than to attack him in a bad one; for that reason, therefore, I only state the case, and leave yourselves to reflect upon it.

To go a little back into politics, it will be found, that the true interests of Britain lay in proposing and promoting the independence of America immediately after the last peace; for the expence which Britain had then incurred, by defending America, as her own dominions, ought to have shewn her the policy and necessity of changing the STYLE

of the country, as the best probable method of preventing future wars and expence, and the only method by which she could hold the commerce without the charge of sovereignty. Besides which, the title she assumed, of parent country, led to, and pointed out, the propriety, wisdom, and advantage of a separation; for as, in private life, children grow into men, and, by setting up for themselves, extend and secure the interest of the whole family, so in the settlement of colonies, large enough to admit of maturity, the same policy should be pursued, and the same consequences would follow. Nothing hurts the affections, both of parents and children, so much, as living too closely connected, and keeping up the distinction too long. Domineering will not do over those who, by a progress in life, are become equal in rank to their parents; that is, when they have families of their own; and though they may conceive themselves the subjects of their advice, will not suppose them the objects of their government. I do not, by drawing this parallel, mean to admit the title of PARENT COUNTRY, because, if due any where, it is due to Europe collectively, and the first settlers from England were driven here by persecution. I mean only to introduce the term for the sake of policy, and to shew from your title, the line of your interest.

When you saw the state of strength and opulence, and that by her own industry, which America had arrived at, you ought to have advised her to have set up for herself, and proposed an alliance of interest with her, and, in so doing, you would have drawn, and that at her own expence, more real advantage, and more military supplies and assistance, both of ships and men, than from any weak and wrangling government you could exercise over her. In short, had you studied only the domestic politics of a family, you would have learned how to govern the state; but, instead of this easy and natural line, you flew out into every thing which was wild and outrageous, till, by following the passion and stupidity of the pilot, you wrecked the vessel within sight of the shore.

Having shewn what you ought to have done, I now proceed to shew the reason why it was not done. The caterpillar circle of the Court, had an interest to pursue, distinct from, and opposed to yours; for though, by the independence of America, and an alliance therewith, the trade would have continued, if not increased, as, in many articles, neither country can go to a better market, and though, by defending and protecting herself, she would have been no expence

to you, and, consequently, your national charges would have decreased, and your taxes might have been proportionally lessened thereby; yet, the striking off so many places from the Court Calendar was put in opposition to the interest of the nation. The loss of thirteen Government-ships, with their appendages here, and in England, is a shocking sound in the ear of a hungry Courtier. *Your present King and Minister will be the ruin of you; and you had better risk a revolution, and call a Congress, than be thus led on from madness to despair, and from despair to ruin. America has set you the example, and may you follow it, and be free.*

I now come to the last part—a war with France. This is what no man in his senses will advise you to, and all good men would wish to prevent. Whether France will declare war against you, is not for me, in this place, to mention, or to hint, even if I knew it, but it must be madness in you to do it first. The matter is now come to a full crisis, and peace is easy, if willingly set about. Whatever you may think, France has behaved handsomely to you. She would have been unjust to herself to have acted otherwise than she did; and having accepted our offer of alliance, she gave you genteel notice of it. There was nothing in her conduct reserved or indelicate: and, while she announced her determination to support her treaty, she left you to give the first offence. America, on her part, has exhibited a character of firmness to the world. Unprepared and unarmed, without form or Government, she singly opposed a nation that domineered over half the globe. The greatness of the deed demands respect; and, though you may feel resentment, you are compelled both to WONDER and ADMIRE.

Here I rest my arguments, and finish my address, such as it is: it is a gift, and you are welcome. It was always my design to dedicate a CRISIS to you, when the time should come, that would properly MAKE IT A CRISIS; and when, likewise, I should catch myself in a temper to write it, and suppose you in a condition to read it. THAT time is now arrived, and with it the opportunity of conveyance. For the Commissioners—POOR COMMISSIONERS! having proclaimed, that, "YET FORTY DAYS AND NINEVEH SHALL BE OVERTHROWN," have waited out the date, and, discontented with their God, are returning to their gourd. And all the harm I wish them, is, that it may not WITHER about their ears, and that they may not make their exit in the belly of a whale.

P. S. Though, in the tranquillity of my mind, I have concluded with a laugh, yet I have something to mention to the COMMISSIONERS, which to them is serious, and worthy their attention. Their authority is derived from an Act of Parliament, which likewise describes and LIMITS their OFFICIAL powers. Their commission, therefore, is only a recital, and personal investiture of those powers, or a nomination and description of the persons who are to execute them. Had it contained any thing contrary to, or gone beyond the line of, the written law from which it is derived, and by which it is bound, it would, by the English Constitution, have been treason in the Crown, and the King been subject to an impeachment. He dared not, therefore, put in his commission what you have put in your Proclamation, that is, he dared not have authorised you, in that commission, to burn and destroy, or to threaten to burn and destroy, any thing in America. You are both in the ACT, and in the COMMISSION, styled COMMISSIONERS FOR RESTORING PEACE, and the methods for doing it are there pointed out. Your last Proclamation is signed by you, as commissioners UNDER THAT ACT. You make Parliament the patron of its contents. Yet, in the body of it you insert matters contrary both to the spirit and letter of the Act, and what likewise your King dared not have put in his commission to you. The state of things in England, Gentlemen, is too ticklish for you to run hazards. You are ACCOUNTABLE TO PARLIAMENT FOR THE EXECUTION OF THAT ACT ACCORDING TO THE LETTER OF IT. Your heads may pay for breaking it, for you certainly have broke it by exceeding it. And as a friend, who would wish you to escape the paw of the lion, as well as the belly of the whale, I civilly hint to you, TO KEEP WITHIN COMPASS.

Sir Harry Clinton, strictly speaking, is as accountable as the rest; though a general, he is likewise a commissioner, acting under a superior authority. His first obedience is to the Act; and his plea of being a general, will not and cannot clear him as a commissioner, for that would suppose the Crown, in its single capacity, to have the power of dispensing with a single Act of Parliament. Your situations, Gentlemen, are nice and critical, and the more so, because England is unsettled. Take heed! Remember the times of Charles the First! For Laud and Strafford fell by trusting to a hope like yours.

Having thus shewn you the danger of your Proclamation,

I now shew you the folly of it. The means contradict the design. You threaten to lay waste, in order to render America a useless acquisition of alliance to France. I reply, that the more destruction you commit, (if you could do it,) the more valuable to France you make that alliance. You can destroy only houses and goods; and by so doing you increase our demand upon her for materials and merchandize; for the wants of one nation, provided it has FREEDOM and CREDIT, naturally produces riches to the other: and as you can neither ruin the land, nor prevent the vegetation, you would increase the exportation of our produce in payment, which, to her, would be a new fund of wealth. In short, had you cast about for a plan on purpose to enrich your enemies, you could not have hit upon a better.

COMMON SENSE.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

## No. VIII.

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ADDRESSED TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

*Philadelphia, March* 1780.

"TRUSTING, (says the King of England in his speech of November last) in the Divine Providence, and in the justice of my cause, I am firmly resolved to prosecute the war with vigour, and to make every exertion in order to compel our enemies to equitable terms of peace and accommodation." To this declaration the United States of America, and the confederated powers of Europe, will reply, *if Britain will have war, she shall have enough of it.*

Five years have nearly elapsed since the commencement of hostilities, and every campaign, by a gradual decay, has lessened your ability to conquer, without producing a serious thought on your condition or your fate. Like a prodigal lingering in an habitual consumption, you feel the relics of life, and mistake them for recovery. New schemes, like new medicines, have administered fresh hopes, and prolonged the disease instead of curing it. A change of generals, like a change of physicians, served only to keep the flattery alive, and furnish new pretences for new extravagance.

"*Can Britain fail?*"* has been proudly asked at the commencement of every enterprize, and that "*whatever she wills is fate,*† has been given with the solemnity of pro-

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* Whitehead's New Year's Ode, 1776.

† Ode at the installation of Lord North, for Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

phetic confidence; and though the question has been constantly replied to by disappointment, and the prediction falsified by misfortune, yet still the insult continued, and your catalogue of national evils increased therewith. Eager to persuade the world of her power, she considered destruction as the minister of greatness, and conceived that the glory of a nation, like that of an Indian, lay in the number of its scalps, and the miseries it inflicts.

Fire, sword and want, as far as the arms of Britain could extend them, have been spread with wanton cruelty along the coast of America: and while you, remote from the scene of suffering, had nothing to lose, and as little to dread, the information reached you like a tale of antiquity, in which the distance of time defaces the the conception, and changes the severest sorrows into conversable amusement.

This makes the second paper, addressed, perhaps in vain, to the people of England. That advice should be taken, wherever example has failed, or precept be regarded, where warning is ridiculed, is like a picture of hope resting on despair. But when time shall stamp with universal currency the facts you have long encountered with a laugh, and the irrisistible evidence of accumulated losses like the handwriting on the wall, shall add terror to distress, you will then, in a conflict of sufferings, learn to sympathize with others by feeling for yourselves.

The triumphant appearance of the combined fleets in the Channel, and at your harbours' mouth, and the expedition of Captain Paul Jones, on the Western and Eastern coast of England and Scotland, will, by placing you in the condition of an endangered country, read to you a stronger lecture on the calamities of invasion, and bring to your minds a truer picture of promiscuous distress, than the most finished rhetoric can describe, or the keenest imagination can conceive.

Hitherto, you have experienced the expences, but nothing of the miseries of war. Your disappointments have been accompanied with no immediate suffering, and your losses came to you only by intelligence. Like fire at a distance, you heard not even the cry; you felt not the danger, you saw not the confusion. To you, every thing has been foreign, but the taxes to support it. You knew not what it was to be alarmed at midnight with an armed enemy in the streets. You were strangers to the distressing scene of a family in flight, and the thousand restless cares and tender sorrows that incessantly arose. To see women and children

wandering in the severity of winter with the broken remains of a well furnished house, and seeking shelter in every crib and hut, were matters you had no conception of. You knew not what it was to stand by and see your goods chopped up for fuel, and your beds ripped to pieces to make packages for plunder. The misery of others, like a tempestuous night, added to the pleasures of your own security. You even enjoyed the storm, by contemplating the difference of conditions, and that which carried sorrow into the breast of thousands, served but to heighten in you a species of tranquil pride.——Yet these are but the fainter sufferings of war, when compared with carnage and slaughter, the miseries of a military hospital, or a town in flames.

The people of America, by anticipating distress, had fortified their minds against every species you could inflict. They had resolved to abandon their homes, to resign them to destruction, and to seek new settlements, rather than submit. Thus familiarized to misfortune, before it arrived, they bore their portion with less regret: the justness of their cause was a continual source of consolation, and the hope of final victory, which never left them, served to lighten the load, and sweeten the cup allotted them to drink.

But when their suffering shall become yours, and invasion be transferred to the invaders, you will have neither an extended wilderness to fly to, their cause to comfort you, nor their hopes to rest on. Distress with them was sharpened with no self-reflection. They had not brought it on themselves. On the contrary, they had by every proceeding endeavoured to avoid it, and had descended even below the mark of congressional character to prevent a war. The national honour, or the advantages of independence, were matters, which, at the commencement of the dispute, they had never studied, and it was only at the last moment that the measure was resolved on. Thus circumstanced, they naturally and conscientiously felt a dependance upon Providence. They had a clear pretension to it, and had they failed therein, infidelity had gained a triumph.

But your condition is the reverse of theirs. Every thing you suffer you have sought; nay, had you created mischiefs on purpose to inherit them, you could not have secured your title by a firmer deed. The world awakens with no pity at your complaints. You felt none for others: you deserve none for yourselves. Nature doth not interest herself in cases like yours, but, on the contrary, turns from them with dislike, and abandons them to punishment. You may

now present memorials to what Court you please, but so far as America is the object, none will listen. The policy of Europe, and the propensity there is in every mind to curb insulting ambition, and bring cruelty to judgment, are unitedly against you; and where nature and interest reinforces each other, the compact is too intimate to be dissolved.

Make but the case of others your own, and your own theirs, and you will then have a clear idea of the whole. Had France acted towards her colonies as you have done, you would have branded her with every epithet of abhorrence: and had you, like her, stept in to succour a struggling people, all Europe must have echoed with your own applauses. But entangled in the passion of dispute, you see it not as you ought, and form opinions thereon which suit with no interest but your own. You wonder America does not rise in union with you to impose on herself a portion of your taxes, and reduce herself to unconditional submission. You are amazed that the southern powers of Europe do not assist you in conquering a country which is afterwards to be turned against themselves; and that the northern ones do not contribute to reinstate you in America, who already enjoy the market for naval stores by the separation. You seem surprised that Holland does not pour in her succours, to maintain you mistress of the seas, when her own commerce is suffering by your act of navigation, or that any country should study her own interests while yours is on the carpet.

Such excesses of passionate folly, and unjust, as well as unwise resentment, have driven you on like Pharaoh, to unpitied miseries, and while the importance of the quarrel shall perpetuate your disgrace, the flag of America will carry it round the world. The natural feelings of every rational being will take against you, and wherever the story shall be told, you will have neither excuse nor consolation left. With an unsparing hand, and an unsatiable mind, you have havocked the world, both to gain dominion, and to lose it; and while in a phrenzy of avarice and ambition, the east and west are doomed to tributary bondage, you rapidly earned destruction as the wages of a nation.

At the thoughts of a war at home, every man amongst you ought to tremble. The prospect is far more dreadful there than in America. Here the party that was against the measures of the Continent, were, in general, a kind of neutrals, who added strength to neither army. There does not exist a being so devoid of sense and sentiment as to covet

"UNCONDITIONAL SUBMISSION," and therefore no man in America could be with you in principle. Several might, from a cowardice of mind, PREFER it to the hardships and dangers of OPPOSING it; but the same disposition that gave them such a choice, unfitted them to act either for or against. But England is rent into parties, with equal shares of resolution. The principle which produced the war divides the nation. Their animosities are in the highest state of fermentation, and both sides by a call of the militia are in arms. No human foresight can discern, no conclusion can be formed, what turn a war might take, if once set on by an invasion. She is not now in a fit disposition to make a common cause of her own affairs, and having no conquests to hope for abroad, and nothing but expences arising at home, her every thing is staked upon a defensive combat, and the further she goes, the worse she is off.

There are situations a nation may be in, in which peace or war, abstracted from every other consideration, may be politically right or wrong. When nothing can be lost by a war, but what must be lost without it, war is then the policy of that country; and such was the situation of America at the commencement of hostilities. But when no security can be gained by a war, but what may be accomplished by a peace, the case becomes reversed, and such now is the situation of England.

That America is beyond the reach of conquest, is a fact which experience has shewn, and time confirmed; and this admitted, what is, I ask, now the object of contention? If there be any honour in pursuing self-destruction with inflexible passion: if national suicide be the perfection of national glory, you may, with all the pride of criminal happiness, expire unenvied, and unrivalled.—But when the tumult of war shall cease, and the tempest of present passions be succeeded by calm reflection, or when those, who surviving its fury, shall inherit from you a legacy of debts and misfortunes, when the yearly revenue shall scarcely be able to discharge the interest of the one, and no possible remedy be left for the other, ideas, far different to the present, will arise, and embitter the remembrance of former follies. A mind disarmed of its rage, feels no pleasure in contemplating a frantic quarrel. Sickness of thought, the sure consequence of conduct like yours, leaves no ability for enjoyment, no relish for resentment; and though, like a man in a fit, you feel not the injury of the struggle, nor distinguish between strength and disease, the weakness will,

nevertheless, be proportioned to the violence, and the sense of pain, increase with the recovery.

To what persons, or to whose system of politics you owe your present state of wretchedness, is a matter of total indifference to America. They have contributed, however unwillingly, to set her above themselves; and she, in the tranquillity of conquest, resigns the enquiry. The case now, is not so properly, who began the war, as who continues it. That there are men in all countries to whom a state of war is a mine of wealth, is a fact never to be doubted. Characters like these, naturally breed in the putrefaction of distempered times, and after fattening on the disease, they perish with it, or, impregnated with the stench, retreat into obscurity.

But there are several erroneous notions, to which you likewise owe a share of your misfortunes, and which, if continued, will only increase your trouble and your losses. An opinion hangs about the gentlemen of the Minority, that America would relish measures under THEIR administration, which she would not from the present cabinet. On this rock Lord Chatham would have split had he gained the helm, and several of his survivors are steering the same course. Such distinctions, in the infancy of the argument, had some degree of foundation: but they now serve no other purpose than to lengthen out a war, in which the limits of the dispute, being fixed by the fate of arms, and guaranteed by treaties, are not to be changed, or altered by trivial circumstances.

The Ministry and many of the Minority sacrifice their time in disputing on a question, with which they have nothing to do, namely, whether America shall be independent or not? Whereas, the only question that can come under their determination, is, whether they will accede to it or not? They confound a military question with a political one, and undertake to supply by a vote, what they lost by a battle. Say, she shall not be independent, and it will signify as much, as if they voted against a decree of fate; or say that she shall, and she will be no more independent than before. Questions, which when determined, cannot be executed, serve only to shew the folly of dispute, and the weakness of the disputants.

From a long habit of calling America your own, you suppose her governed by the same prejudices and conceits which govern yourselves. Because you have set up a particular denomination of religion to the exclusion of all

others, you imagine she must do the same; and, because you, with an unsociable narrowness of mind, have cherished against France and Spain, you suppose her alliance must be defective in friendship. Copying her notions of the world from you, she formerly thought as you instructed, but now feeling herself free, and the prejudice removed, she thinks, and acts upon a different system. It frequently happens, that in proportion as we are taught to dislike persons and countries not knowing why, we feel an ardour of esteem upon a removal of the mistake. It seems as if something was to be made amends for, and we eagerly give in to every office of friendship, to atone for the injury of the error.

But, perhaps, there is something in the extent of countries, which, among the generality of people, insensibly communicates extension of the mind. The soul of an islander, in its native state, seems bounded by the foggy confines of the water's edge, and all beyond, affords to him matters only for profit or curiosity—not for friendship. His island is to him, his world, and, fixed to that, his every thing centers in it; while those, who are inhabitants of a continent, by casting their eye over a larger field, take in, likewise, a larger intellectual circuit, and thus approaching nearer to an acquaintance with the universe, their atmosphere of thought is extended, and their liberality fills a wider space. In short, our minds seem to be measured by countries when we are men, as they are by places, when we are children; and until something happens to disentangle us from the prejudice, we serve under it without perceiving it.

In addition to this, it may be remarked, that men who study any universal science, the principles of which are universally known or admitted, and applied, without distinction, to the common benefit of all countries, obtain thereby, a larger share of philanthropy than those who only study national arts and improvements. Natural philosophy, mathematics, and astronomy, carry the mind from the country to the creation, and give it a fitness suited to the extent. It was not Newton's honour, neither could it be his pride, that he was an Englishman, but that he was a philosopher. The Heavens had liberated him from the prejudices of an island, and science had expanded his soul as boundless as his studies.

COMMON SENSE.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

No. IX.

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*Philadelphia, June* 9, 1780.

HAD America pursued her advantages with half the spirit she resisted her misfortunes, she would, before now, have been a conquering and a peaceful people; but lulled in the lap of soft tranquillity, she rested on her hopes, and adversity only has convulsed her into action. Whether subtlety or sincerity, at the close of the last year, induced the enemy to an appearance for peace, is a point not material to know; it is sufficient that we see the effects it has had on our politics, and that we sternly rise to resent the delusion.

The war, on the part of America, has been a war of natural feelings. Brave in distress; serene in conquest; drowsy while at rest; and in every situation generously disposed to peace. A dangerous calm, and a most heightened zeal, have, as circumstances varied, succeeded each other. Every passion, but that of despair, has been called to a tour of duty; and so mistaken has been the enemy, of our abilities and disposition, that when she supposed us conquered, we rose the conquerors. The extensiveness of the United States, and the variety of their resources; the universality of their cause, the quick operation of their feelings, and the similarity of their sentiments, have, in every trying situation, produced *a something*, which, favoured by Providence, and pursued with ardour, has accomplished in an instant, the business of a campaign. We have never deliberately sought victory, but snatched it; and bravely undone in an hour, the plotted operations of a season.

The reported fate of Charlestown, like the misfortunes of seventy-six, has, at last, called forth a spirit, and kindled up a flame, which, perhaps, no other event could have produced. If the enemy has circulated a falsehood, they have unwisely aggravated us into life; and if they have told us a truth, they have unintentionally done us a service. We were returning with folded arms, from the fatigues of war, and thinking and sitting leisurely down to enjoy repose. The dependence that has been put upon Charlestown, threw a drowsiness over America. We looked on the business done —The conflict over--the matter settled—or that all which remained unfinished, would follow of itself. In this state of dangerous relax, exposed to the poisonous infusions of the enemy, and having no common danger to attract our attention, we were extinguishing, by stages, the ardour we began with, and surrendering by piece-meals the virtue that defended us.

Afflicting as the loss of Charlestown may be, yet, if it universally rouse us from the slumber of a twelvemonth past, and renew in us the spirit of former days, it will produce an advantage more important than its loss. America ever is what she *thinks* herself to be. Governed by sentiment, and acting her own mind, she becomes, as she pleases, the victor or the victim.

It is not the conquest of towns, nor the accidental capture of garrisons, that can reduce a country so extensive as this. The sufferings of one part can ever be relieved by the exertions of another, and there is no situation the enemy can be in, that does not afford to us the same advantages she seeks herself. By dividing her force, she leaves every post attackable. It is a mode of war that carries with it a confession of weakness, and goes on the principle of distress, rather than conquest.

The decline of the enemy is visible, not only in their operations, but in their plans. Charlestown originally made but a secondary object in the system of attack, and it is now become their principal one, because they have not been able to succeed elsewhere. It would have carried a cowardly appearance in Europe, had they formed their grand expedition in seventy-six, against a part of the Continent, where there was no army, or not a sufficient one to oppose them; but failing, year after year, in their impressions here, and to the eastward and northward, they deserted their first capital design, and prudently contenting themselves with what they can get, give a flourish of honour to conceal disgrace.

But this piecemeal work is not conquering the Continent. It is a discredit in them to attempt it, and in us to suffer it. It is now full time to put an end to a war of aggravations, which, on one side, has no possible object, and on the other, has every inducement which honour, interest, safety, and happiness can inspire. If we suffer them much longer to remain among us, we shall become as bad as themselves. An association of vices will reduce us more than the sword. A nation hardened in the practice of iniquity knows better how to profit by it, than a young country newly corrupted. We are not a match for them in the line of advantageous guilt, nor they to us on the principles we bravely set out with. Our first days were our days of honour. They have marked the character of America, wherever the story of her wars are told; and convinced of this, we have nothing to do, but wisely and unitedly to tread the well-known track.

The progress of war is often as ruinous to individuals, as the issue of it is to a nation; and it is not only necessary that our forces be such, that we be conquerors in the end, but that by timely exertions we be secure in the interim. The present campaign will afford an opportunity which has never presented itself before, and the preparations for it are equally necessary, whether Charlestown stand or fall. Suppose the first, it is in that case only a failure of the enemy, not a defeat. All the conquest a besieged town can hope for, is, not to be conquered; and compelling an enemy to raise the siege, is to the besieged a victory. But there must be a probability, amounting almost to certainty, that would justify a garrison marching out to attack a retreat. Therefore, should Charlestown not be taken, and the enemy abandon the siege, every other part of the Continent should prepare to meet them; and, on the contrary, should it be taken, the same preparations are necessary to balance the loss, and put ourselves in a condition to co-operate with our allies, immediately on their arrival.

We are not now fighting our battles alone, as we were in seventy-six. England, from a malicious disposition to America, has not only not declared war against France and Spain, but the better to prosecute her passions here, has afforded those two powers no military object, and avoids them, to distress us. She will suffer her West India islands to be over-run by France, and her southern settlements taken by Spain, rather than quit the object that gratifies revenge. This conduct, on the part of Britain, has pointed

out the propriety of France sending a naval and land force to co-operate with America on the spot. Their arrival cannot be very distant, nor the ravages of the enemy long. In the meantime the part necessary to us needs no illustration. The recruiting the army, and procuring the supplies, are the two things needful, and a capture of either of the enemy's divisions will restore to America peace and plenty.

At a crisis, big, like the present, with expectation and events, the whole country is called to unanimity and exertion. Not an ability ought now to sleep, that can produce but a mite to the general good, nor even a whisper to pass that militates against it. The necessity of the case, and the importance of the consequences, admit no delay from a friend, no apology from an enemy. To spare now, would be the height of extravagance, and to consult present ease, would be to sacrifice it, perhaps, for ever.

America, rich in patriotism and produce, can want neither men nor supplies, when a serious necessity call them forth. The slow operation of taxes, owing to the extensiveness of collection, and their depreciated value before they arrived in the treasury, have, in many instances, thrown a burthen upon Government, which has been artfully interpreted by the enemy into a general decline throughout the country, Yet this, inconvenient as it may at first appear, is not only remediable, but may be turned to an immediate advantage; for it makes no real difference, whether a certain number of men, or company of militia (and in this country every man is a militia man) are directed by law to send a recruit at their own expence, or whether a tax is laid on them for that purpose, and the man hired by government afterwards. The first, if there is any difference, is both cheapest and best, because it saves the expence which would attend collecting it as a tax, and brings the man sooner into the field, than the modes of recruiting formerly used. And on this principle, a law has been passed in this State, for recruiting two men from each company of militia, which will add upwards of a thousand to the force of the country.

But the flame, which has broke forth in this city since the report from New York, of the loss of Charlestown, not only does honour to the place, but like the blaze of seventy-six, will kindle into action the scattered sparks throughout America. The valour of a country may be learned by the bravery of its soldiery, and the general cast of its inhabitants; but confidence of success is best discovered by the active measures pursued by men of property; and when

the spirit of enterprise becomes so universal as to act at once on all ranks of men, a war may then, and not till then, be styled truly popular.

In seventy-six the ardour of the enterprising part was considerably checked, by the real revolt of some, and the coolness of others. But, in the present case, there is a firmness in the substance and property of the country to the public cause. An association has been entered into by the merchants, tradesmen, and the principal inhabitants of this city, to receive and support the new State money at the value of gold and silver; a measure, which, while it does them honour, will likewise contribute to their interest, by rendering the operations of the campaign convenient and effectual.

Neither has the spirit of exertion stopped here. A voluntary subscription is likewise began, to raise a fund of hard money to be given as bounties to fill up the full quota of the Pennsylvania line. It has been the remark of the enemy, that every thing in America has been done by the force of Government; but when she sees individuals throwing in their voluntary aids, and facilitating the public measures in concert with the established powers of the country, it will convince her that the cause of America stands not on the will of a few, but on the broad foundation of property and popularity.

Thus aided, and thus supported, disaffection will decline, and the withered head of tyranny expire in America. The ravages of the enemy will be short and limited, and like all their former ones, will produce a victory over themselves.

COMMON SENSE.

*** At the time of writing this number of the Crisis, the loss of Charlestown, though believed by some, was more confidently disbelieved by others. But there ought to be no longer a doubt on the matter. Charlestown is gone, and, I believe, for the want of a sufficient supply of provisions. The man that does not now feel for the honour of the best and noblest cause that ever a country engaged in, and exert himself accordingly, is no longer worthy a peaceful residence among a people determined to be free.

THE

# CRISIS EXTRAORDINARY.

## ON THE SUBJECT OF TAXATION.

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*Philadelphia, October* 6, 1780.

It is impossible to sit down and think seriously on the affairs of America, but the original principles on which she resisted, and the glow and ardour they inspired, will occur like the undefaced remembrance of a lovely scene. To trace over in imagination the purity of the cause, the voluntary sacrifices made to support it, and all the various turnings of the war in its defence, is at once both paying and receiving respect. The principles deserve to be remembered, and to remember them rightly, is repossessing them. In this indulgence of generous recollection, we become gainers by what we seem to give, and the more we bestow the richer we become.

So extensively right was the ground on which America proceeded, that it not only took in every just and liberal sentiment which could impress the heart, but made it the direct interest of every class and order of men to defend the country. The war, on the part of Britain, was originally a war of covetuousness. The sordid, and not the splendid passions, gave it being. The fertile fields, and prosperous infancy of America, appeared to her as mines for tributary wealth. She viewed the hive, and disregarding the industry that had enriched it, thirsted for the honey. But in the present stage of her affairs, the violence of temper is added to the rage of avarice; and therefore, that, which at the first setting out proceeded from purity of principle and public interest, is now heightened by all the obligations of necessity; for it requires but little knowledge of

human nature, to discern what would be the consequence, were America again reduced to the subjection of Britain. Uncontrouled power, in the hands of an incensed, imperious, and rapacious conqueror, is an engine of dreadful execution, and woe be to that country over which it can be exercised. The names of Whig and Tory would then be sunk in the general term of rebel, and the oppression, whatever it might be, would, with very few instances of exception, light equally on all.

Britain did not go to war with America for the sake of dominion, because she was then in possession; neither was it for the extension of trade and commerce, because she had monopolized the whole, and the country had yielded to it: neither was it to extinguish what *she* might call rebellion, because, before she began, no resistance existed. It could then be from no other motive than avarice, or a design of establishing, in the first instance, the same taxes in America as are paid in England (which, as I shall presently shew, are above a eleven times heavier than the taxes we now pay for the present year, 1780), or in the second instance, to confiscate the whole property of America, in case of resistance and conquest of the latter, of which she had then no doubt.

I shall now proceed to shew what the taxes in England are, and what the yearly expence of the present war is to her, what the taxes of this country amount to, and what the annual expence of defending it effectually will be to us; and shall endeavour concisely to point out the cause of our difficulties, and the advantages on one side, and the consequences on the other, in case we do, or do not put ourselves in an effectual state of defence. I mean to be open, candid, and sincere. I see an universal wish to expel the enemy from the country, a murmuring because the war is not carried on with more vigour, and my intention is to shew, as shortly as possible, both the reason and the remedy.

The number of souls in England (exclusive of Scotland and Ireland) is seven millions,* and the number of souls in America is three millions.

The amount of the taxes in England (exclusive of Scotland and Ireland) was, before the present war commenced,

* This is taking the highest number that the people of England have been, or can be rated at.

eleven millions six hundred and forty-two thousand six hundred and fifty-three pounds sterling, which, on an average, is no less a sum than one pound thirteen shillings and threepence sterling per head, per annum, men, women, and children; besides country taxes, taxes for the support of the poor, and a tenth of all the produce of the earth for the support of the bishops and the clergy.* Nearly five millions of this sum went annually to pay the interest of the national debt, contracted by former wars, and the remaining sum of six millions six hundred and forty-two thousand six hundred pounds was applied to defray the yearly expence of Government, the peace establishment of the army and navy, placemen, and pensioners, &c. consequently the whole of her enormous taxes being thus appropriated, she had nothing to spare out of them towards defraying the expences of the present war, or any other. Yet had she not been in debt at the beginning of the war, as we

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* The following is taken from Dr. Price's state of the taxes of England, pages 96, 97, 98.

An account of the money drawn from the public by taxes annually, being the medium of three years before the year 1776.

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Amount of customs in England | 2,528,275 |
| Amount of the excise in England | 4,649,892 |
| Land-tax at 3s. | 1,300,000 |
| Land-tax at 1s. in the pound | 450,000 |
| Salt duties | 218,739 |
| Duties on stamps, cards, dice, advertisements, bonds, leases, newspapers, almanacks, &c. | 280,788 |
| Duties on houses and windows | 385,369 |
| Post office, seizures, wine licences, hackney coaches, &c. | 250,000 |
| Annual profits from lotteries | 150,000 |
| Expence of collecting the excises in England | 297,887 |
| Expence of collecting the customs in England | 468,703 |
| Interest of loans on the land-tax at 4s. Expences of collection, militia, &c. | 250,000 |
| Perquisites, &c. on custom-house officers, &c. supposed | 250,000 |
| Expence of collecting the salt duties in England, 10½ per cent. | 27,000 |
| Bounties on fish exported | 18,000 |
| Expence of collecting the duties on stamps, cards, advertisements, &c. at 5¼ per cent. | 18,000 |
| Total | £. 11,542,653 |

were not, and, like us, had only a land, and not a naval war to carry on, her then revenue of eleven millions and a half pounds sterling would then defray all her annual expences of war and Government within each year.

But this not being the case with her, she is obliged to borrow about ten millions pounds sterling yearly, to prosecute the war she is now engaged in, (this year she borrowed twelve) and lay on new taxes to discharge the interest: and allowing that the present war has cost her only fifty millions sterling, the interest thereon, at five per cent, will be two millions and a half, therefore the amount of her taxes now must be fourteen millions, which, on an average, is not less than forty shillings sterling per head, men, women, and children, throughout the nation. Now as this expence of fifty millions was borrowed on the hopes of conquering America, and as it was avarice which first induced her to commence the war, how truly wretched and deplorable would the condition of this country be, were she, by her own remissness, to suffer an enemy of such a disposition, and so circumstanced, to reduce her to subjection.

I now proceed to the revenues of America.

I have already stated the number of souls in America to be three millions, and by a calculation I have made, which I have every reason to believe is sufficiently right, the whole expence of the war and the support of the several Governments may be defrayed for two million pounds sterling, annually; which, on an average, is thirteen shillings and fourpence per head, men, women, and children, and the peace establishment at the end of the war, will be but three quarters of a million, or five shillings sterling per head. Now, throwing out of the question every thing, of honour, principle, happiness, freedom, and reputation in the world, and taking it up on the simple ground of interest, I put the following case:

Suppose Britain was to conquer America, and, as conquerors, was to lay her under no other conditions than to pay the same proportions towards her annual revenue which the people of England pay, our share in that case would be six million pounds sterling yearly; can it then be a question, whether it is best to raise two millions to defend the country and govern it ourselves, and only three quarters of a million afterwards, or pay six millions to have it conquered, and let the enemy govern it?

Can it be supposed that conquerors would choose to put themselves in a worse condition than what they granted to

the conquered. In England, the tax on rum is five shillings and one penny sterling per gallon, which is one silver dollar and fourteen coppers. Now would it not be laughable to imagine, that after the expence they have been at, they would let either Whig or Tory in America drink it cheaper than themselves? Coffee, which is so considerable an article of consumption and support here, is there loaded with a duty, which makes the price between five and six shillings sterling a pound, and a penalty of fifty pounds sterling on any person detected in roasting it in his own house. There is scarcely an article of life you can eat, drink, wear, or enjoy, that is not there loaded with a tax; even the light from heaven is only permitted to shine into their dwellings by paying eighteen pence sterling per window annually; and the humblest drink of life, small beer, cannot there be purchased without a tax of nearly two coppers a gallon, besides a heavy tax upon the malt, and another on the hops, before it is brewed, exclusive of a land tax on the earth which produces them. In short, the condition of that country in point of taxation is so oppressive, the number of her poor so great, and the extravagance and rapaciousness of the court so enormous, that were they to effect a conquest of America, it is then only that the distresses of America would begin. Neither would it signify any thing to a man whether he be Whig or Tory. The people of England, and the ministry of that country, know us by no such distinctions. What they want is clear, solid revenue, and the modes they would take to procure it would operate alike on all. Their manner of reasoning would be short, because they would naturally infer, that if we were able to carry on a war of five or six years against them, we were able to pay the same taxes which they do.

I have already stated that the expence of conducting the present war, and the government of the several States, may be done for two millions sterling, and the establishment in time of peace, for three quarters of a million.*

As to navy matters, they flourish so well, and are so well attended to in the hands of individuals, that I think it con-

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* I have made the calculations in sterling, because it is a rate generally known in all the States, and because, likewise, it admits of an easy comparison between our expences to support the war, and those of the enemy. Four silver dollars and a half are one pound sterling, and threepence over.

sistent on every principle of real use and economy, to turn the navy into hard money, (keeping only three or four packets) and apply it to promote the service of the army. We shall not have a ship the less; the use of them, and the benefit from them, will be greatly increased, and their expence saved. We are now allied to a formidable naval power, from whom we derive the assistance of a navy. And the line in which we can prosecute the war, so as to reduce the common enemy, and benefit the alliance most effectually, will be, by attending closely to the land service.

I estimate the charge of keeping up, and maintaining an army, officering them, and all expences included, sufficient for the defence of the country, to be equal to the expence of forty thousand men at thirty pounds sterling per head, which is one million two hundred thousand pounds.

I likewise allow four hundred thousand pounds for continental expences at home and abroad.

And four hundred thousand pounds for the support of the several State Governments; the amount will then be,

| | |
|---|---|
| For the army | 1,200,000 |
| Continental expences at home and abroad | 400,000 |
| Government of the several states | 400,000 |
| Total, | £2,000,000 |

I take the proportion of this State, Pennsylvania, to be an eighth part of the thirteen United States; the quota then for us to raise will be two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling; two hundred thousand of which will be our share for the support and pay of the army and continental expences at home and abroad, and fifty thousand pounds for the support of State Government.

In order to gain an idea of the proportion in which the raising such a sum will fall, I make the following calculation.

Pennsylvania contains three hundred and seventy-five thousand inhabitants, men, women, and children, which is likewise an eighth of the whole inhabitants of the whole United States; therefore, two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling to be raised among three hundred and seventy-five thousand persons, is, on an average, thirteen shillings and fourpence sterling, per head, per annum, or something more than one shilling sterling per month. And our proportion of three quarters of a million, for the government of the country, in time of peace, will be ninety-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds sterling, fifty

thousand of which will be for the Government expences of the State, and forty-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds for continental expences at home and abroad.

The peace establishment, then, will, on an average, be five shillings sterling per head. Whereas, was England now to stop, and the war to cease, her peace establishment would continue the same as it is now; viz. forty shillings per head; therefore, were our taxes necessary for carrying on the war as much per head, as hers now is, and the difference to be only whether we should, at the end of the war, pay at the rate of five shillings per head, or forty shillings per head, the case needs no thinking of. But as we can securely defend and keep the country for one third less than what our burthen would be if it was conquered, and support the Government afterwards for one eighth of what Britain would levy on us, and, could I find a miser whose heart never felt the emotion of a spark of principle, even that man, uninfluenced by every love, but the love of money, and capable of no attachment but to his interest, would, and must, from the frugality which governs him, contribute to the defence of the country, or he ceases to be a miser, and becomes an idiot. But when we take in with it every thing that can ornament mankind; when the line of our interest becomes the line of our happiness; when all that can cheer and animate the heart: when sense of honour, fame, character at home and abroad, are interwoven, not only with the security, but the increase of property; there exists not a man in America, unless he be an hired emissary, who does not see that his good is connected with keeping a sufficient defence.

I do not imagine that an instance can be produced in the world, of a country putting herself to such an amazing charge to conquer and enslave another, as Britain has done. The sum is too great for her to think of with any tolerable degree of temper; and when we consider the burthen she sustains, as well as the disposition she has shewn, it would be the height of folly in us, to suppose that she would not reimburse herself by the most rapid means, had she once more America within her power. With such an oppression of expence, what would an empty conquest be to her? What relief, under such circumstances, could she derive from a victory without a price? It was money, it was revenue she first went to war for, and nothing but *that* would satisfy her. It is not the nature of avarice to be satisfied with any thing else. Every passion that acts upon mankind has a

peculiar mode of operation. Many of them are temporary and fluctuating; they admit of cessation and variety. But avarice is a fixed, uniform passion. It neither abates of its vigour, nor changes its object; and the reason why it does not, is founded on the nature of things, for wealth has not a rival, where avarice is the ruling passion. One beauty may excel another, and extinguish from the mind of a man the pictured remembrance of a former one. But wealth is the phœnix of avarice, and, therefore, cannot seek a new object, because there is not another in the world.

I now pass on to shew the value of the present taxes, and compare them with the annual expence; but this I shall preface with a few explanatory remarks.

There are two distinct things which make the payment of taxes difficult; the one is the large and real value of the sum to be paid, and the other is, the scarcity of the thing in which the payment is to be made; and, although these appear to be one and the same, they are, in several instances, not only different, but the difficulty springs from different causes.

Suppose a tax was to be laid, equal to one half of what a man's yearly income is, such a tax could not be paid, because the property could not be spared; and on the other hand, suppose a very trifling tax was laid, to be collected in *pearls*, such a tax, likewise could not be paid, because it could not be had. Now any person may see that these are distinct cases, and the latter of them is a representation of ours.

That the difficulty cannot proceed from the former, that is, from the real value or weight of the tax, is evident at first view, to any person who will consider it.

The amount of the quota of taxes for this State, for the present year, 1780, (and so on in proportion for every other State) is twenty million of dollars, which at seventy for one, is but sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty pounds three shillings sterling, and on an average, is no more than three shillings and fivepence sterling, per head, per ann. per man, woman, and child, or three 2-5ths pence per head, per month. Now here is a clear positive fact, that cannot be contradicted, and which proves that the difficulty cannot be in the weight of the tax, for in itself it is a trifle, and far from being adequate to our quota of the expence of the war. The quit-rents of one penny sterling per acre, on only one half the State, come to upwards of fifty thousand pounds, which is almost as much as all the taxes of the

present year, and as those quit-rents made no part of the taxes then paid, and are now discontinued, the quantity of money drawn for public service this year, exclusive of the militia fines, which I shall take notice of in the process of this work, is less than what was paid, and payable in any year preceding the Revolution, and since the last war; what I mean is, that the quit-rents and taxes taken together, came to a larger sum then, than the present taxes without the quit-rents do now.

My intention by these arguments and calculations, is, to place the difficulty to the right cause, and shew that it does not proceed from the weight or worth of the tax, but from the scarcity of the medium in which it is paid; and to illustrate this point still farther, I shall now shew, that if the tax of twenty millions of dollars, was of four times the real value it is now, or nearly so, which would be about two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling, and would be our full quota, that this sum would have been raised with more ease, and less felt, than the present sum of only sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty pounds.

The convenience or inconvenience of paying a tax in money, arises from the quantity of money that can be spared out of trade.

When the emissions stopped, the Continent was left in possession of two hundred millions of dollars, perhaps as equally dispersed as it was possible for trade to do it. And as no more was to be issued, the rise or fall of prices could neither increase nor diminish the quantity. It, therefore, remained the same through all the fluctuations of trade and exchange.

Now had the exchange stood at twenty for one, which was the rate Congress calculated upon when they quoted the States the latter end of last year, trade would have been carried on for nearly four times less money than it is now, and consequently, the twenty millions would have been spared with much greater ease, and, when collected, would have been almost four times the value they now are. And on the other hand, was the depreciation to be ninety or one hundred for one, the quantity required for trade would be more than at sixty or seventy for one, and though the value of them would be less, the difficulty of sparing the money out of trade would be greater. And on these facts and arguments I rest the matter, to prove that it is not the want of property, but the scarcity of the medium, by which the proportion of property for taxation is to be measured

out, that makes the embarrassment we lie under. There is not money enough, and, what is equally as true, the people will not let there be money enough.

While I am on the subject of the currency, I shall offer one remark, which will appear true to every body, and can be accounted for by nobody, which is, that the better the times were, the worse the money grew; and the worse the times were, the better the money stood. It never depreciated by any advantage obtained by the enemy. The troubles of seventy-six, and the loss of Philadelphia, in seventy-seven, made no sensible impression on it, and every one knows, that the surrender of Charlestown did not produce the least alteration in the rate of exchange, which for long before, and for more than three months after, stood at sixty for one.

It seems, as if the certainty of its being our own, made us careless of its value, and that the most distant thoughts of losing it, made us hug it the closer, like something we were loth to part with; or that we depreciate it for our pastime, which when called to seriousness by the enemy, we leave off to renew again at our leisure. In short, our good luck seems to break us, and our bad make us whole.

Passing on from this digression, I shall now endeavour to bring into one view, the several parts I have already stated, and form thereon some propositions, and conclude.

I have placed before the reader, the average tax per head, paid by the people in England; which is forty shillings sterling.

And I have shewn the rate on an average per head, which will defray all the expence of the war to us, and support the several Governments, without running the country into debt, which is thirteen shillings and fourpence.

I have shewn what the peace establishment may be conducted for, viz. an eighth part of what it would be if under the government of Britain.

And I have likewise shewn what the average per head of the present taxes are, namely, three shillings and fivepence sterling, or three 2-5ths per month; and that their whole yearly value in sterling, is only sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty pounds. Whereas, our quota, to keep the payments equal with the expences, is two hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Consequently, there is a deficiency of one hundred and eighty-five thousand seven hundred and twenty pounds, and the same proportion of defect, according to the several quotas, happens in every other state. And this defect is the cause why the army has been so indifferently fed, clothed

and paid. It is the cause, likewise, of the nerveless state of the campaign, and the insecurity of the country. Now, if a tax equal to the thirteen and fourpence per head, will remove all these difficulties, make people secure in their homes, leave them to follow the business of their stores and farms unmolested, and not only keep out, but drive out the enemy from the country; and if the neglect of raising this sum will let them in, and produce the evils which might be prevented—on which side, I ask, does the wisdom, interest, and policy lie; or, rather, would it not be an insult to reason to put the question? The sum, when proportioned out according to the several abilities of the people, can hurt no one, but an inroad from the enemy ruins hundreds of families.

Look at the destruction done in this city. The many houses totally destroyed, and others damaged; the waste of fences in the country round it, besides the plunder of furniture, forage, and provision. I do not suppose that half a million sterling would reinstate the sufferers; and does this, I ask, bear any proportion to the expence that would make us secure? The damage, on an average, is, at least, ten pounds sterling per head, which is as much as thirteen shillings and fourpence per head comes to for fifteen years. The same has happened on the frontiers, and in the Jerseys, New York, and other places where the enemy has been.—Carolina, and Georgia, are likewise suffering the same fate.

That the people generally do not understand the insufficiency of the taxes to carry on the war, is evident, not only from common observation, but from the construction of several petitions, which were presented to the Assembly of this State, against the recommendation of Congress of the 18th of March last, for taking up and funding the present currency at forty for one, and issuing new money in its stead. The prayer of the petition was, *That the currency might be appreciated by taxes,* (meaning the present taxes) *and that part of the taxes be applied to the support of the army, if the army could not be otherwise supported.* Now it could not have been possible for such a petition to have been presented, had the petitioners known, that so far from *part* of the taxes being sufficient for the support of the army, the *whole* of them falls three-fourths short of the year's expences.

Before I proceed to propose methods by which a sufficiency of money may be raised, I shall take a short view of the general state of the country.

Notwithstanding the weight of the war, the ravages of the

enemy, and the obstructions she has thrown in the way of trade and commerce, so soon does a young country outgrow misfortune, that America has already surmounted many that once heavily oppresed her. For the first year or two of the war we were shut up within our ports, scarcely venturing to look towards the ocean. Now our rivers are beautified with large and valuable vessels, our stores filled with merchandize, and the produce of the country has a ready market, and an advantageous price. Gold and silver, that, for a while, seemed to have retreated again within the bowels of the earth, are once more risen into circulation, and every day adds new strength to trade, commerce, and agriculture. In a pamphlet written by Sir John Dalrymple, and dispersed in America in the year 1775, he asserted, that, *two twenty gun ships, nay,* says he, *tenders of those ships, stationed between Albemarle Sound, and Chesapeake Bay, would shut up the trade of America for six hundred miles.* How little did Sir John Dalrymple know of the abilities of America!

While under the Government of Britain, the trade of this country was loaded with restrictions. It was only a few foreign ports we were allowed to sail to. Now it is otherwise; and allowing that the quantity of trade is but half what it was before the war, the case must shew the vast advantage of an open trade, because the present quantity under her restrictions, could not support itself; from which I infer, that if half the quantity without restrictions, can bear itself up nearly, if not quite, as well as the whole when subject to them, how prosperous must the condition of America be, when the whole shall return open with all the world. By trade I do not mean the employment of a merchant only, but the whole interest and business of the country taken collectively.

It is not so much my intention, by this publication, to propose particular plans for raising money, as it is to shew the necessity and advantages to be derived from it. My principal design is to form the disposition of the people to such measures which I am fully persuaded is their interest and duty to adopt, and which need no other force to accomplish them than the force of being felt. But as every hint may be useful, I shall throw out a sketch, and leave others to make such improvements upon it as to them may appear reasonable.

The annual sum wanted is two millions, and the average rate in which it falls, is thirteen shillings and fourpence per head.

Suppose then, that we raise half the sum, and sixty thousand pounds over. The average rate thereof will be seven shillings per head.

In this case, we shall have half the supply we want, and an annual fund of sixty thousand pounds, whereon to borrow the other million; because sixty thousand pounds is the interest of a million at six per cent. and if at the end of another year we should be obliged by the continuance of the war to borrow another million, the taxes will be increased to seven shillings and sixpence, and thus for every million borrowed, an additional tax equal to sixpence per head must be levied.

The sum then to be raised next year will be one million and sixty thousand pounds; one half of which I would propose should be raised by duties on imported goods and prize goods, and the other half by a tax on landed property and houses, or such other means as each State may devise.

But as the duties on imports and prize goods must be the same in all the States, therefore the rate per cent. or what other form the duty shall be laid, must be ascertained and regulated by Congress, and ingrafted in that form into the law of each State; and the monies arising therefrom carried into the treasury of each State. The duties to be paid in gold or silver.

There are many reasons why a duty on imports is the most convenient duty or tax that can be collected; one of which is, because the whole is payable in a few places in a country, and it likewise operates with the greatest ease and equality, because as every one pays in proportion to what he consumes, so people, in general, consume in proportion to what they can afford, and therefore the tax is regulated by the abilities which every man supposes himself to have, or, in other words, every man becomes his own assessor, and pays by a little at a time when it suits him to buy. Besides, it is a tax which people may pay or let alone, by not consuming the articles; and though the alternative may have no influence on their conduct, the power of choosing is an agreeable thing to the mind. For my own part, it would be a satisfaction to me was there a duty on all sorts of liquors during the war, as in my idea of things, it would be an addition to the pleasure of society to know, that when the health of the army goes round, a few drops from every glass becomes theirs. How often have I heard an emphatical wish, almost accompanied with a tear, "*Oh, that our*

*poor fellows in the field had some of this!*" Why then need we suffer under a fruitless sympathy, when there is a way to enjoy both the wish and the entertainment at once?

But the great national policy of putting a duty upon imports is, that it either keeps the foreign trade in our own hands, or draws something for the defence of the country from every foreigner who participates it with us.

Thus much for the first half of the taxes, and as each State will best devise means to raise the other half, I shall confine my remarks to the resources of this State.

The quota then of this State, of one million and sixty thousand pounds, will be one hundred and thirty-three thousand two hundred and fifty pounds, the half of which is sixty-six thousand six hundred and twenty-five pounds; and supposing one-fourth part of Pennsylvania inhabited, then a tax of one bushel of wheat on every twenty acres of land, one with another, would produce the sum, and all the present taxes to cease. Whereas the tythes of the bishops and clergy in England, exclusive of the taxes, are upwards of half a bushel of wheat on *every single* acre of land, good and bad, throughout the nation.

In the former part of this paper, I mentioned the militia fines, but reserved speaking to the matter, which I shall now do. The ground I shall put it upon is, that two millions sterling a year will support a sufficient army, and all the expences of war and Government, without having recourse to the inconvenient method of continually calling men from their employments, which of all others is the most expensive and the least substantial. I consider the revenues created by taxes as the first and principal thing, and fines only as secondary and accidental things. It was not the intention of the militia law to apply the militia fines to any thing else but the support of the militia, neither do they produce any revenue to the State, yet these fines amount to more than all the taxes; for taking the muster-roll to be sixty thousand men, the fine on forty thousand who may not attend will be sixty thousand pounds sterling, and those who muster will give up a portion of time equal to half that sum, and if the eight classes should be called within the year, and one-third turn out, the fine on the remaining forty thousand, would amount to seventy-two millions of dollars, besides the fifteen shillings on every hundred pounds of property, and the charge of seven and a half per cent for collecting in certain instances, which,

on the whole, would be upwards of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling.

Now, if those very fines disable the country from raising a sufficient revenue, without producing an equivalent advantage, would it not be to the ease and interest of all parties to increase the revenue in the manner I have proposed, or any better, if a better can be devised, and cease the operation of the fines? I would still keep the militia as an organized body of men, and, should there be a real necessity to call them forth, pay them out of the proper revenues of the State, and increase the taxes a third or fourth per cent. on those who do not attend. My limits will not allow me to go farther in this matter, which I shall therefore close with this remark, that fines are, of all modes of revenue, the most unsuited to the minds of a free country. When a man pays a tax, he knows the public necessity requires it, and therefore feels a pride in discharging his duty: but a fine seems an atonement for neglect of duty, and, of consequence, is paid with discredit, and frequently levied with severity.

I have now only one subject more to speak to, with which I shall conclude, which is, the resolve of Congress of the 18th of March last, for taking up and funding the present currency at forty for one, and issuing new money in its stead.

Every one knows that I am not the flatterer of Congress, but in this instance *they are right;* and if that measure is supported, the currency will acquire a value, which, without it, it will not. But this is not all: it will give relief to the finances until such time as they can be properly arranged, and save the country from being immediately double taxed under the present mode. In short, support that measure, and it will support you.

I have now waded through a tedious course of difficult business, and over an untrodden path. The subject, on every point it could be viewed, was entangled with perplexities, and enveloped in obscurity; yet such are the resources of America, that she wants nothing but system to insure success.

COMMON SENSE.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

No. X.

## ON THE KING OF ENGLAND'S SPEECH.

*Philadelphia, March* 5, 1782.

Of all the innocent passions which actuate the human mind, there is none more universally prevalent than curiosity. It reaches all mankind, and in matters which concern us, or concern us not, it alike provokes in us a desire to know.

Although the situation of America, superior to every effort to enslave her, and daily rising to importance and opulence, hath placed her above the region of anxiety, it still left her within the circle of curiosity; and her fancy to see the speech of a man who had proudly threatened to bring her to his feet, was visibly marked with that tranquil confidence which cared nothing about its contents. It was enquired after with a smile, read with a laugh, and dismissed with disdain.

But, as justice is due, even to an enemy, it is right to say that the speech is as well managed as the embarrassed condition of their affairs could well admit of; and though scarcely a line of it is true, except the mournful story of Cornwallis, it may serve to amuse the deluded Commons and People of England, for whom it was calculated.

" The war," says the speech, " is still unhappily prolonged by that restless ambition which first excited our enemies to commence it, and which still continues to disappoint my earnest wishes and diligent exertions to restore the public tranquillity."

How easy it is to abuse truth and language, when men by habitual wickedness have learned to set justice at defiance! That the very man who began the war, who with the most sullen insolence refused to answer, and even to hear the humblest of all petitions, who hath encouraged his officers and his army in the most savage cruelties, and the most scandalous plunderings, who hath stirred up the Indians on one side, and the Negroes on the other, and invoked every aid of hell in his behalf, should now with an affected air of pity turn the tables from himself, and charge on another the wickedness that is his own, can only be equalled by the baseness of the heart that spoke it.

TO BE NOBLY WRONG IS MORE MANLY THAN TO BE MEANLY RIGHT, is an expression I once used on a former occasion, and it is equally applicable now. We feel something like respect for consistency even in error. We lament the virtue that is debauched into a vice, but the vice that affects a virtue, becomes the more detestable. And amongst the various assumptions of character, which hypocrisy has taught, and men have practised, there is none that raises a higher relish of disgust, than to see disappointed inveteracy, twisting itself, by the most visible falsehoods, into an appearance of piety it has no pretensions to.

"But I should not," continues the speech, "answer the trust committed to the sovereign of a FREE PEOPLE, nor make a suitable return to my subjects for their constant, zealous, and affectionate attachment to my person, family, and government, if I consented to sacrifice, either to my own desire of peace, or to their temporary ease and relief. THOSE ESSENTIAL RIGHTS AND PERMANENT INTERESTS, upon the maintenance and preservation of which, the future strength and security of this country must principally depend."

That the man whose ignorance and obstinacy first involved and still continues the nation in the most hopeless and expensive of all wars, should now meanly flatter them with the name of a FREE PEOPLE, and make a merit of his crime, under the disguise of their essential rights and permanent interests, is something which disgraces even the character of perverseness. Is he afraid they will send him to Hanover, or what does he fear? Why is the sycophant thus added to the hypocrite, and the man who pretends to govern, sunk into the humble and submissive memorialist?

What those essential rights and permanent interests are on which the future strength and security of England must

principally DEPEND, are not so much as alluded to. They are words which impress nothing but the ear, and are calculated only for the sound.

But if they have any reference to America, then do they amount to the disgraceful confession, that England, who once assumed to be her protectress, is now become her DEPENDENT. The British King and Ministry are constantly holding up the vast importance which America is of to England, in order to allure the nation to carry on the war. Now whatever ground there is for this idea, it ought to have operated as a reason for not beginning it; and therefore they support their present measures at their own disgrace, because the arguments they now use, are a direct reflection on their former policy.

"The favourable appearance of affairs," continues the speech, "in the East Indies, and the safe arrival of the numerous commercial fleets of my kingdom, must have given you satisfaction."

That things are not QUITE so bad everywhere as in America may be some cause of consolation, but can be none for triumph. One broken leg is better than two, but still it is not joy; and let the appearance of affairs in the East Indies be ever so favourable, they are, nevertheless, worse than at first, without a prospect of their ever being better. But the mournful story of Cornwallis was yet to be told, and it was necessary to give it the softest introduction possible.

"But in the course of this year," continues the speech, "my assiduous endeavours to guard the extensive dominions of my crown, have not been attended with success equal to the justice and uprightness of my views."——What justice and uprightness there was in beginning a war with America the world will judge of, and the unequalled barbarity with which it has been conducted is not to be worn from the memory by the cant of snivelling hypocrisy.

"And it is with GREAT CONCERN that I inform you that the events of war have been very unfortunate to my arms in Virginia, having ended in the loss of my forces in that province."—And OUR great concern is that they are not all served in the same manner.

"No endeavours have been wanting on my part," says the speech, "to extinguish that spirit of rebellion which our enemies have found means to foment and maintain in the colonies; and to restore to my DELUDED SUBJECTS in America, that happy and prosperous condition

which they formerly derived from a due obedience to the laws."

The expression of DELUDED SUBJECTS is become so hacknied and contemptible, and the more so when we see them making prisoners of whole armies at a time, that the pride of not being laughed at would induce a man of common sense to leave it off. But the most offensive falsehood in the paragraph, is the attributing the prosperity of America to a wrong cause. It was the unremitted industry of the settlers and their descendants, the hard labour and toil of persevering fortitude, that were the true causes of the prosperity of America. The former tyranny of England served to people it, and the virtue of the adventurers to improve it. Ask the man who with his axe hath cleared a way in the wilderness and now possesses an estate, what made him rich, and he will tell you the labour of his hands, the sweat of his brow, and the blessing of Heaven. Let Britain but leave America to herself and she asks no more. She has risen into greatness without the knowledge and against the will of England, and has a right to the unmolested enjoyment of her own created wealth.

"I will order," says the speech, "the estimates of the ensuing year to be laid before you. I rely on your wisdom and public spirit for such supplies as the circumstances of our affairs shall be found to require. Among the many ill consequences which attend the continuation of the present war, I must sincerely regret the additional burdens which it must unavoidably bring upon my faithful subjects."

Strange! That a nation must run through such a labyrinth of trouble, and expend such a mass of wealth to gain the wisdom which an hour's reflection might have taught. The final superiority of America over every attempt which an island might make to conquer her, was as naturally marked in the constitution of things, as the future ability of a giant over a dwarf is delineated in his features while an infant. How far Providence, to accomplish purposes which no human wisdom could foresee, permitted such extraordinary errors, will be believed by some and doubted by others, and still a secret in the womb of time, must rest till futurity shall give it birth.

"In the prosecution of this great and important contest," says the speech, "in which we are engaged, I retain a firm confidence in the PROTECTION OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE, and a perfect conviction in the justice of my cause; and I have no doubt, but, that by the concurrence

and support of my Parliament, by the valour of my fleets and armies, and by a vigorous, animated, and united exertion of the faculties and resources of my people, I shall be enabled to restore the blessings of a safe and honourable peace to all my dominions."

The King of England is one of the readiest believers in the world. In the beginning of the contest he passed an act to put America out of the protection of the crown of England, and though Providence, for seven years together, hath put him out of HER protection, still the man has no doubt. Like Pharaoh on the edge of the Red Sea, he sees not the plunge he is making, and precipitately drives across the flood that is closing over his head.

I think it is a reasonable supposition, that this part of the speech was composed before the arrival of the news of the capture of Cornwallis; for it certainly has no relation to their condition at the time it was spoken. But, be this as it may, it is nothing to us. Our line is fixed. Our lot is cast: and America, the child of fate, is arriving at maturity. We have nothing to do but by a spirited and quick exertion, to stand prepared for war or peace. Too great to yield, and too noble to insult; superior to misfortune, and generous in success, let us untaintedly preserve the character we have gained, and shew to future ages, an example of unequalled magnanimity. There is something in the cause and consequence of America that has drawn on her the attention of all mankind. The world has seen her brave. Her love of liberty; her ardour in supporting it; the justice of her claims, and the constancy of her fortitude have won her the esteem of Europe, and attach to her interest the first power of that country.

Her situation now is such, that to whatever point, past, present, or to come, she casts her eyes, new matter rises to convince her she is right. In her conduct towards her enemy, no reproachful sentiment lurks in secret. No sense of injustice is left upon the mind. Untainted with ambition, and a stranger to revenge, her progress hath been marked by Providence, and she, in every stage of her conflict, has blessed her with success.

But let not America wrap herself up in delusive hope, and suppose the business done. The least remissness in preparation, the least relax in execution, will only serve to prolong the war and increase expences. If our enemies can draw consolation from misfortune, and exert themselves upon despair, how much more ought we, who are to win a

Continent by the conquest, and have already an earnest of success?

Having in the preceding part made my remarks on the several matters which the speech contains, I shall now make my remarks on what it does not contain.

There is not a syllable in it respecting alliances. Either the injustice of Britain is too glaring, or her condition too desperate, or both, for any neighbouring power to come to her support. In the beginning of the contest, when she had only America to contend with, she hired assistance from Hesse and other smaller States of Germany, and for nearly three years did America, young, raw, undisciplined and unprovided, stand against the power of Britain, aided by twenty thousand foreign troops, and made a complete conquest of one entire army. The remembrance of those things ought to inspire us with confidence and greatness of mind, and carry us through every remaining difficulty with content and cheerfulness. What are the little sufferings of the present day, compared with the hardships that are past? There was a time, when we had neither house nor home in safety; when every hour was the hour of alarm and danger; when the mind, tortured with anxiety, knew no repose, and every thing but hope and fortitude was bidding us farewell.

It is of use to look back upon these things; to call to mind the times of trouble and the scenes of complicated anguish that are past and gone. Then every expence was cheap, compared with the dread of conquest and the misery of submission. We did not stand debating upon trifles, nor contending about the necessary and unavoidable charges of defence. Every one bore his lot of suffering, and looked forward to happier days and scenes of rest.

Perhaps one of the greatest dangers which any country can be exposed to, arises from a kind of trifling which sometimes steals upon the mind when it supposes the danger past; and this unsafe situation marks at this time the peculiar Crisis of America. What would she once have given, to have known that her condition at this day should be what it now is? and yet we do not seem to place a proper value upon it, nor vigorously pursue the necessary measures to secure it. We know we cannot be defended, nor yet defend ourselves, without trouble and expence. We have no right to expect it; neither ought we to look for it. We are a people, who, in our situation, differ from all the world. We form one common floor of public good, and,

whatever is our charge, it is paid for our own interest and upon our own account.

Misfortune and experience have now taught us system and method; and the arrangements for carrying on the war are reduced to rule and order. The quota of the several States are ascertained, and I intend in a future publication to shew what they are, and the necessity as well as the advantage of vigorously providing them.

In the mean time, I shall conclude this paper with an instance of *British clemency* from Smollett's History of England, volume the 11th, page 239, printed in London. It will serve to shew how dismal is the situation of a conquered people, and that the only security is an effectual defence.

We all know that the Stuart family and the house of Hanover opposed each other for the crown of England. The Stuart family stood first in the line of succession, but the other was the most successful.

In July, 1745, Charles, the son of the exiled king, landed in Scotland, collected a small force, at no time exceeding five or six thousand men, and made some attempts to re-establish his claim. The late Duke of Cumberland, uncle to the present king of England, was sent against him, and on the 16th of April following, Charles was totally defeated at Culloden, in Scotland. Success and power are the only situations in which clemency can be shewn, and those who are cruel, because they are victorious, can, with the same facility, act any other degenerate characters.

"Immediately after the decisive action at Culloden, the Duke of Cumberland took possesion of Inverness; where six and thirty deserters, convicted by a Court Martial were ordered to be executed: then he detached several parties to ravage the country. One of these apprehended the Lady Mackintosh, who was sent prisoner to Inverness, plundered her house, and drove away her cattle, though her husband was actually in the service of the Government. The castle of Lord Lovat was destroyed. The French prisoners were sent to Carlisle and Penrith; Kilmarnock, Balmerino, Cromartie, and his son the Lord Macleod, were conveyed by sea to London; and those of an inferior rank were confined in different prisons. The Marquis of Tullibardine, together with a brother of the Earl of Dunmore, and Murray the Pretender's secretary, were seized and transported to the Tower of London, to which the Earl of Traquair had been committed on suspicion; and the eldest son of Lord Lovat

was imprisoned in the castle of Edinburgh. In a word, all the gaols of Great Britain, from the capital northwards, were filled with those unfortunate captives; and great numbers of them were crowded together in the holds of ships, where they perished in the most deplorable manner, for want of air and exercise. Some rebel chiefs escaped in two French frigates that arrived on the coast of Lochaber about the end of April, and engaged three vessels belonging to his Britannic Majesty, which they obliged to retire. Others embarked on board a ship on the coast of Buchan, and were conveyed to Norway, from whence they travelled to Sweden. In the month of May, the Duke of Cumberland advanced with the army into the Highlands, as far as Fort Augustus, where he encamped; and sent off detachments on all hands, to hunt down the fugitives, and lay waste the country with fire and sword. The castles of Glengary and Lochiel were plundered and burned; every house, hut, or habitation, met with the same fate, without distinction; and all the cattle and provisions were carried off; the men were either shot upon the mountains, like wild beasts, or put to death in cold blood, without form of trial; the women, after having seen their husbands and fathers murdered, were subjected to brutal violation, and then turned out naked, with their children, to starve on the barren heaths. One whole family was inclosed in a barn, and consumed to ashes. Those ministers of vengeance were so alert in the execution of their office, that in a few days there was neither house, cottage, man, nor beast, to be seen within the compass of fifty miles; all was ruin, silence, and desolation."

I have here presented the reader with one of the most shocking instances of cruelty ever practised, and I leave it to rest on his mind, and he may be fully impressed with a sense of the destruction he has escaped in case Britain had conquered America; and likewise, that he may see and feel their necessity, as well for his own personal safety, as for the honour, the interest, the happiness of the whole community, to omit or delay no one preparation necessary to secure the ground we so happily stand upon.

## TO THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA.

*On the Expences, Arrangements, and Disbursements for carrying on the War, and finishing it with Honour and Advantage.*

When any necessity or occasion has pointed out the convenience of addressing the public, I have never made it a consideration whether the subject was popular or unpopular, whether it was right or wrong; for that which is right will become popular, and that which is wrong, though by mistake it may obtain the cry of fashion of the day, will soon lose the power of delusion, and sink into disesteem.

A remarkable instance of this happened in the case of Silas Deane; and I mention this circumstance with the greater ease, because the poison of his hypocrisy spread over the whole country, and every man, almost without exception, thought me wrong in opposing him. The best friends I then had, except Mr. Laurens, stood at a distance, and this tribute, which is due to his constancy, I pay to him with respect, and that the readier, because he is not here to hear it. If it reaches him in his imprisonment, it will afford him an agreeable reflection.

"*As he rose like a rocket, he would fall like the stick,*" is a metaphor which I applied to Mr. Deane in the first piece which I published respecting him, and he has exactly fulfilled the description. The credit he so unjustly obtained from the public he lost in almost as short a time. The delusion perished as it fell, and he soon saw himself stripped of popular support. His more intimate acquaintance began to doubt and to desert him long before he left America, and at his departure he saw himself the object of general suspicion. When arrived in France, he endeavoured to effect by treason what he had failed to accomplish by fraud. His plans, schemes, and projects, together with his expectation of being sent to Holland to negociate a loan of money had all miscarried. He then began traducing and accusing America of every crime which could injure her reputation. "That she was a ruined country; that she only meant to make a tool of France, to get what money she could out of her, and then to leave her, and accommodate with Britain." Of all which, and much more, Colonel Laurens and myself, when in France, informed Dr. Franklin, who had not before heard of it. And to complete the character of a traitor, he has, by letters to this country since, some of which, in his own

hand-writing, are now in the possession of Congress, used every expression and argument in his power to injure the reputation of France, and to advise America to renounce her alliance, and surrender up her independence.* Thus in France, he abuses America, and in his letters to America he abuses France: and his endeavouring to create disunion between the two countries by the same arts of double-dealing by which he caused dissensions among the commissioners in Paris, and distractions in America. But his life has been fraud, and his character that of a plodding, plotting, cringing mercenary, capable of any disguise that suited his purpose. His final detection has very happily cleared up those mistakes, and removed those uneasinesses which his unprincipled conduct occasioned. Every one now sees him in the same light; for towards friends or enemies he acted with the same deception and injustice, and his name, like that of *Arnold*, ought now to be forgotten among us. As this is the first time I have mentioned him since my return from France, it is my intention it shall be the last. From this digression, which for several reasons I thought necessary to give, I now proceed to the purport of my address.

I consider the war of America against Britain as the country's war, the public's war, or the war of the people in their own behalf for the security of their natural rights, and the protection of their own property. It is not the war of Congress, the war of the Assemblies, or the war of Government, in any line whatever. The country first, by a mutual compact, resolved to defend their rights, and maintain their independence, *at the hazard of their lives and fortunes.* They elected their representatives, by whom they appointed their members to Congress, and said, *act you for us, and we will support you.* This is the true ground and principle of the war on the part of America, and, consequently, there remains nothing to do but for every one to fulfil his obligation.

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* Mr. William Marshall, of this city, formerly a pilot, who had been taken at sea and carried to England, and got from thence to France, brought over letters from Mr. Deane to America, one of which was directed to "Robert Morris, Esq." Mr. Morris sent it unopened to Congress, and advised Mr. Marshall to deliver the others there, which he did. The letters were of the same purport with those which have been already published under the signature of S. Deane, to which they had frequent reference.

It was next to impossible that a new country, engaged in a new undertaking, could set off systematically right at first. She saw not the extent of the struggle she was involved in, neither could she avoid the beginning. She supposed every step she took, and every resolution she formed, would bring her enemy to reason, and close the contest. Those failing, she was forced into new measures; and these, like the former, being fitted to her expectations, and failing in her turn, left her continually unprovided and without system. The enemy likewise was induced to prosecute the war from the temporary expedients we adopted for carrying it on. We were continually expecting to see their credit exhausted, and they were looking to see our currency fail; and thus, between their watching us and we them, the hopes of both have been deceived, and the childishness of the expectation has served to increase the expence.

Yet who, through this wilderness of error, has been to blame? Where is the man who can say the fault has not in part been his? They were the natural unavoidable errors of the day. They were the errors of a whole country, which nothing but experience could detect, and time remove. Neither could the circumstances of America admit of system, till either the paper currency was fixed or laid aside. No calculation of finance could be made on a medium failing without reason, and fluctuating without rule.

But there is one error which might have been prevented, and was not; and as it is not my custom to flatter, but to serve mankind, I will speak it freely. It certainly was the duty of every Assembly on the Continent to have known, at all times, what was the condition of its treasury, and to have ascertained at every period of depreciation, how much the real worth of the taxes fell short of their nominal value. This knowledge, which might have been easily gained, would have enabled them to have kept their constituents well informed, which is one of the greatest duties of representation. They ought to have studied and calculated the expences of the war, the quota of each State, and the consequent proportion that would fall on each man's property for his defence; and this must easily have shewn to them, that a tax of an hundred pounds could not be paid by a bushel of apples or an hundred of flour, which was often the case two or three years ago. But instead of this, which would have been plain and upright dealing, the little line of temporary popularity, the feather of an hour's duration, was

too much pursued: and in this involved condition of things, every State, for the want of a little thinking, or a little information, supposes that it supported the whole expences of the war, when in fact it fell, by the time the tax was levied and collected, above three-fourths short of its own quota.

Impressed with a sense of the danger to which the country was exposed by this lax method of doing business, and the prevailing errors of the day, I published, last October was a twelvemonth, *The Crisis Extraordinary*, on the revenues of America, and the yearly expence of carrying on the war. My estimate of the latter, together with the civil list of Congress, and the civil list of the several States, was two million pounds sterling, which is very nearly nine millions of dollars.

Since that time, Congress have gone into a calculation, and have estimated the expences of the war department and the civil list of Congress (exclusive of the civil list of the several Governments) at eight millions of dollars; and as the remaining million will be fully sufficient for the civil list of the several States, the two calculations are exceedingly near each other.

The sum of eight millions of dollars they have called upon the States to furnish, and their quotas are as follow, which I shall preface with the resolution itself:—

BY THE UNITED STATES IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED,

*October* 30, 1781.

RESOLVED,

That the respective States be called upon to furnish the Treasury of the United States with their quotas of eight millions of dollars, for the war department and civil list for the ensuing year, to be paid quarterly, in equal proportions, the first payment to be made on the first day of April next.

*Resolved*, That a committee, consisting of a member from each State, be appointed to apportion to the several States the quota of the above sum.

*November* 2.

The committee, appointed to ascertain the proportions of the several States of the monies to be raised for the expences of the ensuing year, report the following resolutions:

That the sum of eight millions of dollars, as required to

be raised by the resolutions of the 30th of October last, be paid by the States in the following proportion.

| | |
|---|---|
| New-Hampshire | 373,598 |
| Massachusetts | 1,307,596 |
| Rhode-Island | 216,684 |
| Connecticut | 747,196 |
| New-York | 373,598 |
| New-Jersey | 485,679 |
| Pennsylvania | 1,120,794 |
| Delaware | 112,085 |
| Maryland | 933,996 |
| Virginia | 1,307,594 |
| North-Carolina | 622,677 |
| South-Carolina | 373,598 |
| Georgia | 24,905 |
| | 8,000,000 Dollars. |

Resolved,

*That it be recommended to the several States, to lay taxes for raising their quotas of money for the United States, separate from those laid for their own particular use.*

On these resolutions I shall offer several remarks.

*First*, On the sum itself, and the ability of the country.

*Secondly*, On the several quotas, and the nature of a union. And,

*Thirdly*, On the manner of collection and expenditure.

*First*, On the sum itself, and the ability of the country. As I know my own calculations is as low as possible, and as the sum called for by Congress, according to their calculation, agrees very nearly therewith, I am sensible it cannot possibly be lower. Neither can it be done for that, unless there is ready money to go to market with; and even in that case, it is only by the utmost management and economy that it can be made to do.

By the accounts which were laid before the British Parliament last spring, it appeared that the charge of only subsisting, that is, feeding their Army in America) cost annually four millions of pounds of sterling, which is very nearly eighteen millions of dollars. Now if, for eight millions, we can feed, clothe, arm, provide for, and pay an army sufficient for our defence, the very comparison shews that the money must be well laid out.

It may be of some use, either in debate or conversation, to attend to the progress of the expences of an army,

because it will enable us to see on what part any deficiency will fall.

The first thing is, to feed them and provide for the sick.

Secondly, to clothe them.

Thirdly, to arm and furnish them.

Fourthly, to provide means for removing them from place to place. And,

Fifthly, to pay them.

The first and second are absolutely necessary to them as men. The third and fourth are equally as necessary to them as an army. And the fifth is their just due. Now if the sum which shall be raised should fall short, either by the several acts of the States for raising it, or by the manner of collecting it, the deficiency will fall on the fifth head, the soldiers' pay, which would be defrauding them, and eternally disgracing ourselves. It would be a blot on the councils, the country, and the Revolution of America, and a man would hereafter be ashamed to own he had any hand in it.

But if the deficiency should be still shorter, it would next fall on the fourth head, *the means of removing the army from place to place;* and in this case, the army must either stand still where it can be of no use, or seize on horses, carts, waggons, or any means of transportation it can lay hold of; and in this instance the country suffers. In short, every attempt to do a thing for less than it can be done for, is sure to become at last both a loss and a dishonour.

But the country cannot bear it, say some. This has been the most expensive doctrine that ever was held out, and cost America millions of money for nothing. Can the country bear to be over-run, ravaged and ruined by an enemy, which will immediately follow where defence is wanting, and defence will ever be wanting where sufficient revenues are not provided. But this is only one part of the folly. The second is, that when the danger comes, invited in part by our not preparing against it, we have been obliged, in a number of instances, to expend double the sums, to do that which at first might have been done for half the money. But this is not all. A third mischief has been, that grain of all sorts, flour, beef, fodder, horses, carts, waggons, or whatever was absolutely or immediately wanted, have been taken without pay. Now, I ask, why was all this done, but from that extremely weak and expensive doctrine, *that the country could not bear it?* that is, that she could not bear, in the first instance, that which would have saved her twice as much at last; or, in proverbial language, that she could not bear to

pay a penny to save a pound; the consequence of which has been, that she has paid a pound for a penny. Why are there so many unpaid certificates in almost every man's hands, but from the parsimony of not providing sufficient revenues? Besides, the doctrine contradicts itself; because, if the whole country cannot bear it, how is it possible that a part should? and yet this has been the case: for those things have been had; and they must be had; but the misfortune is, they have been had in a very unequal manner and upon extensive credit, whereas with ready money they might have been purchased for half the price, and no body distressed.

But there is another thought which ought to strike us, which is,—How is the army to bear the want of food, clothing, and other necessaries? The man who is at home, can turn himself a thousand ways, and find as many means of ease, convenience, or relief; but a soldier's life admits of none of those; his wants cannot be supplied from himself: for an army, though it is the defence of a State, is at the same time the child of a Country, and must be provided for in every thing.

*And lastly*, The doctrine is false. There are not three millions of people, in any part of the universe, who live so well, or have such a fund of ability, as in America. The income of a common labourer, who is industrious, is equal to that of the generality of tradesmen in England. In the mercantile line, I have not heard of one who could be said to be a bankrupt since the war began, and in England they have been without number. In America, almost every farmer lives on his own lands, and in England not one in an hundred does. In short, it seems as if the poverty of that country had made them furious, and they were determined to risk all to recover all.

Yet, notwithstanding those advantages on the part of America, true it is, that had it not been for the operation of taxes for our necessary defence, we had sunk into a state of sloth and poverty; for there was more wealth lost by neglecting to till the earth in the years 1776, 77, and 78, than the quota of the tax amounts to. That which is lost by neglect of this kind, is lost for ever; whereas that which is paid, and continues in the country, returns to us again; and at the same time that it provides us with defence, it operates not only as a spur, but as a premium to our industry.

I shall now proceed to the second head, viz.—ON THE SEVERAL QUOTAS, AND THE NATURE OF A UNION.

There was a time when America had no other bond of union, than that of common interest and affection. The whole country flew to the relief of Boston, and, making her cause their own, participated her cares, and administered to her wants. The fate of war, since that day, has carried the calamity in a ten-fold proportion to the southward; but in the mean time the union has been strengthened by a legal compact of the States, jointly and severally ratified, and that which before was choice, or the duty of affection, is now likewise the duty of legal obligation.

The union of America is the foundation stone of her Independence; the rock on which it is built; and is something so sacred in her Constitution, that we ought to watch every word we speak, and every thought we think, that we injure it not, even by mistake. When a multitude, extended, or rather scattered, over a continent, in the manner we are, mutually agree to form one common centre whereon the whole shall move, to accomplish a particular purpose, all parts must act together and alike, or not act at all, and a stoppage in any one is a stoppage of the whole, at least for a time.

Thus the several States have sent Representatives to assemble together in Congress, and they have empowered that body, which thus becomes their centre, and are no other than themselves in representation, to conduct and manage the war, while their constituents at home attend to the domestic cares of the country, their internal legislation, their farms, professions, or employments: for it is only by reducing complicated things to method and orderly connection, that they can be understood with advantage, or pursued with success.—Congress, by virtue of this delegation, estimates the expence, and apportions it out to the several parts of the empire, according to their several abilities; and here the debate must end, because each State has already had its voice, and the matter has undergone its whole portion of argument, and can no more be altered by any particular State, than a law of any State, after it has passed, can be altered by an individual. For with respect to those things which immediately concern the union, and for which the union was purposely established and is intended to secure, each State is to the United States what each individual is to

the State he lives in. And it is on this grand point, this movement upon one centre, that our existence as a nation, our happiness as a people, and our safety as individuals, depend.

It may happen, that some State or other may be somewhat over or under-rated, but this cannot be much. The experience which has been had upon the matter, has nearly ascertained their several abilities. But even in this case, it can only admit of an appeal to the United States, but cannot authorise any State to make the alteration itself, any more than our internal government can admit an individual to do so in the case of an Act of Assembly; for if one State can do it, then may another do the same, and the instant this is done the whole is undone.

Neither is it supposable that any single State can be judge of all the comparative reasonings which may influence the collective body in quotating out the Continent. The circumstances of the several States are frequently varying, occasioned by the accidents of war and commerce, and it will often fall upon some to help others, rather beyond what their exact proportion at another time might be; but even this assistance is as naturally and politically included in the idea of a union, as that of any particular assigned proportion; because we know not whose turn it may be next to want assistance, for which reason, that is the wisest State which sets the best example.

Though in matters of bounden duty and reciprocal affection, it is rather a degeneracy from the honesty and ardour of the heart to admit any thing selfish to partake in the government of our conduct, yet in cases where our duty, our affections, and our interest all coincide, it may be of some use to observe their union. The United States will become heir to an extensive quantity of vacant land, and their several titles to shares and quotas thereof will naturally be adjusted according to their relative quotas, during the war, exclusive of that inability which may unfortunately arise to any State by the enemy holding possession of a part; but as this is a cold matter of interest, I pass it by, and proceed to my third head, viz.

## ON THE MANNER OF COLLECTION AND EXPENDITURE

It hath been our error, as well as our misfortune, to blend the affairs of each State, especially in money matters, with

those of the United States; whereas it is to our ease, convenience, and interest, to keep them separate. The expences of the United States for carrying on the war, and the expences of each State for its own domestic government, are distinct things, and to involve them is a source of perplexity and a cloak for fraud. I love method, because I see and am convinced of its beauty and advantage. It is that which makes all business easy and understood, and without which every thing becomes embarrassed and difficult.

There are certain powers which the people of each State have delegated to their legislative and executive bodies, and there are other powers which the people of every State have delegated to Congress, among which is that of conducting the war, and, consequently, of managing the expences attending it; for how else can that be managed, which concerns every State, but by a delegation from each? When a State has furnished its quota, it has an undoubted right to know how it has been applied, and it is as much the duty of Congress to inform the State of the one, as it is the duty of the State to provide the other.

In the resolution of Congress already recited, it is recommended to the several States *to lay taxes for raising their quotas of money for the United States, separate from those laid for their own particular use.*

This is a most necessary point to be observed, and the distinction should follow all the way through. They should be levied, paid, and collected separately, and kept separate in every instance. Neither have the civil officers of any State, or the government of that State, the least right to touch that money which the people pay for the support of their army and the war, any more than Congress has to touch that which each State raises for its own use.

This distinction will naturally be followed by another. It will occasion every State to examine nicely into the expences of its Civil List, and to regulate, reduce, and bring it into better order than it has hitherto been, because the money for that purpose must be raised apart, and accounted for to the public separately. But while the monies of both were blended, the necessary nicety was not observed, and the poor soldier, who ought to have been the first, was the last who was thought of.

Another convenience will be, that the people, by paying the taxes separately, will know what they are for; and will likewise know that those which are for the defence of the

country will cease with the war, or soon after. For although, as I have before observed, the war is their own, and for the support of their own rights, and the protection of their own property, yet they have the same right to know, that they have to pay, and it is the not knowing, that is often the cause of dissatisfaction.

This regulation of keeping the taxes separate has given rise to a regulation in the Office of Finance, by which it is directed—

"That the receivers shall, at the end of every month, make out an exact account of the monies received by them respectively, during such month, specifying therein the names of the persons from whom the same shall have been received, the dates and the sums; which account they shall respectively cause to be published in one of the newspapers of the State: to the end that every citizen may know how much of the monies collected from him, in taxes, is transmitted to the Treasury of the United States for the support of the war; and also, that it may be known what monies have been at the order of the Superintendant of Finance. It being proper and necessary, that in a free country, the people should be as fully informed of the administration of their affairs as the nature of things will admit."

It is an agreeable thing to see a spirit of order and economy taking place, after such a series of errors and difficulties. A government or an administration, who means and acts honestly, has nothing to fear, and consequently has nothing to conceal; and it would be of use if a monthly or quarterly account was to be published, as well of the expenditures as of the receipts. Eight millions of dollars must be husbanded with an exceeding deal of care to make it do, and therefore, as the management must be reputable, the publication would be serviceable.

I have heard of petitions which have been presented to the Assembly of this State (and probably the same may have happened in other States) praying to have the taxes lowered. Now the only way to have the taxes low, is, for the United States to have ready money to go to market with; and though the taxes to be raised for the present year will fall heavy, and there will naturally be some difficulty in paying them, yet the difficulty, in proportion as money spreads about the country, will every day grow less, and in the end we shall save some millions of dollars by it.

We see what a bitter revengeful enemy we have to deal with, and any expence is cheap compared to their merciless paw. We have seen the unfortunate Carolineans hunted like partridges on the mountains, and it is only by providing means for our defence, that we shall not be in the same condition. When we think or talk about taxes, we ought to recollect that we lie down in peace, and sleep in safety; that we can follow our farms, or stores, or other occupations, in prosperous tranquillity: and that these inestimable blessings are procured to us by the taxes that we pay. In this view, our taxes are properly our insurance-money; they are what we pay to be made safe, and in strict policy are the best money we can lay out.

It was my intention to offer some remarks on the impost law of *five per cent.* recommended by Congress, and to be established as a fund for the payment of the loan-office certificates and other debts of the United States; but I have already extended my piece beyond my intention. And as this fund will make our System of Finance complete, and is strictly just, and consequently requires nothing but honesty to do it, there needs but little to be said upon it.

COMMON SENSE.

*Philadelphia, March* 5, 1782.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

No. XI.

## ON THE PRESENT STATE OF NEWS.

*Philadelphia, May* 22, 1782.

SINCE the arrival of two, if not three packets, in quick succession at New York, from England, a variety of unconnected *news* has circulated through the country, and afforded as great a variety of speculations.

That something is the matter in the cabinet and councils of our enemies, on the other side of the water, is certain—that they have run their length of madness, and are under the necessity of changing their measures, may easily be seen into; but to what this change of measures may amount, or how far it may correspond with our interest, happiness, and duty, is yet uncertain; and from what we have hitherto experienced, we have too much reason to suspect them in every thing.

I do not address this publication so much to the People of America as to the British Ministry, whoever they may be, for if it is their intention to promote any kind of negociation, it is proper they should know beforehand, that the United States have as much honour as bravery; and that they are no more to be seduced from their alliance than their allegiance; that their line of politics is formed, and not dependent, like that of their enemy, on chance and accident.

On our part, in order to know, at any time, what the British Government will do, we have only to find out what they ought *not* to do, and this last will be their conduct. For ever changing and for ever wrong; too distant from America to improve circumstances, and too unwise to foresee them; scheming without principle, and executing with-

out probability, their whole line of management has hitherto been blunder and baseness. Every campaign has added to their loss, and every year to their disgrace; till unable to go on, and ashamed to go back, their politics have come to a halt, and all their fine prospects to a halter.

Could our affections forgive, or humanity forget, the wounds of an injured country—we might, under the influence of a momentary oblivion, stand still and laugh. But they are engraven where no amusement can conceal them, and of a kind for which there is no recompence. Can ye restore to us the beloved dead? Can ye say to the grave, Give up the murdered? Can ye obliterate from our memories those who are no more? Think not then to tamper with our feelings by insidious contrivance, nor suffocate our humanity by seducing us to dishonour.

In March 1780, I published part of the Crisis, No. VIII. in the newspapers, but did not conclude it in the following papers, and the remainder has lain by me till the present day.

There appeared about that time some disposition in the British Cabinet to cease the further prosecution of the war, and as I had formed my opinion, that whenever such a design should take place, it would be accompanied with a dishonourable proposition to America, respecting France, I had suppressed the remainder of that number, not to expose the baseness of any such proposition. But the arrival of the next news from England, declared her determination to go on with the war, and consequently as the political object I had then in view was not become a subject, it was unnecessary in me to bring it forward, which is the reason it was never published.

The matter which I allude to in the unpublished part I shall now make a quotation of, and apply it as the more enlarged state of things, at this day, shall make convenient or necessary.

It was as follows:

"By the speeches which have appeared from the British Parliament, it is easy to perceive to what impolitic and imprudent excesses their passions and prejudices have, in every instance, carried them, during the present war. Provoked at the upright and honourable Treaty between America and France, they imagined nothing more was necessary to be done to prevent its final ratification, than to promise, through the agency of their Commissioners (Carlisle, Eden, and Johnson,) a repeal of their once offensive Acts of

Parliament. The vanity of the conceit was as unpardonable as the experiment was impolitic. And so convinced am I of their wrong ideas of America, that I shall not wonder, if in their last stage of political phrenzy, they propose to her to break her alliance with France, and enter into one with them. Such a proposition, should it ever be made, and it has already been more than once hinted in Parliament, would discover such a disposition to perfidiousness, and such disregard of honour and morals, as would add the finishing vice to national corruption.—I do not mention this to put America on the watch, but to put England on her guard, that she do not, in the looseness of her heart, envelope in disgrace every fragment of reputation."—Thus far the quotation.

By the complexion of some part of the news which has transpired through the New York papers, it seems probable that this insidious era in the British politics is beginning to make its appearance. I wish it may not; for that which is a disgrace to human nature, throws something of a shade over all the human character, and the individual feels his share of the wound that is given to the whole.

The policy of Britain has ever been to divide America in some way or other. In the beginning of the dispute, she practised every art to prevent or destroy the union of the States, well knowing that could she once get them to stand singly, she could conquer them unconditionally. Failing in this project in America, she renewed it in Europe; and after the alliance had taken place, she made secret offers to France to induce her to give up America, and what is still more extraordinary, she at the same time made propositions to Dr. Franklin, then in Paris, the very Court to which she was secretly applying, to draw off America from France. But this is not all.

On the 14th of September, 1778, the British Court, through their Secretary, Lord Weymouth, made application to the Marquis D'Almadovar, the Spanish Ambassador at London, to "ask the MEDIATION," for these were the words of the Court of Spain, for the purpose of negociating a peace with France, leaving America (as I shall hereafter shew) out of the question. Spain readily offered a mediation, and likewise the city of Madrid as the place of conference, but, withal, proposed that the United States of America should be invited to the Treaty, and considered as independent during the time the business was negociating. But this was not the view of England. She wanted to draw

France from the war, that she might uninterruptedly pour out all her force and fury upon America; and being disappointed in this plan, as well through the open and generous conduct of Spain, as the determination of France, she refused the mediation she had solicited.

I shall now give some extracts from the justifying Memorial of the Spanish Court, in which she has set the conduct and character of Britain, with respect to America, in a clear and striking point of light.

The Memorial, speaking of the refusal of the British Court to meet in Conference, with Commissioners from the United States, who were to be considered as independent during the Conference, says,

"It is a thing very extraordinary and even ridiculous, that the Court of London, who treat the Colonies as independent, not only in acting, but of right, during the war, should have a repugnance to treat them as such only in acting during a truce of suspension of hostilities. The convention of Saratoga; the reputing General Burgoyne as a lawful prisoner, in order to suspend his trial; the exchange and liberating other prisoners made from the Colonies; the having named commissioners to go and supplicate the Americans, at their own doors, request peace of them, and treat with them and the Congress; and finally, by a thousand other acts of this sort, authorised by the Court of London, which have been, and are true signs of the acknowledgment of their independence.

"In aggravation to all the foregoing, at the same time the British Cabinet answered the King of Spain in the terms already mentioned; they were insinuating themselves at the Court of France by means of secret emissaries, and making very great offers to her to abandon the Colonies and make peace with England. But there is yet more; for at this same time the English Ministry were treating by means of another certain emissary with Doctor Franklin, Minister Plenipotentiary from the Colonies, residing at Paris, to whom they made various proposals to disunite them from France, and accommodate matters with England.

"From what has been observed, it evidently follows, that the whole of the British Politics, was to disunite the two Courts of Paris and Madrid, by means of the suggestions and offers she repeatedly made to them; and also to separate the Colonies from their treaties and engagements entered into with France, and induce them to arm against the House of Bourbon, or MORE PROBABLY TO OPPRESS

THEM WHEN THEY FOUND FROM BREAKING THEIR ENGAGEMENTS, THEY STOOD ALONE AND WITHOUT PROTECTORS.

"This, therefore, is the net they laid for the American States; that is to say, to tempt them with flattering and very magnificent promises to come to an accommodation with them, exclusive of any intervention of Spain or France, that the British Ministry might always remain the Arbiters of the fate of the Colonies.

"But the Catholic King (the King of Spain) faithful on the one part to the engagements which bind him to the most Christian King (the King of France) his nephew; just and upright on the other, to his own subjects, whom he ought to protect and guard against so many insults; and finally, full of humanity and compassion for the Americans and other individuals who suffer in the present war: he is determined to pursue and prosecute it, and to make all the efforts in his power, until he can obtain a solid and permanent peace, with full and satisfactory securities that it shall be observed."

Thus far the Memorial; a translation of which into English, may be seen in full, under the head of STATE PAPERS, in the Annual Register for 1779, page 367.

The extracts I have here given serve to shew the various endeavours and contrivances of the enemy to draw France from her connection with America, and to prevail on her to make a separate peace with England, leaving America totally out of the question, and at the mercy of a merciless, unprincipled enemy. The opinion, likewise, which Spain has formed of the British Cabinet's character, for meanness and perfidiousness, is so exactly the opinion of America, respecting it, that the Memorial, in this instance, contains our own sentiments and language; for people, however remote, who think alike, will unavoidably speak alike.

Thus we see the insidious use which Britain endeavoured to make of the propositions for peace under the mediation of Spain. I shall now proceed to the second proposition under the mediation of the Emperor of Germany and the Empress of Russia; the general outline of which was, that a Congress of the several powers at war should meet at Vienna, in 1781, to settle preliminaries of peace.

I could wish myself at liberty to make use of all the information I am possessed of on this subject, but as there is a delicacy in the matter, I do not conceive it prudent, at least at present, to make references and quotations in the

same manner as I have done with respect to the mediation of Spain, who published the whole proceedings herself, and therefore what comes from me on this part of the business must rest on my own credit with the public, assuring them, that when the whole proceedings, relative to the proposed Congress at Vienna, shall appear, they shall find my account not only true, but studiously moderate.

We know that at the time this mediation was on the carpet, the expectations of the British King and Ministry ran high with respect to the conquest of America. The English packet which was taken with the mail on board, and carried into L'Orient in France, contained letters from Lord G. Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton, which expressed in the fullest terms the ministerial idea of a total conquest. Copies of those letters were sent to Congress and published in the newspapers of last year. Colonel Laurens brought over the originals, some of which, signed in the hand-writing of the then secretary, Germaine, are now in my possession.

Filled with these high ideas, nothing could be more insolent towards America than the language of the British Court on the proposed mediation. A peace with France and Spain she anxiously solicited; but America, as before, should be left to her mercy, neither would she hear any proposition for admitting an agent from the United States into the Congress of Vienna.

On the other hand, France, with an open, noble, and manly determination, and the fidelity of a good ally, would hear no proposition for a separate peace, nor even meet in Congress at Vienna, without an agent from America: and likewise, that the independent character of the United States, represented by the agent, should be fully and unequivocally defined and settled before any conference should be entered on. The reasoning of the Court of France on the several propositions of the two Imperial Courts, which relate to us, is rather in the style of an American than an ally, and she advocated the cause of America as if she had been America herself.—Thus the second mediation, like the first, proved ineffectual.

But since that time a reverse of fortune has overtaken the British arms, and all their high expectations are dashed to the ground. The noble exertions to the southward, under General Greene; the successful operations of the Allied Arms in the Chesapeake; the loss of most of their islands in the West Indies, and Minorca in the Mediterranean; the persevering spirit of Spain against Gibraltar; the expected

capture of Jamaica; the failure of making a separate peace with Holland, and the expence of an hundred millions sterling, by which all these fine losses were obtained, have read them a loud lesson of disgraceful misfortune, and necessity has called on them to change their ground.

In this situation of confusion and despair, their present councils have no fixed character. It is now the hurricane months of British politics. Every day seems to have a storm of its own, and they are scudding under the bare poles of hope. Beaten, but not humble; condemned, but not penitent, they act like men trembling at fate and catching at a straw. From this convulsion in the entrails of their politics, it is more than probable, that the mountain groaning in labour will bring forth a mouse as to its size, and a monster as to its make. They will try on America the same insidious arts they tried on France and Spain.

We sometimes experience sensations to which language is not equal. The conception is too bulky to be born alive, and in the torture of thinking we stand dumb. Our feelings imprisoned by their magnitude, find no way out—and, in the struggle of expression, every finger tries to be a tongue. The machinery of the body seems too little for the mind, and we look about for helps to shew our thoughts by. Such must be the sensations of America, whenever Britain, teeming with corruption, shall propose to her to sacrifice her faith.

But, exclusive of the wickedness, there is a personal offence contained in every such attempt. It is calling us villains; for no man asks another to act the villain unless he believes him inclined to be one. No man attempts to seduce a truly honest woman. It is the supposed looseness of her mind that starts the thoughts of seduction, and he who offers it calls her a prostitute. Our pride is always hurt by the same propositions which offend our principles; for when we are shocked at the crime, we are wounded by the suspicion of our compliance.

Could I convey a thought that might serve to regulate the public mind, I would not make the interest of the alliance the basis of defending it. All the world are moved by interest, and it affords them nothing to boast of. But I would go a step higher, and defend it on the ground of honour and principle. That our public affairs have flourished under the alliance—that it was wisely made, and has

been nobly executed—that by its assistance we are enabled to preserve our country from conquest, and expel those who sought our destruction—that it is our true interest to maintain it unimpaired, and that while we do so, no enemy can conquer us;—are matters which experience has taught us, and the common good of ourselves, abstracted from principles of faith and honour, would lead us to maintain the connection.

But over and above the mere letter of the alliance, we have been nobly and generously treated, and have had the same respect and attention paid us as if we had been an old established country. To oblige and be obliged is fair work among mankind, and we want an opportunity of shewing the world that we are a people sensible of kindness and worthy of confidence. Character is to us, in our present circumstances, of more importance than interest. We are a young nation, just stepping upon the stage of public life, and the eye of the world is upon us to see how we act. We have an enemy that is watching to destroy our reputation, and who will go any length to gain some evidence against us that may serve to render our conduct suspected, and our character odious: because, could she accomplish this, wicked as it is, the world would withdraw from us, as from a people not to be trusted, and our task would then become difficult.

There is nothing sets the character of a nation in a higher or lower light with others, than the faithfully fulfilling, or perfidiously breaking of treaties. They are things not to be tampered with; and should Britain, which seems very probable, propose to reduce America into such an act of baseness, it would merit from her some mark of unusual detestation. It is one of those extraordinary instances in which we ought not to be contented with the bare negative of Congress, because it is an affront on the multitude as well as on the Government. It goes on the supposition that the public are not honest men, and that they may be managed by contrivance, though they cannot be conquered by arms. But, let the world and Britain know, that we are neither to be bought nor sold. That our mind is great and fixed; our prospect clear; and that we will support our character as firmly as our independence.

But I will go still farther: General Conway, who made the motion in the British Parliament, for discontinuing *offensive* war in America, is a gentleman of an amiable character.

We have no personal quarrel with him. But he feels not as we feel; he is not in our situation, and that alone, without any other explanation, is enough.

The British Parliament suppose they have many friends in America, and that when all chance of conquest is over, they will be able to draw her from her alliance with France. Now, if I have any conception of the human heart, they will fail in this more than in any thing they have yet tried.

This part of the business is not a question of policy only, but of honour and honesty; and the proposition will have in it something so visibly low and base, that their partizans, if they have any, will be ashamed of it. Men are often hurt at a mean action who are not startled at a wicked one, and this will be such a confession of inability, such a declaration of servile thinking, that the scandal of it will ruin all their hopes.

In short, we have nothing to do but to go on with vigour and determination. The enemy is yet in our country. They hold New York, Charlestown, and Savannah, and the very being in those places is an offence, and a part of offensive war, and until they can be driven from them, or captured in them, it would be folly in us to listen to an idle tale. —I take it for granted that the British Ministry are sinking under the impossibility of carrying on the war. Let them, then, come to a fair and open peace with France, Spain, Holland, and America, in the manner they ought to do; but until then we can have nothing to say to them.

COMMON SENSE.

A

# SUPERNUMERARY CRISIS.

## TO SIR GUY CARLETON.

It is the nature of compassion to associate with misfortune; and I address this to you in behalf even of an enemy, a captain in the British service, now on his way to the head quarters of the American army, and unfortunately doomed to death for a crime not his own.—A sentence so extraordinary, an execution so repugnant to every human sensation, ought never to be told without the circumstances which produced it: and as the destined victim is yet in existence, and in your hands rests his life or death, I shall briefly state the case, and the melancholy consequence.

Captain Huddy of the Jersey Militia, was attacked in a small fort on Tom's River, by a party of refugees in the British pay and service, was made prisoner together with his company, carried to New York and lodged in the Provost of that city; about three weeks after which, he was taken out of the Provost down to the water-side, put into a boat and brought again upon the Jersey shore, and there, contrary to the practice of all nations, but savages, was hung upon a tree, and left hanging till found by our people, who took him down and buried him.

The inhabitants of that part of the country where the murder was committed, sent a deputation to General Washington with a full and certified statement of the fact. Struck, as every human breast must be, with such brutish outrage, and determined both to punish and prevent it for the future, the General represented the case to General Clinton, who then commanded, and demanded that the refugee officer who ordered and attended the execution, and whose name is Lippincut, should be delivered up as a murderer; and in case of refusal, that the person of some British officer should suffer in his stead. The demand, though not refused, has not been complied with; and the melancholy lot (not by election, but by casting lots) has fallen upon Captain Asgill, of the Guards, who, as I have already mentioned, is on his way from Lancaster to camp, a martyr to

the general wickedness of the cause he engaged in, and the ingratitude of those he has served.

The first reflection which arises on this black business is, what sort of men must Englishmen be, and what sort of order and discipline do they preserve in their army, when in the immediate place of their head-quarters, and under the eye and nose of their Commander in Chief, a prisoner can be taken at pleasure from his confinement, and his death made a matter of sport.

The history of the most savage Indians does not produce instances exactly of this kind. They, at least, have a formality in their punishments. With them it is the horridness of revenge, but with your army it is the still greater crime, the horridness of diversion.

The British generals who have succeeded each other, from the time of General Gage to yourself, have all affected to speak in language they have no right to. In their proclamations, their addresses, their letters to General Washington, and their supplications to Congress, (for they deserve no other name) they talk of British honour, British generosity, and British clemency, as if those things were matters of fact; whereas, we whose eyes are open, who speak the same language with yourselves, many of whom were born on the same spot with you, and who can no more be mistaken in your words than in your actions, can declare to all the world, that so far as our knowledge goes, there is not a more detestable character, nor a meaner or more barbarous enemy, than the present British one. With us, you have forfeited all pretensions of reputation, and it is only holding you like a wild beast, afraid of your keepers, that you can be made manageable.—But to return to the point in question.

Though I can think no man innocent who has lent his hand to destroy the country which he did not plant, and to ruin those he could not enslave, yet abstracted from all ideas of right and wrong on the original question, Captain Asgill, in the present case, is not the guilty man. The villain and the victim are here separated characters. You hold the one and we the other. You disown, or affect to disown, and reprobate the conduct of Lippincut, yet you give him a sanctuary; and by so doing, you as effectually become the executioner of Asgill, as if you put the rope on his neck, and dismissed him from the world. Whatever your feelings on this extraordinary occasion may be, are best known to yourself. Within the grave of our own minds lies buried

the fate of Asgill. He becomes the corpse of your will, or the survivor of your justice. Deliver up the one, and you save the other; withhold the one, and the other dies by your choice.

On our part the case is exceeding plain; AN OFFICER HAS BEEN TAKEN FROM HIS CONFINEMENT AND MURDERED, AND THE MURDERER IS WITHIN YOUR LINES. Your army have been guilty of a thousand instances of equal cruelty, but they have been rendered equivocal, and sheltered from personal detection. Here the crime is fixed; and is one of those extraordinary cases which can neither be denied nor palliated, and to which the custom of war does not apply; for it never could be supposed that such a brutal outrage would ever be committed. It is an original in the history of civilized barbarians, and is truly British.

On your part, you are accountable to us for the personal safety of the prisoners within your walls. Here can be no mistake; they can neither be spies nor suspected as such: your security is not endangered, nor your operations subjected to miscarriage, by men immured within a dungeon. They differ in every circumstance from men in the field, and leave no pretence for severity of punishment. But if to the dismal condition of captivity with you, must be added the constant apprehensions of death; if to be imprisoned is so nearly to be entombed; and, if after all, the murderers are to be protected, and thereby the crime encouraged, wherein do you differ from Indians, either in conduct or character?

We can have no idea of your honour, or your justice, in any future transaction, of whatever nature it may be, while you shelter within your lines an outrageous murderer, and sacrifice in his stead an officer of your own. If you have no regard to us, at least spare the blood which it is your duty to save. Whether the punishment will be greater on him, who, in this case, innocently dies, or, on him whom sad necessity forces to retaliate, is, in the nicety of sensation an undecided question. It rests with you to prevent the sufferings of both. You have nothing to do but to give up the murderer, and the matter ends.

But to protect him, be he who he may, is to patronize his crime, and to trifle it off by frivolous and unmeaning enquiries, is to promote it. There is no declaration you can make, no promise you can give, that will obtain credit. It is the man, and not the apology, that is demanded.

You see yourself pressed on all sides to spare the life of your own officer, for die he will, if you withhold justice. The murder of Captain Huddy is an offence not to be borne with, and there is no security we can have that such actions or similar ones shall not be repeated but by making the punishment fall upon yourselves. To destroy the last security of captivity, and to take the unarmed, the unresisting prisoner to private and sportive execution, is carrying barbarity too high for silence. The evil MUST be put an end to; and the choice of persons rests with you. But if your attachment to the guilty is stronger than to the innocent, you invent a crime that must destroy your character, and if the cause of your king needs to be so supported, for ever cease, Sir, to torture our remembrance with the wretched phrases of British Honour, British Generosity, and British Clemency.

From this melancholy circumstance, learn, Sir, a lesson of morality. The refugees are men whom your predecessors have instructed in wickedness, the better to fit them to their master's purpose. To make them useful they have made them vile, and the consequence of their tutored villainy is now descending on the heads of their encouragers. They have been trained like hounds to the scent of blood, and cherished in every species of dissolute barbarity. Their ideas of right and wrong are worn away in the constant habitude of repeated infamy, till, like men practised in executions, they feel not the value of another's life.

The task before you, though painful, is not difficult; give up the murderer, and save your officer, as the first outset of a necessary reformation.

COMMON SENSE.

*Philadelphia, May* 31, 1782.

THE

# AMERICAN CRISIS.

No. XII.

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## TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

My Lord,

A speech, which has been printed in several of the British and New York newspapers, as coming from your Lordship, in answer to one from the Duke of Richmond, of the 10th of July last, contains expressions and opinions so new and singular, and so enveloped in mysterious reasoning, that I address this publication to you, for the purpose of giving them a free and candid examination. The speech I allude to is in these words:—

"His Lordship said, it had been mentioned in another place, that he had been guilty of inconsistence. To clear himself of this, he asserted that he still held the same principles in respect to American independence which he at first imbibed. He had been, and yet was of opinion, whenever the Parliament of Great Britain acknowledges that point, the sun of England's glory is set for ever. Such were the sentiments he possessed on a former day, and such the sentiments he continued to hold at this hour. It was the opinion of Lord Chatham, as well as many other able statesmen. Other noble Lords, however, think differently; and as the majority of the Cabinet support them, he acquiesced in the measure, dissenting from the idea; and the point is settled for bringing the matter into the full discussion of Parliament, where it will be candidly, fairly, and impartially debated. The independence of America would end in the ruin of England; and that a peace patched up with France, would give that proud enemy the means of yet trampling on this country. The sun of England's glory he wished not

to see set for ever; he looked for a spark at least to be left, which might in time light us up to a new day. But if independence was to be granted, if Parliament deemed that measure prudent, he foresaw, in his own mind, that England was undone. He wished to God that he had been deputed to Congress, that he might plead the cause of that country as well as of this, and that he might exercise whatever powers he possessed as an orator, to save both from ruin, in a conviction to Congress, that, if their independence was signed, their liberties were gone for ever.

"Peace, his Lordship added, was a desirable object, but it must be an honourable peace, and not an humiliating one, dictated by France, or insisted on by America. It was very true this kingdom was not in a flourishing state, it was impoverished by war. But if we were not rich, it was evident that France was poor. If we were straitened in our finances, the enemy were exhausted in their resources. This was a great empire; it abounded with brave men, who were able and willing to fight in a common cause: the language of humiliation should not, therefore, be the language of Great Britain. His Lordship said, that he was not ashamed nor afraid of those expressions going to America. There were numbers, great numbers there, who were of the same way of thinking, in respect to that country being dependent on this, and who, with his Lordship, perceived ruin and independence linked together."

Thus far the speech; on which I remark—That his Lordship is a total stranger to the mind and sentiments of America; that he has wrapped himself up in fond delusion, that something less than independence may, under his Administration, be accepted; and he wishes himself sent to Congress, to prove the most extraordinary of all doctrines, which is, that *Independence*, the sublimest of all human conditions, is loss of liberty.

In answer to which we may say, that in order to know what the contrary word *Dependence* means, we have only to look back to those years of severe humiliation, when the mildest of all petitions could obtain no other notice than the haughtiest of all insults; and when the base terms of unconditional submission were demanded, or undistinguishable destruction threatened. It is nothing to us that the ministry have been changed, for they may be changed again. The guilt of Government is the crime of a whole country; and the nation that can, though but for a moment, think and act as England has done, can never afterwards be believed or

trusted. There are cases in which it is as impossible to restore character to life, as it is to recover the dead. It is a phœnix that can expire but once, and from whose ashes there is no resurrection. Some offences are of such a slight composition, that they reach no farther than the temper, and are created or cured by a thought. But the sin of England has struck the heart of America, and nature has not left it in our power to say we can forgive.

Your Lordship wishes for an opportunity to plead before Congress *the cause of England and America, and to save, as you say, both from ruin.*

That the country, which, for more than seven years has sought our destruction, should now cringe to solicit our protection, is adding the wretchedness of disgrace to the misery of disappointment; and if England has the least spark of supposed honour left, that spark must be darkened by asking, and extinguished by receiving, the smallest favour from America: for the criminal who owes his life to the grace and mercy of the injured, is more executed by living than he who dies.

But a thousand pleadings, even from your Lordship, can have no effect. Honour, interest, and every sensation of the heart, would plead against you. We are a people who think not as you think; and what is equally true, you cannot feel as we feel. The situations of the two countries are exceedingly different. We have been the seat of war; you have seen nothing of it. The most wanton destruction has been committed in our sight; the most insolent barbarity has been acted on our feelings. We can look round and see the remains of burnt and destroyed houses, once the fair fruit of hard industry, and now the striking monuments of British brutality. We walk over the dead whom we loved, in every part of America, and remember by whom they fell. There is scarcely a village but brings to life some melancholy thought, and reminds us of what we have suffered, and of those we have lost by the inhumanity of Britain. A thousand images arise to us, which, from situation, you cannot see, and are accompanied by as many ideas which you cannot know; and therefore your supposed system of reasoning would apply to nothing, and all your expectations die of themselves.

The question, whether England shall accede to the independence of America, and which your Lordship says is to undergo a Parliamentary discussion, is so very simple, and composed of so few cases, that it scarcely needs a debate.

It is the only way out of an expensive and ruinous war, which has no object, and without which acknowledgment there can be no peace.

But your Lordship says, "*The sun of Great Britain will set whenever she acknowledges the independence of America.*" Whereas the metaphor would have been strictly just to have left the sun wholly out of the figure, and have ascribed her not acknowledging it to the influence of the moon.

But the expression, if true, is the greatest confession of disgrace that could be made, and furnishes America with the highest notions of sovereign independent importance. Mr. Wedderburne, about the year 1776, made use of an idea of much the same kind. "*Relinquish America!*" says he, "*What is it but to desire a giant to shrink spontaneously into a dwarf.*"

Alas! are those people who call themselves Englishmen, of so little internal consequence, that when America is gone, or shuts her eyes upon them, their sun is set, they can shine no more, but grope about in obscurity, and contract into insignificant animals? Was America, then, the giant of the empire, and England only her dwarf in waiting? Is the case so strangely altered, that those who once thought we could not live without them, now declare they cannot exist without us? Will they tell to the world, and that from their first Minister of State, that America is their all in all, that it is by her importance only they can live, and breathe, and have a being? Will they, who threatened to bring us to their feet, bow themselves at ours, and own that without us they are not a nation? Are they become so unqualified to debate on independence, that they have lost all idea of it in themselves, and are calling to the rocks and mountains of America to cover their insignificance? Or, if America is lost, is it manly to sob over it like a child for its rattle, and invite the laughter of the world by declarations of disgrace? Surely, the more consistent conduct would be, to bear it without complaint; and to shew that England, without America, can preserve her independence, and a suitable rank with other European powers. You were not contented while you had her, and to weep for her now is childish.

But Lord Shelburne thinks that something may yet be done. What that something is, or how it is to be accomplished, is a matter in obscurity. By arms there is no hope. The experience of nearly eight years, with the expence of an hundred million pounds sterling, and the loss of two

armies, must positively decide that point. Besides, the British have lost their interest in America with the disaffected. Every part of it has been tried. There is no new scene left for delusion: and the thousands who have been ruined by adhering to them, and have now to quit the settlements they had acquired, and be conveyed like transports to cultivate the deserts of Augustine and Nova Scotia, has put an end to all further expectations of aid.

If you cast your eyes on the people of England, what have they to console themselves with for the millions expended? or, what encouragement is there left to continue throwing good money after bad? America can carry on the war for ten years longer, and all the charges of government included, for less than you can defray the charges of war and government for one year. And I, who know both countries, know well, that the people of America can afford to pay their share of the expence much better than the people of England can. Besides, it is their own estates and property, their own rights, liberties, and government, they are defending; and were they not to do it, they would deserve to lose all, and none would pity them. The fault would be their own, and their punishment just.

The British army in America care not how long the war lasts. They enjoy an easy and indolent life. They fatten on the folly of one country and the spoils of another; and, between their plunder and their pay, may go home rich. But the case is very different with the labouring farmer, the working tradesman, and the necessitous poor in England, the sweat of whose brow goes day after day to feed, in prodigality and sloth, the army that is robbing both them and us. Removed from the eye of that country that supports them, and distant from the government that employs them, they cut and carve for themselves, and there is none to call them to account.

But England will be ruined, says Lord Shelburne, if America is independent.

Then, I say, is England already ruined, for America is already independent: and if Lord Shelburne will not allow this, he immediately denies the fact which he infers. Besides, to make England the mere creature of America, is paying too great a compliment to us, and too little to himself.

But the declaration is a rhapsody of inconsistence. For to say, as Lord Shelburne has numberless times said, that the war against America is ruinous, and yet to continue the

prosecution of that ruinous war for the purpose of avoiding ruin, is a language which cannot be understood. Neither is it possible to see how the independence of America is to accomplish the ruin of England after the war is over, and yet not affect it before. America cannot be more independent of her, nor a greater enemy to her, hereafter, than she now is; nor England derive less advantages from her than at present: why, then, is ruin to follow in the best state of the case, and not in the worst? and if not in the worst, why is it to follow at all?

That a nation is to be ruined by peace and commerce, and fourteen or fifteen millions a year less expences than before, is a new doctrine in politics. We have heard much clamour of national savings and economy; but surely the true economy would be, to save the whole charge of a silly, foolish, and headstrong war; because compared with this, all other retrenchments are baubles and trifles.

But is it possible that Lord Shelburne can be serious in supposing that the least advantage can be obtained by arms, or that any advantage can be equal to the expence or the danger of attempting it? Will not the capture of one army after another satisfy him, but all must become prisoners? Must England ever be the sport of hope and the victim of delusion? Sometimes our currency was to fail; another time our army was to disband: then whole provinces were to revolt. Such a general said this and that; another wrote so and so; Lord Chatham was of this opinion; and Lord Somebody else of another. To-day 20,000 Russians and twenty ships of the line were to come; to-morrow the Empress was abused without mercy or decency—Then the Emperor of Germany was to be bribed with a million of money, and the King of Prussia was to do wonderful things. At one time it was, Lo, here! and then it was, Lo, there! Sometimes this power, and sometimes that power, was to engage in the war, just as if the whole world was as mad and foolish as Britain. And thus, from year to year, has every straw been catched at, and every will-with-a-wisp led them a new dance.

This year a still newer folly is to take place. Lord Shelburne wishes to be sent to Congress, and he thinks that something may be done.

Are not the repeated declarations of Congress, and which all America supports, that they will not even hear any proposals whatever, until the unconditional and unequivocal In-

dependence of America is recognized; are not, I say, these declarations answer enough?

But for England to receive any thing from America now, after so many insults, injuries, and outrages, acted towards us, would shew such a spirit of meanness in her, that we could not but despise her for accepting it. And so far from Lord Shelburne coming here to solicit it, it would be the greatest disgrace we could do them to offer it. England would appear a wretch indeed, at this time of day, to ask or owe any thing to the bounty of America. Has not the name of Englishman blots enough upon it, without inventing more? Even Lucifer would scorn to reign in Heaven by permission, and yet an Englishman can creep for only an entrance into America. Or, has a land of liberty so many charms, that to be a door-keeper in it is better than to be an English minister of state?

But what can this expected something be? or if obtained, what can it amount to, but new disgraces, contentions, and quarrels? The people of America have for years accustomed themselves to think and speak so freely and contemptuously of English authority, and the inveteracy is so deeply rooted, that a person invested with any authority from that country, and attempting to exercise it here, would have the life of a toad under a harrow. They would look on him as an interloper, to whom their compassion permitted a residence. He would be no more than the Mungo of the farce; and if he disliked that, he must set off. It would be a station of degradation, debased by our pity, and despised by our pride, and would place England in a more contemptible situation than any she has yet suffered by the war. We have too high an opinion of ourselves, ever to think of yielding again the least obedience to outlandish authority; and for a thousand reasons, England would be the last country in the world to yield it to. She has been treacherous, and we know it. Her character is gone, and we have seen the funeral.

Surely she loves to fish in troubled waters, and drink the cup of contention, or she would not now think of mingling her affairs with those of America. It would be like a foolish dotard taking to his arms the bride that despises him, or who has placed on his head the ensigns of her disgust. It is kissing the hand that boxes his ears, and proposing to renew the exchange. The thought is as servile as the war was wicked, and shows the last scene of the drama as inconsistent as the first.

As America is gone, the only act of manhood is to *let her go.* Your Lordship had no hand in the separation, and you will gain no honour by temporising politics. Besides, there is something so exceedingly whimsical, unsteady, and even insincere, in the present conduct of England, that she exhibits herself in the most dishonourable colours.

On the second of August last, General Carlton and Admiral Digby wrote to General Washington in these words:

"The resolution of the House of Commons, of the 27th of February last, has been placed in your Excellency's hands, and intimations given at the same time, that further pacific measures were likely to follow. Since which, until the present time, we have had no direct communications from England; but a mail is now arrived which brings us very important information. We are are acquainted, Sir, *by authority*, that negociations for a general peace have already commenced at Paris, and that Mr. Grenville is invested with full powers to treat with all the parties at war, and is now at Paris in the execution of his commission. And we are further, Sir, made acquainted, *that his Majesty, in order to remove any obstacles to that peace which he so ardently wishes to restore, has commanded his Ministers to direct Mr. Grenville, that the Independence of the Thirteen United Provinces, should be proposed by him in the first instance, instead of making it a condition of a general Treaty.*

Now, taking your present measures into view, and comparing them with the declaration in this letter, pray, what is the word of your King, or his Ministers, or the Parliament good for? Must we not look upon you as a confederated body of faithless, treacherous men, whose assurances are fraud, and their language deceit? What opinion can we possibly form of you, but that you are a lost, abandoned, profligate nation, who sport even with your own character, and are to be held by nothing but the bayonet or the halter?

To say, after this, *that the sun of Great Britain will be set whenever she acknowledges the Independence of America,* when the not doing it is the unqualified lie of government, can be no other than the language of ridicule, the jargon of inconsistency. There were thousands in America who predicted the delusion, and looked upon it as a trick of treachery, to take us from our guard, and draw off our attention from the only system of finance, by which we can be called, or deserve to be called, a sovereign, independent people. The fraud, on your part, might be worth attempting, but the sacrifice to obtain it is too high.

There are others who credited the assurance, because they thought it impossible that men who had their characters to establish, would begin it with a lie. The prosecution of the war by the former ministry was savage and horrid; since which it has been mean, trickish, and delusive. The one went greedily into the passion of revenge, the other into the subtleties of low contrivance; till, between the crimes of both, there is scarcely left a man in America, be he Whig or Tory, who does not despise or detest the conduct of Britain.

The management of Lord Shelburne, whatever may be his views, is a caution to us, and must be to the world, never to regard British assurances. A perfidy so notorious cannot be hid. It stands even in the public papers of New York, with the names of Carlton and Digby affixed to it. It is a proclamation that the King of England is not to be believed: that the spirit of lying is the governing principle of the ministry. It is holding up the character of the House of Commons to public infamy, and warning all men not to credit them. Such is the consequence which Lord Shelburne's management has brought upon his country.

After the authorized declarations contained in Carlton and Digby's letter, you ought, from every motive of honour, policy, and prudence, to have fulfilled them, whatever might have been the event. It was the least atonement you could possibly make to America, and the greatest kindness you could do to yourselves; for you will save millions by a general peace, and you will lose as many by continuing the war.

COMMON SENSE.

*Philadelphia, October* 29, 1782.

*P. S.* The manuscript copy of this letter is sent your Lordship, by way of our head-quarters, to New York, inclosing a late pamphlet of mine, addressed to the Abbé Raynal, which will serve to give your Lordship some idea of the principles and sentiments of America.

C. S.

THE

# LAST CRISIS.

No. XIII.

*Philadelphia, April* 19, 1783.

"THE times that tried men's souls,"* are over—and the greatest and completest revolution the world ever knew, gloriously and happily accomplished.

But to pass from the extremes of danger to safety—from the tumult of war, to the tranquillity of peace, though sweet in contemplation, requires a gradual composure of the senses to receive it. Even calmness has the power of stunning, when it opens too instantly upon us. The long and raging hurricane that should cease in a moment, would leave us in a state rather of wonder than enjoyment; and some moments of recollection must pass, before we could be capable of tasting the full felicity of repose. There are but few instances, in which the mind is fitted for sudden transitions: it takes in its pleasures by reflection and comparison, and those must have time to act, before the relish of new scenes is complete.

In the present case—the mighty magnitude of the object—the various uncertainties of fate it has undergone—the numerous and complicated dangers we have suffered or escaped—the eminence we now stand on, and the vast prospect before us, must all conspire to impress us with contemplation.

To see it in our power to make a world happy—to teach mankind the art of being so—to exhibit on the theatre of the universe, a character hitherto unknown—and to have, as it were, a new creation entrusted to our hands, are honours that command reflection, and can neither be too highly estimated, nor too gratefully received.

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* "These are the times that try men's souls." Crisis, No. I, published December 19, 1776.

In this pause then of recollection—while the storm is ceasing, and the long agitated mind vibrating to a rest, let us look back on the scenes we have passed, and learn from experience what is yet to be done.

Never, I say, had a country so many openings to happiness as this. Her setting out into life, like the rising of a fair morning, was unclouded and promising. Her cause was good. Her principles just and liberal. Her temper serene and firm. Her conduct regulated by the nicest steps, and every thing about her wore the mark of honour.

It is not every country (perhaps there is not another in the world) that can boast so fair an origin. Even the first settlement of America corresponds with the character of the revolution. Rome, once the proud mistress of the universe, was originally a band of ruffians. Plunder and rapine made her rich, and her oppression of millions made her great. But America needs never be ashamed to tell her birth, nor relate the stages by which she rose to empire.

The remembrance then of what is past, if it operates rightly, must inspire her with the most laudable of all ambition, that of adding to the fair fame she began with. The world has seen her great in adversity. Struggling, without a thought of yielding, beneath accumulated difficulties; bravely, nay proudly, encountering distress, and rising in resolution as the storm increased. All this is justly due to her, for her fortitude has merited the character. Let then the world see that she can bear prosperity; and that her honest virtue in the time of peace, is equal to the bravest virtue in time of war.

She is now descending to the scenes of quiet and domestic life. Not beneath the cypress shade of disappointment, but to enjoy, in her own land, and under her own vine, the sweet of her labours, and the reward of her toil.—In this situation, may she never forget that a fair national reputation is of as much importance as independence. That it possesses a charm which wins upon the world, and makes even enemies civil. That it gives a dignity which is often superior to power, and commands a reverence where pomp and splendour fall.

It would be a circumstance ever to be lamented and never to be forgotten, were a single blot, from any cause whatever, suffered to fall on a revolution, which to the end of time must be an honour to the age that accomplished it: and which has contributed more to enlighten the world, and diffuse a spirit of freedom and liberality among mankind;

than any human event (if this may be called one) that ever preceded it.

It is not among the least of the calamities of a long continued war, that it unhinges the mind from those nice sensations which at other times appear so amiable. The continual spectacle of woe, blunts the finer feelings, and the necessity of bearing with the sight, renders it familiar. In like manner, are many of the moral obligations of society weakened, till the custom of acting, by necessity becomes an apology, where it is truly a crime. Yet let but a nation conceive rightly of its character, and it will be chastely just in protecting it. None ever began with a fairer than America, and none can be under a greater obligation to preserve it.

The debt which America has contracted, compared with the cause she has gained, and the advantages to flow from it, ought scarcely to be mentioned. She has it in her choice to do, and to live, as happily as she pleases. The world is in her hands. She has no foreign power to monopolize her commerce, perplex her legislation, or controul her prosperity. The struggle is over, which must one day have happened, and, perhaps, never could have happened, at a better time.* And instead of a domineering master, she has gained an *ally*, whose exemplary greatness, and universal liberality, have extorted a confession even from her enemies.

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* That the Revolution began at the exact period of time best fitted to the purpose, is sufficiently proved by the event.—But the great hinge on which the whole machine turned is the UNION OF THE STATES: and this union was naturally produced by the inability of any one State to support itself against any foreign enemy without the assistance of the rest.

Had the States severally been less able than they were when the war began, their united strength would not have been equal to the undertaking, and they must in all human probability, have failed.—And on the other hand, had they severally been more able, they might not have seen, or, what is more, might not have felt the necessity of uniting; and either by attempting to stand alone or in small confederacies, would have been separately conquered.

Now, as we cannot see a time (and many years must pass away before it can arrive) when the strength of any one State, or several united, can be equal to the whole of the present United States, and as we have seen the extreme difficulty of collectively prosecuting the war to a successful issue, and preserving our national importance in the world, therefore, from the experience we have had, and the knowledge we have gained, we must, unless we make a waste of wisdom, be strongly impressed with the advantage, as well as the

With the blessings of Peace, Independence, and universal Commerce, the States individually and collectively, will have leisure and opportunity to regulate and establish their domestic concerns, and to put it beyond the power of calumny to throw the least reflection on their honour. Character is much easier kept than recovered, and that man, if any such there be, who, from any sinister views, or littleness of soul, lends unseen his hand to injure it, contrives a wound it will never be in his power to heal.

As we have established an inheritance for posterity, let that inheritance descend, with every mark of an honourable conveyance. The little it will cost, compared with the worth of the States, the greatness of the object, and the value of national character, will be a profitable exchange.

But that which must more forcibly strike a thoughtful penetrating mind, and which includes and renders easy all inferior concerns, is the UNION OF THE STATES. On this, our great national character depends. It is this which must give us importance abroad and security at home. It is through this only that we are, or can be nationally known in the world. It is the flag of the United States; which renders our ships and commerce safe on the seas, or

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necessity of strengthening that happy union which has been our salvation, and without which we should have been a ruined people. While I was writing this note, I cast my eye on the pamphlet COMMON SENSE, from which I shall make an extract, as it applies exactly to the case. It is as follows:

"I have never met with a man, either in England or America, who hath not confessed his opinion that a separation between the countries would take place one time or other; and there is no instance in which we have shewn less judgment, than in endeavouring to describe, what we call, the ripeness or fitness of the Continent for independence.

"As all men allow the measure, and differ only in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavour, if possible, to find out the VERY TIME. But we need not to go far, the enquiry ceases at once, for, THE TIME HATH FOUND US. The general concurrence, the glorious union of all things prove the fact.

"It is not in numbers, but in a union, that our great strength lies. The Continent is just arrived at that pitch of strength, in which no single Colony is able to support itself, and the whole, when united, can accomplish the matter; and either more or less than this, might be fatal in its effects."

in a foreign port. Our Mediterranean passes must be obtained under the same style. All our treaties, whether of alliance, peace, or commerce, are formed under the sovereignty of the United States, and Europe knows us by no other name or title.

The division of the Empire into States is for our own convenience, but abroad this distinction ceases. The affairs of each State are local. They can go no farther than to itself. And were the whole worth of even the richest of them expended in revenue, it would not be sufficient, to support sovereignty against a foreign attack. In short, we have no other national sovereignty than as United States. It would be even fatal for us if we had—too expensive to be maintained, and impossible to be supported. Individuals or individual States may call themselves what they please: but the world, and especially the world of enemies, is not to be held in awe by the whistling of a name. Sovereignty must have power to protect all the parts that compose and constitute it: and as UNITED STATES we are equal to the importance of the title, but otherwise we are not. Our union, well and wisely regulated and cemented, is the cheapest way of being great—the easiest way of being powerful, and the happiest invention in government which the circumstances of America can admit of—Because it collects from each State that which, by being inadequate, can be of no use to it, and forms an aggregate that serves for all.

The States of Holland are an unfortunate instance of the effects of individual sovereignty. Their disjointed condition exposes them to numerous intrigues, losses, calamities, and enemies; and the almost impossibly of bringing their measures to a decision, and that decision into execution, is to them, and would be to us, a source of endless misfortune.

It is with confederated States as with individuals in society; something must be yielded up to make the whole secure. In this view of things we gain by what we give, and draw an annual interest greater than the capital.—I ever feel myself hurt when I hear the union, that great palladium of our liberty and safety, the least irreverently spoken of. It is the most sacred thing in the Constitution of America, and that which every man should be most proud and tender of. Our citizenship in the United States is our national character. Our citizenship in any particular State is only our local distinction. By the latter we are known at home, by the former to the world. Our great title is, AMERICANS—our inferior one varies with the place.

So far as my endeavours could go, they have all been directed to conciliate the affections, unite the interests, and draw and keep the mind of the country together; and the better to assist in this foundation-work of the revolution, I have avoided all places of profit or office, either in the State I live in, or in the United States; kept myself at a distance from all parties and party connections, and even disregarded all private and inferior concerns: and when we take into view the great work we have gone through, and feel, as we ought to feel, the just importance of it, we shall then see, that the little wranglings, and indecent contentions of personal party, are as dishonourable to our characters, as they are injurious to our repose.

It was the cause of America that made me an author. The force with which it struck my mind, and the dangerous condition the country appeared to me in, by courting an impossible and an unnatural reconciliation with those who were determined to reduce her, instead of striking out into the only line that could cement and save her, A DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, made it impossible for me, feeling as I did, to be silent: and if, in the course of more than seven years, I have rendered her any service, I have likewise added something to the reputation of literature, by freely and disinterestedly employing it in the great cause of mankind, and shewing there may be genius without prostitution.

Independence always appeared to me practicable and probable, provided the sentiment of the country could be formed and held to the object: and there is no instance in the world, where a People so extended, and wedded to former habits of thinking, and under such a variety of circumstances, were so instantly and effectually pervaded, by a turn in politics, as in the case of Independence, and who supported their opinion, undiminished, through such a succession of good and ill fortune, till they crowned it with success.

But as the scenes of war are closed, and every man preparing for home and happier times, I therefore take my leave of the subject. I have most sincerely followed it from beginning to end, and through all its turns and windings; and whatever country I may hereafter be in, I shall always feel an honest pride at the part I have taken and acted, and a gratitude to Nature and Providence for putting it in my power to be of some use to mankind.

COMMON SENSE.

A

# SUPERNUMERARY CRISIS.

## TO THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA.

In "*Rivington's New York Gazette*," of December 6th, is a publication, under the appearance of a letter from London, dated September 30th; and is on a subject which demands the attention of the United States.

The public will remember, that a treaty of Commerce between the United States and England was set on foot last spring, and that until the said treaty could be completed, a bill was brought into the British Parliament, by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Pitt, to admit and legalize (as the case then required) the commerce of the United States into the British port and dominions. But neither the one nor the other has been completed. The Commercial treaty is either broken off, or remains as it began; and the Bill in Parliament has been thrown aside. And in lieu thereof, a selfish system of English politics has started up, calculated to fetter the commerce of America, by engrossing to England the carrying trade of the American produce to the West India islands.

Among the advocates for this last measure is Lord Sheffield, a Member of the British Parliament, who has published a pamphlet entitled, "*Observations on the Commerce of the American States.*" The pamphlet has two objects; the one is, to allure the Americans to purchase British manufactures; and the other, to spirit up the British Parliament to prohibit the citizens of the United States from rading to the West India islands.

Viewed in this light, the pamphlet, though in some parts dexterously written, is an absurdity. It offends, in the very act of endeavouring to ingratiate; and his Lordship, as a politician, ought not to have suffered the two objects to have appeared together. The letter alluded to, contains extracts from the pamphlet, with high encomiums on Lord Sheffield, for laboriously endeavouring (as the letter styles it) "to shew the mighty advantages of retaining the carrying trade."

Since the publication of this pamphlet in England, the commerce of the United States to the West Indies in American vessels has been prohibited: and all intercourse, except in British bottoms, the property of and navigated by British subjects cut off.

That a country has a right to be as foolish as it pleases, has been proved by the practice of England for many years past: in her island situation, sequestered from the world, she forgets that her whispers are heard by other nations; and in her plans of politics and commerce, she seems not to know, that other votes are necessary besides her own. America would be equally as foolish as Britain, were she to suffer so great a degradation on her flag, and such a stroke on the freedom of her commerce, to pass without a balance.

We admit the right of any nation to prohibit the commerce of another into its own dominions, where there are no treaties to the contrary; but as this right belongs to one side, as well as the other, there is always a way left to bring avarice and insolence to reason.

But the ground of security which Lord Sheffield has chosen to erect his policy upon, is of a nature which ought, and I think must, awaken in every American, a just and strong sense of national dignity. Lord Sheffield appears to be sensible, that in advising the British nation and Parliament to engross to themselves so great a part of the carrying trade of America, he is attempting a measure which cannot succeed, if the policy of the United States be properly directed to counteract the assumption.

But, says he, in his pamphlet, "*It will be a long time before the American States can be brought to act as a nation, neither are they to be feared as such by us.*

What is this more or less than to tell us, that while we have no national system of commerce, the British will govern our trade by their own laws and proclamations as they

please. The quotation discloses a truth too serious to be overlooked, and too mischievous not to be remedied.

Among other circumstances which led them to this discovery, none could operate so effectually, as the injudicious, uncandid, and indecent opposition made by sundry persons in a certain State, to the recommendations of Congress last winter, for an import duty of five per cent. It could not but explain to the British a weakness in the national power of America, and encourage them to attempt restrictions on her trade, which otherwise they would not have dared to hazard. Neither is there any State in the union, whose policy was more misdirected to its interest than the State I allude to, because her principal support is the carrying trade, which Britain, induced by the want of a well-centered power in the United States to protect and secure, is now attempting to take away. It fortunately happened (and to no State in the union more than the State in question) that the terms of peace were agreed on before the opposition appeared, otherwise there needs not a doubt, that if the same idea of the diminished authority of America had occurred to them at that time as has occurred to them since, but they would not have made the same grasp at the fisheries, as they have done at the carrying trade.

It is surprising that an authority which can be supported with so much ease, and so little expence, and capable of such extensive advantages to the country, should be cavilled at by those whose duty it is to watch over it, and whose existence as a people depends upon it. But this, perhaps, will ever be the case, till some misfortune awakens us into reason, and the instance now before us is but a gentle beginning of what America must expect, unless she guards her union with nicer care and stricter honour. United, she is formidable, and that with the least possible charge a nation can be so; separated, she is a medley of individual nothings, subject to the sport of foreign nations.

It is very probable that the ingenuity of commerce may have found out a method to evade and supersede the intentions of the British, in interdicting the trade with the West India islands. The language of both being the same, and their customs well understood, the vessels of one country may, by deception, pass for those of another. But this would be a practice too debasing for a Sovereign People to stoop to, and too profligate not to be discountenanced. As illicit trade, under any shape it can be placed, cannot be

carried on without a violation of truth. America is now Sovereign and Independent, and ought to act all her affairs in a regular style of character. She has the same right to say that no British vessel shall enter her ports, or that no British manufactures shall be imported, but in American bottoms, the property of, and navigated by, American subjects, as Britain has to say the same thing respecting the West Indies. Or she may lay a duty of ten, fifteen, or twenty shillings per ton (exclusive of other duties) on every British vessel coming from any port of the West Indies, where she is not admitted to trade, the said tonnage to continue as long on her side as the prohibition continues on the other.

But it is only by acting in union, that the usurpation of foreign nations on the freedom of trade can be counteracted, and security extended to the commerce of America. And when we view a flag, which to the eye is beautiful, and to contemplate its rise and origin inspires a sensation of sublime delight, our national honour must unite with our interest to prevent injury to the one, or insult to the other.

COMMON SENSE.

*New York, December* 9, 1783.

# PUBLIC GOOD,

BEING AN

## EXAMINATION

INTO

## THE CLAIM OF VIRGINIA

TO THE VACANT

## Western Territory,

AND OF

THE RIGHT OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE SAME:

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

## PROPOSALS

FOR

LAYING OFF A NEW STATE,

TO BE APPLIED AS A

FUND FOR CARRYING ON THE WAR, OR REDEEMING THE NATIONAL DEBT.

*WRITTEN IN THE YEAR* 1780.

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BY THOMAS PAINE.

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London:

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1819.

# PREFACE.

The following pages are on a subject hitherto little understood, but highly interesting to the United States.

They contain an investigation of the claims of Virginia to the vacant western territory, and of the right of the United States to the same; with some outlines of a plan for laying out a new State, to be applied as a fund, for carrying on the war, or redeeming the national debt.

The reader, in the course of this publication, will find it studiously plain; and as far as I can judge, perfectly candid. What materials I could get at I have endeavoured to place in a clear line, and deduce such arguments therefrom as the subject required. In the prosecution of it, I have considered myself as an advocate for the right of the States, and taken no other liberty with the subject than what a counsel would, and ought to do in behalf of a client.

I freely confess that the respect I had conceived, and still preserve, for the character of Virginia, was

a constant check upon those sallies of imagination, which are fairly and advantageously indulged against an enemy, but ungenerous when against a friend.

If there is any thing I have omitted or mistaken, to the injury of the intentions of Virginia or her claims, I shall gladly rectify it; or if there is any thing yet to add, should the subject require it, I shall as cheerfully undertake it; being fully convinced, that to have matters fairly discussed, and properly understood, is a principal means of preserving harmony and perpetuating friendship.

*THE AUTHOR.*

# PUBLIC GOOD.

When we take into view the mutual happiness and united interests of the States of America, and consider the important consequences to arise from a strict attention of each, and of all, to every thing which is just, reasonable, and honourable, or the evils that will follow from an inattention to those principles; there cannot, and ought not, to remain a doubt, but that the governing rule of right and mutual good must in all public cases finally preside.

The hand of providence has cast us into one common lot, and accomplished the independence of America, by the unanimous consent of the several parts, concurring at once in time, manner, and circumstances. No superiority of interest, at the expence of the rest, induced the one, more than the other, into the measure. Virginia and Maryland, it is true, might foresee, that their staple commodity, tobacco, by being no longer monopolized by Britain, would bring them a better price abroad: for as the tax on it in England was treble its first purchase from the planter, and they being now no longer compelled to send it under that obligation, and in the restricted manner they formerly were; it is easy to see, that the article, from the alteration of the circumstances of trade, will, and daily does, turn out to them additional advantages.

But this being a natural consequence, produced by that common freedom and independence of which all are partakers, is therefore an advantage they are entitled to, and on which the rest of the States can congratulate them without feeling a wish to lessen, but rather to extend it. To contribute to the increased prosperity of another, by the same means which occasion our own, is an agreeable reflection; and the more valuable any article of export becomes, the

more riches will be introduced into, and spread over the Continent.

Yet this is an advantage which these two States derive from the independence of America, superior to the local circumstances of the rest; and of the two it more particularly belongs to Virginia than Maryland, because the staple commodity of a considerable part of Maryland, is flour, which, as it is an article of the growth of Europe as well as of America, cannot obtain a foreign market but by underselling, or at least, by limiting it to the current price abroad. But tobacco commands its own price. It is not a plant of almost universal growth, like wheat. There are but few soils and climes that produce it to advantage, and before the cultivation of it in Virginia and Maryland, the price was from four to sixteen shillings a pound in England.*

But the condition of the vacant western territory of America makes a very different case to that of the circumstances of trade in any of the States. These very lands, formed in contemplation, the fund by which the debt of America would in a course of years be redeemed. They were considered as the common right of all; and it is only till lately that any pretension of claims had been made to the contrary. That difficulties and differences will arise in communities, ought always to be looked for. The opposition of interests, real or supposed; the variety of judgments; the contrariety of temper; and, in short, the whole composition of man, in his individual capacity, is tinctured with a disposition to contend; but in his social capacity there is either a right which, being proved, terminates the dispute, or a reasonableness in the measure, where no direct right can be made out, which decides or compromises the matter.

As I shall have frequent occasion to mention the moral *right*, I wish to be clearly understood in my definition of it. There are various senses in which this term is used, and custom has, in many of them, afforded it an introduction contrary to its true meaning. We are so naturally inclined to give the utmost degree of force to our own case, that we call every pretension, however founded, a *right;* and by this means the term frequently stands opposed to justice and reason.

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* See Sir Dalby Thomas's Historical Account of the Rise and Growth of the West India Colonies.

After Theodore was elected King of Corsica, not many years ago, by the mere choice of the natives, for their own convenience in opposing the Genoese, he went over into England, run himself into debt, got himself into jail, and on his release therefrom by the benefit of an act of insolvency he surrendered up, what he called *his* kingdom of Corsica, as a part of his personal property, for the use of his creditors; some of whom may hereafter call this a charter, or by any other name more fashionable, and ground thereon what they may term a *right* to the sovereignty and property of Corsica. But does not justice abhor such an action, both in him and them, under the prostituted name of a *right*, and must not laughter be excited wherever it is told?

A right, to be truly so, must be right in itself; yet many things have obtained the name of rights, which are originally founded in wrong. Of this kind are all rights by mere conquest, power, or violence. In the cool moments of reflection, we are obliged to allow, that the mode by which such right is obtained, is not the best suited to that spirit of universal justice which ought to preside equally over all mankind. There is something in the establishment of such a right that we wish to slip over as easily as possible, and say as little about as can be. But in the case of a *right founded in right* the mind is carried cheerfully into the subject, feels no compunction, suffers no distress, subjects its sensations to no violence, nor sees any thing in its way which requires an artificial smoothing.

From this introduction I proceed to examine into the claims of Virginia; first, as to the right, secondly, as to the reasonableness, and lastly, as to the consequences. The name, *Virginia*, originally bore a different meaning to what it does now. It stood in the place of the word North America, and seems to have been intended as a name comprehensive of all the English settlements or colonies on the Continent, and not descriptive of any one as distinguishing it from the rest. All to the southward of Chesapeake, as low as the gulf of Mexico, was called South Virginia, and all to the northward, North Virginia, in a similar line of distinction, as we now call the whole continent North and South America.* The first charter or patent was to Sir Walter Raleigh by Queen Elizabeth of England, in the

* Oldmixon's History of Virginia.

year 1583, and had neither name nor bounds. Upon Sir Walter's return, the name *Virginia*, was given to the whole country, including the now United States. Consequently the present Virginia, either as a province or State, can set up no exclusive claim to the western territory under this patent, and that for two reasons; first, because the words of the patent run *to Sir Walter Raleigh, and such persons as he shall nominate, themselves and their successors;* which is a line of succession Virginia does not pretend to stand in; and secondly, because a prior question would arise, namely, who are to be understood by Virginians under this patent? and the answer would be, all the inhabitants of America, from New England to Florida. This patent, therefore, would destroy their exclusive claim, and invest the right collectively in the thirteen States.

But it unfortunately happened, that the settlers under this patent, partly from misconduct, the opposition of the Indians, and other calamities, discontinued the process, and the patent became extinct.

After this, James the First, who, in the year 1602, succeeded Elizabeth, issued a new patent, which I come next to describe.

This patent differed from the former in this essential point, that it had limits, whereas the other had none: the former was intended to promote discoveries wherever they could be made, which accounts why no limits were affixed, and this to settle discoveries already made which likewise assigns a reason why limits should be described.

In this patent were incorporated two companies, called the South Virginia company, and the North Virginia company, and sometimes the London company, and the Plymouth company.

The South Virginia or London company was composed chiefly of London adventurers; the North Virginia or Plymouth company was made up of adventurers from Plymouth in Devonshire, and other persons of the western parts of England.

Though they were not to fix together, yet they were allowed to choose their places of settlement any where on the coast of America, then called Virginia, between the latitudes between 34 and 45 degrees, which was a range of seven hundred and sixty miles: the south company was not to go below 34 degrees, nor the north company above 45 degrees. But the patent expressed, that as soon as

they had made their choice, each was to become limited to fifty miles each way on the coast, and one hundred up the country; so that the grant to each company was a square of one hundred miles, and no more. The North Virginia, or Plymouth company, settled to eastward, and in the year 1614 changed the name, and called that part New England. The South Virginia, or London company, settled near Cape Henry. This then cannot be the patent of boundless extent, and that for two reasons; first, because the limits are described, namely, a square of one hundred miles; and secondly, because there were two companies of equal rights included in the same patent.

Three years after this, that is, in the year 1609, the South Virginia company applied for new powers from the Crown of England, which were granted them in a new patent, and the boundaries of the grant enlarged: and this is the charter or patent on which some of the present Virginians ground their pretension to boundless territory.

The first reflection that presents itself on this enlargement of the grant is, that it must be supposed to bear some intended degree of reasonable comparison to that which it superseded. The former could not be greater than a square of one hundred miles; and this new one being granted in the lieu of that, and that within the space of three years, and by the same person, James the First, who was never famed either for profusion or generosity, cannot, on a review of the time and circumstances of the grant, be supposed a very extravagant or very extraordinary one. If a square of one hundred miles was not sufficiently large, twice that quantity was as much as could well be expected or solicited: but to suppose that he, who had caution enough to confine the first grant within moderate bounds, should in so short a space as three years, supersede it by another grant of many million times greater contents, is on the face of the affair, a circumstantial nullity. Whether this patent or charter was in existence or not at the time the revolution commenced, is a matter I shall hereafter speak to, and confine myself in this place to the limits which the said patent or charter lays down. The words are as follows: "Beginning from the Cape or point of land called Cape or Point Comfort, thence all along the sea coast to the NORTHWARD two hundred miles, and from the said Point or Cape Comfort, all along the sea coast to the *southward* two hundred miles; and all

that space or circuit of land lying from the sea coast of the precinct aforesaid up into the land throughout, from sea to sea, WEST and *northwest.*"

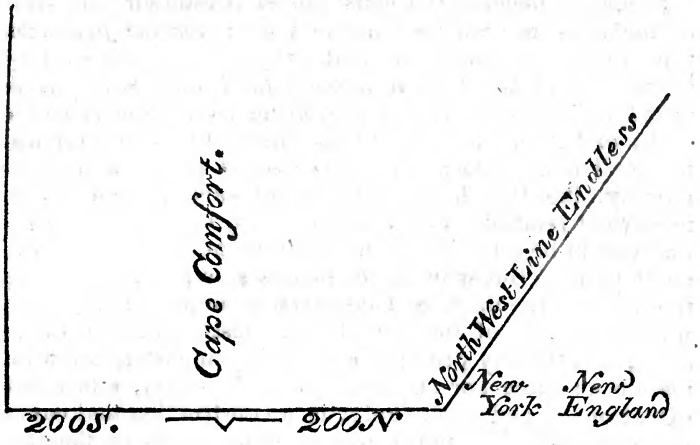
The first remark I shall offer on the words of this grant is, that they are uncertain, obscure and unintelligible, and may be construed into such a variety of contradictory meanings as to leave at last no meaning at all.

Whether the two hundred miles each way, from Cape Comfort were to be on a *straight* line, or ascertained by following the indented *line of the coast*, that is, "*all along the sea coast*," in and out as the coast lay, cannot now be fully determined; because, as either will admit of supposition, and nothing but supposition can be produced, therefore neither can be taken as positive. Thus far may be said, that had it been intended to be a straight line, the word *straight* ought to have been inserted, which would have made the matter clear; but as no inference can well be drawn to the advantage of that which does *not appear* against that which *does*, therefore the omission implies negatively in favour of the coast indented line, or that the four hundred miles were to be traced on the windings of the coast, that is, "*all along the sea coast.*"

But what is meant by the words "*west and northwest*" is still more unintelligible. Whether they mean a west line and a north-west line, or whether they apply to the general lying of the land from the Atlantic, without regard to lines, cannot again be determined. But if they are supposed to mean lines to be run, then a new difficulty of more magnitude than all the rest arises; namely, from which end of the extent of the coast is the west line and the north-west line to be set off? as the difference in the content of the grant, occasioned by transposing them, is many hundred millions of acres; and either includes or excludes a far greater quantity of land than the whole thirteen United States contain. In short, there is not a boundary in this grant that is clear, fixed, and defined. The coast line is uncertain, and that being the base on which the others are to be formed, renders the whole uncertain. But even if this line was admitted, in either shape, the other boundaries would still be on supposition, till it might be said there is no boundary at all, and consequently no charter; for words which describe nothing can give nothing.

The advocates for the Virginia claim, laying hold of these ambiguities have explained the grant thus:

Four hundred miles on the sea coast, and from the south point a west line to the great South Sea, and from the north point a north-west line to the said South Sea. The figure which these lines produce will be thus:



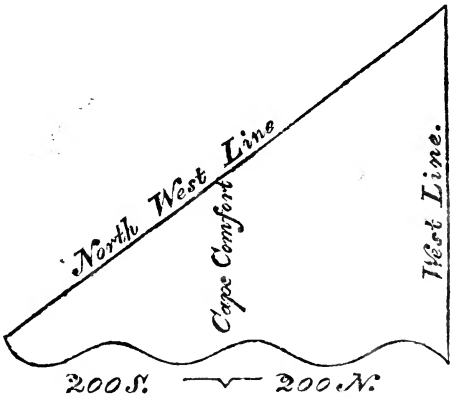

But why, I ask, must the west land line be set off from the south point, any more than from the north point? The grant or patent does not say from which it shall be, neither is it clear that a line is the thing intended by the words: but admitting it is, on what grounds do the claimants proceed in making this choice? The answer, I presume is easily given; namely, because it is the most beneficial explanation to themselves they can possibly make, as it takes in many thousand times more extent of country than any other explanation would. But this, though it be a very good reason to them, is a very bad reason to us; and though it may do for the claimants to hope upon, will not answer to plead upon; especially to the very people, who, to confirm the partiality of the claimants' choice, must relinquish their own right and interest.

Why not set off the west land line from the north end of the coast line, and the north-west line from the south end of the same? There is some reason why this should be the construction, and none why the other should.

First, because if the line of two hundred miles each way from Cape Comfort be traced by following the indented line of the coast, which seems to be the implied intention of the words, and a west line be set off from the north end, and a north-west line from the south end, these lines will all unite,

(which the other construction never can), and form a complete triangle; the content of which will be about twenty-nine or thirty millions of acres, or something larger than Pennsylvania: and

Secondly, because this construction is following the order or the lines as expressed in the grant; for the *first* mentioned *coast* line, which is that to the *northward* of Cape Comfort, and the *first* mentioned *land* line, which is the *west* line, have a numerical line, being the first-mentioned of each; and implies, that the west line was to be set off from the *north* point, and *not* from the *south* point: and consequently, the two last mentioned of each have the same numerical relation; and again implies, that the *north-west* line was to be set off from the *south* point, and not from the *north* point. But why the claimants should break through the order of the lines, and contrary to implication, join the *first*-mentioned of the *one*, to the last-mentioned of the *other*, and thereby produce a shapeless monster, for which there is no name nor any parallel in the world, either as to extent of soil and sovereignty, is a construction that cannot be supported. The figure produced by following the order of the lines is as follows. N. B. If the reader will cast his eye again over the words of the patent on page 9, he will perceive the numerical relation alluded to; observing that the first-mentioned coast line and the first-mentioned land line are distinguished by CAPITALS. And the last-mentioned of each by *italics*, which I have chosen to do to illustrate the explanation.




I presume that if four hundred miles be traced by follow-

ing the inflexes of any sea shore, that the two extremes will not be more than three hundred miles distant from each other, on a straight line. Therefore, to find the content of a triangle whose base is three hundred miles, multiply the length of the base into half the perpendicular, which, in this case, is the west line, and the product will be the answer:—

| | |
|---|---|
| 300 | miles length of the base. |
| 150 | half the perpendicular (supposing it a right angled triangle). |
| 15000 | |
| 300 | |
| 45000 | content of the grant in square miles. |
| 640 | acres in a square mile. |
| 1800000 | |
| 270000 | |
| 28800000 | content in square acres. |

Now will any one undertake to say, that this explanation is not as fairly drawn (if not more so) from the words themselves, as any other that can be offered, because it is not only justified by the exact words of the patent, grant, or charter, or any other name by which it may be called, but by their implied meaning; and is likewise of such a content as may be supposed to have been intended; whereas, the claimants' explanation is without bounds, and beyond every thing that is reasonable. Yet after all, who can say what were the precise meaning of terms and expressions so loosely formed and capable of such a variety of contradictory interpretations?

Had the order of the lines been otherwise than they are in the patent, the reasonableness of the thing must have directed the manner in which they should be connected; but as the claim is founded in unreasonableness, and that unreasonableness endeavoured to be supported by a transposition of the lines, there remains no pretence for the claim to stand on.

Perhaps those who are interested in the claimants explanation, will say, that as the South Sea is spoken of, the lines must be as they explain them, in order to reach it.

To this I reply; first, that no man then knew how far it

was from the Atlantic to the South Sea, as I shall presently shew, but believed it to be but a short distance: and,

Secondly, that the uncertain and ambiguous manner in which the South Sea is alluded to (for it is not mentioned by name, but only "*from sea to sea*,") serves to perplex the patent, and not to explain it; and as no right can be founded on an ambiguity, but of some proof cleared of ambiguity, therefore the allusive introduction of "sea to sea," can yield no service to the claim.

There is likewise an ambiguous mention made of *two lands* in this patent as well as of *two seas;* viz. and all that "*space or circuit of land* lying from the sea coast of the precinct aforesaid up into the *land throughout from sea to sea.*"

On which I remark, that the two *lands* here mentioned, have the appearance of a major and a minor, or the greater out of which the less is to be taken: and the term from "*sea to sea*" may be said to apply descriptively to the *land throughout*, and not to the *space or circuit of land patented to the company;* in a similar manner that the former patent described a major of seven hundred and sixty miles extent, out of which the minor, or square of one hundred miles was to be chosen.

But to suppose, that because the South Sea is darkly alluded to, it must therefore (at whatever distance it might be introduced) be made a certain boundary, and that without regard to the reasonableness of the matter, or the order in which the lines are arranged, which is the only implication the patent gives for setting off the land lines, is a supposition that contradicts every thing which is reasonable.

The figure produced by following the order of the lines will be complete in itself, let the distance to the South Sea be more or less; because, if the *land throughout from sea to sea* had not been sufficiently extensive to admit the west land line and the north-west land line to close, the South Sea in that case, would have eventually become a boundary: but if the extent of the *land throughout from sea to sea*, was so great, that the lines closed without reaching the said South Sea, the figure was complete without it.

Wherefore, as the order of the lines, when raised on the indented coast line, produces a regular figure of reasonable dimensions, and of about the same content, though not of the same shape, which Virginia now holds within the Allegany Mountains; and by the transposing them another figure is produced, for which there is no name, and cannot

be completed, as I shall presently explain, and of an extent greater than one half of Europe; it is needless to offer any other arguments to shew that the order of the lines must be the rule; if any rule can be drawn from the words, for ascertaining from which point the west line and north-west line were to be set off. Neither is it possible to suppose any other rule could be followed; because a north-west line set off two hundred miles above Cape Comfort, would not only never touch the South Sea, but would form a spiral line of infinite windings round the globe, and after passing over the northern parts of America and the Frozen Ocean, and then into the northern parts of Asia, would, when eternity should end, and not before, terminate in the north pole. This is the only manner in which I can express the effect of a north-west line, set off as above; because as its direction must always be between the north and the west, it consequently can never get into the pole nor yet come to a rest, and on the principle that matter or space is capable of being eternally divided, must proceed on for ever. But it was a prevailing opinion, at the time this patent was obtained, that the South Sea was at no great distance from the Atlantic, and therefore it was needless, under that supposition to regard which way the lines shoud be run; neither need we wonder at this error in the English Government respecting America then, when we see so many and such glaring ones now, for which there are less excuse.

Some circumstances favoured this mistake. Admiral Sir Francis Drake not long before this, had, from the top of a mountain in the isthmus of Darien, which is the centre of North and South America, seen both the South Sea and the Atlantic; the width of the part of the Continent where he then was, not being above seventy miles, whereas its width opposite Chesapeake Bay is as great, if not greater, than in any other part being from *sea to sea*, about the distance it is from America to England. But this could not then be known, because only two voyages had been made across the South Sea; the one by the ship in which Magellan sailed, who died in his passage, and which was the first ship that sailed round the world, and the other by Sir Francis Drake; but as neither of these sailed into a northern latitude in that ocean, high enough to fix the longitude of the western coast of America from the eastern, the distance across was entirely on supposition, and the errors they then ran into appear laughable to us who now know what the distance is.

That the company expected to come at the South Sea without much trouble or travelling, and that the great body of land which intervened, so far from being their view in obtaining the charter, became their disappointment, may be collected from a circumstance mentioned in Stith's History of Virginia.

He relates, that in the year 1608, which was at the time the company were soliciting this patent, they fitted up in England "a barge for Captain Newport, (who was afterwards one of the joint deputy-governors under the very charter we are now treating of,) which, for convenience of carriage, might be taken into five pieces, and with which he and his company were instructed to go up James's River as far as the falls thereof, to discover the country of the Monakins, and from thence they were to proceed, *carrying their barge beyond the falls to convey them to the South Sea;* being ordered not to return without a lump of gold, or a certainty of the said sea."

And Hutchinson, in his History of New England, which was called North Virginia at the time this patent was obtained, says, "the geography of this part of America was less understood than at present. A line to the Spanish settlements was imagined much shorter than it really was, some of Chaplain's people in the beginning of the last century, who had been but a few days march from Quebec, returned with great joy, supposing that from the top of a high mountain they had discovered the *South Sea.*"

From these matters, which are evidences on record, it appears that the adventurers had no knowledge of the distance it was to the South Sea, but supposed it to be no great way from the Atlantic; and also that great extent of territory was not their object, but a short communication with the southern ocean, by which they might get into the neighbourhood of the Gold Coast, and likewise carry on a commerce with the East Indies.

Having thus shewn the confused and various interpretations this charter is subject to, and that it may be made to mean any thing and nothing; I now proceed to shew, that let the limits of it be more or less, the present Virginia does not, and cannot, as a matter of right, inherit under it.

I shall open this part of the subject by putting the following case:—

Either Virginia stands in succession to the London company, to whom the charter was granted, or to the Crown of England. If to the London company, then it becomes her,

as an outset in the matter, to shew who they were, and likewise that they were in possession to the commencement of the revolution. If to the crown, then the charter is of consequence superseded; because the crown did not possess territories by charter, but by prerogative without charter. The notion of the crown chartering to itself is a nullity; and in this case, the unpossessed lands, be they little or much, are in the same condition as if they never had been chartered at all; and the sovereignty of them devolves to the sovereignty of the United States.

The charter or patent of 1609 as well as that of 1606 was to Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Summers, the Rev. Richard Hackluit, prebend of Westminster, and others: and the government was then proprietary. These proprietors, by virtue of the charter of 1609, chose Lord Delaware for their governor, and Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Summers, and Captain Newport (the person who was to go with a boat to the South Sea) joint deputy governors.

Was this the form of government either as to soil or constitution at the time the present revolution commenced? if not, the charter was not *in being;* for it matters not to us how it came to be *out of being*, so long as the present Virginians, or their ancestors, neither are nor were sufferers by the change then made.

But suppose it could be proved to be in being, which it cannot, because *being* in charter is power, it would only prove a right in behalf of the London company of adventurers, but how that right is to be disposed of is another question. We are not defending the right of the London company, deceased one hundred and fifty years ago, but taking up the matter at the place where we found it, and so far as the authority of the crown of England was exercised when the revolution commenced. The charter was a contract between the crown of England and those adventurers for their own emolument, and not between the crown and the people of Virginia; and whatever was the occasion of the contract becoming void, or surrendered up, or superseded, makes no part of the question now. It is sufficient that when the United States succeeded to sovereignty they found no such contract in existence or even in litigation. They found Virginia under the authority of the crown of England, both as to soil and government, subject to quit-rents to the crown and not to the company, and had been so for upwards of one hundred and fifty years: and that an instrument or deed of writing, of a private nature, as all

proprietary contracts are so far as land is concerned, and which is now only historically known, and in which Virginia was no party, and to which no succession in any line can be proved, and has ceased for one hundred and fifty years, should now be raked from oblivion and held up as a charter whereon to assume a right to boundless territory, and that by a perversion of the order of it, is something very singular and extraordinary.

If there was any innovation on the part of the crown, the contest rested between the crown and the proprietors, the London company, and not between Virginia and the said crown. It was not her charter; it was the company's charter, and the only parties in the case were the crown and the company.

But why, if Virginia contends for the immutability of charters, has she selected this in preference to the two former ones? All her arguments arising from this principle must go to the first charter and not to the last; but by placing them to the last, instead of the first she admits a fact against her principle; because, in order to establish the last, she proves the first to be vacated by the second in the space of twenty-three years, the second to be vacated by the third in the space of three years; and why the third should not be vacated by the fourth form of government; issuing from the same power with the former two and which took place about twenty-five years after, and continued in being for one hundred and fifty years since, and under which all her public and private business was transacted, her purchases made, her warrants for survey and patents for land obtained, is too mysterious to account for.

Either the re-assumption of the London company's charter into the hands of the crown was an usurpation, or it was not. If it was, then, strictly speaking, is every thing which Virginia has done under that usurpation illegal, and she may be said to have lived in the most curious species of rebellion ever known: rebellion against the London company of adventurers. For, if the charter to the company (for it was not to the Virginians) ought to be in being now, it ought to have been in being then; and why she should admit its vacation then and reject it now, is unaccountable; or why she should esteem her purchases of lands good which were *then* made contrary to this charter, and now contend for the operation of the same charter to possess new territory by, are circumstances which cannot be reconciled.

But whether the charter, as it is called, ought to be extinct or not, cannot make a question with us. All the parties concerned in it are deceased, and no successors, in any regular line of succession, appear to claim. Neither the London company of adventurers, their heirs or assigns were in possession of the exercise of this charter at the commencement of the revolution; and, therefore the State of Virginia does not, in point of fact, succeed to and inherit from the company.

But, say they, we succeed to and inherit from the crown of England, which was the immediate possessor of the sovereignty at the time we entered, and had been so for one hundred and fifty years. To say this, is to say there is no charter at all. A charter is an assurance from one party to another, and cannot be from the same party to itself.

But before I enter further on this case, I shall concisely state how this charter came to be re-assumed by the power which granted it, the crown of England. I have already stated that it was a proprietary charter, or grant, to Sir Thomas Gates, and others, who were called the London company, and sometimes the South Virginia company, to distinguish them from those who settled to the eastward (now New England) and were then called the North Virginia, or Plymouth company.

Oldmixon's History of Virginia (in his account of the British empire in America) published in the year 1708, gives a concise progress of the affair. He attributes it to the misconduct, contentions and mismanagement of the proprietors, and their innovations upon the Indians, which had so exasperated them, that they fell on the settlers and destroyed at one time three hundred and thirty-four men, women and children.

"Sometime after this massacre," says he, "several gentlemen in England procured grants of land from the company, and others came over on their private accounts to make settlements; among the former was one Captain Martin, who was named to be of the council. This man raised so many differences among them, that new distraction followed, which the Indians observing, took heart, and once more fell upon the settlers on the borders, destroying, without pitying either age, sex, or condition.

"These and other calamities being chiefly imputed to the mismanagement of the proprietors, whose losses had so discouraged most of their best members, that they sold their shares; and Charles the First on his accession to the throne,

dissolved the company, and took the colony into his own immediate direction. He appointed the governor and council himself, ordered all patents and process to issue in his own name, and reserved a quit-rent of two shillings sterling for every hundred acres."

Thus far our author. Now it is impossible for us at this distance of time, to say what were all the exact causes of the change; neither have we any business with it. The company might surrender it, or they might not, or they might forfeit it by not fulfilling conditions, or they might sell it; or the crown might, as far as we know, take it from them. But what are either of these cases to Virginia, or any other which can be produced.

She was not a party in the matter. It was not her charter, neither can she ingraft any right upon it, or suffer any injury under it.

If the charter was vacated, it must have been by the London company; if it was surrendered, it must be by the same; and if it was sold, nobody else could sell it; and if it was taken from them, nobody else could lose it; and yet Virginia calls this her charter, which it was not within her power to hold, to sell, to vacate, or to lose.

But if she puts her right upon the ground that it never was sold, surrendered, lost, or vacated, by the London company, she admits that if they *had* sold, surrendered, lost, or vacated it, that it would have become extinct, and to her no charter at all. And in this case, the only thing to prove is the fact, which is, has this charter been the rule of government, and of purchasing or procuring unappropriated lands in Virginia, from the time it was granted to the time of the revolution? Answer—The charter has not been the rule of government, nor of purchasing and procuring lands, neither has any lands been purchased or procured under its sanction or authority for upwards of one hundred and fifty years.

But if she goes a step further, and says, that they could not vacate, surrender, sell, or lose it, by any act they could do, so neither could they vacate, surrender, sell, or lose that of 1606, which was three years prior to this; and this argument, so far from establishing the charter of 1609, would destroy it; and in its stead confirm the preceding one which limited the company to a square of one hundred miles. And if she still goes back to that of Sir Walter Raleigh, *that* only places her in the light of Americans in common with all.

The only fact that can be clearly proved is, that the

crown of England exercised the power of dominion and government in Virginia, and of the disposal of the lands, and that the charter had neither been the rule of government or purchasing land for upwards of one hundred and fifty years, and this places Virginia in succession to the crown and not to the company. Consequently it proves a lapse of the charter into the hands of the crown by some means or other.

Now to suppose that the charter could return into the hands of the crown and yet remain in force, is to suppose that a man would be bound by a bond of obligation to himself.

Its very *being* in the hands of the crown from which it issued, is a cessation of its existence; and an effectual unchartering all that part of the grant which was not before disposed of. And consequently, the State of Virginia standing thus in succession to the crown, can be entitled to no more extent of country as a State under the union, than what is possessed as a province under the crown. And all lands exterior to these bounds, as well of Virginia as the rest of the States, devolve, in the order of succession, to the sovereignty of the United States, for the benefit of all.

And this brings the case to what were the limits of Virginia, as a province under the crown of England.

Charter it had none. Its limits then rested at the discretion of the authority to which it was subject. Maryland and Pennsylvania became its boundary to the eastward and northward, and North Carolina to the southward, therefore the boundary to the westward was the only principal line to be ascertained.

As Virginia, from a proprietary soil and government, was become what then bore the name of a royal one, the extent of the province, as the order of things then stood, (for something must always be admitted whereon to form a beginning) was wholly at the disposal of the crown of England, who might enlarge, or diminish, or erect new governments to the westward, by the same authoritative right that Virginia now can divide a country into two; if too large or too inconvenient.

To say, as has been said, that Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina, were taken out of Virginia, is no more than to say they were taken out of America; because Virginia was the common name of all the country, north and south: and to say they were taken out of the chartered

limits of Virginia, is likewise to say nothing; because, after the dissolution or extinction of the proprietary company, there was nobody to whom any provincial limits became chartered. The extinction of the company was the extinction of the chartered limits. The patent could not survive the company, because it was to them a right, which, when they expired, ceased to be any body's else in their stead.

But to return to the western boundary of Virginia at the commencement of the revolution.

Charters, like proclamations, were the sole act of the crown; and if the former were adequate to fix limits to the lands which it gave away, sold, or otherwise disposed of, the latter were equally adequate to fix limits or divisions to those which it retained; and therefore, the western limits of Virginia, as the proprietary company was extinct, and consequently the patent with it, must be looked for in the line of proclamations.

I am not fond of quoting these old remains of former arrogance, but as we must begin somewhere, and as the States have agreed to regulate the right of each State to territory, by the condition each stood in with the crown of England at the commencement of the revolution, we have no other rule to go by; and any rule which can be agreed on is better than none.

From the proclamation then of 1763, the western limits of Virginia, as a province under the crown of England, are described so as not to extend beyond the heads of any of the rivers which empty themselves into the Atlantic, and consequently the limits did not pass over the Allegany Mountain.

Extract from the proclamation of 1763, so far as respects boundary: "AND WHEREAS it is *just* and *reasonable*, and *essential to our interest*, and the security of our colonies, that the several nations or tribes of Indians, with whom we are connected, and who live under our protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the possession of such parts of our dominions and territories, *as not having been ceded to or purchased by us, are reserved to them or any of them as their hunting grounds;* we do therefore, with the advice of our privy council, declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that no governor, or commander in chief, in any of our colonies of Quebec, East Florida, or West Florida, do presume upon any pretence whatever, to grant warrants of survey, or pass any patents for lands beyond the bounds of their respective governments, as described in their com-

missions: AS ALSO that no governor or commander in chief of our colonies or plantations in America, do presume, for the present, and until our further pleasure be known, to grant warrants of survey, or to pass patents for any lands *beyond the heads or sources of any of the rivers which fall into the Atlantic ocean from the west or north-west*, or upon any lands whatever, *which not having been ceded to, or purchased by us, as aforesaid, are reserved unto the said Indians or any of them.*

"And we do further declare it to be our royal will and pleasure, for the present, as aforesaid, to reserve under our sovereignty, protection and dominion, *for the use of the said Indians all the lands and territories*, not included within the limits of our said three new governments, or within the limits of the territory granted to the Hudson's Bay company; as also, *all the lands and territories lying to the westward of the sources of the rivers which fall into the sea from the west and north-west as aforesaid;* and we do hereby strictly forbid, on pain of our displeasure, all our loving subjects from making any purchases or settlements whatever, or taking possession of any of the lands above reserved, without our especial leave and licence for that purpose first obtained.

"And we do further strictly enjoin and require all persons whatever, who have either wilfully or inadvertently seated themselves upon any lands within the countries above described, or upon any other lands, *which, not having been ceded to, or purchased by us*, are still reserved to the said Indians, as aforesaid, forthwith to remove themselves from such settlements."

It is easy for us to understand, that the frequent and plausible mention of the Indians was only speciousness to create an idea of the humanity of Government. The object and intention of the proclamation was the western boundary, which is here signified not to extend beyond the heads of the rivers: and these, then, are the western limits which Virginia had as a province under the crown of Britain. And agreeable to the intention of this proclamation, and the limits described thereby, Lord Hillsborough, then Secretary of State in England, addressed an official letter of the 31st of July, 1770, to Lord Bottetourt, at that time Governor of Virginia, which letter was laid before the council of Virginia by Mr. President Nelson, and by him answered on the 18th of October in the same year, of which the following are extracts.

"On the evening of the day your Lordship's letter to the

Governor was delivered to me (as it contains matters of great variety and importance), it was read in council, and, together with the several papers inclosed, it hath been maturely considered, and I now trouble your Lordship with theirs, as well as my own opinion upon the subject of them.

"We do not presume to say to whom our gracious Sovereign shall grant his vacant lands, and with respect to the establishment of a *new colony on the back of Virginia*, it is a subject of too great political importance for me to presume to give an opinion upon; however, permit me, my Lord, to observe, that when that part of the country shall become sufficiently populated, it may be a wise and prudent measure."

On the death of Lord Bottetourt, Lord Dunmore was appointed to the government, and he, either from ignorance of the subject, or other motives, made a grant of some lands on the Ohio to certain of his friends and favourites, which produced the following letter from Lord Dartmouth, who succeeded Lord Hillsborough as Secretary of State: "I think fit to inclose your Lordship a copy of Lord Hillsborough's letter to Lord Bottetourt, of the 31st of July, 1770, the receipt of which was acknowledged by Mr. President Nelson, a few days before Lord Bottetourt's death, and appears by his answer to have been laid before the council. That board, therefore, could not be ignorant of what has passed here upon Mr. Walpole's application, nor of the King's express command contained in Lord Hillsborough's letter, that no lands should be granted beyond the limits of the royal proclamation of 1763, until the King's further pleasure was signified; and I have only to observe, that it must have been a very extraordinary neglect in them not to have informed your Lordship of that letter and those orders."

On these documents I shall make no remarks. They are their own evidence, and shew what the limits of Virginia were while a British province; and as there was then no other authority by which they could be fixed, and as the grant to the London company could not be a grant to any but themselves, and of consequence ceased to be when they ceased to exist, it remained a matter of choice in the crown, on its re-assumption of the lands, to limit or divide them into separate governments, as it judged best, and from which there was not, and could not, in the order of government, be any appeal. Neither was Virginia, as a province, affected by it, because the monies, in any case, arising from

the sale of lands, did not go into her treasury; and whether to the crown, or to the proprietors, was to her indifferent. And it is likewise evident, from the secretary's letter, and the President's answer, that it was in contemplation to lay out a new colony on the *back* of Virginia, between the Allegany Mountains and the Ohio.

Having thus gone through the several charters, or grants, and their relation to each other, and shewn that Virginia cannot stand in succession to a private grant, which has been extinct for upwards of one hundred and fifty years—and that the western limits of Virginia at the commencement of the revolution, were at the heads of the rivers emptying themselves into the Atlantic, none of which are beyond the Allegany Mountains. I now proceed to the second part, namely,

The reasonableness of her claims.

Virginia, as a British province, stood in a different situation with the Crown of England to any of the other provinces, because she had no ascertained limits but such as arose from the laying off new provinces and the proclamation of 1763. For the same name, Virginia, as I have before mentioned, was the general name of all the country, and the dominion out of which the several governments were laid off: and in strict propriety, conformable to the origin of names, the province of Virginia was taken out of the dominion of Virginia. For the term, *dominion*, could not appertain to the province, which retained the name of Virginia, but to the crown, and from thence was applied to the whole country, and signified its being an appendage to the crown of England, as they now say, "*our dominion of Wales.*"

It is not possible to suppose there could exist an idea that Virginia, as a British province, was to be extended to the South Sea at the distance of three thousand miles. The dominion, as appertaining at that time to the crown, might be claimed to extend so far, but as a province the thought was not conceivable, nor the practice possible. And it is more than probable, that the deception made use of to obtain the patent of 1609, by representing the South Sea to be near where the Allegany Mountains are, was one cause of its becoming extinct; and it is worthy of remarking, that no history (at least that I have met with) mentions any dispute or litigation, between the crown and the company in consequence of the extinction of the patent, and the re-assumption of the lands; and therefore the negative

evidence corroborating with the positive, make it, as certain as such a case can possibly be, that either the company received compensation for the patent, or quitted it quietly, ashamed of the imposition they had acted, and their subsequent mal-administration. Men are not inclined to give up any claim where there is any ground to contend on, and the silence in which the patent expired is a presumptive proof that its fate, from whatever cause, was just.

There is one general policy which seems to have prevailed with the English in laying off new governments, which was, not to make them larger than their own country, that they might the easier hold them manageable: this was the case with every one except Canada, the extension of whose limits was for the politic purpose of recognizing new acquisition of territory, not immediately convenient for colonization.

But, in order to give this matter a chance through all its cases, I will admit what no man can suppose, which is, that there is an English charter that fixes Virginia to extend from the Atlantic to the South Sea, and contained within a due west line, set off two hundred miles below Cape Comfort; and a north-west line, set off two hundred miles above it. Her side, then, on the Atlantic, (according to an explanation given in Mr. Bradford's paper of September 29, 1779, by an advocate for the Virginia claims) will be four hundred miles; her side to the south three thousand; her side to the west four thousand; and her north-west line about five thousand; and the quantity of land contained within these dimensions will be almost 4,000,000,000, that is, four thousand millions of acres, which is more than ten times the quantity contained within the present United States, and above an hundred times greater than the kingdom of England.

To reason on a case like this, is such a waste of time, and such an excess of folly, that it ought not to be reasoned upon. It is impossible to suppose that any patent to private persons could be so intentionally absurd, and the claim grounded thereon is as wild as any thing the imagination of man ever conceived.

But if, as I before mentioned, there was a charter which bore such an explanation, and that Virginia stood in succession to it, what would that be to us, any more than the will of Alexander, had he taken it in his head to have bequeathed away the world? Such a charter, or grant, must have been obtained by imposition and a false representation

of the country, or granted in error, or both; and in any of, or all, these cases, the United States must reject the matter as something they cannot know, for the merit will not bear an argument, and the pretension of right stands upon no better ground.

Our case is an original one; and many matters attending it must be determined on their own merits and reasonableness. The territory of the rest of the States is, in general, within known bounds of moderate extent, and the quota which each State is to furnish towards the expence and service of the war, must be ascertained upon some rule of comparison. The number of inhabitants of each State formed the first rule; and it was naturally supposed that those numbers bore nearly the same proportion to each other, which the territory of each State did. Virginia, on this scale, would be about one-fifth larger than Pennsylvania, which would be as much dominion as any State could manage with happiness and convenience.

When I first began this subject, my intention was to be extensive on the merits, and concise on the matter of right; instead of which I have been extensive on the matter of right, and concise on the merits of reasonableness: and this alteration in my design arose, consequentially, from the nature of the subject; for as a reasonable thing the claim can be supported by no argument, and therefore needs none to refute it; but as there is a strange propensity in mankind to shelter themselves under the sanction of a right, however unreasonable that supposed right might be, I found it most conducive to the interest of the case, to shew, that the right stands upon no better grounds than the reason. And shall therefore proceed to make some observations on, The consequences of the claim.

The claim being unreasonable in itself and standing on no ground of right, but such as, if true, must from the quarter it is drawn be offensive, has a tendency to create disgust and sour the minds of the rest of the States. Those lands are capable, under the management of the United States, of repaying the charges of the war, and some of them, as I shall hereafter shew, may, I presume, be made an immediate advantage of.

I distinguish three different descriptions of lands in America at the commencement of the revolution. Proprietary or chartered lands, as was the case in Pennsylvania; crown lands within the described limits of any of the crown governments; and crown residuary lands, that were without, or beyond the limits of any province; and those

last were held in reserve whereon to erect new governments and lay out new provinces; as appears to have been the design by Lord Hillsborough's letter and the President's answer, wherein he says, "with respect to the establishment of a *new* colony on the *back* of Virginia, it is a subject of too great political importance for me to presume to give an opinion upon; however, permit me, my Lord, to observe, that when that part of the country shall become populated it may be a wise and prudent measure."

The expression is, a "*new colony* on the *back* of Virginia;" and referred to lands between the heads of the rivers and the Ohio. This is a proof that those lands were not considered within, but beyond the limits of Virginia as a colony; and the other expression in the letter is equally descriptive, namely, "*We do not presume to say to whom our gracious Sovereign shall grant his vacant lands.*" Certainly then, the same right, which at that time rested in the crown, rests now in the more supreme authority of the United States; and therefore, addressing the President's letter to the circumstances of the revolution, it will run thus:—

"We do not presume to say to whom the *sovereign United States* shall grant their vacant lands, and with respect to the settlement of a *new colony* on the *back* of Virginia, it is a matter of too much political importance for me to give an opinion upon; however, permit me to observe, that when that part of the country shall become populated it may be a wise and prudent measure."

It must occur to every person, on reflection, that those lands are too distant to be within the government of any of the present States; and, I may presume to suppose, that were a calculation justly made, Virginia has lost more by the decrease of taxables than she has gained by what lands she has made sale of; therefore, she is not only doing the rest of the States wrong in point of equity, but herself and them an injury in point of strength, service, and revenue.

It is only the United States, and not any single State, that can lay off new States and incorporate them in the union by representation; therefore, the situation which the settlers on those lands will be in, under the assumed right of Virginia, will be hazardous and distressing, and they will feel themselves at last like aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, their habitations unsafe, and their title precarious.

And when men reflect on that peace, harmony, quietude, and security which is necessary to prosperity, especially in making new settlements, and think that when the war shall

be ended, their happiness and safety will depend on a union with the States, and not a scattered people, unconnected with, and politically unknown to the rest, they will feel but little inclination to put themselves in a situation, which, however solitary and recluse it may appear at present, will then be uncertain and unsafe, and their troubles will have to begin where those of the United States shall end.

It is probable that some of the inhabitants of Virginia may be inclined to suppose, that the writer of this, by taking up the subject in the manner he has done, is arguing unfriendly against their interest.

To this he wishes to reply.

That the most extraordinary part of the whole is, that Virginia should countenance such a claim. For it is worthy of observing, that, from the begining of the contest with Britain, and long after, there was not a people in America who discovered, through all the variety and multiplicity of public business, a greater fund of true wisdom, fortitude, and disinterestedness, than the then colony of Virginia. They were loved—they were reverenced. Their investigation of the assumed rights of Britain had a sagacity which was uncommon. Their reasonings were piercing, difficult to be equalled, and impossible to he refuted, and their public spirit was exceeded by none. But since this unfortunate land-scheme has taken place, their powers seem to be absorbed; a torpor has overshaded them, and every one asks, what is become of Virginia?

It seldom happens that the romantic schemes of extensive dominion are of any service to a government, and never to a people. They assuredly end at last in loss, trouble, division, and disappointment. And was even the title of Virginia good, and the claim admissible, she would derive more lasting and real benefit by participating it, than by attempting the management of an object so infinitely beyond her reach. Her share with the rest, under the supremacy of the United States, which is the only authority adequate to the purpose, would be worth more to her than what the whole would produce under the management of herself alone. And that for several reasons:

First, because her claim not being admissible not yet manageable, she cannot make a good title to the purchasers, and consequently can get but little for the lands.

Secondly, because the distance the settlers will be from her, will immediately put them out of all government

and protection, so far, at least, as relates to Virginia: and by this means she will render her frontiers a refuge to desperadoes, and a hiding place from justice: and the consequence will be perpetual unsafety to her own peace, and that of the neighbouring States.

Thirdly, because her quota of expence for carrying on the war, admitting her to engross such an immensity of territory, would be greater than she can either support or supply, and could not be less, upon a reasonable rule of proportion, than nine-tenths of the whole.

And Lastly, because she must sooner or later relinquish them, and therefore to see her own interest wisely at first, is preferable to the alternative of finding it out by misfortune at last.

I have now gone through my examination of the claims of Virginia, in every case which I proposed; and for several reasons wish the lot had fallen to another person.

But as this is a most important matter, in which all are interested, and the substantial good of Virginia not injured, but promoted, and as few men have leisure, and still fewer have inclination, to go into intricate investigation, I have at last ventured on the subject.

The succession of the United States to the vacant western territory is a right they originally set out upon; and in the pamphlet *Common Sense*, I frequently mentioned those lands as a national fund for the benefit of all; therefore, resuming the subject, where I then left off, I shall conclude with concisely reducing to system what I then only hinted.

In my last piece, *The Crisis Extraordinary*, I estimated the annual amount of the charge of war and the support of the several governments at two million pounds sterling, and the peace establishment at three-quarters of a million, and by a comparison of the taxes of this country with those of England, proved that the whole yearly expence to us, to defend the country, is but a third of what Britain would have drawn from us by taxes, had she succeeded in her attempt to conquer; and our peace establishment only an eighth part; and likewise shewed, that it was within the ability of the States to carry on the whole of the war by taxation, without having recourse to any other modes or funds. To have a clear idea of taxation is necessary to every country, and the more funds we can discover and organize, the less will be the hope of the enemy, and the readier their disposition to peace, which it is now *their* entrest more than *ours* to promote.

I have already remarked, that only the United States and not any particular State can lay off new States, and incorporate them in the union by representation; keeping, therefore, this idea in view, I ask, might not a substantial fund be quickly created by laying off a new State, so as to contain between twenty and thirty millions of acres, and opening a land-office in all the countries in Europe for hard money, and in this country for supplies in kind, at a certain price.

The tract of land that seems best adapted to answer this purpose is contained between the Allegany Mountain and the river Ohio, as far north as the Pennsylvania line, thence extending down the said river to the falls thereof, thence due south into the latitude of the North Carolina line, and thence east to the Allegany Mountain aforesaid.—I the more readily mention this tract, because it is fighting the enemy at their own weapons, as it includes the same ground on which a new colony would have been erected, for the emolument of the crown of England, as appears by Lord Hillsborough and Dartmouth's letters, had not the revolution prevented its being carried into execution.

It is probable there may be some spots of private property within this tract, but to incorporate them into some government will render them more profitable to the owners, and the condition of the scattered settlers more eligible and happy than at present.

If twenty millions of acres of this new State be patented and sold at twenty pounds sterling per hundred acres, they will produce four million pounds sterling; which, if applied to Continental expences only, will support the war for three years, should Britain be so unwise to herself to prosecute it against her own direct interest, and against the interest and policy of all Europe. The several States will then have to raise taxes for their internal government only, and the Continental taxes, as soon as the fund begins to operate, will lessen, and if sufficiently productive, will cease.

Lands are the real riches of all the habitable world, and the natural funds of America. The funds of other countries are, in general, artificially constructed; the creatures of necessity and contrivance; dependant upon credit, and always exposed to hazard and uncertainty. But lands can neither be annihilated nor lose their value; on the contrary, they universally rise with population, and rapidly so, when under the security of effectual government. But this it is

impossible for Virginia to give; and, therefore, that which is capable of defraying the expences of the empire, will, under the management of any single State, produce only a fugitive support to wandering individuals.

I shall now enquire into the effects which the laying out a new State, under the authority of the United States, will have upon Virginia.

It is the very circumstance she ought to, and must, wish for, when she examines the matter through all its cases and consequences.

The present settlers being beyond her reach, and her supposed authority over them remaining in herself, they will appear to her as revolters, and she to them as oppressors; and this will produce such a spirit of mutual dislike, that in a little time a total disagreement will take place, to the disadvantage of both.

But under the authority of the United States the matter is manageable, and Virginia will be eased of a disagreeable consequence.

Besides this, a sale of the lands, continentally, for the purpose of supporting the expense of the war, will save her a greater share of taxes, than what the small sale she could make herself, and the small price she could get for them, would produce.

She would likewise have two advantages which no other State in the union enjoys; first, a frontier State for her defence against the incursions of the Indians; and the second is, that the laying out and peopling a new State on the back of an old one, situated as she is, is doubling the quantity of its trade.

The new State, which is here proposed to be laid out, may send its exports down the Mississippi, but its imports must come through Chesapeake Bay, and consequently Virginia will become the market for the new State; because, though there is a navigation from it, there is none into it, on account of the rapidity of the Mississippi.

There are certain circumstances that will produce certain events whether men think of them or not. The events do not depend upon thinking, but are the natural consequence of acting; and according to the system which Virginia has gone upon, the issue will be, that she will get involved with the back settlers in a contention about *rights* till they dispute with her own claims; and, soured by the contention, will go to any other State for their commerce; both of

which may be prevented, a perfect harmony established, the strength of the States increased, and the expences of the war defrayed, by settling the matter now on the plan of a general right, and every day it is delayed the difficulty will be increased and the advantages lessened.

But if it should happen, as it possibly may, that the war should end before the money which the new State may produce be expended, the remainder of the lands therein may be set apart to reimburse those whose houses have been burnt by the enemy, as this is a species of suffering which it was impossible to prevent, because houses are not moveable property: and it ought not to be, that because we cannot do every thing, that we ought not to do what we can.

Having said this much on the subject, I think it necessary to remark, that the prospect of a new fund, so far from abating our endeavours in making every immediate provision for the supply of the army, ought to quicken us therein; for should the States see it expedient to go upon the measure, it will be at least a year before it can be productive. I the more freely mention this because there is a dangerous species of popularity, which, I fear, some men are seeking from their constituents by giving them grounds to believe, that if they are elected they will lighten the taxes; a measure, which, in the present state of things, cannot be done without exposing the country to the ravages of the enemy by disabling the army from defending it.

Where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime; and if any man whose duty it was to know better, has encouraged such an expectation, he has either deceived himself or them: besides, no country can be defended without expence, and let any man compare his portion of temporary inconveniences arising from taxations, with the real distresses of the army for the want of supplies, and the difference is not only sufficient to strike him dumb, but make him thankful that worse consequences have not followed.

In advancing this doctrine, I speak with an honest freedom to the country; for as it is their good to be defended, so it is their interest to provide that defence, at least, till other funds can be organized.

As the laying out new States, will some time or other, be the business of the country, and as it is yet a new business to

us, and as the influence of the war has scarcely afforded leisure for reflecting on distant circumstances, I shall throw together a few hints for facilitating that measure, whenever it may be proper for adopting it.

The United States now standing on the line of sovereignty, the vacant territory is their property collectively, but the persons by whom it may hereafter be peopled will have an equal right with ourselves; and therefore, as new States shall be laid off and incorporated with the present, they will become partakers of the remaining territory with us who are already in possession. And this consideration ought to heighten the value of lands to new emigrants; because, in making the purchases, they not only gain an immediate property, but become initiated into the right and heirship of the States to a property in reserve, which is an additional advantage to what any purchasers under the late gov rnment of England enjoyed.

The setting off the boundary of any new State will naturally be the first step, and as it must be supposed not to be peopled at the time it is laid off, a constitution must be formed, by the United States, as the rule of government in any new State, for a certain term of years (perhaps ten) or until the State becomes peopled to a certain number of inhabitants; after which, the whole and sole right of modelling their government to rest with themselves.

A question may arise, whether a new State should immediately possess an equal right with the present ones in all cases which may come before Congress.

This, experience will best determine; but at first view of the matter it appears thus: that it ought to be immediately incorporated into the union on the ground of a family right, such a State standing in the line of a younger child of the same stock; but as new emigrants will have something to learn when they first come to America, and a new State requiring aid rather than capable of giving it, it might be most convenient to admit its immediate representation into Congress, there to sit, hear, and debate on all questions and matters, but not to vote on any till after the expiration of seven years.

I shall in this place take the opportunity of renewing a hint which I formerly threw out in the pamphlet *Common Sense*, and which the several States will, sooner or later, see the convenience, if not the necessity, of adopting; which

is, that of electing a Continental convention, for the purpose of forming a continental Constitution, designing and describing the powers and authority of Congress.

Those of entering into treaties, and making peace, they naturally possess, in behalf of the States, for their separate as well as their united good, but the internal controul and dictatorial powers of Congress are not sufficiently defined, and appear to be too much in some cases, and too little in others; and therefore, to have them marked legally out will give additional energy to the whole, and new confidence to the several parts.

THOMAS PAINE.

A

# LETTER

ADDRESSED TO THE

# ABBE RAYNAL,

ON THE AFFAIRS OF

# North America;

IN WHICH

## THE MISTAKES IN THE ABBE'S ACCOUNT

OF THE

## REVOLUTION OF AMERICA

ARE CORRECTED AND CLEARED UP.

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BY THOMAS PAINE.

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London:

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1819.

# INTRODUCTION.

A London translation of an original work in French, by the Abbe Raynal, which treats of the Revolution of North America, having been reprinted in Philadelphia and other parts of the Continent, and as the distance at which the Abbe is placed from the American theatre of war and politics, has occasioned him to mistake several facts, or misconceive the causes or principles by which they were produced; the following tract, therefore, is published with a view to rectify them, and prevent even accidental errors intermixing with history, under the sanction of time and silence.

The Editor of the London edition has entitled it, "The Revolution of America, by the Abbe Raynal," and the American printers have followed the example. But I have understood, and I believe my information to be just, that the piece, which is more properly reflections on the Revolution, was unfairly purloined from the printer which the Abbe employed, or from the manuscript copy, and is only part of a larger work then in the press, or preparing for it. The person who procured it, appears to have been an Englishman; and though, in an advertisement prefixed to the London edition, he has endeavoured to gloss over the embezzlement with professions of patriotism, and to soften it with high encomiums on the author, yet the action, in any view in which it can be placed, is illiberal and unpardonable.

"In the course of his travels," says he, "the translator happily succeeded in obtaining a copy of this

exquisite little piece, which has not yet made its appearance from any press." He publishes a French edition, in favour of those who will feel its eloquent reasoning more forcibly in its native language, at the same time with the following translation of it: in which he has been desirous, perhaps, in vain, that all the warmth, the grace, the strength, the dignity of the original, should not be lost. And he flatters himself, that the indulgence of the illustrious historian will not be wanting to a man who, of his own motion, has taken the liberty to give this composition to the public, " only from a strong persuasion, that this momentous argument will be useful, in a critical conjuncture, to that country which he loves with an ardour that can be exceeded only by the nobler flame which burns in the bosom of the philanthropic author, for the freedom and happiness of all the countries upon earth."

This plausibility of setting off a dishonourable action, may pass for patriotism and sound principles with those who do not enter into its demerits, and whose interest is not injured, nor their happiness affected thereby. But it is more than probable, notwithstanding the declarations it contains, that the copy was obtained for the sake of profiting by the sale of a new and popular work, and that the professions are but a garb to the fraud.

It may, with propriety, be remarked, that in all countries where literature is protected, (and it never can flourish where it is not,) the works of an author are his legal property; and to treat letters in any other light than this, is to banish them from the country, or strangle them in the birth. The embezzlement from the Abbe Raynal was, it is true, committed by one country upon another, and therefore, shews no defect in the laws of either. But it is nevertheless a breach of civil manners and literary justice; neither can it be any apology, that because the

countries are at war, literature shall be entitled to depredation.*

But the forestalling the Abbe's publication by London editions, both in French and English, and thereby not only defrauding him, and throwing an expensive publication on his hands by anticipating the sale, are only the smaller injuries which such conduct may occasion. A man's opinions, whether written, or in thought, are his own until he pleases to publish them himself; and it is adding cruelty to injustice to make him the author of what future reflection or better information might occasion him to suppress or amend. There are declarations and sentiments in the Abbe's piece, which, for my own part, I did not expect to find, and such as himself, on a revisal, might have seen occasion to change, but the anticipated piracy effectually prevented him the opportunity, and precipitated him into difficulties which, had it not been for such ungenerous fraud, might not have happened.

This mode of making an author appear before his time, will appear still more ungenerous, when we consider how exceedingly few men there are in any country, who can at once, and without the aid of reflection and revisal, combine warm passions with a cool temper, and the full expansion of imagination,

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* The state of literature in America must one day become a subject of legislative consideration. Hitherto it hath been a disinterested volunteer in the service of the Revolution, and no man thought of profits; but when peace shall give time and opportunity for study, the country will deprive itself of the honour and service of letters, and the improvement of science, unless sufficient laws are made to prevent depredation on literary property. It is well worth remarking, that Russia, who, but a few years ago, was scarcely known in Europe, owes a large share of her present greatness to the close attention she has paid, and the wise encouragement she has given, to every branch of science and learning: and we have almost the same instance in France in the reign of Lewis XIV.

with the natural and necessary gravity of judgment, so as to be rightly balanced within themselves, and to make a reader feel, fancy, and understand justly, at the same time. To call three powers of the mind into action at once, in a manner that neither shall interrupt, and that each shall aid and vigorate the other, is a talent very rarely possessed.

It often happens, that the weight of an argument is lost by the wit of setting it off, or the judgment disordered by an intemperate irritation of the passions: yet a certain degree of animation must be felt by the writer, and raised in the reader, in order to interest the attention; and a sufficient scope given to the imagination, to enable it to create in the mind a sight of the persons, characters, and circumstances of the subject; for without these, the judgment will feel little or no excitement to office, and its determinations will be cold, sluggish, and imperfect. But if either or both of the two former are raised too high, or heated too much, the judgment will be jostled from its seat, and the whole matter, however important in itself, will diminish into a pantomime of the mind, in which we create images that promote no other purpose than amusement.

The Abbe's writings bear evident marks of that extension and rapidness of thinking, and quickness of sensation, which, of all others, require revisal, and the more particularly so, when applied to the living characters of Nations, or individuals in a state of war. The least misinformation or misconception leads to some wrong conclusion, and an error believed becomes the progenitor of others. And as the Abbe has suffered some inconveniences in France by mis-stating certain circumstances of the war, and the characters of the parties therein, it becomes some apology for him, that those errors were precipitated into the world by the avarice of an ungenerous enemy.

A

# LETTER,

*&c. &c.*

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To an Author of such distinguished reputation as the Abbe RAYNAL, it might very well become me to apologize for the present undertaking; but, as *to be right* is the first wish of philosophy, and the first principle of history, he will, I presume, accept from me a declaration of my motives, which are those of doing justice, in preference to any complimental apology I might otherwise make.—The Abbe, in the course of his work, has in some instances extolled, without a reason, and wounded without a cause. He has given fame where it was not deserved, and withheld it where it was justly due: and appears to be so frequently in and out of temper with his subjects and parties, that few or none of them are decisively and uniformly marked.

It is yet too soon to write the history of the Revolution; and whoever attempts it precipitately, will unavoidably mistake characters and circumstances, and involve himself in error and difficulty. Things, like men are seldom understood rightly at first sight. But the Abbe is wrong even in the foundation of his work; that is, he has misconceived and mis-stated the causes which produced the rupture between England and her then Colonies, and which led on, step by step, unstudied and uncontrived on the part of America, to a Revolution, which has engaged the attention, and affected the interest of Europe.

To prove this, I shall bring forward a passage, which, though placed towards the latter part of the Abbe's work, is more intimately connected with the beginning; and in which, speaking of the original cause of the dispute, he declares himself in the following manner—

"None," says he, "of those energetic causes, which

have produced so many Revolutions upon the globe, existed in North-America. Neither religion nor laws had there been outraged. The blood of martyrs or patriots had not there streamed from scaffolds. Morals had not there been insulted. Manners, customs, habits, no object dear to nations, had there been the sport of ridicule. Arbitrary power had not there torn any inhabitant from the arms of his family and his friends, to drag him to a dreary dungeon. Public order had not been there inverted. The principles of administration had not been changed there; and the maxims of government had there always remained the same. The whole question was reduced to the knowing whether the mother country had, or had not, a right to lay, directly or indirectly, a slight tax upon the Colonies."

On this extraordinary passage, it may not be improper, in general terms, to remark, that none can feel like those who suffer; and that for a man to be a competent judge of the provocative, or, as the Abbe styles them, the energetic causes of the Revolution, he must have resided in America.

The Abbe, in saying that the several particulars he has enumerated did not exist in America, and neglecting to point out the particular period in which he means they did not exist, reduces thereby his declaration to a nullity by taking away all meaning from the passage.

They did not exist in 1763, and they all existed before 1776; consequently, as there was a time when they did *not*, and another when they *did* exist, the *time when* constitutes the essence of the fact; and not to give it, is to withhold the only evidence, which proves the declaration right or wrong, and on which it must stand or fall. But the declaration, as it now appears, unaccompanied by time, has an effect in holding out to the world, that there was no real cause for the Revolution, because it denies the existence of all those causes which are supposed to be justifiable, and which the Abbe styles energetic.

I confess myself exceedingly at a loss to find out the time to which the Abbe alludes; because, in another part of the work, in speaking of the Stamp Act, which was passed in 1764, he styles it, "An *usurpation* of the Americans' *most precious and sacred rights.*" Consequently he here admits the most energetic of all causes, that is, *an usurpation of the most precious and sacred rights*, to have existed in America twelve years before the Declaration of Independence, and ten years before the breaking out of hostilities.—The time therefore, in which the paragraph is true, must be antece-

dent to the Stamp Act; but as at that time there was no Revolution, nor any idea of one, it consequently applies without a meaning; and as it cannot, on the Abbe's own principle, be applied to any time *after* the Stamp Act; it is therefore a wandering solitary paragraph, connected with nothing, and at variance with every thing.

The Stamp Act, it is true, was repealed in two years after it was passed; but it was immediately followed by one of infinitely more mischievous magnitude, I mean the Declaratory Act, which asserted the right, as it was styled, of the British Parliament, "*to bind America in all cases whatsoever.*

If, then, the Stamp Act was an "usurpation of the Americans' most precious and sacred rights," the Declaratory Act left them no rights at all; and contained the full grown seeds of the most despotic government that ever existed in the world. It placed America not only in the lowest, but in the basest state of vassalage; because it demanded an unconditional submission in every thing, or as the Act expresses it, *in all cases whatsoever;* and what renders this Act the more offensive, is that it appears to have been passed as an act of mercy; truly, then, it may be said, that *the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.*

All the original charters from the Crown of England, under the faith of which, the adventurers from the old world settled in the new, were by this act displaced from their foundations; because, contrary to the nature of them, which was that of a compact, they were now made subject to repeal or alteration, at the mere will of one party only. The whole condition of America was thus put into the hands of the Parliament of the Ministry, without leaving to her the least right in any case whatsoever.

There is no despotism to which this iniquitous law did not extend; and though it might have been convenient, in the execution of it, to have consulted manners and habits, the principle of the act made all tyranny legal. It stopped no where. It went to every thing. It took in with it the whole life of a man, or, if I may so express it, an eternity of circumstances. It is the nature of law to require obedience, but this demanded servitude; and the condition of an American, under the operation of it, was not that of a subject, but a vassal. Tyranny has often been established *without* law, and sometimes *against* it, but the history of mankind does not produce another instance in which it has been established *by* law. It is an audacious outrage upon

Civil Government, and cannot be too much exposed, in order to be sufficiently detected.

Neither could it be said after this, that the legislature of that country any longer made laws for this, but that it gave out commands; for wherein differed an Act of Parliament constructed on this principle, and operating in this manner, over an unrepresented people, from the orders of a military establishment?

The Parliament of England, with respect to America, was not septennial put *perpetual.* It appeared to the latter a body always in being. Its election or its expiration were to her the same as if its members succeeded by inheritance, or went out by death, or lived for ever, or were appointed to it as a matter of office. Therefore, for the people of England to have any just conception of the mind of America, respecting this extraordinary act, they must suppose all election and expiration in that country to cease for ever, and the present Parliament, its heirs, &c. to be perpetual; in this case, I ask, what would the most clamorous of them think, were an act to be passed, declaring the right of *such a Parliament* to bind *them* in all cases whatsoever? For this word *whatsoever* would go as effectually to their *Magna Charta, Bill of Rights, Trial by Juries,* &c. as it went to the charters and forms of government in America.

I am persuaded, that the Gentleman to whom I address these remarks, will not, after the passing this act, say, "That the *principals* of administration had not been *changed* in America, and that the maxims of government had there been *always the same.*" For here is, in principle, a total overthrow of the whole, and not a subversion only, but an annihilation of the foundation of liberty and absolute domination established in its stead.

The Abbe likewise states the case exceedingly wrong and injuriously, when he says, "that *the whole* question was reduced to the knowing whether the mother country had, or had not, a right to lay, directly or indirectly, a *slight* tax upon the Colonies." This was *not the whole* of the question; neither was the *quantity* of the tax the object, either to the Ministry, or to the Americans. It was the principle, of which the tax made but a part, and the quantity still less, that formed the ground on which America opposed.

The Tax on Tea, which is the tax here alluded to, was neither more or less than an experiment to establish the practice of the Declaratory Law upon; modelled into the more fashionable phrase *of the universal supremacy of Parliament.* For, until this time, the Declaratory Law had lain

dormant, and the framers of it had contented themselves with barely declaring an opinion.

Therefore, the *whole* question with America, in the opening of the dispute, was, shall we be bound in all cases whatsoever by the British Parliament, or shall we not? For submission to the Tea or Tax Act, implied an acknowledgement of the Declaratory Act, or, in other words, to the universal supremacy of Parliament, which, as they never intended to do, it was necessary they should oppose it in its first stage of execution.

It is probable the Abbe has been led into this mistake by perusing detached pieces in some of the American newspapers; for, in a case where all were interested, every one had a right to give his opinion; and there were many who, with the best intentions, did not choose the best, nor indeed the true ground, to defend their cause upon. They felt themselves right by a general impulse, without being able to separate, analyze, and arrange the parts.

I am somewhat unwilling to examine too minutely into the whole of this extraordinary passage of the Abbe, lest I should appear to treat it with severity; otherwise I could shew that not a single declaration is justly founded; for instance, the reviving an obsolete act of the reign of Henry the Eighth, and fitting it to the Americans, by authority of which they were to be seized and brought from America to England, and there imprisoned and tried for any supposed offences, was, in the worse sense of the words, *to tear them by the arbitrary power of Parliament from the arms of their families and friends, and drag them not only to dreary, but distant dungeons.* Yet this act was contrived some years before the breaking out of hostilities. And again, though the blood of martyrs and patriots had not streamed on the scaffolds, it streamed in the streets, in the massacre of the inhabitants of Boston, by the British soldiery, in the year 1770.

Had the Abbe said that the causes which produced the Revolution in America were originally *different* from those which produced Revolutions in other parts of the globe, he had been right. Here the value and quality of liberty, the nature of government, and the dignity of man were known and understood, and the attachment of the Americans to these principles produced the Revolution as a natural and almost unavoidable consequence. They had no particular family to set up or pull down. Nothing of personality was incorporated with their cause. They started even-

handed with each other, and went no faster into the several stages of it, than they were driven by the unrelenting and imperious conduct of Britain. Nay, in the last act, the Declaration of Independence, they had nearly been too late; for had it not been declared at the exact time it was, I have seen no period in their affairs since, in which it could have been declared with the same effect, and probably not at all.

But the object being formed before the reverse of fortune took place, that is before the operations of the gloomy campaign of 1776, their honour, their interest, their every thing, called loudly on them to maintain it, and that glow of thought, and energy of heart, which even a distant prospect of independence inspires, gave confidence to their hopes, and resolution to their conduct, which a state of dependence could never have reached. They looked forward to happier days and scenes of rest, and qualified the hardships of the campaign by contemplating the establishment of their new-born system.

If on the other hand, we take a review of what part Britain has acted, we shall find every thing which ought to make a nation blush. The most vulgar abuse, accompanied by that species of haughtiness, which distinguishes the hero of a mob from the character of a gentleman: it was equally as much from her manners, as from her injustice, that she lost the Colonies. By the latter she provoked their principles, by the former she wore out their temper; and it ought to be held out as an example to the world, to shew, how necessary it is to conduct the business of government with civility. In short other Revolutions may have originated in caprice, or generated in ambition; but here, the most unoffending humility was tortured into rage, and the infancy of existence made to weep.

An union so extensive, continued and determined, suffering with patience and never in despair, could not have been produced by common causes. It must be something capable of reaching the whole soul of man, and arming it with perpetual energy. In vain it is to look for precedents among the Revolutions of former ages, to find out, by comparison, the causes of this. The spring, the progress, the object, the consequences, nay the men, their habits of thinking, and all the circumstances of the country, are different. Those of other nations are, in general, little more than the history of their quarrels. They are marked by no important character in the annals of events; mixed in the mass of general matters they occupy but a common page; and while the

chief of the successful partizans stepped into power, the plundered multitude sat down and sorrowed. Few, very few of them are accompanied with reformation, either in government or manners; many of them with the most consummate profligacy. Triumph on the one side, and misery on the other, were the only events. Pains, punishments, torture, and death, were made the business of mankind, until compassion, the fairest associate of the heart, was driven from its place, and the eye, accustomed to continual cruelty, could behold it without offence.

But as the principles of the present Revolution differed from those which preceded it, so likewise has the conduct of America, both in government and war. Neither the foul finger of disgrace, nor the bloody hand of vengeance, has hitherto put a blot upon her fame. Her victories have received lustre from a greatness of lenity; and her laws been permitted to slumber, where they might justly have awakened to punish. War, so much the trade of the world, has here been only the business of necessity; and when the necessity shall cease, her very enemies must confess, that as she drew the sword in her just defence, she used it without cruelty, and sheathed it without revenge.

As it is not my design to extend these remarks to an history, I shall now take my leave of this passage of the Abbe, with an observation, which, until something unfolds itself to convince me otherwise, I cannot avoid believing to be true; —which is, that it was the first determination of the British Cabinet to quarrel with America at all events.

They, (the members who compose the Cabinet) had no doubt of success, if they could once bring it to the issue of a battle; and they expected from a conquest what they could neither propose with decency, nor hope for by negociation. The Charters and Constitutions of the Colonies were become to them matters of offence, and their rapid progress in property and population were disgustingly beheld as the growing and natural means of independence. They saw no way to retain them long, but by reducing them in time. A conquest would at once have made them both lords and landlords, and put them in possession both of the revenue and the rental. The whole trouble of government would have ceased in a victory, and a final end been put to remonstrance and debate. The experience of the Stamp Act had taught them how to quarrel with the advantages of cover and convenience, and they had nothing to do but to renew the scene, and put contention into motion. They hoped for a

rebellion, and they made one. They expected a Declaration of Independence, and they were not disappointed. But, after this, they looked for victory, and gained a defeat.

If this be taken as the generating cause of the contest, then is every part of the conduct of the British Ministry consistent, from the commencement of the dispute, until the signing the Treaty of Paris, after which, conquest becoming doubtful, they retreated to negociation, and were again defeated.

Though the Abbe possesses and displays great powers of genius, and is a master of style and language, he seems not to pay equal attention to the office of an historian. His facts are coldly and carelessly stated. They neither inform the reader, nor interest him. Many of them are erroneous, and most of them defective and obscure. It is undoubtedly both an ornament and an useful addition to history, to accompany it with maxims and reflections. They afford, likewise, an agreeable change to the style, and a more diversified manner of expression; but it is absolutely necessary that the root from whence they spring, or the foundation on which they are raised, should be well attended to, which in this work they are not. The Abbe hastens through his narrations as if he was glad to get from them, that he may enter the more copious field of eloquence and imagination.

The actions of Trenton and Princeton, in New Jersey, in December, 1776, and January following, on which the fate of America stood for a while, trembling on the point of suspense, and from which the most important consequences followed, are comprised within a single paragraph, faintly conceived, and barren of character, circumstance, and description.

"On the 25th of December," says the Abbe, "they (the Americans) crossed the Delaware, and fell, *accidentally*, upon Trenton, which was occupied by fifteen hundred of the twelve thousand Hessians, sold in so base a manner by their avaricious master, to the King of Great Britain. This corps was *massacred*, taken, or dispersed. Eight days after, three English regiments were, in like manner, driven from Princeton; but after having better supported their reputation than the foreign troops in their pay."

This is all the account which is given of these most interesting events. The Abbe has preceded them by two or three pages, on the military operations of both armies, from the time of General Howe arriving before New York, from Halifax, and the vast reinforcements of British and foreign

troops with Lord Howe from England. But in these there is so much mistake, and so many omissions, that, to set them right, must be the business of history, and not of a letter. The action of Long-Island is but barely hinted at; and the operations at the White Plains wholly omitted; as are likewise, the attack and loss of Fort Washington, with a garrison of about two thousand five hundred men, and the precipitate evacuation of Fort Lee, in consequence thereof; which losses were, in a great measure, the cause of the retreat through the Jerseys, to the Delaware, a distance of about ninety miles. Neither is the manner of the retreat described, which, from the season of the year, the nature of the country, the nearness of the two armies (sometimes within sight and shot of each other for such a length of way) the rear of the one employed in pulling down bridges, and the van of the other in building them up, must necessarily be accompanied with many interesting circumstances.

It was a period of distresses. A crisis rather of danger than of hope: there is no description can do it justice: and even the actors in it, looking back upon the scene, are surprised how they got through; and at a loss to account for those powers of the mind, and springs of animation, by which they withstood the force of accumulated misfortune.

It was expected, that the time for which the army was enlisted, would carry the campaign so far into winter, that the severity of the season, and the consequent condition of the roads, would prevent any material operation of the enemy, until the new army could be raised for the next year. And I mention it, as a matter worthy of attention by all future historians, that the movements of the American army, until the attack upon the Hessian post at Trenton, the 26th of December, are to be considered as operating to effect no other principal purpose than delay, and to wear away the campaign under all the disadvantages of an unequal force, with as little misfortune as possible.

But the loss of the garrison at Fort Washington, on the 16th of November, and the expiration of the time of a considerable part of the army, so early as the 30th of the same month, and which were to be followed by almost daily expirations afterwards, made retreat the only final expedient. To these circumstances, may be added, the forlorn and destitute condition of the few that remained; for the garrison at Fort Lee, which composed almost the whole of the retreat, had been obliged to abandon it so instantaneously, that every article of stores and baggage was left behind, and in

this destitute condition, without tent, or blanket, and without any other utensils to dress their provisions, than what they procured by the way, they performed a march of about ninety miles, and had the address and management to prolong it to the space of nineteen days.

By this unexpected, or rather, unthought-of turn of affairs, the country was in an instant, surprised into confusion, and found an enemy within its bowels, without an army to oppose him. There were no succours to be had, but from the free-will offering of the inhabitants. All was choice, and every man reasoned for himself.

It was in this situation of affairs, equally calculated to confound, or to inspire, that the gentleman, the merchant, the farmer, the tradesman, and the labourer, mutually turned out from all the conveniences of home, to perform the duties of private soldiers, and undergo the severities of a winter campaign. The delay, so judiciously contrived on the retreat, afforded time for the volunteer reinforcements to join General Washington on the Delaware.

The Abbe is likewise wrong in saying, that the American army fell, *accidentally*, on Trenton. It was the very object for which General Washington crossed the Delaware in the dead of night, and in the midst of snow, storms, and ice; and which he immediately re-crossed with his prisoners, as soon as he had accomplished his purpose. Neither was the intended enterprize a secret to the enemy, information having been sent of it, by letter, from a British Officer at Princeton, to Colonel Rolle, who commanded the Hessians at Trenton, which letter was afterwards found by the Americans. Nevertheless, the post was completely surprised. A small circumstance, which had the appearance of mistake on the part of the Americans, led to a more capital and real mistake on the part of Rolle.

The case was this: A detachment of twenty or thirty Americans had been sent across the river from a post, a few miles above, by an officer unacquanted with the intended attack; these were met by a body of Hessians on the night, to which the information pointed, which was Christmas night, and repulsed. Nothing further appearing, and the Hessians mistaking this for the advanced party, supposed the enterprise disconcerted, which at that time was not began, and under this idea returned to their quarters; so that, what might have raised an alarm, and brought the Americans into an ambuscade, served to take off the force of an information, and promote the success of the enterprise.

Soon after day-light General Washington entered the town, and after a little opposition, made himself master of it, with upwards of nine hundred prisoners.

This combination of equivocal circumstances, falling within what the Abbe styles "*the wide empire of change*," would have afforded a fine field for thought; and I wish for the sake of that elegance of reflection he is so capable of using, that he had known it.

But the action at Princeton was accompanied by a still greater embarrassment of matters, and followed by more extraordinary consequences. The Americans, by a happy stroke of generalship, in this instance, not only deranged and defeated all the plans of the British, in the intended moment of execution, but drew from their posts the enemy they were not able to drive, and obliged them to close the campaign. As the circumstance is a curiosity in war, and not well understood in Europe, I shall, as concisely as I can, relate the principal parts; they may serve to prevent future historians from error, and recover from forgetfulness a scene of magnificent fortitude.

Immediately after the surprise of the Hessians at Trenton, General Washington recrossed the Delaware, which at this place is about three quarters of a mile over, and re-assumed his former post on the Pennsylvania side. Trenton remained unoccupied, and the enemy were posted at Princeton, twelve miles distant, on the road towards New York. The weather was now growing very severe, and as there were very few houses near the shore where General Washington had taken his station, the greatest part of his army remained out in the woods and fields. These, with some other circumstances, induced the re-crossing the Delaware, and taking possession of Trenton. It was undoubtedly a bold adventure, and carried with it the appearance of defiance, especially when we consider the panic-struck condition of the enemy on the loss of the Hessian post. But, in order to give a just idea of the affair, it is necessary I should describe the place.

Trenton is situated on a rising ground, about three quarters of a mile distant from the Delaware, on the eastern or Jersey side; and is cut into two divisions by a small creek or rivulet, sufficient to turn a mill which is on it, after which it empties itself at nearly right angles into the Delaware. The upper division, which is to the north-east, contains about seventy or eighty houses, and the lower, about forty or fifty. The ground on each side of this creek, and on which the houses are, is likewise rising, and the two divi-

sions present an agreeable prospect to each other, with the creek between, on which there is a small stone bridge of one arch.

Scarcely had General Washington taken post here, and before the several parties of militia, out on detachments, or on their way, could be collected, than the British, leaving behind them a strong garrison at Princeton, marched suddenly, and entered Trenton at the upper or north-east quarter. A party of the Americans skirmished with the advanced party of the British, to afford time for removing the stores and baggage, and withdrawing over the bridge.

In a little time the British had possession of one half of the town, General Washington of the other, and the creek only separated the two armies. Nothing could be a more critical situation than this; and if ever the fate of America depended upon the event of a day, it was now. The Delaware was filling fast with large sheets of driving ice, and was impassable, so that no retreat into Pennsylvania could be effected, neither is it possible, in the face of an enemy, to pass a river of such extent. The roads were broken and rugged with the frost, and the main road was occupied by the enemy.

About four o'clock a party of the British approached the bridge, with a design to gain it, but were repulsed. They made no more attempts, though the creek is passable any where between the bridge and the Delaware. It runs in a rugged natural-made ditch, over which a person may pass with little difficulty, the stream being rapid and shallow. Evening was now coming on, and the British, believing they had all the advantages they could wish for, and that they could use them when they pleased, discontinued all further operations, and held themselves prepared to make the attack next morning.

But the next morning produced a scene, as elegant as it was unexpected. The British were under arms and ready to march to action, when one of their light-horse from Princeton came furiously down the street, with an account that General Washington had that morning attacked and carried the British post at that place, and was proceeding on to seize the magazine at Brunswick; on which the British, who were then on the point of making an assault on the evacuated camp of the Americans, wheeled about, and in a fit of consternation marched for Princeton.

This retreat is one of those extraordinary circumstances that in future ages may probably pass for fable. For it will

with difficulty be believed that two armies, on which such important consequences depended, should be crowded into so small a space as Trenton; and that the one, on the eve of an engagement, when every ear is supposed to be open, and every watchfulness employed, should move completely from the ground, with all its stores, baggage and artillery, unknown and even unsuspected by the other. And so entirely were the British deceived, that when they heard the report of the cannon and small arms at Princeton, they supposed it to be thunder, though in the depth of winter.

General Washington, the better to cover and disguise his retreat from Trenton, had ordered a line of fires to be lighted up in front of his camp. These not only served to give an appearance of going to rest, and continuing that deception, but they effectually concealed from the British whatever was acting behind them, for flame can no more be seen through than a wall, and in this situation, it may with some propriety be said, they became a pillar of fire to the one army, and a pillar of cloud to the other: after this, by a circuitous march of about eighteen miles, the Americans reached Princeton early in the morning.

The number of prisoners taken were between two and three hundred, with which General Washington immediately set off. The van of the British army from Trenton, entered Princeton about an hour after the Americans had left it, who, continuing their march for the remainder of the day, arrived in the evening at a convenient situation, wide of the main road to Brunswick, and about sixteen miles distant from Princeton. But so wearied and exhausted were they, with the continual and unabated service and fatigue of two days and a night, from action to action, without shelter and almost without refreshment, that the bare and frozen ground, with no other covering than the sky, became to them a place of comfortable rest. By these two events, and with but little comparative force to accomplish them, the Americans closed with advantage, a campaign, which but a few days before threatened the country with destruction. The British army, apprehensive for the safety of their magazines at Brunswick, eighteen miles distant, marched immediately for that place, where they arrived late in the evening, and from which they made no attempts to move for nearly five months.

Having thus stated the principal outlines of these two most interesting actions, I shall now quit them, to put the Abbe right in his mis-stated account of the debt and paper

money of America, wherein, speaking of these matters, he says.

"These ideal riches were rejected. The more the multiplication of them was urged by want, the greater did their depreciation grow. The Congress was indignant at the affronts given to its money, and declared all those to be traitors to their country who should not receive it as they would have received gold itself.

"Did not this body know, that possessions are no more to be controuled than feelings are? Did it not perceive, that in the present crisis, every rational man would be afraid of exposing his fortune? Did it not see, that in the beginning of a republic it permitted to itself the exercise of such acts of despotism as are unknown even in the countries which are moulded to, and become familiar with servitude and oppression? Could it pretend that it did not punish a want of confidence with the pains which would have been scarcely merited by revolt and treason? Of all this was the Congress well aware. But it had no choice of means. Its despised and despicable scraps of paper were actually thirty times below their original value, when more of them were ordered to be made. On the 13th of September 1779, there was of this paper money, amongst the public, to the amount of £35,544,155. The State owed moreover £8,385,356, without reckoning the particular debts of single provinces."

In the above-recited passages, the Abbe speaks as if the United States had contracted a debt of upwards of forty millions of pounds sterling, besides the debts of individual States. After which, speaking of foreign trade with America, he says, that "those countries in Europe, which are truly commercial ones, knowing that North America had been reduced to contract debts at the epoch of even her greatest prosperity, wisely thought, that in her present distress, she would be able to pay but very little, for what might be carried to her."

I know it must be extremely difficult to make foreigners understand the nature and circumtances of our paper money, because there are natives who do not understand it themselves. But with us its fate is now determined. Common consent has consigned it to rest with that kind of regard which the long service of inanimate things insensibly obtains from mankind. Every stone in the bridge, that has carried us over, seems to have a claim upon our esteem. But this was a corner-stone, and its usefulness cannot be forgotten. There is something in a grateful mind, which ex-

tends itself even to things that can neither be benefited by regard, nor suffer by neglect: But so it is; and almost every man is sensible of the effect.

But to return. The paper money, though issued from Congress under the name of dollars, did not come from that body always at that value. Those which were issued the first year were equal to gold and silver. The second year less; the third still less; and so on, for nearly the space of five years; at the end of which, I imagine, that the whole value at which Congress might pay away the several emissions, taking them together, was about ten or twelve millions of pounds sterling.

Now, as it would have taken ten or twelve millions sterling of taxes to carry on the war for five years, and, as while this money was issuing and likewise depreciating down to nothing, there were none, or few valuable taxes paid; consequently, the event to the public was the same, whether they sunk ten or twelve millions of expended money, by depreciation, or paid ten or twelve millions by taxation; for as they did not do both, and chose to do one, the matter, in a general view, was indifferent. And, therefore, what the Abbe supposes to be a debt, has now no existence; it having been paid, by every body consenting to reduce it, at his own expence, from the value of the bills continually passing among themselves, a sum equal to nearly what the expence of the war was for five years.

Again.—The paper money having now ceased, and the depreciation with it, and gold and silver supplied its place, the war will now be carried on by taxation, which will draw from the public a considerable less sum than what the depreciation drew; but as, while they pay the former, they do not suffer the latter, and as, when they suffered the latter, they did not pay the former, the thing will be nearly equal, with this moral advantage, that taxation occasions frugality and thought, and depreciation produced dissipation and carelessness.

And again.—If a man's portion of taxes comes to less than what he lost by the depreciation, it proves the alteration is in his favour. If it comes to more, and he is justly assessed, it shews that he did not sustain his proper share of depreciation, because the one was as operatively his tax as the other.

It is true, that it never was intended, neither was it foreseen that the debt contained in the paper currency should sink itself in this manner; but as by the voluntary conduct

of all and of every one it is arrived at this fate, the debt is paid by those who owed it. Perhaps nothing was ever so universally the act of a country as this. Government had no hand in it. Every man depreciated his own money by his own consent, for such was the effect which the raising the nominal value of goods produced. But as by such reduction he sustained a loss equal to what he must have paid to sink it by taxation, therefore the line of justice is to consider his loss by the depreciation as his tax for that time, and not to tax him when the war is over, to make that money good in any other person's hands, which became nothing in his own.

Again—The paper currency was issued for the express purpose of carrying on the war. It has performed that service, without any other material charge to the public, while it lasted. But to suppose, as some did, that at the end of the war, it was to grow into gold and silver, or become equal thereto, was to suppose that we were to *get* two hundred millions of dollars by *going to war*, instead of *paying* the cost of carrying it on.

But if any thing in the situation of America, as to her currency or her circumstances, yet remains not understood; then let it be remembered, that this war is the public's war; the people's war; the country's war. It is *their* independence that is to be supported; *their* property that is to be secured; *their* country that is to be saved. Here government, the army, and the people, are mutually and reciprocally one. In other wars, kings may lose their thrones and their dominions; but here, the loss must fall on the *majesty of the multitude*, and the property they are contending to save. Every man being sensible of this, he goes to the field, or pays his portion of the charge as the sovereign of his own possessions; and when he is conquered a monarch falls.

The remark which the Abbe, in the conclusion of the passage, has made respecting America contracting debts in the time of her prosperity (by which he means, before the breaking out of hostilities), serves to shew, though he has not made the application, the very great commercial difference between a dependent and an independent country. In a state of dependence, and with a fettered commerce, though with all the advantages of peace, her trade could not balance itself, and she annually run into debt. But now, in a state of independence, though involved in war, she requires no credit; her stores are full of merchandise, and gold and silver are become the currency of the country. How

these things have established themselves, it is difficult to account for: but they are facts, and facts are more powerful than arguments.

As it is probable this letter will undergo a republication in Europe, the remarks here thrown together will serve to shew the extreme folly of Britain, in resting her hopes of success on the extinction of our paper currency. The expectation is at once so childish and forlorn, that it places her in the laughable condition of a famished lion watching for prey at a spider's web.

From this account of the currency, the Abbe proceeds to state the condition of America in the winter 1777, and the spring following; and closes his observations with mentioning the treaty of alliance, which was signed in France, and the propositions of the British Ministry, which were rejected in America. But in the manner in which the Abbe has arranged his facts, there is a very material error, that not only he, but other European historians, have fallen into: none of them have assigned the true cause why the British proposals were rejected, and all of them have assigned a wrong one.

In the winter of 1777, and the spring following, Congress were assembled at York-town in Pennsylvania, the British were in possession of Philadelphia, and General Washington with the army were encamped in huts at the Valley-Forge, twenty-five miles distant therefrom. To all who can remember it, it was a season of hardship, but not of despair; and the Abbe, speaking of this period and its inconveniences, says,

"A multitude of privations, added to so many other misfortunes, might make the Americans regret their former tranquillity, and incline them to an accommodation with England. In vain, had the people been bound to the new government, by the sacredness of oaths, and the influence of religion. In vain, had endeavours been used to convince them, that it was impossible to treat safely, with a country, in which one Parliament might overturn what should have been established by another. In vain, had they been threatened with the eternal resentment of an exasperated and vindictive enemy. It was possible that these distant troubles might not be balanced by the weight of present evils.

"So thought the British Ministry, when they sent to the New World, public agents, authorised to offer every thing, except independence, to these very Americans, from whom they had, two years before, exacted an unconditional sub-

mission. It is not improbable but that, by this plan of conciliation a few months sooner, some effect might have been produced. But at the period at which it was proposed by the Court of London, it was rejected with disdain, because this method appeared but as an argument of fear and wickedness. The people were already re-assured. The Congress, the Generals, the troops, the bold and skilful men in each colony, had possessed themselves of the authority; every thing had recovered its first spirit. *This was the effect of a treaty of friendship and commerce between the United States and the Court of Versailles, signed the 6th of February*, 1778."

On this passage of the Abbe's I cannot help remarking, that, to unite time with circumstance, is a material nicety in history, the want of which, frequently throws it into endless confusion and mistake, occasions a total separation between causes and consequences, and connects them with others they are not immediately, and, sometimes, not at all related to.

The Abbe, in saying that the offers of the British Ministry "were rejected with disdain," is *right* as to the *fact*, but *wrong* as to the *time;* and the error in the time has occasioned him to be mistaken in the cause.

The signing the treaty of Paris the 6th of February, 1778, could have no effect on the mind or politics of America until it was *known in America;* and, therefore, when the Abbe says, that the rejection of the British offers was in consequence of the alliance, he must mean, that it was in consequence of the alliance *being known* in America, which was not the case: and, by this mistake, he not only takes from her the reputation which her unshaken fortitude, in that trying situation, deserves, but is likewise led very injuriously to suppose that had she *not known* of the treaty, the offers would probably have been accepted; whereas, she knew nothing of the treaty at the time of the rejection, and, consequently, did not reject them on that ground.

The propositions or offers above-mentioned, were contained in two bills, brought into the British Parliament by Lord North, on the 17th of February, 1778. Those bills were hurried through both Houses with unusual haste; and before they had gone through all the customary forms of Parliament, copies of them were sent over to Lord Howe, and General Howe, then in Philadelphia, who were likewise Commissioners. General Howe ordered them to be printed in Philadelphia, and sent copies of them, by a flag, to Gene-

ral Washington, to be forwarded to Congress, at York Town, where they arrived the 21st of April, 1778. Thus much for the arrival of the bills in America.

Congress, as is their usual mode, appointed a committee from their own body to examine them, and report thereon. The report was brought in the next day, (the twenty-second) was read, and unanimously agreed to, entered on their journals, and published for the information of the country. Now this report must be the rejection to which the Abbe alludes, because Congress gave no other formal opinion on those bills and propositions: and on a subsequent application from the British Commissioners, dated the 27th of May, and received at York Town the 6th of June, Congress immediately referred them for answer to their printed resolves of the 22d of April. Thus much for the rejection of the offers.

On the 2d of May, that is, eleven days after the above rejection was made, the treaty between the United States and France arrived at York Town, and, until this moment, Congress had not the least notice or idea that such a measure was in any train of execution. But lest this declaration of mine should pass only for assertion, I shall support it by proof, for it is material to the character and principle of the Revolution, to shew, that no condition of America, since the Declaration of Independence, however trying and severe, ever operated to produce the most distant idea of yielding it up, either by force, distress, artifice, or persuasion. And this proof is the more necessary, because it was the system of the British Ministry, at this time, as well as before, and since, to hold out to the European powers, that America was unfixed in her resolutions and policy; hoping, by this artifice, to lessen her reputation in Europe, and weaken the confidence which those powers, or any of them, might be inclined to place in her.

At the time these matters were transacting, I was Secretary to the Foreign Department of Congress. All the political letters from the American Commissioners, rested in my hands, and all that were officially written, went from my office: and so far from Congress knowing any thing of the signing the treaty, at the time they rejected the British offers they had not received a line of information from their Commissioners at Paris on any subject whatever for upwards of a twelvemonth. Probably, the loss of the port of Philadelphia, and the navigation of the Delaware, together

with the danger of the seas, covered, at this time, with British cruizers, contributed to the disappointment.

One packet, it is true, arrived at York Town in January preceding, which was about three months before the arrival of the treaty; but, strange as it may appear, every letter had been taken out, before it was put on board the vessel which brought it from France, and blank white paper put in their stead.

Having thus stated the time when the proposals from the British Commissioners were first received, and likewise the time when the treaty of alliance arrived, and shewn that the rejection of the former was eleven days prior to the arrival of the latter, and without the least knowledge of such circumstance having taken place, or being about to take place; the rejection, therefore, must, and ought to be attributed to the first unvaried sentiments of America respecting the enemy she is at war with, and her determination to support her independence to the last possible effort, and not to any new circumstance in her favour, which, at that time, she did not, and could not know of.

Besides, there is a vigour of determination, and spirit of defiance, in the language of the rejection, (which I here subjoin) which derive their greatest glory by appearing before the treaty was known; for that which is bravery in distress becomes insult in prosperity. And the treaty placed America on such a strong foundation, that had she then known it, the answer which she gave would have appeared rather as an air of triumph than as the glowing serenity of fortitude.

Upon the whole, the Abbe appears to have entirely mistaken the matter; for instead of attributing the rejection of the propositions, to our knowledge of the treaty of alliance, he should have attributed the origin of them in the British Cabinet to their knowledge of that event. And then the reason why they were hurried over to America, in the state of bills, that is, before they were passed into acts, is easily accounted for; which is, that they might have the chance of reaching America before any knowledge of the treaty should arrive, which they were lucky enough to do, and there met the fate they so richly merited. That these bills were brought into the British Parliament, after the treaty with France was signed, is proved from the dates: the treaty being on the 6th, and the bills on the 17th of February. And that the signing the treaty was known in Parliament,

when the bills were brought in, is likewise proved by a speech of Mr. Charles Fox on the said 17th of February, who, in reply to Lord North, informed the House of the treaty being signed, and challenged the Minister's knowledge of the same fact.*

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* *In Congress, April 22d,* 1778.

" The Committee to whom was referred the General's letter of the 18th, containing a certain printed paper sent from Philadelphia, purporting to be the draught of a Bill for declaring the intentions of the Parliament of Great Britain, as to the exercise of what they are pleased to term their right of imposing taxes within these United States; and also the draught of a Bill to enable the King of Great Britain to appoint Commissioners, with powers to treat, consult, and agree upon the means of quieting certain disorders within the said States, beg leave to observe,

" That the said paper being industriously circulated by emissaries of the enemy, in a partial and secret manner, the same ought to be forthwith printed for the public information.

" The Committee cannot ascertain whether the contents of the said paper have been framed in Philadelphia or in Great Britain, much less whether the same are really and truly intended to be brought into the Parliament of that kingdom, or whether the said Parliament will confer thereon the usual solemnities of their laws. But are inclined to believe this will happen, for the following reasons:—

" 1st. Because their General hath made divers feeble efforts to set on foot some kind of treaty during the last winter, though either from a mistaken idea of his own dignity and importance, the want of information, or some other cause, he hath not made application to those who are invested with proper authority.

" 2dly. Because they suppose that the fallacious idea of a cessation of hostilities will render these States remiss in their preparations of war.

" 3dly. Because believing the Americans wearied with war, they suppose we will accede to the terms for the sake of peace.

" 4thly. Because they suppose that our negociations may be subject to a like corrupt influence with their debates.

" 5thly. Because they expect from this step the same effects they did from what one of their Ministers thought proper to call his *conciliatory motion*, viz. that it will prevent foreign powers from giving aid to these States; that it will lead their own subjects to continue a little longer the present war; and that it will detach some weak men in America from the cause of freedom and virtue.

" 6thly. Because their King, from his own shewing, hath reason

Though I am not surprised to see the Abbe mistaken in matters of history, acted at so great a distance from his

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to apprehend that his fleets and armies, instead of being employed against the territories of these States, will be necessary for the defence of his own dominions. And,

" 7thly. Because the impracticability of subjugating this country, being every day more and more manifest, it is their interest to extricate themselves from the war upon any terms.

" The Committee beg leave further to observe, That, upon a supposition, the matters contained on the said paper will really go into the British Statute Book, they serve to shew, in a clear point of view, the weakness and wickedness of the enemy.

" THEIR WEAKNESS.

" 1st. Because they formerly declared, not only that they had a right to bind the inhabitants of these States in all cases whatsoever, but also, that the said inhabitants should *absolutely* and *unconditionally* submit to the exercise of that right. And this submission they have endeavoured to exact by the sword. Receding from this claim, therefore, under the present circumstances, shews their inability to enforce it.

" 2dly. Because their Prince hath heretofore rejected the humblest petitions of the Representatives of America, praying to be considered as subjects, and protected in the enjoyment of peace, liberty, and safety; and hath waged a most cruel war against them, and employed the savages to butcher innocent women and children. But now the same Prince pretends to treat with those very Representatives, and grant to the arms of America what he refused to her prayers.

" 3dly. Because they have uniformly laboured to conquer this Continent, rejecting every idea of accommodation proposed to them from a confidence in their own strength. Wherefore it is evident, from the change in their mode of attack, that they have lost this confidence. And,

" 4thly. Because the constant language, spoken not only by their Ministers, but by the most public and authentic act of the nation, hath been, that it is incompatible with their dignity to treat with the Americans while they have arms in their hands. Notwithstanding which, an offer is now about to be made for treaty.

" The wickedness and insincerity of the enemy appear from the following considerations:—

" 1st. Either the bills now to be passed contain a direct or indirect cession of a part of their former claims, or they do not. If they do, then it is acknowledged that they have sacrificed many brave men in an unjust quarrel. If they do not, then they are calculated to deceive America into terms, to which neither argument before the war, nor force since, could procure her assent.

" 2dly. The first of these bills appears, from the title, to be a

sphere of immediate observation, yet I am more than surprised to find him wrong, (or, at least, what appears so to

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declaration of the intentions of the British Parliament concerning the exercise of the right of imposing taxes within these States. Wherefore, should these States treat under the said Bill, they would indirectly acknowledge that right, to obtain which acknowledgment the present war hath been avowedly undertaken and prosecuted on the part of Great Britain.

"3dly. Should such pretended right be so acquiesced in, then of consequence the same might be exercised whenever the British Parliament should find themselves in a different temper and disposition; since it must depend upon those, and such like contingencies, how far men will act according to their former intentions.

"4thly. The said first Bill, in the body thereof, containeth no new matter, but is precisely the same with the motion before mentioned, and liable to all the objections which lay against the said motion, excepting the following particular, viz. that by the motion, actual taxation was to be suspended, so long as America should give as much as the said Parliament might think proper: whereas, by the proposed Bill, it is to be suspended as long as future Parliaments continue of the same mind with the present.

"5thly. From the second Bill it appears, that the British King may, if he pleases, appoint Commissioners to treat and agree with those whom they please, about a variety of things therein mentioned. But such treaties and agreements are to be of no validity without the concurrence of the said Parliament, except so far as they relate to the suspension of hostilities, and of certain of their acts, the granting of pardons, and the appointment of Governors to these Sovereign, free, and independent States. Wherefore, the said Parliament have reserved to themselves in express words, the power of setting aside any such treaty, and taking the advantage of any circumstances which may arise to subject this Continent to their usurpations.

"6thly. The said Bill, by holding forth a tender of pardon, implies a criminality in our justifiable resistance, and consequently, to treat under it, would be an implied acknowledgment, that the inhabitants of these States were, what Britain has declared them to be—Rebels.

"7thly. The inhabitants of these States being claimed by them as subjects, they may infer from the nature of the negociation now pretended to be set on foot, that the said inhabitants would of right be afterwards bound by such laws as they should make. Wherefore any agreement entered into on such negociation might at any future time be repealed. And,

"8thly. Because the said Bill purports, that the Commissioners therein mentioned may treat with private individuals; a measure highly derogatory to the dignity of the national character.

me) in the well-enlightened field of philosophical reflection. Here the materials are his own; created by himself; and the error, therefore, is an act of the mind. Hitherto, my remarks have been confined to circumstances; the order in which they arose, and the events they produced, In these, my information being better than the Abbe's my task was easy. How I may succeed in controverting matters of sen-

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"From all which it appears evident to your Committee, that the said Bills are intended to operate upon the hopes and fears of the good people of these States, so as to create divisions among them, and a defection from the common cause, now by the blessing of Divine Providence drawing near to a favourable issue. That they are the sequel of that insidious plan, which, from the days of the Stamp Act down to the present time, hath involved this country in contention and bloodshed. And that as in other cases so in this, although circumstances may force them at times to recede from their unjustifiable claims, there can be no doubt but they will as heretofore, upon the first favourable occasion, again display that lust of domination, which hath rent in twain the mighty empire of Britain.

"Upon the whole matter, the Committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, That the Americans united in this arduous contest upon principles of common interest, for the defence of common rights and privileges, which union hath been cemented by common calamities, and by mutual good offices and affection, so the great cause for which they contend, and in which all mankind are interested, must derive its success from the continuance of that union. Wherefore any man or body of men, who should presume to make any separate or partial convention or agreement with Commissioners under the Crown of Great Britain, or any of them, ought to be considered and treated as open and avowed enemies of these United States.

"And further, your Committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, That these United States cannot, with propriety, hold any conference or treaty with any Commissioners on the part of Great Britain, unless they shall, as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and admirals, or else, in positive or express terms, acknowledge the independence of the said States.

"And inasmuch as it appears to be the design of the enemies of these States to lull them into a fatal security—to the end that they may act with a becoming weight and importance, it is the opinion of your Committee, That the several States be called upon to use the most strenuous exertions to have their respective quotas of Continental troops in the field as soon as possible, and that all the militia of the said States be held in readiness, to act as occasion may require."

timent and opinion, with one whom years, experience, and long established reputation have placed in a superior line, I am less confident in; but as they fall within the scope of my observations, it would be improper to pass them over.

From this part of the Abbe's work to the latter end, I find several expressions which appear to me to start, with a cynical complexion, from the path of liberal thinking; or at least, they are so involved, as to lose many of the beauties which distinguish other parts of the performance.

The Abbe having brought his work to the period when the treaty of alliance between France, and the United States commenced, proceeds to make some remarks thereon.

"In short," says he, "philosophy, whose first sentiment is the desire to see all governments just, and all people happy, in casting her eyes upon this alliance of a monarchy, with a people who are defending their liberty, *is curious to know its motive. She sees, at once, too clearly, that the happiness of mankind has no part in it.*"

Whatever train of thinking or of temper the Abbe might

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*The following is the Answer of Congress to the second Application of the Commissioners.*

YORK TOWN, June 6, 1778.

"SIR,

"I HAVE had the honour of laying your Letter of the 3d instant, with the acts of the British Parliament, which came inclosed, before Congress; and I am instructed to acquaint you, Sir, that they have already expressed their sentiments upon bills not essentially different from those acts, in a publication of the 22d of April last.

"Be assured, Sir, when the King of Great Britain shall be seriously disposed to put an end to the unprovoked and cruel war waged against these United States, Congress will readily attend to such terms of peace, as may consist with the honour of independent nations, the interest of their constituents, and the sacred regard they mean to pay to treaties. I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient, and
most humble servant,

HENRY LAURENS,
President of Congress."

"His Excellency,
"Sir Henry Clinton, K. B. Philadelphia.

be in, when he penned this expression, matters not. They will neither qualify the sentiment, nor add to its defect. If right, it needs no apology; if wrong, it merits no excuse. It is sent into the world as an opinion of philosophy, and may be examined without regard to the author.

It seems to be a defect, connected with ingenuity, that it often employs itself more in matters of curiosity than usefulness. Man must be the privy counsellor of fate, or something is not right. He must know the springs, the whys and wherefores of every thing, or he sits down unsatisfied. Whether this be a crime, or only a caprice of humanity, I am not enquiring into. I shall take the passage as I find it, and place my objection against it.

It is not so properly the *motives* which *produced* the alliance, as the *consequences* which are to be *produced from it*, that mark out the field of philosophical reflection. In the one we only penetrate into the barren cave of secresy, where little can be known, and every thing may be misconceived; in the other, the mind is presented with a wide extended prospect of vegetative good, and sees a thousand blessings budding into existence.

But the expression, even within the compass of the Abbe's meaning, sets out with an error, because it is made to declare that, which no man has authority to declare. Who can say that the happiness of mankind made *no part of the motives* which produced the alliance? To be able to declare this, a man must be possessed of the mind of all the parties concerned, and know that their motives were something else.

In proportion as the independence of America became contemplated and understood, the local advantages of it to the immediate actors, and the numerous benefits it promised to mankind, appeared to be every day increasing, and we saw not a temporary good for the present race only, but a continued good to all posterity; these motives, therefore, added to those which preceded them, became the motives, on the part of America, which led her to propose and agree to the treaty of alliance, as the best effectual method of extending and securing happiness; and therefore, with respect to us, the Abbe is wrong.

France, on the other hand, was situated very differently to America. She was not acted upon by necessity to seek a friend, and therefore her motive in becoming one, has the strongest evidence of being good, and that which is so, must have some happiness for its object. With regard to herself

she saw a train of conveniences worthy her attention. By lessening the power of an enemy, whom, at the same time she sought neither to destroy nor distress, she gained an advantage without doing an evil, and created to herself a new friend by associating with a country in misfortune. The springs of thought that lead to actions of this kind, however political they may be, are nevertheless naturally beneficent; for in all causes, good or bad, it is necessary there should be a fitness in the mind, to enable it to act in character with the object: Therefore, as a bad cause cannot be prosecuted with a good motive, so neither can a good cause be long supported by a bad one, as no man acts without a motive, therefore, in the present instance, as they cannot be bad, they must be admitted to be good. But the Abbe sets out upon such an extended scale, that he overlooks the degrees by which it is measured, and rejects the beginning of good, because the end comes not at once.

It is true that bad motives may in some degree be brought to support a good cause, or prosecute a good object; but it never continues long, which is not the case with France; for either the object will reform the mind, or the mind corrupt the object, or else, not being able, either way, to go into unison, they will separate in disgust: And this natural, though unperceived progress of association or contention between the mind and the object, is the secret cause of fidelity or defection. Every object a man pursues is, for the time, a kind of mistress to his mind: if both are good, or bad, the union is natural; but if they are in reverse, and neither can seduce nor yet reform the other, the opposition grows into dislike, and a separation follows.

When the cause of America first made her appearance on the stage of the universe, there were many who, in the style of adventurers and fortune-hunters, were dangling in her train and making their court to her with every profession of honour and attachment. They were loud in her praise and ostentatious in her service. Every place echoed with their ardour or their anger, and they seemed like men in love.—But, alas! they were fortune-hunters. Their expectations were excited, but their minds were unimpressed; and finding her not to their purpose, nor themselves reformed by her influence, they ceased their suit, and in some instances deserted and betrayed her.

There were others, who at first beheld her with indifference and unacquainted with her character were cautious of her company. They treated her as one, who, under the

fair name of liberty, might conceal the hideous figure of anarchy, or the gloomy monster of tyranny. They knew not what she was. If fair, she was fair indeed. But still she was suspected, and though born among us appeared to be a stranger.

Accident with some, and curiosity with others, brought on a distant acquaintance. They ventured to look at her. They felt an inclination to speak to her. One intimacy led to another, till the suspicion wore away, and a change of sentiment stole gradually upon the mind; and having no self-interest to serve, no passion of dishonour to gratify, they became enamoured of her innocence, and unaltered by misfortune, or uninflamed by success, shared with fidelity in the varieties of her fate.

This declaration of the Abbe's, respecting motives, has led me unintendedly into a train of metaphysical reasoning; but there was no other avenue by which it could so properly be approached. To place presumption against presumption, assertion against assertion, is a mode of opposition that has no effect; and therefore the more eligible method was, to shew that the declaration does not correspond with the natural progress of the mind, and the influence it has upon our conduct. I shall now quit this part, and proceed to what I have before stated, namely, that it is not so properly the motives which produced the alliance, as the consequences to be produced from it, that mark out the field of philosophical reflections.

It is an observation I have already made in some former publication, that the circle of civilization is yet incomplete. A mutuality of wants has formed the individuals of each country into a kind of national society; and here the progress of civilization has stopped. For it is easy to see, that nations with regard to each other (notwithstanding the ideal civil law, which every one explains as it suits him), are like individuals in a state of nature. They are regulated by no fixed principle, governed by no compulsive law, and each does independently what it pleases, or what it can.

Were it possible we could have known the world when in a state of barbarism, we might have concluded, that it never could be brought into the order we now see it. The untamed mind was then as hard, if not harder to work upon in its individual state, than the national mind is in its present one. Yet we have seen the accomplishment of the one, why then should we doubt that of the other?

There is a greater fitness in mankind to extend and com-

plete the civilization of nations with each other at this day, than there was to begin it with the unconnected individuals at first; in the same manner that it is somewhat easier to put together the materials of a machine after they are formed, than it was to form them from original matter. The present condition of the world differing so exceedingly from what it formerly was, has given a new cast to the mind of man, more than what he appears to be sensible of. The wants of the individual, which first produced the idea of society, are now augmented into the wants of the nation, and he is obliged to seek from another country what before he sought from the next person.

Letters, the tongue of the world, have in some measure brought all mankind acquainted, and, by an extension of their uses, are every day promoting some new friendship. Through them distant nations become capable of conversation, and losing by degrees the awkwardness of strangers, and the moroseness of suspicion, they learn to know and understand each other. Science, the partizan of no country, but the beneficent patroness of all, has liberally opened a temple where all may meet. Her influence on the mind, like the sun on the chilled earth, has long been preparing it for higher cultivation and further improvement. The philosopher of one country sees not an enemy in the philosopher of another: he takes his seat in the temple of science, and asks not who sits beside him.

This was not the condition of the barbarian world. Then the wants of man were few, and the objects within its reach. While he could acquire these, he lived in a state of individual independence, the consequence of which was, there was as many nations as persons, each contending with the other, to secure something which he had, or to obtain something which he had not. The world had then no business to follow, no studies to exercise the mind. Their time were divided between sloth and fatigue. Hunting, and war, were their chief occupations; sleep and food their principal enjoyments.

Now, it is otherwise. A change in the mode of life has made it necessary to be busy; and man finds a thousand things to do now, which before he did not. Instead of placing his idea of greatness in the rude achievements of the savage, he studies arts, science, agriculture, and commerce; the refinements of the gentleman, the principles of society, and the knowledge of the philosopher.

There are many things which, in themselves, are morally,

neither good nor bad, but they are productive of consequences, which are strongly marked with one or other of these characters. Thus commerce, though, in itself, a moral nullity, has had a considerable influence in tempering the human mind. It was the want of objects, in the ancient world, which occasioned in them, such a rude and perpetual turn for war. Their time hung on their hands without the means of employment. The indolence they lived in afforded leisure for mischief, and being all idle at once, and equal in their circumstances, they were easily provoked, or induced to action.

But the introduction of commerce furnished the world with objects, which in their extent, reach every man, and give him something to think about, and something to do; by these, his attention is mechanically drawn from the pursuits which a state of indolence, and an unemployed mind occasioned; and he trades with the same countries, which former ages, tempted by their productions, and too indolent to purchase them, would have gone to war with.

Thus, as I have already observed, the condition of the world being materially changed by the influence of science and commerce, it is put into fitness, not only to admit of, but to desire an extension of civilization. The principal, and almost only remaining enemy it now has to encounter, is, *Prejudice;* for it is evidently the interest of mankind to agree, and make the best of life. The world has undergone its divisions of empire, the several boundaries of which are known and settled. The idea of conquering countries, like the Greeks and Romans, does not now exist; and experience has exploded the notion of going to war for the sake of profit. In short, the objects for war are exceedingly diminished, and there is now left scarcely any thing to quarrel about, but what arises from that demon of society, Prejudice, and the consequent sullenness and untractableness of the temper.

There is something exceedingly curious in the constitution and operation of Prejudice. It has the singular ability of accommodating itself to all the possible varieties of the human mind. Some passions and vices are but thinly scattered among mankind, and find only here and there a fitness of reception. But Prejudice, like the spider, makes every where its home. It has neither taste nor choice of place, and all that it requires is room. There is scarcely a situation, except fire or water, in which a spider will not live. So, let the mind be as naked as the walls of an empty and

forsaken tenement, gloomy as a dungeon, or ornamented with the richest abilities of thinking; let it be hot, cold, dark, or light; lonely or inhabited, still Prejudice, if undisturbed, will fill it with cobwebs, and live, like the spider, where there seems nothing to live on. If the one prepares her food by poisoning it to her palate and her use, the other does the same; and as several of our passions are strongly characterred by the animal world, Prejudice may be denominated the spider of the mind.

Perhaps no two events ever united so intimately and forcibly to combat and expel Prejudice, as the revolution of America, and the alliance with France. Their effects are felt, and their influence already extends, as well to the old world as the new. Our style and manner of thinking have undergone a revolution more extraordinary than the political revolution of the country. We see with other eyes; we hear with other ears; and think with other thoughts than those we formerly used. We can look back on our own prejudices as if they had been the prejudices of other people. We now see and know they were prejudices, and nothing else; and relieved from their shackles, enjoy a freedom of mind we felt not before. It was not all the argument, however powerful, nor all the reasoning, however elegant, that could have produced this change, so necessary to the extension of the mind, and the cordiality of the world, without the two circumstances of the revolution and the alliance.

Had America dropped quietly from Britain, no material change in sentiment had taken place. The same notions, prejudices, and conceits, would have governed in both countries as governed them before; and, still the slaves of error and education, they would have travelled on in the beaten tract of vulgar and habitual thinking. But brought about by the means it has been, both with regard to ourselves, to France, and to England, every corner of the mind is swept of its cobwebs, poison, and dust, and made fit for the reception of generous happiness.

Perhaps there never was an alliance on a broader basis than that between America and France, and the progress of it is worth attending to. The countries had been enemies, not properly of themselves, but through the medium of England. They, originally, had no quarrel with each other, nor any cause for one, but what arose from the interest of England, and her arming America against France. At the same time, the Americans, at a distance from, and unacquainted with the world, and tutored in all the prejudices

which governed those who governed them, conceived it their duty to act as they were taught. In doing this, they expended their substance to make conquests, not for themselves, but for their masters, who, in return, treated them as slaves.

A long succession of insolent severity, and the separation finally occasioned by the commencement of hostilities at Lexington, on the 19th of April, 1775, naturally produced a new disposition of thinking. As the mind closed itself towards England, it opened itself towards the world; and our prejudices, like our oppressions, underwent, though less observed, a mental examination; until we found the former as inconsistent with reason and benevolence as the latter were repugnant to our civil and political rights.

While we were thus advancing, by degrees, into the wide field of extended humanity, the alliance with France was concluded; an alliance not formed for the mere purpose of a day, but on just and generous grounds, and with equal and mutual advantages; and the easy, affectionate manner in which the parties have since communicated, has made it an alliance, not of courts only, but of countries. There is now an union of mind as well as of interest; and our hearts, as well as our prosperity, call on us to support it.

The people of England, not having experienced this change, and, likewise no idea of it, they were hugging to their bosoms the same prejudices we were trampling beneath our feet; and they expected to keep a hold upon America by that narrowness of thinking which America disdained. What they were proud of, we despised; and this is a principle cause why all their negociations, constructed on this ground, have failed. We are now, really another people, and cannot again go back to ignorance and prejudice. The mind once enlightened, cannot again become dark. There is no possibility, neither is there any term, to express the supposition by, of the mind unknowing any thing it already knows; and, therefore, all attempts on the part of England, fitted to the former habit of America, and on the expectation of their applying now, will be like persuading a seeing man to become blind, and a sensible one to turn an idiot. The first of which is unnatural, and the other impossible.

As to the remark, which the Abbe makes, of the one country being a monarchy, and the other a republic, it can have no essential meaning. Forms of government have nothing

to do with treaties. The former, are the internal police of the countries severally; the latter, their external police jointly: and so long as each performs its part, we have no more right or business to know how the one or the other conducts its domestic affairs, than we have to enquire into the private concerns of a family.

But had the Abbe reflected for a moment, he would have seen, that courts, or the governing powers of all countries, be their forms what they may, are, relatively, republics with each other. It is the first, and true principle of alliancing. Antiquity may have given precedence, and power will naturally create importance, but their equal right is never disputed. It may likewise be worthy of remarking, that a monarchical country can suffer nothing in its popular happiness, by allying with a republican one; and republican governments have never been destroyed by their external connexions, but by some internal convulsion or contrivance. France has been in alliance with the republic of Switzerland for more than two hundred years, and still Switzerland retains her original form as entire, as if she had allied with a republic like herself; therefore, this remark of the Abbe goes to nothing. Besides, it is best that mankind should mix. There is ever something to learn, either of manners, or principle; and it is by a free communication, without regard to domestic matters, that friendship is to be extended, and prejudice destroyed all over the world.

But, notwithstanding the Abbe's high professions in favour of liberty, he appears sometimes to forget himself, or that his theory is rather the child of his fancy, than of his judgment; for, in almost the same instant that he censures the alliance as not originally, or sufficiently calculated for the happiness of mankind, he, by a figure of implication, accuses France for having acted so generously and unreservedly in concluding it. "Why did they," says he, meaning the court of France, "tie themselves down, by an inconsiderate treaty, to conditions with the Congress, which they might themselves have held in dependence, by ample and regular supplies."

When an author undertakes to treat of public happiness, he ought to be certain that he does not mistake passion for right, nor imagination for principle. Principle, like truth, needs no contrivance. It will ever tell its own tale, and tell it the same way. But where this is not the case, every page must be watched, recollected, and compared, like an invented story.

I am surprised at this passage of the Abbe. It means nothing; or, it means ill; and, in any case, it shews the great difference between speculative and practical knowledge. A treaty, according to the Abbe's language, would have neither duration, nor affection; it might have lasted to the end of the war, and then expired with it. But France, by acting in a style superior to the little politics of narrow thinking, has established a generous fame, and with the love of a country she was before a stranger to. She had to treat with a people who thought as nature taught them; and, on her own part, she wisely saw there was no present advantage to be obtained by unequal terms, which could balance the more lasting ones that might flow from a kind and generous beginning.

From this part the Abbe advances into the secret transactions of the two Cabinets of Versailles and Madrid, respecting the independence of America; through which I mean not to follow him. It is a circumstance sufficiently striking, without being commented on, that the former union of America with Britain produced a power, which, in her hands, was becoming dangerous to the world: and there is no improbability in supposing, that, had the latter known as much of the strength of the former before she began the quarrel, as she has known since, that instead of attempting to reduce her to unconditional submission, she would have proposed to her the conquest of Mexico. But from the countries separately, Spain has nothing to apprehend, though from their union she had more to fear than any other power in Europe.

The part which I shall more particularly confine myself to, is that wherein the Abbe takes an opportunity of complimenting the British Ministry with high encomiums of admiration, on their rejecting the offered mediation of the Court of Madrid, in 1779.

It must be remembered, that before Spain joined France in the war, she undertook the office of a Mediator, and made proposals to the British King and Ministry so exceedingly favourable to their interest, that had they been accepted, would have become inconvenient, if not inadmissible, to America. These proposals were nevertheless rejected by the British Cabinet: on which the Abbe says ——

"It is in such a circumstance as this; it is in the time when noble pride elevates the soul superior to all terror; when nothing is seen more dreadful than the shame of receiving the law, and when there is no doubt or hesitation

which to choose between ruin and dishonour; it is then, that the greatness of a nation is displayed. I acknowledge, however, that men accustomed to judge of things by the event, call great and perilous resolutions, heroism or madness, according to the good or bad success with which they have been attended. If then, I should be asked what is the name which shall, in years to come, be given to the firmness which was in this moment exhibited by the English, I shall answer, that I do not know. But that which it deserves I know. I know that the annals of the world hold out to us but rarely the august and majestic spectacle of a nation, which chooses rather to renounce its duration than its glory."

In this paragraph the conception is lofty, and the expression elegant; but the colouring is too high for the original, and the likeness fails through an excess of graces. To fit the powers of thinking and the turn of language to the subject, so as to bring out a clear conclusion that shall hit the point in question, and nothing else, is the true criterion of writing. But the greater part of the Abbe's writings (if he will pardon me the remark) appear to me uncentral, and burthened with variety. They represent a beautiful wilderness without paths; in which the eye is diverted by every thing, without being particularly directed to any thing; and in which it is agreeable to be lost, and difficult to find the way out.

Before I offer any other remark on the spirit and composition of the above passage, I shall compare it with the circumstance it alludes to.

The circumstance, then, does not deserve the encomium. The rejection was not prompted by her fortitude, but her vanity. She did not view it as a case of despair, or even of extreme danger, and consequently the determination to renounce her duration rather than her glory, cannot apply to the condition of her mind. She had then high expectations of subjugating America, and had no other naval force against her than France; neither was she certain that rejecting the mediation of Spain would combine that power with France. New mediations might arise more favourable than those she had refused. But if they should not, and Spain should join, she still saw that it would only bring out her naval force against France and Spain, which was not wanted, and could not be employed against America; and habits of thinking had taught her to believe herself superior to both.

But in any case to which the consequence might point, there was nothing to impress her with the idea of renouncing her duration. It is not the policy of Europe to suffer the extinction of any power, but only to lop off, or prevent its dangerous increase. She was likewise freed by situation from the internal and immediate horrors of invasion; was rolling in dissipation, and looking for conquests; and though she suffered nothing but the expence of war, she still had a greedy eye to magnificent reimbursement.

But if the Abbe is delighted with high and striking singularities of character, he might, in America, have found ample field for encomium. Here was a people who could not know what part the world would take for or against them; and who were venturing on an untried scheme, in opposition to a power, against which more formidable nations had failed. They had every thing to learn but the principles which supported them, and every thing to procure that was necessary for their defence. They have at times seen themselves as low as distress could make them, without shewing the least stagger in their fortitude; and been raised again by the most unexpected events, without discovering an unmanly discomposure of joy. To hesitate or to despair, are conditions equally unknown in America. Her mind was prepared for every thing, because her original and final resolution of succeeding or perishing, included all possible circumstances.

The rejection of the British propositions in the year 1778, circumstanced as America was at that time, is a far greater instance of unshaken fortitude than the refusal of the Spanish mediation by the Court of London: and other historians besides the Abbe, struck with the vastness of her conduct therein, have, like himself, attributed it to a circumstance which was then unknown, the alliance with France. Their error shews the idea of its greatness; because, in order to account for it, they have sought a cause suited to its magnitude, without knowing that the cause existed in the principles of the country.*

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* Extract from "*A short Review of the present Reign,*" in England. *Page* 45, *in the New Annual Register for the year* 1780.

"The Commissioners, who, in consequence of Lord North's Conciliatory Bills, went over to America, to propose terms of

But this passionate encomium of the Abbe is deservedly subject to moral and philosophical objections. It is the effusion of wild thinking, and has a tendency to prevent that humanity of reflection which the criminal conduct of Britain enjoins on her as a duty.—It is a laudanum to courtly iniquity.—It keeps in intoxicated sleep the conscience of the nation; and more mischief is affected by wrapping up guilt in splendid excuse, than by directly patronizing it.

Britain is now the only country which holds the world in disturbance and war; and instead of paying compliments to the excess of her crimes, the Abbe would have appeared much more in character, had he put to her, or to her monarch, this serious question :—

Are there not miseries enough in the world, too difficult to be encountered, and too pointed to be borne, without studying to enlarge the list, and arming it with new destruction? Is life so very long, that it is necessary, nay even a duty, to shake the sand, and hasten out the period of duration? Is the path so elegantly smooth, so decked on every side, and carpeted with joys, that wretchedness is wanted to enrich it as a soil? Go ask thine aching heart, when sorrow from a thousand causes wound it; go, ask thy sickened self, when every medicine fails, whether this be the case or not?

Quitting my remarks on this head, I proceed to another, in which the Abbe has let loose a vein of ill-nature, and what is still worse, of injustice.

After cavilling at the treaty, he goes on to characterize the several parties combined in the war.—"Is it possible," says the Abbe, "that a strict union should long subsist amongst confederates of characters so opposite as the hasty, light, disdainful Frenchman, the jealous, haughty, sly, slow, circumspective Spaniard, and the American, who is secretly

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peace to the Colonies were wholly unsuccessful. The concessions which formerly would have been received with the utmost gratitude, were rejected with disdain. Now was the time of American pride and haughtiness. It is probable, however, that it was not pride and haughtiness alone that dictated the Resolutions of Congress, but a distrust of the sincerity of the offers of Britain, a determination not to give up their independence, and ABOVE ALL THE ENGAGEMENTS INTO WHICH THEY HAD ENTERED BY THEIR LATE TREATY WITH FRANCE."

snatching looks at the mother country, and would rejoice, were they compatible with his independence, at the disasters of his allies?"

To draw foolish portraits of each other, is a mode of attack and reprisal, which the greater part of mankind are fond of indulging. The serious philosopher should be above it, more especially in cases from which no possible good can arise, and mischief may, and where no received provocation can palliate the offence. The Abbe might have invented a difference of character for every country in the world, and they in return might find others for him, till in the war of wit all real character is lost. The pleasantry of one nation or the gravity of another, may, by a little pencilling, be distorted into whimsical features, and the painter become as much laughed at as the painting.

But why did not the Abbe look a little deeper, and bring forth the excellences of the several parties? Why did he not dwell with pleasure on that greatness of character, that superiority of heart, which has marked the conduct of France in her conquests, and which has forced an acknowledgment even from Britain?

There is one line, at least, (and many others might be discovered) in which the confederates unite, which is, that of a rival eminence in their treatment of their enemies. Spain, in her conquest of Minorca and the Bahama Islands confirms this remark. America has been invariable in her lenity from the beginning of the war, notwithstanding the high provocations she has experienced. It is England only who has been insolent and cruel.

But why must America be charged with a crime undeserved by her conduct, more so by her principles, and which, if a fact, would be fatal to her honour? I mean that of want of attachment to her allies, or rejoicing in their disasters. She, it is true, has been assiduous in shewing to the world that she was not the aggressor towards England; that the quarrel was not of her seeking, or, at that time, even of her wishing. But to draw inferences from her candour, and even from her justification, to stab her character by, and I see nothing else from which they can be supposed to be drawn, is unkind and unjust.

Does her rejection of the British propositions in 1778, before she knew of any alliance with France, correspond with the Abbe's description of her mind? Does a single instance of her conduct since that time justify it?—But there is still better evidence to apply to, which is, that

of all the mails which at different times have been way-laid on the road in divers parts of America, and taken and carried into New York, and from which the most secret and confidential private letters, as well as those from authority, have been published, not one of them, I repeat it, not a single one of them gives countenance to such a charge.

This is not a country where men are under government restraint in speaking; and if there is any kind of restraint, it arises from a fear of popular resentment. Now, if nothing in her private or public correspondence favours such a suggestion, and if the general disposition of the country is such as to make it unsafe for a man to shew an appearance of joy at any disaster to her ally, on what grounds, I ask, can the accusation stand? What company the Abbe may have kept in France we cannot know; but this we know, that the account he gives does not apply to America.

Had the Abbe been in America at the time the news arrived of the disaster of the fleet under Count de Grasse, in the West Indies, he would have seen his vast mistake. Neither do I remember any instance, except the loss of Charlestown, in which the public mind suffered more severe and pungent concern, or underwent more agitations of hope and apprehension, as to the truth or falsehood of the report. Had the loss been all our own, it could not have had a deeper effect, yet it was not one of these cases which reached to the independence of America.

In the geographical account which the Abbe gives of the Thirteen States, he is so exceedingly erroneous, that to attempt a particular refutation, would exceed the limits I have prescribed to myself. And as it is a matter neither political, historical, nor sentimental, and which can always be contradicted by the extent and natural circumstances of the country, I shall pass it over, with this additional remark, that I never yet saw an European description of America that was true, neither can any person gain a just idea of it, but by coming to it.

Though I have already extended this letter beyond what I at first proposed, I am, nevertheless, obliged to omit many observations I originally designed to have made. I wish there had been no occasion for making any. But the wrong ideas which the Abbe's work had a tendency to excite, and the prejudicial impressions they might make, must be an apology for my remarks, and the freedom with which they are done.

I observe the Abbe has made a sort of epitome of a consi-

derable part of the pamphlet COMMON SENSE, and introduced it in that form into his publication. But there are other places where the Abbe has borrowed freely from the same pamphlet, without acknowledging it. The difference between Society and Government, with which the pamphlet opens, is taken from it, and in some expressions almost literally, into the Abbe's work, as if originally his own; and through the whole of the Abbe's remarks on this head, the idea in Common Sense is so closely copied and pursued, that the difference is only in words, and in the arrangement of the thoughts, and not in the thoughts themselves*.

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| * COMMON SENSE. | ABBE RAYNAL. |
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| "Some writers have so confounded Society with Government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. | "Care must be taken not to confound together Society with Government. That they may be known distinctly, their origin should be considered. |
| "Society is produced by our wants, and Governments by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness positively, by uniting our affections; the latter negatively, by restraining our vices." | "Society originates in the wants of men, Government in their vices. Society tends always to good; Government ought always to tend to the repressing of evil." |

*In the following paragraph there is less likeness in the language, but the ideas in the one are evidently copied from the other.*

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| "In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of Government, let us suppose a small number of persons meeting in some sequestered part of the earth unconnected with the rest; they will then represent the peopling of any country or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, Society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto. The strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is | "Man, thrown as it were by chance upon the globe, surrounded by all the evils of nature, obliged continually to defend and protect his life against the storms and tempests of the air, against the inundations of water, against the fire of volcanoes, against the intemperance of frigid and torrid zones, against the sterility of the earth, which refuses him aliment; or its baneful fecundity, which makes poison spring up beneath his feet; in short, against the claws and teeth of |

But as it is time I should come to a conclusion of my letter, I shall forbear all further observations on the Abbe's

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COMMON SENSE.

soon obliged to seek assistance of another, who, in his turn, requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness; but one man might labour out the common period of life, without accomplishing any thing: when he had felled his timber he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger, in the mean time, would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way. Disease, nay, even misfortune, would be death; for though neither might be immediately mortal, yet either of them would disable him from living and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.—Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would form our newly arrived emigrants into Society, the reciprocal blessings of which would supersede and render the obligations of law and Government unnecessary, while they remained perfectly just to each other. But as nothing but Heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen, that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other, and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of Government to supply the defect of moral virtue,"

ABBE RAYNAL.

savage beasts, who dispute with him his habitation and his prey, and attacking his person, seem resolved to render themselves rulers of this globe, of which he thinks himself to be the master. Man, in this state, alone and abandoned to himself, could do nothing for his preservation. It was necessary, therefore, that he should unite himself, and associate with his like, in order to bring together their strength and intelligence in common stock. It is by this union that he has triumphed over so many evils, that he has fashioned this globe to his use, restrained the rivers, subjugated the seas, insured his subsistence, conquered a part of the animals in obliging them to serve him, and driven others far from his empire to the depth of deserts or of woods, where their number diminishes from age to age. What a man alone would not have been able to effect, men have executed in concert; and altogether they preserve their work. ——Such is the origin, such the advantages, and the end of Society.—Government owes its birth to the necessity of preventing and repressing the injuries which the associated individuals had to fear from one another. It is the centinel who watches, in order that the common labours be not disturbed."

work, and take a concise view of the state of public affairs, since the time in which that performance was published.

A mind habited to actions of meanness and injustice, commits them without reflection, or with a very partial one; for on what other ground than this can we account for the declaration of war against the Dutch? To gain an idea of the politics which actuated the British Ministry to this measure, we must enter into the opinion which they and the English in general had formed of the temper of the Dutch nation; and from thence infer what their expectation of the consequence would be.

Could they have imagined that Holland would have seriously made a common cause with France, Spain, and America, the British Ministry would never have dared to provoke them. It would have been a madness in politics to have done so, unless their views were to hasten on a period of such emphatic distress, as should justify the concessions which they saw they must one day or other make to the world, and for which they wanted an apology to themselves. There is a temper in some men which seeks a pretence for submission. Like a ship disabled in action, and unfitted to continue it, it waits the approach of a still larger one to strike to, and feels relief at the opportunity. Whether this is greatness or littleness of mind, I am not inquiring into. I should suppose it to be the latter, because it proceeds from the want of knowing how to bear misfortune in its original state.

But the consequent conduct of the British Cabinet has shewn that this was not their plan of politics, and consequently, their motives must be sought for in another line.

The truth is, that the British had formed a very humble opinion of the Dutch nation. They looked on them as a people who would submit to any thing; that they might insult them as they liked, plunder them as they pleased, and still the Dutch dared not to be provoked.

If this be taken as the opinion of the British Cabinet, the measure is easily accounted for, because it goes on the supposition, that when, by a declaration of hostilities, they had robbed the Dutch of some millions sterling, (and to rob them was popular) they could make peace with them again whenever they pleased, and on almost any terms the British Ministry should propose. And no sooner was the plundering committed, than the accommodation was set on foot, and failed.

When once the mind loses the sense of its own dignity, it loses, likewise, the ability of judging of it in another. And the American war has thrown Britain into such a variety of absurd situations, that arguing from herself, she sees not in what conduct national dignity consists in other countries. From Holland she expected duplicity and submission, and this mistake arose from her having acted, in a number of instances, during the present war, the same character herself.

To be allied to or connected with Britain, seems to be an unsafe and impolitic situation. Holland and America are instances of the reality of this remark. Make those countries the allies of France or Spain, and Britain will court them with civility, and treat them with respect; make them her own allies, and she will insult and plunder them. In the first case, she feels some apprehensions at offending them, because they have support at hand; in the latter, those apprehensions do not exist. Such, however, has hitherto been her conduct.

Another measure which has taken place since the publication of the Abbe's work, and likewise since the time of my beginning this letter, is the change in the British Ministry. What line the new cabinet will pursue respecting America, is at this time unknown; neither is it very material, unless they are seriously disposed to a general and honourabe peace.

Repeated experience has shewn, not only the impracticability of conquering America, but the still higher impossibility of conquering her mind, or recalling her back to her former condition of thinking. Since the commencement of the war, which is now approaching to eight years, thousands, and tens of thousands, have advanced, and are daily advancing into the first state of manhood, who know nothing of Britain but as a barbarous enemy, and to whom the independence of America appears as much the natural and established government of the country, as that of England does to an Englishman. And on the other hand, thousands of the aged, who had British ideas, have dropped, and are daily dropping from the stage of business and life. The natural progress of generation and decay, operates every hour to the disadvantage of Britain. Time and death, hard enemies to contend with, fight constantly against her interest; and the bills of mortality, in every part of America, are the thermometers of her decline. The children in the streets, are, from their cradle, bred to consider her as their only foe. They hear of her cruelties; of their fathers,

uncles, and kindred killed; they see the remains of burnt and destroyed houses, and the common tradition of the school they go to, tells them *those things were done by the British.*

These are circumstances which the mere English state-politician, who considers man only in a state of manhood, does not attend to. He gets entangled with parties coeval or equal with himself at home, and thinks not how fast the rising generation in America is growing beyond his knowledge of them, or they of him. In a few years, all personal remembrance will be lost, and who is King or Minister in England, will be little known, and scarcely enquired after.

The new British Administration is composed of persons who have ever been against the war, and who have constantly reprobated all the violent measures of the former one. They considered the American war as destructive to themselves, and opposed it on that ground. But what are these things to America? She has nothing to do with English parties. The Ins and the Outs are nothing to her. It is the whole country she is at war with, or must be at peace with.

Were every minister in England a *Chatham*, it would now weigh little or nothing in the scale of American politics. Death has preserved to the memory of this Statesman, *that fame*, which he, by living, would have lost. His plans and opinions, towards the latter part of his life, would have been attended with as many evil consequences, and as much reprobated here, as those of Lord North; and considering him a wise man, they abound with inconsistencies amounting to absurdities.

It has, apparently, been the fault of many in the late minority, to suppose, that America would agree to certain terms with them, were they in place, which she would not ever listen to from the then administration. This idea can answer no other purpose than to prolong the war; and Britain may, at the expence of many more millions, learn the fatality of such mistakes. If the new ministry wisely avoid this hopeless policy, they will prove themselves better pilots, and wiser men than they are conceived to be; for it is every day expected to see their bark strike upon some hidden rock and go to pieces.

But there is a line in which they may be great. A more brilliant opening needs not to present itself; and it is such an one, as true magnanimity would improve, and humanity rejoice in.

A total reformation is wanted in England. She wants an expanded mind—an heart which embraces the universe. Instead of shutting herself up in an island, and quarrelling with the world, she would derive more lasting happiness, and acquire more real riches, by generously mixing with it, and bravely saying, I am the enemy of none. It is not now a time for little contrivances, or artful politics. The European world is too experienced to be imposed upon, and America too wise to be duped. It must be something new and masterly that must succeed. The idea of seducing America from her independence, or corrupting her from her alliance, is a thought too little for a great mind, and impossible for any honest one to attempt. Whenever politics are applied to debauch mankind from their integrity, and dissolve the virtues of human nature, they become detestable, and to be a statesman upon this plan, is to be a commissioned villain. He who aims at it, leaves a vacancy in his character, which may be filled up with the worst of epithets.

If the disposition of England should be such, as not to agree to a general and honourable peace, and that the war must, at all events, continue longer, I cannot help wishing that the alliances which America has or may enter into, may become the only objects of the war. She wants an opportunity of shewing to the world, that she holds her honour as dear and sacred as her independence, and that she will, in no situation, forsake those, whom no negociations could induce to forsake her. Peace to every reflective mind is a desirable object; but that peace which is accompanied with a ruined character, becomes a crime to the seducer, and a curse upon the seduced.

But where is the impossibility, or even the great difficulty, of England forming a friendship with France and Spain, and making it a national virtue to renounce for ever those prejudiced inveteracies it has been her custom to cherish; and which, while they serve to sink her with an increasing enormity of debt, by involving her in fruitless wars, become likewise, the bane of her repose, and the destruction of her manners. We had once the fetters that she has now, but experience has shewn us the mistake, and thinking justly has set us right.

The true idea of a great nation, is, that which extends and promotes the principles of universal society; whose mind rises above the atmosphere of local thoughts, and considers mankind, of whatever nation or profession they may be, as the work of one Creator. The rage for conquest has had its

fashion and its day. Why may not the amiable virtues have the same? The Alexanders and Cæsars of antiquity, have left behind them their monuments of destruction, and are remembered with hatred; while these more exalted characters, who first taught society and science, are blessed with the gratitude of every age and country. Of more use was one philosopher, though a heathen, to the world, than all the heathen conquerors that ever existed.

Should the present revolution be distinguished by opening a new system of extended civilization, it will receive from heaven the highest evidence of approbation; and as this is a subject to which the Abbe's powers are so eminently suited, I recommend it to his attention, with the affection of a friend, and the ardour of an universal citizen.

# POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE closing the foregoing letter, some intimations respecting a general peace, have made their way to America. On what authority or foundation they stand, or how near, or how remote such an event may be, are circumstances, I am not enquiring into. But as the subject must, sooner or later, become a matter of serious attention, it may not be improper, even at this early period, candidly to investigate some points that are connected with it, or lead towards it.

The independence of America is at this moment, as firmly established as that of any other country in a state of war. It is not length of time, but power, that gives stability. Nations at war, know nothing of each other on the score of antiquity. It is their present and immediate strength, together with their connections, that must support them. To which we may add, that a right which originated to-day, is as much a right, as if it had the sanction of a thousand years; and, therefore, the independence and present government of America are in no more danger of being subverted, because they are modern, than that of England is secure, because it is ancient.

The politics of Britain, so far as they respected America, were originally conceived in idiotism, and acted in madness. There is not a step which bears the smallest trace of rationality. In her management of the war, she has laboured to be wretched, and studied to be hated; and in all her former propositions for accommodation, she has discovered a total ignorance of mankind, and of those natural and unalterable sensations by which they are so generally governed. How she may conduct herself in the present or future business of negociating a peace is yet to be proved.

He is a weak politician who does not understand human nature, and penetrate into the effect which measures of government will have upon the mind. All the miscarriages of Britain have arisen from this defect. The former ministry acted as if they supposed mankind to be *without a mind;* and

the present ministry, as if America was *without a memory.* The one must have supposed we were incapable of feeling; and the other that we could not remember injuries.

There is likewise another line in which politicians mistake, which is that of not rightly calculating, or rather of misjudging, the consequence which any given circumstance will produce. Nothing is more frequent, as well in common as in political life, than to hear people complain, that such and such means produced an event directly contrary to their intentions. But the fault lies in their not judging rightly what the event would be; for the means produced only their proper and natural consequences.

It is very probable, that in a treaty of peace, Britain will contend for some post or other in North America; perhaps Canada or Halifax, or both: and I infer this from the known deficiency of her politics, which have ever yet made use of means, whose natural event was against both her interest and her expectation. But the question with her ought to be, Whether it is worth her while to hold them, and what will be the consequence?

Respecting Canada, one or other of the two following will take place, viz. If Canada should people, it will revolt, and if it do not people, it will not be worth the expence of holding. And the same may be said of Halifax, and the country round it. But Canada *never will* people; neither is there any occasion for contrivances on one side or the other, for nature alone will do the whole.

Britain may put herself to great expence in sending settlers to Canada; but the descendants of those settlers will be Americans, as other descendants have been before them. They will look round and see the neighbouring States sovereign and free, respected abroad, and trading at large with the world; and the natural love of liberty, the advantages of commerce, the blessings of independence, and of a happier climate, and a richer soil, will draw them southward, and the effect will be, that Britain will sustain the expence, and America reap the advantage.

One would think that the experience which Britain has had of America, would entirely sicken her of all thoughts of Continental colonization; and any part which she might retain, would only become to her a field of jealousy and thorns, of debate and contention, for ever struggling for privileges, and meditating revolt. She may form new settlements, but they will be for us; they will become part of the United States of America; and that against all her contrivances to

prevent it, or without any endeavours of ours to promote it. In the first place, she cannot draw from them a revenue until they are able to pay one, and when they are so, they will be above subjection. Men soon become attached to the soil they live upon, and incorporated with the prosperity of the place; and it signifies but little, what opinions they come over with, for time, interest, and new connections, will render them obsolete, and the next generation know nothing of them.

Were Britain truly wise she would lay hold of the present opportunity, to disentangle herself from all Continental embarrassments in North America, and that not only to avoid future broils and troubles, but to save expences. For to speak explicitly on the matter, I would not, were I an European power, have Canada, under the conditions that Britain must retain it could it be given to me. It is one of those kind of dominions that is, and ever will be, a constant charge upon any foreign holder.

As to Halifax, it will become useless to England after the present war, and the loss of the United States. A harbour, when the dominion is gone, for the purpose of which only it was wanted, can be attended only with expence. There are, I doubt not, thousands of people in England, who suppose, that those places are a profit to the nation, whereas, they are directly the contrary, and instead of producing any revenue, a considerable part of the revenue of England is annually drawn off, to support the expence of holding them.

Gibraltar is another instance of national ill-policy. A post which, in time of peace, is not wanted, and in time of war, is of no use, must, at all times, be useless. Instead of affording protection to a navy, it requires the aid of one to maintain it. And to suppose that Gibraltar commands the Mediterranean, or the pass into it, or the trade of it, is to suppose a detected falsehood; because, though Britain holds the post, she has lost the other three, and every benefit she expected from it. And to say that all this happens because it is besieged by land and water, is to say nothing, for this will always be the case in time of war, while France and Spain keep up superior fleets, and Britain holds the place. So that, though as an impenetrable, inaccessible rock, it may be held by the one, it is always in the power of the other to render it useless, and excessively chargeable.

I should suppose that one of the principal objects of Spain in besieging it, is to shew to Britain, that though she may

not take it, she can command it, that is, she can shut it up, and prevent its being used as a harbour, though not as a garrison.—But the short way to reduce Gibraltar is to attack the British fleet; for Gibraltar is as dependent on a fleet for support, as a bird is on its wings for food, and when wounded there, it starves.

There is another circumstance which the people of England have not only not attended to, but seem to be utterly ignorant of, and that is, the difference between permanent power, and accidental power, considered in a national sense.

By permanent power, I mean, a natural, inherent, and perpetual ability in a nation, which, though always in being, may not be always in action, or not always advantageously directed; and by accidental power, I mean, a fortunate or accidental disposition or exercise of national strength in whole or in part.

There undoubtedly was a time when any one European nation, with only eight or ten ships of war, equal to the present ships of the line, could have carried terror to all others, who had not began to build a navy, however great their natural ability might be for that purpose. But this can be considered only as accidental, and not as a standard to compare permanent power by, and could last no longer than until those powers built as many or more ships than the former. After this, a larger fleet was necessary, in order to be superior; and a still larger would again supersede it. And thus mankind have gone on, building fleet upon fleet, as occasion or situation dictated. And this reduces it to an original question, which is. Which power can build and man the largest number of ships? The natural answer to which, is, That power which has the largest revenue, and the greatest number of inhabitants, provided its situation of coast affords sufficient conveniences.

France being a nation on the continent of Europe, and Britain an island in its neighbourhood, each of them derived different ideas from their different situations. The inhabitants of Britain could carry on no foreign trade, nor stir from the spot they dwelt upon, without the assistance of shipping; but this was not the case with France. The idea, therefore, of a navy did not arise to France from the same original and immediate necessity which produced it to England. But the question is, that when both of them turn their attention, and employ their revenues the same way, which can be superior?

The annual revenue of France is nearly double that of England, and her number of inhabitants more than twice as many. Each of them has the same length of coast on the channel; besides which, France has several hundred miles extent on the Bay of Biscay, and an opening on the Mediterranean: and every day proves, that practice and exercise make sailors, as well as soldiers, in one country as well as another.

If, then, Britain can maintain an hundred ships of the line, France can as well support an hundred and fifty, because her revenues, and her population, are as equal to the one, as those of England are to the other. And the only reason why she has not done it, is, because she has not, till very lately, attended to it. But when she sees, as she now sees, that a navy is the first engine of power, she can easily accomplish it.

England very falsely, and ruinously for herself, infers, that because she had the advantage of France, while France had a smaller navy, that for that reason it is always to be so. Whereas, it may be clearly seen, that the strength of France has never yet been tried on a navy, and that she is able to be as superior to England in the extent of a navy, as she is in the extent of her revenues and her population. And England may lament the day when, by her insolence and injustice, she provoked in France a maritime disposition.

It is in the power of the combined fleets to conquer every island in the West Indies, and reduce all the British navy in those places. For were France and Spain to send their whole naval force in Europe to those islands, it would not be in the power of Britain to follow them with an equal force. She would still be twenty or thirty ships inferior, were she to send every vessel she had; and, in the mean time, all the foreign trade of England would lay exposed to the Dutch.

It is a maxim which, I am persuaded, will ever hold good, and more especially in naval operations, that a great power ought never to move in detachments, if it can possibly be avoided; but to go with its whole force to some important object, the reduction of which shall have a decisive effect upon the war. Had the whole of the French and Spanish fleets in Europe come last spring to the West Indies, every island had been their own, Rodney their prisoner, and his fleet their prize. From the United States, the combined fleets can be supplied with provisions, without the necessity

of drawing them from Europe, which is not the case with England.

Accident has thrown some advantages in the way of England, which, from the inferiority of her navy, she had not a right to expect. For though she has been obliged to fly before the combined fleets, yet Rodney has twice had the fortune to fall in with detached squadrons, to which he was superior in numbers. The first off Cape St. Vincent, where he had nearly two to one; and the other in the West Indies, where he had a majority of six ships. Victories of this kind almost produce themselves. They are won without honour, and suffered without disgrace; and are ascribable to the chance of meeting, not to the superiority of fighting. For the same Admiral, under whom they were obtained, was unable, in three former engagements, to make the least impression on a fleet consisting of an equal number of ships with his own, and compounded for the events by declining the action.*

To conclude, if it may be said, that Britain has numerous enemies, it likewise proves that she has given numerous offences. Insolence is sure to provoke hatred, whether in a nation or an individual. The want of manners, in the British Court, may be seen even in its birth-day and new-year's odes, which are calculated to infatuate the vulgar, and disgust the man of refinement; and her former overbearing rudeness, and insufferable injustice on the seas, have made every commercial nation her foe. Her fleets were employed as engines of prey; and acted on the surface of the deep, the character which the shark does beneath it.—On the other hand, the Combined Powers are taking a popular part, and will render their reputation immortal, by establishing the perfect freedom of the ocean, to which all countries have a right, and are interested in accomplishing. The sea is the world's highway; and he who arrogates a prerogative over it, transgresses the right, and justly brings on himself the chastisement of nations.

Perhaps it might be of some service to the future tranquillity of mankind, were an article introduced into the next general peace, that no one nation should, in time of peace, exceed a certain number of ships of war. Something

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* See the accounts, either English or French, of the actions in the West-Indies between Count de Guichen, and Admiral Rodney, in 1780.

of this kind seems necessary; for, according to the present fashion, half the world will get upon the water, and there appears to be no end to the extent to which navies may be carried. Another reason is, that navies add nothing to the manners or morals of a people. The sequestered life which attends the service, prevents the opportunity of society, and is too apt to occasion a coarseness of ideas and of language, and that more in ships of war than in commercial employ; because, in the latter, they mix more with the world, and are nearer related to it. I mention this remark as a general one, and not applied to any one country more than to another.

Britain has now had the trial of above seven years, with an expence of nearly a hundred million pounds sterling; and every month in which she delays to conclude a peace, costs her another million sterling, over and above her ordinary expences of government, which are a million more; so that her total *monthly* expence is two million pounds sterling, which is equal to the whole *yearly* expence of America, all charges included. Judge then who is best able to continue it.

She has, likewise, many atonements to make to an injured world, as well in one quarter as another. And instead of pursuing that temper of arrogance, which serves only to sink her in the esteem, and entail on her the dislike, of all nations, she will do well to reform her manners, retrench her expences, live peaceably with her neighbours, and think of war no more.

*Philadelphia, August* 21, 1782.

## LETTER FROM THOMAS PAINE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

*Borden Town, Sept.* 7, 1782.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour of presenting you with fifty copies of my Letter to the Abbe Raynal, for the use of the army, and to repeat to you my acknowledgments for your friendship.

I fully believe we have seen our worst days over. The spirit of the war, on the part of the enemy, is certainly on the decline, full as much as we think for. I draw this opinion not only from the present promising appearance of things, and the difficulties we know the British cabinet is in; but I add to it the peculiar effect which certain periods of time, have more or less, upon all men.

The British have accustomed themselves to think of *seven years* in a manner different to other portions of time. They acquire this partly by habit, by reason, by religion, and by superstition. They serve seven years apprenticeship—they elect their parliament for seven years—they punish by seven years transportation, or the duplicate or triplicate of that term—they let their leases in the same manner, and they read that Jacob served seven years for one wife, and after that seven years for another; and this particular period of time, by a variety of concurrences, has obtained an influence in their mind.

They have now had seven years of war, and are no further on the Continent than when they began. The superstitious and populous part will therefore conclude that *it is not to be*, and the rational part of them will think they have tried an unsuccessful and expensive project long enough, and by these two joining issue in the same eventual opinion, the obstinate part among them will be beaten out; unless, consistent with their former sagacity, they should get over the matter by an act of parliament, "*to bind* TIME *in all cases whatsoever*," *or declare him a rebel.*

I observe the affair of Captain Asgill seems to die away: —very probably it has been protracted on the part of Clinton and Carleton to gain time, to state the case to the British

ministry, where following close on that of Colonel Haynes, it will create new embarrassments to them.—For my own part, I am fully persuaded that a suspension of his fate, still holding it *in terrorem*, will operate on a greater quantity of their passions and vices, and restrain them more than his execution would do.—However the change of measures which seems now to be taking place, gives somewhat of a new cast to former designs; and if the case, without the execution, can be so managed as to answer all the purposes of the latter, it will look much better hereafter, when the sensations that now provoke, and the circumstances that would justify his exit, shall be forgotten.

I am your Excellency's obliged
and obedient humble servant,
THOMAS PAINE.

*His Excellency General Washington.*

## LETTER FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON TO THOMAS PAINE.

*Head Quarters, Verplank's Point,*
*Sept.* 18, 1782.

SIR,

I have the pleasure to acknowledge your favour of the 7th inst. informing me of your proposal to present me with fifty copies of your last publication, for the amusement of the army.

For this intention you have my sincere thanks, not only on my own account, but for the pleasure, I doubt not, the gentlemen of the army will receive from the perusal of your pamphlets.

Your observations on the *period of seven years*, as it applies itself to, and affects British minds, are ingenious, and I wish it may not fail of its effects in the present instance. The measures, and the policy of the enemy are at present, in great perplexity and embarrassment—but I have my fears, whether their necessities (which are the only operative motive with them) are yet arrived to that point, which must drive them unavoidably into what they will esteem disagreeable and dishonourable terms of peace—such for instance as an absolute, unequivocal admission of American Independence, upon the terms on which she can alone accept it.

For this reason, added to the obstinacy of the king—and the probable consonant principles of some of his principal ministers, I have not so full a confidence in the success of the present negociation for peace as some gentlemen entertain.

Should events prove my jealousies to be ill founded, I shall make myself happy under the mistake—consoling myself with the idea of having erred on the safest side, and enjoying with as much satisfaction as any of my countrymen, the pleasing issue of our severe contest.

The case of Captain Asgill has indeed been spun out to a great length—but with you, I hope, that its termination will not be unfavourable to this country.

I am, Sir, with great esteem and regard,
Your most obedient Servant,
G. WASHINGTON.

*Thomas Paine, Esq.*

# DISSERTATIONS

ON

# GOVERNMENT,

THE

## Affairs of the Bank,

AND

## PAPER MONEY.

BY THOMAS PAINE.

London:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY R. CARLILE, 55, FLEET STREET.

1819.

# PREFACE.

I HERE present the public with a new performance. Some parts of it are more particularly adapted to the State of Pennsylvania, on the present state of its affairs; but there are others which are on a larger scale. The time bestowed on this work has not been long; the whole of it being written and printed during the short recess of the Assembly.

As to parties, merely considered as such, I am attached to no particular one. There are such things as right and wrong in the world, and so far as these are parties against each other, the signature of COMMON SENSE is properly employed.

THOMAS PAINE.

*Philadelphia, Feb.* 18, 1786.

# DISSERTATIONS,

*&c. &c.*

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EVERY Government, let its form be what it may, contains within itself a principle common to all, which is, that of a sovereign power, or a power over which there is no control, and which controls all others: and as it is impossible to construct a form of government in which this power does not exist, so there must of necessity be a place, if it may be so called, for it to exist in.

In despotic monarchies this power is lodged in a single person or sovereign. His will is law; which he declares, alters or revokes as he pleases, without being accountable to any power for so doing. Therefore, the only modes of redress, in countries so governed, are by petition or insurrection. And this is the reason we so frequently hear of insurrections in despotic governments; for as there are but two modes of redress, this is one of them.

Perhaps it may be said, that as the united resistance of the people is able, by force, to control the will of the sovereign, that, therefore, the controling power lodges in them: but it must be understood that I am speaking of such powers only as are constituent parts of the government, not of those powers which are externally applied to resist and overturn it.

In republics, such as those established in America, the sovereign power, or the power over which there is no control and which controls all others, remains where nature placed it,—in the people; for the people in America are the fountain of power. It remains there as a matter of right, recognized in the constitutions of the country, and the exercise of it is constitutional and legal.—This sovereignty is exercised in electing and deputing a certain number of

persons to represent and act for the whole, and who, if they do not act right, may be displaced by the same power that placed them there, and others elected and deputed in their stead, and the wrong measures of former representatives corrected and brought right by this means. Therefore, the republican form and principle leaves no room for insurrection, because it provides and establishes a rightful means in its stead.

In countries under a despotic form of government, the exercise of this power is an assumption of sovereignty; a wresting it from the person in whose hand their form of government has placed it, and the exercise of it is there stiled rebellion. Therefore, the despotic form of government knows no intermediate space between being slaves and being rebels.

I shall in this place offer an observation which, though not immediately connected with my subject, is very naturally deduced from it; which is, that the nature, if I may so call it, of a government over any people may be ascertained from the modes which the people pursue to obtain redress; for like causes will produce like effects. And therefore, the government which Britain attempted to erect over America could be no other than a despotism, because it left to the Americans no other modes of redress than those which are left to people under despotic governments, petition and resistance: and the Americans, without ever attending to a comparison on the case, went into the steps which such people go into, because no other could be pursued: and this similarity of effects lead up to, and ascertains, the similarity of the causes or governments which produced them.

But to return.—The repository where the sovereign power is placed is the first criterion of distinction between a country under a despotic form of government and a free country. In a country under a despotic government, the Sovereign is the only free man in it. In a republic, the people retaining the sovereignty themselves, naturally and necessarily retain freedom with it: for, wherever the sovereignty is, there must the freedom be; the one cannot be in one place and the other in another.

As the repository where the sovereign power is lodged is the first criterion of distinction; the second is the principles on which it is administered.

A despotic government knows no principle but WILL. Whatever the sovereign wills to do, the government admits

him the inherent right, and the uncontrolled power of doing. He is restrained by no fixed rule of right and wrong, for he makes the right and wrong himself and as he pleases.—If he happens (for a miracle may happen) to be a man of consummate wisdom, justice, and moderation, of a mild affectionate disposition, disposed to business, and understanding, and promoting the general good, all the beneficial purposes of government will be answered under his administration, and the people so governed may, while this is the case, be prosperous and easy. But as there can be no security that this disposition will last, and this administration continue, and still less security that his successor shall have the same qualities and pursue the same measures; therefore, no people exercising their reason and understanding their rights, would, of their own choice, invest any one man with such a power.

Neither is it consistent to suppose the knowledge of any one man competent to the exercise of such a power. A sovereign of this sort is brought up in such a distant line of life, and lives so remote from the people, and from a knowledge of every thing which relates to their local situations and interests, that he can know nothing from experience and observation, and all which he does know he must be told. Sovereign power, without sovereign knowledge, that is, a full knowledge of all the matters over which that power is to be exercised, is a something which contradicts itself.

There is a species of sovereign power, in a single person, which is very proper when applied to a commander-in-chief over an army, so far as relates to the military government of an army, and the condition and purpose of an army constitute the reason why it is so.

In an army every man is of the same profession, that is, he is a soldier, and the commander-in-chief is a soldier too: therefore the knowledge necessary to the exercise of the power is within himself. By understanding what a soldier is, he comprehends the local situation, interest, and duty of every man within, what may be called, the dominion of his command; and therefore the condition and circumstances of an army make a fitness for the exercise of the power.

The purpose likewise, or object of an army, is another reason: for this power in a commander-in-chief, though exercised over the army, is not exercised against it; but is exercised through or over the army against the enemy.

Therefore the enemy, and not the people, is the object it is directed to. Neither is it exercised over an army, for the purpose of raising a revenue from it, but to promote its combined interest, condense its powers, and give it capacity for action.

But all these reasons cease when sovereign power is transferred from the commander of an army to the commander of a nation, and entirely loses its fitness when applied to govern subjects following occupations, as it governs soldiers following arms. A nation is quite another element, and every thing in it differs not only from each other, but all of them differ from those of an army. A nation is composed of distinct unconnected individuals, following various trades, employments, and pursuits: continually meeting, crossing, uniting, opposing, and separating from each other, as accident, interest, and circumstance shall direct. An army has but one occupation and but one interest.

Another very material matter in which an army and a nation differ, is that of temper. An army may be said to have but one temper; for, however the *natural* temper of the persons composing the army may differ from each other, there is a second temper takes place of the first: a temper formed by discipline, mutuality of habits, union of objects and pursuits, and the style of military manners: but this can never be the case among all the individuals of a nation. Therefore the fitness, arising from those circumstances, which disposes an army to the command of a single person, and the fitness of a single person to that command, is not to be found either in one or the other, when we come to consider them as a sovereign and a nation.

Having already shewn what a despotic government is, and how it is administered, I now come to shew what the administration of a republic is.

The administration of a republic is supposed to be directed by certain fundamental principles of right and justice, from which there cannot, because there ought not, to be any deviation; and whenever any deviation appears, there is a kind of stepping out of the republican principle, and an approach towards the despotic one. This administration is executed by a select number of persons, periodically chosen by the people, and act as representatives and in behalf of the whole, and who are supposed to enact the same laws, and pursue the same line of administration as the whole of the people would do were they assembled together.

The PUBLIC GOOD is to be their object. It is therefore necessary to understand what Public Good is.

Public Good is not a term opposed to the good of individuals; on the contrary, it is the good of every individual collected. It is the good of all, because it is the good of every one: for as the public body is every individual collected, so the public good is the collected good of those individuals.

The foundation principle of Public Good is justice, and wherever justice is impartially administered the public good is promoted; for as it is to the good of every man that no injustice be done to him, so likewise it is to his good that the principle which secures him should not be violated in the person of another, because such a violation weakens *his* security, and leaves to chance what ought to be to him a rock to stand on.

But in order to understand more minutely, how the Public Good is to be promoted, and the manner in which the representatives are to act to promote it, we must have recourse to the original or first principles, on which the people formed themselves into a republic.

When a people agree to form themselves into a republic (for the word REPUBLIC means the PUBLIC GOOD, or the good of the whole, in contradiction to the despotic form, which makes the good of the sovereign, or of one man, the only object of the government) when, I say, they agree to do this, it is to be understood, that they mutually resolve and pledge themselves to each other, rich and poor alike, to support and maintain this rule of equal justice among them. They therefore renounce not only the despotic form, but the despotic principle, as well of governing as of being governed by mere will and power, and substitute in its place a government of justice.

By this mutual compact the citizens of a republic put it out of their power, that is, they renounce, as detestable, the power of exercising at any future time, any species of despotism over each other, or doing a thing, not right in itself, because a majority of them may have strength of numbers sufficient to accomplish it.

In this pledge and compact* lies the foundation of the

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* This pledge and compact is contained in the Declaration of Rights prefixed to the Constitution, and is as follows:—

I. That all men are born equally free and independent, and

republic: and the security to the rich and the consolation to the poor is, that what each man has is his own; that no despotic sovereign can take it from him, and that the common cementing principle which holds all the parts of a republic together, secures him likewise from the despotism of numbers: for despotism may be more effectually acted by many over a few than by one man over all.

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have certain natural, inherent and unalienable rights, amongst which are, the enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.

II. That all men have a natural and unalienable right to worship Almighty God, according to the dictates of their own consciences and understanding: And that no man ought, or of right can be compelled, to attend any religious worship, or erect or support any place of worship, or maintain any ministry, contrary to, or against, his own free will and consent: Nor can any man who acknowledges the being of a God, be justly deprived or abridged of any civil right as a citizen, on account of his religious sentiments or peculiar mode of religious worship: And that no authority can or ought to be vested in, or assumed by any power whatever, that shall in any case interfere with, or in any manner control, the right of conscience in the free exercise of religious worship.

III. That the people of this State have the sole, exclusive and inherent right of governing and regulating the internal police of the same.

IV. That all power being originally inherent in, and consequently derived from, the people; therefore all officers of government whether legislative or executive, are their trustees and servants, and at all times accountable to them.

V. That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection and security of the people, nation or community; and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single man, family, or set of men, who are a part only of that community; and that the community hath an indubitable, unalienable and indefeasible right to reform, alter or abolish Government in such manner as shall be by that community judged most conducive to the public weal.

VI. That those who are employed in the legislative and executive business of the State may be restrained from oppression, the people have a right, at such periods as they may think proper, to reduce their public officers to a private station, and supply the vacancies by certain and regular elections.

VII. That all elections ought to be free; and that all free men having a sufficient evident common interest with, and attachment to the community, have a right to elect officers, or to be elected into office.

Therefore, in order to know how far the power of assembly, or a house of representatives can act in administering the affairs of a republic, we must examine how far the power of the people extends under the original compact they have made with each other; for the power of the representatives is in many cases less, but never can be greater than that of the people represented; and whatever the people in

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VIII. That every member of society hath a right to be protected in the enjoyment of life, liberty and property, and therefore is bound to contribute his proportion towards the expence of that protection, and yield his personal service when necessary, or an equivalent thereto: But no part of a man's property can be justly taken from him, or applied to public uses, without his own consent, or that of his legal representatives: Nor can any man who is conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms, be justly compelled thereto, if he will pay such equivalent: Nor are the people bound by any laws, but such as they have in like manner assented to, for their common good.

IX. That in all prosecutions for criminal offences, a man hath a right to be heard by himself and his counsel, to demand the cause and nature of his accusation, to be confronted with the witnesses, to call for evidence in his favour, and a speedy public trial, by an impartial jury of the country, without the unanimous consent of which jury he cannot be found guilty: Nor can he be compelled to give evidence against himself: Nor can any man be justly deprived of his liberty, except by the laws of the land, or the judgment of his peers.

X. That the people have a right to hold themselves, their houses, papers, and possessions, free from search or seizure; and therefore warrants without oaths or affirmations first made, affording a sufficient foundation for them, and whereby any officer or messenger may be commanded or required to search suspected places, or to seize any person or persons, his or their property, not particularly described, are contrary to that right, and ought not to be granted.

XI. That in controversies respecting property, and in suits between man and man, the parties have a right to trial by jury, which ought to be held sacred.

XII. That the people have a right to freedom of speech, and of writing, and publishing their sentiments; therefore the freedom of the press ought not to be restrained.

XIII. That the people have a right to bear arms for the defence of themselves and the state; and as standing armies in the time of peace, are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be kept up: And that the military should be kept under strict subordination to, and governed by, the civil power.

their mutual original compact have renounced the power of doing towards, or acting over each other, the representatives cannot assume the power to do, because, as I have already said, the power of the representatives cannot be greater than that of the people they represent.

In this place it naturally presents itself that the people in their original compact of equal justice or first principles of a republic, renounced as despotic, detestable and unjust, the assuming a right of breaking and violating their engagements, contracts and compacts with, or defrauding, imposing or tyrannizing over each other, and therefore the representatives cannot make an act to do it for them, and any such an act would be an attempt to depose, not the personal sovereign, but the sovereign principle of the republic, and to produce despotism in its stead.

It may in this place be proper to distinguish between that species of sovereignty which is claimed and exercised by despotic monarchs, and that sovereignty which the citizens of a republic inherit and retain.——The sovereignty of a despotic monarch assumes the power of making wrong right, or right wrong, as he pleases or as it suits him. The sovereignty in a republic is exercised to keep right and wrong in their proper and distinct places, and never to suffer the one to usurp the place of the other. A republic, properly understood, is a sovereignty of justice, in contradistinction to a sovereignty of will.

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XIV. That a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles, and a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, industry and frugality are absolutely necessary to preserve the blessings of liberty and keep a government free: The people ought therefore to pay particular attention to these points in the choice of officers and representatives, and have a right to exact a due and constant regard to them, from their legislators and magistrates, in the making and executing such laws as are necessary for the good government of the State.

XV. That all men have a natural inherent right to emigrate from one State to another that will receive them, or to form a new State in vacant countries, or in such countries as they can purchase, whenever they think that thereby they may promote their own happiness.

XVI. That the people have a right to assemble together, to consult for their common good, to instruct their representatives, and to apply to the legislature for redress of grievances, by address, petition or remonstrance.

Our experience in republicanism is yet so slender, that it is much to be doubted whether all our public laws and acts are consistent with or can be justified on the principles of a republican government.

We have been so much habituated to act in committees at the commencement of the dispute, and during the interregnum of Government, and in many cases since, and to adopt expedients warranted by necessity, and to permit to ourselves a discretionary use of power, suited to the spur and exigency of the moment, that a man transferred from a committee to a seat in the legislature imperceptibly takes with him the ideas and habits he has been accustomed to, and continues to think like a committee-man instead of a legislator, and to govern by spirit rather than by the rule of the constitution and the principles of the republic.

Having already stated that the power of the representatives can never exceed the power of the people whom they represent, I now proceed to examine more particularly, what the power of the representatives is.

It is, in the first place, the power of acting as legislators in making laws—and in the second place, the power of acting in certain cases, as agents or negociators for the commonwealth, for such purposes as the circumstances of the commonwealth require.

A very strange confusion of ideas, dangerous to the credit, stability, and the good and honour of the commonwealth, has arisen, by confounding those two distinct powers and things together, and blending every act of the assembly, of whatever kind it may be, under one general name of "*Laws of the Commonwealth*," and thereby creating an opinion (which is truly of the despotic kind) that every succeeding assembly has an equal power over every transaction, as well as law, done by a former assembly.

All laws are acts, but all acts are not laws. Many of the acts of the assembly are acts of agency or negociation, that is, they are acts of contract and agreement, on the part of the State, with certain persons therein mentioned, and for certain purposes therein recited. An act of this kind, after it has passed the house, is of the nature of a deed or contract, signed, sealed, and delivered; and subject to the same general laws and principles of justice as all other deeds and contracts are: for in a transaction of this kind, the State stands as an individual, and can be known in no other character in a court of justice.

By "LAWS," as distinct from the agency transactions or

matters of negociation, are to be comprehended all those public acts of the assembly or commonwealth which have an universal operation, or apply themselves to every individual of the commonwealth. Of this kind are the laws for the distribution and administration of justice, for the preservation of the peace, for the security of property, for raising the necessary revenue by just proportions, &c. &c.

Acts of this kind are properly LAWS, and they may be altered and amended, or repealed, or others substituted in their places, as experience shall direct, for the better effecting the purpose for which they were intended: and the right and power of the assembly to do this, is derived from the right and power which the people, were they all assembled together, instead of being represented, would have to do the same thing: because, in acts or laws of this kind, there is no other party than the public. The law, or the alteration, or the repeal, is for themselves;—and whatever the effect may be, it falls on themselves;—if for the better, they have the benefit of it—if for the worse, they suffer the inconvenience. No violence to any one is here offered—no breach of faith is here committed. It is therefore one of these rights and powers which is within the sense, meaning, and limits of the original compact of justice which they formed with each other as the foundation-principle of the republic, and being one of those rights and powers, it devolves on their representatives by delegation.

As it is not my intention (neither is it within the limits assigned to this work) to define every species of what may be called LAWS (but rather to distinguish that part in which the representatives act as agents or negociators for the State, from the legislative part), I shall pass on to distinguish and describe those acts of the assembly which are acts of agency or negociation, and to shew that as they are different in their nature, construction, and operation, from legislative acts, so likewise the power and authority of the assembly over them, after they are passed, is different.

It must occur to every person on the first reflection, that the affairs and circumstances of a commonwealth require other business to be done besides that of making laws, and consequently, that the different kinds of business cannot all be classed under one name, or be subject to one and the same rule of treatment.——But to proceed——

By agency transactions, or matters of negociation, done by the assembly, are to be comprehended all that kind of public business, which the assembly, as representatives of

the republic, transact in its behalf, with certain person or persons, or part or parts of the republic, for purposes mentioned in the act, and which the assembly confirm and ratify on the part of the commonwealth, by affixing to it the seal of the State.

An act of this kind differs from a law of the before-mentioned kind; because here are two parties, and there but one; and the parties are bound to perform different and distinct parts: whereas, in the before-mentioned law, every man's part was the same.

These acts, therefore, though numbered among the laws, are evidently distinct therefrom, and are not of the legislative kind. The former are laws for the government of the commonwealth; these are transactions of business, such as selling and conveying an estate belonging to the public, or buying one; acts for borrowing money, and fixing with the lender the terms and mode of payment; acts of agreement and contract, with certain person or persons, for certain purposes; and, in short, every act in which two parties, the State being one, are particularly mentioned or described, and in which the form and nature of a bargain or contract is comprehended.——These, if for custom and uniformity sake we call by the name of LAWS, they are not laws for the government of the commonwealth, but for the government of the contracting parties, as all deeds and contracts are; and are not, properly speaking, acts of the assembly, but joint acts, or acts of the assembly in behalf of the commonwealth on one part, and certain persons therein-mentioned on the other part.

Acts of this kind are distinguishable in two classes:—

First, those wherein the matters inserted in the act have already been settled and adjusted between the State on one part, and the persons therein mentioned on the other part. In this case the act is the completion and ratification of the contract or matters therein recited. It is in fact a deed signed, sealed, and delivered.

Secondly, those acts wherein the matters have not been already agreed upon, and wherein the act only holds forth certain propositions and terms to be accepted of and acceded to.

I shall give an instance of each of those acts. First—The State wants the loan of a sum of money—certain persons make an offer to government to lend that sum, and send in their proposals: the government accept these proposals and all the matters of the loan and the payment are

agreed on; and an act is passed, according to the usual form of passing acts, ratifying and confirming this agreement. This act is final.

In the second case—The State, as in the preceding one, wants a loan of money—the assembly passes an act holding forth the terms on which it will borrow and pay: this act has no force, until the propositions and terms are accepted of and acceded to by some person or persons, and when those terms are accepted of and complied with, the act is binding on the State.—But if at the meeting of the next assembly, or any other, the whole sum intended to be borrowed should not be borrowed, that assembly may stop where they are, and discontinue proceeding with the loan, or make new propositions and terms for the remainder; but so far as the subscriptions have been filled up, and the terms complied with, it is, as in the first case, a signed deed: and in the same manner are all acts, let the matters in them be what they may, wherein, as I have before mentioned, the State on one part, and certain individuals on the other part, are parties in the act.

If the State should become a bankrupt, the creditors, as in all cases of bankruptcy, will be sufferers; they will have but a dividend for the whole; but this is not a dissolution of the contract, but an accommodation of it, arising from necessity. And so in all cases of acts of this kind, if an inability takes place on either side, the contract cannot be performed, and some accommodation must be gone into or the matter falls through of itself.

It may likewise happen, though it ought not to happen, that in performing the matters, agreeably to the terms of the act, inconveniences, unforeseen at the time of making the act, may arise to either or both parties; in this case, those inconveniences may be removed by the mutual consent and agreement of the parties, and each finds its benefit in so doing: for in a republic it is the harmony of its parts that constitutes their several and mutual good.

But the acts themselves are legally binding, as much as if they had been made between two private individuals. The greatness of one party cannot give it a superiority of advantage over the other. The State, or its representatives, the assembly, has no more power over an act of this kind, after it is passed, than if the State was a private person. It is the glory of a republic to have it so, because it secures the individual from becoming the prey of power, and prevents MIGHT overcoming RIGHT.

If any difference or dispute arise afterwards between the State and the individuals with whom the agreement is made, respecting the contract, or the meaning, or extent of any of the matters contained in the act, which may affect the property or interest of either, such difference or dispute must be judged of, and decided upon, by the laws of the land, in a court of justice and trial by jury; that is, by the laws of the land already in being at the time such act and contract was made. No law made afterwards can apply to the case, either directly, or by construction or implication: for such a law would be a retrospective law, or a law made after the fact, and cannot even be produced in court as applying to the case before it for judgment.

That this is justice, that it is the true principle of Republican Government, no man will be so hardy as to deny:—If therefore, a lawful conract or agreement, sealed and ratified, cannot be affected or altered by any act made afterwards, how much more inconsistent and irrational, despotic and unjust would it be, to think of making an act with the professed intention of breaking up a contract already signed and sealed.

That it is possible an assembly, in the heat and indiscretion of party, and meditating on power rather than on the principle by which all power in a Republican Government is governed, that of equal justice, may fall into the error of passing such an act, is admitted;—but it would be an useless act, an act that goes for nothing, an act which the courts of justice, and the established laws of the land, could know nothing of.

Because such an act would be an act of one party only, not only without, but against the consent of the other; and, therefore, cannot be produced to affect a contract made between the two. That the violation of a contract should be set up as a justification to the violator, would be the same thing as to say, that a man by breaking his promise is freed from the obligation of it, or that by transgressing the laws he exempts himself from the punishment of them.

Besides the constitutional and legal reasons why an assembly cannot, of its own act and authority, undo or make void a contract made between the State (by a former assembly) and certain individuals, may be added, what may be called, the natural reasons, or those reasons which the plain rules of common sense point out to every man. Among which are the following:—

The principals, or real parties, in the contract, are the

State and the persons contracted with. The assembly, is not a party, but an agent in behalf of the State, authorized and empowered to transact its affairs.

Therefore it is the State that is bound on one part and certain individuals on the other part, and the performance of the contract, according to the conditions of it, devolves on succeeding assemblies, not as principals, but as agents.

Therefore, for the next or any other assembly to undertake to dissolve the State from its obligation is an assumption of power of a novel and extraordinary kind—It is the servant attempting to free his master.

The election of new assemblies following each other makes no difference in the nature of the thing. The State is still the same State. The public is still the same body. These do not annually expire, though the time of an assembly does. These are not new-created every year, nor can they be displaced from their original standing; but are a perpetual permanent body, always in being and still the same.

But if we adopt the vague inconsistent idea that every new assembly has a full and complete authority over every act done by the State in a former assembly, and confound together laws, contracts, and every species of public business, it will lead us into a wilderness of endless confusion and insurmountable difficulties. It would be declaring an assemby despotic for the time being. Instead of a government of established principles administered by established rules, the authority of government by being strained so high, would, by the same rule, be reduced proportionably as low, and would be no other than that of a committee of the State acting with discretionary powers for one year. Every new election would be a new revolution, or it would suppose the public of the former year dead, and a new public risen in its place.

Having now endeavoured to fix a precise idea to, and to distinguish between, legislative acts and acts of negociation and agency, I shall proceed to apply this distinction to the case now in dispute, respecting the charter of the Bank.

The charter of the Bank, or what is the same thing, the act for incorporating it, is to all intents and purposes an act of negociation and contract, entered into, and confirmed, between the State on one part, and certain persons mentioned therein on the other part The purpose for which the act was done on the part of the State is therein recited, viz. the support which the finances of the country would

derive therefrom. The incorporating clause is the condition or obligation on the part of the State; and the obligation on the part of the Bank, is, "that nothing contained in that act shall be construed to authorise the said corporation to exercise any powers in this State repugnant to the laws or constitution thereof."

Here are all the marks and evidences of a contract. The parties—the purport—and the reciprocal obligations.

That it is a contract, or a joint act, is evident from its being in the power of either of the parties to have forbidden or prevented its being done. The State could not force the stockholders of the Bank to be a corporation, and therefore as their consent was necessary to the making the act, their dissent would have prevented its being made; so on the other hand, as the Bank could not force the State to incorporate them, the consent or dissent of the State would have had the same effect to do, or to prevent its being done; and as neither of the parties could make the act alone, for the same reason can neither of them dissolve it alone: but this is not the case with a law or act of legislation, and therefore the difference proves it to be an act of a different kind.

The Bank may forfeit the charter by delinquency, but the delinquency must be proved and established by a legal process in a court of justice and trial by jury; for the State, or the assembly, is not to be a judge in its own case, but must come to the laws of the land for judgment; for that which is law for the individual, is likewise law for the State.

Before I enter farther into this affair, I shall go back to the circumstances of the country and the condition the government was in, for some time before, as well as at the time it entered into this engagement with the Bank, and this act of incorporation was passed: for the government of this State, and I suppose the same of the rest, were then in want of two of the most essential matters which governments could be destitute of.—Money and credit.

In looking back to those times, and bringing forward some of the circumstances attending them, I feel myself entering on unpleasant and disagreeable ground; because some of the matters which the attack on the Bank now make necessary to state, in order to bring the affair fully before the public, will not add honour to those who have promoted that measure, and carried it through the late House of Assembly; and for whom, though my own judgment and opinion on the case oblige me to differ from, I

retain my esteem, and the social remembrance of times past. But, I trust those gentlemen will do me the justice to recollect my exceeding earnestness with them, last spring, when the attack on the Bank first broke out; for it clearly appeared to me one of those over-heated measures, which, neither the country at large, nor their own constituents, would justify them in, when it came to be fully and clearly understood; for however high a party measure may be carried in an assembly, the people out of doors are all the while following their several occupations and employments, minding their farms and their business, and take their own time and leisure to judge of public measures; the consequence of which is, that they often judge in a cooler spirit than their representatives act in.

It may be easily recollected, that the present Bank was preceded by, and rose out of, a former one, called the Pennsylvania Bank, which began a few months before; the occasion of which I shall briefly state.

In the spring 1780, the Pennsylvania Assembly was composed of many of the same members, and nearly all of the same connection, which composed the late House that began the attack on the Bank. I served as clerk of the assembly of 1780, which station I resigned at the end of the year, and accompanied a much lamented friend, the late Colonel John Laurens, on an embassy of France.

The spring of 1780 was marked with an accumulation of misfortunes. The reliance placed on the defence of Charleston failed, and exceedingly lowered, or rather depressed, the spirits of the country. The measures of government, from the want of money, means, and credit, dragged on like a heavy loaded carriage without wheels, and were nearly got to what a countryman would understand by a dead pull.

The assembly of that year met by adjournment at an unusual time, the tenth of May, and what particularly added to the affliction, was, that so many of the members, instead of spiriting up their constituents to the most nervous exertions, came to the assembly furnished with petitions to be exempt from paying taxes. How the public measures were to be carried on, the country defended, and the army recruited, clothed, fed, and paid, when the only resource, and that not half sufficient, that of taxes, should be relaxed to almost nothing, was a matter too gloomy to look at. A language very different from that of petitions ought at this time to have been the language of every one. A declaration

to have stood forth with their lives and fortunes, and a reprobation of every thought of partial indulgence would have sounded much better than petitions.

While the assembly was sitting, a letter from the commander-in-chief was received by the executive council, and transmitted to the House. The doors were shut, and it fell officially to me to read.

In this letter the naked truth of things was unfolded. Among other informations, the General said, that notwithstanding his confidence in the attachment of the army to the cause of the country, the distresses of it, from the want of every necessary which men could be destitute of, were arisen to such a pitch, that the appearance of mutiny and discontent were so strongly marked on the countenance of the army, that he dreaded the event of every hour.

When the letter was read I observed a despairing silence in the house. Nobody spoke for a considerable time. At length a member of whose fortitude to withstand misfortunes I had a high opinion, rose: "if," said he, "the account in that letter is a true state of things, and we are in the situation there represented, it appears to me in vain to contend the matter any longer. We may as well give up at first as at last."

The gentleman who spoke next, was (to the best of my recollection) a member from Bucks county, who, in a cheerful note, endeavoured to dissipate the gloom of the house ——"Well, well," said he, "don't let the house despair, if things are not so well as we wish, we must endeavour to make them better." And on a motion for adjournment, the conversation went no farther.

There was now no time to lose, and something absolutely necessary to be done, which was not within the immediate power of the house to do; for what with the depreciation of the currency, the slow operation of taxes, and the petitions to be exempt therefrom, the treasury was moneyless, and the government creditless.

If the assembly could not give the assistance which the necessity of the case immediately required, it was very proper the matter should be known by those who either could or would endeavour to do it. To conceal the information within the house, and not provide the relief which that information required, was making no use of the knowledge and endangering the public cause. The only thing that now remained, and was capable of reaching the case, was private credit, and the voluntary aid of individuals;

and under this impression, on my return from the house, I drew out the salary due to me as clerk, inclosed five hundred dollars in a letter to a gentleman in this city, in part of the whole, and wrote fully to him on the subject of our affairs.

The gentleman to whom this letter was addressed is Mr. Blair M'Clenaghan. I mentioned to him, that notwithstanding the current opinion that the enemy were beaten from before Charleston, there were too many reasons to believe the place was then taken and in the hands of the enemy: the consequence of which would be, that a great part of the British force would return, and join that at New York. That our own army required to be augmented, ten thousand men, to be able to stand against the combined force of the enemy. I informed Mr. M'Clenaghan of General Washington's letter, the extreme distresses he was surrounded with. and the absolute occasion there was for the citizens to exert themselves at this time, which there was no doubt they would do, if the necessity was made known to them; for that the ability of government was exhausted. I requested Mr. M'Clenaghan to propose a voluntary subscription among his friends, and added, that I had enclosed five hundred dollars as my mite thereto, and that I would increase it as far as the last ability would enable me to go.*

The next day Mr. M'Clenaghan informed me, he had communicated the contents of the letter at a meeting of gentlemen at the coffee-house, and that a subscription was immediately began—that Mr. Robert Morris and himself had subscribed two hundred pounds each, in hard money, and that the subscription was going very successfully on.—This subscription was intended as a donation, and to be given in bounties to promote the recruiting service. It is dated June 8th, 1780. The original subscription list is now in my possession—it amounts to four hundred pounds hard money, and one hundred and one thousand three hundred and sixty pounds continental.

While this subscription was going forward, information of the loss of Charleston arrived,† and on a communication

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* Mr. M'Clenaghan being now returned from Europe, has my consent to shew the letter to any gentleman who may be inclined to see it.

† Colonel Tennant, aid to General Lincoln, arrived the 14th of June, with dispatches of the capitulation of Charleston.

from several members of Congress to certain gentlemen of this city, of the increasing distresses and dangers then taking place, a meeting was held of the subscribers, and such other gentlemen who chose to attend at the city tavern. This meeting was on the 17th of June, nine days after the subscriptions had began.

At this meeting it was resolved to open a security subscription to the amount of three hundred thousand pounds, Pennsylvania currency, in real money; the subscribers to execute bonds to the amount of their subscriptions, and to form a Bank thereon for supplying the army. This being resolved on and carried into execution, the plan of the first subscriptions was discontinued, and this extended one established in its stead.

By means of this Bank the army was supplied through the campaign, and being at the same time recruited, was enabled to maintain its ground: and on the appointment of Mr. Morris to be superintendant of the finances the spring following, he arranged the system of the present Bank, styled the Bank of North America, and many of the subscribers of the former Bank transferred their subscriptions into this.

Towards the establishment of this Bank, Congress passed an ordinance of incorporation, December 21st, 1781, which the Government of Pennsylvania recognized by sundry matters: and afterwards, on an application from the president and directors of the Bank, through the mediation of the executive council, the assembly agreed to, and passed the State Act of Incorporation April 1st, 1782.

Thus arose the Bank—produced by the distress of the times and the enterprising spirit of patriotic individuals.—Those individuals furnished and risked the money, and the aid which the Government contributed was that of incorporating them.--It would have been well if the State had made all its bargains and contracts with as much true policy as it made this; for a greater service for so small a consideration, that only of an act of incorporation, has not been obtained since the Government existed.

Having now shewn how the Bank originated, I shall proceed with my remarks.

The sudden restoration of public and private credit, which took place on the establishment of the Bank, is an event as extraordinary in itself as any domestic occurrence during the progress of the revolution.

How far a spirit of envy might operate to produce the

attack on the Bank during the sitting of the late assembly, is best known and felt by those who began or promoted that attack. The Bank had rendered services which the assembly of 1780 could not, and acquired an honour which many of its members might be unwilling to own, and wish to obscure.

But surely every wise Government, acting on the principles of patriotism and public good, would cherish an institution capable of rendering such advantages to the community. The establishment of the Bank in one of the most trying vicissitudes of the war, its zealous services in the public cause, its influence in restoring and supporting credit, and the punctuality with which all its business has been transacted, are matters, that so far from meriting the treatment it met with from the late assembly, are an honour to the State, and what the body of her citizens may be proud to own.

But the attack on the Bank, as a chartered institution, under the protection of its violators, however criminal it may be as an error of Government, or impolitic as a measure of party, is not to be charged on the constituents of those who made the attack. It appears from every circumstance that has come to light, to be a measure which that assembly contrived of itself. The members did not come charged with the affair from their constituents. There was no idea of such a thing when they were elected, or when they met. The hasty and precipitate manner in which it was hurried through the house, and the refusal of the house to hear the Directors of the Bank in its defence, prior to the publication of the repealing bill for public consideration, operated to prevent their constituents comprehending the subject: therefore, whatever may be wrong in the proceedings lies not at the door of the public. The house took the affair on its own shoulders, and whatever blame there is, lies on them.

The matter must have been prejudged and predetermined by a majority of the members out of the house, before it was brought into it. The whole business appears to have been fixed at once, and all reasoning or debate on the case rendered useless.

Petitions from a very *inconsiderable* number of persons suddenly procured, and so privately done, as to be a secret among the few that signed them, were presented to the house and read twice in one day, and referred to a committee of the house to *inquire* and report thereon. I here

subjoin the petition* and the report, and shall exercise the right and privilege of a citizen in examining their merits, not for the purpose of opposition, but with a design of making an intricate affair more generally and better understood.

So far as my private judgment is capable of comprehending the subject, it appears to me, that the committee were unacquainted with, and have totally mistaken, the nature and business of a Bank, as well as the matter committed to them, considered as a proceeding of Government.

They were instructed by the house to *inquire* whether the Bank established at Philadelphia was compatible with the public safety.

It is scarcely possible to suppose the instructions meant no more than that they were to inquire of one another. It is certain they made no inquiry at the Bank, to inform

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* *Minutes of the Assembly, March* 21, 1785.

Petitions from a considerable number of the inhabitants of *Chester* county were read, representing that the Bank established at *Philadelphia* has fatal effects upon the community; that whilst men are enabled, by means of the Bank, to receive near three times the rate of common interest, and at the same time to receive their money at a very short warning, whenever they have occasion for it, it will be impossible for the husbandman or mechanic to borrow on the former terms of legal interest and distant payments of the principal; that the best security will not enable the person to borrow; that experience clearly demonstrates the mischievous consequences of this institution to the fair trader; that impostors have been enabled to support themselves in a fictitious credit, by means of a temporary punctuality at the Bank, until they have drawn in their honest neighbours to trust them with their property, or to pledge their credit as sureties, and have been finally involved in ruin and distress; that they have repeatedly seen the stopping of discounts at the Bank operate on the trading part of the community with a degree of violence scarcely inferior to that of a stagnation of the blood in the human body, hurrying the wretched merchant who hath debts to pay into the hands of griping usurers; that the directors of the Bank may give such preference in trade, by advances of money to their particular favourites, as to destroy that equality which ought to prevail in a commercial country; that paper money has often proved beneficial to the State, but the Bank forbids it, and the people must acquiesce: therefore, and in order to restore public confidence and private security, they pray that a bill may be brought in and passed into a law for repealing the law for incorporating the Bank.

themselves of the situation of its affairs, how they were conducted, what aids it had rendered the public cause, or whether any; nor do the committee produce in their report a single fact or circumstance to shew they made any inquiry at all, or whether the rumours then circulated were true or false; but content themselves with modelling the insinuations of the petitions into a report, and giving an opinion thereon.

It would appear from the report, that the committee either conceived that the house had already determined how it would act without regard to the case, and that they were only a committee for form sake, and to give a colour of inquiry without making any, or that the case was referred to them, *as law questions are sometimes referred to law-officers, for an opinion only.*

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*March* 28.

The report of the committee, read March 25, on the petitions from the counties of *Chester* and *Berks*, and the city of *Philadelphia*, and its vicinity, praying the act of assembly, whereby the Bank was established at *Philadelphia*, may be repealed, was read the second time as follows, viz.

The committee to whom were referred the petitions concerning the Bank established at *Philadelphia*, and who were instructed to inquire whether the said Bank be compatible with the public safety, and that equality which ought ever to prevail between the individuals of a republic, beg leave to report, that it is the opinion of this committee, that the said Bank, as at present established, is in every view incompatible with the public safety; that in the present state of our trade, the said Bank has a direct tendency to banish a great part of the specie from the country, so as to produce a scarcity of money, and to collect into the hands of the stockholders of the said Bank almost the whole of the money which remains amongst us. That the accumulation of enormous wealth in the hands of a society, who claim perpetual duration, will necessarily produce a degree of influence and power, which cannot be entrusted in the hands of any set of men whatsoever without endangering the public safety. That the said Bank, in its corporate capacity, is empowered to hold estates to the amount of ten millions of dollars, and by the tenor of the present charter, is to exist for ever, without being obliged to yield any emolument to the Government, or to be at all dependant upon it. That the great profits of the Bank, which will daily increase as money grows scarcer, and which already far exceed the profits of European Banks, have tempted foreigners to vest their money in this Bank, and thus to draw from us large sums for interest.

This method of doing public business serves exceedingly to mislead a country.——When the constituents of an assembly hear that an inquiry into any matter is directed to be made, and a committee appointed for that purpose, they naturally conclude that the inquiry *is made*, and that the future proceedings of the house are in consequence of the matters, facts, and information obtained by means of that inquiry.——But here is a committee of inquiry making no inquiry at all, and giving an opinion on a case without inquiring into it. This proceeding of the committee would justify an opinion that it was not their wish to *get*, but to *get over* information, and lest the inquiry should not suit their wishes, omitted to make any. The subsequent conduct to the house, in resolving not to hear the directors of the Bank on their application for that purpose, prior to the

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That foreigners will doubtless be more and more induced to become stockholders, until the time may arrive when this enormous engine of power may become subject to foreign influence; this country may be agitated with the politics of European courts, and the good People of *America* reduced once more into a state of subordination, and dependence upon some one or the other of the European powers. That at best, if it were even confined to the hands of Americans, it would be totally destructive of that equality which ought to prevail in a republic. We have nothing in our free and equal Government capable of balancing the influence which this Bank must create; and we see nothing which in the course of a few years, can prevent the directors of the Bank, from governing Pennsylvania. Already we have felt its influence indirectly interfering in the measures of the legislature. Already the House of Assembly, the representatives of the people, have been threatened, that the credit of our paper-currency will be blasted by the Bank; and if this growing evil continues we fear the time is not very distant, when the Bank will be able to dictate to the legislature, what laws to pass and what to forbear.

Your committee therefore beg leave farther to report the following resolution to be adopted by the house, *viz.*

RESOLVED, that a committee be appointed to bring in a bill to repeal the act of assembly, passed the first day of *April*, 1782, entitled, "*An act to incorporate the subscribers to the Bank of* North America;" and also to repeal one other act of assembly, passed the 18th of *March*, 1782, entitled, "*An act for preventing and punishing the counterfeiting of the common seal, bank-bills and bank-notes of the president, directors and company, of the Bank of* North America, *and for the other purposes therein mentioned.*

publication of the bill for the consideration of the people, strongly corroborates this opinion: for why should not the house hear them, unless it was apprehensive, that the Bank, by such a public opportunity, would produce proofs of its services and usefulness, that would not suit the temper and views of its opposers?

But if the house did not wish or choose to hear the defence of the Bank, it was no reason their constituents should not. The constitution of this State, in lieu of having two branches of legislature, has substituted, that "To the end that laws before they are enacted may be more *maturely considered*, and the inconvenience of *hasty determinations* as much as possible prevented, all bills of a public nature shall be printed for the consideration of the people."*—— The people, therefore, according to the constitution, stand in the place of another house; or, more properly speaking, are a house in their own right: But in this instance, the assembly arrogates the whole power to itself, and places itself as a bar to stop the necessary information spreading among the people. The application of the Bank to be heard before the bill was published for public consideration, had two objects. First, to the house, and secondly, through the house to the people, who are as another house. It was as a defence in the first instance, and as an appeal in the second. But the assembly absorbs the right of the people to judge; because, by refusing to hear the defence, they barred the appeal. Were there no other cause which the constituents of that assembly had for censuring its conduct than the exceeding unfairness, partiality, and arbitrariness with which this business was transacted, it would be cause sufficient.

Let the constituents of assemblies differ, as they may, respecting certain peculiarities in the *form* of the constitution, they will all agree in supporting its *principles*, and in reprobating unfair proceedings and despotic measures. Every constituent is a member of the republic, which is a station of more consequence to him than being a member of a party, and though they may differ from each other in their choice of persons to transact the public business, it is of equal importance to all parties that the business be done on right principles: otherwise our laws and acts, instead of being founded in justice, will be founded in party, and be

* Constitution, section the 15th.

laws and acts of retaliation: and instead of being a republic of free citizens, we shall be alternately tyrants and slaves.—But to return to the report.——

The report begins by stating, that "The committee to whom were referred the petitions concerning the Bank established at Philadelphia, and who were instructed to *inquire* whether the said Bank be compatible with the public safety, and that equality which ought ever to prevail between the individuals of a republic, beg leave to report (not that they have made any *inquiry*, but) that it is the *opinion* of this committee, that the said Bank, as at present established, is, in every view, incompatible with the public safety." But why is it so? Here is an opinion unfounded and unwarranted. The committee have begun their report at the wrong end; for an opinion, when given as a matter of judgment, is an action of the mind which follows a fact, but here it is put in the room of one.

The report then says, "That in the present state of our trade, the said Bank has a direct tendency to banish a great part of the specie from the country, and to collect into the hands of the stockholders of the Bank almost the whole of the money which remains among us."

Here is another mere assertion, just like the former, without a single fact or circumstance to shew why it is made or whereon it is founded. Now the very reverse, of what the committee asserts, is the natural consequence of a Bank. ——Specie may be called the stock in trade of the Bank, it is therefore its interest to prevent it from wandering out of the country, and to keep a constant standing supply to be ready for all domestic occasions and demands. Were it true that the Bank has a direct tendency to banish the specie from the country, there would soon be an end to the Bank; and, therefore, the committee have so far mistaken the matter, as to put their fears in the place of their wishes: for if it is to happen as the committee states, let the Bank alone and it will cease of itself, and the repealing act need not have been passed.

It is the interest of the Bank that people should keep their cash there, and all commercial countries find the exceeding great convenience of having a general repository for their cash. But so far from banishing it, there are no two classes of people in America who are so much interested in preserving hard money in the country as the Bank and the merchant. Neither of them can carry on their business without it. Their opposition to the paper-money of the

late assembly was because it has a direct effect, as far as it is able, to banish the specie and that without providing any means for bringing more in.

The committee must have been aware of this, and therefore chose to spread the first alarm, and groundless as it was, to trust to the delusion.

As the keeping the specie in the country is the interest of the Bank, so it has the best opportunities of preventing its being sent away, and the earliest knowledge of such a design. While the Bank is the general depository of cash, no great sums can be obtained without getting it from thence, and as it is evidently prejudicial to its interest to advance money to be sent abroad, because in this case, the money cannot by circulation return again; the Bank, therefore, is interested in preventing what the committee would have it suspected of promoting.

It is to prevent the exportation of cash and to retain it in the country that the Bank has on several occasions stopped the discounting notes till the danger has been passed.* The

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* The petitions say, "That they have repeatedly seen the stopping of discounts at the Bank, operating on the trading part of the community, with a degree of violence scarcely inferior to that of a stagnation of the blood in the human body, hurrying the wretched merchant who hath debts to pay into the hands of griping usurers."

As the persons who say or signed this, live somewhere in Chester county, they are not, from situation, certain of what they say, Those petitions have every appearance of being contrived for the purpose of bringing the matter on. The petition and the report have strong evidence in them of being both drawn up by the same person; for the report is as clearly the echo of the petition as ever the address of the British Parliament was the echo of the King's speech.

Besides the reason I have already given for occasionally stopping discounting notes at the Bank, there are other necessary reasons. It is for the purpose of settling accounts. Short reckonings make long friends. The Bank lends its money for short periods, and by that means assists a great many different people, and if it did not sometimes stop discounting, as a means of settling with persons it has already lent its money to, those persons would find a way to keep what they had borrowed longer than they ought, and prevent others being assisted. It is a fact, and some of the committee know it to be so, that sundry of those persons who then opposed the Bank acted this part.

The stopping the discounts do not, and cannot, operate to call

first part, therefore, of the assertion, that of banishing the specie, contains an apprehension as needless as it is groundless, and which, had the committee understood, or been the least informed of, the nature of a Bank, they could not have made. It is very probable that some of the opposers to the Bank are those persons who have been disappointed in their attempt to obtain specie for this purpose, and now cloak their opposition under other pretences.

I now come to the second part of the assertion, which is, that when the Bank has banished a great part of the specie from the country, "it will collect into the hands of the stockholders almost the whole of the money which remains among us." But how, or by what means, the Bank is to accomplish this wonderful feat, the committee have not informed us. Whether people are to give their money to the Bank for nothing, or whether the Bank is to charm it from them as a rattle-snake charms a squirrel from a tree, the committee have left us as much in the dark about it as they were themselves.

Is it possible the committee should know so very little of the matter, as not to know that no part of the money which at any time may be in the Bank belongs to the stockholders? not even the original capital which they put in is any part of it their own, until every person who has a demand upon the Bank is paid, and if there is not a sufficiency for this purpose, on the balance of loss and gain, the original money of the stockholders must make up the deficiency.

The money which at any time may be in the Bank is the property of every man who holds a bank-note, or deposits cash there, or who has a just demand upon it from the city of Philadelphia up to Fort Pitt, or to any part of the United States; and he can draw the money from it when he pleases. Its being in the Bank, does not in the least make it the property of the stockholders, any more than the money in the State treasury is the property of the State

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in the loans sooner than the time for which they were lent, and therefore the charge is false, that "it hurries men into the hands of griping usurers:"—and the truth is, that it operates to keep them from thence.

If petitions are to be contrived to cover the designs of a house of assembly, and give a pretence for its conduct, or if a house is to be led by the nose by the idle tale of any fifty or sixty signers to a petition, it is time for the public to look a little closer into the conduct of its representatives.

treasurer. They are only stewards over it for those who please to put it, or let it remain there; and, therefore, this second part of the assertion is somewhat ridiculous.

The next paragraph in the report is, "that the accumulation of *enormous wealth* in the hands of a *society* who claim perpetual duration, will necessarily produce a degree of influence and power which cannot be entrusted in the hands of any set of men whatsoever, (the committee I presume excepted) without endangering the public safety."—— There is an air of solemn fear in this paragraph which is something like introducing a ghost in a play to keep people from laughing at the players.

I have already shewn that whatever wealth there may be, at any time in the Bank, is the property of those who have demands upon the Bank, and not the property of the stockholders. As a society, they hold no property, and most probably never will, unless it should be a house to transact their business in, instead of hiring one. Every half year the Bank settles its accounts, and each individual stockholder takes his dividend of gain or loss to himself, and the Bank begins the next half year in the same manner it began the first, and so on. This being the nature of a Bank, there can be no accumulation of wealth among them as a society.

For what purpose the word "*society*" is introduced into the report I do not know, unless it be to make a false impression upon people's minds. It has no connection with the subject, for the Bank is not a society, but a company, and denominated so in the charter. There are several religious societies incorporated in this State, which hold property as the right of those societies, and to which no person can belong that is not of the same religious profession. But this is not the case with the Bank. The Bank is a company for the promotion and convenience of commerce, which is a matter in which all the State is interested, and holds no property in the manner which those societies do.

But there is a direct contradiction in this paragraph to that which goes before it. The committee, there, accuses the Bank of banishing the specie, and here, of accumulating enormous sums of it. So here are two enormous sums of specie; one enormous sum going out, and another enormous sum remaining. To reconcile this contradiction, the committee should have added to their report, *that they suspected the Bank had found out the philosopher's stone, and kept it a secret.*

The next paragraph is, " that the said Bank, in its corporate capacity, is empowered to hold estates to the amount of ten millions of dollars, and by the tenor of the present charter is to exist for ever, without being obliged to yield any emolument to the government, or be at least dependant on it."

The committee have gone so vehemently into this business, and so completely shewn their want of knowledge in every point of it, as to make, in the first part of this paragraph, a fear of what, the greater fear is, will never happen. Had the committee known any thing of banking, they must have known, that the objection against banks has been (not that they held great estates, but) that they held none; that they had no real, fixed, and visible property, and that it is the maxim and practice of banks not to hold any.

The Honourable Chancellor Livingston, late secretary for foreign affairs, did me the honour of shewing, and discoursing with me, on a plan of a Bank he had drawn up for the State of New York. In this plan it was made a condition or obligation, that whatever the capital of the Bank amounted to in specie, there should be added twice as much in real estates. But the mercantile interest rejected the proposition.

It was a very good piece of policy in the assembly which passed the charter act, to add the clause to empower the Bank to purchase and hold real estates. It was as an inducement to the Bank to do it, because such estates, being held as the property of the Bank, would be so many mortgages to the public in addition to the money capital of the Bank.

But the doubt is that the Bank will not be induced to accept the opportunity. The Bank has existed five years and has not purchased a shilling of real property: and as such property or estates cannot be purchased by the Bank but with the interest money which the stock produces, and as that is divided every half year among the stockholders, and each stockholder chooses to have the management of his own dividend, and if he lays it out in purchasing an estate to have that estate his own private property, and under his own immediate management, there is no expectation, so far from being any fear, that the clause will be accepted.

Where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime; and the committee are criminal in not understanding this subject

better. Had this clause not been in the charter, the committee might have reported the want of it as a defect, in not empowering the Bank to hold estates as a real security to its creditors: but as the complaint now stands, the accusation of it is, that the charter empowers the Bank to *give real security* to its creditors. A complaint never made, heard of, or thought of before.

The second article in the paragraph is, " that the Bank, according to the tenor of the present charter, is to exist for ever."———Here I agree with the committee, and am glad to find that among such a list of errors and contradictions there is one idea which is not wrong, although the committee have made a wrong use of it.

As we are not to live for ever ourselves, and other generations are to follow us, we have neither the power nor the right to govern them, or to say how they shall govern themselves. It is the summit of human vanity, and shews a covetousness of power beyond the grave, to be dictating to the world to come. It is sufficient that we do that which is right in our own day, and leave them with the advantage of good examples.

As the generations of the world are every day both commencing and expiring, therefore, when any public act of this sort is done, it naturally supposes the age of that generation to be then beginning, and the time contained between coming of age, and the natural end of life, in the extent of time it has a right to go to, which may be about thirty years; for though many may die before, others will live beyond; and the mean time is equally fair for all generations.

If it was made an article in the constitution, that all laws and acts should cease of themselves in thirty years, and have no legal force beyond that time, it would prevent their becoming too numerous and voluminous, and serve to keep them within view, and in a compact compass. Such as were proper to be continued, would be enacted again, and those which were not, would go into oblivion. There is the same propriety that a nation should fix a time for a full settlement of its affairs, and begin again from a new date, as that an individual should; and to keep within the distance of thirty years would be a convenient period.

The British, from the want of some general regulation of this kind, have a great number of obsolete laws; which, though out of use and forgot, are not out of force, and are occasionally brought up for sharping purposes, and innocent unwary persons trepanned thereby.

To extend this idea still farther, it would probably be a considerable improvement in the political system of nations, to make all treaties of peace for a limited time. It is the nature of the mind to feel uneasy under the idea of a condition perpetually existing over it, and to excite in itself apprehensions that would not take place were it not from that cause.

Were treaties of peace made for, and renewable every seven or ten years, the natural effect would be, to make peace continue longer than it does under the custom of making peace for ever. If the parties felt or apprehended any inconveniences under the terms already made, they would look forward to the time when they should be eventually relieved therefrom, and might renew the treaty on improved conditions. This opportunity periodically occurring, and the recollection of it always existing, would serve as a chimney to the political fabric, to carry off the smoke and fume of national fire. It would naturally abate, and honourably take off, the edge and occasion for fighting; and however the parties might determine to do it, when the time of the treaty should expire, it would then seem like fighting in cool blood: the fighting temper would be dissipated before the fighting time arrived, and negociation supply its place. To know how probable this may be, a man need do no more than observe the progress of his own mind on any private circumstance similar in its nature to a public one.—But to return to my subject.

To give limitation is to give duration: and though it is not a justifying reason, that because an act or contract is not to last for ever, that it shall be broken or violated today, yet, where no time is mentioned, the omission affords an opportunity for the abuse. When we violate a contract on this pretence, we assume a right that belongs to the next generation; for though they, as a following generation, have the right of altering or setting it aside, as not being concerned in the making it, or not being done in their day, we, who made it, have not that right; and, therefore, the committee, in this part of their report, have made a wrong use of a right principle; and as this clause in the charter might have been altered by the consent of the parties, it cannot be produced to justify the violation. And were it not altered, there would be an inconvenience from it. The term "for ever" is an absurdity that would have no effect. The next age will think for itself by the same rule of right that we have done, and not admit any assumed authority of

ours to encroach upon the system of their day. Our *for ever* ends where their *for ever* begins.

The third article in this paragraph is, that the Bank holds its charter "without being obliged to yield any emolument to the Government."

Ingratitude has a short memory. It was on the failure of the Government to support the public cause, that the Bank originated. It stept in as a support when some of the persons then in the Government, and who now oppose the Bank, were apparently on the point of abandoning the cause, not from disaffection, but from despair. While the expences of the war were carried on by emissions of continental money, any set of men, in Government, might carry it on. The means being provided to their hands, required no great exertions of fortitude or wisdom; but when this means failed, they would have failed with it, had not a public spirit awakened itself with energy out of doors. It was easy times to the Governments while continental money lasted. The dream of wealth supplied the reality of it; but when the dream vanished, the Government did not awake.

But what right has the Government to expect any emolument from the Bank? does the committee mean to set up acts and charters for sale, or what do they mean? Because it is the practice of the British ministry to grind a toll out of every public institution they can get a power over, is the same practice to be followed here?

The war being now ended, and the Bank having rendered the service expected, or rather hoped for, from it, the principal public use of it, at this time, is for the promotion and extension of commerce. The whole community derives benefit from the operation of the Bank. It facilitates the commerce of the country. It quickens the means of purchasing and paying for country-produce, and hastens on the exportation of it. The emolument, therefore, being to the community, it is the office and duty of Government to give protection to the Bank.

Among many of the principal conveniences arising from the Bank, one of them is, that it gives a kind of life to, what would otherwise be, dead money. Every merchant and person in trade, has always in his hands some quantity of cash, which constantly remains with him; that is, he is never entirely without: this remnant money, as it may be called, is of no use to him till more is collected to it. He can neither buy produce nor merchandize with it, and this

being the case with every person in trade, there will be (though not all at the same time) as many of those sums lying uselessly by, and scattered throughout the city, as there are persons in trade, besides many that are not in trade.

I should not suppose the estimation over-rated, in conjecturing, that half the money in the city, at any one time, lies in this manner. By collecting those scattered sums together, which is done by means of the Bank, they become capable of being used, and the quantity of circulating cash is doubled, and by the depositors alternately lending them to each other, the commercial system is invigorated: and as it is the interest of the Bank to preserve this money in the country for domestic uses only, and as it has the best opportunity of doing so, the Bank serves as a centinel over the specie.

If a farmer, or a miller, comes to the city with produce, there are but few merchants that can individually purchase it with ready money of their own; and those few would command nearly the whole market for country produce: but, by means of the Bank, this monopoly is prevented, and the chance of the market enlarged. It is very extraordinary that the late assembly should promote monopolizing; yet such would be the effect of suppressing the Bank; and it is much to the honour of those merchants, who are capable, by their fortunes, of becoming monopolizers, that they support the Bank. In this case, honour operates over interest. They were the persons who first set up the Bank, and their honour is now engaged to support what it is their interest to put down.

If merchants, by this means, or farmers by similar means, among themselves, can mutually aid and support each other, what has the Government to do with it? What right has it to expect emolument from associated industry, more than from individual industry? It would be a strange sort of a Government, that should make it illegal for people to assist each other, or pay a tribute for doing so.

But the truth is, that the Government has already derived emoluments, and very extraordinary ones. It has already received its full share, by the services of the Bank during the war; and it is every day receiving benefits, because whatever promotes and facilitates commerce, serves likewise to promote and facilitate the revenue.

The last article in this paragraph is, "that the Bank is not the least dependant on the Government."

Have the committee so soon forgot the principles of republican Government and the constitution, or are they so little acquainted with them, as not to know, that this article in their report partakes of the nature of treason? Do they not know, that freedom is destroyed by dependance, and the safety of the State endangered thereby? Do they not see, that to hold any part of the citizens of the State, as yearly pensioners on the favour of an assembly, is striking at the root of free elections?

If other parts of their report discover a want of knowledge on the subject of Banks, this shews a want of principle in the science of Government.

Only let us suppose this dangerous idea carried into practice, and then see what it leads to. If corporate bodies are, after their incorporation, to be annually dependant on an assembly for the continuance of their charter, the citizens, which compose those corporations are not free. The Government holds an authority and influence over them, in a manner different from what it does over other citizens, and by this means destroys that equality of freedom, which is the bulwark of the republic and the constitution.

By this scheme of Government any party, which happens to be uppermost in a State, will command all the corporations in it, and may create more for the purpose of extending that influence. The dependant borough-towns in England are the rotten part of their Government, and this idea of the committee has a very near relation to it.

"If you do not do so and so," expressing what was meant, "take care of your charter," was a threat thrown out against the Bank. But as I do not wish to enlarge on a disagreeable circumstance, and hope that what is already said, is sufficient to shew the anti-constitutional conduct and principles of the committee, I shall pass on to the next paragraph in the report.—Which is———

"That the great profits of the Bank, which will daily increase as money grows scarcer, and which already far exceed the profits of European Banks, have tempted foreigners to vest their money in this Bank, and thus to draw from us large sums for interest."

Had the committee understood the subject, some dependance might be put on their opinion, which now cannot. Whether money will grow scarcer, and whether the profits of the Bank will increase, are more than the committee know, or are judges sufficient to guess at. The committee are not so capable of taking care of commerce, as commerce

is capable of taking care of itself. The farmer understands farming, and the merchant understands commerce; and as riches are equally the object of both, there is no occasion that either should fear that the other will seek to be poor. The more money the merchant has, so much the better for the farmer, who has produce to sell; and the richer the farmer is, so much the better for the merchant, when he comes to his store.

As to the profits of the Bank, the stockholders must take their chance for it. It may some years be more and others less, and upon the whole may not be so productive as many other ways that money may be employed. It is the convenience which the stockholders, as commercial men, derive from the establishment of the Bank, and not the mere interest they receive, that is the inducement to them. It is the ready opportunity of borrowing alternately of each other that forms the principal object: and as they pay as well as receive a great part of the interest among themselves, it is nearly the same thing, both cases considered at once, whether it is more or less.

The stockholders are occasionally depositors and sometines borrowers of the Bank. They pay interest for what they borrow, and receive none for what they deposit; and were a stockholder to keep a nice account of the interest he pays for the one and loses upon the other, he would find, at the year's end, that ten per cent upon his stock would probably not be more than common interest upon the whole, if so much.

As to the committee complaining "that foreigners by vesting their money in the Bank will draw large sums from us for interest," is like a miller complaining in a dry season, that so much water runs into his dam that some of it runs over.

Could those foreigners draw this interest without putting in any capital, the complaint would be well founded; but as they must first put money in before they can draw any out, and as they must draw many years before they can draw even the numerical sum they put in at first, the effect, for at least twenty years to come, will be directly contrary to what the committee states; because we draw *capitals* from them and they only *interest* from us, and as we shall have the use of the money all the while it remains with us, the advantage will always be in our favour.——In framing this part of the report, the committee must have forgot

which side of the Atlantic they were on, for the case would be as they state it if we put money into their Bank instead of their putting it into ours.

I have now gone through, line by line, every objection against the Bank, contained in the first half of the report; what follows may be called, *The Lamentations of the Committee*, and a lamentable pusillanimous degrading affair it is. It is a public affront, a reflection upon the sense and spirit of the whole country. I shall give the remainder together as it stands in the report, and then my remarks.

The Lamentations are, "That foreigners will doubtless be more and more induced to become stockholders, until the time may arrive when this *enormous* engine of power may become subject to foreign influence, this country may be agitated by the politics of European Courts, and the good people of America reduced once more into a state of subordination and dependance upon some one or other of the European powers. That at best, if it were even confined to the hands of Americans, it would be totally destructive of that equality which ought to prevail in a republic. We have nothing in our free and equal Government capable of balancing the influence which this Bank must create; and we see nothing which in the course of a few years can prevent the directors of the Bank from governing Pennsylvania. Already we have felt its influence indirectly interfering in the measures of the legislature. Already the house of assembly, the representatives of the people, have been threatened, that the credit of our paper currency will be blasted by the Bank; and if this growing evil continues, we fear the time is not very distant when the Bank will be able to dictate to the legislature, what laws to pass, and what to forbear."

When the sky falls we shall be all killed. There is something so ridiculously grave, so wide of probability, and so wild, confused, and inconsistent in the whole composition of this long paragraph, that I am at a loss how to begin upon it—It is like a drowning man crying fire! fire!

This part of the report is made up of two dreadful predictions. The first is, that if foreigners purchase Bank stock we shall be all ruined:—the second is, that if the Americans keep the Bank to themselves, we shall also be ruined.

A committee of fortune-tellers is a novelty in Government: and the gentlemen, by giving this specimen of their

art, have ingeniously saved their honour on one point, which is, that though people may say they are not bankers, nobody can say they are not conjurors. There is, however, one consolation left, which is, that the committee do not know *exactly* how long it may be; so there is some hope that we may all be in heaven when this dreadful calamity happens upon earth.

But to be serious, if any seriousness is necessary on so laughable a subject. If the State should think there is any thing improper in foreigners purchasing Bank stock, or any other kind of stock or funded property (for I see no reason why Bank stock should be particularly pointed at) the legislature have authority to prohibit it. It is a mere political opinion that has nothing to do with the charter, or the charter with that; and therefore the first dreadful prediction vanishes.

It has always been a maxim in politics, founded on, and drawn from natural causes and consequences, that the more foreign countries which any nation can interest in the prosperity of its own, so much the better. Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also; and therefore, when foreigners vest their money with us, they naturally invest their good wishes with it; and it is we that obtain an influence over them, not they over us. But the committee set out so very wrong at first, that the further they travelled the more they were out of their way; and now they are got to the end of their report, they are at the utmost distance from their business.

As to the second dreadful part, that of the Bank overturning the Government, perhaps the committee meant that at the next general election themselves might be turned out of it, which has partly been the case; not by the influence of the Bank, for it had none, not even enough to obtain the permission of a hearing from Government, but by the influence of reason and the choice of the people, who most probably resent the undue and unconstitutional influence which that house and the committee were assuming over the privileges of citizenship.

The committee might have been so modest as to have confined themselves to the Bank, and not thrown a general odium on the whole country. Before the events can happen which the committee predict, the electors of Pennsylvania must become dupes, dunces, and cowards, and therefore when the committee predict the dominion of the Bank they predict the disgrace of the people.

The committee having finished their report proceed to give their advice, which is,

" That a committee be appointed to bring in a bill to repeal the act of assembly, passed the first day of April, 1782, entitled, *An Act to incorporate the subscribers to the Bank of North America*," and also to repeal one other act of the assembly, passed the 18th of March, 1782, entitled, " *An Act for preventing and punishing the counterfeiting of the common seal, Bank bills, and Bank notes of the President, Directors, and Company of the Bank of North America, and for other purposes therein mentioned.*"

There is something in this sequel to the report that is perplexed and obscure.

Here are two acts to be repealed. One is, the incorporating act. The other, the act for preventing and punishing the counterfeiting of the common seal, Bank bills, and Bank notes of the President, Directors, and Company of the Bank of North America.

It would appear from the committee's manner of arranging them (were it not for the difference of the dates) that the act for punishing the counterfeiting the common seal, &c. of the Bank, followed the act of incorporation, and that the common seal there referred to is a common seal which the Bank held in consequence of the aforesaid incorporating act. But the case is quite otherwise. The act for punishing the counterfeiting the common seal, &c. of the Bank, was passed prior to the incorporating act, and refers to the common seal which the Bank held in consequence of the charter of Congress, and the style which the act expresses, of President, Directors, and Company of the Bank of North America, is the corporate style which the Bank derives under the Congress charter.

The punishing act, therefore, hath two distinct legal points. The one is an authoritative public recognition of the charter of Congress. The second is, the punishment it inflicts on counterfeiting.

The legislature may repeal the punishing part, but it cannot undo the recognition, because no repealing act can say that the State *has not* recognized. The recognition is a mere matter of fact, and no law or act can undo a fact or put it, if I may so express it, in the condition it was before it existed. The repealing act, therefore, does not reach the full point the committee had in view; for even admitting it to be a repeal of the state charter, it still leaves another charter recognized in its stead. The charter of Congress,

standing merely on itself, would have a doubtful authority, but the recognition of it by the State gives it legal ability. The repealing act, it is true, sets aside the punishment, but does not bar the operation of the charter of Congress as a charter recognized by the State, and therefore the committee did their business but by halves.

I have now gone entirely through the report of the committee, and a more irrational, inconsistent, contradictory report will scarcely be found on the journals of any legislature in America.

How the repealing act is to be applied, or in what manner it is to operate, is a matter yet to be determined. For admitting a question of law to arise, whether the charter, which that act attempts to repeal, is a law of the land in the manner which laws of universal operation are, or of the nature of a contract made between the public and the Bank (as I have already explained in this work) the repealing act does not and cannot decide the question, because it is the repealing act that makes the question, and its own fate is involved in the decision. It is a question of law, and not a question of legislation; and must be decided in a court of justice, and not by a house of assembly.

But the repealing act, by being passed prior to the decision of this point, assumes the power of deciding it, and the assembly in so doing, erects itself unconstitutionally into a tribunal of judicature, and absorbs the authority and right of the courts of justice into itself.

Therefore, the operation of the repealing act, in its very outset, requires injustice to be done. For it is impossible, on the principles of a republican Government and the constitution to pass an act to forbid any of the citizens the right of appealing to the courts of justice on any matter in which his interest or property is affected; but the first operation of this act goes to shut up the courts of justice, and holds them subservient to the assembly. It either commands or influences them not to hear the case, or to give judgment on it on the mere will of one party only.

I wish the citizens to awaken themselves on this subject. Not because the Bank is concerned, but because their own constitutional rights and privileges are involved in the event. It is a question of exceeding great magnitude; for if an assembly is to have this power, the laws of the land and the courts of justice are but of little use.

Having now finished with the report, I proceed to the third and last subject—that of paper money.

I remember a German farmer expressing as much in a few words as the whole subject requires—"*money is money, and paper is paper.*"—All the invention of man cannot make them otherwise. The alchymist may cease his labours, and the hunter after the philosopher's stone go to rest, if paper cannot be metamorphosed into gold and silver, or made to answer the same purpose in all cases.

Gold and silver are the emissions of nature: paper is the emission of art. The value of gold and silver is ascertained by the quantity which nature has made in the earth. We cannot make that quantity more or less than it is, and therefore the value being dependant upon the quantity, depends not on man. Man has no share in making gold or silver; all that his labours and ingenuity can accomplish is, to collect it from the mine, refine it for use, and give it an impression, or stamp it into coin.

Its being stamped into coin adds considerably to its convenience, but nothing to its value. It has then no more value than it had before. Its value is not in the impression but in itself. Take away the impression and still the same value remains. Alter it as you will, or expose it to any misfortune that can happen, still the value is not diminished. It has a capacity to resist the accidents that destroy other things. It has, therefore, all the requisite qualities that money can have, and is a fit material to make money of; and nothing which has not all those properties can be fit for the purpose of money.

Paper, considered as a material whereof to make money, has none of the requisite qualities in it. It is too plentiful, and too easily come at. It can be had any where, and for a trifle.

There are two ways in which I shall consider paper.

The only proper use for paper, in the room of money, is to write promissory notes and obligations of payment in specie upon. A piece of paper, thus written and signed, is worth the sum it is given for, if the person who gives it is able to pay it; because, in this case, the law will oblige him. But if he is worth nothing, the paper note is worth nothing. The value, therefore, of such a note, is not in the note itself, for that is but paper and promise, but in the man who is obliged to redeem it with gold or silver.

Paper, circulating in this manner, and for this purpose, continually points to the place and person where, and of whom, the money is to be had, and at last finds his home;

and, as it were, unlocks its master's chest and pays the bearer.

But when an assembly undertake to issue paper *as* money, the whole system of safety and certainty is overturned, and property set afloat. Paper-notes given and taken between individuals as a promise of payment is one thing, but paper issued by an assembly *as* money is another thing. It is like putting an apparition in the place of a man; it vanishes with looking at, and nothing remains but the air.

Money, when considered as the fruit of many years industry, as the reward of labour, sweat and toil, as the widow's dowry and children's portion, and as the means of procuring the necessaries, and alleviating the afflictions of life, and making old age a scene of rest, has something in it sacred that is not to be sported with, or trusted to the airy bubble of paper currency.

By what power or authority an assembly undertake to make paper-money is difficult to say. It derives none from the constitution, for that is silent on the subject. It is one of those things which the people have not delegated, and which, were they at any time assembled together, they would not delegate. It is, therefore an assumption of power which an assembly is not warranted in, and which may, one day or other, be the means of bringing some of them to punishment.

I shall enumerate some of the evils of paper-money and conclude with offering means for preventing them.

One of the evils of paper-money is, that it turns the whole country into stock-jobbers. The precariousness of its value and the uncertainty of its fate continually operate, night and day, to produce this destructive effect. Having no real value in itself it depends for support upon accident, caprice and party, and as it is the interest of some to depreciate and of others to raise its value, there is a continual invention going on that destroys the morals of the country.

It was horrid to see and hurtful to recollect how loose the principals of justice were let by means of the paper-emissions during the war. The experience then had, should be a warning to any assembly how they venture to open such a dangerous door again.

As to the romantic if not hypocritical tale, that a virtuous people need no gold and silver and that paper will do as well, requires no other contradiction than the experience

we have seen. Though some well-meaning people may be inclined to view it in this light, it is certain that the sharper always talks this language.

There are a set of men who go about making purchases upon credit, and buying estates they have not wherewithall to pay for; and having done this, their next step is to fill the newspapers with paragraphs of the scarcity of money and the necessity of a paper-emission, than to have it made a legal tender under the pretence of supporting its credit; and when out, to depreciate it as fast as they can, get a deal of it for a little price and cheat their creditors; and this is the concise history of paper-money schemes.

But why, since the universal custom of the world has established money as the most convenient medium of traffic and commerce, should paper be set up in preference to gold and silver? The productions of nature are surely as innocent as those of art; and in the case of money, are abundantly, if not infinitely, more so. The love of gold and silver may produce covetousness, but covetousness, when not connected with dishonesty, is not properly a vice. It is frugality run to an extreme.

But the evils of paper-money have no end. Its uncertain and fluctuating value is continually awakening or creating new schemes of deceit. Every principle of justice is put to the rack and the bond of society dissolved: the suppression therefore of paper-money might very properly have been put into the act for preventing vice and immorality.

The pretence for paper-money has been, that there was not a sufficiency of gold and silver. This, so far from being a reason for paper-emissions, is a reason against them.

As gold and silver are not the productions of North America, they are, therefore, articles of importation; and if we set up a paper-manufactory of money, it amounts, as far as it is able, to prevent the importation of hard money, or to send it out again as fast as it comes in; and by following this practice we shall continually banish the specie, till we have none left, and be continually complaining of the grievance instead of remedying the cause.

Considering gold and silver as articles of importation, there will in time, unless we prevent it by paper-emission, be as much in the country as the occasion of it require, for the same reasons there are as much of other imported ar-

ticles. But as every yard of cloth manufactured in the country occasions a yard the less to be imported, so it is by money, with the difference, that in the one case we manufacture the thing itself and in the other we do not. We have cloth for cloth, but we have only paper-dollars for silver ones.

As to the assumed authority of any assembly in making paper-money, or paper of any kind, a legal tender, or in other language, a compulsive payment, it is a most presumptuous attempt at arbitrary power. There can be no such power in a republican government: the people have no freedom, and property no security where this practice can be acted: and the committee who shall bring in a report for this purpose, or the member who moves for it, and he who seconds it merit impeachment, and sooner or later may expect it.

Of all the various sorts of base coin, paper-money is the basest. It has the least intrinsic value of any thing that can be put in the place of gold and silver. A hobnail or a piece of wampum far exceeds it. And there would be more propriety in making those articles a legal tender than to make paper so.

It was the issuing base coin and establishing it as a tender, that was one of the principle means of finally overthrowing the power of the Stuart family in Ireland. The article is worth reciting, as it bears such a resemblance to the progress practised on paper-money.

"Brass and copper of the basest kind, old cannon, broken bells, household utensils were assiduously collected; and from every pound weight of such vile materials, valued at four-pence, pieces were coined and circulated to the amount at five pounds nominal value. By the first proclamation they were made current in all payments to and from the king and the subjects of the realm, except in duties on the importation of foreign goods, money left in trust, or due by mortgage, bills or bonds; and *James* promised that when the money should be decried, he would receive it in all payments or make full satisfaction in gold and silver. The nominal value was afterwards raised by subsequent proclamations, the original restrictions removed, and this base money was ordered to be received in all kinds of payments. As brass and copper grew scarce it was made of still viler materials, of tin and pewter, and old debts of one thousand pounds were discharged by pieces of vile metal, amounting

to thirty shillings in intrinsic value."* Had King James thought of paper, he needed not to have been at the trouble or expence of collecting brass and copper, broken bells and household utensils.

The laws of a country ought to be the standard of equity, and calculated to impress on the minds of the people the moral as well as the legal obligations of reciprocal justice. But tender laws, of any kind, operate to destroy morality, and to dissolve by the pretence of law what ought to be the principle of law to support, reciprocal justice between man and man: and the punishment of a member who should move for such a law ought to be DEATH.

When the recommendation of Congress, in the year 1780, for repealing the tender laws was before the assembly of Pennsylvania, on casting up the votes, for and against bringing in a bill to repeal those laws, the numbers were equal, and the casting vote rested on the speaker, Colonel Bayard, "I give my vote," said he, "for the repeal, from a consciousness of justice; the tender laws operate to establish iniquity by law." But when the bill was brought in, the house rejected it, and the tender laws continued to be the means of fraud.

If any thing had, or could have. a value equal to gold and silver, it would require no tender law; and if it had not that value, it ought not to have such a law; and, therefore all tender laws are tyrannical and unjust, and calculated to support fraud and oppression.

Most of the advocates for tender laws are those who have debts to discharge, and who take refuge in such a law, to violate their contracts and cheat their creditors. But as no law can warrant the doing an unlawful act, therefore the proper mode of proceeding, should any such laws be enacted in future, will be to impeach and execute the members who moved for and seconded such a bill, and put the debtor and the creditor in the same situation they were in, with respect to each other, before such a law was passed. Men ought to be made to tremble at the idea of such a barefaced act of injustice. It is in vain to talk of restoring credit, or to complain that money cannot be borrowed at legal interest, until every idea of tender laws is totally and publicly reprobated and extirpated from among us.

As to paper money, in any light it can be viewed, it is at

* Leland's History of Ireland, vol. iv. p. 265.

best a bubble. Considered as property, it is inconsistent to suppose that the breath of an assembly, whose authority expires with the year, can give to paper the value and duration of gold. They cannot even engage that the next assembly shall receive it in taxes. And by the precedent (for authority there is none) that any one assembly makes paper-money, another may do the same, until confidence and credit are totally expelled, and all the evils of depreciation acted over again. The amount, therefore, of paper-money is this, That it is the illegitimate offspring of assemblies, and when their year expires, they leave a vagrant on the hands of the public.

Having now gone through the three subjects proposed in the title of this work, I shall conclude with offering some thoughts on the present affairs of the State.

My idea of a single legislature was always founded on a hope, that whatever personal parties there might be in the State, they would all unite and agree in the general principles of good Government—that these party differences would be dropped at the threshold of the State-house, and that the public good, or the good of the whole, would be the governing principle of the legislature within it.

Party dispute, taken on this ground, would only be who should have the honour of making the laws; not what the laws should be. But when party operates to produce party laws, a single house is a single person, and subject to the haste, rashness, and passion of individual sovereignty. At last, it is an aristocracy.

The form of the present constitution is now made to trample on its principles, and the constitutional members are anti-constitutional legislators. They are fond of supporting the form for the sake of the power, and they dethrone the principle to display the sceptre.

The attack of the late assembly on the Bank, discovers such a want of moderation and prudence, of impartiality and equity, of fair and candid inquiry and investigation, of deliberate and unbiassed judgment, and such a rashness of thinking and vengeance of power as is inconsistent with the safety of the Republic. It was judging without hearing, and execution without trial.

By such rash, injudicious, and violent proceedings, the interest of the State is weakened, its prosperity diminished, and its commerce and its specie banished to other places.—Suppose the Bank had not been in an immediate condition

to have stood such a sudden attack, what a scene of instant distress would the rashness of that assembly have brought upon this city and State. The holders of Bank notes, whoever they might be, would have been thrown into the utmost confusion and difficulties. It is no apology to say the house never thought of this, for it was their duty to have thought of every thing.

But by the prudent and provident management of the Bank (though unsuspicious of the attack) it was enabled to stand the run upon it without stopping payment a moment, and to prevent the evils and mischiefs taking place which the rashness of the assembly had a direct tendency to bring on; a trial that scarcely a bank in Europe, under a similar circumstance, could have stood through.

I cannot see reason sufficient to believe that the hope of the house to put down the Bank was placed on the withdrawing the charter, so much as on the expectation of producing a bankruptcy on the Bank, by starting a run upon it. If this was any part of their project it was a very wicked one, because hundreds might have been ruined to gratify a party spleen.

But this not being the case, what has the attack amounted to, but to expose the weakness and rashness, the want of judgment as well as justice, of those who made it, and to confirm the credit of the Bank more substantially than it was before?

The attack, it is true, has had one effect, which is not in the power of the assembly to remedy; it has banished many thousand hard dollars from the State. By the means of the Bank, Pennsylvania had the use of a great deal of hard money belonging to citizens of other States, and that without any interest, for it laid here in the nature of a deposit, the depositors taking Bank notes in its stead. But the alarm called those notes in, and the owners drew out their cash.

The banishing the specie served to make room for the paper-money of the assembly, and we have now paper dollars where we might have had silver ones. So that the effect of the paper-money has been to make less money in the State then there was before. Paper-money is like dram-drinking, it relieves for the moment by a deceitful sensation, but gradually diminishes the natural heat, and leaves the body worse than it found it. Where not this the case, and could money be made of paper at pleasure, every

sovereign in Europe would be as rich as he pleased. But the truth is, that it is a bubble, and the attempt vanity. Nature has provided the proper materials for money, gold and silver, and any attempt of ours to rival her is ridiculous.

But to conclude—If the public will permit the opinion of a friend who is attached to no party, and under obligations to none, nor at variance with any, and who through a long habit of acquaintance with them has never deceived them, that opinion shall be freely given.

The Bank is an institution capable of being made exceedingly beneficial to the State, not only as the means of extending and facilitating its commerce, but as a means of increasing the quantity of hard money in the State. The assembly's paper money serves directly to banish or crowd out the hard, because it is issued *as* money and put in the place of hard money. But Bank notes are of a very different kind, and produce a contrary effect. They are promissory notes payable on demand, and may be taken to the Bank and exchanged for gold or silver, without the least ceremony or difficulty.

The Bank, therefore, is obliged to keep a constant stock of hard money sufficient for this purpose; which is what the assembly neither does, nor can do by their paper; because the quantity of hard money collected by taxes into the treasury is trifling compared with the quantity that circulates in trade and through the Bank.

The method, therefore, to increase the quantity of hard money would be to combine the security of the Government and the Bank into one. And instead of issuing paper money that serves to banish the specie, to borrow the sum wanted of the Bank in Bank notes on the condition of the Bank exchanging those notes at stated periods and quantities with hard money.

Paper issued in this manner, and directed to this end, would, instead of banishing, work itself into gold and silver; because it will then be both the advantage and duty of the Bank, and of all the mercantile interest connected with it, to procure and import gold and silver from any part of the world it can be got, to exchange the notes with. The English Bank is restricted to the dealing in no other articles of importation than gold and silver, and we may make the same use of our Bank if we proceed properly with it.

Those notes will then have a double security, that of the Government and that of the Bank: and they will not be issued *as* money, but as hostages to be exchanged for hard money, and will, therefore, work the contrary way to what the paper of the assembly, uncombined with the security of the Bank, produces: and the interest allowed the Bank will be saved to Government by a saving of the expences and charges attending paper emissions.

It is, as I have already observed in the course of this work, the harmony of all the parts of a republic that constitutes their several and mutual good. A Government that is constructed only to govern, is not a Republican Government. It is combining authority with usefulness that in a great measure distinguishes the republican system from others.

Paper money appears, at first sight, to be a great saving, or rather that it costs nothing; but it is the dearest money there is. The ease with which it is emitted by an assembly at first, serves as a trap to catch people in at last. It operates as an anticipation of the next year's taxes. If the money depreciates after it is out, it then, as I have already remarked, has the effect of fluctuating stock, and the people become stock-jobbers to throw the loss on each other. If it does not depreciate, it is then to be sunk by taxes at the price of *hard money;* because the same quantity of produce, or goods, that would procure a paper dollar to pay taxes with, would procure a silver one for the same purpose. Therefore, in any case of paper money it is dearer to the country than hard money, by all the expence which the paper, printing, signing, and other attendant charges come to, and at last goes into the fire.

Suppose one hundred thousand dollars in paper money to be emitted every year by the assembly, and the same sum to be sunk every year by taxes, there will then be no more than one hundred thousand dollars out at any one time. If the expence of paper and printing, and of persons to attend the press while the sheets are striking off, signers, &c. be five per cent. it is evident, that in the course of twenty years' emissions, the one hundred thousand dollars will cost the country two hundred thousand dollars. Because the paper-maker's and printer's bills, and the expence of supervisors and signers, and other attendant charges, will

in that time amount to as much as the money amounts to; for the successive emissions are but a recoinage of the same sum.

But gold and silver require to be coined but once, and will last a hundred years, better than paper will one year, and at the end of that time be still gold and silver. Therefore the saving to Government, in combining its aid and security with that of the Bank in procuring hard money, will be an advantage to both, and to the whole community.

The case to be provided against, after this, will be, that the Government do not borrow too much of the Bank, nor the Bank lend more notes than it can redeem; and, therefore, should any thing of this kind be undertaken, the best way will be to begin with a moderate sum, and observe the effect of it. The interest given the Bank operates as a bounty on the importation of hard money, and which may not be more than the money expended in making paper emissions.

But nothing of this kind, nor any other public undertaking that requires security and duration beyond the year, can be gone upon under the present mode of conducting Government. The late assembly, by assuming a sovereign power over every act and matter done by the State in former assemblies, and thereby setting up a precedent of overhauling and overturning, as the accident of elections shall happen, or party prevail, have rendered Government incompetent to all the great objects of the State. They have eventually reduced the public to an annual body like themselves; whereas the public are a standing permanent body, holding annual elections.

There are several great improvements and undertakings, such as inland navigation, building bridges, opening roads of communication through the State, and other matters of a public benefit, that might be gone upon, but which now cannot, until this governmental error or defect is remedied. The faith of Government, under the present mode of conducting it, cannot be relied on. Individuals will not venture their money in undertakings of this kind, on an act that may be made by one assembly and broken by another. When a man can say that he cannot trust this Government, the importance and dignity of the public is diminished, sapped and undermined; and, therefore, it becomes the public

to restore their own honour, by setting these matters to rights.

Perhaps this cannot be effectually done until the time of the next convention, when the principles, on which they are to be regulated and fixed, may be made a part of the constitution.

In the mean time the public may keep their affairs in sufficient good order, by substituting prudence in the place of authority, and electing men into the Government who will at once throw aside the narrow prejudices of party, and make the good of the whole the ruling object of their conduct. And with this hope, and a sincere wish for their prosperity, I close my book.

THOMAS PAINE.

# PROSPECTS

ON

# THE RUBICON:

OR, AN

## Investigation

INTO

THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

OF

## The Politics

TO BE

*AGITATED AT THE MEETING OF PARLIAMENT.*

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BY THOMAS PAINE.

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# PREFACE.

An expression in the British Parliament respecting the American war, alluding to Julius Cæsar having passed the Rubicon, has on several occasions introduced that river as the figurative of war.

Fortunately for England she is yet on the peaceable side of the Rubicon; but as the flames once kindled are not always easily extinguished, the hopes of peace are not so clear as before the late mysterious dispute began.

But while the calm lasts, it may answer a very good purpose to take a view of the prospects, consistent with the maxim, that he that goeth to war should first sit down and count the cost.

The nation has a young and ambitious minister at its head, fond of himself; and deficient in experience; and instances have often shewn that judgment is a different thing to genius, and that the affairs of a nation are but unsafely trusted where the benefit of experience is wanting.

Illustrations have been drawn from the circumstances of the war before last to decorate the character of the present minister, and, perhaps, they have

been greatly overdrawn; for the management must have been bad to have done less than what was then done, when we impartially consider the means, the force, and the money employed.

It was then Great Britain and America against France singly, for Spain did not join till near the end of the war. The great number of troops which the American colonies then raised, and paid themselves, were sufficient to turn the scale, if all other parts had been equal. France had not at that time attended to naval affairs so much as she has done since; and the capture of French sailors before any declaration of war was made, which, however, it may be justified upon policy, will always be ranked among the clandestine arts of war, assured a certain, but unfair advantage against her, because it was like a man administering a disabling dose over night to the person whom he intends to challenge in the morning.

# PROSPECTS,

*&c. &c.*

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RIGHT by chance and wrong by system, are things so frequently seen in the political world, that it becomes a proof of prudence neither to censure nor applaud too soon.

"The Rubicon is past," was once given as a reason for prosecuting the most expensive war that England ever knew. Sore with the event, and groaning beneath a galling yoke of taxes, she has again been led ministerially on to the shore of the same delusive and fatal river, without being permitted to know the object or reason why.

Expensive preparations have been gone into; fears, alarms, dangers, apprehensions, have been mystically held forth as if the existence of the nation was at stake, and at last the mountain has brought forth a Dutch mouse.

Whosoever will candidly review the present national characters of England and France, cannot but be struck with surprize at the change that is taking place. The people of France are beginning to think for themselves, and the people of England resigning up the prvilege of thinking.

The affairs of Holland have been the bubble of the day; and a tax is to be laid on shoes and boots (so say the newspapers) for the service of the Stadtholder of Holland. This will undoubtedly do honour to the nation, by verifying the old English proverb, "over shoes over boots."

But though Democrites could scarcely have forborne laughing at the folly, yet as serious argument and sound reasoning are preferable to ridicule, it will be best to quit the vein of unprofitable humour, and give the cause a fair investigation. But before we do this, it may not be improper to take a general review of sundry political matters that will naturally lead to a better understanding of the subject.

What has been the event of all the wars of England, but an amazing accumulation of debt, and an unparalleled burden of taxes. Sometimes the pretence has been to support one outlandish cause, and sometimes another. At one time Austria, and another time Prussia, another to oppose Russia, and so on; but the consequence has always been TAXES. A few men have enriched themselves by jobs and contracts, and the groaning multitude borne the burden. What has England gained by war since the year 1738, only fifty years ago, to recompence her for TWO HUNDRED MILLIONS sterling, incurred as a debt within that time, and under the annual interest of which, besides what was incurred before, she is now groaning? Nothing at all.

The glare of fancied glory has often been held up, and the shadowy recompense imposed itself upon the senses. Wars that might have been prevented have been madly gone into, and the end has been debt and discontent. A sort of something which man can account for is mixed in his composition, and renders him the subject of deception by the very means he takes not to be deceived.

The jealousy which the individuals of every nation feels at the supposed designs of foreign powers, fits them to be the prey of ministers, and of those among themselves whose trade is war, or whose livelihoods is jobs and contracts. "Confusion to the politics of Europe, and may every nation be at war in six months," was a toast given in my hearing not long since. The man was in court to the Ministry for a job. Ye gentle graces, if any such there be, who preside over human actions, how must ye weep at the viciousness of man!

When we consider, for the feelings of nature cannot be dismissed, the calamities of war and the miseries it inflicts upon the human species, the thousands and tens of thousands of every age and sex who are rendered wretched by the event, surely there is something in the heart of man that calls upon him to think! Surely there is some tender chord tuned by the hand of its Creator, that struggles to emit in the hearing of the soul a note of sorrowing sympathy. Let it then be heard, and let men learn to feel, that the true greatness of a nation is founded on principles of humanity; and that to avoid a war when her own existence is not endangered, and wherein the happiness of man must be wantonly sacrificed, is a higher principle of true honour than madly to engage in it.

But independent of all civil and moral considerations,

there is no possible event that a war could produce benefits to England or France, on the present occasion, that could in the most distant proportion, recompense to either the expence she must be at. War involves in its progress such a train of unforeseen and unsupposed circumstances, such a combination of foreign matters, that no human wisdom can calculate the end. It has but one thing certain, and that is increase of TAXES. The policy of European Courts is now so cast, and their interest so interwoven with each other, that however easy it may be to begin a war, the weight and influence of interfering nations compel even the conqueror to unprofitable conditions of peace.

Commerce and maritime strength are now becoming the fashion, or rather the rage of Europe, and this naturally excites in them a combined wish to prevent either England or France increasing its comparative strength by destroying, or even relatively weakening, the other, and therefore, whatever views each may have at the commencement of a war, new enemies will arise as either gains the advantage, and continual obstacles ensue to embarrass success.

The greatness of Lewis the Fourteenth made Europe his enemy, and the same cause will produce the same consequence to any other European power. That nation, therefore, only is truly wise, who, contenting herself with the means of defence, creates to herself no unnecessary enemies by seeking to be greater than the system of Europe admits. The Monarch or the Minister who exceeds this line, knows but little of his business. It is what the poet, on another occasion, calls,

> "The point where sense and nonsense join."

Perhaps there is not a greater instance of the folly of calculating upon events, than are to be found in treaties of alliance. As soon as they have answered the immediate purpose of either of the parties, they are but little regarded. Pretences, afterwards, are never wanting to explain them away, nor reasons to render them abortive. And if half the money which nations lavish on speculative alliances were reserved for their own immediate purpose, whenever the occasion shall arrive, it would be more productively and advantageously employed.

Monarchs and Ministers, from ambition or resentment, often contemplate to themselves schemes of future greatness, and set out with what appears to them the fairest

prospect; in the mean while, the great wheel of time and fate revolves unobserved, and something, never dreamed of, turns up and blasts the whole. A few fancied or unprofitable laurels supply the absence of success, and the exhausted nation is HUZZARD INTO NEW TAXES.

The politics and interests of European courts are so frequently varying with regard to each other, that there is no fixing even the probability of their future conduct. But the great principle of alliancing seems to be but little understood, or little cultivated in courts, perhaps the least of all, in that of England. No alliance can be operative, that does not embrace within itself, not only the attachment of the Sovereigns, but the real interest of the nations.

The alliance between France and Spain, however it may be spoken of as a mere family compact, derives its greatest strength from national interest. The mines of Peru and Mexico, are the soul of this alliance. Were those mines extinct, the family compact would most probably dissolve.

There exists not a doubt in the mind of Spain, what part England would act, respecting those mines, could she demolish the maritime power of France; and therefore the interest of Spain feels itself continually united with France. Spain have high ideas of honour, but they have not the same ideas of English honour. They consider England as wholly governed by principles of interest, and that whatever she thinks it her interest to do, and supposes she has the power of doing, she makes very little ceremony of attempting. But this is not all. There is not a nation in Europe but what is more satisfied that those mines should be in the possession of Spain, than in that of any other European nation; because the wealth of those mines, sufficient to ruin Europe in the hands of some of its powers, is innocently employed with respect to Europe, and better and more peaceably distributed among them all, through the medium of Spain, than it would be through that of any other nation. This is one of the secret causes that combine so large a part of Europe in the interest of France, because they cannot but consider her as standing as a barrier, to secure to them the free and equal distribution of this wealth throughout all the dominions of Europe.

This alliance of interest is likewise one of the unseen cements that prevents Spain and Portugal, two nations not very friendly to each other, proceeding to hostilities. They are both in the same situation, and whatever their dislikes may be, they cannot fail to consider, that by giving way to

resentment that would weaken and exhaust themselves, each would be exposed a prey to some stronger power.

In short, this alliance of national interest is the only one that can be trusted, and the only one that can be operative. All other alliances formed on the mere will and caprice of sovereigns, of family connections, uncombined with national interest, are but the quagmire of politics, and never fail to become a loss to that nation who wastes its present substance on the expectancy of distant returns.

With regard to Holland, a man must know very little of the matter, not to know that there exists a stronger principle of rivalship between Holland and England in point of commerce, than prevails between England and France in point of power: and, therefore, whenever a Stadtholder of Holland shall see it his interest to unite with the principle of his country, and act in concert with the sentiments of the very people who pay him for his services, the means now taken by England to render him formidable, will operate contrary to the political expectations of the present day.

Circumstances will produce their own natural effects, and no other, let the hopes or expectations of man be what they may. It is not our doing a thing with a design that it shall answer such and such an end, that will cause it to produce that end; the means taken must have a natural ability and tendency within themselves to produce no other, for it is this, and not our wishes or policy, that governs the event.

The English navigation act was levelled against the interest of the Dutch as a whole nation, and therefore it is not to be supposed that the catching at the accidental circumstances of one man, as in the case of the present Stadtholder, can combine the interest of that country with this. A few years, perhaps a less time, may remove him to the place where all things are forgotten, and his successor contemplating his father's troubles will be naturally led to reprobate the means that produce them, and to repose himself on the interests of his country, in preference to the accidental and tumultuous assistance of exterior power.

England herself exhibits at this day, a species of this kind of policy. The present reign, by embracing the Scotch, has tranquillized and conciliated the spirit that disturbed the two former reigns. Accusations were not wanting at that time to reprobate the policy as tinctured with ingratitude towards those who were the immediate means of the Hanover succession. The brilliant pen of Junius was drawn forth, but in vain. It enraptured without convincing; and though

in the plenitude of its rage it might be said to give elegance to bitterness, yet the policy survived the blast.

What then will be the natural consequence of this expence, on account of the Stadtholder, or of a war entered into from that cause? Search the various windings and caverns of the human heart, and draw from thence the most probable conclusion, for this is more to be depended upon than the projects or declarations of ministers.

It may do very well for a paragraph in a newspaper, or the wild effusions of romantic politicians, or the mercenary views of those who wish for war on any occasion, or on no occasion at all, but for the sake of jobs and contracts, to talk of French finesse, or French intrigue; but the Dutch are not a people to be impressed by the finesse or intrigue of France or England, or any other nation. If there has been any finesse in the case, it has been between the Electorate of Hanover, the King of Prussia, and the Stadtholder, in which it is most probable the people of England will be finessed out of a sum of money.

The Dutch, as is already observed, are not a people open to the impression of finesse. It is lost upon them. They are impressed by their commercial interest. It is the political soul of their country, the spring of their actions, and when this principle coincides with their ideas of freedom, it has all the impulse a Dutchman is capable of feeling.

The opposition in Holland were the enemies of the Stadtholder, upon a conviction that he was not a friend of their national interests. They wanted no impulse but this. Whether this defect in him proceeded from foreign attachment, from bribery or corruption, or from the well-known defect of his understanding, is not the point of inquiry. It was the effect rather than the cause that irritated the Hollanders.

If the Stadtholder made use of the power he held in the Government to expose and endanger the interest and property of the very people who supported him, what other incentive does any man in any country require? If the Hollanders conceived the conduct of the Stadtholder injurious to their national interest, they had the same right to expel him which England had to expel the Stuarts; and the interference of England to re-establish him, serves only to confirm in the Hollanders the same hatred against England, which the attempt of Louis the Fourteenth to re-establish the Stuarts caused in England against France; therefore, if the present policy is intended to attach

Holland to England, it goes on a principle exceedingly erroneous.

Let us now consider the situation of the Stadtholder, as making another part of the question.

He must place the cause of his troubles to some secret influence which governed his conduct during the late war; or in other words, that he was suspected of being the tool of the then British Administration. Therefore, as every part of an argument ought to have its weight, instead of charging the French of intriguing with the Hollanders, the charge more consistently lies against the British Ministry, for intriguing with the Stadtholder, and endangering the nation in a war without a sufficient object. That which the Ministry are now doing confirms the suspicion, and explains to the Hollanders that collusion of the Stadtholder's against their national interests, which he must wish to have concealed, and the explanation does him more hurt than the unnecessary parade of service has done him good.

Nothing but necessity should have operated with England to appear openly in a case that must put the Stadtholder on still worse terms with his countrymen. Had France made any disposition for war, had she armed, had she made any one hostile preparation, there might have been then some pretence for England taking a step, that cannot fail to expose to the world that the suspicions of the Hollanders against the Stadtholder were well founded, and that their cause was just, however unsuccessful has been the event.

As to the consequence of Holland in the scale of Europe (the great stake, says some of the newspapers, for which England is contending) that is naturally pointed out by her condition: as merchants for other nations, her interest dictates to her to be a neutral power, and this she always will be unless she is made war upon, as was the case in the last war; and any expectation beyond what is the line of her interest, that is, beyond neutrality, either in England or France, will prove abortive. It therefore cannot be policy to go to war to effect that at a great expence, which will naturally happen of itself, and beyond which there is nothing to expect.

Let Holland be allied with England or with France, or with neither, or with both; her national conduct, consequently arising out of her circumstances, will be nearly the same, that is, she will be neutral. Alliances have such a natural tendency to sink into harmless unoperative things, that to make them a cause for going to war, either to prevent

their being formed, or to break any already formed, is the silliest speculation that war can be made upon, or wealth wasted to accomplish. It would scarcely be worth the attempt, if war could be carried on without expence, because almost the whole that can be hoped at the risk and expence of a war, is effected by their natural tendency to inactivity.

However pompous the declaration of an alliance may be, the object of many of them is no other than good will, and reciprocally securing, as far as such security can go, that neither shall join the enemies of the other in any war that may happen. But the national circumstances of Holland operate to ensure this tranquillity on her part as effectually to the power she is not allied with, as the engagement itself does to the power with whom she is allied; therefore, the security from circumstances is as good as the security from engagement.

As to a cordial union of interest between Holland and England, it is as unnatural to happen as between two individual rivals in the same trade: and if there is any step that England could take to put it at a still greater distance, it is the part she is now acting. She has increased the animosity of Holland on the speculative politics of interesting the Stadtholder, whose future repose depends upon uniting with the opposition in Holland, as the present reign did with the Scotch. How foolish then has been the policy, how needless the expence, of endangering a war on account of the affairs of Holland?

A cordiality between England and France is less improbable than between England and Holland. It is not how an Englishman feels, but how a Dutchman feels, that decides this question. Between England and France there is no real rivalship of interest; it is more the effect of temper, disposition, and the jealousy of confiding in each other, than any substantial cause, that keeps up the animosity. But on the part of Holland towards England, there is over and above the spirit of animosity, the more powerful motives of interested commercial rivalship, and the galling remembrance of past injuries. The making war upon them under Lord North's administration, when they were taking no part in the hostilities, but merely acting the business of merchants, is a circumstance that will not easily be forgotten by them. On these reasons, therefore, which are naturally deduced from the operative feelings of mankind, any expectation of attaching Holland to England as a friendly power,

is vague and futile. Nature has her own way of working in the heart, and all plans of politics not founded thereon, will disappoint themselves.

Any one who will review the history of English politics for several years past, must perceive that they have been directed without system. To establish this, it is only necessary to examine one circumstance fresh in the mind of every man.

The American war was prosecuted at a very great expence, on the publicly declared opinion, that the retaining America was necessary to the existence of England; but America being now separated from England, the present politics are, that she is better without her than with her. Both these cannot be true, and their contradiction to each other shews a want of system. If the latter is true, it amounts to an impeachment of the political judgment of Government, because the discovery ought to have been made before the expence was gone into. This single circumstance, yet fresh in every man's mind, is sufficient to create a suspicion, whether the present measures are more wisely founded than the former ones; and whether experience may not prove, that going to war for the sake of the Stadtholder, or for the hope of retaining a partial interest in Holland, who, under any connection can, from circumstance, be no more than a neutral power, is not as weak policy as going to war to retain America.

If England is powerful enough to maintain her own ground and consequence in the world as an independent nation, she needs no foreign connection. If she is not, the fact contradicts the popular opinion that she is. Therefore, either her politics are wrong, or her true condition is not what she supposes it to be. Either she must give up her opinion to justify her politics, or renounce her politics to vindicate her opinion.

If some kind of connection with Holland is supposed to be an object worthy some expence to obtain, it may be asked why was that connection broken by making war upon her in the last war? If it was not then worth preserving without expence, is it now worth re-obtaining at a vast expence? If the Hollanders do not like the English, can they be made to like them against their wills? If it shall be said that under the former connection they were unfriendly, will they be more friendly under any other? They were then in as free a situation to choose as any future circumstances can make them, and, therefore, the national

governing sentiment of the country can be easily discovered; for it signifies not what or who a Stadtholder may be, that which governs Holland is, and always must be, a commercial principle, and it will follow this line in spite of politics. Interest is as predominant and as silent in its operations as love; it resists all the attempts of force, and countermines all the stratagem of controul.

The most able English statesmen and politicians have always held it as a principle, that foreign connections served only to embarrass and exhaust England. That, surrounded by the ocean, she could not be invaded as countries are on the Continent of Europe, and that her insular situation dictated to her a different system of politics to what those countries required, and that to be enleagued with them was sacrificing the advantages of situation to a capricious system of politics. That though she might serve them, they could not much serve her, and that as the service must at all times be paid for, it could always be procured when it was wanted; and that it would be better to take it up in this line than to embarrass herself with speculative alliances that served rather to draw her into a continental war on their account, than extricate her from a war undertaken on her own account.

From this discussion of the affairs of Holland, and of the inadequacy of Holland as an object for war, we will proceed to shew that neither England nor France are in a condition to go to war; and that there is no present object to the one or to the other to recompense the expence that each must be at, or atone to the subjects of either for the additional burdens that might be brought upon them. I defend the cause of the poor, of the manufacturers, of the tradesman, of the farmer, and of all those on whom the real burden of taxes fall—but above all, I defend the cause of humanity.

It will always happen, that any rumour of war will be popular among a great number of people in London. There are thousands who live by it; it is their harvest; and the clamour which those people keep up in newspapers and conversations, passes unsuspiciously for the voice of the people, and it is not till after the mischief is done, that the deception is discovered.

Such people are continually holding up in very magnified terms the wealth of the nation, and the depressed condition of France, as reasons for commencing a war, without knowing any thing of either of these subjects.

But admitting them to be as true, as they are false, as will be hereafter shewn, it certainly indicates a vileness in the national disposition of any country, that will make the accidental internal difficulties to which all natious are subject, and sometimes encumbered with, a reason for making war upon them. The amazing increase and magnitude of the paper currency now floating in all parts of England, exposes her to a shock as much more tremendous than the shock occasioned by the bankruptcy of the South Sea funds, as the quantity of credit and paper currency is now greater than they were at that time. Whenever such a circumstance shall happen, and the wisest men in the nation are, and cannot avoid being impressed with the danger, it would be looked upon a baseness in France, to make the distress and misfortune of England a cause and opportunity for making war upon her, yet this hideous infidelity is publicly avowed in England. The bankruptcy of 1719, was precipitated by the great credit which the funds then had, and the confidence which people placed in them. Is not credit making infinitely greater strides now than it made then? Is not confidence equally as blind now as at that day? The people then supposed themselves as wise as they do now, yet they were miserably deceived, and the deception that has once happened will happen again from the same causes.

Credit is not money, and therefore it is not pay, neither can it be put in the place of money in the end. It is only the means of getting into debt, not the means of getting out, otherwise the national debt could not accumulate; and the delusion which nations are under respecting the extension of credit is exactly like that which every man feels respecting life, the end is always nearer than was expected; and we become bankrupts in time by the same delusions that nations become bankrupts in property.

The little which nations know, or are sometimes willing to know, of each other, serves to precipitate them into wars which neither would have undertaken, had she fully known the extent of the power and circumstances of the other; it may therefore be of some use to place the circumstances of England and France in a comparative point of view.

In order to do this the accidental circumstances of a nation must be thrown out of the account. By accidental circumstances is meant, those temporary disjointings and derangements of its internal system which every nation in the

world is subject to, and which, like accidental fits of sickness in the human body, prevents in the interim the full exertion and exercise of its natural powers.

The substantial basis of the power of a nation arises out of its population, its wealth and its revenues. To these may be added the disposition of the people. Each of these will be spoken to as we proceed.

Instances are not wanting to shew that a nation confiding too much on its natural strength, is less inclined to be active in its operations than one of less natural powers who is obliged to supply that deficiency by increasing its exertions. This has often been the case between England and France. The activity of England arising from its fears, has sometimes exceeded the exertions of France reposing on its confidence.

But as this depends on the accidental disposition of a people, it will not always be the same. It is a matter well known to every man who has lately been in France, that a very extraordinary change is working itself in the minds of the people of that nation. A spirit that will render France exceedingly formidable whenever its government shall embrace the fortunate opportunity of doubling its strength by allying, if it may be so expressed (for it is difficult to express a new idea by old terms) the majesty of the sovereign with the majesty of the nation; for of all alliances that is infinitely the strongest and the safest to be trusted to, because the interest so formed, and operating against external enemies can never be divided.

It may be taken as a certain rule, that a subject of any country attached to the government on the principles abovementioned is of twice the value he was before. Freedom in the subject is not a diminution, as was formerly believed, of the power of government, but an increase of it. Yet the progress by which changes of this kind are effected, requires to be nicely attended to.

Were Governments to offer freedom to the people, or to shew an anxiety for that purpose, the offer most probably would be rejected. The purpose for which it was offered might be mistrusted. Therefore, the desire must originate with, and proceed from, the mass of the people, and when the oppression becomes universal, and not before, is the important moment for the most effectual consolidation of national strength and greatness that can take place.

While this change is working, there will appear a kind

of chaos in the nation; but the creation we enjoy arose out of a chaos, and our greatest blessings appear to have a confused beginning.

Therefore we may take it for granted, that what has at this moment the appearance of disorder in France, is no more than one of the great links in that great chain of circumstances by which nations acquire the summit of their greatness. The provincial assemblies already begun in France, are as full, or rather a fuller representation of the people than the Parliaments of England are.

The French, or, as they were formerly called, the Franks, (from whence came the English word frank and free) were once the freest people in Europe; and as nations appear to have their periodical revolutions, it is very probable they will be so again. The change is already begun. The people of France, as it is before observed, are beginning to think for themselves, and the people of England resigning up the prerogative of thinking.

We shall now proceed to compare the present condition of England and France as to population, revenues, and wealth, and to shew that neither is in a condition of going to war, and that war can end in nothing but loss, and most probably a temporary ruin to both nations.

To establish this point, so necessary for both nations to be impressed with, a free investigation of all the matters connected with it is indispensable: if, therefore, any thing herein advanced shall be disagreeable, it must be justified on the ground that it is better to be known, in order to prevent ruin, than to be concealed, when such concealment serves only to hasten the ruin.

## OF POPULATION.

The population of France being upwards of twenty-four millions, is more than double that of Great Britain and Ireland; besides which, France recruits more soldiers in Switzerland than England does in Scotland and Ireland. To this may likewise be added, that England and Ireland are not on the best terms. The suspicion that England governs Ireland for the purpose of keeping her low to prevent her becoming a rival in trade and manufactures, will always operate to hold Ireland in a state of sentimental hostilities with England.

## REVENUES.

The revenues of France are twenty-four millions sterling.

The revenues of England are fifteen millions and an half. The taxes per head in France are twenty shillings sterling; the taxes per head in England are two pounds four shillings and two-pence. The national debt in France including the life annuities (which are two-fifths of the whole debt, and are annually expiring) at eleven years' purchase, is one hundred and forty-two millions sterling. The national debt of England, the whole of which is on perpetual interest, is two hundred and forty-five millions. The national debt of France contains a power of annihilating itself without any new taxes for that purpose; because it needs no more than to apply the life-annuities as they expire to the purchase of the other two-fifths, which are on perpetual interest. But the national debt of England has not this advantage, and therefore the million a year that is to be applied toward reducing it is so much additional tax upon the people, over and above the current service.

## WEALTH.

This is an important investigation, it ought therefore to be heard with patience, and judged of without prejudice.

Nothing is more common than for people to mistake one thing for another. Do not those who are crying up the wealth of the nation mistake a paper currency for riches? To ascertain this point may be one of the means of preventing that ruin which cannot fail to follow by persisting in the mistake.

The highest estimation that is made of the quantity of gold and silver in Britain at this present day is twenty millions: and those who are most conversant with money transactions, believe it to be considerably below that sum. Yet this is no more money than what the nation possessed twenty years ago, and therefore, whatever her trade may be, it has produced to her no profit. Certainly no man can be so unwise as to suppose that increasing the quantity of Bank notes, which is done with as little trouble as printing of newspapers, is national wealth.

The quantity of money in the nation was very well ascertained in the years 1773, 74, and 76, by calling in the light gold coin.

There were upwards of fifteen millions and a half of gold coin then called in, which, with upwards of two millions of heavy guineas that remained out, and the silver coin, made about twenty millions, which is more than there is at this

day. There is an amazing increase in the circulation of Bank paper, which is no more national wealth than newspapers are; because an increase of promissory notes, the capital remaining unincreasing in the same proportion, is no increase of wealth. It serves to raise false ideas which the judicious soon discover, and the ignorant experience to their cost.

Out of twenty millions sterling, the present quantity of real money in the nation, it would be too great an allowance to say that one-fourth of that sum, which is five millions, was in London. But even admitting this to be the case, it would require no very conjuring powers to ascertain pretty nearly what proportion of that sum of five millions could be in the bank. It would be ridiculous to suppose it could be less than half a million, and extravagant to suppose it could be two millions.

It likewise requires no very extraordinary discernment to ascertain how immense the quantity of bank notes, compared to its capital in the bank must be, when it is considered, that the national taxes are paid in bank notes, that all great transactions are done in bank notes, and that were a loan for twenty millions to be opened at the meeting of Parliament, it would most probably be subscribed in a few days: yet all men must know the loan could not be paid in money, because it is at least four times greater than all the money in London, including the bankers and the bank amount too. In short, every thing shews, that the rage that over-run America, for paper money, or paper currency, has reached to England under another name. There it was called continental money, and here it is called bank notes. But it signifies not what name it bears, if the capital is not equal to the redemption.

There is likewise another circumstance that cannot fail to strike with some force when it is mentioned, because every man that has any thing to do with money transactions, will feel the truth of it, though he may not before have reflected upon it. It is the embarrassed condition into which the gold coin is thrown by the necessity of weighing it, and by refusing guineas that are even standing weight, and there appears to be but very few heavy ones. Whether this is intended to force the paper currency into circulation, is not here attempted to be asserted, but it certainly has that effect to a very great degree, because people, rather than submit to the trouble and hazard of weighing, will take

paper in preference to money. This was once the case in America.

The natural effect of increasing and continuing to increase paper currencies is that of banishing the real money. The shadow takes place of the substance till the country is left with only shadows in its hands.

A trade that does not increase the quantity of real money in a country, cannot be stiled a profitable trade: yet this is certainly the case with England: and as to credit, of which so much has been said, it may be founded on ignorance or a false belief, as well as on real ability.

In Amsterdam, the money deposited in the bank is never taken out again. The depositors, when they have debts to pay, transfer their right to the persons to whom they are indebted, and those again proceed by the same practice, and the transfer of the right goes for payment; now could all the money deposited in the bank of Amsterdam be privately removed away, and the matter be kept a secret, the ignorance, or the belief that the money was still there, would give the same credit as if it had not been removed. In short, credit is often no more than an opinion, and the difference between credit and money is that money requires no opinion to support it.

All the countries in Europe annually increase in their quantity of gold and silver except England. By the registers kept at Lisbon and Cadiz, the two ports into which the gold and silver from South America are imported, it appears that above eighty millions sterling have been imported within twenty years.* This has spread itself over Europe, and increased the quantity in all the countries on the Continent, yet twenty years ago there was as much gold and silver in England as there is at this time.

The value of the silver imported into Europe exceeds that of the gold, yet every one can see there is no increase of silver coin in England; very little silver coin appearing except what are called Birmingham shillings, which have a faint impression of King William on one side, and are smooth on the other.

In what is the profits of trade to shew itself but by in-

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* From 1763 to 1777, a period of fifteen years of peace, the registered importations of gold and silver into Lisbon and Cadiz, were seventy millions sterling, besides what was privately landed.

creasing the quantity of that which is the object of trade, money? An increase of paper is not an increase of national profit, any more than it is an increase of national money, and the confounding paper and money together, or not attending to the distinction, is a rock that the nation will one day split upon.

Whether the payment of interest to foreigners, or the trade to the East Indies, or the nation embroiling itself in foreign wars, or whether the amount of all the trade which England carries on with different parts of the world, collectively taken, balances itself without profit; whether one or all of these is the cause, why the quantity of money does not increase in England is not, in this place, the object of inquiry. It is the fact and not the cause that is the matter here treated of.

Men immersed in trade and the concerns of a compting-house, are not the most speculative in national affairs, or always the best judges of them. Accustomed to run risks in trade, they are habitually prepared to run risks with Government, and though they are the first to suffer, they are often the last to foresee an evil.

Let us now cast a look towards the manufactures. A great deal has been said of their flourishing condition, and perhaps a great deal too much, for it may again be asked, where is the profit if there is no increase of money in the nation?

The woollen manufacture is the staple manufacture of England, and this is evidently on the decline, in some, if not in all, its branches. The city of Norwich, one of the most populous cities in England, and wholly dependant on the woollen manufacture, is, at this day, in a very impoverished condition, owing to the decline of its trade.

But not to rest the matter on a general assertion, or embarrass it with numerous statements, we will produce a circumstance by which the whole progress of the trade may be ascertained.

So long as thirty years ago the price paid to the spinners of wool was one shilling for twenty-four skains, each skain containing five hundred and sixty yards. This, according to the term of the trade, was giving a shilling for a shilling. A good hand would spin twelve skains, which was sixpence a day.

According to the increase of taxes, and the increased price of all the articles of life, they certainly ought now to get at least fifteen-pence, for what thirty years ago they got

one shilling. But such is the decline of the trade, that the case is directly the contrary. They now get but ninepence for the shilling, that is, they get but ninepence for what thirty years ago they got one shilling. Can these people cry out for war, when they are already half ruined by the decline of trade, and half devoured by the increase of taxes?

But this not the whole of the misfortunes which that part of the country suffers, and which will extend to others. The Norfolk farmers were the first who went into the practice of manuring their land with marl: but time has shewn, that though it gave a vigour to the land for some years, it operated in the end to exhaust its stamina; that the lands in many parts are worse than before they began to marl, and that it will not answer to marl a second time.

The manufactures of Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield have had of late a considerable spring, but this appears to be rather on speculation than certainty. The speculations on the American market have failed, and that on Russia is becoming very precarious. Experience likewise was wanting to ascertain the quantity which the treaty of commerce with France would give sale to, and it is most probable the estimations have been too high, more especially as English goods will now become unpopular in France, which was not the case before the present injudicious rupture.

But in the best state which manufactures can be in, they are very unstable sources of national wealth. The reasons are, that they seldom continue long in one stay. The market for them depends upon the caprice of fashions, and sometimes of politics in foreign countries, and they are at all times exposed to rivalship as well as to change. The Americans have already several manufactures amongst them, which they prefer to the English, such as axes, scythes, hoes, planes, nails, &c. Window glass, which was once a considerable article of exportation from England to America, the Americans now procure from other countries, nearly as good as the English crown glass, and but little dearer than the common green window glass.

It is somewhat remarkable that so many pens have been displayed to shew what is called the increase of the commerce of England, and yet all of them have stopped short of the grand point, that is, they have gone no farther than to shew that a larger number of shipping, and a greater quantity of tonnage have been employed of late years than formerly. But this is no more than what is happening in other

parts of Europe. The present fashion of the world is commerce, and the quantity increases in France as well as in England.

But the object of all trade is profit, and profit shews itself, not by an increase of paper currency, for that may be nationally had without the trouble of trade, but by an increase of real money: therefore the estimation should have ended, not in the comparative quantity of shipping and tonnage, but in the comparative quantity of gold and silver.

Had the quantity of gold and silver increased in England, the ministerial writers would not have stopped short at shipping and tonnage; but if they know any thing of the matter, they must know that it does not increase, and that the deception is occasioned by the increase of paper money, and that as paper continues to increase, gold and silver will diminish. Poorer in wealth, and richer in delusion.

Something is radically wrong, and time will discover it to be putting paper in the room of money.

Out of one hundred millions sterling of gold and silver, which must have been imported into Europe from South America since the commencement of the peace before last, it does not appear that England has derived or retains any portion of it.

M. Neckar states the annual increase of gold and silver in France, that is, the proportion which France draws of annual importation into Europe, to be upwards of one million sterling. But England, in the space of twenty years, does not appear to have increased in any thing but paper currency.

Credulity is wealth while credulity lasts, and credit is, in a thousand instances, the child of credulity. It requires no more faith to believe paper to be money, than to believe a man could go into a quart bottle; and the nation whose credulity can be imposed upon by bottle-conjuring, can, for a time, be imposed upon by paper-conjuring.

From these matters we pass on to make some observations on the national debt, which is another species of paper currency.

In short, to whatever point the eye is directed, whether to the money, the paper, the manufactures, the taxes, or the debt, the inability of supporting a war is evident, unless it is intended to carry it on by fleecing the skin over people's ears by taxes; and therefore the endangering the nation in a war for the sake of the Stadtholder of Holland, or the King of Prussia, or any other foreign affairs, from

which England can derive no possible advantage, is an absurd and ruinous system of politics.

France perhaps is not in a better situation, and, therefore, a war where both must lose, and wherein they could only act the part of seconds, must historically have been denominated a boyish, foolish, unnecessary quarrel.

But before we enter on the subject of the national debt, it will be proper to make a general review of the different manner of carrying on war since the Revolution to what was the practice before.

Before the Revolution the intervals of peace and war always found means to pay off the expence, and leave the nation clear of incumbrance at the commencement of any succeeding war; and even for some years after the Revolution this practice was continued.

From the year 1688, (the era of the Revolution) to the year 1702, a period of fourteen years, the sums borrowed by Government at different times amounted to forty-four millions; yet this sum was paid off almost as fast as it was borrowed; thirty-four millions being paid off at the commencement of the year 1702. This was a greater exertion than the nation has ever made since, for exertion is not in borrowing but in paying.

From that time wars have been carried on by borrowing and funding the capital on a perpetual interest, instead of paying it off, and thereby continually carrying forward and accumulating the weight and expence of every war into the next. By this means that which was light at first becomes immensely heavy at last. The nation has now on its shoulders the weight of all the wars from the time of Queen Anne. This practice is exactly like that of loading a horse with a feather at a time till you break his back.

The national debt exhibits at this day a striking novelty. It has travelled on in a circular progression till the amount of the annual interest has exactly overtaken, or become equal to, the first capital of the national debt, NINE MILLIONS. Here begins the evidence of the predictions so long foretold by the ablest calculators in the nation. The interest will in succession overtake all the succeeding capitals, and that with the proportioned rapidity with which those capitals accumulated; because by continuing the practice not only higher and higher premiums must be given for loans, but the money, or rather the paper, will not go so far as it formerly did, and therefore the debt will increase with a continual increasing velocity.

The expence of every war, since the national debt began, has, upon an average, been double the expence of the war preceding it: the expence therefore of the next war will be at least two hundred millions, which will increase the annual interest to at least seventeen millions, and consequently the taxes in the same proportion; the following war will increase the interest to thirty-three millions, and a third war will mount up the interest to sixty-five millions. This is not going on in the spirit of prediction, but taking what has already been as a rule for what will yet be, and therefore the nation has but a miserable prospect to look at. The weight of accumulating interest is not much felt till after many years have passed over; but when it begins to be heavy, as it does now, the burden increases like that of purchasing a horse with a farthing for the first nail of the shoe and doubling it.

As to Mr. Pitt's scheme of reducing the national debt by a million a year, applied to the purchase of stock, it will turn out, to say no worse of it, a ridiculous and frivolous project: for if a minister has not experience enough to distinguish a feather in the air, and such there always will be, from the god of war, nor the clamours and interest of those who are seeking for jobs and contracts, from the voice and interest of the people, he will soon precipitate the nation into some unnecessary war: and therefore any scheme of redemption of the debt, founded on the supposed continuance of peace, will, with such conduct, be no more than a balloon.

That the funding system contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction, is as certain as that of the human body containing within itself the seeds of death. The event is as fixed as fate, unless it can be taken as a proof, that because we are not dead we are not to die.

The consequence of the funding scheme, even if no other event takes place, will be to create two violent parties in the nation. The one goaded by taxes continually increasing to pay the interest, the other reaping a benefit from the taxes by receiving the interest. This is very strongly shadowed forth, like the hand-writing on the wall, by the ingenious author of the Commercial Atlas in his observations on the national debt.

The slumber that for several years has over-shadowed the nation in all matters of public finance, cannot be supposed to last for ever. The people have not yet awakened to the subject, and this is taking for granted they never will.

But, if a supposed unnecessary expenditure of between five and six millions sterling in the finances of France (for the writer undertakes not to judge of the fact) has awakened that whole nation, a people supposed to be perfectly docile in all national matters, surely the people of England will not be less attentive to their rights and properties. If this should not be the case, the inference will be fairly drawn, that England is losing the spirit that France is taking up, and that it is an ingenious device in the Ministry to compose the nation to unpopular and unnecessary taxes, by shamming a victory, when there was no enemy at hand.

In short, every war serves to increase every kind of paper currency in the nation, and to diminish the quantity of gold and silver, by sending it to Prussia and other foreign countries.

It will not be denied that credulity is a strong trait in the English character; and this has in no instance shewn itself more than in mistaking paper for money, except it be in the unaccountable ignorance of mistaking the debt of the nation for riches. But the suspicion is beginning to awake.

We will close this article with observing that a new kind of paper currency has arisen within a few years, which is that of country bank notes; almost every town now has its bank, its paper mint, and the coinage of paper is become universal. In the mean time the melting down the light guineas, and re-coining them, passes with those who know no better for an increase of money; because every new guinea they see, and which is but seldom, they naturally suppose to be a guinea more, when it is really nothing else than an old guinea new cast.

From this account of the money, paper, and national debt of England, we proceed to compare it with the money, paper, and national debt of France.

It is very well known that paper has not the credit in France which it has in England, and that consequently, there is much less of it. This has naturally operated to increase the quantity of gold and silver in France, and prevent the increase of paper.

The highest estimation of the quantity of gold and silver in England, as already stated, is twenty millions sterling, and the quantity of paper grafted thereon, immense.

The quantity of gold and silver in France, is upwards of ninety millions sterling, and the quantity of paper grafted thereon, trifling. France, therefore, has a long run of credit

now in reserve, which England has already expended; and it will naturally follow, that when the Government of France and the nation shall adjust their differences by an amicable embrace of each other, that this reserved credit will be brought forth, and the power of France will be at least doubly increased. The adjustment of these differences is but the business of a day, whenever its Government shall see the proper moment for doing it, and nothing would precipitate this event more than a war. The cry of war, from the injudicious provocations given by the British ministry, and the disadvantageous effects of the commercial treaty, is becoming popular in France.

The near situation of France to Spain and Portugal, the two countries which import gold and silver, and her manufactures being better adapted to the warm climate of those countries, than the manufactures of England, give her superior opportunities of drawing money into the nation, and as she has but little trade to the East Indies, the money so drawn in, is not drawn out again as in England. Another advantage is, that from the greatness of her dominions she has no occasion to waste her wealth in hiring foreign troops, as is the practice with England; and a third advantage is, that the money which England squanders in Prussia, and other countries on the Continent, serves to increase the wealth of France, because a considerable part of it centres there through the medium of her commerce.

Admitting Great Britain and Ireland to contain ten millions of inhabitants, the quantity of money per head is forty shillings: the money per head in France is three pounds fifteen shillings, which is nearly double.

The national debt of England, compared to the whole amount of money in the nation, is as twelve to one, that is, the debt is twelve times greater than all the money amounts to.

The national debt of France, compared to the whole amount of her money, is considerably less than as two are to one, that is, her debt is not so much as twice the amount of her money. France, therefore, as already stated, has an immense credit in reserve whenever the settlement of her internal differences shall furnish her with the means of employing it, and that period, so much to be dreaded by England, is hastening on.

The annual interest of the national debt of England and France are nearly equal, being NINE MILLIONS sterling;

but with this difference, that above three millions and a half of the annual interest of France are only life annuities. The interest, therefore, of the debt lessens every year, and she will have a surplus up to the amount of three millions and a half, to apply to the purchase of that part of the debt which is on perpetual interest; therefore, without any new taxes for that purpose, she can discharge her whole debt in less than a third of the time in which it can be done in England, according to Mr. Pitt's plan, with his additional tax of a million a year.

But let the event of Mr. Pitt's plan be what it may, as to reducing the debt, there is one circumstance that cannot fail to accompany it, which is, that of making it the interest of Government, in executing this plan, to undermine the interest of its creditors, or the value of the funds, for the purpose of purchasing at a cheaper rate.

The plan is founded on the presumption of a long uninterrupted peace, and that future loans would not be wanted, which cannot now be expected, for France in her turn is getting into a temper for war. The plan naturally strikes at the credit of Government, in contracting further debts, for were a loan to be opened to-morrow, the subscribers naturally perceiving that it was the interest of Government to undermine them as soon as they became creditors, would consequently seek to secure themselves, by demanding higher premiums at first. It is a question, whether a premium of thirty per cent., is now as good as ten was before, and therefore the plan, in case of a war, instead of lessening the debt, serves to push it more rapidly on.

The minister certainly never understood the natural operation of his plan, or he would not have acted as he has done. The plan has two edges, while he has supposed it to have only one. It strikes at the debt in peace, and at the credit in war.

The gentleman who originally furnished the minister with this plan, now totally gives it up. He knew its operation both in peace and war, but the minister appears not to have comprehended it: but if he has made a mistake, his youth and inexperience must be his apology.

The plan, unless it should be altered, that is given out for providing for the expence of the late armaments, is in reality no other than the American plan of paper money, and it is very probable that the minister has received it from some American refugee.

The plan given out is, that the minister is to borrow the

MONEY of the Bank. Here is the delusion. The name of MONEY covers the deception. For the case is, that the bank does not lend the real money, but it issues out an emission of bank-paper, and the presumption is, that there will be no run upon the bank in consequence of such an extraordinary emission, but if there should, no man can be at a loss in foreseeing the issue.

There are those who remember that on a former run the bank was obliged to prolong the time by paying shillings and sixpences, and it is universally credited that a quantity of silver is now preserved in the bank for the same purpose; but the device, to every person of reflection, shews that the capital is not equal to the demands, and that the chapter of accidents is part of the bible of the bank.

It may be asked, why do not the Government issue the paper instead of the bank? The answer is, that it is exactly the same thing in the end, only with this difference in the mode, that were the Government to do it, it would be too visible a system of paper currency, and that a disguise is necessary.

Having recourse to the bank, is a kind of playing the bank off against the funds. Fighting one kind of paper against another, and in the combat both will be sufferers.

In short, the delusion of paper riches is working as rapidly in England as it did in America. A young and inexperienced minister, like a young and inexperienced Congress, may suppose that he sees mines of wealth in a printing-press, and that a nation cannot be exhausted while there is paper and ink enough to print paper money. Every new emission, until the delusion bursts, will appear to the nation an increase of wealth. Every merchant's coffers will appear a treasury, and he will swell with paper riches till he becomes a bankrupt.

When a bank makes too free with its paper, it exposes itself in much the same manner which a Government does that makes too free with its power; too much credit is as bad as too little; and there is such a thing as governing too much as well in a bank as in Government. But nothing exposes a bank more than being under the influence, instead of the protection of Government, and whenever either the property or the credit of a bank, can be commanded or influenced by a Government, or a minister, its destruction is not far off.

We have now stated the comparative condition of England

and France as to money matters. But there yet remain some things necessary to be touched upon.

It is an error very frequently committed in the world to mistake disposition for condition.

France with a much better permanent condition for war than England, is in a less disposition to enter into one, and this disposition in her is mistaken in England for want of condition; and on the other hand, the apparent disposition in England for war is mistaken by her for a condition to undertake and carry one on.

There appears a uniformity in all the works of nature, from animals up to nations. The individual smaller animals are always the most fretful, passionate, and insulting. They mistake temper for strength, and often fall a sacrifice to vexatious impetuosity; while larger ones go calmly on, and require repeated provocations to incense them. France may yet be aggravated into war, and very probably will. Where the condition exists, the disposition may at any time take place. We may create temper, but we cannot create strength.

While the literature of England preserves an honourable rank among the nations of Europe, her national character is most miserably suffering in the world through her newspapers. The most barefaced perfidiousness, the most abandoned principles are daily propagated. A total disregard to all the obligations of national faith and honour are publicly professed. Instead of that true great heart, that generous disdain of vulgar littleness that ought always to accompany the disputes of nations, scarcely any thing is to be seen, but mean abuse and low scurrility. This is not the case in any other country in the world but England.

We will now proceed to conclude with a few additional observations on the state of politics.

For several weeks the nation was amused with the daily rumours of some great cabinet secret, and admiring how profoundly the secret was kept, when the only secret was, that there was no secret to divulge.

But this opinion of a secret very well shews, that the opinion of the nation was different to the opinion of the minister, or the supposition of some great secret would not have taken place, as the affairs of the Stadtholder were then publicly known. It shews that the nation did not think the Stadtholder of Holland a sufficient reason for laying new taxes on England, and running into the risk and expence of

a war, and great was the surprise when the declaration and counter declaration, like twin mice, peeped from the cabinet.

But there is one secret that requires to be investigated, which is, whether the minister did not know that France would not engage in a war, and whether the preparations were not an idle parade, founded on that knowledge.

Whether it was not only meanly putting England under the banners of Prussia, and taking thereby a dishonourable advantage of the internal perplexity which France was then in, and which in its turn may happen to England, to assume the air of a challenge, which it must be known would not be accepted, because there was nothing to make the acceptance necessary.

Whether this conduct in the minister does not mischievously operate to destroy the harmony that appeared to be growing up between the two nations; to lessen, if not totally destroy, the advantages of the commercial treaty, and to lay the seeds of future war, when there was a prospect of a long and uninterrupted peace.

When there are two ways of accomplishing the same object, it almost always happens that the one is better than the other; and whether the minister has not chosen the worst, a few observations will elucidate.

It signifies not what airy schemes, projects, or even treaties may be formed, especially if done under the point of the bayonet, for all that can be expected from Holland is neutrality. Her trade is with all nations, and it is from her neutrality that this trade has arisen. Destroy this neutrality and Holland is destroyed. Therefore, it matters not what sentiments party men may be of in Holland as to the stadtholdership, because there is still a superior banner under which all will unite.

Holland will not expose her trade to the devastations of England by joining France in a war, neither will she expose it to France by joining England. It may very well be asked, what are England or France to Holland, that she should join with either in a war, unless she is compelled to it by one or the other making war upon her, as was the case in the last war?

Events may soon happen in Europe to make all the force that Prussia can raise, necessary to her own defence, and Holland must be wise enough to see, that by joining England she not only exposes her trade to France, but likewise her dominions, because France can invade her in a quarter in which England cannot defend her, for Holland lies open

to France by land. It is, therefore, more immediately the interest of Holland to keep on good terms with France, neither can England give her any equivalent to balance this circumstance. How foolish then are the politics which are directed to unnatural and impossible objects! Surely the experience of a century past is sufficient to shew any man, except one of yesterday, what the conduct of Holland in all cases must be.

But there is another circumstance that does not fail to impress foreigners, and especially Holland, which is, that the immensity of the national debt of England, the prospect of its still increasing, and the exorbitancy of her paper currencies, render her too insecure in herself to be much confided in by foreign nations for any length of time. Because that which must happen may soon happen.

Concerning the rescript delivered by the French minister, there is one certain explanation to be put upon it, which is, that if France had been disposed for war, she would not have made that communication. The very making it goes to a full explanation of the parts; and as soon as Mr. Pitt obtained this knowledge, it appeared to him a safe moment to gird on his sword, and when he found that France was as well weaponed as himself, to propose to take it off again. This is, in a few words, the whole history of the campaign. A war minister in peace, and a peace minister in war. Brave where there is no danger, and prudent when there is.

The rescript could be nothing else than an explanation, on the part of France, of the situation she conceived herself to be subject to, and the probable consequences that might follow from it. This she was not obliged to make, and therefore her making it was a matter of civil communication towards a power she was at peace with, and which in return entitled her to a similar communication on the part of the British Cabinet. All this might have been done without either the expence, the tumult, the provocations, or the ill blood that has been created.

The alliance between France and the Dutch, was formed while the Stadtholder was a part of the government, therefore France could not from that alliance take a part either for or against him. She could only act when the whole interest of the republic was exposed to a foreign enemy, and it was not certain that this might not be the case.

The rescript, therefore, instead of being taken as a ground for war, was in itself a ground for peace, because it tended

to bring on a discussion of all the circumstances of France and England, relative to Holland, which would not have failed to place Holland in a state of neutrality, and that only will be the final event now; because, independent of all parties, no other is consistent with the whole national interest of that republic.

But this not being done, it is now left to the Dutch to do it for themselves.

An alliance with England, at the same time there is one existing with France, will secure this neutrality so necessary to the Dutch republic. By this stroke of politics she will be free from all obligations to join with either in a war, and be guaranteed by both. Her alliance with England will debar England from molesting her trade by sea, and that with France will debar France from the same thing, and likewise from invading her by land in all future cases. There are so many probable circumstances to arise on the Continent of Europe, that the situation of Holland requires this safeguard, more especially from France, on account of her land connection.

The rising greatness of the Russian empire, the probable union of this empire with that of Germany and France, and consequently with Spain, whose interests cannot be separated, and the probability of a rupture between the Emperor and the King of Prussia, are matters that cannot fail to impress the Dutch with the necessity of securing themselves by land as well as by sea, and to prevent their being drawn into the quarrels either of England or France.

Upon the whole, as there was a civil as well as an uncivil line of politics to be pursued, every man of humane and generous sentiments must lament it was not chosen.

A disposition for peace was growing up in every part of France, and there appeared at the same time a mutual one rising in England. A silent wish on both sides, was universally expanding itself, that wars, so fatal to the true interest and burdensome by taxes to the subjects of both countries, might exist no more, and that a long and lasting peace might take place.

But instead of cultivating this happy opportunity, the pettish vanity of a young and inexperienced minister, who balanced himself between peace and war to take his choice of circumstances, instead of principles, and who went into an expensive armament when there was none to contend with, and not till after the affairs of Holland might be said to be terminated, has destroyed those seeds of harmony that might

have been considered of more value to both nations than their fleets and armies.

He has permitted the nation to run mad under the universal influence of a groundless belief of vast hostile armaments in the East and West Indies, and the supposition of a secret that never existed. By this means the sparks of ill-will are afresh kindled up between the nations, the fair prospect of lasting peace is vanished, and a train of future evils fills up the scene, and that at a time when the internal affairs of France, however confused they at present appear, are naturally approaching to a great and harmonious increase of its power.

THOMAS PAINE.

*York-Street, St. James's-Square,*
*20th of August*, 1787.

# RIGHTS OF MAN;

BEING

AN ANSWER

TO

MR. BURKE'S ATTACK

ON THE

French Revolution.

BY

THOMAS PAINE.

PART I.

London:

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1819.

TO

# GEORGE WASHINGTON,

*PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.*

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SIR,

I PRESENT you a small treatise in defence of those principles of freedom which your exemplary virtue hath so eminently contributed to establish. That the RIGHTS OF MAN may become as universal as your benevolence can wish, and that you may enjoy the happiness of seeing the New World regenerate the Old, is the prayer of

SIR,

Your much obliged

And obedient humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

# PREFACE

TO THE

# ENGLISH EDITION.

FROM the part Mr. Burke took in the American Revolution, it was natural that I should consider him a friend to Mankind; and as our acquaintance commenced on that ground, it would have been more agreeable to me to have had cause to continue in that opinion, than to change it.

At the time Mr. Burke made his violent speech last winter in the English Parliament, against the French Revolution and the National Assembly, I was in Paris, and had written to him, but a short time before, to inform him how prosperously matters were going on. Soon after this, I saw his advertisement of the pamphlet he intended to publish. As the attack was to be made in a language but little studied, and less understood in France, and as every thing suffers by translation, I promised some of the Friends of the Revolution in that country, that whenever Mr. Burke's pamphlet came forth, I would answer it. This appeared to me the more necessary to be done, when I saw the flagrant misrepresentations which Mr. Burke's Pamphlet contains; and that, while it is an outrageous abuse

on the French Revolution, and the principles of Liberty, it is an imposition on the rest of the world.

I am the more astonished, and disappointed, at this conduct in Mr. Burke, as, from the circumstance I am going to mention, I had formed other expectations.

I had seen enough of the miseries of war, to wish it might never more have existence in the world; and that some other mode might be found out, to settle the differences that should occasionally arise in the neighbourhood of Nations. This certainly might be done, if Courts were disposed to set honestly about it; or if Countries were enlightened enough not to be made the dupes of Courts. The people of America had been bred up in the same prejudices against France, which at that time characterized the people of England; but experience, and an acquaintance with the French Nation, have most effectually shewn to the Americans, the falsehood of those prejudices; and I do not believe that a more cordial and confidential intercourse exists between any two countries than between America and France.

When I came to France, in the Spring of 1787, the Archbishop of Thoulouse was then minister, and at that time highly esteemed. I became much acquainted with the private secretary of that minister, a man of an enlarged, benevolent heart; and found that his sentiments and my own perfectly

agreed with respect to the madness of war, and the wretched impolicy of two Nations, like England and France, continually worrying each other, to no other end than that of a mutual increase of burdens and taxes. That I might be assured I had not misunderstood him, nor he me, I put the substance of our opinions into writing, and sent it to him; subjoining a request, that if I should see among the people of England any disposition to cultivate a better understanding between the two Nations than had hitherto prevailed, how far I might be authorised to say, that the same disposition prevailed on the part of France? He answered me by letter, in the most unreserved manner, and that not for himself only, but for the minister, with whose knowledge the letter was declared to be written.

I put this letter into the hands of Mr. Burke, almost three years ago; and left it with him, where it still remains; hoping, and at the same time naturally expecting, from the opinion I had conceived of him, that he would find some opportunity of making a good use of it, for the purpose of removing those errors and prejudices, which two neighbouring nations, from the want of knowing each other, had entertained, to the injury of both.

When the French Revolution broke out, it certainly afforded to Mr. Burke an opportunity of doing some good, had he been disposed to it: instead of which, no sooner did he see the old prejudices wearing away, than he immediately began sowing the seeds of a new inveteracy, as if he were

afraid that England and France would cease to be enemies. That there are men, in all countries, who get their living by war, and by keeping up the quarrels of Nations, is as shocking as it is true; but when those who are concerned in the government of a country, make it their study to sow discord, and cultivate prejudices between Nations, it becomes the more unpardonable.

With respect to a paragraph in this work, alluding to Mr. Burke's having a pension, the report has been some time in circulation, at least two months; and as a person is often the last to hear what concerns him the most to know, I have mentioned it that Mr. Burke may have an opportunity of contradicting the rumour if he thinks proper.

THOMAS PAINE.

*London*, 1791.

THE

# AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO THE

## FRENCH EDITION.

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THE wonder and astonishment which the French revolution has caused throughout the whole of Europe, must be considered under two different points of view; first, in as much as that revolution affects the inhabitants of foreign countries; secondly, in as much as it affects the governments of those same countries.

The cause of the French people is that of all Europe, or rather that of the whole world; but the governments of all those countries and different states are, in no respect, in the least favourable to them, and it is absolutely requisite we should never lose sight of this distinction. We must never confound the people with their government, and particularly the English people with its government.

The government of England is no friend to the revolution of France; of which we have sufficient proofs in the thanks and compliments which the

Elector of Hanover, or, as they sometimes style him, the King of England, (a weak man without sense or understanding) has made to Mr. Burke, for the injuries and abuse with which he has loaded it in his writings, and in the malevolent reflections of the English minister, Mr. Pitt, in his different speeches in Parliament.

Although the English government, in its official correspondence with that of France, makes profession of the most sincere friendship, its conduct belies all its declarations; and at the same time makes us perceive that it is not a court in which we can place the least confidence; it is a court of madness and folly, which plunges itself into all the quarrels and intrigues of Europe, *seeking of war* to satisfy its folly, and to favour its extravagance.

With regard to the English nation, on the contrary, it has the most favourable disposition towards the French revolution, and to the unlimited progress of liberty through the whole universe; and that disposition will become more general in England, in proportion as the intrigues and artifices of its government become discovered, and the principles of the French revolution shall be better understood. It is necessary that the French should know, that most of the English newspapers are directly in the pay of its government, or other ways, however indirectly, so connected with it, that they are always obedient to its orders; and that those newspapers constantly disfigure, misrepresent, and are attacking the French revolution for the sole

purpose of deceiving the nation; but as it is impossible long to impede the operations of truth, the falsities which those daily papers contain, no longer produce their desired effect.

To convince the whole universe that *truth is stifled in England*, it is requisite only to inform them, that the English government looks upon and pursues it as a most atrocious libel*; that government above all others which ought to protect it. This outrage on morality is constituted and called law, and there have been found rascally judges wicked enough to punish it as such.

The English government presents us, however, a curious phenomenon. Seeing that the French and English nations are rapidly disengaging themselves and shaking off the prejudices and those false notions which they had formerly imbibed against each other, and which had cost them such considerable sums, it seems (that is, the government) has at present fixed up posting bills, signifying it is in want of an enemy; for unless it finds one somewhere, it has no longer any pretext for the revenue, and the excessive imposts and taxes which are actually necessary to it.

It seeks then in Russia the enemy it has lost in France, and appears to say to the world, or to say to itself: if no one will have the complaisance to

* The judges' principal and uniform maxim is, that the greater truth, the greater the libel.

become my enemy, I shall no longer have any occasion for navy or armies, and shall be forced to diminish my taxes. The war with America alone obliged me to double the taxes; the affair of Holland to add something more; the folly of Nootka furnished me with a pretext to raise above three millions sterling; but, unless I make an enemy of Russia, the harvest of wars will be terminated. It was me who first excited the Turks against the Russians; and now I hope to gather a fresh harvest of taxes.

If the miseries of war, and the deluge of evils, which spread over a country, checked not the desire of pleasantry, or did not change the desire of laughter into grief, the frenzied and mad government of England would only excite ridicule. But it is impossible to banish from the mind those images of misery which the contemplation of such a vicious policy presents to our view. To reason with the governments, such as they have existed for ages past, is to argue and reason with brutes; and it is only from the nations themselves that we can expect any reform. There ought not, however, at this time to exist the least doubt that the people of France, England, and America, enlightened and enlightening each other, cannot not only give to the world a full and clear example of a good government, but even by their united influence enforce the practice.

# RIGHTS OF MAN,

*&c. &c.*

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AMONG the incivilities by which Nations or individuals provoke and irritate each other, Mr. Burke's pamphlet on the French Revolution is an extraordinary instance. Neither the people of France, nor the National Assembly, were troubling themselves about the affairs of England, or the English Parliament; and that Mr. Burke should commence an unprovoked attack upon them, both in parliament and in public, is a conduct that cannot be pardoned on the score of manners, nor justified on that of policy.

There is scarcely an epithet of abuse to be found in the English language, with which Mr. Burke has not loaded the French Nation, and the National Assembly. Every thing which rancour, prejudice, ignorance, or knowledge could suggest, is poured forth in the copious fury of near four hundred pages. In the strain and on the plan Mr. Burke was writing, he might have written on to as many thousands. When the tongue or the pen is let loose in a frenzy of passion, it is the man, and not the subject, that becomes exhausted.

Hitherto Mr. Burke has been mistaken and disappointed in the opinions he had formed of the affairs of France; but such is the ingenuity of his hope, or the malignancy of his despair, that it furnishes him with new pretences to go on. There was a time when it was impossible to make Mr. Burke believe there would be any revolution in France. His opinion then was, that the French had neither spirit to undertake it, nor fortitude to support it; and now that there is one, he seeks an escape, by condemning it.

Not sufficiently content with abusing the National Assembly, a great part of his work is taken up with abusing Dr. Price (one of the best hearted men that lives), and the two societies in England, known by the name of the Revolution Society, and the Society for Constitutional Information.

Dr. Price had preached a sermon on the 4th of November, 1789, being the anniversary of what is called in England, the Revolution which took place 1688. Mr. Burke, speaking of this sermon, says, "The Political Divine proceeds dogmatically to assert, that by the principles of the Revolution, the people of England have acquired three fundamental rights:

1. To choose our own governors.
2. To cashier them for misconduct.
3. To frame a government for ourselves."

Dr. Price does not say that the right to do these things exists in this or in that person, or in this or in that description of persons, but that it exists in the *whole;* that it is a right resident in the Nation.—Mr. Burke, on the contrary, denies that such a right exists in the Nation, either in whole or in part, or that it exists any where: and, what is still more strange and marvellous, he says, "that the people of England utterly disclaim such right, and that they will resist the practical assertion of it with their lives and fortunes." That men should take up arms, and spend their lives and fortunes, *not* to maintain their rights, but to maintain they have *not* rights, is an entirely new species of discovery, and suited to the paradoxical genius of Mr. Burke.

The method which Mr. Burke takes to prove that the people of England have no such rights, and that such rights do not now exist in the Nation, either in whole or in part, or any where at all, is of the same marvellous and monstrous kind with what he has already said; for his arguments are, that the persons, or the generation of persons, in whom they did exist, are dead, and with them the right is dead also. To prove this, he quotes a declaration made by parliament about a hundred years ago, to William and Mary, in these words:—"The Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, do, in the name of the people aforesaid," (meaning the people of England, then living,) "most humbly and faithfully *submit* themselves, their *heirs* and *posterities*, for EVER."

He also quotes a clause of another Act of Parliament made in the same reign, the terms of which, he says, "bind us," (meaning the people of that day,) "our *heirs*, and our *posterity*, to *them*, *their heirs* and *posterity*, TO THE END OF TIME."

Mr. Burke conceives his point sufficiently established by producing those clauses, which he enforces by saying that

they exclude the Right of the Nation *for ever:* and not yet content with making such declarations, repeated over and over again, he further says, " that if the people of England possessed such a right before the Revolution, (which he acknowledges to have been the case, not only in England, but throughout Europe, at an early period), yet that the *English Nation* did, at the time of the Revolution, most solemnly renounce and abdicate it, for themselves, and for all *all their posterity for ever!*"

As Mr. Burke occasionally applies the poison drawn from his horrid principles, (if it is not a profanation to call them by the name principles), not only to the English Nation, but to the French Revolution and the National Assembly, and charges that august, illuminated, and illuminating body of men, with the epithet of *usurpers*, I shall, *sans ceremonie*, place another system of principles in opposition to his.

The English Parliament of 1688 did a certain thing, which, for themselves and their constituents, they had a right to do, and which appeared right should be done; but, in addition to this right, which they possessed by delegation, *they set up another right by assumption*, that of binding and controlling posterity to the end of time. The case, therefore, divides itself into two parts; the right which they possessed by delegation; and the right which they set up by assumption. The first is admitted; but, with respect to the second, I reply—

There never did, there never will, and there never can exist a Parliament, or any description of men, or any generation of men, in any country, possessed of the right or the power of binding and controlling posterity to the " *end of time*," or of commanding for ever how the world shall be governed, or who shall govern it; and therefore, all such clauses, acts, or declarations, by which the makers of them attempt to do what they have neither the right nor the power to do, nor the power to execute, are in themselves null and void.

Every age and generation must be as free to act for itself, *in all cases*, as the ages and generations which preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave, is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man; neither has any generation a property in the generations which are to follow.

The parliament, or the people of 1688, or of any other period, had no more right to dispose of the people of the present day, or to bind, or control them *in any shape*

*whatever*, than the parliament or the people of the present day have to dispose of, bind, or control those who are to live a hundred or a thousand years hence.

Every generation is, and must be, competent to all the purposes which its occasions require. It is the living, and not the dead, that are to be accommodated. When man ceases to be, his power and his wants cease with him; and having no longer any participation in the concerns of this world, he has no longer any authority in directing who shall be its governors, or how its government shall be organized, or how administered.

I am not contending for nor against any form of Government, nor for nor against any party here or elsewhere. That which a whole nation chooses to do, it has a right to do. Mr. Burke says, No. Where then does the right exist? I am contending for the rights of the living, and against their being willed away, controlled and contracted for, by the manuscript, assumed authority of the dead; and Mr. Burke is contending for the authority of the dead, over the rights and freedom of the living.

There was a time when kings disposed of their crowns by will upon their death-beds, and consigned the people, like beasts of the field, to whatever successor they appointed. This is now so exploded as scarcely to be remembered, and so monstrous as hardly to be believed: but the parliamentary clauses upon which Mr. Burke builds his political church, are of the same nature.

The laws of every country must be analogous to some common principle. In England, no parent, or master, nor all the authority of Parliament, omnipotent as it has called itself, can bind or control the personal freedom even of an individual beyond the age of twenty-one years: on what ground of right, then, could the Parliament of 1688, or any other Parliament, bind all posterity for ever?

Those who have quitted the world, and those who are not yet arrived at it, are as remote from each other as the utmost stretch of mortal imagination can conceive. What possible obligation then can exist between them? What rule or principle can be laid down, that of two nonentities, the one out of existence, and the other not in, and who never can meet in this world, the one should control the other to the end of time?

In England it is *said* that money cannot be taken out of the pockets of the people without their consent: but who authorized, and who could authorize the Parliament

of 1688, to control and take away the freedom of posterity, and limit and confine the rights of acting in certain cases for ever, who were not in existence to give or withhold their consent?

A greater absurdity cannot present itself to the understanding of man, than what Mr. Burke offers to his readers. He tells them, and he tells the world to come, that a certain body of men, who existed a hundred years ago, made a law; and that there does not now exist in the nation, nor ever will, nor ever can, a power to alter it.

Under how many subtilties, or absurdities, has the divine right to govern been imposed on the credulity of mankind?—Mr. Burke has discovered a new one, and he has shortened his journey to Rome, by appealing to the power of this infallible Parliament of former days; and he produces what it has done, as of divine authority; for that power must certainly be more than human, which no human power to the end of time can alter.

But Mr Burke has done some service, not to his cause, but to his country, by bringing those clauses into public view. They serve to demonstrate how necessary it is, at all times, to watch against the attempted encroachment of power, and to prevent its running to excess.

It is somewhat extraordinary, that the offence for which James II. was expelled, that of setting up power by *assumption*, should be re-acted, under another shape and form, by the Parliament that expelled him. It shews, that the Rights of Man were but imperfectly understood at the Revolution; for, certain it is, that the right which that Parliament set up by *assumption* (for by delegation it had not, and could not have it, because none could give it) over the persons and freedom of posterity for ever, was of the same tyrannical, unfounded kind, which James attempted to set up over the Parliament and the nation, and for which he was expelled. The only difference is, (for in principle they differ not), that the one was an usurper over the living, and the other over the unborn; and as the one has no better authority to stand upon than the other, both of them must be equally null and void, and of no effect.

From what, or from whence, does Mr. Burke prove the right of any human power to bind posterity for ever? He has produced his clauses; but he must produce also his proofs that such a right existed, and shew how it existed. If it ever existed, it must now exist; for whatever appertains to the nature of man, cannot be annihilated by man. It is the nature of man to die, and he will continue to die as long

as he continues to be born. But Mr. Burke has set up a sort of political Adam, in whom all posterity are bound for ever; he must therefore prove that his Adam possessed such a power, or such a right.

The weaker any cord is, the less will it bear to be stretched, and the worse is the policy to stretch it, unless it is intended to break it.—Had a person contemplated the overthrow of Mr. Burke's petitions, he would have proceeded as Mr. Burke has done; he would have magnified the authorities on purpose to have called the *right* of them into question; and the instant the question of RIGHT was started, the authorities must have been given up.

It requires but a very small glance of thought to perceive that although laws made in one generation often continue in force through succeeding generations, yet that they continue to derive their force from the consent of the living. A law not repealed continues in force, not because it *cannot* be repealed, but because it *is not* repealed; and the non-repealing passes for consent.

But Mr. Burke's clauses have not even this qualification in their favour. They become null by attempting to become immortal. The nature of them precludes consent. They destroy the right which they *might* have by grounding it on a right which they cannot have. Immortal power is not a human right, and therefore cannot be a right of parliament.

The parliament of 1688 might as well have passed an act to have authorised themselves to live for ever, as to make their authority live for ever. All, therefore, that can be said of them is, that they are a formality of words, of as much import as if those who used them had addressed a congratulation to themselves, and, in the oriental style of antiquity, had said, O Parliament, live for ever!

The circumstances of the world are continually changing, and the opinions of men change also; and as government is for the living, and not for the dead, it is the living only that have any right in it. That which may be thought right, and found convenient in one age, may be thought wrong, and found inconvenient in another. In such cases, who is to decide, the living or the dead?

As almost one hundred pages of Mr. Burke's book are employed upon these clauses, it will consequently follow, that if the clauses themselves, so far as they set up an *assumed usurped* dominion over posterity for ever, are unauthoritative, and in their nature null and void; that all his voluminous

inferences and declamation, drawn therefrom, or founded thereon, are null and void also; and on this ground I rest the matter.

We now come more particularly to the affairs of France. Mr. Burke's book has the appearance of being written as instruction to the French nation; but if I may permit myself the use of an extravagant metaphor, (suited to the extravagance of the case,) it is darkness attempting to illuminate light.

While I am writing this, there are accidently before me some proposals for a declaration of rights by the Marquis de la Fayette, (I ask his pardon for using his former address, and do it only for distinction's sake) to the National Assembly, on the 11th of July, 1789, three days before taking of the Bastille; and I cannot but remark with astonishment how opposite the sources are from which that gentleman and Mr. Burke draw their principles. Instead of referring to musty records, and mouldy parchments, to prove that the rights of the living are lost, "renounced, and abdicated for ever," by those who are now no more, as Mr. Burke has done, M. de la Fayette applies to the living world, and emphatically says, "Call to mind the sentiments which Nature has engraven on the heart of every citizen, and which take a new force when they are solemnly recognized by all:—For a Nation to love liberty, it is sufficient that she knows it: and to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it." How dry, barren, and obscure is the source from which Mr. Burke labours! and how ineffectual, though gay with flowers, are all his declamation and argument, compared with these clear, concise, and soul-animating sentiments! Few and short as they are, they lead on to a vast field of generous and manly thinking; and do not finish, like Mr. Burke's periods, with music in the ear, and nothing in the heart.

As I have introduced M. de la Fayette, I will take the liberty of adding an anecdote respecting his farewell address to the Congress of America, in 1783, and which occurred fresh to my mind when I saw Mr. Burke's thundering attack on the French Revolution.

M. de la Fayette went to America at an early period of the war, and continued a volunteer in her service to the end. His conduct, through the whole of that enterprise, is one of the most extraordinary that is to be found in the history of a young man, scarcely then twenty years of age. Situated in a country that was like the lap of sensual pleasure, how few are there to be found who would exchange such a scene for the woods and wildernesses of America; and pass the flowery years of youth in unprofitable danger and hardship! But

such is the fact. When the war ended, and he was on the point of taking his final departure, he presented himself to Congress, and contemplating, in his affectionate farewell, the revolution he had seen, expressed himself in these words:—"May this great monument, raised to Liberty, serve as a lesson to the oppressor, and an example to the oppressed!"—When this address came to the hands of Dr. Franklin, who was then in France, he applied to Count Vergennes to have it inserted in the French Gazette, but could never obtain his consent. The fact was, that Count de Vergennes was an aristocratical despot at home, and dreaded the example of the Amecan revolution in France, as certain other persons now dread the example of the French revolution in England; and Mr. Burke's tribute of fear, (for in this light his book must be considered,) runs parallel with Count Vergennes' refusal. But to return more particularly to his work—

"We have seen," says Mr. Burke, "the French rebel against a mild and lawful monarch, with more fury, outrage, and insult, than any people has been known to rise against the most illegal usurper, or the most sanguinary tyrant." This is one, amongst a thousand other instances, in which Mr. Burke shews that he is ignorant of the springs and principles of the French revolution.

It was not against Louis the XVI. but against the despotic principles of the Government that the nation revolted. These principles had not their origin in him, but in the original establishment, many centuries back; and they were become too deeply rooted to be removed, and the Augean stable of parasites and plunderers too abominably filthy to be cleansed, by any thing short of a complete and general revolution. When it becomes necessary to do a thing, the whole heart and soul should go into the measure, or not attempt it. That crisis was then arrived, and there remained no choice but to act with determined vigour, or not to act at all. The king was known to be the friend of the Nation, and this circumstance was favourable to the enterprize. Perhaps no man bred up in the style of an absolute King, ever possessed a heart so little disposed to the exercise of that species of power, as the present King of France. But the principles of the Government itself still remained the same. The Monarch and the Monarchy were distinct and separate things; and it was against the established despotism of the latter, and not against the person or principles of the former, that the revolt commenced, and the revolution has been carried.

Mr. Burke does not attend to the distinction between *men*

and *principles;* and therefore he does not see that a revolt may take place against the despotism of the latter, while there lies no charge of despotism against the former.

The natural moderation of Louis XVI. contributed nothing to alter the hereditary despotism of the monarchy. All the tyrannies of former reigns, acted under that hereditary despotism, were still liable to be revived in the hands of a successor. It was not the respite of a reign that would satisfy France, enlightened as she was then become. A casual discontinuance of the *practice* of despotism is not a discontinuance of its *principles;* the former depends on the virtue of the individual who is in the immediate possession of the power; the latter on the virtue and fortitude of the Nation.

In the case of Charles I. and James II. of England, the revolt was against the personal despotism of the men; whereas in France, it was against the hereditary despotism of the Government. But men who can consign over the rights of posterity for ever, on the authority of a mouldy parchment, like Mr. Burke, are not qualified to judge of this revolution. It takes in a field too vast for their views to explore, and proceeds with a mightiness of reason they cannot keep pace with.

But there are many points of view in which this revolution may be considered. When despotism has established itself in a country for ages, as in France, it is not in the person of the king only that it resides. It has the appearance of being so in show, and in nominal authority; but it is not so in practice, and in fact. It has its standard every where. Every office, and every department, has its despotism, founded upon custom and usage. Every place has its Bastille, and every Bastille its despot. The original hereditary despotism, resident in the person of the King, divides and subdivides itstelf into a thousand shapes and forms, till at last the whole of it is acted by deputation. This was the case in France; and against this species of despotism proceeding on through an endless labyrinth of office, till the source of it is scarcely perceptible, there is no mode of redress. It strengthens itself by assuming the appearance of duty, and tyrannizes under the pretence of obeying.

When a man reflects on the condition which France was in, from the nature of her Government, he will see other causes for revolt than those which immediately connect themselves with the person or character of Louis XVI. There were, if I may so express it, a thousand despotisms to be reformed in France, which had grown up under the

hereditary despotism of the monarchy, and became so rooted as to be in a great measure independent of it. Between the monarchy, the parliament, and the church, there was a *rivalship* of despotism; besides the feudal despotism, operating locally, and the ministerial despotism, operating everywhere. But Mr. Burke, considering the King as the only possible object of a revolt, speaks as if France was a village, in which every thing that passed must be known to its commanding officer, and no oppression could be acted but what he could immediately control. Mr. Burke might have been in the Bastille his whole life, as well under Louis XVI. as Louis XIV. and neither the one nor the other have known that such a man as Mr. Burke existed. The despotic principles of the Government were the same in both reigns, though the dispositions of the men were as remote as tyranny and benevolence.

What Mr. Burke considers as a reproach to the French Revolution (that of bringing it forward under a reign more mild than the preceding ones,) is one of its highest honours. The revolutions that have taken place in other European countries have been excited by personal hatred. The rage was against the man, and he became the victim. But, in the instance of France, we see a revolution generated in the rational contemplation of the Rights of Man, and distinguishing from the beginning, between persons and principles.

But Mr. Burke appears to have no idea of principles, when he is contemplating Governments. "Ten years ago, (says he,) I could have felicitated France on her having a Government, without enquiring what the nature of that Government was, or how it was administered." Is this the language of a rational man? Is it the language of a heart feeling as it ought to feel for the rights and happiness of the human race? On this ground, Mr. Burke must compliment every Government in the world; while the victims who suffer under them, whether sold into slavery, or tortured out of existence, are wholly forgotten. It is power, and not principles, that Mr. Burke venerates; and under this abominable depravity he is disqualified to judge between them.—Thus much for his opinion as to the occasion of the French Revolution. I now proceed to other considerations.

I know a place in America called Point-no-Point; because as you proceed along the shore, gay and flowery as Mr. Burke's language, it continually recedes and presents itself at a distance a-head; but when you have got as far as you

can go, there is no point at all. Just thus it is with Mr. Burke's three hundred and fifty-six pages. It is therefore difficult to reply to him. But as the points he wishes to establish may be inferred from what he abuses, it is in his parodoxes that we must look for his arguments.

As to the tragic paintings by which Mr. Burke has outraged his own imagination, and seeks to work upon that of his readers, they are very well calculated for theatrical representation, where facts are manufactured for the sake of show, and accommodated to produce, through the weakness of sympathy, a weeping effect. But Mr. Burke should recollect, he is writing *history*, and not *plays;* and that his readers will expect truth, and not the spouting rant of high-toned exclamation.

When we see a man dramatically lamenting, in a publication intended to be believed, that "*The age of chivalry is gone!*" that "*The glory of Europe is extinguished for ever!*" that "*the unbought grace of life,*" (if any one knows what it is), "*the cheap defence of Nations, the nurse of manly sentiment, and heroic enterprize is gone!*" and all this because the Quixote age of chivalry nonsense is gone, what opinion can we form of his judgment, or what regard can we pay to his facts? In the rhapsody of his imagination, he has discovered a world of windmills, and his sorrows are, that there are no Quixotes to attack them. But if the age of aristocracy, like that of chivalry, should fall, (and they had originally some connection,) Mr. Burke, the trumpeter of the order, may continue his parody to the end, and finish with exclaiming, "*Othello's occupation's gone!*"

Notwithstanding Mr. Burke's horrid paintings, when the French Revolution is compared with those of other countries, the astonishment will be, that it is marked with so few sacrifices; but this astonishment will cease, when we reflect that *principles*, and not *persons*, were the meditated objects of destruction. The mind of the Nation was acted upon by a higher stimulus than what the consideration of persons could inspire, and sought a higher conquest than could be produced by the downfal of an enemy. Among the few who fell, there do not appear to be any that were intentionally singled out. They all of them had their fate in the circumstances of the moment, and were not pursued with that long, cold blooded, unabated revenge which pursued the unfortunate Scotch in the affair of 1745.

Through the whole of Mr. Burke's book I do not observe that the Bastille is mentioned more than once, and that with

a kind of implication as if he were sorry it was pulled down, and wished it were built up again.—

"We have re-built Newgate (says he), and tenanted the mansion; and we have prisons almost as strong as the Bastille for those who dare to libel the Queens of France."* As to what a madman, like the person called Lord George Gordon, might say, and to whom Newgate is rather a bedlam than a prison, it is unworthy of rational consideration. It was a madman that libelled—and that is sufficient apology: and it afforded an opportunity for confining him, which was the thing that was wished for. But certain it is, that Mr. Burke, who does not call himself a madman, (whatever other people may do,) has libelled, in the most unprovoked manner, and in the grossest style of the most vulgar abuse, the whole representative authority of France; and yet Mr. Burke takes his seat in the British House of Commons! From his violence and his grief, his silence on some points, and his excess on others, it is difficult not to believe that Mr. Burke is sorry, extremely sorry, that arbitrary power, the power of the Pope, and the Bastille are pulled down.

Not one glance of compassion, not one commiserating reflection, that I can find throughout his book, has he bestowed on those who lingered out the most wretched of lives—a life without hope, in the most miserable of prisons. It is painful to behold a man employing his talents to corrupt himself. Nature has been kinder to Mr. Burke, than he is to her. He is not affected by the reality of distress touching his heart, but by the showy resemblance of it striking his imagination. He pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird. Accustomed to kiss the aristocratic hand that hath purloined him from himself, he degenerates into a composition of art, and the genuine soul of Nature forsakes him. His hero or his heroine must be a tragedy victim, expiring

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* Since writing the above, two other places occur in Mr. Burke's pamphlet in which the name of the Bastille is mentioned, but in the same manner. In the one, he introduces it in a sort of obscure question, and asks,—"Will any ministers who now serve such a king, with but a decent appearance of respect, cordially obey the orders of those whom but the other day, *in his name*, they had committed to the Bastille?" In the other, the taking it is mentioned as implying criminality in the French guards who assisted in demolishing it.—"They have not," says he, "forgot taking of the king's castles at Paris."—This is Mr. Burke who pretends to write on constitutional freedom.

in show; and not the real prisoner of misery, sliding into death in the silence of a dungeon.

As Mr. Burke has passed over the whole transaction of the Bastille, (and his silence is nothing in his favour,) and has entertained his readers with reflections on supposed facts distorted into real falsehoods; I will give, since he has not, some account of the circumstances which preceded that transaction. They will serve to shew, that less mischief could scarcely have accompanied such an event, when considered with the treacherous and hostile aggravations of the enemies of the revolution.

The mind can hardly picture to itself a more tremendous scene, than what the city of Paris exhibited at the time of taking the Bastille, and for two days before and after, nor conceive the possibility of its quieting so soon. At a distance, this transaction has appeared only as an act of heroism, standing on itself; and the close political connection it had with the revolution is lost in the brilliancy of the achievement. But we are to consider it as the strength of the parties brought man to man, and contending for the issue. The Bastille was to be either the prize or prison of the assailants. The downfal of it included the idea of the downfal of Despotism; and this compounded image was become as figuratively united as Bunyan's Doubting Castle and Giant Despair.

The National Assembly, before and at the time of taking the Bastille, was sitting at Versailles, twelve miles distant from Paris. About a week before the rising of the Parisians and their taking the Bastille, it was discovered that a plot was forming, at the head of which was the Count d'Artois, the King's youngest brother, for demolishing the National Assembly, seizing its members, and thereby crushing by a *coup de main* all hopes and prospects of forming a free Government. For the sake of humanity, as well as of freedom, it is well this plan did not succeed. Examples are not wanting, to shew how dreadfully vindictive and cruel are all old Governments, when they are successful against what they call a revolt.

This plan must have been some time in agitation; because, in order to carry it into execution, it was necessary to collect a large military force round Paris, and to cut off the communication between that city and the National Assembly at Versailles. The troops destined for this service were chiefly the foreign troops in the pay of France; and who for this particular purpose, were drawn from the dis-

tant provinces where they were then stationed. When they were collected, to the amount of between twenty-five and thirty thousand men, it was judged time to put the plan in execution. The ministry who were then in office, and who were friendly to the revolution, were instantly dismissed, and a new ministry formed of those who had concerted the project;—among whom was the Count de Broglio, and to his share was given the command of those troops. The character of this man, as described to me in a letter which I communicated to Mr. Burke before he began to write his book, and from an authority which Mr. Burke well knows was good, was that of "an high-flying aristocrat, cool, and capable of every mischief."

Whilst these matters were agitating, the National Assembly stood in the most perilous and critical situation that a body of men can be supposed to act in. They were the devoted victims, and they knew it. They had the hearts and wishes of their country on their side, but military authority they had none. The guards of Broglio surrounded the hall where the assembly sat—ready, at the word of command, to seize their persons, as had been done the year before to the parliament in Paris. Had the National Assembly deserted their trust, or had they exhibited signs of weakness or fear, their enemies had been encouraged, and the country depressed. When the situation they stood in, the cause they were engaged in, and the crisis then ready to burst, which should determine their personal and political fate, and that of their country, and probably of Europe, are taken into one view, none but a heart callous with prejudice, or corrupted by dependence, can avoid interesting itself in their success.

The Archbishop of Vienne was at this time president of the National Assembly; a person too old to undergo the scene, that a few days, or a few hours might bring forth. A man of more activity, and bolder fortitude was necessary; and the National Assembly chose (under the form of a vice-president, for the presidency still resided in the Archbishop) M. de la Fayette; and this is the only instance of a vice-president being chosen. It was at the moment that this storm was pending (July 11) that a declaration of rights was brought forward by M. de la Fayette, and is the same which I have before alluded to. It was hastily drawn up, and makes only a part of a more extensive declaration of rights, agreed upon and adopted afterwards by the National Assembly. The particular reason for bringing it forward at this moment, M de la Fayette has since informed me,

was, that if the National Assembly should fall in the threatened destruction that then surrounded it, some traces of its principles might have the chance of surviving the wreck.

Every thing was now drawing to a crisis. The event was freedom or slavery. On the one side, an army of nearly thirty thousand men; on the other an unarmed body of citizens: for the citizens of Paris, on whom the National Assembly must then immediately depend, were as unarmed and as undisciplined as the citizens of London are now.

The French guards had given strong symptoms of their being attached to the National cause; but their numbers were small—not a tenth part of the force that Broglio commanded, and their officers were in the interest of Broglio.

Matters being now ripe for execution, the new ministry made their appearance in office. The reader will carry in his mind, that the Bastille was taken the 14th of July; the point of time I am now speaking to is the 12th. Immediately on the news of the change of ministry reaching Paris, in the afternoon, all the playhouses and places of entertainment, shops and houses, were shut up. The change of ministry was considered as the prelude to hostilities, and the opinion was rightly founded.

The foreign troops began to advance towards the city. The prince de Lambesc, who commanded a body of German cavalry, approached by the Place of Louis XV. which connects itself with some of the streets. In his march, he insulted and struck an old man with his sword. The French are remarkable for their respect to old age; and the insolence with which it appeared to be done, uniting with the general fermentation they were in, produced a powerful effect, and the cry of "*To arms! To arms!*" spread itself in a moment over the city.

Arms they had none, nor scarcely any who knew the use of them; but desperate resolution, when every hope is at stake, supplies for awhile the want of arms. Near where the Prince of Lambesc was drawn up, were large piles of stones collected for building the new bridge, and with these the people attacked the cavalry. A party of the French guards, upon hearing the firing, rushed from their quarters, and joined the people; and night coming on, the cavalry retreated.

The streets of Paris, being narrow, are favourable for defence; and the loftiness of the houses, consisting of many stories, from which great annoyance might be given, secured them against nocturnal enterprises; the night was spent in

providing themselves with every sort of weapon they could make or procure; guns, swords, blacksmiths' hammers, carpenters' axes, iron crows, pikes, halberts, pitchforks, spits, clubs, &c. &c. The incredible numbers in which they assembled the next morning, and the still more incredible resolution they exhibited, embarrassed and astonished their enemies. Little did the new ministry expect such a salute. Accustomed to slavery themselves, they had no idea that liberty was capable of such inspiration; or that a body of unarmed citizens would dare to face the military force of thirty thousand men. Every moment of this day was employed in collecting arms, concerting plans, and arranging themselves into the best order which such an instantaneous movement could afford. Broglio continued lying round the city, but made no farther advances this day; and the succeeding night passed with as much tranquillity as such a scene could possibly produce.

But defence only was not the object of the citizens. They had a cause at stake on which depended their freedom, or their slavery. They every moment expected an attack, or to hear of one made on the National Assembly; and in such a situation, the most prompt measures are sometimes the best. The object that now presented itself was the Bastille; and the eclat of carrying such a fortress in the face of such an army, could not fail to strike a terror into the new ministry, who had scarcely yet had time to meet. By some intercepted correspondence this morning, it was discovered that the Mayor of Paris, M. De Flesselles, who appeared to be in their interest, was betraying them; and from this discovery, there remained no doubt that Broglio would reinforce the Bastille the ensuing evening. It was therefore necessary to attack it that day; but before this could be done, it was first necessary to procure a better supply of arms than they were then possessed of.

There was adjoining to the city a large magazine of arms deposited at the Hospital of the Invalids, which the citizens summoned to surrender; and as the place was not defensible, nor attempted much defence, they soon succeeded.—Thus supplied, they marched to attack the Bastille—a vast mixed multitude of all ages, and of all degrees, and armed with all sorts of weapons. Imagination would fail in describing to itself the appearance of such a procession, and of the anxiety for the events which a few hours, or a few moments, might produce. What plans the ministry were forming, were as unknown to the people within the city, as

what the citizens were doing was unknown to the ministry; and what movements Broglio might make for the support or relief of the place, were to the citizens equally unknown. All was mystery and hazard.

That the Bastille was attacked with an enthusiasm of heroism, such only as the highest animation of liberty could inspire, and carried in the space of a few hours, is an event which the world is fully possessed of. I am not undertaking a detail of the attack; but bringing into view the conspiracy against the Nation which provoked it, and which fell with the Bastille. The prison to which the new ministry were dooming the National Assembly, in addition to its being the high altar and castle of despotism, became the proper object to begin with. This enterprize broke up the new ministry, who began now to fly from the ruin they had prepared for others. The troops of Broglio dispersed, and himself fled also.

Mr. Burke has spoken a great deal about plots; but he has never once spoken of this plot against the National Assembly, and the liberties of the Nation; and that he might not, he has passed over all the circumstances that might throw it in his way.

The exiles who have fled from France, in whose fate he so much interests himself, and from whom he has had his lesson, fled in consequence of the miscarriage of this plot. No plot was formed against them—they were plotting against others; and those who fell, met, not unjustly, the punishment they were preparing to execute. But will Mr. Burke say, that if this plot, contrived with the subtilty of an ambuscade, had succeeded, the successful party would have restrained their wrath so soon? Let the history of all old governments answer the question.

Whom has the National Assembly brought to the scaffold? None. They were themselves the devoted victims of this plot, and they have not retaliated. Why then are they charged with revenge they have not acted? In the tremendous breaking forth of a whole people, in which all degrees, tempers, and characters, are confounded; and delivering themselves, by a miracle of exertion, from the destruction meditated against them, is it to be expected that nothing will happen? When men are sore with the sense of oppressions, and menaced with the prospect of new ones, is the calmness of philosophy, or the palsy of insensibility, to be looked for? Mr. Burke exclaims against outrage; yet the greatest is that which himself has committed. His book is

a volume of outrage; not apologized for by the impulse of a moment, but cherished through a space of ten months: yet Mr. Burke had no provocation—no life, no interest at stake.

More of the citizens fell in this struggle than of their opponents; but four or five persons were seized by the populace, and instantly put to death: the Governor of the Bastille, and the Mayor of Paris, who was detected in the act of betraying them; and afterwards Foulon, one of the new ministry, and Berthier his son-in-law, who had accepted the office of Intendant of Paris. Their heads were stuck upon spikes, and carried about the city; and it is upon this mode of punishment that Mr. Burke builds a great part of his tragic scenes. Let us therefore examine how men came by the idea of punishment in this manner.

They learn it from the Governments they live under, and retaliate the punishments they have been accustomed to behold. The heads stuck upon spikes, which remained for years upon Temple-bar, differed nothing in the horror of the scene from those carried about upon spikes at Paris; yet this was done by the English government. It may perhaps be said, that it signifies nothing to a man what is done to him after he is dead; but it signifies much to the living: it either tortures their feelings, or hardens their hearts; and in either case it instructs them how to punish, when power falls into their hands.

Lay then the axe to the root, and teach Governments humanity. It is their sanguinary punishments which corrupt mankind. In England, the punishment in certain cases, is by hanging, drawing, and quartering; the heart of the sufferer is cut out, and held up to the view of the populace. In France, under the former Government, the punishments were not less barbarous. Who does not remember the execution of Damien, torn to pieces by horses? The effect of those cruel spectacles exhibited to the populace, is to destroy tenderness, or excite revenge; and by the base and false idea of governing men by terror, instead of reason, they become precedents. It is over the lowest class of mankind that government by terror is intended to operate; and it is on them that it operates to the worst effect. They have sense enough to feel they are the objects aimed at; and they inflict in their turn the examples of terror which they have been instructed to practise.

There is in all European countries a large class of people of that description which in England is called the *mob*.

Of this class were those who committed the burnings and devastations in London, in 1780; and of this class were those who carried the heads upon spikes in Paris.

Foulon and Berthier were taken up in the country, and sent to Paris, to undergo their examination at the Hotel de Ville; for the National Assembly, immediately on the new ministry coming into office, passed a decree, which they communicated to the King and Cabinet, that they (the National Assembly) would hold the ministry, of which Foulon was one, responsible for the measures they were advising and pursuing; but the mob, incensed at the appearance of Foulon and Berthier, tore them from their conductors, before they were carried to the Hotel de Ville, and executed them on the spot. Why then does Mr. Burke charge outrages of this kind upon a whole people? As well may he charge the riots and outrages of 1780 on all the people of London, or those in Ireland on all his countrymen.

But every thing we see or hear, offensive to our feelings, and derogatory to the human character, should lead to other reflections than those of reproach. Even the beings who commit them have some claim to our consideration. How then is it, that such vast classes of mankind as are distinguished by the appellation of the vulgar, or the ignorant mob, are so numerous in all old countries? The instant we ask ourselves this question, reflection feels an answer. They arise, as an unavoidable consequence, out of the ill construction of old governments in Europe, England included with the rest. It is by distortedly exalting some men, that others are distortedly debased, till the whole is out of nature. A vast mass of mankind is degradingly thrown into the background of the human picture, to bring forward with greater glare, the puppet-show of state and aristocracy. In the commencement of a revolution, those men are rather the followers, of the *camp* than of the *standard* of liberty, and have yet to be instructed how to reverence it.

I give to Mr. Burke all his theatrical exaggerations for facts, and I then ask him, if they do not establish the certainty of what I here lay down? Admitting them to be true, they shew the necessity of the French Revolution, as much as any one thing he could have asserted. These outrages were not the effect of the principles of the revolution, but of the degraded mind that existed before the revolution, and which the revolution is calculated to reform. Place them then to their proper cause, and take the reproach of them to your own side.

It is to the honour of the National Assembly, and the city of Paris, that during such a tremendous scene of arms and confusion, beyond the control of all authority, they have been able, by the influence of example and exhortation, to restrain so much. Never were more pains taken to instruct and enlighten mankind, and to make them see that their interest consisted in their virtue, and not in their revenge, than have been displayed in the Revolution of France.

I now proceed to make some remarks on Mr. Burke's account of the expedition to Versailles, October the 5th and 6th, 1789.

I cannot consider Mr. Burke's book in scarcely any other light than a dramatic performance; and he must, I think, have considered it in the same light himself, by the poetical liberties he has taken, of omitting some facts, distorting others, and making the whole machinery bend to produce a stage effect. Of this kind is his account of the expedition to Versailles. He begins this account by omitting the only facts which as causes are known to be true; every thing beyond these is conjecture, even in Paris; and he then works up a tale accommodated to his own passions and prejudices.

It is to be observed throughout Mr. Burke's book, that he never speaks of plots *against* the Revolution; and it is from those plots that all the mischiefs have arisen. It suits his purpose to exhibit the consequences without their causes. It is one of the arts of the drama to do so. If the crimes of men were exhibited with their sufferings, stage effect would sometimes be lost, and the audience would be inclined to approve, where it was intended they should commiserate.

After all the investigations which have been made into this intricate affair, (the expedition to Versailles) it still remains enveloped in all that kind of mystery which ever accompanies events produced more from a concurrence of awkward circumstances, than from fixed design. While the characters of men are forming, as is always the case in revolutions, there is a reciprocal suspicion, and a disposition to misinterpret each other; and even parties directly opposite in principle will sometimes concur in pushing forward the same movement with very different views, and with the hopes of its producing very different consequences. A great deal of this may be discovered in this embarrassed affair, and yet the issue of the whole was what nobody had in view.

The only things certainly known are, that considerable uneasiness was at this time excited at Paris, by the delay of

the King, in not sanctioning and forwarding the decrees of the National Assembly; particularly that of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and the Decrees of the Fourth of August, which contained the foundation principles on which the constitution was to be erected. The kindest, and perhaps the fairest conjecture, upon this matter is, that some of the ministers intended to make remarks and observations upon certain parts of them, before they were finally sanctioned and sent to the provinces. But be this as it may, the enemies of the revolution derived hope from the delay, and the friends of the revolution uneasiness.

During this state of suspense, the *Garde du Corps*, which was composed, as such regiments generally are, of persons much connected with the court, gave an entertainment at Versailles, (Oct. 1,) to some foreign regiments then arrived; and when the entertainment was at the height, on a signal given, the Garde du Corps tore the National cockade from their hats, trampled it under foot, and replaced it with a counter cockade prepared for the purpose. An indignity of this kind amounted to defiance. It was like declaring war; and if men will give challenges, they must expect consequences.

But all this Mr. Burke has carefully kept out of sight. He begins his conduct by saying—" History will record, that on the morning of the 6th of Oct. 1789, the King and Queen of France, after a day of confusion, alarm, dismay, and slaughter, lay down under the pledged security of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of respite, and troubled melancholy repose." This is neither the sober style of history, nor the intention of it. It leaves every thing to be guessed at, and mistaken. One would at least think there had been a battle; and a battle there probably would have been, had it not been for the moderating prudence of those whom Mr. Burke involves in his censures. By his keeping the *Garde du Corps* out of sight, Mr. Burke has afforded himself the dramatic licence of putting the King and Queen in their places, as if the object of the expedition had been against them.—But, to return to my account—

This conduct of the *Garde du Corps*, as might well be expected, alarmed and enraged the Parisians. The colours of the cause, and the cause itself, were become too united to mistake the intention of the insult, and the Parisians were determined to call the *Garde du Corps* to an account. There was certainly nothing of the cowardice of assassination, in marching, in the face of day, to demand satisfaction, if such

a phrase may be used, of a body of armed men, who had voluntarily given defiance. But the circumstance which serves to throw this affair into embarrassment, is, that the enemies of the revolution appear to have encouraged it, as well as its friends. The one hope to prevent a civil war, by checking it in time, and the other to make one. The hopes of those opposed to the revolution, rested in making the King of their party, and getting him from Versailles to Metz, where they expected to collect a force, and set up a standard. We have therefore two different objects presenting themselves at the same time, and to be accomplished by the same means: the one to chastise the *Garde du Corps*, which was the object of the Parisians; the other, to render the confusion of such a scene an inducement to the King to set off for Metz.

On the 5th of October, a very numerous body of women, and men in the disguise of women, collected round the Hotel de Ville, or town-hall of Paris, and set off for Versailles. Their professed object was the *Garde du Corps;* but prudent men readily recollect that mischief is more easily begun than ended; and this impressed itself with the more force, from the suspicion already stated, and the irregularity of such a cavalcade.

As soon, therefore, as a sufficient force could be collected, M. de la Fayette, by orders from the civil authority of Paris, set off after them, at the head of twenty thousand of the Paris Militia. The revolution could derive no benefit from confusion, and its opposers might. By an amiable and spirited manner of address, he had hitherto been fortunate in calming disquietudes, and in this he was extraordinarily successful. To frustrate, therefore, the hopes of those who might seek to improve this scene into a sort of justifiable necessity for the King's quitting Versailles, and withdrawing to Metz; and to prevent, at the same time, the consequences that might ensue between the *Garde du Corps* and this phalanx of men and women, he forwarded expresses to the King, that he was on his march to Versailles, by the orders of the civil authority of Paris, for the purpose of peace and protection; expressing at the same time the necessity of restraining the *Garde du Corps* from firing upon the people.*

* I am warranted in asserting this, as I had it personally from M. de la Fayette, with whom I have lived in habits of friendship for fourteen years.

He arrived at Versailles between ten and eleven at night. The *Garde du Corps* was drawn up, and the people had arrived some time before, but every thing had remained suspended. Wisdom and policy now consisted in changing a scene of danger into a happy event. M. de la Fayette became the mediator between the enraged parties; and the King, to remove the uneasiness which had arisen, from the delay already stated, sent for the President of the National Assembly, and signed the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and such other parts of the constitution as were in readiness.

It was now about one in the morning. Every thing appeared to be composed, and a general congratulation took place. By the beat of drum a proclamation was made that the citizens of Versailles would give the hospitality of their houses to their fellow-citizens of Paris. Those who could not be accommodated in this manner, remained in the streets, or took up their quarters in the churches; and at two o'clock the King and Queen retired.

In this state matters passed till the break of day, when a fresh disturbance arose from the censurable conduct of some of both parties, for such characters there will be in all such scenes. One of the *Garde du Corps* appeared at one of the windows of the palace, and the people who remained during the night in the streets accosted him with reviling and provocative language. Instead of retiring, as in such a case prudence would have dictated, he presented his musket, fired, and killed one of the Paris militia. The peace being thus broken, the people rushed into the palace in search of the offender. They attacked the quarters of the *Garde du Corps* within the palace, and pursued them throughout the avenues of it, and to the apartments of the King. On this tumult, not the Queen only, as Mr. Burke has represented it, but every person in the palace, was awakened and alarmed; and M. de la Fayette had a second time to interpose between the parties; the event of which was, that the *Garde du Corps* put on the national cockade, and the matter ended as by oblivion, after the loss of two or three lives.

During the latter part of the time in which this confusion was acting, the King and Queen were in public at the balcony, and neither of them concealed for safety's sake, as Mr. Burke insinuates.

Matters being thus appeased, and tranquillity restored, a general acclamation broke forth, of—*Le Roi à Paris.* The King to Paris. It was the shout of peace, and immediately accepted on the part of the King. By this measure, all

future projects of trepanning the King to Metz, and setting up the standard of opposition to the constitution, were prevented, and the suspicions extinguished.

The King and his family reached Paris in the evening, and were congratulated on their arrival, by M. Bailley, the Mayor of Paris, in the name of the citizens. Mr. Burke who, throughout his book, confounds things, persons, and principles, has, in his remarks on M. Bailley's address, confounded time also. He censures M. Bailley for calling it '*un bon jour*,' a good day. Mr. Burke should have informed himself, that this scene took up the space of two days—the day on which it began with every appearance of danger and mischief, and the day on which it terminated without the mischiefs that threatened; and it is to this peaceful termination that M. Bailley alludes, and to the arrival of the King at Paris. Not less than three hundred thousand persons arranged themselves in the procession from Versailles to Paris, and not an act of molestation was committed during the whole march.

Mr. Burke, on the authority of M. Lally Tollendal, a deserter from the National Assembly, says, that on entering Paris, the people shouted—'*Tous les Eveques à la lanterne.*' All bishops to be hanged at the lanthorn or lamp-posts. It is surprising that nobody could hear this but Lally Tollendal, and that nobody should believe it but Mr. Burke. It has not the least connection with any part of the transaction, and is totally foreign to every circumstance of it. The bishops had never been introduced before into any scene of Mr. Burke's drama; why then are they, all at once, and all together, *tout à coup et tous ensemble*, introduced now? Mr. Burke brings forward his bishops and his lanthorn, like figures in a magic lanthorn, and raises his scenes by contrast instead of connection. But it serves to shew, with the rest of his book, what little credit ought to be given, where even probability is set at defiance, for the purpose of defaming; and with this reflection, instead of a soliloquy in praise of chivalry, as Mr. Burke has done, I close the account of the expedition to Versailles.*

I have now to follow Mr. Burke through a pathless wilderness of rhapsodies, and a sort of descant upon governments,

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* An account of the expedition to Versailles may be seen in No. 13, of the REVOLUTION DE PARIS, containing the events from the 3d to the 10th October, 1789.

in which he asserts whatever he pleases, on the presumption of its being believed, without offering either evidence or reasons for so doing.

Before any thing can be reasoned upon to a conclusion, certain facts, principles, or data, to reason from, must be established, admitted, or denied. Mr. Burke, with his usual outrage, abuses the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, published by the National Assembly of France, as the basis on which the constitution of France is built. This he calls "paltry and blurred sheets of paper about the Rights of Man." Does Mr. Burke mean to deny that Man has any Rights? If he does, then he must mean that there are no such things as rights any where, and that he has none himself; for who is there in the world but man? But if Mr. Burke means to admit that man has rights, the question then will be, What are those rights, and how came man by them originally?

The error of those who reason by precedents drawn from antiquity, respecting the Rights of Man, is, that they do not go far enough into antiquity. They do not go the whole way. They stop in some of the intermediate stages, of a hundred, or a thousand years, and produce what was then done, as a rule for the present day. This is no authority at all. If we travel still farther into antiquity, we shall find a direct contrary opinion and practice prevailing; and if antiquity is to be authority, a thousand such authorities may be produced, successively contradicting each other. But if we proceed on, we shall at last come out right; we shall come to the time when Man came from the hand of his Maker. What was he then?—MAN. Man was his high and *only* title, and a higher cannot be given him. But of titles I shall speak hereafter.

We are now got at the origin of Man, and at the origin of his Rights. As to the manner in which the world has been governed from that day to this, it is no farther any concern of ours, than to make a proper use of the errors, or the improvements which the history of it presents. Those who lived a hundred, or a thousand years ago, were then moderns, as we are now. They had *their* ancients, and those ancients had others, and we also shall be ancients in our turn. If the mere name of antiquity is to govern in the affairs of life, the people who are to live a hundred, or a thousand years hence, may as well take us for a precedent, as we make a precedent of those who lived a hundred or a thousand years ago. The fact is, that portions of antiquity, by proving every thing, establish nothing. It is authority

against authority all the way, until we come to the divine origin of the Rights of Man, at the creation. Here our enquiries find a resting-place, and our reason finds a home. If a dispute about the Rights of Man had arisen at the distance of a hundred years from the creation, it is to this source of authority they must have referred, and it is to the same source of authority that we must now refer.

Though I mean not to touch upon any sectarian principle of religion, yet it may be worth observing, that the geneaolgy of Christ is traced to Adam. Why then not trace the Rights of Man to the creation of Man? I will answer the question—because there have been upstart Governments thrusting themselves between, and presumptuously working to unmake Man.

If any generation of men ever possessed the right of dictating the mode by which the world shouldbe governed for ever, it was the first generation that existed; and if that generation did not do it, no succeeding generation can shew any authority for doing it, nor can set any up. The illuminating and divine principle of the equal Rights of Man, (for it has its origin from the Maker of Man) relates not only to the living individuals, but to generations of men succeeding each other. Every generation is equal in Rights to the generations which preceded it, by the same rule that every individual is born equal in Rights with his cotemporary.

Every history of the creation, and every traditionary account, whether from the lettered or unlettered world, however they may vary in their opinion or belief of certain particulars, all agree in establishing one point—*the unity of Man;* by which I mean, that men are all of *one degree*, and consequently that all men are born equal, and with equal Natural Right, in the same manner as if posterity had been continued by *creation*, instead of *generation*, the latter being only the mode by which the former is carried forward; and consequently, every child born into the world must be considered as deriving its existence from God. The world is as new to him as it was to the first man that existed, and his Natural Right in it is of the same kind.

The Mosaic account of the creation, whether taken as divine authority, or merely historical, is fully up to this point, *the unity or equality of Man.* The expressions admit of no controversy. "*And God said, Let us make Man in our own image. In the image of God created he him: male and female created he them.*" The distinction of sexes is pointed out, but no other distinction is even implied. If this be not

*divine* authority, it is at least *historical* authority: and shews that the equality of Man, so far from being a modern doctrine, is the *oldest* upon record.

It is also to be observed, that all the religions known in the world are founded, so far as they relate to man, on the *unity of Man*, as being all of one degree. Whether in heaven or in hell, or in whatever state man may be supposed to exist hereafter, the good and the bad are the only distinctions. Nay, even the laws of Governments are obliged to slide into this principle, by making degrees to consist in crimes, and not in persons.

It is one of the greatest of all truths, and of the highest advantage to cultivate. By considering man in this light, and by instructing him to consider himself in this light, it places him in a close connection with all his duties, whether to his Creator, or to the creation of which he is a part; and it is only when he forgets his origin, or to use a more fashionable phrase, his *birth and family*, that he becomes dissolute.

It is not among the least of the evils of the present existing Governments, in all parts of Europe, that Man, considered as Man, is thrown back to a vast distance from his Maker, and the artificial chasm filled up by a succession of barriers, or a sort of turnpike gates, through which he has to pass. I will pass Mr. Burke's catalogue of barriers, that he has set up between Man and his Maker. Putting himself in the character of a herald, he says—"*We fear God—we look with* AWE *to kings—with affection to Parliaments—with duty to magistrates—with reverence to priests—and with respect to nobiliy.*" Mr. Burke has forgotten to put in "*chivalry.*" He has also forgotten to put in *Peter.*

The duty of man is not a wilderness of turnpike-gates, through which he is to pass by tickets from one to the other. It is plain and simple, and consists but of two points. His duty to God, which every Man must feel; and with respect to his neighbour, to do as he would be done by. If those to whom power is delegated do well, they will be respected; if not, they will be despised: and with regard to those to whom no power is delegated, but who assume it, the rational world can know nothing of them.

Hitherto we have spoken only, and that but in part, of the Natural Rights of Man. We have now to consider the Civil Rights of Man, and to shew how the one originates out of the other. Man did not enter into society to become worse than he was before, nor to have fewer rights than he

had before; but to have those rights better secured. His Natural Rights are the foundation of all his Civil Rights. But in order to pursue this distinction with more precision, it will be necessary to mark the different qualities of Natural and Civil Rights.

A few words will explain this. Natural Rights are those which appertain to Man in right of his existence. Of this kind are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind: and also all those rights of acting as an individual, for his own comfort and happiness, which are not injurious to the Natural Rights of others.—Civil Rights are those which appertain to Man, in right of his being a member of society. Every Civil Right has for its foundation some Natural Right pre-existing in the individual, but to the enjoyment of which his individual power is not, in all cases, sufficiently competent. Of this kind are all those which relate to security and protection.

From this short review, it will be easy to distinguish between that class of National Rights which man retains after entering into society, and those which he throws into the common stock, as a member of society.

The Natural Rights which he retains, are all those in which the *power* to execute is as perfect in the individual as the right itself. Among this class, as is before-mentioned, are all the intellectual rights, or Rights of the Mind: consequently, religion is one of those rights. The Natural Rights which are not retained, are all those in which, though the right is perfect in the individual, the power to execute them is defective. They answer not his purpose. A man by Natural Right, has a right to judge in his own cause; and so far as the Right of the Mind is concerned, he never surrenders it; but what availeth it him to judge, if he has not the power to redress? He therefore deposits this right in the common stock of society, and takes the arm of society, of which he is a part, in preference and in addition to his own. Society *grants* him nothing. Every man is a proprietor in society, and draws on the capital as a matter of right.

From these premises two or three certain conclusions will follow:—

First, *That every Civil Right grows out of a Natural Right; or, in other words, is a Natural Right exchanged.*

Secondly, *That civil power, properly considered as such, is made up of the aggregate of that class of the Natural Rights of Man, which becomes defective in the individual in point of*

*power, and answers not his purpose; but when collected to a focus, becomes competent to the purpose of every one.*

Thirdly, *That the power produced from the aggregate of Natural Rights, imperfect in power in the individual, cannot be applied to invade the Natural Rights which are retained in the individual, and in which the power to execute is as perfect as the Right itself.*

We have now, in a few words, traced Man from a natural individual to a member of society, and shewn, or endeavoured to shew, the quality of the Natural Rights retained, and of those which are exchanged for Civil Rights. Let us now apply these principles to Governments.

In casting our eyes over the world, it is extremely easy to distinguish the Governments which have arisen out of society or out of the social compact, from those which have not: but to place this in a clearer light than what a single glance may afford, it will be proper to take a review of the several sources from which Governments have arisen, and on which they have been founded.

They may be all comprehended under three heads—

First, *Superstition.*

Secondly, *Power.*

Thirdly, *The common interests of society, and the common Rights of Man.*

The first was a government of Priestcraft, the second of Conquerors, and the third of Reason.

When a set of artful men pretended, through the medium of oracles, to hold intercourse with the Deity, as familiarly as they now march up the back-stairs in European Courts, the world was completely under the government of superstition. The oracles were consulted, and whatever they were made to say, became the law: and this sort of Government lasted as long as this sort of superstition lasted.

After these a race of conquerors arose, whose Government, like that of William the Conqueror, was founded in power, and the sword assumed the name of a sceptre. Governments thus established, last as long as the power to support them lasts; but that they might avail themselves of every engine in their favour, they united fraud to force, and set up an idol which they called *Divine Right;* and which, in imitation of the Pope, who affects to be spiritual and temporal, and in contradiction to the Founder of the Christian religion, twisted itself afterwards into an idol of another shape, called *Church and State.* The key of St. Peter and the key of the

Treasury became quartered upon one another, and the wondering cheated multitude worshipped the invention.

When I contemplate the natural dignity of Man—when I feel (for nature has not been kind enough to me to blunt my feelings) for the honour and happiness of its character, I become irritated at the attempt to govern mankind by force and fraud, as if they were all knaves and fools; and can scarcely avoid disgust at those who are thus imposed upon.

We have now to review the Governments which arise out of society, in contradistinction to those which arose out of superstition and conquest.

It has been thought a considerable advance towards establishing the principles of Freedom, to say, that Government is a compact between those who govern and those who are governed; but this cannot be true, because it is putting the effect before the cause; for, as men must have existed before Governments existed, there necessarily was a time when Governments did not exist, and consequently there could originally exist no governors to form such a compact with. The fact therefore must be, that the *individuals themselves*, each in his own personal and sovereign right, *entered into a compact with each other* to produce a Government: and this is the only mode in which Governments have a right to arise, and the only principle on which they have a right to exist.

To possess ourselves of a clear idea of what Government is, or ought to be, we must trace it to its origin. In doing this, we shall easily discover that Governments must have arisen, either *out* of the people, or *over* the people. Mr. Burke has made no distinction. He investigates nothing to its source, and therefore he confounds every thing: but he has signified his intention of undertaking at some future opportunity, a comparison between the constitutions of England and France. As he thus renders it a subject of controversy, by throwing down the gauntlet, I take him up on his own ground. It is in high challenges that high truths have the right of appearing; and I accept it with the more readiness, because it affords me, at the same time, an opportunity of pursuing the subject with respect to Governments arising out of society.

But it will be first necessary to define what is meant by a *Constitution.* It is not sufficient that we adopt the word; we must fix also a standard signification to it.

A Constitution is not a thing in name only, but in fact. It has not an ideal, but a real existence; and *wherever it cannot be produced, in a visible form, there is none.* A Constitution is a thing *antecedent* to a Government; and a Government is only the creature of a Constitution. The Constitution of a country is not the act of its Government, but of the people constituting a Government. It is the body of elements, to which you can refer, and quote article by article; and which contains the principles on which the Government shall be established, the manner in which it shall be organized, the powers it shall have, the mode of elections, the duration of parliaments, or by what other names such bodies may be called; the powers which the executive part of a Government shall have; and, in fine, every thing that relates to the complete organization of a Civil Government, and the principles on which it shall act, and by which it shall be bound. A Constitution therefore is to a Government, what the laws made afterwards by that Government are to a Court of Judicature. The Court of Judicature does not make the laws, neither can it alter them; it only acts in conformity to the laws made; and the Government is in like manner governed by the Constitution.

Can then Mr Burke produce the English Constitution? *If he cannot,* we may fairly conclude, that though it has been so much talked about, no such thing as a Constitution exists, or ever did exist; and, consequently, that the People have yet a Constitution to form.

Mr. Burke will not, I presume, deny the position I have already advanced; namely, that Governments arise, either *out of the People,* or *over the People.* The English Government is one of those which arose out of a conquest, and not out of society: and consequently it arose over the People; and though it has been much modified from the opportunity of circumstances, since the time of William the Conqueror, the country has never yet regenerated itself; and is therefore without a Constitution.

I readily perceive the reason why Mr. Burke declined going into the comparison between the English and French Constitutions, because he could not but perceive, when he sat down to the task, that no such thing as a Constitution existed on his side the question. His book is certainly bulky enough to have contained all he could say upon the subject, and it would have been the best manner in which people could have judged of their separate merits. Why then has he declined the only thing that was worth his while

to write upon? It was the strongest ground he could take, if the advantages were on his side; but the weakest, if they were not: and his declining to take it, is either a sign that he could not possess it, or could not maintain it.

Mr. Burke said in a speech last winter in parliament, *that when the National Assembly first met in three orders*, (the *Tiers Etats*, the Clergy, and the Noblesse) *France had then a* GOOD *Constitution*. This shews, among numerous other instances, that Mr. Burke does not understand what a Constitution is. The persons so met, were not a *Constitution*, but a *Convention*, to *make* a Constitution.

The present National Assembly of France is, strictly speaking, the *personal social compact*. The members of it are the delegates of the Nation, in its *original* character; future assemblies will be the delegates of the Nation, in its *organized* character. The authority of the present Assembly is different to what the authority of future Assemblies will be. The authority of the present one, is to form a Constitution; the authority of future Assemblies will be to legislate according to the principles and forms prescribed in that Constitution; and if experience should hereafter shew that alterations, amendments, or additions, are necessary, the Constitution will point out the mode by which such things shall be done, and not leave it to the discretionary power of the future Government.

A Government, on the principles on which Constitutional Governments, arising out of society, are established, cannot have the right of altering itself. If it had, it would be arbitrary. It might make itself what it pleased; and wherever such a right is set up, it shews there is no Constitution. The act by which the English parliament empowered itself to sit for seven years, shews there is no Constitution in England. It might, by the same self-authority, have set any greater number of years, or for life. The bill which the present Mr. Pitt brought into parliament some years ago, to reform parliament, was on the same erroneous principle. The right of reform is in the Nation, in its original character; and the Constitutional method would be, by a general Convention, elected for the purpose. There is, moreover, a paradox in the idea of vitiated bodies reforming themselves.

From these preliminaries, I proceed to draw some comparisons. I have already spoken of the Declaration of Rights; and as I mean to be as concise as possible, I shall proceed to other parts of the French Constitution.

The Constitution of France says, *that every man who pays a tax of sixty sous per annum* (2s. 6d. English) *is an elector.*

What article will Mr. Burke place against this? Can any thing be more limited, and at the some time more capricious, than the qualifications of electors are in England? Limited—because not one man in a hundred (I speak much within compass) is admitted to vote. Capricious—because the lowest character that can be supposed to exist, and who has not so much as the visible means of an honest livelihood, is an elector in some places: while in other places, the man who pays very large taxes, and has a known fair character; and the farmer who rents to the amount of three or four hundred pounds a year, with a property on that farm to three or four times that sum, is not admitted to be an elector.

Every thing is out of Nature, as Mr. Burke says on another occasion, in this strange chaos, and all sorts of follies are blended with all sorts of crimes.

William the Conqueror, and his descendants, parcelled out the country in this manner; and bribed some parts of it, by what they called Charters, to hold the other parts of it the better subjected to their will. This is the reason why so many of those Charters abound in Cornwall; the people were averse from the Government established at the Conquest, and the towns were garrisoned and bribed to enslave the country. All the old Charters are the badges of this Conquest; and it is from this source that the capriciousness of elections arises.

The French Constitution says, *that the number of representatives for any place, shall be in a ratio to the number of taxable inhabitants or electors.*

What article will Mr. Burke place against this? The county of Yorkshire, which contains near a million of souls, sends two county members; and so does the county of Rutland, which contains not a hundredth part of that number. The town of Old Sarum, which contains not three houses, sends two members; and the town of Manchester, which contains upwards of sixty thousand souls, is not admitted to send any. Is there any principle in these things? Is there any thing by which you can trace the marks of freedom, or discover those of wisdom? No wonder, then, that Mr. Burke has declined the comparison, and endeavoured to lead his readers from the point, by a wild unsystematical display of paradoxical rhapsodies.

The French Constitution says, *that the National Assembly shall be elected every two years.*

What article will Mr. Burke place against this? Why, that the Nation has no right at all in the case; that the Government is perfectly arbitrary with respect to this point; and he can quote for his authority the precedent of a former parliament.

The French Constitution says, *there shall be no Game Laws; that the farmer on whose lands wild game shall be found, (for it is by the produce of his lands that they are fed) shall have a right to what he can take—that there shall be no monopolies of any kind—that all trade shall be free; and every man free to follow any occupation by which he can procure an honest livelihood; and in any place, town, or city, throughout the Nation.*

What will Mr. Burke say to this? In England, Game is made the property of those at whose expence it is not fed; and with respect to monopolies, the country is cut up into monopolies. Every chartered town is an aristocratical monopoly in itself; and the qualification of electors proceeds out of those chartered monopolies. Is this freedom? Is this what Mr. Burke means by a Constitution?

In these chartered monopolies, a man coming from another part of the country, is hunted from them, as if he were a foreign enemy. An Englishman is not free of his own country: every one of those places presents a barrier in his way, and tells him, he is not a freeman!—that he has no Rights.

Within these monopolies, are other monopolies. In a city, such, for instance, as Bath, which contains between twenty and thirty thousand inhabitants, the right of electing representatives to parliament is monopolized by about thirty-one persons. And within these monopolies are still others. A man, even of the same town, whose parents were not in circumstances to give him an occupation, is debarred in many cases from the natural right of acquiring one, be his genius, or industry, what it may.

Are these things examples to hold out to a country regenerating itself from slavery, like France?—Certainly they are not: and certain am I, that when the people of England come to reflect upon them, they will, like France, annihilate those badges of ancient oppression—those traces of a conquered Nation.

Had Mr. Burke possessed talents similar to the author

"On the Wealth of Nations," he would have comprehended all the parts which enter into and by assemblage form a Constitution. He would have reasoned from minutiæ to magnitude. It is not from his prejudices only, but from the disorderly cast of his genius, that he is unfitted for the subject he writes upon. Even his genius is without a Constitution. It is a genius at random, and not a genius constituted. But he must say something—he has, therefore, mounted in the air, like a balloon, to draw the eyes of the multitude from the ground they stand upon.

Much is to be learned from the French Constitution. Conquest and tyranny transplanted themselves with William the Conqueror, from Normandy into England, and the country is yet disfigured with the marks. May then the example of all France contribute to regenerate the freedom which a province of it destroyed!

The French Constitution says, *that to preserve the national representation from being corrupt, no member of the National Assembly shall be an officer of the Government, a placeman, or a pensioner.*

What will Mr. Burke place against this?—I will whisper his answer—LOAVES AND FISHES! Ah! this Government of loaves and fishes has more mischief in it than people have yet reflected on. The National Assembly has made the discovery, and it holds out the example to the world. Had Governments agreed to quarrel, on purpose to fleece their countries by taxes, they could not have succeeded better than they have done.

Many things in the English Government appear to me the reverse of what they ought to be, and the reverse of what they are said to be. The Parliament, imperfectly and capriciously elected as it is, is nevertheless supposed to hold the national purse in trust for the Nation: but in the manner in which an English Parliament is constructed, it is like a man being both mortgagor, and mortgagee; and in the case of misapplication of trust, it is the criminal sitting in judgment upon himself. If those who vote the supplies are the same persons who receive the supplies when voted, and are to account for the expenditure of those supplies to those who voted them, it is *themselves accountable to themselves*, and the Comedy of Errors concludes with the Pantomime of HUSH. Neither the ministerial party, nor the opposition, will touch upon this case. The national purse is the common hack which each mounts upon. It is like what

the country people call, "*Ride and tie—you ride a little way and then I.*"* They order these things better in France.

The French Constitution says, *that the right of war and peace is in the Nation.*

Where else should it reside, but in those who are to pay the expence?

In England this right is said to reside in a *metaphor*, shewn at the Tower, for sixpence or a shilling a-piece. So are the lions; and it would be a step nearer to reason, to say it resided in them; for any inanimate metaphor is no more than a hat or a cap. We can all see the absurdity of worshipping Aaron's molten calf, or Nebuchadnezzar's golden image; but why do men continue to practise themselves the absurdities which they despise in others?

It may with reason be said, that in the manner the English Nation is represented, it signifies not where this right resides, whether in the Crown, or in Parliament. War is the common harvest of all those who participate in the division and expenditure of public money, in all countries. It is the art of *conquering at home*—the object of it is an increase of revenue; and as revenue cannot be increased without taxes, a pretence must be made for expenditure. In reviewing the history of the English Government, its wars, and its taxes, a by-stander, not blinded by prejudice, nor warped by interest, would declare, that taxes were not raised to carry on wars, but that wars were raised to carry on taxes.

Mr. Burke, as a Member of the House of Commons, is a part of the English Government; and though he professes himself an enemy to war, he abuses the French Constitution, which seeks to explode it. He holds up the English Government as a model, in all its parts, to France; but he should first know the remarks which the French make upon it. They contend, in favour of their own, that the portion of liberty enjoyed in England, is just enough to enslave a country by, more productively than by despotism; and that as the real object of all despotism is revenue, a Government so formed obtains more than it could do, either by direct despotism, or in a full state of freedom; and is therefore, on

* It is a practice in some parts of the country, when two travellers have but one horse, which, like the national purse, will not carry double, that the one mounts and rides two or three miles a-head, and then ties the horse to a gate, and walks on. When the second traveller arrives, he takes the horse, rides on, and passes his companion a mile or two, and ties again:—and so on—ride and tie.

the ground of interest, opposed to both. They account also for the readiness which always appears in such Governments for engaging in wars, by remarking on the different motives which produce them. In despotic Governments, wars are the effect of pride; but in those Governments in which they become the means of taxation, they acquire thereby a more permanent promptitude.

The French Constitution, therefore, to provide against both these evils, has taken away the power of declaring war from kings and ministers, and placed the right where the expence must fall.

When the question on the right of war and peace was agitating in the National Assembly, the people of England appeared to be much interested in the event, and highly to applaud the decision.—As a principle it applies as much to one country as to another. William the Conqueror, *as a conqueror*, held this power of war or peace to himself, and his descendants have ever since claimed it as a *right*.

Although Mr. Burke has asserted the right of parliament at the Revolution, to bind and control the Nation, and posterity, *for ever;* he denies, at the same time, that the Parliament, or the Nation, had any right to alter what he calls the succession of the crown, in any thing but in part, or by a sort of modification. By his taking this ground, he throws the case back to the Norman Conquest; and by thus running a line of succession springing from William the Conqueror to the present day, he makes it necessary to enquire who and what William the Conqueror was, and where he came from; and into the origin, history, and nature of what are called prerogatives. Every thing must have had a beginning, and the fog of time and antiquity should be penetrated to discover it. Let then Mr. Burke bring forward his William of Normandy, for it is to this origin that his argument goes. It also unfortunately happens, in running this line of succession, that another line parellel thereto presents itself; which is—that if the succession runs in the line of the Conquest, the Nation runs in the line of being conquered, and it ought to rescue itself from this reproach.

But it will perhaps be said, that though the power of declaring war descends in the heritage of the Conquest, it is held in check by the right of the Parliament to withhold the supplies. It will always happen, when a thing is originally wrong, that amendments do not make it right; and it often happens, that they do as much mischief one way as good the other; and such is the case here. For, if the one rashly

declares war, as a matter of right, and the other preremptorily withholds the supplies as a matter of right, the remedy becomes as bad, or worse than the disease. The one forces the Nation to a combat, and the other ties its hands; but the more probable issue is, that the contest will end in a collusion between the parties, and be made a screen to both.

On this question of war, three things are to be considered:

First, *The right of declaring it.*

Secondly, *The expence of supporting it.*

Thirdly, *The mode of conducting it after it is declared.*

The French Constitution places the *right* where the *expence* must fall; and this union can only be in the Nation. The mode of conducting it after it is declared, it consigns to the executive department. Were this the case in all countries, we should hear but little more of wars.

Before I proceed to consider other parts of the French Constitution, and by way of relieving the fatigue of argument, I will introduce an anecdote, which I had from Dr. Franklin.

While the Doctor resided in France, as minister from America during the war, he had numerous proposals made to him by projectors of every country, and of every kind, who wished to go to the land that floweth with milk and honey, America; and amongst the rest, there was one who offered himself to be King. He introduced his proposal to the Doctor by a letter, which is now in the hands of M. Beaumarchais, of Paris—stating first, that as the Americans had dismissed, or sent away* their King, they would want another. Secondly, that himself was a Norman. Thirdly, that he was of a more ancient family than the Dukes of Normandy, and of a more honourable descent, his line never having been bastardised. Fourthly, that there was already a precedent in England of Kings coming out of Normandy: and on these grounds he rested his offer, *enjoining* that the Doctor would forward it to America. But as the Doctor did not do this, nor yet send him an answer, the projector wrote a second letter; in which he did not, it is true, threaten to go over and conquer America, but only with great dignity proposed, that if his offer was not accepted, an acknowledgment of about thirty thousand pounds might be made to him for his generosity!

Now, as all arguments respecting succession, must necessa-

* The word he used was *renvoyé*—dismissed or sent away.

rily connect that succession with some beginning, Mr. Burke's arguments on this subject go to shew, that there is no English origin of Kings; and that they are descendants of the Norman Line, in right of the Conquest. It may, therefore, be of service to his doctrine to make this story known; and to inform him, that in the case of that natural extinction to which all mortality is subject, Kings may again be had from Normandy, on more reasonable terms than William the Conqueror; and, consequently, that the good people of England, at the Revolution of 1688, *might have done much better* had such a generous Norman as this known *their* wants, and they had known *his*. The chivalry character which Mr. Burke so much admires, is certainly much easier to make a bargain with than a *hard-dealing Dutchman*.—But to return to the matters of the Constitution.

The French constitution says, *There shall be no titles*: and, of consequence, all that class of equivocal generation, which in some countries is called "*aristocracy*," and in others "*nobility*," is done away, and the *peer* is exalted into the MAN.

Titles are but nick-names, and every nick-name is a title. The thing is perfectly harmless in itself; but it marks a sort of foppery in the human character that degrades it. It reduces man into the diminutive of man, in things which are great; and into the counterfeit of woman, in things which are little. It talks about its fine *blue ribbon* like a girl, and shews its *new garter* like a child. A certain writer of some antiquity says—"*When I was a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.*"

It is properly, from the elevated mind of France, that the folly of titles has fallen. It has outgrown the baby clothes of *Count* and *Duke*, and breeched itself in MANHOOD. France has not *levelled*—it has *exalted*. It has put down the dwarf, to set up the man. The punyism of a senseless word, like *Duke*, or *Count*, or *Earl*, has ceased to please. Even those who possess them have disowned the gibberish, and as they outgrew the rickets, have despised the rattle. The genuine mind of man, thirsting for its native home, society, contemns the gewgaws that separate him from it. Titles are like circles drawn by the magician's wand, to contract the sphere of man's felicity. He lives immured within the Bastille of a word, and surveys at a distance the envied life of man.

Is it then any wonder that titles should fall in France? Is it not a greater wonder they should be kept up any where?

What are they? What is their worth, "and what is their amount?"

When we think or speak of a *Judge*, or a *General*, we associate with it the ideas of office and character; we think of gravity in the one, and bravery in the other: but when we use a word *merely as a title*, no ideas associate with it. Through all the vocabulary of Adam there is not such an animal as a Duke or a Count; neither can we connect any certain ideas with the words. Whether they mean strength, or weakness; wisdom, or folly; a child, or a man; or the rider, or the horse; is all equivocal. What respect then can be paid to that which describes nothing, and which means nothing? Imagination has given figure and character to centaurs, satyrs, and down to all the fairy tribe; but titles baffle even the powers of fancy, and are a chimerical nondescript.

But this is not all. If a whole country is disposed to hold them in contempt, all their value is gone, and none will own them. It is common opinion only that makes them any thing, or nothing, or worse than nothing. There is no occasion to take titles away, for they take themselves away when society concurs to ridicule them. This species of imaginary consequence has visibly declined in every part of Europe, and it hastens to its exit as the world of reason continues to rise. There was a time when the lowest class of what are called *nobility* was more thought of than the highest is now; and when a man in armour, riding throughout Christendom in quest of adventures, was more stared at than a modern Duke. The world has seen this folly fall, and it has fallen by being laughed at, and the farce of titles will follow its fate. The patriots of France have discovered in good time, that rank and dignity in society must take a new ground. The old one has fallen through. It must now take the substantial ground of character, instead of the chimerical ground of titles; and they have brought their titles to the altar, and made of them a burnt-offering to Reason.

If no mischief had annexed itself to the folly of titles, they would not have been worth a serious and formal destruction, such as the National Assembly has decreed them; and this makes it necessary to enquire farther into the nature and character of Aristocracy.

That, then, which is called Aristocracy in some countries, and Nobility in others, arose out of the Governments founded in conquest. It was originally a military order, for the pur-

pose of supporting military Government (for such were all Governments founded upon Conquest;) and to keep a succession of this order for the purpose for which it was established, all the younger branches of those families were disinherited, and the law of *primogenitureship* set up.

The nature and character of Aristocracy shews itself to us in this law. It is a law against every law of Nature, and Nature herself calls for its destruction. Establish family justice, and Aristocracy falls. By the aristocratical law of primogenitureship, in a family of six children, five are exposed. Aristocracy has never more than *one* child. The rest are begotten to be devoured. They are thrown to the cannibal for prey, and the natural parent prepares the unnatural repast.

As every thing which is out of Nature in man, affects more or less the interest of society, so does this. All the children which the Aristocracy disown (which are all except the eldest) are, in general, cast like orphans upon a parish, to be provided for by the public, but at a greater charge. Unnecessary offices and places, in Governments and Courts, are created at the expence of the public, to maintain them.

With what kind of parental reflections can the father or mother contemplate their younger offspring? By Nature they are children, and by Marriage they are heirs; but by Aristocracy they are bastards and orphans: They are the flesh and blood of their parents in one line, and nothing akin to them in the other. To restore, therefore, parents to their children, and children to their parents—relations to each other, and man to society—and to exterminate the monster, Aristocracy, root and branch, the French Constitution has destroyed the law of PRIMOGENITURESHIP. Here then lies the monster, and Mr. Burke, if he pleases, may write its epitaph.

Hitherto we have considered Aristocracy chiefly in one point of view. We have now to consider it in another. But whether we view it before, or behind, or side-ways, or any way else, domestically or publicly, it is still a monster.

In France, Aristocracy had one feature less in its countenance, than what it has in some other countries. It did not compose a body of hereditary legislators. It was not a "*Corporation of Aristocracy*," for such I have heard M. de la Fayette describe an English House of Peers. Let us then examine the grounds upon which the French Constitution has resolved against having such a House in France.

Because, in the first place, as is already mentioned, Aristocracy is kept up by family tyranny and injustice.

Secondly, Because there is an unnatural unfitness in Aristocracy to be legislators for a Nation. Their ideas of distributive justice are corrupted at the very source. They begin life by trampling on all their younger brothers and sisters, and relations of every kind, and are taught and educated so to do. With what ideas of justice and honour can that man enter an house of legislation, who absorbs in his own person the inheritance of a whole family of children, or doles out to them some pitiful portion with the insolence of a gift?

Thirdly, Because the idea of hereditary legislators is as inconsistent as that of hereditary judges, or hereditary juries; and as absurd, as an hereditary mathematician, or an hereditary wise man: and as ridiculous, as an hereditary poet-laureat.

Fourthly, Because a body of men holding themselves accountable to nobody, ought not to be trusted by any body.

Fifthly, Because it is continuing the uncivilized principle of Governments founded in Conquest, and the base idea of man having a property in man, and governing him by personal right.

Sixthly, Because Aristocracy has a tendency to degenerate the human species. By the universal economy of Nature it is known, and by the instance of the Jews it is proved, that the human species has a tendency to degenerate, in any small number of persons, when separated from the general stock of society, and intermarrying constantly with each other. It defeats even its pretended end, and becomes in time the opposite of what is noble in Man.

Mr. Burke talks of Nobility, let him shew what it is. The greatest characters the world has known, have arisen on the democratic floor. Aristocracy has not been able to keep a proportionate pace with democracy. The artificial Noble shrinks into a dwarf before the Noble of Nature; and in the few instances of those (for there are some in all countries) in whom Nature, as by a miracle, has survived in Aristocracy, THOSE MEN DESPISE IT.—But it is time to proceed to a new subject.

The French Constitution *has reformed the condition of the Clergy.* It has raised the income of the lower and middle classes, and taken from the higher. None are now less than twelve hundred livres (fifty pounds sterling), nor any higher than about two or three thousand pounds.

What will Mr. Burke place against this? Hear what he says:

"*That the people of England can see, without pain or*

*grudging, an Archbishop precede a Duke; they can see a Bishop of Durham, or a Bishop of Winchester, in possession of ten thousand pounds a year; and cannot see why it is in worse hands, than estates to the like amount in the hands of this earl, or that squire.*"

And Mr. Burke offers this as an example to France.

As to the first part, whether the Archbishop precedes the Duke, or the Duke the Archbishop, it is, I believe, to the people in general, somewhat like *Sternhold* and *Hopkins*, or *Hopkins* and *Sternhold*. You may put which you please first: and as I confess that I do not understand the merits of the case, I will not contend it with Mr. Burke.

But with respect to the latter, I have something to say.—Mr. Burke has not put the case right.—The comparison is out of order, by being put between the Bishop and the Earl or the Squire. It ought to be put between the Bishop and the Curate, and then it will stand thus:—

"*The people of England can see, without pain or grudging, a Bishop of Durham or a Bishop of Winchester, in possession of ten thousand pounds a year, and a curate on thirty or forty pounds a year, or less.*"

No, Sir, they certainly do not see these things without great pain and grudging. It is a case that applies itself to every man's sense of justice; and is one, among many, that calls aloud for a Constitution.

In France the cry of "*the church! the church!*" was repeated as often as in Mr. Burke's book, and as loudly as when the Dissenters' bill was before the English parliament; but the generality of the French Clergy were not to be deceived by this cry any longer. They knew, that whatever the pretence might be, it was themselves who were the principal objects of it. It was the cry of the high beneficed clergy, to prevent any regulation of income taking place between those of ten thousand pounds a year, and the parish priest. They therefore joined their cause to those of every other oppressed class of men, and by this union obtained redress.

The French Constitution *has abolished Tythes;* that source of perpetual discontent between the tythe-holder and the parishioner.

When land is held on tythe, it is in the condition of an estate held between two parties; the one receiving one tenth, and the other nine tenths of the produce: and, consequently, on principles of equity, if the estate can be improved, and

made to produce by that improvement, double or treble what it did before, or in any other ratio, the expence of such improvement ought to be borne in like proportion between the parties who are to share the produce. But this is not the case in tythes; the farmer bears the whole expence, and the tythe-holder takes a tenth of the improvement, in addition to the original tenth, and by this means, gets the value of two tenths instead of one. This is another case that calls for a Constitution.

The French Constitution *hath abolished* or *renounced* TOLERATION, *and* INTOLERATION *also; and hath established* UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE.

Toleration is not the *opposite* of Intoleration, but the *counterfeit* of it. Both are despotisms. The one assumes to itself the right of withholding Liberty of Conscience, and the other of granting it. The one is the Pope armed with fire and faggot, and the other is the Pope, selling or granting indulgences. The former is church and state, and the latter is church and traffic.

But Toleration may be viewed in a much stronger light. Man worships not himself, but his Maker; and the liberty of conscience which he claims, is not for the service of himself, but of his God. In this case, therefore, we must necessarily have the associated ideas of two beings; the *mortal* who renders the worship, and the IMMORTAL BEING who is worshipped. Toleration, therefore, places itself, not between man and man, nor between church and church, nor between one denomination of religion and another, but between God and man—between the being who worships, and the BEING who is worshipped: and by the same act of assumed authority by which it tolerates man to pay his worship, it presumptuously and blasphemously sets itself up to tolerate the Almighty to receive it.

Were a bill brought into any parliament, entitled, "*An act to tolerate or grant liberty to the Almighty, to receive the worship of a Jew, or a Turk,*" or "*to prohibit the Almighty from receiving it,*" all men would startle, and call it blasphemy. There would be an uproar. The presumption of toleration in religious matters would then present itself unmasked: but the presumption is not the less because the name of "man" only appears to those laws, for the associated idea of the *worshipper* and the *worshipped* cannot be separated.—Who, then, art thou, vain dust and ashes! by whatever name thou art called, whether a king, a bishop, a church, or a state, a parliament, or any thing else, that

obtrudest thine insignificance between the soul of man and his Maker? Mind thine own concerns. If he believes not as thou believest, it is a proof that thou believest not as he believeth, and there is no earthly power can determine between you.

With respect to what are called denominations of religion, if every one is left to judge of his own religion, there is no such thing as a religion that is wrong; but if they are to judge of each other's religion, there is no such thing as a religion that is right; and, therefore, all the world are right, or all the world are wrong. But with respect to religion itself, without regard to names, and as directing itself from the universal family of mankind to the divine object of all adoration, *it is man bringing to his Maker the fruits of his heart;* and though these fruits may differ from each other, like the fruits of the earth, the grateful tribute of every one is accepted.

A bishop of Durham, or a bishop of Winchester, or the archbishop who heads the Dukes, will not refuse a tythe-sheaf of wheat, because it is not a cock of hay; nor a cock of hay, because it is not a sheaf of wheat; nor a pig, because it is neither the one nor the other. But the same persons, under the figure of an established church, will not permit their Maker to receive the varied tythes of man's devotion.

One of the continual choruses of Mr. Burke's book is "Church and State:" he does not mean some one particular church, or some one particular state, but any church and state; and he uses the term as a general figure to hold forth the political doctrine of always uniting the church with the state in every country, and he censures the National Assembly for not having done this in France. Let us bestow a few thoughts on this subject.

All religions are in their nature mild and benign, and united with principles of morality. They could not have made proselytes at first, by professing any thing that was vicious, cruel, persecuting, or immoral. Like every thing else, they had their beginning; and they proceeded by persuasion, exhortation, and example. How then is it that they lose their native mildness, and become morose and intolerant?

It proceeds from the connection which Mr. Burke recommends. By engendering the Church with the state, a sort of mule animal, capable only of destroying, and not of breeding up, is produced, called, *The Church established by Law.*

It is a stranger, even from its birth, to any parent mother on which it is begotten, and whom in time it kicks out and destroys.

The Inquisition in Spain does not proceed from the religion originally professed, but from this mule animal, engendered between the church and the state. The burnings in Smithfield proceeded from the same heterogeneous production; and it was the regeneration of this strange animal in England afterwards, that renewed rancour and irreligion among the inhabitants, and that drove the people called Quakers and Dissenters to America. Persecution is not an original feature in *any* religion; but it is always the strongly marked feature of all law-religion, or religions established by law. Take away the law-establishment, and every religion re-assumes its original benignity. In America, a Catholic priest is a good citizen, a good character, and a good neighbour; an episcopalian minister is of the same description; and this proceeds, independent of men, from there being no law-establishment in America.

If also we view this matter in a temporal sense, we shall see the ill effects it has had on the prosperity of nations. The union of church and state has impoverished Spain. The revoking the edict of Nantz drove the silk manufacture from that country into England; and church and state are now driving the cotton manufacture from England to America and France. Let, then, Mr. Burke continue to preach his anti-political doctrine of church and state. It will do some good. The National Assembly will not follow his advice but will benefit by his folly. It was by observing the ill effects of it in England, that America has been warned against it; and it is by experiencing them in France, that the National Assembly have abolished it, and, like America, have established UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE, AND UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CITIZENSHIP.*

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* When in any country we see extraordinary circumstances taking place, they naturally lead any man who has talent for observation and investigation, to inquire into the causes. The manufacturers of Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield, are the most principal manufacturers in England. From whence did this arise? A little observation will explain the case. The principal, and the generality of the inhabitants of these places, are not of what is called in England, the church established by law; and they, or their fathers (for it is within but a few years) withdrew from the

I will here cease the comparison with respect to the principles of the French Constitution, and conclude this part of the subject with a few observations on the organization of the formal parts of the French and English Governments.

The executive power of each country is in the hands of a person, styled the King; but the French Constitution distinguishes between the King and the Sovereign. It considers the station of King official, and places Sovereignty in the Nation.

The representatives of the Nation, who compose the National Assembly, and who are the legislative power, originate in, and from the people by election, as an inherent right in the People. In England it is otherwise; and this arises from the original establishment of what is called its monarchy; for as by the conquest, all the rights of the

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persecution of chartered towns, where test-laws more particularly operate, and established a sort of asylum for themselves in those places. It was the only asylum that then offered, for the rest of Europe was worse. But the case is now changing. France and America bid all comers welcome, and initiate them into all the rights of citizenship. Policy and interest, therefore, will, but perhaps too late, dictate in England, what reason and justice could not. These manufacturers are withdrawing, and are arising in other places. There is now erecting at Passey, three miles from Paris, a large cotton mill, and several are already erected in America. Soon after the rejecting the bill for repealing the test-law, one of the richest manufacturers in England said in my hearing, "England, Sir, is not a country for a dissenter to live in—we must go to France." These are truths, and it is doing justice to both parties to tell them. It is chiefly the dissenters that have carried English manufactures to the height they are now at, and the same men have it in their power to carry them away; and though those manufactures would afterwards continue to be made in those places, the foreign market would be lost. There are frequently appearing in the London Gazette, extracts from certain acts to prevent machines, and as far as it can extend, to persons from going out of the country. It appears from these, that the ill effects of the test-laws and church establishment begin to be much suspected; but the remedy of force can never supply the remedy of reason. In the progress of less than a century, all the unrepresented part of England, of all denominations, which is at least a hundred times the most numerous, may begin to feel the necessity of a Constitution, and then all those matters will come regularly before them.

People, or the Nation, were absorbed into the hands of the conqueror, and who added the title of King to that of conqueror, those same matters which in France are now held as rights in the People, or in the Nation, are held in England as grants from what is called the crown. The Parliament in England, in both its branches, was erected by patents from the descendants of the Conqueror. The House of Commons did not originate as a matter of right in the People, to delegate or elect, but as a grant or boon.

By the French Constitution, the Nation is always named before the King. The third article of the Declaration of Rights says, "*The Nation is essentially the source* (or fountain) *of all sovereignty.*" Mr. Burke argues, that, in England, a King is the fountain—that he is the fountain of all honour. But as this idea is evidently descended from the conquest, I shall make no other remark upon it than that it is the nature of conquest to turn every thing upside down: and as Mr. Burke will not be refused the privilege of speaking twice, and as there are but two parts in the figure, the *fountain* and the *spout*, he will be right the second time.

The French Constitution puts the legislative before the executive; the law before the King; *la loi, le roi.* This also is in the natural order of things; because laws must have existence, before they can have execution.

A King in France does not in addressing himself to the National Assembly, say, "my Assembly," similar to the phrase used in England, of "*my* Parliament;" neither can he use it consistently with the Constitution, nor could it be admitted. There may be propriety in the use of it in England, because, as is before mentioned, both Houses of Parliament originated from what is called the Crown, by patent or boon—and not out of the inherent rights of the People, as the National Assembly does in France, and whose name designates its origin.

The President of the National Assembly does not ask the King *to grant to the Assembly liberty of speech*, as is the case with the English House of Commons. The Constitutional dignity of the National Assembly cannot debase itself. Speech is, in the first place, one of the Natural Rights of Man always retained; and with respect to the National Assembly, the use of it is their *duty*, and the Nation is their *authority*. They were elected by the greatest body of men exercising the right of election the European world ever saw. They sprung not from the filth of rotten boroughs, nor are they the vassal representatives of aristocratical ones. Feel-

ing the proper dignity of their character, they support it. Their parliamentary language, whether for or against a question, is free, bold, and manly, and extends to all the parts and circumstances of the case. If any matter or subject respecting the executive department, or the person who presides in it (the King), comes before them, it is debated with the spirit of men, and the language of gentlemen; and their answer, or their address, is returned in the same style. They stand not aloof with the gaping vacuity of vulgar ignorance, nor bend with the cringe of sycophantic insignificance. The graceful pride of truth knows no extremes, and preserves, in every latitude of life, the right-angled character of Man.

Let us now look to the other side of the question. In the addresses of the English Parliaments to their Kings, we see neither the intrepid spirit of the old Parliaments of France, nor the serene dignity of the present National Assembly: neither do we see in them any thing of the style of English manners, which borders somewhat on bluntness. Since then they are neither of foreign extraction, nor naturally of English production, their origin must be sought for elsewhere, and that origin is the Norman Conquest. They are evidently of the vassalage class of manners, and emphatically mark the prostrate difference that exists in no other condition of men than between the conqueror and the conquered. That this vassalage idea and style of speaking was not got rid of, even at the Revolution of 1688, is evident from the declaration of Parliament, to William and Mary, in these words: "We do most humbly and faithfully *submit* ourselves, our heirs, and posterity for ever." Submission is wholly a vassalage term repugnant to the dignity of freedom, and an echo of the language used at the conquest.

As the estimation of all things is by comparison, the Revolution of 1688, however from circumstances it may have been exalted above its value, will find its level. It is already on the wane, eclipsed by the enlarging orb of reason, and the luminous Revolutions of America and France. In less than another century, it will go, as well as Mr. Burke's labours, "to the family vault of all the Capulets." Mankind will then scarcely believe that a country calling itself free, would send to Holland for a man, and clothe him with power, on purpose to put themselves in fear of him, and give him almost a million sterling a-year for leave to *submit* themselves and their posterity, like bond-men and bond-women, for ever.

But there is a truth that ought to be made known. I have had the opportunity of seeing it, which is, *that notwithstanding appearances, there is not any description of men that despise monarchy so much as courtiers.* But they well know, that if it were seen by others, as it is seen by them, the juggle could not be kept up. They are in the condition of men who get their living by a show, and to whom the folly of that show is so familiar, that they ridicule it; but were the audience to be made as wise, in this respect, as themselves, there would be an end to the show and the profits with it. The difference between a Republican and a Courtier with respect to monarchy, is, that the one opposes monarchy, believing it to be something, and the other laughs at it, knowing it to be nothing.

As I used sometimes to correspond with Mr. Burke, believing him then to be a man of sounder principles than his book shews him to be, I wrote to him last winter from Paris, and gave him an account how prosperously matters were going on. Among other subjects in that letter, I referred to the happy situation the National Assembly were placed in; that they had taken a ground on which their moral duty and their political interest were united. They have not to hold out a language which they do not believe, for the fraudulent purpose of making others believe it. Their station requires no artifice to support it, and can only be maintained by enlightening mankind. It is not their interest to cherish ignorance, but to dispel it. They are not in the case of a ministerial or an opposition party in England, who, though they are opposed, are still united to keep up the common mystery. The National Assembly must throw open a magazine of light. It must shew Man the proper character of Man; and the nearer it can bring him to that standard, the stronger the National Assembly becomes.

In contemplating the French Constitution, we see in it a rational order of things. The principles harmonize with the forms, and both with their origin. It may perhaps be said, as an excuse for bad forms, that they are nothing more than the forms; but this is a mistake. Forms grow out of principles, and operate to continue the principles they grow from. It is impossible to practise a bad form on any thing but a bad principle. It cannot be ingrafted on a good one; and wherever the forms in any government are bad, it is a certain indication that the principles are bad also.

I will here finally close this subject. I began it by remarking, that Mr. Burke had *voluntarily* declined going into

a comparison of the English and French Constitutions. He apologizes (in page 241) for not doing it, by saying that he had not time. Mr. Burke's book was upwards of eight months in hand, and it extended to a volume of three hundred and fifty-six pages. As his omission does injury to his cause, his apology makes it worse; and men on the English side of the water will begin to consider, whether there is not some radical defect in what is called the English Constitution, that made it necessary for Mr. Burke to suppress the comparison, to avoid bringing it into view.

As Mr. Burke has not written on Constitutions, so neither has he written on the French Revolution. He gives no account of its commencement or its progress. He only expresses his wonder. "It looks," says he, "to me as if I were in a great crisis, not of the affairs of France alone, but of all Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumstances taken together, the French Revolution is the most astonishing that has hitherto happened in the world."

As wise men are astonished at foolish things, and other people at wise ones, I know not on which ground to account for Mr. Burke's astonishment; but certain it is that he does not understand the French Revolution. It has apparently burst forth like a creation from a chaos, but it is no more than the consequence of a mental Revolution priorily existing in France. The mind of the Nation had changed before hand, and the new order of things has naturally followed the new order of thoughts.—I will here, as concisely as I can, trace out the growth of the French Revolution, and mark the circumstances that have contributed to produce it.

The despotism of Louis XVI. united with the gaiety of his Court, and gaudy ostentation of his character, had so humbled, and at the same time so fascinated the mind of France, that the People appear to have lost all sense of their own dignity, in contemplating that of their grand monarch. And the whole reign of Louis XV. remarkable only for weakness and effeminacy, made no other alteration than that of spreading a sort of lethargy over the Nation, from which it shewed no disposition to rise.

The only signs which appeared of the spirit of liberty during those periods, are to be found in the writings of the French Philosophers. Montesquieu, President of the Parliament of Bourdeaux, went as far as a writer under a despotic Government could well proceed: and being obliged to divide himself between principle and prudence, his mind often appears

under a veil, and we ought to give him credit for more than he has expressed.

Voltaire, who was both the flatterer and the satirist of despotism, took another line. His forte lay in exposing and ridiculing the superstitions which priestcraft united with state-craft had interwoven with Governments. It was not from the purity of principles, or his love of mankind (for satire and philanthropy are not naturally concordant), but from his strong capacity of seeing folly in its true shape, and his irresistible propensity to expose it, that he made those attacks. They were, however, as formidable as if the motives had been virtuous; and he merits the thanks rather than the esteem of mankind.

On the contrary, we find in the writings of Rousseau and the Abbe Raynal, a loveliness of sentiment in favour of liberty, that excites respect, and elevates the human faculties: yet having raised this animation, they do not direct its operations, but leave the mind in love with an object, without describing the means of possessing it.

The writings of Quisne, Turgot, and the friends of those authors, are of a serious kind; but they laboured under the same disadvantage with Montesquieu; their writings abound with moral maxims of Government, but are rather directed to economise and reform the Administration of the Government, than the Government itself.

But all those writings, and many others, had their weight; and by the different manner in which they treated the subject of Government, Montesquieu, by his judgment and knowledge of laws, Voltaire by his wit, Rousseau and Raynal by their animation, and Quisne and Turgot by their moral maxims and systems of economy, readers of every class met with something to their taste, and a spirit of political enquiry began to diffuse itself through the Nation at the time the dispute between England and the then colonies of America broke out.

In the war which France afterwards engaged in, it is very well known that the Nation appeared to be before-hand with the French Ministry. Each of them had its view. But those views were directed to different objects; the one sought liberty, and the other retaliation on England. The French officers and soldiers who, after this, went to America, were eventually placed in the school of freedom, and learned the practice, as well as the principles of it by heart.

As it was impossible to separate the military events which took place in America from the principles of the American Revolution, the publication of those events in France necessarily connected themselves with the principles that produced them. Many of the facts were in themselves principles; such as the Declaration of American Independence, and the treaty of alliance between France and America, which recognized the Natural Rights of Man, and justified resistance to oppression.

The then Minister of France, Count Vergennes, was not the friend of America; and it is both justice and gratitude to say, that it was the Queen of France who gave the cause of America a fashion at the French Court. Count Vergennes was the personal and social friend of Doctor Franklin; and the Doctor had obtained, by his sensible gracefulness, a sort of influence over him: but with respect to principles Count Vergennes was a despot.

The situation of Dr. Franklin as Minister from America to France should be taken into the chain of circumstances. The diplomatic character is of itself the narrowest sphere of society that man can act in. It forbids intercourse by a reciprocity of suspicion; and a diplomatic is a sort of unconnected atom, continually repelling and repelled. But this was not the case with Dr. Franklin. He was not the diplomatic of a Court, but of MAN. His character as a philosopher had been long established, and his circle of society in France was universal.

Count Vergennes resisted, for a considerable time, the publication of the American Constitutions in France, translated into the French language: but even in this he was obliged to give way to the public opinion, and a sort of propriety in admitting to appear what he had undertaken to defend. The American Constitutions were to liberty what grammar is to language. They define its parts of speech, and practically construct them into syntax.

The peculiar situation of the then Marquis de la Fayette is another link in the great chain. He served in America as an American officer under a commission of Congress, and by the universality of his acquaintance, was in close friendship with the civil Government of America, as well as with the military line. He spoke the language of the country, entered into the discussions on the principles of Government, and was always a welcome friend at any election.

When the war closed, a vast reinforcement to the cause of liberty spread itself over France, by the return of the

French officers and soldiers. A knowledge of the practice was then joined to the theory; and all that was wanting to give it real existence, was opportunity. Man cannot, properly speaking, make circumstances for his purpose, but he always has it in his power to improve them when they occur. And this was the case in France.

M. Neckar was displaced in May, 1781; and by the ill-management of the finances afterwards, and particularly during the extravagant administration of M. Calonne, the revenue of France, which was nearly twenty-four millions sterling per year, was become unequal to the expenditure, not because the revenue had decreased, but because the expences had increased, and this was the circumstance which the Nation laid hold of to bring forward a revolution. The English Minister, Mr. Pitt, has frequently alluded to the state of the French finances in his budgets, without understanding the subject. Had the French Parliaments been as ready to register edicts for new taxes, as an English Parliament is to grant them, there had been no derangement in the finances, nor yet any Revolution: but this will better explain itself as I proceed.

It will be necessary here to shew how taxes were formerly raised in France. The King, or rather, the Court or Ministry, acting under the use of that name, framed the edicts for taxes at their own discretion, and sent them to the Parliaments to be registered; for until they were registered by the Parliaments, they were not operative. Disputes had long existed between the Court and the Parliament with respect to the extent of the Parliament's authority on this head. The Court insisted that the authority of Parliaments went no further than to remonstrate or shew reasons against the tax, reserving to itself the right of determining whether the reasons were well or ill founded; and in consequence thereof either to withdraw the edict as a matter of choice, or to order it to be enregistered as a matter of authority. The Parliaments on their part insisted, that they had not only a right to remonstrate, but to reject; and on this ground they were always supported by the Nation.

But, to return to the order of my narrative: M. Calonne wanted money; and as he knew the sturdy disposition of the Parliaments with respect to new taxes, he ingeniously sought either to approach them by a more gentle method than that of direct authority, or get over their heads by a manœuvre. And for this purpose, he revived the project of assembling a body of men from the several provinces,

under the style of an "Assembly of the Notables," or men of note, who met in 1787, and who were either to recommend taxes to the Parliament, or to act as a Parliament themselves. An assembly under this name had been called in 1617.

As we are to view this as the first practical step towards the Revolution, it will be proper to enter into some particulars respecting it. The Assembly of the Notables has in some places been mistaken for the States-general, but was wholly a different body; the States-general being always by election. The persons who composed the Assembly of the Notables were all nominated by the King, and consisted of one hundred and forty members. But as M. Calonne could not depend upon a majority of this assembly in his favour, he very ingeniously arranged them in such a manner as to make forty-four a majority of one hundred and forty. To effect this, he disposed of them into seven separate committees, of twenty members each. Every general question was to be decided, not by a majority of persons, but by a majority of committees, and as eleven votes would make a majority in a committee, and four committees a majority of seven, M. Calonne had good reasons to conclude, that as forty-four would determine any general question, he could not be out-voted. But all his plans deceived him, and in the event became his overthrow.

The then Marquis de la Fayette was placed in the second committee, of which Count D'Artois was president; and as money matters were the object, it naturally brought into view every circumstance connected with it. M. de la Fayette made a verbal charge against Calonne, for selling crown lands to the amount of two millions of livres, in a manner that appeared to be unknown to the King. The Count D'Artois (as if to intimidate, for the Bastille was then in being) asked the Marquis, if he would render the charge in writing? He replied that he would. The Count D'Artois did not demand it, but brought a message from the King to that purport. M. de la Fayette then delivered in his charge in writing, to be given to the King, undertaking to support it. No farther proceedings were had upon this affair; but M. Calonne was soon after dismissed by the King, and set off to England.

As M. de la Fayette, from the experience he had seen in America, was better acquainted with the science of civil Government than the generality of the members who composed the Assembly of the Notables, could then be, the brunt of the business fell considerably to his share. The plan of those who had a Constitution in view, was to con-

tend with the Court on the ground of taxes, and some of them openly professed their object. Disputes frequently arose between Count D'Artois and M. de la Fayette, upon various subjects. With respect to the arrears already incurred, the latter proposed to remedy them, by accommodating the expences to the revenue, instead of the revenue to the expences; and as objects of reform, he proposed to abolish the Bastille, and all the State-prisons throughout the Nation, (the keeping of which was attended with great expence) and to suppress *lettres de cachet.* But those matters were not then much attended to; and with respect to *lettres de cachet, a majority of the nobles appeared to be in favour of them.*

On the subject of supplying the treasury by new taxes, the Assembly declined taking the matter on themselves, concurring in the opinion that they had not authority. In a debate on this subject, M. de la Fayette said, that raising money by taxes, could only be done by a National Assembly, freely elected by the People, and acting as their representative. Do you mean, said the Count D'Artois, the *States-general?* M. de la Fayette replied, that he did. Will you, said the Count D'Artois, sign what you say, to be given to the King? The other replied, that he would not only do this, but that he would go farther, and say, that the effectual mode would be, for the King to agree to the establishment of a Constitution.

As one of the plans had thus failed, that of getting the Assembly to act as a Parliament, the other came into view, that of recommending. On this subject, the Assembly agreed to recommend two new taxes to be enregistered by the Parliament, the one a stamp-tax, and the other a territorial tax, or sort of land-tax. The two have been estimated at about five millions sterling per annum. We have now to turn our attention to the Parliament, on whom the business was again devolving.

The Archbishop of Thoulouse (since Archbishop of Sens, and now a Cardinal) was appointed to the administration of the finances, soon after the dismissal of Calonne. He was also made Prime Minister, an office that did not always exist in France. When this office did not exist, the chief of each of the principal departments transacted business immediately with the King; but when a Prime Minister was appointed they did business only with him. The Archbishop arrived to more state authority than any Minister since the Duke de Choiseuil, and the Nation was strongly disposed in his favour: but by a line of conduct scarcely to be accounted

for, he perverted every opportunity, turned out a despot, and sunk into disgrace, and a Cardinal.

The Assembly of the Notables having broke up, the new Minister sent the edicts for the two new taxes recommended by the Assembly to the Parliaments, to be enregistered. They of course came first before the Parliament of Paris, who returned for answer, *That with such a revenue as the nation then supported, the name of taxes ought not to be mentioned, but for the purpose of reducing them;* and threw both the edicts out.*

On this refusal, the Parliament was ordered to Versailles, where, in the usual form, the King held, what under the old Government was called a Bed of Justice. And the two edicts were enregistered in presence of the Parliament, by an order of state, in the manner mentioned in page 66. On this, the Parliament immediately returned to Paris, renewed their session in form, and ordered the enregistering to be struck out, declaring that every thing done at Versailles was illegal. All the Members of Parliament were then served with *lettres de cachet*, and exiled to Trois; but as they continued as inflexible in exile as before, and as vengeance did not supply the place of taxes, they were after a short time recalled to Paris.

The edicts were again tendered to them, and the Count D'Artois undertook to act as representative to the King. For this purpose, he came from Versailles to Paris, in a train of procession; and the Parliament were assembled to receive him. But show and parade had lost their influence in France; and whatever ideas of importance he might set off with, he had to return with those of mortification and disappointment. On alighting from his carriage to ascend the steps of the Parliament House, the crowd (which was numerously collected) threw out trite expressions, saying, "This "is Monsieur D'Artois, who wants more of our money to "spend." The marked disapprobation which he saw, impressed him with apprehensions: and the word *aux arms* (*To arms*) was given out by the officer of the guard who attended him. It was so loudly vociferated, that it echoed through the avenues of the house, and produced a temporary confusion. I was then standing in one of the apartments through

* When the English Minister, Mr. Pitt, mentions the French finances again in the English Parliament, it would be well that he noticed this as an example.

which he had to pass, and could not avoid reflecting how wretched was the condition of a disrespected man.

He endeavoured to impress the Parliament by great words, and opened his authority by saying, "The King, our Lord and Master." The Parliament received him very coolly, and with their usual determination not to enregister the taxes. And in this manner the interview ended.

After this a new subject took place. In the various debates and contests that arose between the Court and the Parliaments on the subject of taxes, the Parliament of Paris at last declared, that although it had been customary for Parliaments to enregister edicts for taxes as a matter of convenience, the right belonged only to the *States-general*; and that, therefore, the Parliaments could no longer, with propriety, continue to debate on what it had not authority to act. The King, after this, came to Paris, and held a meeting with the Parliament, in which he continued from ten in the morning till about six in the evening; and in a manner that appeared to proceed from him, as if unconsulted upon with the Cabinet or the Ministry, gave his word to the Parliament, that the States-general should be convened.

But after this, another scene arose, on a ground different from all the former. The Minister and the Cabinet were averse from calling the States-general. They well knew, if the States-general were assembled, that themselves must fall. And as the King had not mentioned *any time*, they hit on a project calculated to elude, without appearing to oppose.

For this purpose the Court set about making a sort of Constitution itself. It was principally the work of M. Lamoignan, keeper of the seals, who afterwards shot himself. The new arrangement consisted in establishing a body under the name of a *Cour Pleniere*, or full Court, in which were invested all the powers that the Government might have occasion to make use of. The persons composing this Court to be nominated by the King; the contended right of taxation was given up on the part of the King, and a new criminal code of laws, and law proceedings, was substituted in the room of the former. The thing, in many points, contained better principles than those upon which the Government had hitherto been administered. But with respect to the *Cour Pleniere* it was no other than a medium through which despotism was to pass, without appearing to act directly from itself.

The Cabinet had high expectations from their new con-

trivance. The persons who were to compose the *Cour Pleniere* were already nominated; and as it was necessary to carry a fair appearance, many of the best characters in the Nation were appointed among the number. It was to commence on the 8th of May, 1788. But an opposition arose to it, on two grounds—the one as to principle, the other as to form.

On the ground of principle it was contended, that Government had not a right to alter itself; and that if the practice was once admitted, it would grow into a principle, and be made a precedent for any future alterations the Government might wish to establish: that the right of altering the Government was a National Right, and not a right of Government. And on the ground of form, it was contended, that the *Cour Pleniere* was nothing more than a larger Cabinet.

The then Dukes de la Rochefoucault, Luxembourg, de Noailles, and many others, refused to accept the nomination, and strenuously opposed the whole plan. When the edict for establishing this new Court was sent to the Parliaments to be enregistered, and put into execution, they resisted also. The Parliament of Paris not only refused, but denied the authority; and the contest renewed itself between the Parliament and the Cabinet more strongly than ever. While the Parliament were sitting in debate on this subject, the Ministry ordered a regiment of soldiers to surround the House, and form a blockade. The Members sent out for beds and provision, and lived as in a besieged citadel; and as this had no effect, the commanding officer was ordered to enter the Parliament House and seize them, which he did, and some of the principal Members were shut up in different prisons. About the same time a deputation of persons arrived from the Province of Brittany, to remonstrate against the establishment of the *Cour Pleniere*; and those the Archbishop sent to the Bastille. But the spirit of the Nation was not to be overcome; and it was so fully sensible of the strong ground it had taken, that of withholding taxes, that it contented itself with keeping up a sort of quiet resistance, which effectually overthrew all the plans at that time formed against it. The project of the *Cour Pleniere* was at last obliged to be given up, and the Prime Minister not long afterwards followed its fate, and M. Neckar was recalled into office.

The attempt to establish the *Cour Pleniere*, had an effect upon the Nation, which itself did not perceive. It was a sort of new form of Government, that insensibly served to put the old one out of sight, and to unhinge it from the superstitious authority of antiquity. It was Government

dethroning Government; and the old one, by attempting to make a new one, made a chasm.

The failure of this scheme renewed the subject of convening the States-General; and this gave rise to a new series of politics.

There was no settled form for convening the States-General. All that it positively meant, was a deputation from what was then called the Clergy, the Noblesse, and the Commons; but their numbers, or their proportions had not been always the same. They had been convened only on extraordinary occasions, the last of which was in 1614; their numbers were then in equal proportions, and they voted by orders.

It could not well escape the sagacity of M. Neckar, that the mode of 1614 would answer neither the purpose of the then Government, nor of the Nation. As matters were at that time circumstanced, it would have been too contentious to argue upon any thing. The debates would have been endless between privileges and exemptions, in which neither the wants of Government, nor the wishes of the Nation for a Constitution would have been attended to.

But as he did not choose to take the decision upon himself, he summoned again the Assembly of the Notables, and referred it to them.

This body was in general interested in the decision, being chiefly of the Aristocracy and the high paid clergy; and they decided in favour of the mode of 1614.

This decision was against the sense of the Nation, and also against the wishes of the Court; for the Aristocracy opposed itself to both, and contended for privileges independent of either.

The subject was then taken up by the Parliament, who recommended, that the number of the Commons should be equal to the other two; and that they should all sit in one house, and vote in one body.

The number finally determined upon was twelve hundred; six hundred to be chosen by the Commons, (and this was less than their proportion ought to have been, when their worth and consequence is considered on a National scale) three hundred by the Clergy, and three hundred by the Aristocracy. But with respect to the mode of assembling themselves, whether together or apart, or the manner in which they should vote, those matters were referred.*

* Mr. Burke, (and I must take the liberty of telling him, he is very unacquainted with French affairs) speaking on this subject,

The election that followed was not a contested election, but an animated one. The candidates were not men, but principles. Societies were formed in Paris, and committees of correspondence and communication established throughout the Nation, for the purpose of enlightening the People, and explaining to them the principles of civil Government; and so orderly was the election conducted, that it did not give rise even to the rumour of tumult.

The States-General were to meet at Versailles, in April, 1789, but did not assemble till May. They situated themselves in three separate chambers; or rather the Aristocracy and the Clergy withdrew each into a separate chamber.

The majority of the Aristocracy claimed what they called the privilege of voting as a separate body, and of giving their consent or negative in that manner; and many of the Bishops, and the high-beneficed Clergy, claimed the same privilege on the part of their order.

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says, "The first thing that struck me in the calling the States-General, was a great departure from the ancient course:"—and a little further on, he says, "From the moment I read the list, I saw distinctly, and very nearly as it has happened, all that was to follow."

Mr. Burke certainly did not see all that was to follow. I endeavoured to impress upon him as well before as after the States-General met, that there would be a Revolution; but was not able to make him see it, neither would he believe it. How then he could distinctly see all the parts, when the whole was out of sight, is beyond my comprehension.

And with respect to the "departure from the ancient course," besides the natural weakness of the remark, it shews that he is unacquainted with circumstances. The departure was necessary from the experience had upon it, that the ancient course was a bad one. The States-General of 1614, were called at the commencement of the civil war, in the minority of Louis the Thirteenth, but by the clash of arranging them by orders, they increased the confusion they were called to compose.

The author of L'Intrigue du Cabinet, (Intrigue of the Cabinet) who wrote before any Revolution was thought of in France, speaking of the States-General of 1614, says—

"They held the public in the greatest suspense five months; and by the questions agitated therein, and the heat with which they were put, it appears that the great (les grands) thought more to gratify their particular passions, than to procure the good of the Nation; and the whole time passed away in altercations, ceremonies, and parade."—L'Intrigue du Cabinet, vol. 1. p. 239.

The *Tiers Etat*, as they were then called, disowned any knowledge of artificial orders, and artificial privileges; and they were not only resolute on this point, but somewhat disdainful.

They began to consider Aristocracy as a kind of fungus growing out of society, that could not be admitted even as a branch of it; and from the disposition the Aristocracy had shewn, by upholding *Lettres de Cachet*, and in sundry other instances, it was manifest that no Constitution could be formed, by admitting men in any other character than as National men.

After various altercations on this head, the *Tiers Etat*, or Commons, as they were then called, declared themselves, on a motion made for that purpose, by the Abbé Sieyes, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATION; and that the two orders could be considered but as deputies of corporations, and could only have a deliberate voice but when they assembled in a National character with the National representatives.

This proceeding extinguished the style of *Etats Generaux*, or States-General, and erected into the style it now bears, that of *L'Assemblee Nationale*, or National Assembly.

This motion was not made in a precipitate manner. It was the result of cool deliberation, and concerted between the National representatives, and the patriotic members of the two chambers, who saw into the folly, mischief, and injustice of artificial privileged distinctions.

It was become evident, that no Constitution, worthy of being called by that name, could be established on any thing less than a National ground. The Aristocracy had hitherto opposed the despotism of the Court, and affected the language of patriotism; but it opposed it as its rival, (as the English Barons opposed King John) and it now opposed the Nation from the same motives.

On carrying this motion, the National representatives, as had been concerted, sent an invitation to the two chambers, to unite with them in a National character, and to proceed to business.

A majority of the Clergy, chiefly of the parish priests, withdrew from the clerical chamber, and joined the Nation; and forty-five from the other chamber joined in like manner.

There is a sort of secret history belonging to this last circumstance, which is necessary to its explanation. It was not judged prudent that all the patriotic members of the chamber styling itself the Nobles, should quit it at once;

and in consequence of this arrangement, they drew off by degrees, always leaving some, as well to reason the case, as to watch the suspected.

In a little time, the numbers increased from forty-five to eighty, and soon after to a greater number; which with a majority of the clergy, and the whole of the National representatives, put the mal-contents into a very diminutive condition.

The King, who, very different from the general class called by that name, is a man of a good heart, shewed himself disposed to recommend an union of the three chambers on the ground the National Assembly had taken; but the mal-contents exerted themselves to prevent it; and began now to have another object in view.

Their numbers consisted of a majority of the Aristocratical Chamber, and a minority of the Clerical Chamber, chiefly of Bishops and high-beneficed clergy; and these men were determined to put every thing to issue, as well by strength, as by stratagem.

They had no objection to a Constitution; but it must be such a one as themselves should dictate, and suited to their own views and peculiar situations.

On the other hand, the Nation disowned knowing any thing of them but as citizens; and was determined to shut out all such upstart pretensions.

The more aristocracy appeared, the more it was despised; there was a visible imbecility and want of intellect in the majority—a sort of *je ne sais quoi*, that while it affected to be more than Citizen was less than Man. It lost ground from contempt more than from hatred; and was rather jeered at as an ass, than dreaded as a lion. This is the general character of Aristocracy, or what are called Nobles, or Nobility, or rather No-ability, in all countries.

The plan of the mal-contents consisted now of two things; either to deliberate and vote by chambers, (or orders) more especially on all questions respecting a constitution, (by which the Aristocratical Chamber would have had a negative on any article of the Constitution); or, in case they could not accomplish this object, to overthrow the National Assembly entirely.

To effect one or other of these objects, they now began to cultivate a friendship with the despotism they had hitherto attempted to rival, and the Count D'Artois became their chief.

The King, who has since declared himself deceived into

their measures, held, according to the old form, a Bed of Justice, in which he accorded to the deliberation and vote *par tete* (by head) upon several subjects: but reserved the deliberation and vote upon all questions respecting a Constitution to the three chambers separately.

This declaration of the King was made against the advice of M. Neckar, who now began to perceive that he was growing out of fashion at Court, and that another minister was in contemplation.

As the form of sitting in separate chambers was yet apparently kept up, though essentially destroyed, the National representatives, immediately after this declaration of the King, resorted to their own chambers to consult on a protest against it; and the minority of the Chamber calling itself the Nobles, who had joined the National cause, retired to a private house to consult in like manner.

The malcontents had by this time concerted their measures with the Court, which the Count d'Artois undertook to conduct; and as they saw from the discontent which the declaration excited, and the opposition making against it, that they could not obtain a control over the intended Constitution by a separate vote, they prepared themselves for their final object—that of conspiring against the National Assembly, and overthrowing it.

The next morning, the door of the Chamber of the National Assembly was shut against them, and guarded by troops, and the members were refused admittance.

On this, they withdrew to a tennis-ground in the neighbourhood of Versailles, as the most convenient place they could find, and after renewing their session, they took an oath, never to separate from each other, under any circumstance whatever, death excepted, until they had established a Constitution.

As the experiment of shutting up the house had no other effect than that of producing a closer connection in the members, it was opened again the next day, and the public business re-commenced in the usual place.

We are now to have in view the formation of the new Ministry, which was to accomplish the overthrow of the National Assembly.

But as force would be necessary, orders were issued to assemble thirty thousand troops: the command of which was given to Broglio, one of the new intended Ministry, who was recalled from the country for this purpose.

But as some management was also necessary, to keep

this plan concealed till the moment it should be ready for execution, it is to this policy that a declaration made by the Count D'Artois must be attributed, and which it is here proper to introduce.

It could not but occur, that while the malcontents continued to resort to their chambers, separate from the National Assembly, more jealousy would be excited than if they were mixed with it; and that the plot might be suspected.

But, as they had taken their ground, and now wanted a pretext for quitting it, it was necessary that one should be devised.

This was accomplished in the declaration made by the Count D'Artois,—"That if they took not a part in the National Assembly, the life of the King would be endangered;" on which they quitted their Chambers, and mixed with the Assembly in one body.

At the time this declaration was made, it was generally treated as a piece of absurdity in Count D'Artois; and calculated merely to relieve the outstanding members of the two chambers, from the diminutive situation they were put in; and if nothing more had followed, this conclusion would have been good.

But as things best explain themselves by their events, this apparent union was only a cover to the machinations which were secretly going on; and the declaration accommodated itself to answer that purpose.

In a little time the National Assembly found itself surrounded by troops, and thousands more were daily arriving.

On this a very strong declaration was made by the National Assembly to the King, remonstrating on the impropriety of the measure, and demanding the reason.

The King, who was not in the secret of this business, as himself afterwards declared, gave substantially for answer, that he had no other object in view than to preserve the public tranquillity, which appeared to be very much disturbed.

But in a few days from this time, the plot unravelled itself. M. Neckar, and the Ministry were displaced, and a new one formed, of the enemies of the revolution; and Broglio, with between twenty-five and thirty thousand foreign troops, was arrived to support them.

The mask was now thrown off, and matters were come to a crisis. The event was, that in the space of three days, the new ministry and their abettors found it prudent to fly

the Nation: the Bastille was taken, and Broglio, and his foreign troops dispersed, as is already related in the former part of this work.

There are some curious circumstances in the history of this short-lived administration, and this short-lived attempt at a counter-revolution.

The palace of Versailles, where the Court was sitting, was not more than four hundred yards distant from the hall where the National Assembly was sitting. The two places were at this moment like the separate head quarters of two combatant armies; yet the Court was as perfectly ignorant of the information which had arrived from Paris to the National Assembly, as if it had resided at an hundred miles distance.

The then Marquis de la Fayette, who (as has been already mentioned) was chosen to preside in the National Assembly, on this particular occasion, named, by order of the Assembly, three successive deputations to the King, on the day, and up to the evening when the Bastille was taken, to inform and confer with him on the state of affairs; but the Ministry, who knew not so much as that it was attacked, precluded all communication, and were solacing themselves how dexterously they had succeeded; but in a few hours the accounts arrived so thick and fast, that they had to start from their desks and run. Some set off in one disguise, and some in another; and none in their own character. Their anxiety now was to outride the news, lest they should be stopt, which, though it flew fast, flew not so fast as themselves.

It is worth remarking, that the National Assembly neither pursued these fugitive conspirators, nor took any notice of them, nor sought to retaliate in any shape whatever.

Occupied with establishing a Constitution founded on the Rights of Man, and the Authority of the People, the only authority on which Government has a right to exist in any country, the National Assembly felt none of those mean passions which mark the character of impertinent Governments, founding themselves on their own authority, or on the absurdity of hereditary succession. It is the faculty of the human mind to become what it contemplates, and to act in unison with its object.

The conspiracy being thus dispersed, one of the first works of the National Assembly, instead of vindictive proclamations, as has been the case with other Governments,

was to publish a declaration of the Rights of Man, as the basis on which the new Constitution was to be built, and which is here subjoined.

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## DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN,

### AND OF CITIZENS,

### *BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF FRANCE.*

THE Representatives of the People of France, formed into a National Assembly, considering that ignorance, neglect, or contempt of human rights, are the sole causes of public misfortunes, and corruptions of Government, have resolved to set forth, in a solemn declaration, these natural imprescriptible, and inalienable rights: that this declaration being constantly present to the minds of the members of the body social, they may be ever kept attentive to their rights and to their duties; that the acts of the legislative and executive powers of Government, being capable of being every moment compared with the end of political institutions, may be the more respected: and also, that the future claims of the citizens, being directed by simple and incontestible principles, may always tend to the maintenance of the Constitution and the general happiness.

For these reasons the National Assembly doth recognize and declare, in the presence of the Supreme Being, and with the hope of his blessing and favour, the following SACRED Rights of Men and Citizens.

I. Men are born, and always continue free, and equal in respect of their rights. Civil distinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public utility.

II. The end of all political associations, is the preservation of the Natural Rights of Man, and these rights are *Liberty, Property, Security, and Resistance of Oppression.*

III. The Nation is essentially the source of all sovereignty, nor can any individual, nor any body of men, be entitled to any authority which is not expressly derived from it.

IV. Political Liberty consists in the power of doing whatever does not injure another. The exercise of the Natural Rights of every man, has no other limits than those which are necessary to secure to every other man the free exercise

of the same rights; and these limits are determinable only by the law.

V. The law ought to prohibit only actions hurtful to society. What is not prohibited by the law should not be hindered; nor should any man be compelled to do that which the law does not require.

VI. The law is an expression of the will of the community. All citizens have a right to concur, either personally, or by their representatives in its formation. It should be the same to all, whether it protects or punishes; and all, being equal in its sight, are equally eligible to all honours, places, and employments, according to their different abilities, without any other distinction than that created by their virtues and talents.

VII. No man should be accused, arrested, or held in confinement, except in cases determined by the law, and according to the forms which it has prescribed. All who promote, solicit, or execute, or cause to be executed, arbitrary orders, ought to be punished; and every citizen called upon, or apprehended by virtue of the law, ought immediately to obey, and renders himself culpable by a resistance.

VIII. The law ought to impose no other penalties, but such as are absolutely and evidently necessary; and no one ought to be punished but in virtue of a law promulgated before the offence and legally applied.

IX. Every man being presumed innocent, till he has been convicted, whenever his detention becomes indispensible, all rigour to him, more than necessary to secure his person, ought to be provided against by the law.

X. No man ought to be molested on account of his opinions, not even on account of his religious opinions, provided his avowal of them does not disturb the public order established by the laws.

XI. The unrestrained communication of his thoughts and opinions, being one of the most precious Rights of Man, every citizen may speak, write, and publish freely, provided he is responsible for the abuse of this liberty in cases determined by the law.

XII. A public force being necessary, to give security to the Rights of Men and of citizens, that force is instituted for the benefit of the community, and not for the particular benefit of the persons with whom it is entrusted.

XIII. A common contribution being necessary for the support of the public force, and for defraying the other

expences of Government, it ought to be divided equally among the members of the community, according to their abilities.

XIV. Every citizen has a right, either by himself, or by his representatives, to a free voice in determining the necessity of public contributions, the appropriation of them, and their amount, mode of assessment, and duration.

XV. Every community has a right to demand of its agents an account of their conduct.

XVI. Every community, in which a separation of powers, and a security of rights is not provided for, wants a Constitution.

XVII. The right of property being inviolable and sacred, no one ought to be deprived of it, except in cases of evident public necessity, legally ascertained, and on conditions of a previous just indemnity.

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## OBSERVATIONS ON THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

THE three first articles comprehend in general terms, the whole of a Declaration of Rights. All the succeeding articles either originate from them, or follow as elucidations. The 4th, 5th, and 6th, define more particularly what is only generally expressed in the 1st, 2d, and 3d.

The 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th articles, are declaratory of principles, upon which laws shall be constructed, conformable to the rights already declared.

But it is questioned by some very good people in France, as well as in other countries, whether the 10th article sufficiently guarantees the right it is intended to accord with. Besides which, it takes off from the divine dignity of religion, and weakens its operative force upon the mind, to make it a subject of human laws. It then presents itself to man, like light intercepted by a cloudy medium, in which the source of it is obscured from his sight, and he sees nothing to reverence in the dusky ray.*

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* There is a single idea, which, if it strikes rightly upon the mind, either in a legal or a religious sense, will prevent any man, or any body of men, or any Government, from going wrong on the subject of religion; which is, that before any human institution of Government was known in the world, there existed, if I

The remaining articles, beginning with the twelfth, are substantially contained in the principles of the preceding articles; but in the particular situation which France then was, having to undo what was wrong, as well as to set up what was right, it was proper to be more particular than what in another condition of things would be necessary.

While the Declaration of Rights was before the National Assembly, some of its Members remarked, that if a Declaration of Rights was published, it should be accompanied by a Declaration of Duties.

That observation discovered a mind that reflected, and it only erred by not reflecting far enough. A Declaration of Right is, by reciprocity, a Declaration of Duties also. Whatever is my right as a man, is also the right of another; and it becomes my duty to guarantee, as well as to possess.

The three first articles are the basis of Liberty, as well individual as National: nor can any country be called free whose Government does not take its beginning from the principles they contain, and continue to preserve them pure: and the whole Declaration of Rights is of more value to the world, and will do more good, than all the laws and statutes that have yet been promulgated.

In the declaratory exordium which prefaces the Declaration of Rights, we see the solemn and majestic spectacle of a Nation opening its commission under the auspices of its Creator, to establish a Government; a scene so new, and so transcendantly unequalled by any thing in the European world, that the name of a revolution is diminutive of its character, and it rises into a REGENERATION OF MAN.

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may so express it, a compact between God and Man, from the beginning of time; and, as that relation and condition which man in his individual person stands in towards his Maker cannot be changed or any ways altered, by any human laws, or any human authority, that religious devotion, which is a part of this compact, cannot so much as be made a subject of human laws, and that all laws must conform themselves to this prior existing compact, and not assume to make the compact conform to the laws, which, besides being human, are subsequent thereto. The first act of man, when he looked around and saw himself a creature which he did not make, and a world furnished for his reception, must have been devotion; and devotion must ever continue sacred to every individual man, as it appears right to him, and Governments do mischief by interfering.

What are the present Governments of Europe, but a scene of iniquity and oppression? What is that of England? Do not its own inhabitants say, it is a market where every man has his price; and where corruption is the common traffic, at the expence of a deluded people? No wonder, then, that the French Revolution is traduced. Had it confined itself merely to the destruction of flagrant despotism, perhaps Mr. Burke and some others had been silent. Their cry now is, "It is gone too far!" that is, it has gone too far for them. It stares corruption in the face, and the venal tribe are all alarmed. Their fear discovers itself in their outrage, and they are but publishing the groans of a wounded vice.

But from such opposition, the French Revolution, instead of suffering, receives homage. The more it is struck, the more sparks it will emit; and the fear is, that it will not be struck enough. It has nothing to dread from attacks. Truth has given it an establishment; and Time will record it with a name as lasting as his own.

Having now traced the progress of the French Revolution, through most of its principal stages, from its commencement to the taking of the Bastille, and its establishment by the Declaration of Rights, I will close the subject with the energetic apostrophe of M. de la Fayette.

"MAY THIS GREAT MONUMENT, RAISED TO LIBERTY, SERVE AS A LESSON TO THE OPPRESSOR, AND AN EXAMPLE TO THE OPPRESSED!"*

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## MISCELLANEOUS CHAPTER.

To prevent interrupting the argument in the preceding part of this work, or the narrative that follows it, I reserved some observations to be thrown together into a miscellaneous chapter; by which variety might not be censured for confusion.

Mr. Burke's book is all miscellany. His intention was to make an attack on the French Revolution; but instead of

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* See Page 20 of this work. Since the taking of the Bastille, the occurrences have been published; but the matters recorded in this narrative are prior to that period, and some of them, as may be easily seen, can be but very little known.

proceeding with an orderly arrangement, he has stormed it with a mob of ideas tumbling over and destroying one another.

But this confusion and contradiction in Mr. Burke's book is easily accounted for.—When a man in a long cause attempts to steer his course by any thing else than some polar truth or principle, he is sure to be lost. It is beyond the compass of his capacity to keep all the parts of an argument together, and make them unite in one issue, by any other means than having this guide always in view. Neither memory nor invention will supply the want of it. The former fails him, and the latter betrays him.

Notwithstanding the nonsense, for it deserves no better name, that Mr. Burke has asserted about hereditary rights, and hereditary succession, and that a Nation has not a right to choose a Government for itself, it happened to fall in his way to give some account of what Government is.

Government, says he, is a contrivance of human wisdom.

Admitting that Government is a contrivance of human wisdom, it must necessarily follow, that hereditary succession, and hereditary rights, can make no part of it, because it is impossible to make the wisdom hereditary; and on the other hand, that cannot be a wise contrivance, which in its operation may commit the Government of the Nation to the wisdom of an idiot.

The ground which Mr. Burke now takes, is fatal to every part of his cause. The argument changes from hereditary right to hereditary wisdom; and the question is,—Who is the wisest man?

He must shew that every one in the line of hereditary succession was a Solomon, or his title is not good to be a King.

What a stroke has Mr. Burke now made. To use a sailor's phrase, he has swabbed the deck, and scarcely left a name legible in the list of Kings; and he has mowed down the House of Peers, with a scythe as formidable as death and time.

But Mr. Burke appears to have been aware of this retort; and he has taken care to guard against it, by making Government not only to be a contrivance of human wisdom, but a monopoly of wisdom.

He puts the Nation, as fools, on the one side; and places his Government of wisdom, all wise men of Gotham, on the other side; and he then proclaims, and says, that—"Men have a RIGHT that their WANTS should be provided for by

this wisdom." Having thus made proclamation, he next proceeds to explain to them what their wants are, and also what their rights are.

In this he has succeeded dexterously, for he makes their wants to be a want of wisdom; but as this is but cold comfort, he then informs them, that they have a RIGHT, not to any of the wisdom, but to be governed by it; and in order to impress them with a solemn reverence for this monopoly-Government of wisdom, and of its vast capacity for all purposes, possible or impossible, right or wrong, he proceeds with astrological mysterious importance, to tell them its powers in these words:—

"The rights of men, in Governments, are their advantages; and these are often in balances between differences of good; and in compromises sometimes between good and evil; and sometimes between evil and evil. Political reason is a computing principle; adding—subtracting—multiplying—and dividing, morally, and not metaphysically or mathematically, true moral demonstrations."

As the wondering audience, whom Mr. Burke supposes himself talking to, may not understand all this learned jargon, I will undertake to be its interpreter.

The meaning then, good people, of all this, is, that Government is governed by no principle whatever: that it can make evil good, or good evil, just as it pleases. In short, that Government is *arbitrary power*.

But there are some things which Mr. Burke has forgotten.

FIRST, He has not shewn where the wisdom came from; and,

SECONDLY, He has not shewn by what authority it first began to act.

In the manner he introduces the matter, it is either Government stealing wisdom, or wisdom stealing Government. It is without an origin, and its powers without authority. In short, it is usurpation.

Whether it be from a sense of shame, or from a consciousness of some radical defect in a Government necessary to be kept out of sight; or from both, or from any other cause, I undertake not to determine; but so it is, that a monarchical reasoner never traces Government to its source, or from its source; it is one of the *Shibboleths* by which he may be known. A thousand years hence, those who shall live in America, or in France, will look back with contemplative pride on the origin of their Governments,

and say, "This was the work of our glorious ancestors!" But what can a monarchical talker say? What has he to exult in? Alas, he has nothing! A certain something forbids him to look back to a beginning, lest some robber, or some Robin Hood, should rise from the long obscurity of time, and say, *I am the origin.* Hard as Mr. Burke laboured the Regency Bill, and hereditary succession two years ago, and much as he dived for precedents, he still had not boldness enough to bring up William of Normandy, and say, There is the head of the list! there is the fountain of honour! the son of a prostitute, and the plunderer of the English Nation!

The opinions of men with respect to Governments are changing very fast in all countries. The revolutions of America and France have thrown a beam of light over the world, which reaches into man. The enormous expence of Governments have provoked people to think, by making them feel; and when once the veil begins to rend, it admits not of repair. Ignorance is of a peculiar nature; once dispelled, it is impossible to re-establish it. It is not originally a thing of itself, but is only the absence of knowledge; and though man may be kept ignorant, he cannot be made ignorant.

The mind in discovering truth, acts in the same manner as it acts through the eye in discovering objects; when once any object has been seen, it is impossible to put the mind back to the same condition it was in before it saw it.

Those who talk of a counter-revolution in France, shew how little they understand of man. There does not exist in the compass of language, an arrangement of words to express so much as the means of effecting a counter-revolution. The means must be an obliteration of knowledge; and it has never yet been discovered, how to make a man unknow his knowledge, or unthink his thoughts.

Mr. Burke is labouring in vain to stop the progress of knowledge; and it comes with the worse grace from him, as there is a certain transaction known in the city, which renders him suspected of being a pensioner in a fictitious name. This may account for some strange doctrine he has advanced in his book, which, though he points it at the Revolution Society, is effectually directed against the whole Nation.

"The King of England," says he, "holds *his* Crown (for it does not belong to the Nation, according to Mr. Burke) in contempt of the choice of the Revolution Society, who

have not a single vote for a King among them either individually or collectively ; and his Majesty's heirs, each in their time and order, will come to the crown with the same contempt of their choice, with which his Majesty has succeeded to that which he now wears."

As to who is King in England or elsewhere, or whether there is any King at all, or whether the people choose a Cherokee Chief, or a Hessian Hussar for a King, it is not a matter that I trouble myself about—be that to themselves; but with respect to the doctrine, so far as it relates to the Rights of Men and Nations, it is as abominable as any thing ever uttered in the most enslaved country under Heaven. Whether it sounds worse to my ear, by not being accustomed to hear such despotism, than what it does to the ear of another person, I am not so well a judge of; but of its abominable principle I am at no loss to judge.

It is not the Revolution Society that Mr. Burke means; it is the Nation, as well in its original as in its representative character; and he has taken care to make himself understood, by saying that they have not a vote either collectively or individually. The Revolution Society is composed of citizens of all denominations, and of Members of both the Houses of Parliament; and, consequently, if there be not a right to vote in any of the characters, there can be no right to any, either in the Nation, or in its Parliament. This ought to be a caution to every country, how it imports foreign families to be Kings. It is somewhat curious to observe, that although the people of England have been in the habit of talking about Kings, it is always a foreign House of Kings; hating Foreigners, yet governed by them.—It is now the House of Brunswick, one of the petty tribes of Germany.

It has hitherto been the practice of the English Parliaments, to regulate what was called the succession, taking it for granted, that the Nation then continued to accord to the form of annexing a monarchical branch to its Government; for without this, the Parliament could not have had the authority to have sent either to Holland or to Hanover, or to impose a King upon the Nation against its will. And this must be the utmost limit to which Parliament can go upon the case; but the right of the Nation goes to the whole case, because it has the right of changing its whole form of Government. The right of a Parliament is only a right in trust, a right by delegation, and that but from a very small part of the Nation; and one of its Houses has

not even this. But the right of the Nation is an original right, as universal as taxation. The Nation is the paymaster of every thing, and every thing must conform to its general will.

I remember taking notice of a speech in what is called the English House of Peers, by the then Earl of Shelburne, and I think it was at the time he was Minister, which is applicable to this case. I do not directly charge my memory with every particular, but the words and the purport, as nearly as I remember, were these: That the form of a Government was a matter wholly at the will of a Nation, at all times: that if it chose a monarchical form, it had a right to have it so; and if it afterwards chose to be a Republic, it had a right to be a Republic, and to say to a King, "We have no longer any occasion for you."

When Mr. Burke says, that "His Majesty's heirs and successors, each in their time and order, will come to the crown with the same contempt of their choice with which his Majesty has succeeded to that he wears," it is saying too much even to the humblest individual in the country, part of whose daily labour goes towards making up the million sterling a year, which the country gives the person it styles a King. Government with insolence, is despotism; but when contempt is added, it becomes worse; and to pay for contempt, is the excess of slavery. This species of Government comes from Germany; and reminds me of what one of the Brunswick soldiers told me, who was taken prisoner by the Americans in the late war: "Ah!" said he, "America is a fine free country, it is worth the people's fighting for; I know the difference by knowing my own; in my country, if the Prince says, Eat straw, we eat straw." God help that country, thought I, be it England, or elsewhere, whose liberties or whose properties are to be protected by German principles of Government, and Princes of Brunswick!

As Mr. Burke sometimes speaks of England, sometimes of France, and sometimes of the world, and of Government in general, it is difficult to answer his book without apparently meeting him on the same ground. Although principles of Government are general subjects, it is next to impossible, in many cases, to separate them from the idea of place and circumstance; and the more so when circumstances are put for arguments, which is frequently the case with Mr. Burke.

In the former part of his book, addressing himself to the

people of France, he says, "No experience has taught us, (meaning the English), that in any other course or method than that of an hereditary crown, can our liberties be regularly perpetuated and preserved sacred as our hereditary right." I ask Mr. Burke, who is to take them away? M. de la Fayette, in speaking to France, says, "For a Nation to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it." But Mr. Burke represents England as wanting capacity to take care of itself, and that its liberties must be taken care of by a King holding it in "contempt." If England is sunk to this, it is preparing itself to eat straw, as in Hanover, or in Brunswick. But besides the folly of the declaration, it happens that the facts are all against Mr. Burke. It was by the Government being hereditary that the liberties of the people were endangered. Charles I. and James II. are instances of this truth; yet neither of them went so far as to hold the Nation in contempt.

As it is sometimes of advantage to the people of one country, to hear what those of other countries have to say respecting it, it is possible that the people of France may learn something from Mr. Burke's book, and that the people of England may also learn something from the answers it will occasion. When Nations fall out about freedom, a wide field of debate is opened. The argument commences with the rights of war, without its evils; and as knowledge is the object contended for, the party that sustains the defeat obtains a prize.

Mr. Burke talks about what he calls an hereditary crown, as if it were some production of Nature; or as if, like Time, it had a power to operate, not only independently, but in spite of man; or as if it were a thing, or a subject universally consented to. Alas! it has none of those properties, but is the reverse of them all. It is a thing in imagination, the propriety of which is more than doubted, and the legality of which in a few years will be denied.

But, to arrange this matter in a clearer view than what general expressions can convey, it will be necessary to state the distinct heads, under which, what is called, an hereditary crown, or more properly speaking, an hereditary succession to the Government of a Nation, can be considered; which are—

First, The right of a particular Family to establish itself.

Secondly, The right of a Nation to establish a particular Family.

With respect to the first of these heads, that of a Family

establishing itself with hereditary powers, on its own authority, and independent of the consent of a Nation, all men will concur in calling it despotism; and it would be trespassing on their understanding to attempt to prove it.

But the second head, that of a Nation establishing a particular Family with hereditary powers, does not present itself as despotism on the first reflection; but if men will permit a second reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward but one remove out of their own persons into their offspring, they will then see that hereditary succession becomes in its consequences the same despotism to others, which they reprobated for themselves. It operates to preclude the consent of the succeeding generation; and the preclusion of consent is despotism.

When the person who at any time shall be in possession of a Government, or those who stand in succession to him, shall say to a Nation,—I hold this power in contempt of you,—it signifies not upon what authority he pretends to say it. It is no relief, but an aggavation, to a person in slavery, to reflect that he was sold by his parent; and as that which heightens the criminality of an act, cannot be produced to prove the legality of it, hereditary succession cannot be established as a legal thing.

In order to arrive at a more perfect decision on this head, it will be proper to consider the generation which undertakes to establish a Family with hereditary powers, apart and separate from the generations which are to follow; and also to consider the character in which the first generation acts with respect to succeeding generations.

The generation which first selects a person, and puts him at the head of its Government, either with the title of King or any other distinction, acts its own choice, be it wise, or foolish, as a free agent for itself.

The person so set up, is not hereditary, but selected and appointed; and the generation who sets him up does not live under an hereditary Government, but under a Government of its own choice and establishment.

Were the generation who sets him up, and the person so set up to live for ever, it never could become hereditary succession; and, of consequence, hereditary succession can only follow on the death of the first parties.

As therefore hereditary succession is out of the question with respect to the first generation, we have now to consider the character in which that generation acts with respect to the commencing generation, and to all succeeding ones.

It assumes a character, to which it has neither right nor title. It changes itself from a legislator to a testator, and affects to make its WILL, which is to have operation after the demise of the makers, to bequeath the Government; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to establish on the succeeding generation, a new and different form of Government to that under which itself lived. Itself, as is already observed, lived not under an hereditary Government, but under a Government of its own choice and establishment; and it now attempts, by virtue of a will and testament, (and which it has not authority to make) to take from the commencing generation, and all future ones, the rights and free agency by which itself acted.

But, exclusive of the right which any generation has to act collectively as a testator, the objects, to which it applies in this case, are not within the compass of any law, or of any will or testament.

The rights of men in society, are neither deviseable, nor transferable, nor annihilable, but are descendable only; and it is not in the power of any generation to intercept finally, and cut off the descent.

If the present generation, or any other, are disposed to be slaves, it does not lessen the right of the succeeding generation to be free. Wrongs cannot have a legal descendant.

When Mr. Burke attempts to maintain, that the English Nation did, at the Revolution of 1688, most solemnly renounce and abdicate their Rights for themselves, and their posterity for ever, he speaks a language that merits not reply; and which can only excite contempt for his prostitute principles, or pity for his ignorance.

In whatever light hereditary succession, as growing out of the will and testament of some former generation, presents itself, it is an absurdity. A. cannot make a will to take from B. the property of B. and give it to C.—Yet this is the manner in which what is called hereditary succession by law operates.

A certain former generation made a will, to take away the rights of the commencing generation, and all future ones, and convey those rights to a third person, who afterwards comes forward, and tells them, in Mr. Burke's language, that they have no rights—that their rights are already bequeathed to him—and that he will govern in contempt of them!—From such principles, and such ignorance, Good Lord deliver the world!

But, after all, what is this metaphor called a crown? Or,

rather, what is monarchy? Is it a thing—or is it a name—or is it a fraud? Is it a "contrivance of human wisdom,"—or of human craft, to obtain money from a Nation, under specious pretences? Is it a thing necessary to a Nation? If it be, in what does that necessity consist, what services does it perform, what is its business, and what are its merits? Does the virtue consist in the metaphor, or in the man? Doth the goldsmith that makes the crown, make the virtue also? Doth it operate like Fortunatus's wishing-cap, or Harlequin's wooden sword? Doth it make a man a conjuror? In fine, what is it?

It appears to be a something going much out of fashion; falling into ridicule, and rejected in some countries both as unnecessary, and expensive.

In America, it is considered as an absurdity; and in France it has so far declined, that the goodness of the man and the respect for his personal character, are the only things that preserve the appearance of its existence.

If Government be what Mr. Burke describes it,—a contrivance of human wisdom—I ask him if wisdom was at such a low ebb in England, that it was become necessary to import it from Holland, and from Hanover? But I will do the country the justice to say, that was not the case; and even if it was, it mistook the cargo.

The wisdom of every country, when properly exerted, is sufficient for all its purposes; and there could appear no more real occasion in England to have sent for a Dutch Stadtholder, or a German Elector, than there was in America to have done a similar thing. If a country does not understand its own affairs, how is a foreigner to understand them, who knows neither its laws, its manners, nor its language? If there existed a man so transcendantly wise above all others that his wisdom was necessary to instruct a Nation, some reason might be offered for monarchy; but when we cast our eyes about a country, and observe how every part understands its own affairs; and when we look around the world, and see that of all men in it the race of Kings are the most insignificant in capacity, our reason cannot fail to ask us—What are those men kept for?

If there is any thing in monarchy which we people of America do not understand, I wish Mr. Burke would be so kind as to inform us. I see, in America, a Government extended over a country ten times as large as England, and conducted with regularity, for a fortieth part of the expence which Government costs in England.

If I ask a man in America, if he wants a King, he retorts, and asks me if I take him for an idiot. How is it that this difference happens? Are we more, or less, wise than others? I see, in America, the generality of people living in a style of plenty unknown in monarchical countries, and I see that the principle of its Government, which is that of the equal Rights of Man, is making a rapid progress in the world.

If monarchy is a useless thing, why is it kept up any where? And if a necessary thing, how can it be dispensed with? That civil Government is necessary, all civilized Nations will agree; but civil Government is republican Government. All that part of the Government of England, which begins with the office of constable, and proceeds through the department of magistrate, quarter-session, and general assize, including trial by jury, is republican Government. Nothing of monarchy appears in any part of it, except the name which William the Conqueror imposed upon the English, that of obliging them to call him, their Sovereign Lord, the King.

It is easy to conceive, that a band of interested men, such as Placemen, Pensioners, Lords of the Bed-chamber, Lords of the Kitchen, Lords of the Necessary-house, and the Lord knows what besides, can find as many reasons for monarchy as their salaries, paid at the expence of the country, amount to: but if I ask the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and down through all the occupations of life, to the common labourer, what service monarchy is to him, he can give me no answer. If I ask him what monarchy is, he believes it is something like a sinecure.

Notwithstanding the taxes of England amount to almost seventeen millions a year, said to be for the expences of Government, it is still evident, that the sense of the Nation is left to govern itself, and does govern itself by magistrates and juries, almost at its own charge, on republican principles, exclusive of the expence of taxes. The salaries of the judges are almost the only charge that is paid out of the revenue.

Considering that all the internal Government is executed by the people, the taxes of England ought to be the lightest of any Nation in Europe; instead of which, they are the contrary. As this cannot be accounted for on the score of civil Government, the subject necessarily extends itself to the monarchical part.

When the people of England sent for George the First, (and it would puzzle a wiser man than Mr. Burke to dis-

cover for what he could be wanted, or what service he could render,) they ought at least to have conditioned for the abandonment of Hanover. Besides the endless German intrigues that must follow from a German Elector being King of England, there is a natural impossibility of uniting in the same person the principles of Freedom, and the principles of Despotism; or, as it is usually called in England, arbitrary power.

A German Elector is in his Electorate a Despot. How then could it be expected, that he should be attached to principles of liberty in one country, while his interest in another was to be supported by despotism? The union cannot exist; and it might easily have been foreseen, tha German Electors would make German Kings; or, in Mr. Burke's words, "assume Government with contempt."

The English have been in the habit of considering a King of England only in the character in which he appears to them; whereas, the same person, while the connection lasts, has a home seat in another country, the interest of which is different to their own, and the principles of the Governments in opposition to each other. To such a person, England will appear as a town residence, and the Electorate as the estate.

The English may wish, as I believe they do, success to the principles of liberty, in France, or in Germany; but a German Elector trembles for the fate of despotism in his electorate; and the Duchy of Mecklenburgh, where the present Queen's Family governs, is under the same wretched state of arbitrary power, and the people in slavish vassalage.

There never was a time when it became the English to watch continental intrigues more circumspectly than at the present moment, and to distinguish the politics of the Electorate from the politics of the Nation.

The Revolution of France has entirely changed the ground with respect to England and France, as Nations; but the German despots, with Prussia at their head, are combining against liberty, and the fondness of Mr. Pitt for office, and the interest which all his family connections have obtained, do not give sufficient security against this intrigue.

As every thing which passes in the world becomes matter for history, I will now quit this subject, and take a concise review of the state of parties and politics in England, as Mr. Burke has done in France.

Whether the present reign commenced with contempt, I leave to Mr. Burke; certain, however, it is, that it had strongly that appearance. The animosity of the English Nation, it is very well remembered, ran high; and, had the true principles of liberty been as well understood then, as they now promise to be, it is probable that the Nation would not have patiently submitted to so much.

George the First and Second were sensible of a rival in the remains of the Stuarts, and, as they could not but consider themselves as standing on their good behaviour, they had the prudence to keep their German principles of Government to themselves; but as the Stuart family wore away, the prudence became less necessary.

The contest between rights, and what were called prerogatives, continued to heat the Nation till some time after the conclusion of the American war, when all at once it fell a calm:—execration exchanged itself for applause, and Court popularity sprung up like a mushroom in the night.

To account for this sudden transition, it is proper to observe, that there are two distinct species of popularity; the one excited by merit, the other by resentment. As the Nation had formed itself into two parties, and each was extolling the merits of its parliamentary champions, for, and against prerogative, nothing could operate to give a more general shock than an immediate coalition of the champions themselves.

The partisans of each, being thus suddenly left in the lurch, and mutually heated with disgust of the measure, felt no other relief than uniting in a common execration against both.

A higher stimulus of resentment being thus excited, than what the contest on prerogatives had occasioned, the Nation quitted all former objects of rights and wrongs, and sought only that of gratification. The indignation at the coalition so effectually superseded the indignation against the Court, as to extinguish it; and without any change of principles on the part of the Court, the same people who had reprobated its despotism, united with it, to revenge themselves on the Coalition Parliament. The case was not which they liked best—but which they hated most; and the least hated, passed for loved.

The dissolution of the Coalition Parliament, as it afforded the means of gratifying the resentment of the Nation, could not fail to be popular: and from hence arose the popularity of the Court.

Transitions of this kind exhibit a Nation under the Government of temper, instead of a fixed and steady principle: and having once committed itself, however rashly, it feels itself urged along to justify by continuance, its first proceeding.—Measures, which at other times, it would censure, it now approves, and acts persuasion upon itself to suffocate its better judgment.

On the return of a new Parliament, the new Minister, Mr. Pitt, found himself secure in a majority; and the Nation gave him credit, not out of regard to himself, but because it had resolved to do it, out of resentment to another. He introduced himself to public notice, by a proposed Reform of Parliament, which, in its operation, would have amounted to a public justification of corruption. The Nation was to be at the expence of buying up the rotten-boroughs, whereas it ought to punish the persons who deal in the traffic.

Passing over the two bubbles of the Dutch business, and the Million a year to sink the National debt, the matter which most presents itself is the affair of the Regency.

Never, in the course of my observation, was delusion more successfully acted, nor a Nation more completely deceived. But to make this appear, it will be necessary to go over the circumstances.

Mr. Fox has stated, in the House of Commons, that the Prince of Wales, as heir in succession, had a right in himself to assume the Government.

This was opposed by Mr. Pitt; and so far as the opposition was confined to the doctrine, it was just. But the principles which Mr. Pitt maintained on the contrary side, were as bad, or worse in their extent, than those of Mr. Fox; because they went to establish an aristocracy over the Nation, and over the small representation it has in the House of Commons.

Whether the English form of Government be good, or bad, is not, in this case, the question; but, taking it as it stands, without any regard to its merits, or demerits, Mr. Pitt was farther from the point than Mr. Fox.

It is supposed to consist of three parts. While, therefore, the nation is disposed to continue this form, the parts have a national standing, independent of each other, and are not the creatures of each other. Had Mr. Fox passed through Parliament, and said the person alluded to claimed on the

ground of the nation, Mr. Pitt must then have contended what he called the right of the Parliament, against the right of the Nation.

By the appearance which the contest made, Mr. Fox took the hereditary ground, and Mr. Pitt the Parliamentary ground; but the fact is, they both took hereditary ground, and Mr. Pitt took the worst of the two.

What is called the Parliament, is made up of two houses; one of which is more hereditary, and more beyond the control of the nation, than what the crown, as it is called, is supposed to be. It is an hereditary aristocracy, assuming and asserting indefeasible, irrevocable rights and authority, wholly independent of the Nation. Where, then, was the merited popularity of exalting this hereditary power over another hereditary power, less independent of the nation than what itself assumed to be; and of absorbing the rights of the Nation into a House over which it has neither election, nor control?

The general impulse of the Nation was right, but it acted without reflection. It approved the opposition made to the right set up by Mr. Fox, without perceiving that Mr. Pitt was supporting another indefeasible right more remote from the Nation in opposition to it.

With respect to the House of Commons, it is elected but by a small part of the Nation; but were the election as universal as taxation, which it ought to be, it would still be only the organ of the Nation, and cannot possess inherent rights.

When the National Assembly of France resolves a matter, the resolve is made in right of the Nation; but Mr. Pitt, on all national questions, so far as they refer to the House of Commons, absorbs the rights of the Nation into the organ, and makes the organ into a Nation; and the Nation itself into a cypher.

In a few words, the question on the Regency, was a question on a million a year, which is appropriated to the executive department; and Mr. Pitt could not possess himself of any management of this sum, without setting up the supremacy of Parliament: and when this was accomplished, it was indifferent who should be Regent, as he must be Regent at his own cost.

Among the curiosities which this contentious debate afforded, was that of making the Great Seal into a King; the affixing of which to an act, was to be royal authority! If, therefore, royal authority is a Great Seal, it consequently

is in itself nothing; and a good Constitution would be of infinitely more value to the Nation, than what the three nominal powers, as they now stand, are worth.

The continual use of the word Constitution in the English Parliament shews there is none; and that the whole is merely a form of Government without a Constitution, and constituting itself with what powers it pleases.

If there were a Constitution, it could certainly be referred to; and the debate on any Constitutional point, would terminate by producing the Constitution. One member says, this is Constitution—and another says, that is Constitution. To-day it is one thing, and to-morrow it is something else, while the maintaining the debate proves that there is none.

Constitution is now the cant word of Parliament, tuning itself to the ear of the Nation. Formerly, it was the *universal supremacy of Parliament—the omnipotence of Parliament;*—but since the progress of liberty in France those phrases have a despotic harshness in their note; and the English Parliament have catched the fashion from the National Assembly, but without the substance, of speaking of the Constitution.

As the present generation of the people in England did not make the Government, they are not accountable for any of its defects; but that, sooner or later, it must come into their hands to undergo a Constitutional reformation, is as certain as that the same thing has happened in France.

If France, with a revenue of nearly twenty-four millions sterling; with an extent of rich and fertile country, above four times larger than England; with a population of twenty-four millions of inhabitants to support taxation; with upwards of ninety millions sterling of gold and silver circulating in the Nation, and with a debt less than the present debt of England—still found necessary, from whatever cause, to come to a settlement of its affairs, it solves the problem of funding for both countries.

It is out of the question to say, how long what is called the English Constitution has lasted, and to argue from thence, how long it is to last. The question is, how long can the funding system last? It is a thing of but modern invention, and has not yet continued beyond the life of a man: yet in that short space, it has so far accumulated, that together with the current expences, it requires an amount of taxes, equal to the whole rental of the Nation in acres, to

defray the annual expenditure. That a Government could not always have gone on, by the same system that has been followed for the last seventy years, must be evident to every man; and for the same reason it cannot always go on.

The funding system is not money; neither is it, properly speaking, credit. It in effect, creates upon paper the sum which it appears to borrow, and lays on a tax to keep the imaginary capital alive by the payment of interest, and sends the annuity to market to be sold for paper already in circulation.

If any credit is given, it is to the disposition of the people to pay the tax, and not to the Government which lays it on. When this disposition expires, what is supposed to be the credit of Government expires with it. The instance of France under the former Government, shews that it is impossible to compel the payment of taxes by force, when a whole Nation is determined to take its stand upon that ground.

Mr. Burke, in his review of the finances of France, states the quantity of gold and silver in France, at about eighty-eight millions sterling.

In doing this, he has, I presume, divided by the difference of exchange, instead of the standard of twenty-four livres to a pound sterling; for M. Neckar's statement, from which Mr. Burke's is taken, is two thousand two hundred millions of livres, which is upwards of ninety-one millions and an half sterling.

M. Neckar in France, and Mr. George Chalmers, of the office of trade and plantation in England, of which Lord Hawkesbury is president, published nearly about the same time (1786) an account of the quantity of money in each Nation, from the returns of the Mint of each Nation.

Mr. Chalmers, from the returns of the English Mint at the Tower of London, states the quantity of money in England, including Scotland and Ireland, to be twenty millions sterling.

M. Neckar says, that the amount of money in France, recoined from the old coin which was called in, was two thousand five hundred millions of livres, upwards of one hundred and four millions sterling; and, after deducting for waste, and what may be in the West Indies, and other possible circumstances, states the circulating quantity at home, to be ninety-one millions and an half sterling: but taking it as Mr.

Burke has put it, it is sixty-eight millions more than the National quantity in England.

That the quantity of money in France cannot be under this sum, may at once be seen from the state of the French revenue, without referring to the records of the French Mint for proofs. The revenue of France, prior to the Revolution, was nearly twenty-four millions sterling; and as paper had then no existence in France, the whole revenue was collected upon gold and silver; and it would have been impossible to have collected such a quantity of revenue, upon a less national quantity than M. Neckar has stated.

Before the establishment of paper in England, the revenue was about a fourth part of the national amount of gold and silver, as may be known by referring to the revenue prior to King William; and the quantity of money stated to be in the Nation at that time, which was nearly as much as it is now.

It can be of no real service to a Nation to impose upon itself, or permit itself to be imposed upon; but the prejudices of some, and the imposition of others, have always represented France as a Nation possessing but little money, —whereas the quantity is not only more than four times what the quantity is in England, but is considerably greater on a proportion of numbers.

To account for this deficiency on the part of England, some reference should be had to the English system of funding. It operates to multiply paper, and to substitute it in the room of money, in various shapes; and the more paper is multiplied, the more opportunities are afforded to export the specie; and it admits of a possibility, by extending it to small notes, of increasing paper till there is no money left.

I know this is not a pleasant subject to English readers: but the matters I am going to mention, are so important in themselves as to require the attention of men interested in money transactions of a public nature.

There is a circumstance stated by M. Neckar, in his treatise on the administration of the finances, which has never been attended to in England; but which forms the only basis whereon to estimate the quantity of money, (gold and silver) which ought to be in every Nation in Europe, to preserve a relative proportion with other Nations.

Lisbon and Cadiz are the two ports into which (money) gold and silver from South America are imported, and which afterwards divides and spreads itself over Europe by means

of commerce, and increases the quantity of money in all parts of Europe.

If, therefore, the amount of the annual importation into Europe can be known, and the relative proportion of the commerce of the several Nations by which it is distributed can be ascertained, they give a rule sufficiently true, to ascertain the quantity of money which ought to be found in any Nation at any given time.

M. Neckar shews, from the registers of Lisbon and Cadiz, that the importation of gold and silver into Europe is five millions sterling annually. He has not taken it on a single year, but on an average of fifteen succeeding years, from 1763 to 1777, both inclusive; in which time, the amount was one thousand eight hundred million livres, which is seventy-five millions sterling.

From the commencement of the Hanover succession in 1714, to the time Mr. Chalmers published, is seventy two years; and the quantity imported into Europe, in that time, would be three hundred and sixty millions sterling.

If the foreign commerce of Great Britain be stated at a sixth part of what the whole foreign commerce of Europe amounts to, (which is probably an inferior estimation to what the gentlemen at the Exchange would allow) the proportion which Britain should draw by commerce of this sum, to keep herself on a proportion with the rest of Europe, would be also a sixth part, which is sixty millions sterling; and if the same allowance for waste and accident be made for England, which M. Neckar makes for France, the quantity remaining after these deductions would be fifty-two millions; and this sum ought to have been in the Nation (at the time Mr. Chalmers published) in addition to the sum which was in the Nation at the commencement of the Hanover succession, and to have made in the whole, at least, sixty-six millions sterling; instead of which there were but twenty millions, which is forty-six millions below its proportionate quantity.

As the quantity of gold and silver imported into Lisbon and Cadiz is more exactly ascertained than that of any other commodity imported into England; and as the quantity of money coined in the Tower of London is still more positively known, the leading facts do not admit of controversy. Either, therefore, the commerce of England is unproductive of profit; or, the gold and silver which it brings in, leak continually away by unseen means, at the average rate of about three-quarters of a million a year; which, in the

course of seventy-two years, accounts for the deficiency, and its absence is supplied with paper.*

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* Whether the English commerce does not bring in money, or whether the Government sends it out after it is brought in, is a matter which the parties concerned can best explain; but that the deficiency exists is not in the power of either to disprove. While Dr. Price, Mr. Eden, (now Auckland) Mr. Chalmers, and others, were debating whether the quantity of money in England was greater or less than at the Revolution, the circumstance was not adverted to, that since the Revolution, there cannot have been less than four hundred millions sterling imported into Europe; and, therefore, the quantity in England ought at least to have been four times greater than it was at the Revolution, to be on a proportion with the rest of Europe. What England is now doing by paper, is what she would have been able to have done by solid money, if gold and silver had come into the Nation in the proportion it ought, or had not been sent out; and she is endeavouring to restore by paper the balance she has lost by money. It is certain, that the gold and silver which arrive annually in the register-ships to Spain and Portugal do not remain in those countries. Taking the value half in gold, and half in silver, it is about four hundred tons annually; and from the number of ships and galloons employed in the trade of bringing those metals from South America to Portugal and Spain, the quantity sufficiently proves itself, without referring to the registers. In the situation England now is, it is impossible she can increase in money. High taxes not only lessen the property of the individuals, but they lessen also the money capital of a Nation, by inducing smuggling, which can only be carried on by gold and silver. By the politics which the British Government have carried on with the inland powers of Germany and the Continent, it has made an enemy of all the maritime powers, and is therefore obliged to keep up a large navy; but though the navy is built in England, the naval stores must be purchased from abroad, and that from countries where the greatest part must be paid for in gold and silver. Some fallacious rumours have been set afloat in England, to induce a belief of money; and, among others, that of the French refugees bringing great quantities. The idea is ridiculous. The general part of the money in France is silver; and it would take upwards of twenty of the largest broad wheel waggons, with ten horses each, to remove one million sterling in silver. Is it then to be supposed, that a few people, fleeing on horseback, or in post-chaises, in a secret manner, and having the French Custom-House to pass, and the sea to cross, could bring even a sufficiency for their own expences? When millions of money are spoken of, it should be recollected, that such sums can only accumulate in a country by slow degrees, and a long procession of time. The most frugal system that England could now adopt, would not re-

The Revolution of France is attended with many novel circumstances, not only in the political sphere, but in the circle of money transactions.

Among others, it shews, that a Government may be in a state of insolvency, and a Nation rich. So far as the fact is confined to the late Government of France, it was insolvent; because the Nation would no longer support its extravagance; and, therefore, it could no longer support itself—but with respect to the Nation, all the means existed.

A Government may be said to be insolvent, every time it applies to a Nation to discharge its arrears. The insolvency of the late Government of France, and the present Government of England, differed in no other respect than as the dispositions of the people differ. The people of France refused their aid to the old Government; and the people of England submit to taxation without enquiry.

What is called the crown in England, has been insolvent several times; the last of which, publicly known, was in May, 1777, when it applied to the Nation to discharge upwards of £600,000 private debts, which otherwise it could not pay.

It was the error of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Burke, and all those unacquainted with the affairs of France, to confound the French Nation with the French Government.

The French Nation, in effect, endeavoured to render the late Government insolvent, for the purpose of taking Government into its own hands; and it reserved its means for the support of the new Government. In a country of such vast extent, and population as France, the natural means cannot be wanting; and the political means appear the instant the Nation is disposed to permit them. When Mr. Burke, in a speech last winter in the British Parliament, cast his eyes over the map of Europe, and *saw a chasm that once was France*, he talked like a dreamer of dreams. The same natural France existed as before, and all the natural means existed with it. The only chasm was that which the extinction of despotism had left; and which

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cover, in a century, the balance she has lost in money since the commencement of the Hanover Succession. She is seventy millions behind France, and she must be in some considerable proportion behind every country in Europe, because the returns of the English Mint do not shew an increase of money, while the registers of Lisbon and Cadiz shew an European increase of between three and four hundred millions sterling.

was to be filled up with a Constitution more formidable in resources, than the power which had expired.

Although the French Nation rendered the late Government insolvent, it did not permit the insolvency to act towards the creditors; and the creditors considering the Nation as the real paymaster, and the Government only as the agent, rested themselves on the Nation, in preference to the Government.

This appears greatly to disturb Mr. Burke, as the precedent is fatal to the policy by which Governments have supposed themselves secure. They have contracted debts, with a view of attaching what is called the monied interest of a Nation to their support; but the example in France shews, that the permanent security of the creditor is in the Nation, and not in the Government; and that in all possible Revolutions that may happen in Governments, the means are always with the Nation, and the Nation always in existence.

Mr. Burke argues, that the creditors ought to have abided the fate of the Government which they trusted; but the National Assembly considered them as the creditors of the Nation, and not of the Government—of the master, and not of the steward.

Notwithstanding the late Government could not discharge the current expences, the present Government has paid off a great part of the capital. This has been accomplished by two means; the one by lessening the expences of Government, and the other by the sale of the monastic and ecclesiastical landed estates.

The devotees, and penitent debauchees, extortioners and misers of former days, to ensure themselves a better world than that which they were about to leave, had bequeathed immense property in trust to the priesthood for *pious uses*, and the priesthood kept it for themselves. The National Assembly has ordered it to be sold, for the good of the whole Nation, and the priesthood to be decently provided for.

In consequence of the Revolution, the annual interest of the debt of France will be reduced at least six millions sterling, by paying off upwards of one hundred millions of the capital: which, with lessening the former expences of Government at least three millions, will place France in a situation worthy the imitation of Europe.

Upon a whole review of the subject, how vast is the contrast! While Mr. Burke has been talking of a general bankruptcy in France, the National Assembly has been

paying off the capital of its debt; and while taxes have increased near a million a year in England, they have lowered several millions a year in France.

Not a word has either Mr. Burke or Mr. Pitt said about French affairs, or the state of the French finances, in the present session of Parliament. The subject begins to be too well understood, and imposition serves no longer.

There is a general enigma running through the whole of Mr. Burke's book. He writes in a rage against the National Assembly, but what is he enraged about? If his assertions were as true as they are groundless, and that France, by her Revolution, had annihilated her power, and become what he calls a chasm, it might excite the grief of a Frenchman, considering himself as a national man, and provoke his rage against the National Assembly; but why should it excite the rage of Mr. Burke? Alas! it is not the Nation of France that Mr. Burke means, but the COURT; and every Court in Europe, dreading the same fate, is in mourning. He writes neither in the character of an Englishman, nor a Frenchman; but in the fawning character of that creature, known in all countries, and a friend to none—a COURTIER. Whether it be the Court of Versailles, or the Court of St. James's, or Carlton-House, or the Court in Expectation, signifies not; for the caterpillar principles of all Courts, and Courtiers, are alike. They form a common policy throughout Europe, detached and separate from the interests of Nations: and while they appear to quarrel, they agree to plunder. Nothing can be more terrible to a Court, or a Courtier, than the Revolution of France. That which is a blessing to Nations, is bitterness to them; and as their existence depends on the duplicity of a country, they tremble at the approach of principles, and dread the precedent that threatens their overthrow.

## CONCLUSION.

REASON, and Ignorance, the opposites of each other, influence the great bulk of mankind. If either of these can be rendered sufficiently extensive in a country, the machinery of Government goes easily on. Reason obeys itself; and ignorance submits to whatever is dictated to it.

The two modes of Government which prevail in the world, are—

FIRST, Government by election and representation.

SECONDLY, Government by hereditary succession.

The former is generally known by the name of a republic; and the latter by that of monarchy and aristocracy.

Those two distinct and opposite forms, erect themselves on the two distinct and opposite bases of Reason and Ignorance.

As the exercise of Government requires talents and abilities, and as talents and abilities cannot have hereditary descent, it is evident that hereditary succession requires a belief from man to which his reason cannot subscribe, and which can only be established upon his ignorance; and the more ignorant any country is, the better it is fitted for this species of Government.

On the contrary, Government in a well-constituted republic, requires no belief from man beyond what his reason can give.

He sees the *rationale* of the whole system, its origin and its operation; and as it is best supported when best understood, the human faculties act with boldness, and acquire under this form of Government a gigantic manliness.

As, therefore, each of those forms acts on a different base, the one moving freely by the aid of Reason, the other by Ignorance; we have next to consider, what it is that gives motion to that species of Government which is called Mixed Government; or, as it is sometimes ludicrously styled, *a Government of this, that, and t'other.*

The moving power in this species of Government is, of necessity, Corruption. However imperfect election and representation may be, in Mixed Governments, they still give exercise to a greater portion of reason than is convenient to the hereditary part; and, therefore, it becomes necessary to buy the reason up.

A Mixed Government is an imperfect every thing; cementing and soldering the discordant parts together by corruption, to act as a whole.

Mr. Burke appears highly disgusted, that France, since she had resolved on a Revolution, did not adopt what he calls, "*A British Constitution;*" and the regretful manner in which he expresses himself on this occasion, implies a suspicion that the British Constitution needed something to keep its defects in countenance.

In Mixed Governments there is no responsibility; the parts cover each other till responsibility is lost; and the corruption which moves the machine, contrives at the same time its own escape. When it is laid down as a maxim, that a King can do no wrong, it places him in a state of similar security with that of idiots, and persons insane, and responsibility is out of the question with respect to himself.

It then descends upon the Minister, who shelters himself under a majority in Parliament; which by places, pensions, and corruption, he can always command: and that majority justifies itself by the same authority with which it protects the Minister.

In this rotatory motion, responsibility is thrown off from the parts, and from the whole.

When there is a part in a Government which can do no wrong, it implies that it does nothing; and is only the machine of another power, by whose advice and direction it acts.

What is supposed to be the King in a Mixed Government, is the Cabinet; and as the Cabinet is always a part of the Parliament, and the members justifying in one character what they advise, and act in another, a Mixed Government becomes a continual enigma; entailing upon a country, by the quantity of corruption necessary to solder the parts, the expence of supporting all the forms of Government at once; and finally resolving itself into a Government by Committee: in which the advisers, the actors, the approvers, the justifiers, the persons responsible, and the persons not responsible, are the same persons.

By this pantomimical contrivance, and change of scene and character, the parts help each other out in matters which neither of them singly would assume to act.

When money is to be obtained, the mass of variety apparently dissolves, and a profusion of Parliamentary praises passes between the parts. Each admires with astonish-

ment, the wisdom, the liberality, the disinterestedness, of the other; and all of them breathe a pitying sigh at the heavy burthens of the Nation.

But in a well constituted republic, nothing of this soldering, praising, and pitying, can take place. The representation being equal throughout the country, and complete in itself, however it may be arranged into legislative and executive, they have all one and the same natural source.

The parts are not foreigners to each other, like democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy.

As there are no discordant distinctions, there is nothing to corrupt by compromise, nor confound by contrivance.

Public measures appeal of themselves to the understanding of the Nation, and resting on their own merits, disown any flattering application to vanity.

The continual whine of lamenting the burthen of taxes, however successfully it may be practised in Mixed Governments, is inconsistent with the sense and spirit of a republic. If taxes are necessary, they are of course advantageous; but if they require an apology, the apology itself implies an impeachment.

Why, then, is MAN thus imposed upon? Or, why does he impose upon himself?

When men are spoken of as Kings, and Subjects; or when Government is mentioned under the distinct or combined heads of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, what is it that reasoning Man is to understand by the terms? If there really existed in the world two, or more, distinct and separate elements of human power, we should then see the several origins to which those terms would descriptively apply; but as there is but one species of man, there can be but one element of human power; and that element is man himself. Monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, are but creatures of imagination; and a thousand such may be contrived, as well as three.

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From the Revolutions of America and France, and the symptoms that have appeared in other countries, it is evident, that the opinion of the world is changed with respect to systems of Government, and that Revolutions are not within the compass of political calculations.

The progress of time and circumstances, which men assign to the accomplishment of great changes, is too me-

chanical to measure the force of the mind, and the rapidity of reflection, by which Revolutions are generated. All the old Governments have received a shock from those that already appear; and which were once more improbable, and are a greater subject of wonder, than a general Revolution in Europe would be now.

When we survey the wretched condition of Man, under the monarchical and hereditary systems of Government, dragged from his home by one power, or driven by another, and impoverished by taxes more than by enemies, it becomes evident that those systems are bad, and that a general Revolution in the principle and construction of Governments is necessary.

What is Government more than the management of the affairs of a Nation? It is not, and from its nature cannot be, the property of any particular man or family; but of the whole community, at whose expence it is supported; and though by force, or contrivance, it has been usurped into an inheritance, the usurpation cannot alter the right of things.

Sovereignty, as a matter of right, appertains to the Nation only, and not to any individual; and a Nation has at all times an inherent, indefeasible right to abolish any form of Government it finds inconvenient, and establish such as accords with its interest, disposition, and happiness. The romantic and barbarous distinction of men into Kings and Subjects, though it may suit the condition of Courtiers, cannot that of Citizens; and is exploded by the principle upon which Governments are now founded. Every Citizen is a member of the sovereignty, and as such can acknowledge no personal subjection; and his obedience can be only to the laws.

When men think of what Government is, they must necessarily suppose it to possess a knowledge of all the objects and matters upon which its authority is to be exercised. In this view of Government, the republican system, as established by America, and France, operates to embrace the whole of a Nation; and the knowledge necessary to the interest of all the parts, is to be found in the centre, which the parts by representation form. But the old Governments are on a construction that excludes knowledge as well as happiness. Government by Monks, who know nothing of the world beyond the walls of a convent, is as consistent as Government by Kings.

What were formerly called Revolutions, were little more

than a change of persons, or an alteration of local circumstances. They rose, and fell, like things of course, and had nothing in their existence or their fate that could influence beyond the spot that produced them. But what we now see in the world from the Revolutions of America and France, is a renovation of the natural order of things, a system of principles as universal as truth and the existence of man; and combining moral, with political happiness, and National prosperity.

*I. Men are born, and always continue free, and equal in respect of their rights. Civil distinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public utility.*

*II. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of Man; and these Rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance of oppression.*

*III. The nation is, essentially, the source of all Sovereignty; nor can any* INDIVIDUAL OF ANY BODY OF MEN, *be entitled to any authority which is not expressly derived from it.*

**In these principles, there is nothing to throw a Nation into confusion by inflaming ambition. They are calculated to call forth wisdom and abilities, and to exercise them for the public good, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular descriptions of men, or families. Monarchical sovereignty, the enemy of mankind, and the source of misery, is abolished; and sovereignty itself is restored to its natural and original place—the Nation. Were this the case throughout Europe, the cause of wars would be taken away.**

It is attributed to Henry the Fourth of France, a man of an enlarged and a benevolent heart, that he proposed, about the year 1610, a plan for abolishing war in Europe. The plan consisted in constituting an European Congress, or as the French Authors style it, a Pacific Republic; by appointing delegates, from the several Nations, who were to act as a Court of Arbitration, in any disputes that might arise between Nation and Nation.

Had such a plan been adopted at the time it was proposed, the taxes of England and France, as two of the parties, would have been at least ten millions sterling annually to each Nation less than they were at the commencement of the French Revolution.

To conceive a cause why such a plan has not been adopted, and that instead of a Congress for the purpose of preventing war,

it has been called only to terminate a war, after a fruitless expence of several years, it will be necessary to consider the interest of Governments as a distinct interest to that of Nations.

Whatever is the cause of taxes to a Nation, becomes also the means of revenue to a Government. Every war terminates with an addition of taxes, and, consequently, with an addition of revenue; and in any event of war, in the manner they are now commenced and concluded, the powers and interests of Governments are increased. War, therefore, from its productiveness, as it easily furnishes the pretence of necessity for taxes, and appointments to places, and offices, becomes a principal part of the system of old Governments; and to establish any mode to abolish war, however advantageous it might be to Nations, would be to take from such Government the most lucrative of its branches. The frivolous matters upon which war is made, shew the disposition and avidity of Governments to uphold the system of war, and betray the motives upon which they act.

Why are not Republics plunged into war, but because the nature of their Government does not admit of an interest distinct from that of the Nation? Even Holland, though an ill-constructed Republic, and with a commerce extending over the world, existed nearly a century without war; and the instant the form of Government was changed in France, the republican principles of peace and domestic prosperity, and economy, arose with the new Government; and the same consequences would follow the same causes in other Nations.

As war is the system of Government on the old construction, the animosity which Nations reciprocally entertain, is nothing more than what the policy of their Governments excite, to keep up the spirit of the system. Each Government accuses the other of perfidy, intrigue, and ambition, as a means of heating the imagination of their respective Nations, and incensing them to hostilities. Man is not the enemy of Man, but through the medium of a false system of Government. Instead, therefore, of exclaiming against the ambition of Kings, the exclamation should be directed against the principles of such Governments; and, instead of seeking to reform the individual, the wisdom of a Nation should apply itself to reform the system.

Whether the forms and maxims of Governments which are still in practice, were adapted to the condition of the world

at the period they were established, is not in this case the question. The older they are, the less correspondence can they have with the present state of things.

Time, and change of circumstances and opinions, have the same progressive effect in rendering modes of Government obsolete, as they have upon customs and manners.

Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and the tranquil arts, by which the prosperity of Nations is best promoted, require a different system of Government, and a different species of knowledge to direct its operations, than what might have been required in the former condition of the world.

As it is not difficult to perceive, from the enlightened state of mankind, that hereditary Governments are verging to their decline, and that Revolutions on the broad basis of National sovereingty, and Government by representation, are making their way in Europe, it would be an act of wisdom to anticipate their approach, and produce Revolutions by reason and accommodation, rather than commit them to the issue of convulsions.

From what we now see, nothing of reform in the political world ought to be held improbable. It is an age of Revolutions, in which every thing may be looked for.

The intrigue of Courts, by which the system of war is kept up, may provoke a confederation of Nations to abolish it; and an European Congress, to patronise the progress of free Government, and promote the civilization of Nations with each other, is an event nearer in probability, than once were the Revolutions and Alliance of France and America.

END OF PART THE FIRST.

# RIGHTS OF MAN,

COMBINING

## Principle and Practice.

BY

THOMAS PAINE.

PART II.

London:
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1819.

TO

# M. DE LA FAYETTE.

After an acquaintance of nearly fifteen years, in difficult situations in America, and various consultations in Europe, I feel a pleasure in presenting to you this small treatise, in gratitude for your services to my beloved America, and as a testimony of my esteem for the virtues, public and private, which I know you to possess.

The only point upon which I could ever discover that we differed, was not as to principles of Government, but as to time. For my own part, I think it equally as injurious to good principles to permit them to linger, as to push them on too fast. That which you suppose accomplishable in fourteen or fifteen years, I may believe practicable in a much shorter period. Mankind, as it appears to me, are always ripe enough to understand their true interest, provided it be presented clearly to their understanding, and that in a manner not to create suspicion by any thing like self-design, nor offend by assuming too much. Where we would wish to reform, we must not reproach

When the American Revolution was established, I felt a disposition to sit serenely down and enjoy the calm. It did not appear to me that any object could afterwards arise great enough to make me quit tranquillity, and feel as I had felt before. But when principle and not place, is the energetic cause of action, a man, I find is every where the same.

I am now once more in the public world: and as I have not a right to contemplate on so many years of remaining life as you have, I am resolved to labour as fast as I can; and as I am anxious for your aid and your company, I wish you to hasten your principles and overtake me.

If you make a campaign the ensuing spring, which it is most probable there will be no occasion for, I will come and join you. Should the campaign commence, I hope it will terminate in the extinction of German despotism, and in establishing the freedom of Germany. When France shall be surrounded with Revolutions, she will be in peace and safety, and her taxes, as well as those of Germany, will consequently become less.

Your sincere

Affectionate Friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

*London, Feb.* 9, 1792.

# PREFACE.

When I began the chapter entitled "*Conclusion*" in the former part of the RIGHTS OF MAN, published last year, it was my intention to have extended it to a greater length; but in casting the whole matter in my mind which I wished to add, I found that I must either make the work too bulky, or contract my plan too much, I therefore, brought it to a close as soon as the subject would admit, and reserved what I had further to say to another opportunity.

Several other reasons contributed to produce this determination. I wished to know the manner in which a work, written in a style of thinking and expression different to what had been customary in England, would be received before I ventured farther. A great field was opening to the view of mankind by means of the French Revolution. Mr. Burke's outrageous opposition thereto brought the controversy into England. He attacked principles which he knew (from information) I would contest with him, because they are principles which I believe to be good, and which I have contributed to establish, and conceive myself bound to defend. Had he not urged the controversy, I had most probably been a silent man.

Another reason for deferring the remainder of the work was, that Mr. Burke promised in his first publication to renew the subject at another opportunity, and to make a comparison of what he called the English and French Constitutions. I therefore held my-

self in reserve for him. He has published two works since, without doing this; which he certainly would not have omitted, had the comparison been in his favour.

In his last work, "*His Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*," he has quoted about ten pages from the *Rights of Man*, and having given himself the trouble of doing this, says, "he shall not attempt in the smallest degree to refute them," meaning the principles therein contained. I am enough acquainted with Mr. Burke to know that he would if he could. But instead of contesting them, he immediately after consoles himself with saying, that "he has done his part,"—He has not done his part. He has not performed his promise of a comparison of Constitutions. He started the controversy, he gave the challenge, and has fled from it; and he is now a *case in point* with his own opinion, that, "*the age of chivalry is gone!*"

The title, as well as the substance of his last Work, his "*Appeal*," is his condemnation. Principles must stand on their own merits, and if they are good they certainly will. To put them under the shelter of other men's authority, as Mr. Burke has done, serves to bring them into suspicion. Mr. Burke is not very fond of dividing his honours, but in this case he is artfully dividing the disgrace. But who are those to whom Mr. Burke made his Appeal? A set of childish thinkers, and half-way politicians born in the last century; men who went no farther with any principle then as it suited their purpose as a party; the Nation was always left out of the question; and this has been the character of every party from that day to this. The Nation sees nothing in

such Works, or such politics worthy its attention. A little matter will move a party, but it must be something great that moves a Nation.

Though I see nothing in Mr. Burke's Appeal worth taking much notice of, there is, however, one expression upon which I shall offer a few remarks.—After quoting largely from the "*Rights of Man*," and declining to contest the principles contained in that work, he says, "This will most probably be done, (*if such writings shall be thought to deserve any other refutation than that of criminal justice*)" by others who may think with Mr. Burke, and with the same zeal.

In the first place, it has not yet been done by any body. Not less, I believe, than eight or ten pamphlets, intended as answers to the former part of the "Rights of Man," have been published by different persons, and not one of them, to my knowledge, has extended to a second edition, nor are even the titles of them so much as generally remembered. As I am averse to unnecessarily multiplying publications, I have answered none of them. And as I believe that a man may write himself out of reputation, when nobody else can do it, I am careful to avoid that rock.

But as I would decline unnecessary publications on the one hand, so would I avoid every thing that might appear like sullen pride on the other. If Mr. Burke, or any person on his side the question, will produce an answer to the "Rights of Man," that shall extend to an half, or even to a fourth part of the number of copies to which the "*Rights of Man*"

extended, I will reply to his work. But until this be done, I shall so far take the sense of the public for my guide, (and the world knows I am not a flatterer) that what they do not think worth while to read, is not worth mine to answer. I suppose the number of copies to which the first part of the "*Rights of Man*" extended, taking England, Scotland, and Ireland, is not less than between 40 and 50,000.

I now come to remark on the remaining part of the quotation I have made from Mr. Burke.

"If," says he, "such writings shall be thought to deserve any other refutation than that of *criminal* justice."

Pardoning the pun, it must be *criminal* justice indeed, that should condemn a work as a substitute for not being able to refute it. The greatest condemnation that could be passed upon it, would be a refutation. But in proceeding by the method Mr. Burke alludes to, the condemnation would, in the final event, pass upon the criminality of the process, and not upon the work; and, in this case, I had rather be the author, than be either the judge, or the jury, that should condemn it.

But to come at once to the point. I have differed from some professional gentlemen on the subject of prosecutions, and I since find they are falling into my opinion, which I will here state as fully, but as concisely as I can.

I will first put a case with respect to any law, and then compare it with a Government, or with what in England is, or has been, called a Constitution.

It would be an act of despotism, or what in England is called arbitrary power, to make a law to

prohibit investigating the principles, good or bad, on which such a law, or any other is founded.

If a law be bad, it is one thing to oppose the practice of it, but it is quite a different thing to expose its errors, to reason on its defects, and to shew cause why it should be repealed, or why another ought to be substituted in its place. I have always held it an opinion (making it also my practice) that it is better to obey a bad law, making use at the same time, of every argument to shew its errors and procure its repeal, than forcibly to violate it; because the precedent of breaking a bad law, might weaken the force and lead to a dicretionary violation of those which are good.

The case is the same with respect to principles and forms of Government, or to what are called Constitutions, and the parts of which they are composed.

It is for the good of Nations, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular individuals, that Government ought to be established, and that mankind are at the expence of supporting it. The defects of every Government and Constitution, both as to principle and form, must, on a parity of reasoning, be as open to discussion as the defects of a Law, and it is a duty which every man owes to society to point them out. When those defects, and the means of remedying them, are generally seen by a Nation, that Nation will reform its Government or its Constitution in the one case, as the Government repealed or reformed the law in the other. The operation of Government is restricted to the making and the administering laws; but it is to a Nation that the right of forming or reforming, generating or regenerat-

ing Constitutions and Governments belong; and consequently, those subjects, as subjects of investigation, are always before a country *as a matter of right*, and cannot, without invading the general rights of the country, be made subjects for prosecution. On this ground I will meet Mr. Burke whenever he please. It is better that the whole argument should come out, than to seek to stifle it. It was himself that opened the controversy, and he ought not to desert it.

I do not believe that Monarchy and Aristocracy will continue seven years longer in any of the enlightened countries in Europe. If better reasons can be shewn for them than against them, they will stand; if the contrary, they will not. Mankind are not now to be told they shall not think, or they shall not read; and publications that go no farther than to investigate principles of Government, to invite men to reason and to reflect, and to shew the errors and excellencies of different systems, have a right to appear. If they do not excite attention, they are not worth the trouble of prosecution; and if they do, the prosecution will amount to nothing, since it cannot amount to a prohibition of reading. This would be a sentence on the public, instead of the author, and would also be the most effectual mode of making or hastening revolutions.

On all cases that apply universally to a Nation with respect to systems of Government, a jury of *twelve* men is not competent to decide. Where there are no witnesses to be examined, no facts to be proved, and where the whole matter is before the whole public, and the merits or demerits of it resting on

their opinion; and where there is nothing to be known in a Court, but what every body knows out of it, every twelve men is equally as good a jury as the other, and would most probably reverse each other's verdict; or from the variety of their opinions, not be able to form one. It is one case whether a Nation approve a work, or a plan; but is quite another case, whether it will commit to any such jury the power of determining whether that Nation have a right to, or shall reform its Government, or not. I mention those cases, that Mr Burke may see I have not written on Government without reflecting on what is Law, as well as on what are Rights.—The only effectual jury in such cases would be a convention of the whole Nation fairly elected; for in all such cases the whole Nation is the vicinage. If Mr. Burke will propose such a jury, I will wave all privileges of being the citizen of any other country, and, defending its principles, abide the issue, provided he will do the same: for my opinion is that his work and his principles would be condemned instead of mine.

As to the prejudices which men have from education and habit, in favour of any particular form or system of Government, those prejudices have yet to stand the test of reason and reflection. In fact, such prejudices are nothing. No man is prejudiced in favour of a thing, knowing it to be wrong. He is attached to it on the belief of its being right; and when he sees it is not so, the prejudice will be gone. We have but a defective idea of what prejudice is. It might be said, that until men think for themselves, the whole is prejudice and *not opinion;* for that only is opinion which is the result of reason and reflection. I offer

this remark, that Mr. Burke may not confide too much in what have been the customary prejudices of the country.

I do not believe that the People of England have ever been fairly and candidly dealt by. They have been imposed upon by parties, and by men assuming the character of leaders. It is time that the Nation should rise above those trifles. It is time to dismiss that inattention which has so long been the encouraging cause of stretching taxation to excess. It is time to dismiss all those songs and toasts which are calculated to enslave, and operate to suffocate reflection. On all such subjects, men have but to think, and they will neither act wrong, nor be misled. To say that any people are not fit for freedom, is to make poverty their choice, and to say they had rather be loaded with taxes than not. If such a case could be proved, it would equally prove, that those who govern are not fit to govern them, for they are a part of the same National mass.

But admitting Governments to be changed all over Europe, it certainly may be done without convulsion or revenge. It is not worth making changes or revolutions, unless it be for some great National benefit; and when this shall appear to a Nation, the danger will be, as in America and France, to those who oppose; and with this reflection I close my Preface.

THOMAS PAINE.

*London, Feb. 9th*, 1792.

# CONTENTS.

# RIGHTS OF MAN.

## PART II.

### INTRODUCTION.

WHAT Archimedes said of the mechanical powers, may be applied to Reason and Liberty: "*Had we,*" said he, "*a place to stand upon, we might raise the world.*"

The Revolution of America presented in politics what was only theory in mechanics. So deeply rooted were all the Governments of the old world, and so effectually had the tyranny and the antiquity of habit established itself over the mind, that no beginning could be made in Asia, Africa, or Europe, to reform the political condition of Man. Freedom had been hunted round the globe; reason was considered as rebellion; and the slavery of fear had made men afraid to think.

But such is the irresistible nature of truth, that all it asks, and all its wants, is the liberty of appearing. The sun needs no inscription to distinguish him from darkness; and no sooner did the American Governments display themselves to the world, than despotism felt a shock, and man began to contemplate redress.

The Independence of America, considered merely as a separation from England, would have been a matter of but little importance, had it not been accompanied by a Revolution in the principles and practice of Governments. She made a stand, not for herself only, but for the world, and looked beyond the advantages herself could receive. Even the Hessian, though hired to fight against her, may live to bless his defeat; and England, condemning the viciousness of its Government, rejoice in its miscarriage.

As America was the only spot in the political world, where the principles of universal reformation could begin, so also was it the best in the natural world. An assemblage of circumstances conspired, not only to give birth, but to add gigantic maturity to its principles. The scene which that country presents to the eye of a spectator, has something in it which generates and encourages great ideas. Nature appears to him in magnitude. The mighty objects he beholds, act upon his mind by enlarging it, and he partakes of the greatness he contemplates. Its first settlers were emigrants from different European nations, and of diversified professions of religion, retiring from the Governmental persecutions of the old world, and meeting in the new, not as enemies, but as brothers. The wants which necessarily accompany the cultivation of a wilderness, produced among them a state of society, which countries, long harassed by the quarrels and intrigues of Governments, had neglected to cherish. In such a situation Man becomes what he ought. He sees his species, not with the inhuman idea of a natural enemy, but as kindred; and the example shews to the artificial world, that Man must go back to Nature for information.

From the rapid progress which America makes in every species of improvement, it is rational to conclude, that if the Governments of Asia, Africa, and Europe, had begun on a principle similar to that of America, or had not been very early corrupted therefrom, those countries must, by this time, have been in a far superior condition to what they are. Age after age has passed away, for no other purpose than to behold their wretchedness. Could we suppose a spectator who knew nothing of the world, and who was put into it merely to make his observations, he would take a great part of the old world to be new, just struggling with the difficulties and hardships of an infant settlement. He could not suppose that the hordes of miserable poor, with which old countries abound, could be any other than those who had not yet had time to provide for themselves. Little would he think they were the consequence of what in such countries is called Government.

If, from the more wretched parts of the old world, we look at those which are in an advanced stage of improvement, we still find the greedy hand of Government thrusting itself into every corner and crevice of industry, and grasping the spoil of the multitude. Invention is continually exercised, to furnish new pretences for revenue and tax-

ation It watches prosperity as its prey, and permits none to escape without a tribute.

As revolutions have begun, (and as the probability is always greater against a thing beginning than of proceeding after it has begun), it is natural to expect that other revolutions will follow. The amazing and still increasing expences with which old Governments are conducted, the numerous wars they engage in, or provoke, the embarrassments they throw in the way of universal civilization and commerce, and the oppression and usurpation they practise at home, have wearied out the patience, and exhausted the property of the world. In such a situation, and with the examples already existing, revolutions are to be looked for. They are become subjects of universal conversation, and may be considered as the *Order of the Day.*

If systems of Government can be introduced, less expensive, and more productive of general happiness, than those which have existed, all attempts to oppose their progress will, in the end, be fruitless. Reason, like time, will make its own way, and prejudice will fall in a combat with interest. If universal peace, civilization, and commerce, are ever to be the happy lot of man, it cannot be accomplished but by a revolution in the system of Governments. All the monarchical Governments are military. War is their trade; plunder and revenue their objects. While such Governments continue, peace has not the absolute security of a day. What is the history of all monarchical Governments, but a disgustful picture of human wretchedness, and the accidental respite of a few years' repose? Wearied with war, and tired with human butchery, they sat down to rest, and called it peace. This certainly is not the condition that Heaven intended for Man; and if *this be monarchy*, well might monarchy be reckoned among the sins of the Jews.

The revolutions which formerly took place in the world, had nothing in them that interested the bulk of mankind. They extended only to a change of persons and measures, but not of principles, and rose or fell among the common transactions of the moment. What we now behold, may not improperly be called a "*counter revolution.*" Conquest and tyranny, at some early period, dispossessed Man of his Rights, and he is now recovering them. And as the tide of all human affairs has its ebb and flow in directions contrary to each other, so also is it in this. Government founded on a *moral theory, on a system of universal peace, on the inde-*

*feasible hereditary Rights of Man*, is now revolving from West to East, by a stronger impulse than the Government of the sword revolved from East to West. It interests not particular individuals, but nations, in its progress, and promises a new era to the human race.

The danger to which the success of revolutions is most exposed, is that of attempting them before the principles on which they proceed, and the advantages to result from them, are sufficiently seen and understood. Almost every thing appertaining to the circumstances of a nation, has been absorbed and confounded under the general and mysterious word *Government*. Though it avoids taking to its account, the errors it commits, and the mischiefs it occasions, it fails not to arrogate to itself whatever has the appearance of prosperity. It robs industry of its honours, by pedanticly making itself the cause of its effects; and purloins from the general character of Man, the merits that appertain to him as a social being.

It may, therefore, be of use in this day of revolutions, to discriminate between those things which are the effect of Government, and those which are not. This will best be done by taking a review of society and civilization, and the consequences resulting therefrom, as things distinct from what are called Governments. By beginning with this investigation, we shall be able to assign effects to their proper cause, and analyze the mass of common errors.

## CHAPTER I.

### *Of Society and Civilization.*

GREAT part of that order which reigns among mankind, is not the effect of Government. It has its origin in the principals of society and the natural constitution of Man. It existed prior to Government, and would exist if the formality of Government were abolished. The mutual dependence and reciprocal interest which Man has upon Man, and all the parts of a civilized community upon each other, create that great chain of connection which holds it together. The landlord, the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and every occupation, prospers by the aid which each receives from the other, and from the whole. Common interest regulates their concerns, and forms their law; and the laws which common usage ordains, have a greater influence than the laws of Government. In fine, society performs for itself almost every thing which is ascribed to Government.

To understand the nature and quantity of Government proper for Man, it is necessary to attend to his character. As Nature created him for social life, she fitted him for the station she intended. In all cases, she made his natural wants greater than his individual powers. No one man is capable, without the aid of society, of supplying his own wants; and those wants, acting upon every individual, impel the whole of them into society, as naturally as gravitation acts to a centre.

But she has gone farther. She has not only forced Man into society, by a diversity of wants, which the reciprocal aid of each other can supply, but she has implanted in him a system of social affections, which though not necessary to his existence, are essential to his happiness. There is no period in life when this love for society ceases to act. It begins and ends with our being.

If we examine, with attention, into the composition and constitution of Man, the diversity of his wants, and the diversity of talents in different men for reciprocally accommo-

dating the wants of each other, his propensity to society, and, consequently, to preserve the advantages resulting from it, we shall easily discover, that a great part of what is called Government is mere imposition.

Government is no farther necessary than to supply the few cases to which society and civilization are not conveniently competent; and instances are not wanting to shew, that every thing which Government can usefully add thereto, has been performed by the common consent of society, without Government.

For upwards of two years, from the commencement of the American war, and to a longer period in several of the American States, there were no established forms of Government. The old Governments had been abolished, and the country was too much occupied in defence, to employ its attention in establishing new Governments; yet during this interval, order and harmony were preserved as inviolate as in any country in Europe. There is a natural aptness in Man, and more so in society, because it embraces a greater variety of abilities and resource, to accommodate itself to whatever situation it is in. The instant formal Government is abolished, society begins to act. A general association takes place, and common interest produces common security.

So far is it from being true, as has been pretended, that the abolition of any formal Government is the dissolution of society, that it acts by a contrary impulse, and brings the latter the closer together. All that part of its organization which it had committed to its Government, devolves again upon itself, and acts through its medium. When men, as well from natural instinct, as from reciprocal benefits, have habituated themselves to social and civilized life, there is always enough of its principles in practice to carry them through any changes they may find necessary or convenient to make in their Government. In short, Man is so naturally a creature of society, that it is almost impossible to put him out of it.

Formal Government makes but a small part of civilized life; and when even the best that human wisdom can devise is established, it is a thing more in name and idea, than in fact. It is to the great and fundamental principles of society and civilization—to the common usage universally consented to, and mutually and reciprocally maintained—to the unceasing circulation of interest, which, passing through its million channels, invigorates the whole mass of civilized Man—it is to these things infinitely more than to any thing

which even the best instituted Government can perform, that the safety and prosperity of the individual and of the whole depends.

The more perfect civilization is, the less occasion has it for Government, because the more does it regulate its own affairs, and govern itself; but so contrary is the practice of old Governments to the reason of the case, that the expences of them increase in the proportion they ought to diminish. It is but few general laws that civilized life requires, and those of such common usefulness, that whether they are enforced by the forms of Government or not, the effect will be nearly the same. If we consider what the principles are that first condense men into society, and what the motives that regulate their mutual intercourse afterwards, we shall find, by the time we arrive at what is called Government, that nearly the whole of the business is performed by the natural operation of the parts upon each other.

Man, with respect to all those matters, is more a creature of consistency than he is aware, or that Governments would wish him to believe. All the great laws of society are laws of nature. Those of trade and commerce, whether with respect to the intercourse of individuals, or of Nations, are laws of mutual and reciprocal interest. They are followed and obeyed, because it is the interest of the parties so to do, and not on account of any formal laws their Governments may impose or interpose.

But how often is the natural propensity to society disturbed or destroyed by the operations of Government. When the latter, instead of being engrafted on the principles of the former, assumes to exist for itself, and acts by partialities of favour and oppression it becomes the cause of the mischiefs it ought to prevent.

If we look back to the riots and tumults, which at various times have happened in England, we shall find, that they did not proceed from the want of a Government, but that Government was itself the generating cause; instead of consolidating society it divided it; it deprived it of its natural cohesion, and engendered discontents and disorders, which otherwise would not have existed. In those associations which men promiscuously form for the purpose of trade, or of any concern, in which Government is totally out of the question, and in which they act merely on the principles of society, we see how naturally the various parties unite; and this shews, by comparison, that Governments, so far from being always the cause or means of order, are often the

destruction of it. The riots of 1780 had no other source than the remains of those prejudices, which the Government itself had encouraged. But with respect to England there are also other causes.

Excess and inequality of taxation, however disguised in the means, never fail to appear in their effects. As a great mass of the community are thrown thereby into poverty and discontent, they are constantly on the brink of commotion; and deprived, as they unfortunately are, of the means of information, are easily heated to outrage. Whatever the apparent cause of any riots may be, the real one is always want of happiness. It shews, that something is wrong in the system of Government, that injures the felicity by which society is to be preserved.

But as fact is superior to reasoning, the instance of America presents itself to confirm these observations. If there be a country in the world, where concord, according to common calculation, would be least expected, it is America. Made up, as it is, of people from different Nations,* accustomed to different forms and habits of Government, speaking different languages, and more different in their modes of worship, it would appear that the union of such a people was impracticable; but by the simple operation of constructing Government on the principles of society and the Rights of Man, every difficulty retires, and all the parts are brought into cordial unison. There the poor are not oppressed, the rich are not privileged. Industry is not mortified by the splendid extravagance of a court rioting at its expence. Their taxes are few, because their Government is just; and as there is nothing to render them wretched, there is nothing to engender riots and tumults.

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* That part of America which is generally called New-England, including New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode-Island, and Connecticut, is peopled chiefly by English descendants. In the State of New York, about half are Dutch, the rest English, Scotch, and Irish. In New Jersey, a mixture of English and Dutch, with some Scotch and Irish. In Pennsylvania, about one third are English, another Germans, and the remainder Scotch and Irish, with some Swedes. The States to the Southward have a greater proportion of English than the middle States, but in all of them there is a mixture; and besides those enumerated, there are a considerable number of French, and some few of all the European nations lying on the coast. The most numerous religious denomination are the Presbyterians: but no one sect is established above another, and all men are equally citizens.

A metaphysical man, like Mr. Burke, would have tortured his invention to discover how such a people could be governed. He would have supposed that some must be managed by fraud, others by force, and all by some contrivance; that genius must be hired to impose upon ignorance, and shew and parade to fascinate the vulgar. Lost in the abundance of his researches, he would have resolved and re-resolved, and finally overlooked the plain and easy road that lay directly before him.

One of the great advantages of the American Revolution has been, that it led to a discovery of the principles, and laid open the imposition, of Governments. All the revolutions till then had been worked within the atmosphere of a court, and never on the great floor of a nation. The parties were always of the class of courtiers; and whatever was their rage for reformation, they carefully preserved the fraud of the profession.

In all cases they took care to represent Government as a thing made up of mysteries, which only themselves understood; and they hid from the understanding of the nation the only thing that was beneficial to know, namely, *That Government is nothing more than a national association acting upon the principles of society.*

Having thus endeavoured to shew, that the social and civilized state of man is capable of performing within itself almost every thing necessary to its protection and government, it will be proper, on the other hand, to take a review of the present old Governments, and examine whether their principles and practice are correspondent thereto.

## CHAPTER II.

### *Of the Origin of the present Old Governments.*

It is impossible that such Governments as have hitherto existed in the world could have commenced by any other means than a total violation of every principle, sacred and moral. The obscurity in which the origin of all the present old Governments is buried, implies the iniquity and disgrace with which they began. The origin of the present Government of America and France will ever be remembered, because it is honourable to record it; but with respect to the rest, even flattery has consigned them to the tomb of time, without an inscription. It could have been no difficult thing in the early and solitary ages of the world, while the chief employment of men was that of attending flocks and herds, for a banditti of ruffians to overrun a country and lay it under contributions. Their power being thus established, the chief of the band contrived to lose the name of robber in that of monarch; and hence the origin of monarchy and kings.

The origin of the Government of England, so far as relates to what is called its line of monarchy being one of the latest, is, perhaps, the best recorded. The hatred which the Norman invasion and tyranny begat, must have been deeply rooted in the nation, to have outlived the contrivance to obliterate it. Though not a courtier will talk of the curfew-bell, not a village in England has forgotten it.

Those bands of robbers having parcelled out the world, and divided it into dominions, began, as is naturally the case, to quarrel with each other. What at first was obtained by violence, was considered by others as lawful to be taken, and a second plunderer succeeded the first. They alternately invaded the dominions which each had assigned to himself, and the brutality with which they treated each other explains the original character of monarchy. It was ruffian torturing ruffian. The conqueror considered the conquered, not as his prisoner, but his property. He led him in triumph rattling in chains, and doomed him at pleasure, to slavery or death. As time obliterated the history

of their beginning, their successors assumed new appearances to cut off the entail of their disgrace, but their principles and objects remained the same. What, at first, was plunder, assumed the softer name of revenue; and the power originally usurped they affected to inherit.

From such beginning of Governments, what could be expected but a continual system of war and extortion? It has established itself into a trade. The vice is not peculiar to one more than to another, but is the common principle of all. There does not exist within such Governments sufficient stamina whereon to engraft reformation; and the shortest, easiest, and most effectual remedy, is to begin anew on the ground of the oration.

What scenes of horror, what perfection of iniquity, present themselves in contemplating the character, and reviewing the history of such Governments! If we would delineate human nature with a baseness of heart, and hypocrisy of countenance, that reflection would shudder at, and humanity disown, it is Kings, Courts, and Cabinets, that must sit for the portrait. Man, naturally as he is, with all his faults about him, is not up to the character.

Can we possibly suppose, that if Governments had originated in a right principle, and had not an interest in pursuing a wrong one, that the world could have been in the wretched and quarrelsome condition we have seen it? What inducement has the farmer, while following the plough, to lay aside his peaceful pursuit, and go to war with the farmer of another country? Or what inducement has the manufacturer? What is dominion to them, or to any class of men in a nation? Does it add an acre to any man's estate, or raise its value? Are not conquest and defeat each of the same price, and taxes the never-failing consequence? Though this reasoning may be good to a nation, it is not to a Government. War is the Pharo-table of Governments, and nations the dupes of the games.

If there is any thing to wonder at in this miserable scene of Governments more than might be expected, it is the progress which the peaceful arts of agriculture, manufacture and commerce have made beneath such a long accumulating load of discouragement and oppression. It serves to shew, that instinct in animals does not act with stronger impulse than the principles of society and civilization operate in man. Under all discouragements, he pursues his object, and yields to nothing but impossibilities.

## CHAPTER III.

### *Of the Old and New Systems of Government.*

NOTHING can appear more contradictory than the principles on which the old Governments began, and the condition to which society, civilization, and commerce, are capable of carrying mankind. Government on the old system is an assumption of power for the aggrandizement of itself; on the new, a delegation of power for the common benefit of society. The former supports itself by keeping up a system of war; the latter promotes a system of peace, as the true means of enriching a nation. The one encourages national prejudices; the other promotes universal society, as the means of universal commerce. The one measures its prosperity by the quantity of revenue it extorts; the other proves its excellence by the small quantity of taxes it requires.

Mr. Burke has talked of old and new Whigs. If he can amuse himself with childish names and distinctions, I shall not interrupt his pleasure. It is not to him, but to the Abbe Sieyes, that I address this chapter. I am already engaged to the latter gentleman to discuss the subject of monarchical Government; and as it naturally occurs in comparing the old and new systems, I make this the opportunity of presenting to him my observations. I shall occasionally take Mr. Burke in my way.

Though it might be proved that the system of Government now called the NEW is the most ancient in principle of all that have existed, being founded on the original inherent Rights of Man; yet, as tyranny and the sword have suspended the exercise of those rights for many centuries past, it serves better the purpose of distinction to call it the *new*, than to claim the right of calling it the old.

The first general distinction between those two systems, is, that the one now called the old is *hereditary*, either in whole or in part; and the new is entirely *representative*. It rejects all hereditary Government:

First, as being an imposition on mankind.

Secondly, As inadequate to the purposes for which Government is necessary.

With respect to the first of these heads—It cannot be proved by what right hereditary Government could begin: neither does there exist within the compass of mortal power a right to establish it. Man has no authority over posterity in matters of personal right; and therefore, no man, or body of men, had, or can have, a right to set up hereditary Government. Were even ourselves to come again into existence, instead of being succeeded by posterity, we have not now the right of taking from ourselves the rights which would then be our's. On what ground, then, do we pretend to take them from others?

All hereditary Government is in its nature tyranny. An heritable Crown, or an heritable Throne, or by what other fanciful name such things may be called, have no other significant explanation, than that mankind are heritable property. To inherit a Government, is to inherit the People, as if they were flocks and herds.

With respect to the second head, that of being inadequate to the purposes for which Government is necessary, we have only to consider what Government essentially is, and compare it with the circumstances to which hereditary succession is subject.

Government ought to be a thing always in full maturity. It ought to be so constructed as to be superior to all the accidents to which individual man is subject; and therefore, hereditary succession, by being *subject to them all*, is the most irregular and imperfect of all the systems of Government.

We have heard the *Rights of Man* called a *levelling* system; but the only system to which the word *levelling* is truly applicable, is the hereditary monarchical system. It is a system of *mental levelling*. It indiscriminately admits every species of character to the same authority. Vice and virtue, ignorance and wisdom, in short, every quality, good or bad, is put on the same level. Kings succeed each other, not as rationals, but as animals. It signifies not what their mental or moral characters are. Can we then be surprised at the abject state of the human mind in monarchical countries, when the Government itself is formed on such an abject levelling system?—It has no fixed character. To-day it is one thing; to-morrow it is something else. It changes with the temper of every succeeding individual, and is subject to all the varieties of each. It is Government through

the medium of passions and accidents. It appears under all the various characters of childhood, decrepitude, dotage, a thing at nurse, in leading-strings, or in crutches. It reverses the wholesome order of nature. It occasionally puts children over men, and the conceits of non-age over wisdom and experience. In short, we cannot conceive a more ridiculous figure of Government, than hereditary succession, in all its cases, presents.

Could it be made a decree in nature, or an edict registered in Heaven, and man could know it, that virtue and wisdom should invariably appertain to hereditary succession, the objections to it would be removed; but when we see that Nature acts as if she disowned and sported with the hereditary system; that the mental characters of successors, in all countries, are below the average of human understanding; that one is a tyrant, another an idiot, a third insane, and some all three together, it is impossible to attach confidence to it, when reason in man has power to act.

It is not to the Abbe Syeyes that I need apply this reasoning; he has already saved me that trouble, by giving his own opinion upon the case. "If it be asked," says he, "what is my opinion with respect to hereditary right, I answer, without hesitation, That, in good theory, an hereditary transmission of any power or office, can never accord with the laws of a true representation. Hereditaryship is, in this sense, as much an attaint upon principle, as an outrage upon society. But let us," continues he, "refer to the history of all elective monarchies and principalities: Is there one in which the elective mode is not worse than the hereditary succession?"

As to debating on which is the worst of the two, is admitting both to be bad; and herein we are agreed. The preference which the Abbe has given, is a condemnation of the thing he prefers. Such a mode of reasoning on such a subject is inadmissible, because it finally amounts to an accusation upon Providence, as if she had left to man no other choice with respect to Government than between two evils, the best of which he admits to be "*an attaint upon principle, and an outrage upon society.*"

Passing over, for the present, all the evils and mischiefs which monarchy has occasioned in the world, nothing can more effectually prove its uselessness in a state of *civil Government*, than making it hereditary. Would we make any office hereditary that required wisdom and abilities to fill it? and where wisdom and abilities are not necessary, such

an office, whatever it may be, is superfluous or insignificant.

Hereditary succession is a burlesque upon monarchy. It puts it in the most ridiculous light, by presenting it as an office, which any child or idiot may fill. It requires some talents to be a common mechanic; but to be a King, requires only the animal figure of a man—a sort of breathing automaton. This sort of superstition may last a few years more, but it cannot long resist the awakened reason and interest of man.

As to Mr. Burke, he is a stickler for monarchy, not altogether as a pensioner, if he is one, which I believe, but as a political man.

He has taken up a contemptible opinion of mankind, who, in their turn, are taking up the same of him. He considers them as a herd of beings that must be governed by fraud, effigy, and shew; and an idol would be as good a figure of monarchy with him, as a man. I will, however, do him the justice to say, that, with respect to America, he has been very complimentary. He always contended, at least in my hearing, that the people of America were more enlightened than those of England, or of any country in Europe; and that therefore the imposition of shew was not necessary in their Governments.

Though the comparison between hereditary and elective monarchy, which the Abbe has made, is unnecessary to the case, because the representative system rejects both; yet, were I to make the comparison, I should decide contrary to what he has done.

The civil wars which have originated from contested hereditary claims, are more numerous and have been more dreadful, and of longer continuance, than those which have been occasioned by election. All the civil wars in France arose from the hereditary system; they were either produced by hereditary claims, or by the imperfection of the hereditary form, which admits of regencies, or monarchies at nurse. With respect to England, its history is full of the same misfortunes. The contests for succession between the houses of York and Lancaster, lasted a whole century; and others of a similar nature, have renewed themselves since that period. Those of 1715 and 1745, were of the same kind. The succession war for the crown of Spain, embroiled almost half Europe. The disturbances in Holland are generated from the hereditaryship of the Stadtholder. A Government calling itself free, with an hereditary office,

is like a thorn in the flesh, that produces a fermentation which endeavours to discharge it.

But I might go further, and place also foreign wars, of whatever kind, to the same cause. It is by adding the evil of hereditary succession to that of monarchy, that a permanent family interest is created, whose constant objects are dominion and revenue. Poland, though an elective monarchy, has had fewer wars than those which are hereditary; and it is the only Government that has made a voluntary essay, though but a small one, to reform the condition of the country.

Having thus glanced at a few of the defects of the old, or hereditary systems of Government, let us compare it with the new or representative system.

The representative system takes society and civilization for its basis; nature, reason, and experience for its guide.

Experience, in all ages, and in all countries, has demonstrated, that it is impossible to controul Nature in her distribution of mental powers. She gives them as she pleases. Whatever is the rule by which she, apparently to us, scatters them among mankind, that rule remains a secret to man. It would be as ridiculous to attempt to fix the hereditaryship of human beauty, as of wisdom. Whatever wisdom constituently is, it is like a seedless plant; it may be reared when it appears, but it cannot be voluntarily produced. There is always a sufficiency somewhere in the general mass of society for all purposes; but with respect to the parts of society it is continually changing its place. It rises in one to-day, in another to-morrow, and has most probably visited in rotation every family of the earth, and again withdrawn.

As this is the order of nature, the order of Government must necessarily follow it, or Government will, as we see it does, degenerate into ignorance. The hereditary system, therefore, is as repugnant to human wisdom, as to human rights; and is as absurd as it is unjust.

As the republic of letters brings forward the best literary productions, by giving to genius a fair and universal chance; so the representative system of Government is calculated to produce the wisest laws, by collecting wisdom from where it can be found. I smile to myself when I contemplate the ridiculous insignificance into which literature and all the sciences would sink, were they made hereditary; and I carry the same idea into Governments. An hereditary governor is as inconsistent as an hereditary author. I know

not whether Homer or Euclid had sons; but I will venture an opinion, that if they had, and had left their works unfinished, those sons could not have completed them.

Do we need a stronger evidence of the absurdity of hereditary Government, than is seen in the descendants of those men, in any line of life, who once were famous? Is there scarcely an instance in which there is not a total reverse of the character? It appears as if the tide of mental faculties flowed as far as it could in certain channels, and then forsook its course, and arose in others. How irrational then, is the hereditary system which establishes channels of power, in company with which wisdom refuses to flow! By continuing this absurdity, man is perpetually in contradiction with himself; he accepts, for a King, or a Chief Magistrate, or a Legislator, a person whom he would not elect for a Constable.

It appears to general observation, that revolutions create genius and talents; but those events do no more than bring them forward. There is existing in man, a mass of sense lying in a dormant state, and which, unless something excites it to action, will descend with him, in that condition, to the grave. As it is to the advantage of society that the whole of its faculties should be employed, the construction of Government ought to be such as to bring forward, by a quiet and regular operation, all that extent of capacity which never fails to appear in revolutions.

This cannot take place in the insipid state of hereditary Government, not only because it prevents, but because it operates to benumb. When the mind of a nation is bowed down by any political superstition in its Government such as hereditary succession is, it loses a considerable portion of its powers on all other subjects and objects. Hereditary succession requires the same obedience to ignorance, as to wisdom; and when once the mind can bring itself to pay this indiscriminate reverence, it descends below the stature of mental manhood. It is fit to be great only in little things. It acts a treachery upon itself, and suffocates the sensations that urge the detection.

Though the ancient Governments present to us a miserable picture of the condition of man, there is one which above all others exempts itself from the general description. I mean the democracy of the Athenians. We see more to admire, and less to condemn, in that great, extraordinary people, than in any thing which history affords.

Mr. Burke is so little acquainted with constituent princi-

ples of Government, that he confounds democracy and representation together. Representation was a thing unknown in the ancient democracies. In those the mass of the People met and enacted laws (grammatically speaking) in the first person. Simple democracy was no other than the common-hall of the ancients. It signifies the *form*, as well as the public principle of the Government. As these democracies increased in population, and the territory extended, the simple democratical form became unwieldy and impracticable; and as the system of representation was not known, the consequence was, they either degenerated convulsively into monarchies, or became absorbed into such as then existed. Had the system of representation been then understood, as it now is, there is no reason to believe that those forms of Government, now called monarchical and aristocratical, would ever have taken place. It was the want of some method to consolidate the parts of society, after it became too populous, and too extensive for the simple democratical form, and also the lax and solitary condition of shepherds and herdsmen in other parts of the world, that afforded opportunities to those unnatural modes of Government to begin.

As it is necessary to clear away the rubbish of errors, into which the subject of Government has been thrown, I shall proceed to remark on some others.

It has always been the political craft of courtiers and Court Governments, to abuse something which they called republicanism; but what republicanism was, or is, they never attempt to explain. Let us examine a little into this case.

The only forms of Government are, the democratical, the aristocratical, the monarchical, and what is now called the representative.

What is called a *republic*, is not any *particular form* of Government. It is wholly characteristical of the purport, matter, or object for which Government ought to be instituted, and on which it is to be employed, RES-PUBLICA, the public affairs, or the public good; or, literally translated, the *public thing*. It is a word of a good original, referring to what ought to be the character and business of Government; and in this sense it is naturally opposed to the word *monarchy*, which has a base original signification. It means arbitrary power in an individual person; in the exercise of which, *himself*, and not the *res-publica*, is the object.

Every Government that does not act on the principle of a

*Republic*, or in other words, that does not make the *res-publica* its whole and sole object, is not a good Government. Republican Government is no other than Government established and conducted for the interest of the public, as well individually as collectively. It is not necessarily connected with any particular form, but it most naturally associates with the representative form, as being best calculated to secure the end for which a nation is at the expence of supporting it.

Various forms of Government have affected to style themselves a republic. Poland calls itself a republic, which is an hereditary aristocracy with what is called an elective monarchy. Holland calls itself a republic, which is chiefly aristocratical, with an hereditary Stadtholdership. But the Government of America, which is wholly on the system of representation, is the only real republic in character and in practice that now exists. Its Government has no other object than the public business of the nation, and therefore it is properly a republic; and the Americans have taken care that THIS, and no other, shall always be the object of their Government, by their rejecting every thing hereditary, and establishing Government on the system of representation only.

Those who have said that a republic is not a *form* of Government calculated for countries of great extent, mistook, in the first place, the *business* of a Government for a *form* of Government; for the *res-publica* equally appertains to every extent of territory and population. And, in the second place, if they meant any thing with respect to *form*, it was the simple democratical form, such was the mode of Government in the ancient democracies, in which there was no representation. The case, therefore, is not that a republic cannot be extensive, but that it cannot be extensive on the simple democratical form; and the question naturally presents itself, *What is the best form of Government for conducting the* RES-PUBLICA, *or the* PUBLIC BUSINESS *of a nation, after it becomes too extensive and populous for the simple democratical form?*

It cannot be monarchy, because monarchy is subject to an objection of the same amount to which the simple democratical form was subject.

It is probable that an individual may lay down a system of principles on which Government shall be constitutionally established to any extent of territory. This is no more than an operation of the mind, acting by its own power. But

the practice upon those principles, as applying to the various and numerous circumstances of a nation, its agriculture, manufacture, trade, commerce, &c. &c. requires a knowledge of a different kind, and which can be had only from the various parts of society. It is an assemblage of practical knowledge, which no one individual can possess; and therefore the monarchical form is as much limited, in useful practice, from the incompetency of knowledge, as was the democratical form, from the multiplicity of population. The one degenerates, by extension, into confusion; the other, into ignorance and incapacity, of which all the great monarchies are an evidence. The monarchical form, therefore, could not be a substitute for the democratical, because it has equal inconveniences.

Much less could it when made hereditary. This is the most effectual of all forms to preclude knowledge. Neither could the high democratical mind have voluntarily yielded itself to be governed by children and idiots, and all the motley insignificance of character, which attends such a mere animal system, the disgrace and the reproach of reason and of man.

As to the aristocratical form, it has the same vices and defects with the monarchical, except that the chance of abilities is better from the proportion of numbers, but there is still no security for the right use and application of them*.

Referring, then, to the original simple democracy, it affords the true data from which Government on a large scale can begin. It is incapable of extension, not from its principle, but from the inconvenience of its form; and monarchy and aristocracy, from their incapacity. Retaining, then, democracy as the ground, and rejecting the corrupt systems of monarchy and aristocracy, the representative system naturally presents itself, remedying at once the defects of the simple democracy as to form, and the incapacity of the other two with respect to knowledge.

Simple democracy was society governing itself without the aid of secondary means. By ingrafting representation upon democracy, we arrive at a system of Government capable of embracing and confederating all the various interests and every extent of territory and population; and

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* For a character of aristocracy, the reader is referred to RIGHTS OF MAN, Part I. page 38.

that also with advantages as much superior to hereditary Government, as the republic of letters is to hereditary literature.

It is on this system that the American Government is founded. It is representation ingrafted upon democracy. It has fixed the form by a scale parallel in all cases to the extent of the principle. What Athens was in miniature, America will be in magnitude. The one was the wonder of the ancient world; the other is becoming the admiration, the model, of the present. It is the easiest of all the forms of Government to be understood, and the most eligible in practice; and excludes at once the ignorance and insecurity of the hereditary mode, and the inconvenience of the simple democracy.

It is impossible to conceive a system of Government capable of acting over such an extent of territory, and such a circle of interests, as is immediately produced by the operation of representation. France, great and populous as it is, is but a spot in the capaciousness of the system. It adapts itself to all possible cases. It is preferable to simple democracy even in small territories. Athens, by representation, would have outrivalled her own democracy.

That which is called Government, or rather that which we ought to conceive Government to be, is no more than some common centre, in which all the parts of society unite. This cannot be accomplished by any method so conducive to the various interests of the community, as by the representative system. It concentrates the knowledge necessary to the interest of the parts, and of the whole. It places Government in a state of constant maturity. It is, as has been already observed, never young, never old. It is subject neither to nonage, nor dotage. It is never in the cradle, nor on crutches. It admits not of a separation between knowledge and power, and is superior, as Government always ought to be, to all the accidents of individual man, and is therefore superior to what is called monarchy.

A nation is not a body, the figure of which is to be represented by the human body; but is like a body contained within a circle, having a common centre, in which every radius meets; and that centre is formed by representation. To connect representation with what is called monarchy, is eccentric Government. Representation is of itself the delegated monarchy of a nation, and cannot debase itself by dividing it with another.

Mr. Burke has two or three times, in his Parliamentary

speeches, and in his publications, made use of a jingle of words that convey no ideas. Speaking of Government, he says, "It is better to have monarchy for its basis, and republicanism for its corrective, than republicanism for its basis, and monarchy for its corrective." If he means that it is better to correct folly with wisdom, than wisdom with folly, I will no otherwise contend with him, than that it would be much better to reject the folly entirely.

But what is this thing which Mr. Burke calls monarchy? Will he explain it? All men can understand what representation is; and that it must necessarily include a variety of knowledge and talents. But, what security is there for the same qualities on the part of monarchy? or, when this monarchy is a child, where then is the wisdom? What does it know about Government? Who then is the monarch, or where is the monarchy? If it is to be performed by a regency, it proves it to be a farce. A regency is a mock species of republic, and the whole of monarchy deserves no better description. It is a thing as various as imagination can paint. It has none of the stable character that Government ought to possess. Every succession is a revolution, and every regency a counter-revolution. The whole of it is a scene of perpetual Court cabal and intrigue, of which Mr. Burke is himself an instance. To render monarchy consistent with Government, the next in succession should not be born a child, but a man at once, and that man a Solomon. It is ridiculous that nations are to wait, and Government be interrupted, till boys grow to men.

Whether I have too little sense to see, or too much to be imposed upon; whether I have too much or too little pride, or of any thing else, I leave out of the question; but certain it is, that what is called monarchy, always appears to me a silly, contemptible thing. I compare it to something kept behind a curtain, about which there is a great deal of bustle and fuss, and a wonderful air of seeming solemnity; but when by any accident, the curtain happens to be open, and the company see what it is, they burst into laughter.

In the representative system of Government, nothing of this can happen. Like the nation itself, it possesses a perpetual stamina, as well of body as of mind, and presents itself on the open theatre of the world in a fair and manly manner. Whatever are its excellences or its defects, they are visible to all. It exists not by fraud and mystery; it deals not in cant and sophistry; but inspires a language, that, passing from heart to heart, is felt and understood.

We must shut our eyes against reason, we must basely degrade our understanding, not to see the folly of what is called monarchy. Nature is orderly in all her works; but this is a mode of Government that counteracts nature. It turns the progress of the human faculties upside down. It subjects age to be governed by children, and wisdom by folly.

On the contrary, the representative system is always parallel with the order and immutable laws of nature, and meets the reason of man in every part. For example:

In the American federal Government, more power is delegated to the President of the United States, than to any other individual member of Congress. He cannot, therefore, be elected to this office under the age of thirty-five years. By this time the judgment of man becomes matured, and he has lived long enough to be acquainted with men and things, and the country with him. But on the monarchical plan, (exclusive of the numerous chances there are against every man born into the world, of drawing a prize in the lottery of human faculties), the next in succession, whatever he may be, is put at the head of a nation, and of a Government, at the age of eighteen years. Does this appear like an act of wisdom? Is it consistent with the proper dignity and the manly character of a nation? Where is the propriety of calling such a lad the father of the People?—In all other cases, a person is a minor until the age of twenty-one years. Before this period, he is not trusted with the management of an acre of land, or with the heritable property of a flock of sheep, or an herd of swine; but, wonderful to tell! he may, at the age of eighteen years, be trusted with a nation.

That monarchy is all a bubble, a mere court artifice to procure money, is evident, (at least to me), in every character in which it can be viewed. It would be impossible, on the rational system of representative Government, to make out a bill of expences to such an enormous amount as this deception admits. Government is not of itself a very chargeable institution. The whole expence of the federal Government of America, founded, as I have already said, on the system of representation, and extending over a country nearly ten times as large as England, is but six hundred thousand dollars, or one hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds sterling.

I presume, that no man in his sober senses, will compare the character of any of the kings of Europe with that of

General Washington. Yet, in France, and also in England, the expence of the Civil List only, for the support of one man, is eight times greater than the whole expence of the federal Government in America. To assign a reason for this, appears almost impossible. The generality of People in America, especially the poor, are more able to pay taxes than the generality of People either in France or England.

In the representative system, the reason for every thing must publicly appear. Every man is a proprietor in Government, and considers it a necessary part of his business to understand. It concerns his interest, because it affects his property. He examines the cost and compares it with the advantages; and above all, he does not adopt the slavish custom of following what in other Governments are called LEADERS.

It can only be by blinding the understanding of Man, and making him believe that Government is some wonderful mysterious thing, that excessive revenues are obtained. Monarchy is well calculated to ensure this end. It is the popery of Government; a thing kept to amuse the ignorant, and quiet them into taxes.

The Government of a free country, properly speaking, is not in the persons, but in the laws. The enacting of those requires no great expence; and when they are administered, the whole of civil Government is performed—the rest is all court contrivance.

But the case is, that the representative system diffuses such a body of knowledge throughout a nation, on the subject of Government, as to explode ignorance and preclude imposition. The craft of courts cannot be acted on that ground. There is no place for mystery; no where for it to begin. Those who are not in the representation, know as much of the nature of business as those who are. An affectation of mysterious importance would there be scouted. Nations can have no secrets; and the secrets of courts, like those of individuals, are always their defects.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *Of Constitutions.*

THAT men mean distinct and separate things when they speak of Constitutions and of Governments, is evident; or why, are those terms distinctly and separately used? A Constitution is not the act of a Government, but of a People constituting a Government; and a Government without a Constitution, is power without right.

All power exercised over a nation, must have some beginning. It must be either delegated or assumed. There are no other sources. All delegated power is trust, and all assumed power is usurpation. Time does not alter the nature and quality of either.

In viewing this subject, the case and circumstance of America present themselves as in the beginning of a world; and our enquiry into the origin of Government is shortened, by referring to the facts that have risen in our own day. We have no occasion to roam for information into the obscure field of antiquity, nor hazard ourselves upon conjecture. We are brought at once to the point of seeing Government begin, as if we had lived in the beginning of time. The real volume, not of history, but of facts, is directly before us, unmutilated by contrivance, or the errors of tradition.

I will here concisely state the commencement of the American Constitutions; by which the difference between Constitutions and Governments will sufficiently appear.

It may not be improper to remind the reader, that the United States of America consist of thirteen separate States, each of which established a Government for itself, after the Declaration of Independence, done the fourth of July, 1776. Each State acted independently of the rest, in forming its Government; but the same general principal pervades the whole. When the several State Governments were formed, they proceeded to form the federal Government, that acts over the whole in all matters which concern the interest of the whole, or which relate to the intercourse of the several

States with each other, or with foreign nations. I will begin with giving an instance from one of the state Governments, (that of Pennsylvania), and then proceed to the federal Government.

The State of Pennsylvania, though nearly of the same extent of territory as England, was then divided into only twelve counties. Each of those counties had elected a committee at the commencement of the dispute with the English Government; and as the City of Philadelphia, which also had its committee, was the most central for intelligence, it became the centre of communication to the several county committees. When it became necessary to proceed to the formation of a Government, the committee of Philadelphia proposed a conference of all the county committees, to be held in that city, and which met the latter end of July 1776.

Though these committees had been elected by the People, they were not elected expressly for the purpose, nor invested with the authority of forming a Constitution; and as they could not, consistently with the American idea of rights, assume such a power, they could only confer upon the matter, and put it into a train of operation. The conferees, therefore, did no more than state the case, and recommend to the several counties to elect six representatives for each county, to meet in a Convention at Philadelphia, with powers to form a Constitution, and propose it for public consideration.

This Convention, of which Benjamin Franklin was president, having met and deliberated, and agreed upon a Constitution, they next ordered it to be published, not as a thing established, but for the consideration of the whole People, their approbation or rejection, and then adjourned to a stated time. When the time of adjournment was expired, the Convention re-assembled; and as the general opinion of the people in approbation of it was then known, the Constitution was signed, sealed, and proclaimed on the *authority of the People;* and the original instrument deposited as a public record. The Convention then appointed a day for the general election of the representatives who were to compose the Government, and the time it should commence; and having done this, they dissolved, and returned to their several homes and occupations.

In this Constitution were laid down, first, a Declaration of Rights. Then followed the form which the Government should have, and the powers it should possess—the autho-

rity of the Courts of Judicature, and Juries—the manner in which elections should be conducted, and the proportion of representatives to the number of electors—the time which each succeeding assembly should continue, which was one year—the mode of levying, and accounting for the expenditure, of public money—of appointing public officers, &c. &c. &c.

No article of this Constitution could be altered or infringed at the discretion of the Government that was to ensue. It was to that Government a law. But as it would have been unwise to preclude the benefit of experience, and in order also to prevent the accumulation of errors, if any should be found, and to preserve an unison of Government with the circumstances of the State at all times, the Constitution provided, that, at the expiration of every seven years, a Convention should be elected, for the express purpose of revising the Constitution, and making alterations, additions, or abolitions therein, if any such should be found necessary.

Here we see a regular process—a Government issuing out of a Constitution, formed by the People in their original character; and that Constitution serving, not only as an authority, but as a law of controul to the Government. It was the political Bible of the State. Scarcely a family was without it. Every member of the Government had a copy; and nothing was more common when any debate arose on the principle of a bill, or on the extent of any species of authority, than for the members to take the printed Constitution out of their pocket, and read the chapter with which such matter in debate was connected.

Having thus given an instance from one of the States, I will shew the proceedings by which the federal Constitution of the United States arose and was formed.

Congress, at its two first meetings, in September 1774, and May 1775, was nothing more than a deputation from the legislatures of the several provinces, afterwards States; and had no other authority than what arose from common consent, and the necessity of its acting as a public body. In every thing which related to the internal affairs of America, Congress went no farther than to issue recommendations to the several provincial assemblies, who at discretion adopted them or not. Nothing on the part of Congress was compulsive; yet, in this situation, it was more faithfully and affectionately obeyed, than was any Government in Europe. This instance, like that of the Na-

tional Assembly of France, sufficiently shews, that the strength of Government does not consist in any thing within itself, but in the attachment of a nation, and the interest which the People feel in supporting it. When this is lost, Government is but a child in power; and though, like the old Government of France, it may harass individuals for a while, it but facilitates its own fall.

After the Declaration of Independence, it became consistent with the principle on which representative Government is founded, that the authority of Congress should be defined and established. Whether that authority should be more or less than Congress then discretionally exercised, was not the question. It was merely the rectitude of the measure.

For this purpose, the act called the Act of Confederation, which was a sort of imperfect federal Constitution), was proposed, and, after long deliberation, was concluded in the year 1781. It was not the act of Congress, because it is repugnant to the principles of representative Government that a body should give power to itself. Congress first informed the several States of the powers which it conceived were necessary to be invested in the Union, to enable it to perform the duties and services required from it; and the States severally agreed with each other, and concentrated in Congress those powers.

It may not be improper to observe, that in both those instances (the one of Pennsylvania, and the other of the United States), there is no such thing as the idea of a compact between the People on one side, and the Government on the other. The compact was that of the People with each other to produce and constitute a Government. To suppose that any Government can be a party in a compact with the whole People, is to suppose it to have existence before it can have a right to exist. The only instance in which a compact can take place between the People and those who exercise the Government, is, that the People shall pay them, while they choose to employ them.

Government is not a trade which any man, or body of men, has a right to set up and exercise for his or their own emolument, but is altogether a trust, in right of those by whom that trust is delegated, and by whom it is always resumeable. It has of itself no rights; they are altogether duties.

Having thus given two instances of the original formation of a Constitution, I will shew the manner in which both have been changed since their first establishment.

The powers vested in the Governments of the several States by the State Constitutions, were found, upon experience, to be too great; and those vested in the federal Government, by the Act of Confederation, too little. The defect was not in the principle, but in the distribution of power.

Numerous publications, in pamphlets and in the newspapers, appeared, on the propriety and necessity of new modelling the federal Government. After some time of public discussion, carried on through the channel of the press, and in conversations, the State of Virginia, experiencing some inconvenience with respect to commerce, proposed holding a Continental conference; in consequence of which, a deputation from five or six of the State Assemblies met at Anapolis, in Maryland, in 1786. This meeting, not conceiving itself sufficiently authorised to go into the business of a reform, did no more than state their general opinion of the propriety of the measure, and recommend that a convention of all the States should be held the year following.

This convention met at Philadelphia in May, 1787, of which General Washington was elected President. He was not at that time connected with any of the State Governments, or with Congress. He delivered up his commission when the war ended, and since then had lived a private citizen.

The convention went deeply into all the subjects; and having, after a variety of debate and investigation, agreed among themselves upon the several parts of a federal Constitution, the next question was, the manner of giving it authority and practice.

For this purpose, they did not, like a cabal of courtiers, send for a Dutch Stadtholder, or a German Elector; but they referred the whole matter to the sense and interest of the country.

They first directed that the proposed Constitution should be published. Secondly, that each State should elect a convention, expressly for the purpose of taking it into consideration, and of ratifying or rejecting it; and that as soon as the approbation and ratification of any nine States should be given, those States should proceed to the election of their proportion of members to the new federal Government; and that the operation of it should then begin, and the former federal Government cease.

The several States proceeded accordingly to elect their conventions. Some of those conventions ratified the Constitution by very large majorities, and two or three unanimously. In others there were much debate and division of opinion. In the Massachusetts convention, which met at Boston, the majority was not above nineteen or twenty, in about three hundred members; but such is the nature of representative Government, that it quietly decides all matters by majority. After the debate in the Massachusetts convention was closed, and the vote taken, the objecting members rose, and declared, "*That though they had argued and voted against it, because certain parts appeared to them in a different light to what they appeared to other members; yet, as the vote had decided in favour of the Constitution as proposed, they should give it the same practical support as if they had voted for it.*"

As soon as nine States had concurred, (and the rest followed in the order their conventions were elected), the old fabric of the federal Government was taken down, and the new one erected, of which General Washington is President. In this place I cannot help remarking, that the character and services of this gentleman are sufficient to put all those men called kings to shame. While they are receiving from the sweat and labours of mankind, a prodigality of pay, to which neither their abilities nor their services can entitle them, he is rendering every service in his power, and refusing every pecuniary reward. He accepted no pay as Commander-in-Chief; he accepts none as President of the United States.

After the new federal Constitution was established, the State of Pennsylvania, conceiving that some parts of its own Constitution required to be altered, elected a convention for that purpose. The proposed alterations were published, and the People concurring therein, they were established.

In forming those Constitutions, or in altering them, little or no inconvenience took place. The ordinary course of things was not interrupted, and the advantages have been much. It is always the interest of a far greater number of People in a nation to have things right, than to let them remain wrong; and when public matters are open to debate, and the public judgment free, it will not decide wrong, unless it decides too hastily.

In the two instances of changing the Constitutions, the

Government then in being were not actors either way. Government has no right to make itself a party in any debates respecting the principles or modes of forming, or of changing Constitutions. It is not for the benefit of those who exercise the power of Government, that Constitutions, and the Governments issuing from them, are established. In all those matters, the right of judging and acting are in those who pay, and not in those who receive.

A Constitution is the property of a nation, and not of those who exercise the Government. All the Constitutions of America are declared to be established on the authority of the People. In France the word nation is used instead of the People; but in both cases, a Constitution is a thing antecedent to the Government, and always distinct therefrom.

In England it is not difficult to perceive that every thing has a Constitution, except the nation. Every society and association that is established first agreed upon a number of original articles, digested into form, which are its Constitution. It then appointed its officers, whose powers and authorities are described in that Constitution, and the Government of that society then commenced. Those officers, by whatever name they are called, have no authority to add to, alter, or abridge the original articles. It is only to the constituting power that this right belongs.

From the want of understanding the difference between a Constitution and a Government, Dr. Johnson, and all the writers of his description, have always bewildered themselves. They could not but perceive, that there must necessarily be a *controuling* power existing somewhere, and they placed this power in the discretion of the persons exercising the Government, instead of placing it in a Constitution formed by the nation. When it is in a Constitution, it has the nation for its support, and the natural and the political controuling powers are together. The laws which are enacted by Governments controul men only as individuals, but the nation, through its Constitution, controuls the whole Government, and has a natural ability so to do. The final controuling power, therefore, and the original constituting power, are one and the same power.

Dr. Johnson could not have advanced such a position in any country where there was a Constitution; and he is himself an evidence, that no such thing as a Constitution exists in England. But it may be put as a question, not improper to be investigated, That if a Constitution does not

exist, how came the idea of its existence so generally established?

In order to decide this question, it is necessary to consider a Constitution in both its cases:—First, as creating a Government and giving it powers. Secondly, as regulating and restraining the powers so given.

If we begin with William of Normandy, we find that the Government of England was originally a tyranny, founded on an invasion and conquest of the country. This being admitted, it will then appear, that the exertion of the nation, at different periods, to abate that tyranny, and render it less intolerable, has been credited for a Constitution.

Magna Charta, as it was called, (it is now like an almanack of the same date,) was no more than compelling the Government to renounce a part of its assumptions. It did not create and give powers to Government in the manner a Constitution does; but was, as far as it went, of the nature of a re-conquest, and not of a Constitution; for could the nation have totally expelled the usurpation, as France has done its despotism, it would then have had a Constitution to form.

The history of the Edwards and Henries, and up to the commencement of the Stuarts, exhibits as many instances of tyranny as could be acted within the limits to which the nation had restricted it. The Stuarts endeavoured to pass those limits, and their fate is well known. In all those instances we see nothing of a Constitution, but only of restrictions on assumed power.

After this, another William, descended from the same stock, and claiming from the same origin, gained possession; and of the two evils, *James* and *William*, the nation preferred what it thought the least; since, from these circumstances, it must take one. The Act, called the Bill of Rights, comes here into view. What is it but a bargain, which the parts of the Government made with each other to divide powers, profits, and privileges? You shall have so much, and I will have the rest; and with respect to the nation, it said, for *your share*, YOU *shall have the Right of Petitioning*. This being the case, the Bill of Rights is more properly a bill of wrongs and of insult. As to what is called the Convention Parliament, it was a thing that made itself, and then made the authority by which it acted. A few persons got together, and called themselves by that name. Several of them had never been elected, and none of them for the purpose.

From the time of William, a species of Government arose, issuing out of this coalition Bill of Rights, and more so, since the corruption introduced at the Hanover succession, by the agency of Walpole, that can be described by no other name than a despotic legislation. Though the parts may embarrass each other, the whole has no bounds; and the only right it acknowleges out of itself is the right of petitioning. Where then is the Constitution either that gives or that restrains power?

It is not because a part of the Government is elective, that makes it less a despotism, if the persons so elected, possess afterwards, as a Parliament, unlimited powers. Election, in this case, becomes separated from representation, and the candidates are candidates for despotism.

I cannot believe that any nation, reasoning on its own rights, would have thought of calling those things *a Constitution*, if the cry of Constitution had not been set up by the Government. It has got into circulation like the words *bore* and *quoz*, by being chalked up in the speeches of Parliament, as those words were on window-shutters and door-posts; but whatever the Constitution may be in other respects, it has undoubtedly been *the most productive machine of taxation that was ever invented.* The taxes in France, under the new Constitution, are not quite thirteen shillings per head*, and the taxes in England, under what is called its present Constitution, are forty-eight shillings and sixpence per head, men, women, and children, amounting to nearly seventeen millions sterling, besides the expence of collection, which is upwards of a million more.

In a country like England, where the whole of the Civil Government is executed by the People of every town and country, by means of parish officers, magistrates, quarterly sessions, juries, and assize, without any trouble to what is

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* The whole amount of the Assessed Taxes of France, for the present year, is three hundred millions of livres, which is twelve millions and an half sterling; and the Incidental Taxes are estimated at three millions, making in the whole fifteen millions and an half; which, among twenty-four millions of People, is not quite thirteen shillings per head. France has lessened her taxes since the Revolution, nearly nine millions sterling annually. Before the Revolution, the City of Paris paid a duty of upwards of thirty per cent. on all articles brought into the city. This tax was collected at the city gates. It was taken off on the first of last May, and the gates taken down.

called the Government, or any other expence to the revenue than the salary of the Judges, it is astonishing how such a mass of taxes can be employed. Not even the internal defence of the country is paid out of the revenue. On all occasions, whether real or contrived, recourse is continually had to new loans and to new taxes. No wonder, then, that a machine of Government so advantageous to the advocates of a Court, should be so triumphantly extolled! No wonder, that St. James's or St. Stephen's should echo with the continual cry of Constitution! No wonder, that the French Revolution should be reprobated and the *res-publica* treated with reproach! The *Red Book* of England, like the Red Book of France, will explain the reason*.

I will now, by way of relaxation, turn a thought or two to Mr. Burke. I ask his pardon for neglecting him so long.

"America," says he, (in his speech on the Canada Constitution Bill) "never dreamed of such absurd doctrine as the *Rights of Man*."

Mr Burke is such a bold presumer, and advances his assertions and his premises with such a deficiency of judgment, that, without troubling ourselves about principles of philosophy or politics, the mere logical conclusions they produce, are ridiculous. For instance,

If Governments, as Mr. Burke asserts, are not founded on the Rights of MAN, and are founded on *any rights* at all, they consequently must be founded on the rights of *something* that is *not man*. What then is that something?

Generally speaking, we know of no other creatures that inhabit the earth than Man and Beasts; and in all cases, where only two things offer themselves, and one must be admitted, a negation proved on any one, amounts to an affirmative on the other; and therefore, Mr. Burke, by proving against the Rights of *Man*, proves in behalf of the *Beast;* and consequently proves that Government is a Beast: and as difficult things sometimes explain each other, we now see the origin of keeping wild beasts in the Tower; for they certainly can be of no other use than to shew the origin of the Government. They are in the place of a Constitution. O John Bull, what honours thou hast lost by not being a wild beast! Thou mightest on Mr. Burke's system, have been in the Tower for life.

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* What was called the *Livre Rouge*, or the Red Book, in France, was not exactly similar to the Court Calendar in England; but it sufficiently shewed how a great part of the taxes was lavished.

If Mr. Burke's arguments have not weight enough to keep one serious, the fault is less mine than his; and as I am willing to make an apology to the reader for the liberty I have taken, I hope Mr. Burke will also make his for giving the cause.

Having thus paid Mr. Burke the compliment of remembering him, I return to the subject.

From the want of a Constitution in England to restrain and regulate the wild impulse of power, many of the laws are irrational and tyrannical, and the administration of them vague and problematical.

The attention of the Government of England, (for I rather choose to call it by this name, than the English Government) appears, since its political connexion with Germany, to have been so completely engrossed and absorbed by foreign affairs, and the means of raising taxes, that it seems to exist for no other purposes. Domestic concerns are neglected; and with respect to regular law, there is scarcely such a thing.

Almost every case now must be determined by some precedent, be that precedent good or bad, or whether it properly applies or not: and the practice is become so general, as to suggest a suspicion, that it proceeds from a deeper policy than at first sight appears.

Since the revolution of America, and more so since that of France, this preaching up the doctrine of precedents, drawn from times and circumstances antecedent to those events, has been the studied practice of the English Government. The generality of those precedents are founded on principles and opinions, the reverse of what they ought to be; and the greater distance of time they are drawn from, the more they are to be suspected. But by associating those precedents with a superstitious reverence for ancient things, as monks shew relics and call them holy, the generality of mankind are deceived into the design. Governments now act as if they were afraid to awaken a single reflection in man. They are softly leading him to the sepulchre of precedents, to deaden his faculties and call his attention from the scene of revolutions. They feel that he is arriving at knowledge faster than they wish, and their policy of precedents is the barometer of their fears. This political popery, like the ecclesiastical popery of old, has had its day, and is hastening to its exit. The ragged relic, and the antiquated precedent; the monk and the monarch, will moulder together.

Government by precedent, without any regard to the principle of the precedent, is one of the vilest systems that can be set up. In numerous instances, the precedent ought to operate as a warning, and not as an example, and requires to be shunned instead of imitated; but instead of this, precedents are taken in the lump, and put at once for Constitution and for Law.

Either the doctrine of precedents is policy to keep a man in a state of ignorance, or it is a practical confession that wisdom degenerates in Governments as Governments increase in age, and can only hobble along by the stilts and crutches of precedents. How is it that the same persons who would proudly be thought wiser than their predecessors, appear at the same time only as the ghosts of departed wisdom? How strangely is antiquity treated! To answer some purposes it is spoken of as the time of darkness and ignorance, and to answer others, it is put for the light of the world.

If the doctrine of precedents is to be followed, the expences of Government need not continue the same. Why pay men extravagantly, who have but little to do? If every thing that can happen is already in precedent, legislation is at an end, and precedent, like a dictionary, determines every case. Either, therefore, Government has arrived at its dotage, and requires to be renovated, or all the occasions for exercising its wisdom have occurred.

We now see all over Europe, and particularly in England, the curious phænomenon of a nation looking one way, and a Government the other—the one forward and the other backward. If Governments are to go on by precedent, while nations go on by improvement, they must at last come to a final separation: and the sooner, and the more civilly they determine this point, the better.*

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* In England the improvements in agriculture, useful arts, manufactures, and commerce, have been made in opposition to the genius of its Government, which is that of following precedents. It is from the enterprize and industry of the individuals, and their numerous associations, in which, strictly speaking, Government is neither pillow nor bolster, that these improvements have proceeded. No man thought about the Government, or who was *in*, or who was *out*, when he was planning or executing these things; and all he had to hope, with respect to Government, was, *that it would let him alone.* Three or four very silly ministerial news-papers are continually offending against the spirit of national improvement: by ascribing it to a minister. They may with as much truth ascribe this book to a minister.

Having thus spoken of Constitutions generally, as things distinct from actual Governments, let us proceed to consider the parts of which a Constitution is composed.

Opinions differ more on this subject, than with respect to the whole. That a nation ought to have a Constitution, as a rule for the conduct of its Government, is a simple question in which all men, not directly courtiers, will agree. It is only on the component parts that questions and opinions multiply.

But this difficulty, like every other, will diminish, when put into a train of being rightly understood.

The first thing is, that a nation has a right to establish a Constitution.

Whether it exercises this right in the most judicious manner at first, is quite another case. It exercises it agreeably to the judgment it possesses; and by continuing to do so, all errors will at last be exploded.

When this right is established in a nation, there is no fear that it will be employed to its own injury. A nation can have no interest in being wrong.

Though all the Constitutions of America are on one general principle, yet no two of them are exactly alike in their component parts, or in the distribution of the powers which they give to the actual Governments. Some are more, and others less complex.

In forming a Constitution, it is first necessary to consider what are the ends for which Government is necessary? Secondly, what are the best means, and the least expensive, for accomplishing those ends?

Government is nothing more than a national association: and the object of this association is the good of all, as well individually as collectively. Every man wishes to pursue his occupation, and to enjoy the fruits of his labours, and the produce of his property in peace and safety, and with the least possible expence. When these things are accomplished, all the objects for which Government ought to be established are answered.

It has been customary to consider Government under three distinct general heads. The legislative, the executive, and the judicial.

But if we permit our judgment to act unincumbered by the habit of multiplied terms, we can perceive no more than two divisions of power, of which Civil Government is composed, namely, that of legislating or enacting laws, and that of executing or administering them. Every thing, therefore

appertaining to Civil Government, classes itself under one or other of these two divisions.

So far as regards the execution of the laws, that which is called the judicial power, is strictly and properly the executive power of every country. It is that power to which every individual has appeal, and which causes the laws to be executed; neither have we any other clear idea with respect to the official execution of the laws. In England, and also in America and France, this power begins with the Magistrate, and proceeds up through all the Courts of Judicature.

I leave to courtiers to explain what is meant by calling monarchy the executive power. It is merely a name in which acts of Government are done; and any other, or none at all, would answer the same purpose. Laws have neither more nor less authority on this account. It must be from the justness of their principles, and the interest which a nation feels therein, that they derive support; if they require any other than this, it is a sign that something in the system of Government is imperfect. Laws difficult to be executed cannot be generally good.

With respect to the organization of the *legislative power*, different modes have been adopted in different countries. In America it is generally composed of two houses. In France it consists but of one, but in both countries it is wholly by representation.

The case is, that mankind (from the long tyranny of assumed power) have had so few opportunities of making the necessary trials on modes and principles of Government, in order to discover the best, *that Government is but now beginning to be known*, and experience is yet wanting to determine many particulars.

The objections against two houses, are first, that there is an inconsistency in any part of a whole legislature, coming to a final determination by vote on any matter, whilst *that matter*, with respect to *that whole*, is yet only in a train of deliberation, and consequently open to new illustrations.

Secondly, That by taking the vote on each, as a separate body, it always admits of the possibility, and is often the case in practice, that the minority governs the majority, and that, in some instances, to a degree of great inconsistency.

Thirdly, That two Houses arbitrarily checking or controuling each other is inconsistent; because it cannot be proved, on the principles of just representation, that either should be wiser or better than the other. They may check

in the wrong as well as in the right,—and therefore, to give the power where we cannot give the wisdom to use it, nor be assured of its being rightly used, renders the hazard at least equal to the precaution.*

The objection against a single House is, that it is always in a condition of committing itself too soon. But it should at the same time be remembered, that when there is a Constitution which defines the power, and establishes the principles within which a legislature shall act, there is already a more effectual check provided, and more powerfully operating, than any other check can be. For example:

Were a Bill to be brought into any of the American legislatures, similar to that which was passed into an act by the English Parliament, at the commencement of George the First, to extend the duration of the assemblies to a longer period than they now sit, the check is in the Constitution, which in effect says, *Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.*

But in order to remove the objection against a single House, (that of acting with too quick an impulse,) and at the same time to avoid the inconsistencies, in some cases absurdities, arising from two Houses, the following method has been proposed as an improvement on both.

First, To have but one representation.

Secondly, To divide that representation, by lot, into two or three parts.

Thirdly, That every proposed Bill, shall be first debated in those parts by succession, that they may become hearers of each other, but without taking any vote. After which

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* With respect to the two Houses, of which the English Parliament is composed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legislature, to have no temper of its own. The minister, whoever he at any time may be, touches it as with an opium wand, and it sleeps obedience.

But if we look at the distinct abilities of the two Houses, the difference will appear so great, as to shew the inconsistency of placing power where there can be no certainty of the judgment to use it. Wretched as the state of representation is in England, it is manhood compared with what is called the House of Lords; and so little is this nicknamed House regarded, that the People scarcely enquire at any time what it is doing. It appears also to be most under influence, and the furthest removed from the general interest of the Nation.

the whole representation, to assemble for a general debate and determination by vote.

To this proposed improvement has been added another, for the purpose of keeping the representation in a state of constant renovation; which is, that one-third of the representation of each county, shall go out at the expiration of one year, and the number replaced by new elections. Another third at the expiration of the second year replaced in like manner, and every third year to be a general election.*

But in whatever manner the separate parts of a Constitution may be arranged, there is *one* general principle that distinguishes freedom from slavery, which is, that all *hereditary Government over a People is to them a species of slavery, and Representative Government is freedom.*

Considering Government in the only light in which it should be considered, that of a NATIONAL ASSOCIATION; it ought to be so constructed as not to be disordered by any accident happening among the parts; and, therefore, no extraordinary power, capable of producing such an effect, should be lodged in the hands of any individual. The death, sickness, absence, or defection, of any one individual in a Government, ought to be a matter of no more consequence, with respect to the nation, than if the same circumstance had taken place in a member of the English Parliament, or the French National Assembly.

Scarcely any thing presents a more degrading character of national greatness, than its being thrown into confusion by any thing happening to, or acted by, an individual; and the ridiculousness of the scene is often increased by the natural significance of the person by whom it is occasioned. Were a Government so constructed, that it could not go on unless a goose or gander were present in the Senate, the difficulties would be just as great and as real on the flight or sickness of the goose, or the gander, as if it were called a King. We laugh at individuals for the silly difficulties they make to themselves, without perceiving, that the greatest of all ridiculous things are acted in Governments.†

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* As to the state of representation in England, it is too absurd to be reasoned upon. Almost all the represented parts are decreasing in population, and the unrepresented parts are increasing. A general Convention of the Nation is necessary to take the whole state of its Government into consideration.

† It is related that in the Canton of Berne, in Switzerland, it had been customary, from time immemorial, to keep a bear at the pub-

All the Constitutions of America are on a plan that excludes the childish embarrassments which occur in monarchical countries. No suspension of Government can there take place for a moment, from any circumstance whatever. The system of representation provides for every thing, and is the only system in which nations and Governments can always appear in their proper character.

As extraordinary power ought not to be lodged in the hands of any individual, so ought there to be no appropriations of public money to any person, beyond what his service in a state may be worth. It signifies not whether a man be called a President, a King, an Emperor, a Senator, or by any other name, which propriety or folly may devise, or arrogance assume; it is only a certain service he can perform in the State; and the service of any such individual in the routine of office, whether such office be called monarchical, presidential, senatorial, or by any other name or title, can never exceed the value of ten thousand pounds a year. All the great services that are done in the world are performed by volunteer characters, who accept nothing for them; but the routine of office is always regulated to such a general standard of abilities as to be within the compass of numbers in every country to perform, and, therefore, cannot merit very extraordinary recompence. *Government*, says Swift, *is a plain thing, and fitted to the capacity of many heads.*

It is inhuman to talk of a million sterling a year, paid out of the public taxes of any country, for the support of any

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lic expence, and the People had been taught to believe, that if they had not a bear they should all be undone. It happened some years ago, that the bear, then in being, was taken sick, and died too suddenly to have his place immediately supplied with another. During this interregnum the People discovered, that the corn grew, and the vintage flourished, and the sun and moon continued to rise and set, and every thing went on the same as before, and, taking courage from these circumstances, they resolved not to keep any more bears; for, said they, "a bear is a very voracious, expensive animal, and we were obliged to pull out his claws, lest he should hurt the citizens."

The story of the bear of Berne was related in some of the French news-papers, at the time of the flight of Louis XVI. and the application of it to monarchy could not be mistaken in France; but it seems, that the aristocracy of Berne applied it to themselves, and have since prohibited the reading of French news-papers.

individual, whilst thousands who are forced to contribute thereto, are pining with want, and struggling with misery. Government does not consist in a contrast between prisons and palaces, between poverty and pomp; it is not instituted to rob the needy of his mite, and increase the wretchedness of the wretched. But of this part of the subject I shall speak hereafter, and confine myself at present to political observations.

When extraordinary power and extraordinary pay are allotted to any individual in a Government, he becomes the centre, round which every kind of corruption generates and forms. Give to any man a million a year, and add thereto the power of creating and disposing of places, at the expence of a country, and the liberties of that country are no longer secure. What is called the splendour of a throne is no other than the corruption of the state. It is made up of a band of parasites, living in luxurious indolence out of the public taxes.

When once such a vicious system is established it becomes the guard and protection of all inferior abuses. The man who is in the receipt of a million a year is the last person to promote a spirit of reform, lest, in the event, it should reach to himself. It is always his interest to defend inferior abuses, as so many out-works to protect the citadel; and in this species of political fortification, all the parts have such a common dependence that it is never to be expected they will attack each other.*

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* It is scarcely possible to touch on any subject that will not suggest an allusion to some corruption in Governments. The simile of "*fortifications*," unfortunately involves with it a circumstance, which is directly in point with the matter above alluded to.

Among the numerous instances of abuse which have been acted or protected by Governments, ancient or modern, there is not a greater than that of quartering a man and his heirs upon the public, to be maintained at its expence.

Humanity dictates a provision for the poor; but by what right, moral or political, does any Government assume to say, that the person called the Duke of Richmond, shall be maintained by the public? Yet, if common report is true, not a beggar in London can purchase his wretched pittance of coal, without paying towards the Civil List of the Duke of Richmond. Were the whole produce of this imposition but a shilling a year, the iniquitous principle would be still the same; but when it amounts, as it is said to do,

Monarchy would not have continued so many ages in the world had it not been for the abuses it protects. It is the master-fraud which shelters all others. By admitting a participation of the spoil, it makes itself friends; and when it ceases to do this, it will cease to be the idol of courtiers.

As the principle on which Constitutions are now formed, rejects all hereditary pretensions to Government, it also rejects all that catalogue of assumptions known by the name of prerogatives.

If there is any Government where prerogatives might with apparent safety be entrusted to any individual, it is in the federal Government of America. The President of the United States of America is elected only for four years. He is not only responsible in the general sense of the word, but a particular mode is laid down in the Constitution for trying him. He cannot be elected under thirty-five years of age; and he must be a native of the country.

In a comparison of these cases with the Government of England, the difference when applied to the latter amounts to an absurdity. In England the person who exercises prerogative is often a foreigner; always half a foreigner, and always married to a foreigner. He is never in full natural or political connection with the country, is not responsible for any thing, and becomes of age at eighteen years; yet such a person is permitted to form foreign alliances without even the knowledge of the nation, and to make war and peace without its consent.

But this is not all. Though such a person cannot dispose of the Government, in the manner of a testator, he dictates the marriage connections, which, in effect, accomplishes a very great part of the same end. He cannot directly bequeath half the Government to Prussia, but he can form a marriage partnership that will always produce the same thing. Under such circumstances, it is happy for

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to no less than twenty thousand pounds *per annum*, the enormity is too serious to be permitted to remain. This is one of the effects of monarchy and aristocracy.

In stating this case, I am led by no personal dislike. Though I think it mean in any man to live upon the public, the vice originates in the Government; and so general is it become, that whether the parties are in the ministry or in the opposition, it makes no difference: they are sure of the guarantee of each other.

England that she is not situated on the Continent, or she might, like Holland, fall under the dictatorship of Prussia. Holland, by marriage, is as effectually governed by Prussia, as if the old tyranny of bequeathing the Government had been the means.

The Presidency in America, (or, as it is sometimes called, the Executive,) is the only office from which a foreigner is excluded, and in England it is the only one to which he is admitted. A foreigner cannot be a member of Parliament, but he may be what is called a king. If there is any reason for excluding foreigners, it ought to be from those offices where mischief can be most acted, and where, by uniting every bias of interest and attachment, the trust is best secured.

But as nations proceed in the great business of forming Constitutions, they will examine with more precision into the nature and business of that department which is called the executive. What the legislative and judicial departments are, every one can see; but with respect to what, in Europe, is called the executive, as distinct from those two, it is either a political superfluity, or a chaos of unknown things.

Some kind of official department to which reports shall be made from the different parts of the nation, or from abroad, to be laid before the national representatives, is all that is necessary; but there is no consistency in calling this executive; neither can it be considered in any other light than as inferior to the legislative. The sovereign authority in any country is the power of making laws, and every thing else is an official department.

Next to the arrangement of the principles and the organization of the several parts of a Constitution, is the provision to be made for the support of the persons to whom the nation shall confide the administration of the constitutional powers.

A nation can have no right to the time and services of any person at his own expence, whom it may choose to employ or entrust in any department whatever; neither can any reason be given for making provision for the support of any one part of a Government and not for the other.

But, admitting that the honour of being entrusted with any part of a Government is to be considered a sufficient reward, it ought to be so to every person alike. If the members of the legislature of any country are to serve at their own expence, that which is called the executive,

whether monarchical, or by any other name, ought to serve in like manner. It is inconsistent to pay the one, and accept the service of the other gratis.

In America, every department in the Government is decently provided for; but no one is extravagantly paid. Every member of Congress, and of the Assemblies, is allowed a sufficiency for his expences. Whereas in England, a most prodigal provision is made for the support of one part of the Government, and none for the other, the consequence of which is, that the one is furnished with the means of corruption, and the other is put into the condition of being corrupted. Less than a fourth part of such expence, applied as it is in America, would remedy a great part of the corruption.

Another reform in the American Constitution, is the exploding all oaths of personality. The oath of allegiance in America is to the nation only. The putting any individual as a figure for a nation is improper. The happiness of a nation is the superior object, and therefore, the intention of an oath of allegiance ought not to be obscured by being figuratively taken, to, or in the name of, any person. The oath, called the civic oath, in France, viz. "*the Nation, the Law, and the King*," is improper. If taken at all, it ought to be as in America, to the nation only. The law may or may not be good; but in this place it can have no other meaning, than as being conducive to the happiness of the nation, and therefore is included in it. The remainder of the oath is improper, on the ground, that all personal oaths ought to be abolished. They are the remains of tyranny on one part, and slavery on the other; and the name of the CREATOR ought not to be introduced to witness the degradation of his creation; or if taken, as is already mentioned, as figurative of the nation, it is in this place redundant. But whatever apology may be made for oaths at the first establishment of a Government, they ought not to be permitted afterwards. If a Government requires the support of oaths, it is a sign that it is not worth supporting, and ought not to be supported. Make Government what it ought to be, and it will support itself.

To conclude this part of the subject:—One of the greatest improvements that have been made for the perpetual security and progress of constitutional liberty, is the provision which the new Constitutions make for occasionally revising, altering, and amending them.

The principle upon which Mr. Burke formed his political

creed, that "*of binding and controuling posterity to the end of time, and of renouncing and abdicating the rights of all posterity for ever,*" is now become too detestable to make a subject of debate; and therefore, I pass it over with no other notice than exposing it.

Government is but now beginning to be known. Hitherto it has been the mere exercise of power, which forbade all effectual enquiry into rights, and grounded itself wholly on possession. While the enemy of liberty was its judge, the progress of its principles must have been small indeed.

The Constitutions of America, and also that of France, have either affixed a period for their revision, or laid down the mode by which improvements shall be made. It is, perhaps, impossible to establish any thing that combines principles with opinions and practice, which the progress of circumstances through a length of years, will not in some measure derange, or render inconsistent; and therefore, to prevent inconveniences accumulating, till they discourage reformations or provoke revolutions, it is best to provide the means of regulating them as they occur. The Rights of Man are the rights of all generations of men, and cannot be monopolized by any. That which is worth following, is followed for the sake of its worth; and it is in that its security lies, and not in any conditions with which it may be encumbered. When a man leaves property to his heirs, he does not connect it with an obligation that they shall accept it. Why then should we do otherwise with respect to Constitutions?

The best Constitution that could now be devised, consistent with the condition of the present moment, may be far short of that excellence which a few years may afford. There is a morning of reason rising upon man on the subject of Government, that has not appeared before. As the barbarism of the present old Governments expires, the moral condition of nations with respect to each other will be changed. Man will not be brought up with the savage idea of considering his species as his enemy, because the accident of birth gave the individuals existence in countries distinguished by different names: and as Constitutions have always some relation to external as well as to domestic circumstances, the means of benefiting by every change, foreign or domestic, should be a part of every Constitution.

We already see an alteration in the national disposition of England and France towards each other, which, when we look back to only a few years, is itself a revolution. Who

could have foreseen, or who would have believed, that a French National Assembly would ever have been a popular toast in England, or that a friendly alliance of the two nations should become the wish of either? It shews, that man, were he not corrupted by Governments, is naturally the friend of man, and that human nature is not of itself vicious. The spirit of jealousy and ferocity, which the Governments of the two countries inspired, and which they rendered subservient to the purpose of taxation, is now yielding to the dictates of reason, interest, and humanity. The trade of courts is beginning to be understood, and the affectation of mystery, with all the artificial sorcery by which they imposed upon mankind, is on the decline. It has received its death-wound; and though it may linger, it will expire.

Government ought to be as much open to improvement as any thing which appertains to man, instead of which it has been monopolized from age to age, by the most ignorant and vicious of the human race. Need we any other proof of their wretched management, than the excess of debts and taxes with which every nation groans, and the quarrels into which they have precipitated the world?

Just emerging from such a barbarous condition, it is too soon to determine to what extent of improvement Government may yet be carried. For what we can foresee, all Europe may form but one great republic, and man be free of the whole.

## CHAPTER V.

### *WAYS and MEANS of improving the condition of Europe, interspersed with Miscellaneous Observations.*

In contemplating a subject that embraces with equatorial magnitude the whole region of humanity, it is impossible to confine the pursuit in one single direction. It takes ground on every character and condition that appertains to man, and blends the individual, the nation, and the world.

From a small spark, kindled in America, a flame has arisen, not to be extinguished. Without consuming, like the *Ultima Ratio Regum*, it winds in progress from nation to nation, and conquers by a silent operation. Man finds himself changed, he scarcely perceives how. He acquires a knowledge of his rights by attending justly to his interest, and discovers in the event, that the strength and powers of despotism consist wholly in the fear of resisting it, and that, in order "*to be free, it is sufficient that he wills it.*"

Having in all the preceding parts of this work endeavoured to establish a system of principles as a basis, on which Governments ought to be erected; I shall proceed in this, to the ways and means of rendering them into practice. But in order to introduce this part of the subject with more propriety, and stronger effect, some preliminary observations deducible from, or connected with, those principles are necessary.

Whatever the form or Constitution of Government may be, it ought to have no other object than the *general* happiness. When, instead of this, it operates to create and increase wretchedness in any of the parts of society, it is a wrong system, and reformation is necessary.

Customary language has classed the condition of man under the two descriptions of a civilized and uncivilized life. To the one it has ascribed felicity and affluence; to the other, hardship and want. But however our imagination may be impressed by painting and comparison, it is never-

theless true, that a great portion of mankind, in what are called civilized countries, are in a state of poverty and wretchedness, far below the condition of an Indian. I speak not of one country, but of all. It is so in England, it is so all over Europe. Let us enquire into the cause.

It lies not in any natural defect in the principles of civilization, but in preventing those principles having an universal operation; the consequence of which is, a perpetual system of war and expence, that drains the country, and defeats the general felicity of which civilization is capable.

All the European Governments (France now excepted) are constructed not on the principle of universal civilization, but on the reverse of it. So far as those Governments relate to each other, they are in the same condition as we conceive of savage, uncivilized life; they put themselves beyond the law as well of GOD as of man, and are, with respect to principle, and reciprocal conduct, like so many individuals in a state of nature.

The inhabitants of every country, under the civilization of laws, easily civilize together, but Governments being yet in an uncivilized state, and almost continually at war, they pervert the abundance which civilized life produces to carry on the uncivilized part to a greater extent. By thus engrafting the barbarism of Government upon the internal civilization of a country, it draws from the latter, and more especially from the poor, a great portion of those earnings which should be applied to their own existence and comfort.—Apart from all reflections of morality and philosophy, it is a melancholy fact, that more than one-fourth of the labour of mankind is annually consumed by this barbarous system.

What has served to continue this evil, is the pecuniary advantage, which all the Governments of Europe have found in keeping up this state of uncivilization. It affords to them pretences for power and revenue, for which there would be neither occasion nor apology, if the circle of civilization were rendered complete. Civil Government alone, or the Government of laws, is not productive of pretences for many taxes; it operates at home, directly under the eye of the country, and precludes the possibility of much imposition. But when the scene is laid in the uncivilized contention of Governments, the field of pretences is enlarged, and the country, being no longer a judge, is open to every imposition which Governments please to act.

Not a thirtieth, scarcely a fortieth, part of the taxes which

are raised in England are either occasioned by, or applied to, the purposes of civil Government. It is not difficult to see, that the whole which the actual Government does in this respect, is to enact laws, and that the country administers and executes them, at its own expence, by means of magistrates, juries, sessions, and assize, over and above the taxes which it pays.

In this view of the case, we have two distinct characters of Government; the one the civil Government of laws, which operates at home, the other the court or cabinet Government, which operates abroad, on the rude plan of uncivilized life; the one attended with little charge, the other with boundless extravagance; and so distinct are the two, that if the latter were to sink, as it were, by a sudden opening of the earth, and totally disappear, the other would not be deranged. It would still proceed, because it is the common interest of the nation that it should, and all the means are in the practice.

Revolutions, then, have for their object, a change in the moral condition of Governments, and with this change the burthen of public taxes will lessen, and civilization will be left to the enjoyment of that abundance, of which it is now deprived.

In contemplating the whole of this subject, I extend my views into the department of commerce. In all my publications, where the matter would admit, I have been an advocate for commerce, because I am a friend to its effects. It is a pacific system, operating to cordialize mankind, by rendering nations, as well as individuals, useful to each other. As to mere theoretical reformation, I have never preached it up. The most effectual process is that of improving the condition of man by means of his interest; and it is on this ground I take my stand.

If commerce were permitted to act to the universal extent it is capable, it would extirpate the system of war, and produce a revolution in the uncivilized state of Governments. The invention of commerce has arisen since those Governments began, and is the greatest approach towards universal civilization, that has yet been made by any means not immediately flowing from moral principles.

Whatever has a tendency to promote the civil intercourse of nations, by an exchange of benefits, is a subject as worthy of philosophy as politics. Commerce is no other than the traffic of two individuals, multiplied on a scale of numbers; and by the same rule that nature intended the

intercourse of two, she intended that of all. For this purpose she has distributed the materials of manufactures and commerce, in various and distant parts of a nation and of the world; and as they cannot be procured by war so cheaply or so commodiously as by commerce, she has rendered the latter the means of extirpating the former.

As the two are nearly the opposites of each other, consequently, the uncivilized state of European Governments is injurious to commerce. Every kind of destruction or embarrassment serves to lessen the quantity, and it matters but little in what part of the commercial world the reduction begins. Like blood, it cannot be taken from any of the parts, without being taken from the whole mass in circulation, and all partake of the loss. When the ability in any nation to buy is destroyed, it equally involves the seller. Could the Government of England destroy the commerce of all other nations, she would most effectually ruin her own.

It is possible that a nation may be the carrier for the world, but she cannot be the merchant. She cannot be the seller and the buyer of her own merchandize. The ability to buy must reside out of herself; and, therefore, the prosperity of any commercial nation is regulated by the prosperity of the rest. If they are poor, she cannot be rich, and her condition, be it what it may, is an index of the height of the commercial tide in other nations.

That the principles of commerce, and its universal operation may be understood, without understanding the practice, is a position that reason will not deny; and it is on this ground only that I argue the subject. It is one thing in the counting-house, in the world it is another. With respect to its operation it must necessarily be contemplated as a reciprocal thing; that only one half its powers resides within the nation, and that the whole is effectually destroyed by destroying the half that resides without, as if the destruction had been committed on that which is within; for neither can act without the other.

When in the last, as well as in former wars, the commerce of England sunk, it was because the general quantity was lessened every where; and it now rises, because commerce is in a rising state in every nation. If England, at this day, imports and exports more than at any former period, the nations with which she trades must necessarily do the same; her imports are their exports, and *vice versa*.

There can be no such thing as a nation flourishing alone

in commerce; she can only participate; and the destruction of it in any part must necessarily affect all. When, therefore, Governments are at war, the attack is made upon the common stock of commerce, and the consequence is the same as if each had attacked his own.

The present increase of commerce is not to be attributed to ministers, or to any political contrivances, but to its own natural operations in consequence of peace. The regular markets had been destroyed, the channels of trade broken up, the high road of the seas infested with robbers of every nation, and the attention of the world called to other objects. Those interruptions have ceased, and peace has restored the deranged condition of things to their proper order.*

It is worth remarking, that every nation reckons the balance of trade in its own favour; and therefore something must be irregular in the common ideas upon this subject.

The fact, however, is true, according to what is called a balance; and it is from this cause that commerce is universally supported. Every nation feels the advantage, or it would abandon the practice: but the deception lies in the mode of making up the accounts, and in attributing what are called profits to a wrong cause.

Mr. Pitt has sometimes amused himself by shewing what he called a balance of trade from the Custom-House books. This mode of calculation not only affords no rule that is true, but one that is false.

In the first place, every cargo that departs from the Custom-House, appears on the books as an export; and according to the Custom-House balance, the losses at sea, and by foreign failures, are all reckoned on the side of profit, because they appear as exports.

Secondly, Because the importation by the smuggling trade does not appear on the Custom-House books, to arrange against the exports.

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* In America, the increase of commerce is greater in proportion than in England. It is, at this time, at least one half more than at any period prior to the Revolution. The greatest number of vessels cleared out of the port of Philadelphia, before the commencement of the war, was between eight and nine hundred. In the year 1788, the number was upwards of twelve hundred. As the State of Pennsylvania is estimated as an eighth part of the United States in population, the whole number of vessels must now be nearly ten thousand.

No balance, therefore, as applying to superior advantages, can be drawn from these documents; and if we examine the natural operation of commerce, the idea is fallacious; and if true, would soon be injurious. The great support of commerce consists in the balance being a level of benefits among all nations.

Two merchants of different nations trading together, will both become rich, and each makes the balance in his own favour; consequently, they do not get rich out of each other; and it is the same with respect to the nations in which they reside. The case must be, that each nation must get rich out of its own means, and increases those riches by something which it procures from another in exchange.

If a merchant in England sends an article of English manufacture abroad, which costs him a shilling at home, and imports something which sells for two, he makes a balance of one shilling in his own favour; but this is not gained out of the foreign nation or the foreign merchant, for he also does the same by the article he receives, and neither has a balance of advantage upon the other. The original value of the two articles in their proper countries were but two shillings; but by changing their places, they acquire a new idea of value, equal to double what they had at first, and that increased value is equally divided.

There is no otherwise a balance on foreign than on domestic commerce. The merchants of London and Newcastle trade on the same principles, as if they resided in different nations, and make their balances in the same manner: yet London does not get rich out of Newcastle, any more than Newcastle out of London; but coals, the merchandize of Newcastle, have an additional value at London, and London merchandize has the same at Newcastle.

Though the principle of all commerce is the same, the domestic, in a national view, is the part the most beneficial; because the whole of the advantages, on both sides, rests within the nation; whereas, in foreign commerce, it is only a participation of one half.

The most unprofitable of all commerce is that connected with foreign dominion. To a few individuals it may be beneficial, merely because it is commerce; but to the nation it is a loss. The expence of maintaining dominion more than absorbs the profits of any trade. It does not increase the general quantity in the world, but operates to lessen it; and a greater mass would be afloat by relinquish-

ing dominion, the participation without the expence would be more valuable than a greater quantity with it.

But it is impossible to engross commerce by dominion; and therefore it is still more fallacious. It cannot exist in confined channels, and necessarily breaks out by regular or irregular means, that defeat the attempt; and to succeed would be still worse. France, since the Revolution, has been more than indifferent as to foreign possessions; and other nations will become the same, when they investigate the subject with respect to commerce.

To the expence of dominion is to be added that of navies, and when the amount of the two are subtracted from the profits of commerce, it will appear, that what is called the balance of trade, even admitting it to exist, is not enjoyed by the nation, but absorbed by the Government.

The idea of having navies for the protection of commerce is delusive. It is putting the means of destruction for the means of protection. Commerce needs no other protection than the reciprocal interest which every nation feels in supporting it—it is common stock—it exists by a balance of advantages to all; and the only interruption it meets, is from the present uncivilized state of Governments, and which it is its common interest to reform.*

Quitting this subject, I now proceed to other matters.—As it is necessary to include England in the prospect of a general reformation, it is proper to enquire into the defects of its Government. It is only by each nation reforming its own, that the whole can be improved, and the full benefit of reformation enjoyed. Only partial advantages can flow from partial reforms.

France and England are the only two countries in Europe where a reformation in Government could have successfully begun. The one secure by the ocean, and the other by the immensity of its internal strength, could defy the malignity of foreign despotism. But it is with revolutions as with commerce, the advantages increase by their becoming general, and double to either what each would receive alone.

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* When I saw Mr. Pitt's mode of estimating the balance of trade, in one of his Parliamentary speeches, he appeared to me to know nothing of the nature and interest of commerce; and no man has more wantonly tortured it than himself. During a period of peace, it has been havocked with the calamities of war. Three times has it been thrown into stagnation, and the vessels unmanned by impressing, within less than four years of peace.

As a new system is now opening to the view of the world, the European courts are plotting to counteract it. Alliances, contrary to all former systems, are agitating, and a common interest of courts is forming against the common interest of man. This combination draws a line that runs throughout Europe, and presents a cause entirely new, as to exclude all calculations from former circumstances. While despotism warred with despotism, man had no interest in the contest; but in a cause that unites the soldier with the citizen, and nation with nation, the despotism of courts, though it feels the danger, and meditates revenge, is afraid to strike.

No question has arisen within the records of history that pressed with the importance of the present. It is not whether this or that party shall be in or not, or Whig or Tory, or high or low, shall prevail; but whether man shall inherit his rights, and universal civilization take place? Whether the fruits of his labours shall be enjoyed by himself, or consumed by the profligacy of Governments? Whether robbery shall be banished from courts, and wretchedness from countries?

When, in countries that are called civilized, we see age going to the workhouse, and youth to the gallows, something must be wrong in the system of Government. It would seem, by the exterior appearance of such countries, that all was happiness; but there lies hidden from the eye of common observation a mass of wretchedness that has scarcely any other chance than to expire in poverty or infamy. Its entrance into life is marked with the presage of its fate; and until this is remedied, it is in vain to punish.

Civil Government does not consist in executions; but in making that provision for the instruction of youth, and the support of age, as to exclude, as much as possible, profligacy from the one, and despair from the other. Instead of this, the resources of a country are lavished upon kings, upon courts, upon hirelings, impostors, and prostitutes; and even the poor themselves, with all their wants upon them, are compelled to support the fraud that oppresses them.

Why is it, that scarcely any are executed but the poor? The fact is a proof, among other things, of a wretchedness in their condition. Bred up without morals, and cast upon the world without a prospect, they are the exposed sacrifice of vice and legal barbarity. The millions that are superfluously wasted upon Governments are more than sufficient

to reform those evils, and to benefit the condition of every man in a nation, not included within the purlieus of a court. This I hope to make appear in the progress of this work.

It is the nature of compassion to associate with misfortune. In taking up this subject I seek no recompence—I fear no consequence. Fortified with that proud integrity, that disdains to triumph or to yield, I will advocate the Rights of Man.

It is to my advantage that I have served an apprenticeship to life. I know the value of moral instruction, and I have seen the danger of the contrary.

At an early period, little more than sixteen years of age, raw and adventurous, and heated with the false heroism of a master,* who had served in a man of war, I began the career of my own fortune, and entered on board the Terrible privateer, Captain Death. From this adventure I was happily prevented by the affectionate and moral remonstrance of a good father, who, from his own habits of life, being of the Quaker profession, must begin to look upon me as lost. But the impression, much as it affected at the time, began to wear away, and I entered afterwards in the King of Prussia privateer, Captain Mendez, and went with her to sea. Yet, from such a beginning, and with all the inconvenience of early life against me, I am proud to say, that with a perseverance undismayed by difficulties, a disinterestedness that compelled respect, I have not only contributed to raise a new empire in the world, founded on a new system of Government, but I have arrived at an eminence in political literature, the most difficult of all lines to succeed and excel in, which aristocracy, with all its aids, has not been able to reach or to rival.

Knowing my own heart, and feeling myself, as I now do, superior to all the skirmish of party, the inveteracy of interested or mistaken opponents, I answer not to falsehood or abuse, but proceed to the defects of the English Government.†

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* Rev. William Knowles, master of the grammar school of Thetford, in Norfolk.

† Politics and self-interest have been so uniformly connected, that the world, from being so often deceived, has a right to be suspicious of public characters: but with regard to myself, I am perfectly easy on this head. I did not, at my first setting out in

I begin with charters and corporations.

It is a perversion of terms to say, that a charter gives rights. It operates by a contrary effect, that of taking

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public life, nearly seventeen years ago, turn my thoughts to subjects of Government from motives of interest; and my conduct from that moment to this, proves the fact. I saw an opportunity, in which I thought I could do some good, and I followed exactly what my heart dictated. I neither read books, nor studied other people's opinions. I thought for myself. The case was this:—

During the suspension of the old Governments in America, both prior to, and at the breaking out of hostilities, I was struck with the order and decorum with which every thing was conducted; and impressed with the idea, that a little more than what society naturally performed was all the Government that was necessary; and that monarchy and aristocracy were frauds and impositions upon mankind. On these principles I published the pamphlet *Common Sense*. The success it met with was beyond any thing since the invention of printing. I gave the copy-right to every State in the Union, and the demand ran to not less than one hundred thousand copies. I continued the subject in the same manner, under the title of the *Crisis*, till the complete establishment of the Revolution.

After the Declaration of Independence, Congress unanimously, and unknown to me, appointed me Secretary to the Foreign Department. This was agreeable to me, because it gave me the opportunity of seeing into the abilities of foreign courts, and their manner of doing business. But a misunderstanding arising between Congress and me, respecting one of their commissioners then in Europe, Mr. Silas Deane, I resigned the office, and declined, at the same time, the pecuniary offers, made by the ministers of France and Spain, M. Gerard and Don Juan Mirralles.

I had by this time so completely gained the ear and confidence of America, and my own independence was become so visible as to give me a range in political writing beyond, perhaps, what any man ever possessed in any country; and what is more extraordinary, I held it undiminished to the end of the war, and enjoy it in the same manner to the present moment. As my object was not myself, I set out with the determination, and happily with the disposition, of not being moved by praise or censure, friendship or calumny, nor of being drawn from my purpose by any personal altercation; and the man who cannot do this, is not fit for a public character.

When the war ended, I went from Philadelphia to Borden Town, on the east bank of the Delaware, where I have a small place. Congress was at this time at Prince Town, fifteen miles distant; and General Washington had taken his head-quarters at Rocky Hill, within the neighbourhood of Congress, for the purpose of

rights away. Rights are inherently in all the inhabitants; but charters, by annulling those rights in the majority, leave the right by exclusion in the hands of a few. If

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resigning up his commission, (the object for which he accepted it being accomplished,) and of retiring to private life. While he was on this business, he wrote me the letter which I here subjoin.

Rocky Hill, Sept. 10, 1783.

I have learned since I have been at this place, that you are at Borden Town. Whether for the sake of retirement or economy, I know not. Be it for either, for both, or whatever it may, if you will come to this place, and partake with me, I shall be exceedingly happy to see you at it.

Your presence may remind Congress of your past services to this country; and if it is in my power to impress them, command my best exertions with freedom, as they will be rendered cheerfully by one who entertains a lively sense of the importance of your works, and who, with much pleasure, subscribes himself,

Your sincere friend,
G. WASHINGTON.

During the war, in the latter end of the year 1780, I formed to myself a design of coming over to England; and communicated it to General Greene, who was then in Philadelphia, on his route to the southward, General Washington being then at too great a distance to communicate with immediately. I was strongly impressed with the idea, that if I could get over to England, without being known, and only remain in safety till I could get out a publication, that I could open the eyes of the country with respect to the madness and stupidity of its Government. I saw that the parties in Parliament had pitted themselves as far as they could go, and could make no new impressions on each other. General Greene entered fully into my views; but the affair of Arnold and Andre happening just after, he changed his mind, and under strong apprehensions for my safety, wrote very pressingly to me from Annapolis, in Maryland, to give up the design, which, with some reluctance, I did. Soon after this I accompanied Colonel Lawrens, son of Mr. Lawrens, who was then in the Tower, to France, on business from Congress. We landed at L'Orient; and while I remained there, he being gone forward, a circumstance occurred, that renewed my former design. An English packet from Falmouth to New York, with the Government dispatches on board, was brought into L'Orient. That a packet should be taken, is no extraordinary thing; but that the dispatches should be taken with it, will scarcely be credited, as they are always slung at the cabin window, in a bag loaded with cannon-ball, and ready to be sunk at a moment. The fact, however, is as I have stated it, for the

charters were constructed so as to express in direct terms, "*that every inhabitant, who is not a member of a Corporation, shall not exercise the right of voting,*" such charters would, in the face, be charters, not of rights, but of exclusion. The effect is the same under the form they now stand; and the only persons on whom they operate, are the persons whom they exclude. Those whose rights are guaranteed, by not being taken away, exercise no other rights, than as members of the community they are entitled to without a charter; and, therefore, all charters have no other than an indirect negative operation. They do not give rights to A, but they make a difference in favour of A by taking away the right of B, and consequently are instruments of injustice.

But charters and corporations have a more extensive evil effect, than what relates merely to elections. They are sources of endless contentions in the places where they exist; and they lessen the common rights of national society. A native of England, under the operation of these charters and corporations, cannot be said to be an Englishman in the full sense of the word. He is not free of the nation, in the same manner that a Frenchman is free of France, and an American of America. His rights are circumscribed to the town, and in some cases, to the parish of his birth; and all other parts, though in his native land,

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dispatches came into my hands, and I read them. The capture, as I was informed, succeeded by the following stratagem:—The Captain of the Madame privateer, who spoke English, on coming up with the packet, passed himself for the captain of an English frigate, and invited the captain of the packet on board; which, when done, he sent some of his own hands back, and secured the mail. But, be the circumstance of the capture what it may, I speak with certainty as to the Government dispatches. They were sent up to Paris, to Count Vergennes, and when Colonel Lawrens and myself returned to America, we took the originals to Congress.

By these dispatches I saw into the stupidity of the English Cabinet, far more than I otherwise could have done, and I renewed my former design. But Col. Lawrens was so unwilling to return alone; more especially, as among other matters, he had a charge of upwards of two hundred thousand pounds sterling in money, that I gave up to his wishes, and finally gave up my plan. But I am now certain, that if I could have executed it, it would not have been altogether unsuccessful.

are to him as a foreign country. To acquire a residence in these, he must undergo a local naturalization by purchase, or he is forbidden or expelled the place. This species of feudality is kept up to aggrandize the corporations at the ruin of towns; and the effect is visible.

The generality of corporation towns are in a state of solitary decay, and prevented from further ruin, only by some circumstance in their situation, such as a navigable river, or a plentiful surrounding country. As population is one of the chief sources of wealth, (for without it land itself has no value,) every thing which operates to prevent it must lessen the value of property; and as corporations have not only this tendency, but directly this effect, they cannot but be injurious. If any policy were to be followed, instead of that of general freedom to every person to settle where he chose, (as in France or America,) it would be more consistent to give encouragement to new comers, than to preclude their admission by exacting premiums from them*.

The persons most immediately interested in the abolition of corporations, are the inhabitants of the towns where corporations, are established. The instances of Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield, shew, by contrast, the injury which those Gothic Institutions are to property and commerce. A few examples may be found, such as that of London, whose natural and commercial advantage, owing to its situation on the Thames, is capable of bearing up against the political evils of a corporation; but in almost all other cases the fatality is too visible to be doubted or denied.

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* It is difficult to account for the origin of charter and corporation towns, unless we suppose them to have arisen out of, or been connected with, some species of garrison service. The time in which they began justify this idea. The generality of those towns have been garrisons; and the corporations were charged with the care of the gates of the towns, when no military garrison was present. Their refusing or granting admission to strangers, which has produced the customs of giving, selling and buying freedom, has more of the nature of garrison authority than civil government. Soldiers are free of all corporations throughout the nation, by the same propriety that every soldier is free of every garrison, and no other persons are. He can follow any employment, with the permission of his officers, in any corporation town throughout the nation.

Though the whole nation is not so directly affected by the depression of property in corporation towns as the inhabitants themselves, it partakes of the consequence. By lessening the value of property, the quantity of national commerce is curtailed. Every man is a customer in proportion to his ability; and as all parts of a nation trade with each other, whatever affects any of the parts, must necessarily communicate to the whole.

As one of the Houses of the English Parliament is, in a great measure, made up of elections from these corporations; and as it is unnatural that a pure stream should flow from a foul fountain, its vices are but a continuation of the vices of its origin. A man of moral honour and good political principles, cannot submit to the mean drudgery and disgraceful arts, by which such elections are carried. To be a successful candidate, he must be destitute of the qualities that constitute a just legislator, and being thus disciplined to corruption by the mode of entering into Parliament, it is not to be expected that the representative should be better than the man.

Mr. Burke, in speaking of the English representation, has advanced as bold a challenge as ever was given in the days of Chivalry. "Our representation," says he, "has been found *perfectly adequate to all the purposes* for which a representation of the People can be desired or devised. I defy." continues he, "the enemies of our constitution to shew the contrary."

This declaration from a man who has been in constant opposition of all the measures in Parliament the whole of his political life, a year or two excepted, is most extraordinary; and, comparing him with himself, admits of no other alternative, than that he acted against his judgment as a member, or has declared contrary to it as an author.

But it is not in the representation only that defects lie, and therefore I proceed in the next place to the aristocracy.

What is called the House of Peers, is constituted on a ground very similar to that, against which there is a law in other cases. It amounts to a combination of persons in one common interest. No reason can be given, why an House of Legislation should be composed entirely of men whose occupation consists in letting landed property, than why it should be composed of those who hire, or of brewers, or bakers, or any other separate class of men.

Mr. Burke calls this House, "*the great ground and pillar of security to the landed interest.*" Let us examine this idea.

What pillar of security does the landed interest require more than any other interest in the State, or what right has it to a distinct and separate representation from the general interest of a nation? The only use to be made of this power, (and which it has always made), is to ward off taxes from itself, and throw the burthen upon such articles of consumption by which itself would be least affected.

That this has been the consequence, (and will always be the consequence of constructing Governments on combinations,) is evident with respect to England, from the history of its taxes.

Notwithstanding taxes have encreased and multiplied upon every article of common consumption, the land-tax, which more particularly affects this "pillar," has diminished. In 1788, the amount of the land-tax was £1,950,000, which is half a million less than it produced almost an hundred years ago*, notwithstanding the rentals are in many instances doubled since that period.

Before the coming of the Hanoverians, the taxes were divided in nearly equal proportions between the land and articles of consumption, the land bearing rather the largest share: but since that era, nearly thirteen millions annually of new taxes have been thrown upon consumption. The consequence of which has been a constant increase in the number and wretchedness of the poor, and in the amount of the poor-rates. Yet here again the burthen does not fall in equal proportions on the aristocracy with the rest of the community. Their residences, whether in town or country, are not mixed with the habitations of the poor. They live apart from distress, and the expence of relieving it. It is in manufacturing towns and labouring villages that those burthens press the heaviest; in many of which it is one class of poor supporting another.

Several of the most heavy and productive taxes are so contrived, as to give an exemption to this pillar, thus standing in its own defence. The tax upon beer brewed for sale does not affect the aristocracy, who brew their own beer free of this duty. It falls only on those who have not conveniency or ability to brew, and who must purchase it in small quantities. But what will mankind think of the justice of taxation, when they know, that this tax alone, from

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* See Sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue. The land-tax in 1646 was £2,473,499.

which the aristocracy are from circumstances exempt, is nearly equal to the whole of the land-tax, being in the year 1788, and it is not less now than £1,666,152, and with its proportion of the taxes on malt and hops, it exceeds it.—That a single article, thus partially consumed, and that chiefly by the working part, should be subject to a tax, equal to that on the whole rental of the nation, is, perhaps, a fact not to be paralleled in the Histories of Revenues.

This is one of the consequences resulting from an House of Legislation, composed on the ground of a combination of common interest; for whatever their separate politics as to parties may be, in this they are united. Whether a combination acts to raise the price of any article for sale, or the rate of wages; or whether it acts to throw taxes from itself upon another class of the community, the principle and the effect are the same; and if the one be illegal, it will be difficult to shew that the other ought to exist.

It is no use to say, that taxes are first proposed in the House of Commons; for as the other House has always a negative, it can always defend itself; and it would be ridiculous to suppose that its acquiescence in the measures to be proposed were not understood before hand. Besides which, it has obtained so much influence by borough-traffic, and so many of its relations and connections are distributed on both sides of the Commons, as to give it, besides an absolute negative in one House, a preponderancy in the other, in all matters of common concern.

It is difficult to discover what is meant by the *landed interest*, if it does not mean a combination of aristocratical land-holders, opposing their own pecuniary interest to that of the farmer, and every branch of trade, commerce, and manufacture. In all other respects it is the only interest that needs no partial protection. It enjoys the general protection of the world. Every individual, high or low, is interested in the fruits of the earth; men, women, and children, of all ages and degrees, will turn out to asist the farmer, rather than a harvest should not be got in; and they will not act thus by any other property. It is the only one for which the common prayer of mankind is put up, and the only one that can never fail from the want of means. It is the interest, not of the policy, but of the existence of man, and when it ceases, he must cease to be.

No other interest in a nation stands on the same united support. Commerce, manufactures, arts, sciences, and every thing else, compared with this, are supported but in

parts. Their prosperity or their decay has not the same universal influence. When the vallies laugh and sing, it is not the farmer only, but all creation that rejoice. It is a prosperity that excludes all envy; and this cannot be said of any thing else.

Why then does Mr. Burke talk of this House of Peers, as the pillar of the landed interest? Were that pillar to sink into the earth, the same landed property would continue. and the same ploughing, sowing, and reaping would go on. The aristocracy are not the farmers who work the land, and raise the produce, but are the mere consumers of the rent; and when compared with the active world are the drones, a seraglio of males, who neither collect the honey nor form the hive, but exist only for lazy enjoyment.

Mr. Burke, in his First Essay, called aristocracy, "*the Corinthian capital of polished society.*" Towards completing the figure, he has now added the *pillar*; but still the base is wanting; and whenever a Nation chuses to act a Sampson not blind, but bold, down go the Temple of Dagon, the Lords, and the Philistines.

If a House of Legislation is to be composed of men of one class, for the purpose of protecting a distinct interest, all the other interests should have the same. The inequality, as well as the burthen of taxation, arises from admitting it in one case, and not in all. Had there been an House of Farmers, there had been no game laws; or an House of Merchants and Manufacturers, the taxes had neither been so unequal nor so excessive. It is from the power of taxation being in the hands of those who can throw so great a part of it from their own shoulders, that it has raged without a check.

Men of small or moderate estates are more injured by the taxes being thrown on articles of consumption, than they are eased by warding it from landed property, for the following reasons:

First, They consume more of the productive taxable articles, in proportion to their property than those of large estates.

Secondly, Their residence is chiefly in towns, and their property in houses; and the encrease of the poor-rates, occasioned by taxes on consumption, is in much greater proportion than the land-tax has been favoured. In Birmingham, the poor-rates are not less than seven shillings in the pound. From this, as already observed, the aristocracy are in a great measure exempt.

These are but a part of the mischiefs flowing from the wretched scheme of an House of Peers.

As a combination, it can always throw a considerable portion of taxes from itself; and as an hereditary House, accountable to nobody, it resembles a rotten borough, whose consent is to be courted, by interest. There are but few of its members, who are not in some mode or other participators, or disposers of the public money. One turns a candle-holder, or a lord in waiting; another a lord of the bed-chamber, a groom of the stole, or any insignificant nominal office, to which a salary is annexed, paid out of the public taxes, and which avoids the direct appearance of corruption. Such situations are derogatory to the character of man; and where they can be submitted to, honour cannot reside.

To all these are to be added the numerous dependants, the long list of younger branches and distant relations, who are provided for at the public expence: in short, were an estimation to be made of the charges of aristocracy to a nation, it would be found nearly equal to that of supporting the poor. The Duke of Richmond alone (and there are cases similar to his) takes away as much for himself as would maintain two thousand poor and aged persons. Is it then any wonder, that under such a system of Government, taxes and rates have multiplied to their present extent?

In stating these matters, I speak an open and disinterested language, dictated by no passion but that of humanity. To me, who have not only refused offers, because I thought them improper, but have declined rewards I might with reputation have accepted, it is no wonder that meanness and imposition appear disgustful. Independence is my happiness, and I view things as they are, without regard to place or person; my country is the world, and my religion is to do good.

Mr. Burke, in speaking of the aristocratical law of primogeniture, says, "it is the standing law of our landed inheritance; and "which, without question, has a tendency, and I think," continues he, "a happy tendency, to preserve a character of weight and consequence."

Mr. Burke may call this law what he pleases, but humanity and impartial reflection will denounce it a law of brutal injustice. Were we not accustomed to the daily practice, and did we only hear of it as the law of some distant part of the world, we should conclude that the legislators of such countries had not yet arrived at a state of civilization.

As to its preserving a character of *weight and consequence*, the case appears to me directly the reverse. It is an attaint upon character; a sort of privateering on family property. It may have weight among dependant tenants, but it gives none on a scale of national, and much less of universal character. Speaking for myself, my parents were not able to give me a shilling, beyond what they gave me in education; and to do this they distressed themselves: yet, I possess more of what is called consequence, in the world, than any one in Mr. Burke's catalogue of aristocrats.

Having thus glanced at some of the defects of the two Houses of Parliament, I proceed to what is called the crown, upon which I shall be very concise.

It signifies a nominal office of a million sterling a year, the business of which consists in receiving the money. Whether the person be wise or foolish, sane or insane, a native or a foreigner matters not. Every ministry acts upon the same idea, that Mr. Burke writes, namely, that the People must be hoodwinked, and held in superstitious ignorance by some bugbear or other; and what is called the crown answers this purpose, and therefore it answers all the purposes to be expected from it. This is more than can be said of the other two branches. The hazard to which this office is exposed in all countries, is not from any thing that can happen to the man, but from what may happen to the nation —the danger of its coming to its senses.

It has been customary to call the crown the executive power, and the custom is continued, though the reason has ceased.

It was called the executive, because the person whom it signified, used formerly to sit in the character of a judge, in administering or executing the laws. The tribunals were then a part of the court. The power, therefore, which is now called the judicial, is what was called the executive; and, consequently, one or other of the terms is redundant, and one of the offices useless. When we speak of the crown now, it means nothing; it signifies neither a judge nor a general: besides which, it is the laws that govern, and not the man. The old terms are kept up, to give an appearance of consequence to empty forms: and the only effect they have is that of increasing expences.

Before I proceed to the means of rendering Governments more conducive to the general happiness of mankind, than they are at present, it will not be improper to take a review of the progress of taxation in England.

It is a general idea, that when taxes are once laid on, they are never taken off. However true this may have been of late, it was not always so. Either, therefore, the people of former times were more watchful over Government than those of the present, or Government was administered with less extravagance.

It is now seven hundred years since the Norman conquest, and the establishment of what is called the crown. Taking this portion of time in seven separate periods of one hundred years each, the amount of the annual taxes, at each period, will be as follows:—

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Annual amount of taxes levied by William the Conqueror, beginning in the year 1066 | 400,000 |
| Annual amount of taxes at one hundred years from the conquest, (1166) | 200,000 |
| Annual amount of taxes at two hundred years from the conquest, (1266) | 150,000 |
| Annual amount of taxes at three hundred years from the conquest, (1366) | 130,000 |
| Annual amount of taxes at four hundred years from the conquest, (1466) | 100,000 |

These statements, and those which follow, are taken from Sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue; by which it appears, that taxes continued decreasing for four hundred years, at the expiration of which time they were reduced three-fourths, viz. from four hundred thousand pounds to one hundred thousand. The People of England of the present day, have a traditionary and historical idea of the bravery of their ancestors; but whatever their virtues or their vices might have been, they certainly were a People, who would not be imposed upon, and who kept Government in awe as to taxation, if not as to principle. Though they were not able to expel the monarchical usurpation, they restricted it to a republican economy of taxes.

Let us now review the remaining three hundred years.

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Annual amount of taxes at five hundred years from the conquest, (1566) | 500,000 |
| Annual amount of taxes at six hundred years from the conquest, (1666) | 1,800,000 |
| Annual amount of taxes at the present time (1791) | 17,000,000 |

The difference between the first four hundred years and the last three, is so astonishing, as to warrant an opinion,

that the national character of the English has changed. It would have been impossible to have dragooned the former English, into the excess of taxation that now exists; and when it is considered that the pay of the army, the navy, and of all the revenue officers, is the same now as it was above a hundred years ago, when the taxes were not above a tenth part of what they are at present, it appears impossible to account for the enormous increase and expenditure, on any other ground, than extravagance, corruption, and intrigue.*

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* Several of the Court newspapers have of late made frequent mention of Wat Tyler. That his memory should be traduced by court sycophants, and all those who live on the spoil of a public, is not to be wondered at. He was, however, the means of checking the rage and injustice of taxation in his time, and the nation owed much to his valour. The history is concisely this:—In the time of Richard the Second, a poll-tax was levied, of one shilling per head, upon every person in the nation, of whatever estate or condition, on poor as well as rich, above the age of fifteen years. If any favour was shewn in the law, it was to the rich rather than to the poor; as no person should be charged more than twenty shillings for himself, family, and servants, though ever so numerous; while all other families, under the number of twenty, were charged per head. Poll-taxes had always been odious; but this being also oppressive and unjust, it excited, as it naturally must, universal detestation among the poor and middle classes. The person known by the name of Wat Tyler, whose proper name was Walter, and a tyler by trade, lived at Deptford. The gatherer of the poll-tax, on coming to his house, demanded tax for one of his daughters, whom Tyler declared was under the age of fifteen. The tax-gatherer insisted on satisfying himself, and began an indecent examination of the girl, which enraging the father, he struck him with a hammer, that brought him to the ground, and was the cause of his death.

This circumstance served to bring the Discontents to an issue. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood espoused the cause of Tyler, who, in a few days, was joined, according to some histories, by upwards of fifty thousand men, and chosen their chief. With this force he marched to London, to demand an abolition of the tax, and a redress of other grievances. The Court, finding itself in a forlorn condition, and unable to make resistance, agreed, with Richard at its head, to hold a conference with Tyler in Smithfield, making many fair professions, courtier-like, of its disposition to redress the oppressions. While Richard and Tyler were in conversation on these matters, each being on horseback, Walworth, then Mayor of London, and one of the creatures of the court, watched an opportunity, and like a cowardly assassin, stabbed

With the Revolution of 1688, and more so since the Hanover succession, came the destructive system of continental intrigues, and the rage for foreign wars and foreign dominion; systems of such secure mystery that the expences admit of no accounts; a single line stands for millions. To what excess taxation might have extended, had not the French Revolution contributed to break up the system, and put an end to pretences, is impossible to say. Viewed, as that Revolution ought to be, as the fortunate means of lessening the load of taxes of both countries, it is of as much importance to England as to France; and, if properly improved to all the advantages of which it is capable, and to which it leads, deserves as much celebration in one country as the other.

In pursuing this subject, I shall begin with the matter that first presents itself, that of lessening the burthen of taxes; and shall then add such matters and propositions, respecting the three countries of England, France, and America, as the present prospect of things appears to justify: I mean, an alliance of the three, for the purposes that will be mentioned in their proper place.

What has happened may happen again. By the statement before shewn of the progress of taxation, it is seen, that taxes have been lessened to a fourth part of what they had formerly been. Though the present circumstances do not admit of the same reduction, yet it admits of such a beginning, as may accomplish that end in less time, than in the former case.

The amount of taxes for the year, ending at Michaelmas 1788, was as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Land-tax | £1,950,000 |
| Customs | 3,789,274 |
| Carried over | £5,739,274 |

Tyler with a dagger; and two or three others falling upon him, he was instantly sacrificed.

Tyler appears to have been an intrepid disinterested man, with respect to himself. All his proposals made to Richard, were on a more just and public ground, than those which had been made to John by the Barons; and notwithstanding the sycophancy of historians, and men, like Mr. Burke, who seek to gloss over a base action of the court by traducing Tyler, his fame will outlive their falsehood. If the Barons merited a monument to be erected in Runnymede, Tyler merits one in Smithfield.

| | |
|---|---|
| Brought over..... | 5,739,274 |
| Excise (including ale and new malt) ..... ..... | 6,751,727 |
| Stamps ..... | 1,278,214 |
| Miscellaneous taxes and incidents ..... | 1,803,755 |
| £ | 15,572,970 |

Since the year 1778, upwards of one million new taxes have been laid on, besides the produce from the lotteries; and as the taxes have in general been more productive since than before, the amount may be taken, in round numbers, at 17,000,000.

N. B. The expence of collection and the drawbacks, which together amount to nearly two millions, are paid out of the gross amount; and the above is the nett sum paid into the Exchequer

This sum of seventeen millions is applied to two different purposes; the one to pay the interest of the national debt, the other to the current expences of each year. About nine millions are appropriated to the former; and the remainder, being nearly eight millions, to the latter. As to the million, said to be applied to the reduction of the debt, it is so much like paying with one hand and taking out with the other, as not to merit much notice.

It happened, fortunately for France, that she possessed national domains for paying off her debt, and thereby lessening her taxes: but as this is not the case in England, her reduction of taxes can only take place by reducing the current expences, which may now be done to the amount of four or five millions annually, as will hereafter appear. When this is accomplished, it will more than counterbalance the enormous charge of the American war; and the saving will be from the same source from whence the evil arose.

As to the national debt, however heavy the interest may be in taxes; yet, as it serves to keep alive a capital useful to commerce, it balances by its effects a considerable part of its own weight; and as the quantity of gold and silver in England is, by some means or other, short of its proper proportion,* (being not more than twenty millions, whereas it should be sixty,) it would, besides the injustice, be bad policy to extinguish a capital that serves to supply that de-

* Foreign intrigue, foreign wars, and foreign dominions, will in a great measure account for the deficiency.

fect. But with respect to the current expence, whatever is saved therefrom is gain. The excess may serve to keep corruption alive, but it has no re-action on credit and commerce, like the interest of the debt.

It is now very probable, that the English Government (I do not mean the nation) is unfriendly to the French Revolution. Whatever serves to expose the intrigue and lessen the influence of courts, by lessening taxation, will be unwelcome to those who feed upon the spoil. Whilst the clamour of French intrigue, arbitrary power, popery, and wooden shoes could be kept up, the nation was easily allured and alarmed into taxes. Those days are now past; deception, it is to be hoped, has reaped its last harvest, and better times are in prospect for both countries, and for the world.

Taking it for granted, that an alliance may be formed between England, France, and America, for the purposes hereafter to be mentioned, the national expences of France and England may consequently be lessened. The same fleets and armies will no longer be necessary to either, and the reduction can be made ship for ship on each side. But to accomplish these objects, the Governments must necessarily be fitted to a common and correspondent principle. Confidence can never take place, while an hostile disposition remains in either, or where mystery and secresy on one side, is opposed to candour and openness on the other.

These matters admitted, the national expences might be put back, *for the sake of a precedent*, to what they were at some period when France and England were not enemies. This, consequently, must be prior to the Hanover succession, and also to the Revolution of 1688.* The first in-

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* I happened to be in England at the celebration of the centenary of the Revolution of 1688. The characters of William and Mary have always appeared to me detestable; the one seeking to destroy his uncle, and the other her father, to get possession of power themselves; yet, as the nation was disposed to think something of that event, I felt hurt at seeing it ascribe the whole reputation of it to a man who had undertaken it as a job, and who, besides what he otherwise got, charged £600,000 for the expence of the little fleet that brought him from Holland. George the First acted the same close-fisted part as William had done, and bought the Duchy of Bremen with the money he got from England, £.250,000 over and above his pay as King; and having thus

stance that presents itself, antecedent to those dates, is in the very wasteful and profligate times of Charles the Second, at which time England and France acted as allies. If I have chosen a period of great extravagance, it will serve to shew modern extravagance, in a still worse light; especially as the pay of the navy, the army, and the revenue officers has not increased since that time.

The peace establishment was then as follows:—See Sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue.

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Navy | 300,000 |
| Army | 212,000 |
| Ordinance | 40,000 |
| Civil List | 462,115 |
| | £.1,014,115 |

The Parliament, however, settled the whole annual peace establishment at £.1,200,000.* If we go back to the time of Elizabeth, the amount of all the taxes was but half a million, yet the nation sees nothing during that period, that reproaches it with want of consequence.

All circumstances then, taken together, arising from the French Revolution, from the approaching harmony and reciprocal interest of the two nations, the abolition of court intrigue on both sides, and the progress of knowledge in the science of Government, the annual expenditure might be put back to one million and an half, viz.

| | |
|---|---|
| Navy | 500,000 |
| Army | 500,000 |
| Expences of Government | 500,000 |
| | £.1,500,000 |

purchased it at the expence of England, added it to his Hanoverian dominions for his own private profit. In fact, every nation that does not govern itself, is governed as a job. England has been the prey of jobs ever since the Revolution.

* Charles, like his predecessors and successors, finding that war was the harvest of Governments, engaged in a war with the Dutch, the expence of which increased the annual expenditure to £1,800,000, as stated under the date of 1666; but the peace establishment was but £1,200,000.

Even this sum is six times greater than the expences of Government are in America, yet the civil internal Government in England, (I mean that administered by means of quarter sessions, juries, and assize, and which, in fact, is nearly the whole, and performed by the nation,) is less expence upon the revenue, than the same species and portion of Government is in America.

It is time that nations should be rational, and not be governed like animals, for the pleasure of their riders. To read the history of kings, a man would be almost inclined to suppose that Government consisted in stag-hunting, and that every nation paid a million a year to a huntsman. Man ought to have pride, or shame enough to blush at being thus imposed upon, and when he feels his proper character, he will. Upon all subjects of this nature, there is often passing in the mind, a train of ideas he has not yet accustomed himself to encourage and communicate. Restrained by something that puts on the character of prudence, he acts the hypocrite upon himself as well as to others. It is, however, curious to observe how soon this spell can be dissolved. A single expression, boldly conceived and uttered, will sometimes put a whole company into their proper feelings; and whole nations are acted upon in the same manner.

As to the offices of which any civil Government may be composed, it matters but little by what names they are described. In the routine of business, as before observed, whether a man be styled a President, a King, an Emperor, a Senator, or any thing else, it is impossible that any service he can perform, can merit from a nation more than ten thousand pounds a year; and as no man should be paid beyond his services, so every man of a proper heart will not accept more. Public money ought to be touched with the most scrupulous consciousness of honour. It is not the produce of riches only, but of the hard earnings of labour and poverty. It is drawn even from the bitterness of want and misery. Not a beggar passes, or perishes in the streets, whose mite is not in that mass.

Were it possible that the Congress of America, could be so lost to their duty, and to the interest of their constituents, as to offer General Washington, as President of America, a million a year, he would not, and he could not, accept it. His sense of honour is of another kind. It has cost England almost seventy millions sterling, to maintain a family imported from abroad, of very inferior capacity to thousands in the nation; and scarcely a year has passed

that has not produced some new mercenary application. Even the physicians' bills have been sent to the public to be paid. No wonder that jails are crowded, and taxes and poor-rates increased. Under such systems, nothing is to be looked for but what has already happened; and as to reformation, whenever it come, it must be from the nation, and not from the Government.

To shew that the sum of five hundred thousand pounds is more than sufficient to defray all the expences of Government, exclusive of navies and armies, the following estimate is added for any country of the same extent as England.

In the first place, three hundred representatives, fairly elected, are sufficient for all the purposes to which legislation can apply, and preferable to a larger number. They may be divided into two or three houses, or meet in one, as in France, or in any manner a Constitution shall direct.

As representation is always considered, in free countries, as the most honourable of all stations, the allowance made to it is merely to defray the expence which the representatives incur by that service, and not to it as an office.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| If an allowance, at the rate of five hundred pounds *per ann.* be made to every representative, deducting for non-attendance, the expence, if the whole number attended for six months, each year, would be ..... | | | £.75000 |
| The official departments cannot reasonably exceed the following number, with the salaries annexed: | | | |
| Three offices, at ten thousand pounds each ..... | | | 30,000 |
| Ten ditto ..... | at | £.5000 each | 50,000 |
| Twenty ditto ..... | at | 2000 each | 40,000 |
| Forty ditto ..... | at | 1000 each | 40,000 |
| Two hundred ditto ..... | at | 500 each | 100,000 |
| Three hundred ditto ..... | at | 200 each | 60,000 |
| Five hundred ditto ..... | at | 100 each | 50,000 |
| Seven hundred ditto ..... | at | 75 each | 52,500 |
| | | | £.497,500 |

If a nation choose, it can deduct four *per cent.* from all offices, and make one of twenty thousand *per ann.*

All revenue officers are paid out of the monies they collect, and therefore are not in this estimation.

The foregoing is not offered as an exact detail of offices, but to shew the number and rate of salaries which five hundred thousand pounds will support; and it will, on experience, be found impracticable to find business sufficient to justify even this expence. As to the manner in which office business is now performed, the chiefs, in several offices, such as the post office, and certain offices in the exchequer, &c. do little more than sign their names three or four times a year; and the whole duty is performed by under clerks.

Taking, therefore, one million and a half as a sufficient peace establishment for all the honest purposes of Government, which is three hundred thousand pounds more than the peace establishment in the profligate and prodigal times of Charles the Second, (notwithstanding, as has been already observed, the pay and salaries of the army, navy, and the revenue officers, continue the same as at that period) there will remain a surplus of upwards of six millions out of the present current expences. The question then will be, how to dispose of this surplus.

Whoever has observed the manner in which trade and taxes twist themselves together, must be sensible of the impossibility of separating them suddenly.

First. Because the articles now on hand are already charged with the duty, and the reduction cannot take place on the present stock.

Secondly. Because, on all those articles on which the duty is charged in the gross, such as per barrel, hogshead, hundred weight, or tun, the abolition of the duty does not admit of being divided down so as fully to relieve the consumer, who purchases by the pint, or the pound. The last duty laid on strong beer and ale, was three shillings per barrel, which, if taken off, would lessen the purchase only half a farthing per pint, and, consequently, would not reach to practical relief.

This being the condition of a great part of the taxes it will be necessary to look for such others as are free from this embarrassment, and where the relief will be direct and visible, and capable of immediate operation.

In the first place, then, the poor-rates are a direct tax which every housekeeper feels, and who knows also, to a farthing, the sum which he pays. The national amount of the whole of the poor-rates is not positively known, but can be procured. Sir John Sinclair, in his History of the

Revenue, has stated it at £2,100,587. A considerable part of which is expended in litigations, in which the poor, instead of being relieved, are tormented. The expence, however, is the same to the parish, from whatever cause it arises.

In Birmingham, the amount of the poor-rates is fourteen thousand pounds a year. This, though a large sum, is moderate, compared with the population. Birmingham is said to contain seventy thousand souls, and on a proportion of seventy thousand to fourteen thousand pounds poor-rates, the national amount of the poor-rates taking the population of England at seven millions, would be but one million four hundred thousand pounds. It is, therefore, most probable, that the population of Birmingham is overrated. Fourteen thousand pounds is the proportion upon fifty thousand souls, taking two millions of poor-rates as the national amount.

Be it, however, what it may, it is no other than the consequence of the excessive burthen of taxes, for, at the time when the taxes were very low, the poor were able to maintain themselves; and there were no poor-rates.* In the present state of things, a labouring man, with a wife and two or three children, does not pay less than between seven and eight pounds a year in taxes. He is not sensible of this, because it is disguised to him in the articles which he buys, and he thinks only of their dearness; but as the taxes take from him, at least a fourth part of his yearly earnings, he is consequently disabled from providing for a family, especially if himself, or any of them are afflicted with sickness.

The first step, therefore, of practical relief, would be to abolish the poor-rates entirely, and in lieu thereof, to make a remission of the taxes of the poor of double the amount of the present poor-rates, viz. four millions annually out of the surplus taxes. By this measure, the poor will be benefited two millions, and the housekeepers two millions. This alone would be equal to a reduction of one hundred and twenty millions of the national debt, and consequently equal to the whole expence of the American war.

It will then remain to be considered, which is the most effectual mode of distributing this remission of four millions.

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* Poor-rates began about the time of Henry the Eighth, when the taxes began to increase, and they have increased as the taxes increased ever since.

It is easily seen, that the poor are generally composed of large families of children, and old people past their labour. If these two classes are provided for, the remedy will so far reach to the full extent of the case, that what remains will be incidental, and, in a great measure, fall within the compass of benefit clubs, which, though of humble invention, merit to be ranked among the best of modern institutions.

Admitting England to contain seven millions of souls; if one-fifth thereof are of that class of poor which need support, the number will be one million four hundred thousand. Of this number, one hundred and forty thousand will be aged poor, as will be hereafter shewn, and for which a distinct provision will be proposed.

There will then remain one million two hundred and sixty thousand, which, at five souls to each family, amount to two hundred and fifty-two thousand families, rendered poor from the expence of children and the weight of taxes.

The number of children under fourteen years of age, in each of those families, will be found to be about five to every two families; some having two, and others three; some one, and others four; some none, and others five; but it rarely happens that more than five are under fourteen years of age, and after this age they are capable of service or of being apprenticed.

Allowing five children (under fourteen years) to every two families,

| | |
|---|---|
| The number of children will be ..... | 630,000 |
| The number of parents were they all living, would be ..... ..... | 504,000 |

It is certain, that if the children are provided for, the parents are relieved of consequence, because it is from the expence of bringing up children that their poverty arises.

Having thus ascertained the greatest number that can be supposed to need support on account of young families, I proceed to the mode of relief or distribution, which is,

To pay as a remission of taxes to every poor family, out of the surplus taxes, and in room of poor-rates, four pounds a year for every child under fourteen years of age; enjoining the parents of such children to send them to school, to learn reading, writing, and common arithmetic; the ministers of every parish, of every denomination, to certify joint-

ly to an office, for that purpose, that this duty is performed.

The amount of this expence will be,

| | £. |
|---|---|
| For six hundred and thirty thousand children, at four pounds *per ann.* each ..... | 2,520,000 |

By adopting this method, not only the poverty of the parents will be relieved, but ignorance will be banished from the rising generation, and the number of poor will hereafter become less, because their abilities, by the aid of education, will be greater. Many a youth, with good natural genius, who is apprenticed to a mechanical trade, such as a carpenter, joiner, millwright, shipwright, blacksmith, &c. is prevented getting forward the whole of his life, from the want of a little common education when a boy.

I now proceed to the case of the aged.

I divide age into two classes. First, the approach of age beginning at fifty. Secondly, old age commencing at sixty.

At fifty, though the mental faculties of man are in full vigour, and his judgment better than at any preceding date, the bodily powers for laborious life are on the decline. He cannot bear the same quantity of fatigue as at an earlier period. He begins to earn less, and is less capable of enduring wind and weather; and in those more retired employments where much sight is required, he fails apace, and sees himself, like an old horse, beginning to be turned adrift.

At sixty his labour ought to be over, at least from direct necessity. It is painful to see old age working itself to death, in what are called civilized countries, for daily bread.

To form some judgment of the number of those above fifty years of age, I have several times counted the persons I met in the streets of London, men, women, and children, and have generally found that the average is about one in sixteen or seventeen. If it be said that the aged persons do not come much in the streets, so neither do infants; and a great proportion of grown children are in schools, and in work-shops as apprentices. Taking then sixteen for a divisor, the whole number of persons in England, of fifty years and upwards of both sexes, rich and poor, will be four hundred and twenty thousand.

The persons to be provided for out of this gross number will be, husbandmen, common labourers, journeymen of

every trade and their wives, sailors, and disbanded soldiers, worn out servants of both sexes, and poor widows.

There will be also a considerable number of middling tradesmen, who having lived decently in the former part of life, begin, as age approaches, to lose their business, and at last fall to decay.

Besides these, there will be constantly thrown off from the revolutions of that wheel, which no man can stop, nor regulate, a number from every class of life connected with commerce and adventure.

To provide for all those accidents, and whatever else may befal, I take the number of persons, who at one time or other of their lives, after fifty years of age, may feel it necessary or comfortable to be better supported, than they can support themselves, and that not as a matter of grace and favour, but of right, at one third of the whole number, which is one hundred and forty thousand, as stated in page 91, and for whom a distinct provision was proposed to be made. If there be more, society, notwithstanding the shew and pomposity of Government, is in a deplorable condition in England.

Of this one hundred and forty thousand, I take one half, seventy thousand, to be of the age of fifty and under sixty, and the other half to be sixty years and upwards.—Having thus ascertained the probable proportion of the number of aged persons, I proceed to the mode of rendering their condition comfortable, which is,

To pay every such person of the age of fifty years, and until he arrive at the age of sixty, the sum of six pounds *per ann.* out of the surplus taxes; and ten pounds *per ann.* during life after the age of sixty. The expence of which will be,

| | |
|---|---|
| Seventy thousand persons at £. 6 per ann. ..... | 420,000 |
| Seventy thousand ditto at £. 10 per ann. ..... | 700,000 |
| | £. 1,120,000 |

This support, as already remarked, is not of the nature of a charity, but of a right. Every person in England, male and female, pays on an average in taxes, two pounds eight shillings and sixpence *per ann.* from the day of his (or her) birth; and, if the expence of collection be added, he pays two pounds eleven shillings and sixpence; consequently, at the end of fifty years he has paid one hundred and twenty-eight pounds fifteen shillings; and at sixty, one hundred

and fifty-four pounds ten shillings. Converting, therefore, his (or her) individual tax into a tontine, the money he shall receive after fifty years, is but little more than the legal interest of the nett money he has paid; the rest is made up from those whose circumstances do not require them to draw such support, and the capital of both defrays the expences of Government. It is on this ground that I have extended the probable claims to one-third of the number of aged persons in the nation. Is it then better that the lives of one hundred and forty thousand aged persons be rendered comfortable, or that a million a year of public money be expended on any one individual, and him often of the most worthless or insignificant character? Let reason and justice, let honour and humanity, let even hypocrisy, sycophancy, and Mr. Burke, let George, let Louis, Leopold, Frederic, Catharine, Cornwallis, or Tippoo Saib answer the question.*

The sum thus remitted to the poor will be,

| | |
|---|---|
| To two hundred and sixty-two thousand poor families, containing six hundred and thirty thousand children ..... | 2,520,000 |
| To one hundred and forty thousand aged persons | 1,120,000 |
| | £.3,640,000 |

* Reckoning the taxes by families, five to a family pays on an average, £12. 17*s.* 6*d.* per annum, to this sum are to be added the poor-rates. Though all pay taxes in the articles they consume, all do not pay poor-rates. About two millions are exempted; some as not being house-keepers, others as not being able, and the poor themselves who receive the relief. The average, therefore, of poor-rates on the remaining number, is forty shillings for every family of five persons, which makes the whole average amount of taxes and rates, £14. 17*s.* 6*d.* For six persons £17. 17*s.* For seven persons, £20. 16*s.* 6*d.*

The average of taxes in America, under the new and representative system of Government, including the interest of the debt contracted in the war, and taking the population at four millions of souls, which it now amounts to, and it is daily increasing, is five shillings per head, men, women, and children. The difference, therefore, between the two Governments, is as under,

| | England. | | | | America. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £. | *s.* | *d.* | | £. | *s.* | *d.* |
| For a family of five persons ..... | 14 | 17 | 6 | .. | 1 | 5 | 0 |
| For a family of six persons ..... | 17 | 17 | 0 | .. | 1 | 10 | 0 |
| For a family of seven persons ..... | 20 | 16 | 6 | .. | 1 | 15 | 0 |

There will then remain three hundred and sixty thousand pounds out of the four millions, part of which may be applied as follows:—

After all the above cases are provided for, there will still be a number of families, who though not properly of the class of poor, yet find it difficult to give education to their children; and such children, under such a case, would be in a worse condition than if their parents were actually poor. A nation under a well-regulated Government, should permit none to be uninstructed. It is monarchical and aristocratical Government only that requires ignorance for its support.

Suppose, then, four hundred thousand children to be in this condition, which is a greater number than ought to be supposed, after the provision already made, the method will be,

To allow for each of those children ten shillings a year for the expence of schooling, for six years each, which will give them six months schooling each year, and half a crown a year for paper and spelling-books.

The expence of this will be annually* £250,000.

There will then remain one hundred and ten thousand pounds.

Notwithstanding the great modes of relief which the best instituted and best principled Government may devise, there will still be a great number of smaller cases, which it is good policy as well as beneficence in a nation to consider.

Were twenty shillings to be given immediately on the birth of a child to every woman who should make the de-

---

* Public schools do not answer the general purpose of the poor. They are chiefly in corporation towns, from which the country towns and villages are excluded; or, if admitted, the distance occasions a great loss of time. Education, to be useful to the poor, should be on the spot; and the best method, I believe, to accomplish this, is to enable the parents to pay the expence themselves. There are always persons of both sexes to be found in every village, especially when growing into years, capable of such an undertaking. Twenty children, at ten shillings each, (and that not more than six months each year) would be as much as some livings amount to in the remote parts of England; and there are often distressed clergymen's widows to whom such an income would be acceptable. Whatever is given on this account to children, answers two purposes, to them it is education, to those who educate them it is a livelihood.

mand, and none will make it whose circumstances do not require it, it might relieve a great deal of instant distress.

There are about two hundred thousand births yearly in England; and if claimed by one-fourth,

The amount would be..... £50,000

And twenty shillings to every new-married couple who should claim in like manner,

This would not exceed the sum of..... £20,000

Also twenty thousand pounds to be appropriated to defray the funeral expences of persons, who, travelling for work, may die at a distance from their friends. By relieving parishes from this charge, the sick stranger will be better treated.

I shall finish this part of the subject with a plan adapted to the particular condition of a metropolis, such as London.

Cases are continually occurring in a metropolis, different to those which occur in the country, and for which a different, or rather an additional mode of relief is necessary. In the country, even in large towns, people have a knowledge of each other, and distress never rises to that extreme height it sometimes does in a metropolis. There is no such thing in the country as persons, in the literal sense of the word, starved to death, or dying with cold from the want of a lodging. Yet such cases, and others equally as miserable, happen in London.

Many a youth comes up to London full of expectations, and with little or no money, and unless he get immediate employment, he is already half undone; and boys bred up in London, without any means of a livelihood, and as it often happens of dissolute parents, are in a still worse condition; and servants long out of place are not much better off. In short, a world of little cases are continually arising, which busy or affluent life knows not of, to open the first door to distress. Hunger is not among the postponeable wants, and a day, even a few hours, in such a condition, is often the crisis of a life of ruin.

These circumstances, which are the general cause of the little thefts and pilferings that lead to greater, may be prevented. There yet remain twenty thousand pounds out of the four millions of surplus taxes, which, with another fund hereafter to be mentioned, amounting to about twenty thousand pounds more, cannot be better applied than to this purpose. The plan then will be,

First, To erect two or more buildings, or take some

already erected, capable of containing at least six thousand persons, and to have in each of these places as many kinds of employment as can be contrived, so that every person who shall come may find something which he or she can do.

Secondly, To receive all who shall come, without inquiring who or what they are. The only condition to be, that for so much, or so many hours work, each person shall receive so many meals of wholesome food, and a warm lodging, at least as good as a barrack. That a certain portion of what each person's work shall be worth shall be reserved, and given to him, or her, on their going away; and that each person shall stay as long, or as short time, or come as often as he or she choose, on these conditions.

If each person staid three months, it would assist by rotation twenty-four thousand persons annually, though the real number, at all times, would be but six thousand. By establishing an asylum of this kind, persons to whom temporary distresses occur, would have an opportunity to recruit themselves, and be enabled to look out for better employment. Allowing that their labour paid but one half the expence of supporting them, after reserving a portion of their earnings for themselves, the sum of forty thousand pounds additional, would defray all other charges for even a greater number than six thousand.

The fund very properly convertible to this purpose, in addition to the twenty thousand pounds remaining of the former fund, will be the produce of the tax upon coals, so iniquitously and wantonly applied to the support of the Duke of Richmond. It is horrid that any man, more especially at the price coals now are, should live on the distresses of a community; and any Government permitting such an abuse deserves to be dismissed. This fund is said to be about twenty thousand pounds *per annum.*

I shall now conclude this plan with enumerating the several particulars, and then proceed to other matters.

The enumeration is as follows:—

First, Abolition of two millions of poor-rates.

Secondly, Provision for two hundred and fifty-two thousand poor families.

Thirdly, Education for one milllion and thirty thousand children.

Fourthly, Comfortable provision for one hundred and forty thousand aged persons.

Fifthly, Donation of twenty shillings each for fifty thousand births.

Sixthly, Donation of twenty shillings each for twenty thousand marriages.

Seventhly, Allowance of twenty thousand pounds for the funeral expences of persons travelling for work, and dying at a distance from their friends.

Eighthly, Employment, at all times, for the casual poor in the cities of London and Westminster.

By the operation of this plan, the poor laws, those instruments of civil torture, will be superseded, and the wasteful expence of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be shocked by ragged and hungry children, and persons of seventy and eighty years of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their last, as a reprisal of parish upon parish. Widows will have a maintainance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their husbands, like culprits and criminals; and children will no longer be considered as increasing the distresses of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, because it will be to their advantage; and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of distress and poverty, will be lessened. The poor, as well as the rich, will then be interested in the support of Government, and the cause and apprehension of riots and tumults will cease. Ye who sit in ease, and solace yourselves in plenty, and such there are in Turkey and Russia, as well as in England, and who say to yourselves, "Are we not well off," have ye thought of these things? When ye do, ye will cease to speak and feel for yourselves alone.

The plan is easy in practice. It does not embarrass trade by a sudden interruption in the order of taxes, but effects the relief by changing the application of them; and the money necessary for the purpose can be drawn from the excise collections, which are made eight times a year in every market town in England.

Having now arranged and concluded this subject, I proceed to the next.

Taking the present current expences at seven millions and an half, which is the least amount they are now at, there will remain (after the sum of one million and an half be taken for the new current expences, and four millions for the before-mentioned service) the sum of two millions; part of which to be applied as follows:—

Though fleets and armies, by an alliance with France, will, in a great measure, become useless, yet the persons who have devoted themselves to those services, and have

thereby unfitted themselves for other lines of life, are not to be sufferers by the means that make others happy. They are a different description of men to those who form or hang about a court.

A part of the army will remain at least for some years, and also of the navy, for which a provision is already made in the former part of this plan, of one million, which is almost half a million more than the peace establishment of the army and navy in the prodigal times of Charles the Second.

Suppose then fifteen thousand soldiers to be disbanded, and that an allowance be made to each of three shillings a week during life, clear of all deductions, to be paid in the same manner as the Chelsea College Pensioners are paid, and for them to return to their trades and their friends; and also that an addition of fifteen thousand sixpences per week be made to the pay of the soldiers who shall remain; the annual expence will be,

| | £. | |
|---|---|---|
| To the pay of fifteen thousand disbanded soldiers, at three shilling per week..... .. | 117,000 | |
| Additional pay to the remaining soldiers..... | 19,500 | |
| Suppose that the pay of the officers of the disbanded corps be of the same amount as the sum allowed to the men..... ... | 117,000 | |
| | | 253,500 |
| To prevent bulky estimations, admit the same sum to the disbanded navy as to the army, and the same increase of pay..... | | 253,500 |
| Total..... | | £.507,000 |

Every year some part of this sum of half a million (I omit the odd seven thousand pounds for the purpose of keeping the account unembarrassed) will fall in, and the whole of it in time, as it is on the ground of life annuities, except the increased pay of twenty-nine thousand pounds. As it falls in, a part of the taxes may be taken off; for instance, when thirty thousand pounds fall in, the duty on hops may be wholly taken off; and as other parts fall in,

the duties on candles and soap may be lessened, till at last they will totally cease.

There now remains at least one million and a half of surplus taxes.

The tax on houses and windows is one of those direct taxes, which, like the poor-rates, is not confounded with trade; and, when taken off, the relief will be instantly felt. This tax falls heavy on the middling class of people.

The amount of this tax by the returns of 1788, was,

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Houses and windows by the act of 1776... | 385,459 | 11 | 7 |
| Ditto ditto by the act of 1779... | 130,739 | 14 | 5 |
| Total £. | 516,199 | 6 | 0 |

If this tax be struck off, there will then remain about one million of surplus taxes, and as it is always proper to keep a sum in reserve, for incidental matters, it may be best not to extend reductions further, in the first instance, but to consider what may be accomplished by other modes of reform.

Among the taxes most heavily felt is the commutation-tax. I shall, therefore, offer a plan for its abolition, by substituting another in its place, which will effect three objects at once:

First, That of removing the burthen to where it can best be borne.

Secondly, Restoring justice among families by a distribution of property.

Thirdly, Extirpating the overgrown influence arising from the unnatural law of primogeniture, and which is one of the principal sources of corruption at elections.

The amount of the commutation-tax by the returns of 1788, was..... £.771,657

When taxes are proposed, the country is amused by the plausible language of taxing luxuries. One thing is called a luxury at one time, and something else at another; but the real luxury does not consist in the article, but in the means of procuring it, and this is always kept out of sight.

I know not why any plant or herb of the field should be a greater luxury in one country than another, but an overgrown estate is a luxury at all times, and as such is the proper object of taxation. It is, therefore, right to take those kind tax-making gentlemen up on their own word, and argue on the principle themselves have laid down, that of *taxing luxuries*. If they, or their champion Mr. Burke,

who, I fear, is growing out of date, like the man in armour, can prove that an estate of twenty, thirty, or forty thousand pounds a year is not a luxury, I will give up the argument.

Admitting that any annual sum, say for instance, one thousand pounds, is necessary or sufficient for the support of a family, consequently the second thousand is of the nature of a luxury, the third still more so, and by proceeding on, we shall at last arrive at a sum that may not improperly be called a prohibitable luxury. It would not be impolitic to set bounds to property acquired by industry, and therefore it is right to place the prohibition beyond the probable acquisition to which industry can extend; but there ought to be a limit to property, or the accumulation of it, by bequest. It should pass in some other line. The richest in every nation have poor relations, and those often very near in consanguinity.

The following table of progressive taxation is constructed on the above principles, and as a substitute for the commutation-tax. It will reach the point of prohibition by a regular operation, and thereby supersede the aristocratical law of primogeniture.

## TABLE I.

A tax on all estates of the clear yearly value of fifty pounds, after deducting the land-tax, and up

| | *s.* | *d.* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| To £.500 | 0 | 3 | per pound |
| From 500 to 1000 | 0 | 6 | per pound |
| On the second thousand | 0 | 9 | per pound |
| On the third ditto | 1 | 0 | per pound |
| On the fourth ditto | 1 | 6 | per pound |
| On the fifth ditto | 2 | 0 | per pound |
| On the sixth ditto | 3 | 0 | per pound |
| On the seventh ditto | 4 | 0 | per pound |
| On the eighth ditto | 5 | 0 | per pound |
| On the ninth ditto | 6 | 0 | per pound |
| On the tenth ditto | 7 | 0 | per pound |
| On the eleventh ditto | 8 | 0 | per pound |
| On the twelfth ditto | 9 | 0 | per pound |
| On the thirteenth ditto | 10 | 0 | per pound |
| On the fourteenth ditto | 11 | 0 | per pound |
| On the fifteenth ditto | 12 | 0 | per pound |
| On the sixteenth ditto | 13 | 0 | per pound |
| On the seventeenth ditto | 14 | 0 | per pound |

| | s. | d. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| On the eighteenth ditto..... | 15 | 0 | per pound |
| On the nineteenth ditto..... | 16 | 0 | per pound |
| On the twentieth ditto..... | 17 | 0 | per pound |
| On the twenty-first ditto..... | 18 | 0 | per pound |
| On the twenty-second ditto..... | 19 | 0 | per pound |
| On the twenty-third ditto..... | 20 | 0 | per pound |

The foregoing table shews the progression per pound on every progressive thousand. The following table shews the amount of the tax on every thousand separately, and in the last column, the total amount of all the separate sums collected.

TABLE II.

| | | d. | | £. | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| An estate of £. 50 per ann. | at | 3 | per pound pays | 0 | 12 | 6 |
| 100 ..... | | 3 | ..... | 1 | 5 | 0 |
| 200 ..... | | 3 | ..... | 2 | 10 | 0 |
| 300 ..... | | 3 | ..... | 3 | 15 | 0 |
| 400 ... ..... | | 3 | ..... ..... | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 500 ..... | | 3 | ..... | 7 | 5 | 0 |

After 500*l.*—the tax of sixpence per pound takes place on the second £. 500—consequently an estate of £. 1000 *per ann.* pays £. 21 15*s.* and so on.

| | £. | | s. | d. | | £. | s. | | Total amount. £. | s. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| For the 1st | 500 | at | 0 | 3 | per pound | 7 | 5 | ... | 21 | 15 |
| 2d | 500 | at | 0 | 6 | ... | 14 | 10 | ... | | |
| 2d | 1000 | at | 0 | 9 | ... | 37 | 10 | ... | 59 | 5 |
| 3d | 1000 | at | 1 | 0 | ... | 50 | 0 | .. | 109 | 5 |
| 4th | 1000 | at | 1 | 6 | ... | 75 | 0 | ... | 184 | 5 |
| 5th | 1000 | at | 2 | 0 | ... | 100 | 0 | ... | 284 | 5 |
| 6th | 1000 | at | 3 | 0 | ... | 150 | 0 | ... | 434 | 5 |
| 7th | 1000 | at | 4 | 0 | ... | 200 | 0 | ... | 634 | 5 |
| 8th | 1000 | at | 5 | 0 | ... | 250 | 0 | ... | 880 | 5 |
| 9th | 1000 | at | 6 | 0 | ... | 300 | 0 | ... | 1180 | 5 |
| 10th | 1000 | at | 7 | 0 | ... | 350 | 0 | ... | 1530 | 5 |
| 11th | 1000 | at | 8 | 0 | ... | 400 | 0 | ... | 1930 | 5 |
| 12th | 1000 | at | 9 | 0 | ... | 450 | 0 | ... | 2380 | 5 |
| 13th | 1000 | at | 10 | 0 | ... | 500 | 0 | ... | 2880 | 5 |
| 14th | 1000 | at | 11 | 0 | ... | 550 | 0 | ... | 3430 | 5 |
| 15th | 1000 | at | 12 | 0 | ... | 600 | 0 | ... | 4030 | 5 |
| 16th | 1000 | at | 13 | 0 | ... | 650 | 0 | ... | 4680 | 5 |

| | £. | | s. | d. | | £. | s. | | £. | s. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17th | 1000 | at | 14 | 0 | ... | 700 | 0 | ... | 5380 | 5 |
| 18th | 1000 | at | 15 | 0 | ... | 750 | 0 | ... | 6130 | 5 |
| 19th | 1000 | at | 16 | 0 | ... | 800 | 0 | ... | 6930 | 5 |
| 20th | 1000 | at | 17 | 0 | ... | 850 | 0 | ... | 7780 | 5 |
| 21st | 1000 | at | 18 | 0 | ... | 900 | 0 | ... | 8680 | 5 |
| 22d | 1000 | at | 19 | 0 | ... | 950 | 0 | ... | 9630 | 5 |
| 23d | 1000 | at | 20 | 0 | ... | 1000 | 0 | ... | 10630 | 5 |

At the twenty-third thousand the tax becomes twenty shillings in the pound, and consequently every thousand beyond that sum can produce no profit but by dividing the estate. Yet formidable as this tax appears, it will not, I believe, produce so much as the commutation tax; should it produce more, it ought to be lowered to that amount upon estates under two or three thousand a year.

On small and middling estates it is lighter (as it is intended to be) than the commutation tax. It is not till after seven or eight thousand a year that it begins to be heavy. The object is not so much the produce of the tax, as the justice of the measure. The aristocracy has screened itself too much, and this serves to restore a part of the lost equilibrium.

As an instance of its screening itself, it is only necessary to look back to the first establishment of the excise laws, at what is called the Restoration, or the coming of Charles the Second. The aristocratical interest then in power, commuted the feudal services itself was under by laying a tax on beer brewed for *sale;* that is, they compounded with Charles for an exemption from those services for themselves and their heirs, by a tax to be paid by other people. The aristocracy do not purchase beer brewed for sale, but brew their own beer free of the duty, and if any commutation at that time were necessary, it ought to have been at the expence of those for whom the exemptions from those services were intended;* instead of which it was thrown on an entire different class of men.

But the chief object of this progressive tax (besides the justice of rendering taxes more equal than they are) is, as

* The tax on beer brewed for sale, from which the aristocracy are exempt, is almost one million more than the present commutation tax, being by the returns of 1788, £.1,666,152 and consequently they ought to take on themselves the amount of the commutation tax, as they are already exempted from one which is almost one million greater.

already stated, to extirpate the overgrown influence arising from the unnatural law of primogeniture, and which is one of the principal sources of corruption at elections.

It would be attended with no good consequences to enquire how such vast estates as thirty, forty, or fifty thousand a year could commence, and that at a time when commerce and manufactures were not in a state to admit of such acquisitions. Let it be sufficient to remedy the evil by putting them in a condition of descending again to the community, by the quiet means of apportioning them among all the heirs and heiresses of those families. This will be the more necessary, because hitherto the aristocracy have quartered their young children and connections upon the public in useless posts, places, and offices, which, when abolished, will leave them destitute, unless the law of primogeniture be also abolished or superseded.

A progressive tax will, in a great measure, effect this object, and that as a matter of interest to the parties most immediately concerned, as will be seen by the following table; which shews the nett produce upon every estate, after subtracting the tax. By this it will appear, that after an estate exceeds thirteen or fourteen thousand a year, the remainder produces but little profit to the holder, and consequently will pass either to the younger children, or to other kindred.

## TABLE III.

Shewing the nett produce of every estate from one thousand to twenty-three thousand pounds a year.

| No. of Thousands per ann. £. | Total Tax subtracted. £. | Nett Produce. £. |
|---|---|---|
| 1,000 | 21 | 979 |
| 2,000 | 59 | 1,941 |
| 3,000 | 109 | 2,891 |
| 4,000 | 184 | 3,816 |
| 5,000 | 284 | 4,716 |
| 6,000 | 434 | 5,566 |
| 7,000 | 634 | 6,366 |
| 8,000 | 880 | 7,120 |
| 9,000 | 1,180 | 7,820 |
| 10,000 | 1,530 | 8,470 |
| 11,000 | 1,930 | 9,070 |
| 12,000 | 2,380 | 9,620 |
| 13,000 | 2,884 | 10,120 |

| £. | £. | £. |
|---|---|---|
| 14,000 | 3,430 | 10,570 |
| 15,000 | 4,030 | 10,970 |
| 16,000 | 4,680 | 11,320 |
| 17,000 | 5,380 | 11,620 |
| 18,000 | 6,130 | 11,870 |
| 19,000 | 6,930 | 12,070 |
| 20,000 | 7,780 | 12,220 |
| 21,000 | 8,680 | 12,320 |
| 22,000 | 9,630 | 12,270 |
| 23,000 | 10,630 | 12,370 |

N. B. The odd shillings are dropped in this table.

According to this table, an estate cannot produce more than £12,370 clear of the land tax and the progressive tax, and therefore the dividing such estates will follow as a matter of family interest. An estate of £.23,000 a year, divided into five estates of four thousand each, and one of three, will be charged only £.1129 which is but five per cent. but if held by one possessor will be charged £.10,630.

Although an inquiry into the origin of those estates be unnecessary, the continuation of them in their present state is another subject. It is a matter of national concern. As hereditary estates, the law has created the evil, and it ought also to provide the remedy. Primogeniture ought to be abolished, not only because it is unnatural and unjust, but because the country suffers by its operation. By cutting off (as before observed) the younger children from their proper portion of inheritance, the public is loaded with the expence of maintaining them; and the freedom of elections violated by the overbearing influence which this unjust monopoly of family property produces. Nor is this all. It occasions a waste of national property. A considerable part of the land of the country is rendered unproductive by the great extent of parks and chases which this law serves to keep up, and this at a time when the annual production of grain is not equal to the national consumption.* In short, the evils of the aristocratical system are so great and numerous, so inconsistent with every thing that is just, wise, natural, and beneficent, that when they are considered, there ought not to be a doubt that many, who are now classed under that description, will wish to see such a system abolished.

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* See the reports on the corn trade.

What pleasure can they derive from contemplating the exposed condition, and almost certain beggary of their younger offspring? Every aristocratical family has an appendage of family beggars hanging round it, which in a few ages, or a few generations, are shook off, and console themselves with telling their tale in alms-houses, work-houses, and prisons. This is the natural consequence of aristocracy. The peer and the beggar are often of the same family. One extreme produces the other: to make one rich many must be made poor; neither can the system be supported by other means.

There are two classes of people to whom the laws of England are particularly hostile, and those the most helpless; younger children and the poor. Of the former I have just spoken; of the latter I shall mention one instance out of the many that might be produced, and with which I shall close this subject.

Several laws are in existence for regulating and limiting workmen's wages. Why not leave them as free to make their own bargains, as the law-makers are to let their farms and houses? Personal labour is all the property they have. Why is that little, and the little freedom they enjoy to be infringed? But the injustice will appear stronger, if we consider the operation and effect of such laws. When wages are fixed by what is called a law, the legal wages remain stationary, while every thing else is in progression; and as those who make that law, still continue to lay on new taxes by other laws, they encrease the expence of living by one law, and take away the means by another

But if those gentleman law.makers and tax-makers thought it right to limit the poor pittance which personal labour can produce, and on which a whole family is to be supported, they certainly must feel themselves happily indulged in a limitation on their own part, of not less than twelve thousand a year, and that of property they never acquired, (nor probably any of their ancestors) and of which they have made so ill a use.

Having now finished this subject, I shall bring the several particulars into one view, and then proceed to other matters.

The first EIGHT ARTICLES are brought forward from pages 97 and 98.

1. Abolition of two millions of poor-rates.
2. Provision for two hundred and fifty-two thousand poor

families, at the rate of four pounds per head for each child under fourteen years of age; which, with the addition of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, provides also education for one million and thirty thousand children.

3. Annuity of six pounds (per ann.) each, for all poor persons, decayed tradesmen, or others (supposed seventy thousand) of the age of fifty years, and until sixty.

4. Annuity of ten pounds each for life for all poor persons, decayed tradesmen, and others (supposed seventy thousand) of the age of sixty years.

5. Donation of twenty shillings each for fifty thousand births.

6. Donation of twenty shillings each for twenty thousand marriages.

7. Allowance of twenty thousand pounds for the funeral expences of persons travelling for work, and dying at a distance from their friends.

8. Employment at all times for the casual poor in the cities of London and Westminster.

### Second Enumeration.

9. Abolition of the tax on houses and windows.

10. Allowance of three shillings per week for life to fifteen thousand disbanded soldiers, and a proportionable allowance to the officers of the disbanded corps.

Increase of pay to the remaining soldiers of £.19,500 annually.

12. The same allowance to the disbanded navy, and the same increase of pay, as to the army.

13. Abolition of the commutation tax.

14. Plan of a progressive tax, operating to extirpate the unjust and unnatural law of primogeniture, and the vicious influence of the aristocratical system.*

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* When enquiries are made into the condition of the poor, various degrees of distress will most probably be found, to render a different arrangement preferable to that which is already proposed. Widows with families will be in greater want than where there are husbands living. There is also a difference in the expence of living in different counties; and more so in fuel.

Suppose, then, fifty thousand extraordinary cases, at the rate of £.10 per family per ann. ..... £.500,000
100,000 families at £.8 per family per ann. ..... 800,000
100,000 families at £.7 per family per ann. ..... 700,000

Carried over ..... £.2,000,000

There yet remains, as already stated, one million of surplus taxes. Some part of this will be required for circumstances that do not immediately present themselves, and such part as shall not be wanted, will admit a further reduction of taxes equal to that amount.

Among the claims that justice requires to be made, the condition of the inferior revenue officers will merit attention. It is a reproach to any Government to waste such an immensity of revenue in sinecures and nominal and unnecessary places and offices, and not allow even a decent livelihood to those on whom the labour falls. The salary of the inferior officers of the revenue has stood at the petty pittance of less than fifty pounds a year for upwards of one hundred years. It ought to be seventy. About one hundred and twenty thousand pounds applied to this purpose, will put all those salaries in a decent condition.

This was proposed to be done almost twenty years ago, but the treasury-board then in being startled at it, as it might lead to similar expectations from the army and navy, and the event was, that the King, or somebody for him, applied to Parliament to have his own salary raised an hundred thousand a year, which being done, every thing else was laid aside.

With respect to another class of men, the inferior clergy, I forbear to enlarge on their condition; but all partialities and prejudices for or against different modes and forms of religion aside, common justice will determine, whether there ought to be an income of twenty or thirty pounds a year to one man, and of ten thousand to another. I speak on this subject with the more freedom, because I am known not to

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| | |
|---|---|
| Brought over ..... | £.2,000,000 |
| 104,000 families, at £.5 per family, per ann. ..... | 520,000 |
| And instead of ten shillings per head for the education of other children, to allow fifty shillings per family for that purpose to fifty thousand families ..... | 250,000 |
| | 2,770,000 |
| 140,000 Aged persons as before ..... | 1,120,000 |
| | 3,890,000 |

This arrangement amounts to the same sum as stated in page 93, including the £.250,000 for education; but it provides (including the aged people) for four hundred and four thousand families, which is almost one third of all the families in England.

be a Presbyterian; and therefore the cant cry of court sycophants, about church and meeting, kept up to amuse and bewilder the nation, cannot be raised against me.

Ye simple men, on both sides the question, do ye not see through this courtly craft? If ye can be kept disputing and wrangling about church and meeting, ye just answer the purpose of every courtier, who lives the while on the spoil of the taxes, and laughs at your credulity. Every religion is good that teaches man to be good; and I know of none that instructs him to be bad.

All the before-mentioned calculations, suppose only sixteen millions and an half taxes paid into the Exchequer, after the expence of collection and drawbacks at the Custom-house and Excise-office are deducted; whereas the sum paid into the Exchequer is very nearly, if not quite, seventeen millions. The taxes raised in Scotland and Ireland are expended in those countries, and therefore their savings will come out of their own taxes; but if any part be paid into the English Exchequer, it might be remitted. This will not make one hundred thousand pounds a year difference.

There now remains only the national debt to be considered. In the year 1789, the interest, exclusive of the tontine, was £.9,150,138. How much the capital has been reduced since that time, the minister best knows. But after paying the interest, abolishing the tax on houses and windows, the commutation tax, and the poor-rates; and making all the provisions for the poor, for the education of children, the support of the aged, the disbanded part of the army and navy, and increasing the pay of the remainder, there will be a surplus of one million.

The present scheme of paying off the national debt appears to me, speaking as an indifferent person, to be an ill-concerted, if not a fallacious job. The burthen of the national debt consists not in its being so many millions, or so many hundred millions, but in the quantity of taxes collected every year to pay the interest. If this quantity continue the same, the burthen of the national debt is the same to all intents and purposes, be the capital more or less. The only knowledge which the public can have of the reduction of the debt, must be through the reduction of taxes for paying the interest. The debt, therefore, is not reduced one farthing to the public by all the millions that have been paid; and it would require more money now to purchase up the capital, than when the scheme began.

Digressing for a moment at this point, to which I shall re-

turn again, I look back to the appointment of Mr. Pitt, as minister.

I was then in America. The war was over; and though resentment had ceased, memory was still alive.

When the news of the coalition arrived, though it was a matter of no concern to me as a citizen of America, I felt it as a man. It had something in it which shocked, by publicly sporting with decency, if not with principle. It was impudence in Lord North; it was want of firmness in Mr. Fox.

Mr. Pitt was, at that time, what may be called a maiden character in politics. So far from being hackneyed, he appeared not to be initiated into the first mysteries of court intrigue. Every thing was in his favour. Resentment against the coalition served as friendship to him, and his ignorance of vice was credited for virtue. With the return of peace, commerce and prosperity would rise of itself; yet even this increase was thrown to his account.

When he came to the helm the storm was over, and he had nothing to interrupt his course. It required even ingenuity to be wrong, and he succeeded. A little time shewed him the same sort of man as his predecessors had been. Instead of profiting by those errors which had accumulated a burthen of taxes unparalleled in the world, he sought, I might almost say, he advertised for enemies, and provoked means to increase taxation. Aiming at something, he knew not what, he ransacked Europe and India for adventures, and abandoning the fair pretensions he began with, became the knight-errant of modern times.

It is unpleasant to see character throw itself away. It is more so to see one's self deceived. Mr. Pitt had merited nothing, but he promised much. He gave symptoms of a mind superior to the meanness and corruption of courts. His apparent candour encouraged expectations; and the public confidence, stunned, wearied, and confounded by a chaos of parties, revived and attached itself to him. But mistaking, as he has done, the disgust of the nation against the coalition, for merit in himself, he has rushed into measures, which a man less supported would not have presumed to act.

All this seems to shew that change of ministers amounts to nothing. One goes out, another comes in, and still the same measures, vices, and extravagance are pursued. It signifies not who is minister. The defect lies in the system. The foundation and the superstructure of the Government

is bad. Prop it as you please, it continually sinks into Court Government, and ever will.

I return, as I promised, to the subject of the national debt, that offspring of the Dutch-Anglo Revolution, and its handmaid the Hanover succession.

But it is now too late to inquire how it began. Those to whom it is due have advanced the money; and whether it was well or ill spent, or pocketed, is not their crime. It is, however, easy to see, that as the nation proceeds in contemplating the nature and principles of Government, and to understand taxes, and make comparisons between those of America, France, and England, it will be next to impossible to keep it in the same torpid state it has hitherto been. Some reform must, from the necessity of the case, soon begin. It is not whether these principles press with little or much force in the present moment. They are out. They are abroad in the world, and no force can stop them. Like a secret told, they are beyond recal; and he must be blind indeed that does not see that a change is already beginning.

Nine millions of dead taxes is a serious thing; and this not only for bad, but in great measure for foreign Government. By putting the power of making war into the hands of foreigners who came for what they could get, little else was to be expected than what has happened.

Reasons are already advanced in this work shewing that whatever the reforms in the taxes may be, they ought to be made in the current expences of Government, and not in the part applied to the interest of the national debt. By remitting the taxes of the poor, *they* will be totally relieved, and all discontent on their part will be taken away; and by striking off such of the taxes as are already mentioned, the nation will more than recover the whole expence of the mad American war.

There will then remain only the national debt as a subject of discontent; and in order to remove, or rather to prevent this, it would be good policy in the stock-holders themselves to consider it as property, subject, like all other property, to bear some portion of the taxes. It would give to it both popularity and security, and as a great part of its present inconvenience is balanced by the capital which it keeps alive, a measure of this kind would so far add to that balance as to silence objections.

This may be done by such gradual means as to accomplish all that is necessary with the greatest ease and convenience.

Instead of taxing the capital, the best method would be to tax the interest by some progressive ratio, and to lessen the public taxes in the same proportion as the interest diminished.

Suppose the interest was taxed one halfpenny in the pound the first year, a penny more the second, and to proceed by a certain ratio to be determined upon, always less than any other tax upon property. Such a tax would be subtracted from the interest at the time of payment, without any expence of collection.

One halfpenny in the pound would lessen the interest, and consequently the taxes twenty thousand pounds. The tax on waggons amounts to this sum, and this tax might be taken off the first year. The second year the tax on female servants, or some other of the like amount might also be taken off, and by proceeding in this manner, always applying the tax raised from the property of the debt towards its extinction, and not carry it to the current services, it would liberate itself.

The stock-holders, notwithstanding this tax, would pay less taxes than they do now. What they would save by the extinction of the poor-rates, and the tax on houses and windows, and the commutation tax, would be considerably greater than what this tax, slow, but certain in its operation, amounts to.

It appears to me to be prudence to look out for measures that may apply under any circumstances that may approach. There is, at this moment, a crisis in the affairs of Europe that requires it. Preparation now is wisdom. If taxation be once let loose, it will be difficult to reinstate it; neither would the relief be so effectual, as to proceed by some certain and gradual reduction.

The fraud, hypocrisy, and imposition of Government, are now beginning to be too well understood to promise them any long career. The farce of monarchy and aristocracy, in all countries, is following that of chivalry, and Mr. Burke is dressing for the funeral. Let it then pass quietly to the tomb of all other follies, and the mourners be comforted.

The time is not very distant when England will laugh at itself for sending to Holland, Hanover, Zell, or Brunswick for men, at the expence of a million a year, who understood neither her laws, her language, nor her interest, and whose capacities would scarcely have fitted them for the office of a parish constable. If Government could be trusted to such hands, it must be some easy and simple thing indeed, and

materials fit for all the purposes may be found in every town and village in England.

When it shall be said in any country in the world, "My poor are happy; neither ignorance nor distress is to be found among them; my jails are empty of prisoners, my streets of beggars; the aged are not in want, the taxes are not oppressive; the rational world is my friend, because I am the friend of its happiness." When these things can be said, then may that country boast its Constitution and its Government.

Within the space of a few years we have seen two Revolutions, those of America and France. In the former, the contest was long, and the conflict severe; in the latter, the nation acted with such a consolidated impulse, that having no foreign enemy to contend with, the Revolution was complete in power the moment it appeared. From both those instances it is evident, that the greatest forces that can be brought into the field of Revolutions, are reason and common interest. Where these can have the opportunity of acting, opposition dies with fear, or crumbles away by conviction. It is a great standing which they have now universally obtained; and we may hereafter hope to see Revolutions, or changes in Governments, produced with the same quiet operation by which any measure, determinable by reason and discussion, is accomplished.

When a nation changes its opinion and habits of thinking, it is no longer to be governed as before; but it would not only be wrong, but bad policy, to attempt by force what ought to be accomplished by reason. Rebellion consists in forcibly opposing the general will of a nation, whether by a party or by a Government. There ought, therefore, to be in every nation a method of occasionally ascertaining the state of public opinion with respect to Government. On this point the old Government of France was superior to the present Government of England, because, on extraordinary occasions, recourse could be had to what was then called the States-General. But in England there are no such occasional bodies; and as to those who are now called representatives, a great part of them are mere machines of court, placemen, and dependants.

I presume, that though all the People of England pay taxes, not an hundredth part of them are electors, and the members of one of the Houses of Parliament represent nobody but themselves. There is, therefore, no power but the voluntary will of the People that has a right to act in any matter respecting a general reform; and by the same

right that two persons can confer on such a subject a thousand may. The object, in all such preliminary proceedings, is to find out what the general sense of a nation is, and to be governed by it. If it prefer a bad or defective Government to a reform, or choose to pay ten times more taxes than there is occasion for, it has a right so to to do; and so long as the majority do not impose conditions on the minority, different to what they impose on themselves, though there may be much error, there is no injustice. Neither will the error continue long. Reason and discussion will soon bring things right, however wrong they may begin. By such a process no tumult is to be apprehended. The poor, in all countries, are naturally both peaceable and grateful in all reforms in which their interest and happiness are included. It is only by neglecting and rejecting them that they become tumultuous.

The objects that now press on the public attention are the French Revolution, and the prospect of a general Revolution in Governments. Of all nations in Europe, there is none so much interested in the French Revolution as England. Enemies for ages, and that at a vast expence, and without any national object, the opportunity now presents itself of amicably closing the scene, and joining their efforts to reform the rest of Europe. By doing this, they will not only prevent the further effusion of blood, and increase of taxes, but be in a condition of getting rid of a considerable part of their present burthens, as has been already stated. Long experience, however, has shewn that reforms of this kind are not those which old Governments wish to promote; and therefore it is to nations, and not to such Governments, that these matters present themselves.

In the preceding part of this work I have spoken of an alliance between England, France, and America, for the purposes that were to be afterwards mentioned. Though I have no direct authority on the part of America, I have good reason to conclude, that she is disposed to enter into a consideration of such a measure, provided, that the Governments with which she might ally, acted as national Governments, and not as Courts enveloped in intrigue and mystery. That France as a nation, and a national Government, would prefer an alliance with England, is a matter of certainty. Nations, like individuals, who have long been enemies, without knowing each other, or knowing why, become the better friends when they discover the errors and impositions under which they had acted.

Admitting, therefore, the probability of such a connec-

tion, I will state some matters by which such an alliance, together with that of Holland, might render service, not only to the parties immediately concerned, but to all Europe.

It is, I think, certain, that if the fleets of England, France, and Holland were confederated, they could propose, with effect, a limitation to, and a general dismantling of, all the navies in Europe, to a certain proportion to be agreed upon.

First, That no new ship of war shall be built by any power in Europe, themselves included.

Secondly, That all the navies now in existence shall be put back, suppose to one-tenth of their present force. This will save France and England at least two millions sterling annually to each, and their relative force be in the same proportion as it is now. If men will permit themselves to think, as rational beings ought to think, nothing can appear more ridiculous and absurd, exclusive of all moral reflections, than to be at the expence of building navies, filling them with men, and then hauling them into the ocean, to try which can sink each other fastest. Peace, which costs nothing, is attended with infinitely more advantage, than any victory with all its expence. But this, though it best answers the purpose of nations, does not that of Court Governments, whose habited policy is pretence for taxation, places, and offices.

It is, I think, also certain, that the above confederated powers, together with that of the United States of America, can propose with effect, to Spain, the Independence of South America, and the opening those countries of immense extent and wealth to the general commerce of the world, as North America now is.

With how much more glory, and advantage to itself, does a nation act, when it exerts its powers to rescue the world from bondage, and to create itself friends, than when it employs those powers to encrease ruin, desolation, and misery. The horrid scene that is now acting by the English Government in the East Indies, is fit only to be told of Goths and Vandals, who, destitute of principle, robbed and tortured the world they were incapable of enjoying.

The opening of South America would produce an immense field of commerce, and a ready money market for manufactures, which the eastern world does not. The East is already a country full of manufactures, the importation of which is not only an injury to the manufactures of England, but a drain upon its specie. The balance against England by this trade is regularly upwards of half a million annually sent out in the East India ships in silver; and this is the

reason, together with German intrigue, and German subsidies, there is so little silver in England.

But any war is harvest to such Governments, however ruinous it may be to a nation. It serves to keep up deceitful expectations, which prevent a people looking into the defects and abuses of Government. It is the *lo, here!* and the *lo, there!* that amuses and cheats the multitude.

Never did so great an opportunity offer itself to England, and to all Europe, as is produced by the two revolutions of America and France. By the former, freedom has a national champion in the Western world; and by the latter, in Europe. When another nation shall join France, despotism and bad Government will scarcely dare to appear. To use a trite expression, the iron is becoming hot all over Europe. The insulted German and the enslaved Spaniard, the Russ and the Pole, are beginning to think. The present age will hereafter merit to be called the Age of Reason, and the present generation will appear to the future as the Adam of a new world.

When all the Governments of Europe shall be established on the Representative system, nations will become acquainted, and the animosities and prejudices fomented by the intrigue and artifice of courts, will cease. The oppressed soldier will become a freeman; and the tortured sailor, no longer dragged along the streets like a felon, will pursue his mercantile voyage in safety. It would be better that nations should continue the pay of their soldiers during their lives, and give them their discharge, and restore them to freedom and their friends, and cease recruiting, than retain such multitudes at the same expence, in a condition useless to society and themselves. As soldiers have hitherto been treated in most countries, they might be said to be without a friend. Shunned by the citizen on an apprehension of being enemies to liberty, and too often insulted by those who commanded them, their condition was a double oppression. But where genuine principles of liberty pervade a people, every thing is restored to order; and the soldier civilly treated, returns the civility.

In contemplating revolutions, it is easy to perceive that they may arise from two distinct causes; the one, to avoid or get rid of some great calamity; the other, to obtain some great and positive good; and the two may be distinguished by the names of active and passive Revolutions. In those which proceed from the former cause, the temper becomes incensed and soured; and the redress, obtained by danger, is too often sullied by revenge. But in those which proceed

from the latter, the heart, rather animated than agitated, enters serenely upon the subject. Reason and discussion, persuasion and conviction, become the weapons in the contest, and it is only when those are attempted to be suppressed that recourse is had to violence. When men unite in agreeing that a *thing is good*, could it be obtained, such as relief from a burthen of taxes, and the extinction of corruption, the object is more than half accomplished. What they approve as the end, they will promote in the means.

Will any man say, in the present excess of taxation, falling so heavily on the poor, that a remission of five pounds annually of taxes to one hundred and four thousand poor families is not a *good thing?* Will he say, that a remission of seven pounds annually to one hundred thousand other poor families—of eight pounds annually to another hundred thousand poor families, and of ten pounds annually to fifty thousand poor and widowed families, are not *good things*? And to proceed a step farther in this climax, will he say, that to provide against the misfortunes to which all human life is subject, by securing six pounds annually for all poor, distressed, and reduced persons of the age of fifty and until sixty, and of ten pounds annually after sixty, is not a *good thing?*

Will he say, that an abolition of two millions of poor-rates to the housekeepers, and of the whole of the house and window-light tax, and of the commutation-tax, is not a *good thing*? Or will he say, that to abolish corruption is a *bad thing*?

If, therefore, the good to be obtained be worthy of a passive, rational, and costless Revolution, it would be bad policy to prefer waiting for a calamity that should force a violent one. I have no idea, considering the Reforms which are now passing and spreading throughout Europe, that England will permit herself to be the last; and where the occasion and the opportunity quietly offer, it is better than to wait for a turbulent necessity. It may be considered as an honour to the animal faculties of man to obtain redress by courage and danger, but it is far greater honour to the rational faculties to accomplish the same object by reason, accommodation, and general consent.*

* I know it is the opinion of many of the most enlightened characters in France (there always will be those who see farther into events than others) not only among the general mass of citizens, but of many of the principal members of the former National

As Reforms, or Revolutions, call them which you please, extend themselves among nations, those nations will form connections and conventions, and when a few are thus confederated, the progress will be rapid, till despotism and corrupt Government be totally expelled, at least out of two quarters of the world, Europe and America. The Algerine piracy may then be commanded to cease, for it is only by the malicious policy of old Governments against each other that it exists.

Thoughout this work, various and numerous as the subjects are, which I have taken up and investigated, there is only a single paragraph upon religion, viz. "*that every religion is good, that teaches man to be good.*"

I have carefully avoided to enlarge upon the subject, because I am inclined to believe, that what is called the present ministry wish to see contentions about religion kept up, to prevent the nation turning its attention to subjects of Government. It is, as if they were to say, "*Look that way, or any way but this.*"

But as religion is very improperly made a political machine, and the reality of it is thereby destroyed, I will conclude this work with stating in what light religion appears to me.

If we suppose a large family of children, who, on any particular day, or particular circumstance, made it a custom to present to their parent some token of their affection and gratitude, each of them would make a different offering, and most probably in a different manner. Some would pay their congratulations in themes of verse or prose, by some

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Assembly, that the monarchical plan will not continue many years in that country. They have found out, that as wisdom cannot be made hereditary, power ought not; and that, for a man to merit a million sterling a year from a nation, he ought to have a mind capable of comprehending from an atom to a universe; which, if he had, he would be above receiving the pay. But they wished not to appear to lead the nation faster than its own reason and interest dictated. In all the conversations where I have been present upon this subject, the idea always was, that when such a time, from the general opinion of the nation, shall arrive, that the honourable and liberal method would be, to make a handsome present in fee simple to the person, whoever he may be, that shall then be in the monarchical office, and for him to retire to the enjoyment of private life, posessing his share of general rights and privileges, and to be no more accountable to the public for his time and his conduct than any other citizen.

little devices, as their genius dictated, according to what they thought would please; and, perhaps, the least of all, not able to do any of those things, would ramble into the garden, or the field, and gather what it thought the prettiest flower it could find, though, perhaps, it might be but a simple weed. The parent would be more gratified by such variety, than if the whole had acted on a concerted plan, and each had made exactly the same offering. This would have the cold appearance of contrivance, or the harsh one of controul. But of all unwelcome things, nothing could more afflict the parent than to know, that the whole of them had afterwards gotten together by the ears, boys and girls, fighting, scratching, reviling, and abusing each other, about which was the best or the worst present.

Why may we not suppose, that the great Father of all is pleased with variety of devotion; and that the greatest offence we can act, is that by which we seek to torment and render each other miserable. For my own part, I am fully satisfied that what I am now doing, with an endeavour to conciliate mankind, to render their condition happy, to unite nations that have hitherto been enemies, and to extirpate the horrid practice of war, and break the chains of slavery and oppression, is acceptable in His sight, and being the best I can perform, I act it cheerfully.

I do not believe that any two men, on what are called doctrinal points, think alike who think at all. It is only those who have not thought, that appear to agree. It is in this case as with what is called the British Constitution. It has been taken for granted to be good, and encomiums have supplied the place of proof. But when the nation comes to examine into its principles and the abuses it admits, it will be found to have more defects than I have pointed out in this work and the former.

As to what are called national religions, we may, with as much propriety talk of national gods. It is either political craft, or the remains of the Pagan system, when every nation had its separate and particular deity. Among all the writers of the English Church clergy, who have treated on the general subject of religion, the present Bishop of Landaff has not been excelled, and it is with much pleasure that I take the opportunity of expressing this token of respect.

I have now gone through the whole of the subject, at least, as far as it appears to me at present. It has been my intention for the five years I have been in Europe, to offer an address to the People of England on the subject of

Government, if the opportunity presented itself before I returned to America. Mr. Burke has thrown it in my way, and I thank him. On a certain occasion three years ago, I pressed him to propose a National Convention to be fairly elected, for the purpose of taking the state of the nation into consideration; but I found, that however strongly the Parliamentary current was then setting against the Party he acted with, their policy was to keep every thing within that field of corruption, and trust to accidents. Long experience had shewn that Parliaments would follow any change of ministers, and on this they rested their hopes and their expectations.

Formerly, when divisions arose respecting Governments, recourse was had to the sword, and a civil war ensued. That savage custom is exploded by the new system, and reference is had to National Convention. Discussion and the general will arbitrates the question, and to this, private opinion yields with a good grace, and order is preserved uninterrupted.

Some gentlemen have affected to call the principles upon which this work and the former part of *Rights of Man* are founded, "a new fangled doctrine." The question is not whether these principles are new or old, but whether they are right or wrong. Suppose the former, I will shew their effect by a figure easily understood.

It is now towards the middle of February. Were I to take a turn into the country, the trees would present a leafless winterly appearance. As people are apt to pluck twigs as they go along, I might do the same, and by chance might observe, that a *single bud* on that twig had begun to swell. I should reason very unnaturally, or rather not reason at all, to suppose *this* was the *only* bud in England which had this appearance. Instead of deciding thus, I should instantly conclude, that the same appearance was beginning, or about to begin, every where; and though the vegetable sleep will continue longer on some trees and plants than on others, and though some of them may not *blossom* for two or three years, all will be in leaf in the summer, except those which are *rotten*. What pace the political summer may keep with the natural, no human foresight can determine. It is however, not difficult to perceive that the spring is begun. Thus wishing, as I sincerely do, freedom and happiness to all nations, I close the SECOND PART.

# APPENDIX.

As the publication of this work has been delayed beyond the time intended, I think it not improper, all circumstances considered, to state the causes that have occasioned the delay.

The reader will probably observe, that some parts in the plan contained in this work for reducing the taxes, and certain parts in Mr. Pitt's speech at the opening of the present session, Tuesday, January 31, are so much alike, as to induce a belief that either the Author had taken the hint from Mr. Pitt, or Mr. Pitt from the Author. I will first point out the parts that are similar, and then state such circumstances as I am acquainted with, leaving the reader to make his own conclusion.

Considering it almost an unprecedented case, that taxes should be proposed to be taken off, it is equally as extraordinary that such a measure should occur to two persons at the same time; and still more so, (considering the vast variety and multiplicity of taxes) that they should hit on the same specific taxes. Mr. Pitt has mentioned, in his speech, the tax on *Carts* and *Waggons*—that on *Female Servants*—the lowering the tax on *Candles*, and the taking off the tax of three shillings on *Houses* having under seven windows.

Every one of those specific taxes are a part of the plan contained in this work, and proposed also to be taken off. Mr. Pitt's plan, it is true, goes no farther than to a reduction of three hundred and twenty thousand pounds; and the reduction proposed in this work to nearly six millions. I have made my calculations on only sixteen millions and a half of revenue, still asserting that it was " very nearly, if not quite, seventeen millions." Mr. Pitt states it at 16,690,000. I know enough of the matter to say, that he has not *over*-stated it. Having thus given the particulars, which correspond in this work and his speech, I will state a chain of circumstances that may lead to some explanation.

The first hint for lessening the taxes, and that as a consequence flowing from the French Revolution, is to be found in the ADDRESS and DECLARATION of the Gentlemen who met met at the Thatched-House Tavern, August 20,

1791. Among other particulars stated in that Address, is the following, put as an interrogation to the Government opposers of the French Revolution. "*Are they sorry that the pretence for new oppressive taxes, and the occasion for continuing many old taxes will be at an end?*"

It is well known, that the persons who chiefly frequent the Thatched-House Tavern, are men of Court connections, and so much did they take this Address and Declaration respecting the French Revolution and the reduction of taxes in disgust, that the Landlord was under the necessity of informing the Gentlemen, who composed the meeting of the twentieth of August, and who proposed holding another meeting, that he could not receive them*.

What was only hinted at in the Address and Declaration, respecting taxes and principles of Government, will be found reduced to a regular system in this work. But as Mr. Pitt's speech contains some of the same things respecting taxes, I now come to give the circumstances before alluded to.

The case is: This work was intended to be published just before the meeting of Parliament, and for that purpose a considerable part of the copy was put into the printer's hands in September, and all the remaining copy, so far as page 160,† which contains the parts to which Mr. Pitt's speech is similar, was given to him full six weeks before the meeting of Parliament, and he was informed of the time

* The gentleman who signed the address and declaration as chairman of the meeting, Mr. Horne Tooke, being generally supposed to be the person who drew it up, and having spoken much in commendation of it, has been jocularly accused of praising his own work. To free him from this embarrasment, and to save him the repeated trouble of mentioning the author, as he has not failed to do, I make no hesitation in saying, that as the opportunity of benefiting by the French Revolution easily occurred to me, I drew up the publication in question, and shewed it to him and some other gentlemen; who fully approving it, held a meeting for the purpose of making it public, and subscribed to the amount of fifty guineas to defray the expence of advertising. I believe there are at this time, in England, a greater number of men acting on disinterested principles, and determined to look into the nature and practices of Government themselves, and not blindly trust, as has hitherto been the case either to Government generally, or to Parliaments, or to Parliamentary opposition, than to any former period. Had this been done a century ago, corruption and taxation had not arrived to the height they are now at.

† This refers to the original octavo edition.

at which it was to appear. He had composed nearly the whole about a fortnight before the time of Parliament meeting, and had printed as far as page 112, and had given me a proof of the next sheet, up to page 128. It was then in sufficient forwardness to be out at the time proposed, as two other sheets were ready for striking off. I had before told him, that if he thought he should be straightened for time, I would get part of the work done at another press, which he desired me not to do. In this manner the work stood on the Tuesday fortnight preceding the meeting of Parliament, when all at once, without any previous intimation, though I had been with him the evening before, he sent me, by one of his workmen, all the remaining copy, from page 112, declining to go on with the work *on any consideration.*

To account for this extraordinary conduct I was totally at a loss, as he stopped at the part where the arguments on systems and principles of Governments closed, and where the plan for reduction of taxes, the education of children, and the support of the poor and the aged begins; and still more especially, as he had, at the time of his beginning to print, and before he had seen the whole copy, offered a thousand pounds for the copy-right, together with the future copy-right of the former part of Rights of Man. I told the person who brought me this offer that I should not accept it, and wished it not to be renewed, giving them as my reason, that though I believed the printer to be an honest man, I would never put it in the power of any printer or publisher to suppress or alter a work of mine, by making him master of the copy, or give him the right of selling it to any minister, or to any other person, or to treat as a mere matter of traffic, that which I intended should operate as a principle.

His refusal to complete the work (which he could not purchase) obliged me to seek for another printer, and this of consequence would throw the publication back till after the meeting of Parliament, otherwise it would have appeared that Mr. Pitt had only taken up a part of the plan which I had more fully stated.

Whether that gentleman, or any other, had seen the work, or any part of it, is more than I have authority to say. But the manner in which the work was returned, and the particular time at which this was done, and that after the offers he had made, are suspicious circumstances. I know what the opinion of booksellers and publishers is upon such a case, but as to my own, I choose to make no declaration. There are many ways by which proof sheets may be

procured by other persons before a work publicly appears; to which I shall add a certain circumstance, which is,

A ministerial bookseller in Piccadilly, who has been employed, as common report says, by a clerk of one of the boards closely connected with the ministry (the Board of Trade and Plantation, of which Hawkesbury is President) to publish what he calls my Life, (I wish that his own life and the lives of all the Cabinet were as good) used to have his books printed at the same printing-office that I employed; but when the former part of *Rights of Man* came out, he took away his work in dudgeon; and about a week or ten days before the printer returned my copy, he came to make him an offer of his work again, which was accepted. This would consequently give him admission into the printing-office where the sheets of this work were then lying; and as booksellers and printers are free with each other, he would have the opportunity of seeing what was going on. Be the case however as it may, Mr. Pitt's plan, little and diminutive as it is, would have had a very awkward appearance, had this work appeared at the time the printer had engaged to finish it.

I have now stated the particulars which occasioned the delay, from the proposal to purchase to the refusal to print. If all the gentlemen are innocent, it is very unfortunate for them that such a variety of suspicious circumstances should, without any design, arrange themselves together.

Having now finished this part, I will conclude with stating another circumstance.

About a fortnight or three weeks before the meeting of Parliament, a small addition, amounting to about twelve shillings and sixpence a year, was made to the pay of the soldiers, or rather, their pay was docked so much less. Some gentlemen who knew, in part, that this work would contain a plan of reform respecting the oppressed condition of soldiers, wished me to add a note to the work, signifying, that the part upon that subject had been in the printer's hands some weeks before that addition of pay was proposed. I declined doing this, lest it should be interpreted into an air of vanity, or an endeavour to excite suspicion (for which, perhaps, there might be no grounds) that some of the Government gentlemen, had, by some means or other, made out what this work would contain: and had not the printing been interrupted so as to occasion a delay beyond the time fixed for publication, nothing contained in this appendix would have appeared.

THOMAS PAINE.