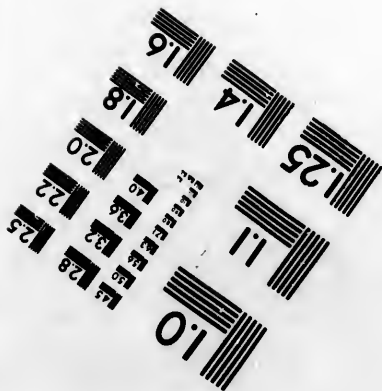
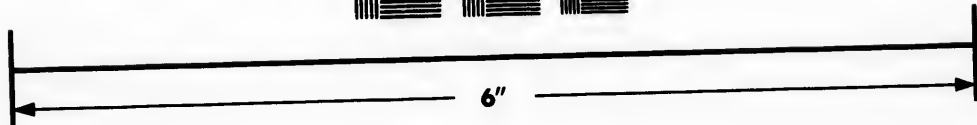
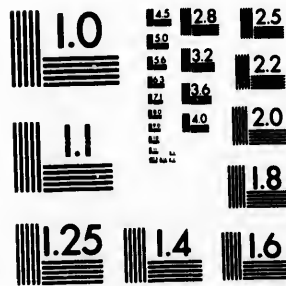


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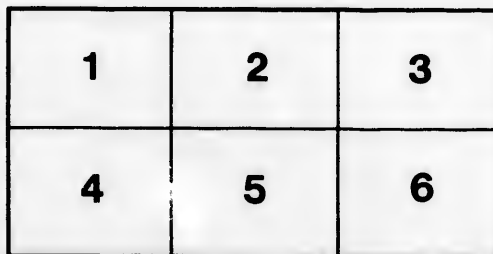
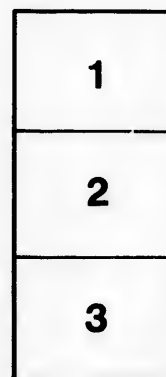
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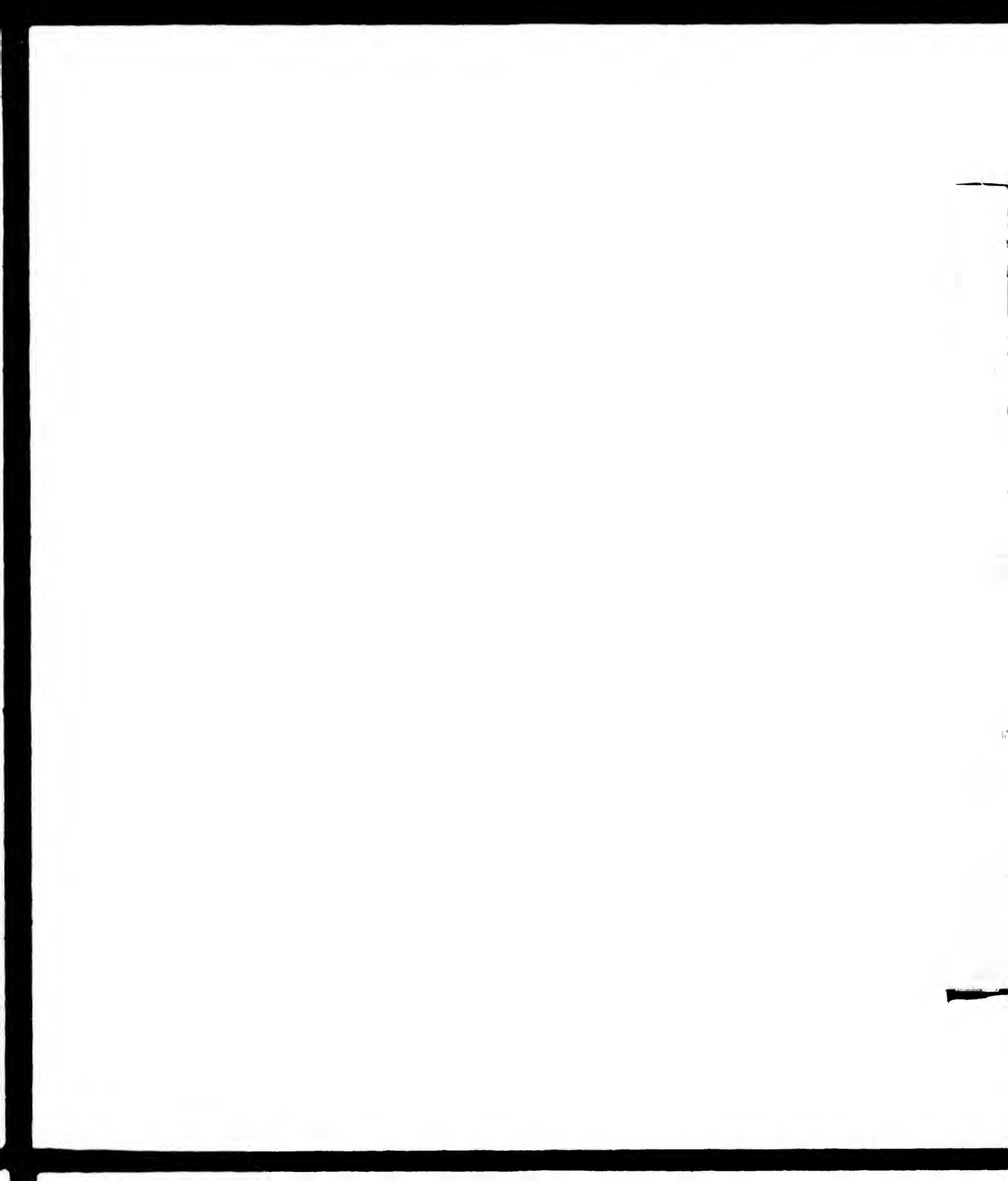
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THE
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WARNING TO BRITAIN.

THE writers who have published their sentiments on the events which have passed in France since the Revolution, have been so lavish of argument, so exuberant in theory, that they seem to have relied for success with their readers, not so much on force of facts, as on ingenuity in weaving curious webs of reasoning. We have had, upon one hand, panegyrics on Gallic freedom, with enthusiastic calls to pursue the same system in order to arrive at the same happiness: on the other hand, every circumstance of the Revolution, from the original wish for liberty, has been condemned and satirized with more wit than truth. To plain men these writers seem equally removed from that examination, which, attending solely to facts, and their immediate or more remote consequences, is not apt to trust to cunning of argument, but looks on every side for the more solid support of experiment.

B I am

I am inclined to think the application of theory to matters of government, a surprizing imbecility in the human mind; for men to be ready to trust to reason in enquiries where experiment is equally at hand for their guide, has been pronounced by various great authorities to be in every other science the grossest folly—why the observation should not equally extend to the science of legislation, will not easily appear.

My personal pursuit for a long series of years has confirmed me in the habit of experimental enquiry: I have observed on so many occasions the fallacy of reasoning, even when exerted with great force of talents, that I am apt, whenever facts are not clearly discerned, to question rather than decide; to doubt much readier than to deliberate; and to value the citation of one new experimented case in point, more than an hundred brilliant declamations. Having resided a good deal in France during the progress of the Revolution, to which I was, for some time, a warm friend; having passed through every province of the kingdom; examined all her principal manufactures; gained much instruction relative to the state of her commerce, and attended minutely to the situation of her people, it was natural on my return to England to consult with attention the legislative acts of the new government, and to procure by correspondence and conversation, with persons on whom I could depend, such intelligence as was necessary to enable me to satisfy my curiosity concerning the result of the most singular Revolution recorded in the annals of mankind. I should consider myself as a bad subject of Britain, if I did not use every endeavour to render the knowledge thus acquired, of use to my countrymen; and it is solely with this view that I now throw together a few short essays, inserted originally in the Annals of Agriculture, somewhat improved in form, and with such additions as the events of the period afford.

But in attempting to give expressions inadequate to the indignation every one must feel at the horrible events now passing in France, I am sensible that I may be reproached with changing my politics, my "principles," as it has been expressed.—My principles I certainly have not changed, because if there is one principle more predominant than another in my politics, it is the *principle of change*. I have been too
long

long a farmer to be governed by any thing but events; I have a constitutional abhorrence of theory, of all trust in abstract reasoning; and consequently a reliance merely on experience, in other words, on events, the only principle worthy of an experimenter. Thus founded on sure ground, it shall be my business in the ensuing pages, to bring to the reader's notice some facts proper to explain

FIRST, the real state of France: and

SECOND, the causes of her evils; and I shall then apply her example to the landed, monied, commercial, and labouring interests of these kingdoms.

PRESENT STATE OF FRANCE.

THE facts which will best explain this, concern—1. Government. 2. Personal Liberty. 3. Security of Property.

Government.

In all discussions relative to the new system of constitution or government in France, it is necessary first to enquire whether they have any other system than that of anarchy. The circumstances to which I shall allude, tend very strongly to prove that the Jacobin clubs, the general councils of the commons, and the nominal legislative convention, appear so to divide the supreme power among them, while the mob, or *nation*, call it which you please, act so independently of all three, that, to compliment the result with the epithet *government*, would be truly ridiculous. To talk of the Rights of man, or any other declarations or laws of the Constituent Assembly, is perfectly beside all present questions;

ons ; the heptarchy is not more out of date.—But let us examine facts as reported by Jacobin authority.

The freedom of elections seems to be curiously attended to.—Resolution of the Jacobin club of September 13, sent to all the clubs of the kingdom :—“ Let us not lose a single moment to prevent, by firm measures, the danger of seeing these new legislators oppose, with impunity, the sovereign will of the nation. Let us be inspired with the spirit of the electoral body of Paris, whose decrees express, *that a scrutiny shall be made of the National Convention, for the purpose of expelling from its bosom suspected members as may in their nomination have escaped the sagacity of the primary assemblies.*” (*Polit. State*, No. 6. p. 449.)

What a beautiful lesson is this to the men who complain of our representation in England, and wish it reformed!—Here is a delicious reform, and at the hands of republicans! The world, probably, never contained a proof of more determined confusion; this is truly a *digest of anarchy*. For members to be elected to the Convention under the controul of the commons of Paris, whether they shall take their seat or not, is curious, and ought to give us the clearest conviction, that the Jacobins want no Duke of Brunswick to be the avenger of the crimes of Paris. None can be such adepts in national misery, such founders of national ruin, as the people themselves, whose exertions are, with singular ingenuity, producing a system, in which regulation shall produce disorder, and decrees blood. That the people design to legislate personally for themselves, cannot be doubted; they mean the Convention to have no power, but an initiative *to propose* to the sovereign body who will accept or reject by the organ of clubs.

It is easy to guess at the obedience paid to a sovereign body whose election is thus respected: The Convention decreed, that all elections should be made by ballot: this was directly disobeyed by Paris. “ Of twenty-five Sections,” says Barbaroux, Oct. 30, “ that have returned an account of the election of a mayor, eighteen have violated that law; and the section of the Pantheon has proposed, should their president be called to the bar, to attend him armed.”

October 5th, a deputation from that city, thus speak at the bar, demanding the speedy trial of the King. "The men of the 10th of August will never suffer, that those they have invested with their confidence, shall despise for an instant the sovereignty of the people; courage is the virtue of a free people; and we will not depart from the principle, that if it is just to obey laws, it is just also to resist despots, under whatever masque they may conceal themselves: we think it for our interest to make our elections *viva voce* (*à haute voix*)."^{*} The minister of the interior is forced to write the same day to the Convention, "I pray you to take measures, to prevent being null and without effect all the demands and requisitions which I daily make, **IN THE NAME OF THE LAW**, to the commons of Paris." The minister, in the name of the Convention, applied for law; but found the commons of Paris stronger than both. "I have seen," says Cambon, Sep. 25th, "these commons rob the national edifices of all their most precious effects, without the least register, or note; and when we decreed that these effects should be carried to the national treasure, that decree remained without execution."

"The council general of the commons of Paris," says Barrere, Nov. 10, "has sought to depress, by every possible means, the national representation. The legislative body said, that *that germ of new revolutions ought to disappear*, and the next day it was obliged to withdraw its decree. It said also, *that the gates of Paris ought to be opened that every man might travel freely through the interior of the empire*; but the council general ordered them to be shut. The legislature decreed *that no more passports should be necessary*. The council general directly ordered that none should stir without a passport."^{*}

That the municipalities are in a state of real anarchy appears clearly from different bodies assuming the same power, while the municipalities of Paris were demanding one from the Convention, *la commune proprement dite*, or ninety-six commissioners of sections were demanding another, which induced Kerfaint to explain. *In what anarchy is our administration plunged. Ought there to be two bodies of representatives of*

^{*} Moniteur, Oct. 28.

the commons of Paris? the law prohibits it. This is curious; a legal vestry meets in the church, and is opposed by another in an alehouse kitchen, who term themselves the vestry, properly called; and one having a taste of public plunder, the other petition also for the same thing; such are the bodies that seize, and divide, under the epithets of confiscation, administration, and sale, the estates and property of emigrants.*

The commissioners of the sections of Paris at the bar of the Convention, bully it in these terms: "The time presses—the storm forms itself."—Thus overturning the government that had been formed on the Rights of Man, which, instead of yielding peace and tranquillity, produced only storms, the eternal product of such Revolutions; and the blood that had been so lavishly spilled for the *public repose*, afforded so little, that the minister Rolland, writing to the commons of Paris, says, *I hear of nothing but conspiracies and projects of murder, and assassination †. The wicked preached yesterday, at the same moment, in different parts of Paris, pillage and assassination ‡.* And being ordered by the Convention to report the state of Paris, his expression is *the administrative bodies, without powers; the commons despotic; the people deceived; such is Paris! §.* But deceived and ignorant as they were, they thought their *lights* sufficient to instruct the nominal legislature; as Marat and his gang were daily declaring that cutting off heads was the *genuine employment of a people*, and denouncing so many members of the Convention in the Jacobin clubs, it was debated in the Convention, whether a guard ought not to be drawn from all the eighty-three departments. On this project the commissioners of the forty-eight sections of Paris thus speak (Oct. 19.) to the Convention. "Proxies of the sovereign! You see before you the deputies of the sections of Paris. They come to make you understand eternal truths. No words—but things! It is proposed to place you on a level with tyrants—to surround you with a distinct guard. The sections of Paris, weighing the principles on which the sovereignty of the people resides, declare to you that this project is odious and dangerous. We will attack in front

* *Moniteur*, Oct. 28.

† *Nov.* 3.

‡ *Nov.* 1.

§ *Monit.* Oct. 30.

such a principle. What audaciousness, to conjecture that the people will consent to such a decree! What! they propose to you constitutional decrees, before the existence of the constitution! Wait till the law exists; and the people have sanctioned it. Paris has made the Revolution. Paris has given liberty to the rest of France. *Paris knows how to maintain it* *.

Here Paris expressly declares to the Convention, that their decrees were waste paper till the people sanction them: such is personal representation; an assembly is so elected, and the people no sooner possess such representatives than, intoxicated with power, they declare their deputies things of straw, and their decrees null till sanctioned by the people themselves! What a lesson! to the friends of reform! *In all the public places, says Louvet † at the Thuilleries, in the Palais de la Revolution, and elsewhere, you hear them preach continually insurrection against the National Convention. It is high time for us to know, says Cambon, that the Convention is absolutely despised ‡.*

Anarchy, said Baurere §, is at its Zenith: and Berbaroux §, Anarchy reigns around us, and we have done nothing to repress it. Those who provoke to murder are yet triumphant. Anarchy is the cause of all our evils! Says the PRESIDENT OF THE CONVENTION to the deputation for the department of Indre and Loire **.

These are the accounts and the words of the members of the Convention openly delivered; but we have a reformer in England, who characterizes the French government with the epithets of, "the erect mien and heavenly dignity of aspect—the fair and enchanting form—the vision so delightful."—It is whimsical enough, that while the French find their government a mere anarchy of murderers and banditti; our English reformers should delineate it as the peculiar dispensation of Providence showering blessings on mankind. That while the administrators of the department of Calvados, tell the Convention that *Paris is the focus of insurrection, vengeance, and proscription: that innocent blood has flowed, that*

* Monit. Oct. 21.
‡ Oct. 30.

† Oct. 29.
§ Oct. 30.

‡ Monit. Dec. 29.
** Monit. Dec. 4.

villains who are the detestation of the nation, and will be the opprobrium of posterity, still calculate in criminal silence the life and death of citizens †, an Englishman can be found to declare such a government so beneficent, that he can refer it only to the first great cause of all ‡!

From such a polluted fountain, it is easy to suppose what streams must flow; and that all parts of France have been scenes either of insurrection, of plunder, or of blood; the instances of Marseilles, Lyons, Avignon, Arles, Rouen, Caen, Bourdeaux, Nancy, Lille, and a long list of other cities, are notorious: it may not be so generally known that at Charleville the colonel commandant was murdered*. That at Cressy all was riot and violence †. That at Cambray the lieutenant-colonel Besombre was murdered by the Gens d'armes, and captain Logros' head was on a bayonette ‡. That the rebellion in Poitou was of 10,000 §, and that of Chartres double. More singular than these is the case of D'Hoté, who being condemned only to the stocks for four hours by the *jury de jugement*, for crimes that merited an hundred deaths, being exposed on the Place de Greve, demanded of the populace *Liberty or death*; the mob, in spite of the Gens d'armes, mounted the scaffold, cut the cords of the criminal, and carried him off in triumph. *When*, says the editor of the *Moniteur*, reporting it, *will the people feel the necessity of respecting the laws?* §

Such is the result of that constitution, founded on personal representation, which has been boasted as the pride and glory of legislation. Such are the effects that form the comment on so many hundred books and pamphlets published in praise of an edifice erected on the Rights of Man!—And of which we may say, with truth and moderation, that it has brought more misery, poverty, devastation, imprisonment, bloodshed, and ruin on France, in four years, than the old government did in a century.

Such is the government that has been contrasted by Paine to the *no* constitution of England. Every thing with us,

† Oct. 20.

* Sept. 4.

‡ Monit. Oct. 15.

‡ Major Cartwright to the Duke of Newcastle.

† Oct. 17.

‡ Oct. 10.

§ Monit. Oct. 29.

according

according to him, has a constitution except the nation; and, if we had a constitution, we should be able to produce it. The French, on the contrary, formed one which they could produce, printed on vellum, and bound in morocco; carried by every one in his pocket, as the charter of his Rights; but unfortunately for theories of government, this great effort of legislation; this boast of French, and envy of English Jacobins, this master-piece of the metaphysical ART of Abbé Sieyès; this quintessence of what *ought to be*, in opposition to *what is**; this fine machine pronounced by so many pens immortal; producible to the measure of Paine, antecedent to the government, and distinct from it; this capital production of Gallic genius endured scarcely two years. The freedom it afforded was not sufficient for adepts in the Rights of Man: The existence of a King, because offensive to the new lights by which they were illumined. Insurrection was pronounced a sacred duty;—revolt followed;—and the horrors that will for ever stain the annals of mankind,—the *deep damnation* that ensued—are written in every heart from which Jacobinism has not eradicated all traces of feeling and humanity. Such has been the PRACTICE of the French revolution; for its THEORY go to *Rights of Man*.

Yet these infamies of abstract and ideal perfection are not black enough to deter men from boldly, in the full face of government and of day, setting their names to such sentiments as these, in which the British constitution and its friends are thus characterised:—"The mad councils of rage and desperation."—"Maimed: mutilated, mangled, and wretched condition."—"Scanty fragments, loathsome offals are all of freedom that the people of England taste."—"Mendicants subsisting on crumbs."—"Visions of slaughtered citizens and a pillaged nation."—"Happy Frenchmen! How long will Englishmen endure the shame of seeing their house of representatives a shocking contrast to models so pure!—Not even plausible *concession* will now, in my humble opinion, put people off their guard, and *compramisè* will be received as insult. Their demand is their rights. They are taking their cause in their own hands. They want no patrons; and their friends will be their

* La physique ne peut être que la connoissance de *ce qui est*. L'art plus hardi demande ce qui *doit être* pour l'utilité des hommes.

servants. Their operations are infallibly their strength will soon be invincible."—Among the discoveries of these pregnant times, it has been found out that men may live and thrive without lords; that the sun will shine and the dew will descend where there are none but equal citizens to partake of these blessings; and that even good laws can be made, and justice well administered, without either hereditary legislators or hereditary judges!"*

Would any person conceive it possible, that the passages here collected, expressive of the warmest detestation, were not applied to France, as being most peculiarly adapted to mark the state of that kingdom weltering in its best blood, rather than to one in so singular a state of prosperity as England?

When our destruction is threatened so openly—when so clear an explanation is given of the REAL meaning and intentions of the reforming societies—and when the operations and strength of the rabble are so soon to be INVINCIBLE, it surely behoves the government of this country to awaken to danger so imminent; to menaces so audacious; and to a licentiousness of publication, which, whatever the intention, must, if unrestrained, let loose the demons of discord, the hell hounds of the mob, to the utter destruction of all that flourishes at present in this kingdom.

"The generality of governments," says Dr. Priestley, "have hitherto been little more than a combination of the few against the many; and to the mean passions and low cunning of these few, have the greatest interests of mankind been too long sacrificed. Whole nations have been deluged with blood, and every source of future prosperity has been drained, to gratify the caprices of some of the most despicable, or the most execrable of the human species. For what else have been the generality of kings, their ministers of state, or their mistresses, to whose wills whole kingdoms have been subject? What can we say of those who have hitherto taken the lead in conducting the affairs of nations, but that they have commonly been either weak or wicked, and sometimes both? Hence the common reproach of all histories,

* Major Cartwright's Letter to the Duke of Newcastle.

that they exhibit little more than a view of the vices and miseries of mankind. From this time, therefore, we may expect that it will wear a different and more pleasing aspect*."

The events which have passed since this passage was written, must make one smile in reading it. It now appears that the combination of the *many* against the *few*, can also deluge a nation in blood, with a cruelty more accursed, because unnecessary to the many: that sources of prosperity can be drained without ministers and without mistresses; that weakness and wickedness can take the lead without kings; and that history will still continue to exhibit the vices and miseries of mankind.

Personal Security.

THE state of France respecting the personal liberty of her citizens is dispatched in few words: THERE IS NO SUCH THING: the fact is so notorious, that an appeal to instances might by many be deemed unnecessary; there are, however, a few circumstances that merit nothing, not so much to prove the violation of this first and most sacred duty of government, as to shew that such violations have been committed on *principle*; and perpetrated or permitted even by the legislature itself.

The declaration of the Rights of Man and of Citizens says, *no man can be accused, arrested, or detained, except in cases determined by the law, and ACCORDING TO THE FORMS WHICH THE LAW HAS PRESCRIBED.* Such is the letter: what is the practice? On complaints from Niort, against some counter revolutionists, seized by a mob thirsting for their blood, but who wished to have the flimsy cloak of a semblance of justice, the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY decreed, "that all the criminal tribunals of the kingdom should try, without appeal, all crimes committed against the Revolution †. And in order to indulge the same thirst at Paris, which was not with all its murders

* Letters to the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, p. 144.

† Mont. 3th.

fatiated, they decreed the removal of the criminals from Orleans to Paris, that is, from the legally established judicature, where there was a chance of justice, to an illegal one, where there was no such chance; and they did this in consequence of such addresses as these from the deputation of the commons of Paris. *It is time that the criminals, at Orleans, be transferred to Paris, there to receive the punishment of their crimes: If you do not agree to this demand we cannot answer for the vengeance of the people. You have heard us, and you know that insurrection is a sacred duty!* Invited to the honours of the meeting!!! The fate of these prisoners is known to every one.

The declaration says, that *no man can be punished but in virtue of a law established, and promulgated prior to the offence, and legally applied.* The application, "disobedience" in the colonies, "shall be regarded as high treason, and those who shall render themselves guilty shall be sent to France to be tried according to the rigour of the law." The liberty of the press was provided for in the declaration. Such the theory. The practice was silencing all that were not *Jacobin* papers; and beheading the authors. No wonder, with such species of government, that prisons should be emptied by massacre, and filled again by arbitrary arrests. Sept. 16, the minister writes thus to the Assembly: "The natural, civil, and political liberty of the nation is in question; since the 5th, above five hundred persons have been arrested, so that the prisons are as full as ever"; no satisfactory account is given of the authority; they have been imprisoned by orders given by the municipality by sections, by the people, and even by individuals: *emprisonnés par ordre, soit de la municipalité, soit des sections, soit du peuple, SOIT MEME D'INDIVIDUS*; and the reasons of very few of these orders are given."

The legislature thus informed of the abuse, may be presumed on the wing to remedy it. The progress of the business is curious:—O^c. 8. Decree—"The National Convention decrees, that citizens detained in houses, which are neither prisons nor houses of arrest, shall be removed

* Contrast this with the ~~22~~ prisoners (four of them not *state* ones), the whole number found in the *Bastille* when forced by the mob!!!

within fifteen days into legal prisons; after which time every citizen, against whom there appears neither warrant of arrest, nor decree of accusation, shall be set at liberty*." If any doubts could remain of the real tyranny under which France groans, such a decree would be sufficient to remove them:—the fact of citizens being thus illegally confined, without warrant, and not in legal prisons, is here admitted; and men so treated may be kept fifteen days longer before they are set free! Sept. 16, the Convention receives the notice officially, and Oct. 8, they decree a power of arbitrary imprisonment fifteen days longer!—Nor does it end here; for Nov. 11, complaint is heard in the Assembly, that *no report is made concerning the prisoners* †; and it merits great attention, that during this long period of the imprisonment of so many unhappy people, Paris was incessantly convulsed; and every day brought reason to expect, that imprisonment and slaughter would prove synonymous terms. To imprison whom they pleased on suspicion, as a means of taking off those they dared not, or could not publicly accuse, was a convenient mode of tyranny, not unworthy of the wretch, a member of their Pandemonium, who, speaking to the question of trying the unhappy King, assigned him to torments in the hearing of those tribunes, who might soon be the executioners of his bloody wishes. *Morisson*, "the first and most natural of all my affections would be to see, that sanguinary monster (Louis XVI.) expiate his guilt by the most cruel torments ‡; and another (*Gonchon*, Dec. 12.) says, *Kings will pass away! but the declaration of rights and pikes will never pass away. Here let the tyrant bear his condemnation*, as if the declaration of rights was not laid in the dust, when such language could be spoken of a prisoner unheard; and amidst *unanimous and reiterated applauses!* The applauses of those whose pikes were ready.

In the full teeth of such authentic facts, given on the authority of their own ministers and friends, we read, in the *Political State of Europe*, printed by Jordan, and written by Paine and Co. No. 6, p. 435, that in Paris a respect is paid to the sacred preservation of property, and that the laws are *no where so universally respected and obeyed!* What will not Jacobin impudence reach!

* Monit. Oct. 9.

† Monit. Nov. 13.

‡ Monit. Nov. 14.
Such

Such has been the attention to personal liberty, under the reign of philosophers, established on the ruins of the mildest and most benignant government in Europe, our own only excepted; a government cruelly libelled in the character given by one of our reforming orators, who thus describes it; "a species of government that trampled on the property, the liberty, and the lives of its subjects; that dealt in extortions, dungeons, and tortures: and that prepared, beforehand, a day of sanguinary vengeance.*" Epithets and expressions so singularly applicable to the fabric erected by the Revolution, that one can with difficulty believe it possible that they were meant for any other.

Security of Property.

If I had not heard Jacobin conversation in England, there would have been little occasion for this paragraph; to a reader that reflects, it must at once be apparent that where there is no personal freedom, there can be no secure property: It would be an insult to common sense to suppose, that a tyrannical mob would respect the property of those whose throats they cut: arbitrary imprisonment and massacre must be inevitably followed by direct attacks on property. Contrary however to these plain deductions of common sense, it has been repeatedly asserted, that the government of France has done nothing in violation of the rights of property, except with relation to emigrants, who were considered as guilty for the act of flying: But is it not palpable, at the first blush, that filling prisons on suspicion, by arbitrary commitments, and emptying them by massacre—that the perpetual din of pillage and assassination—are calculated to fill men with alarm and terror—and to drive them to fly not through guilt, but horror? By your murders you drive them away; and then pronouncing them emigrants, confiscate their estates! And this is called the security of property. The cry of aristocrate or traitor is followed by immediate imprisonment or death, and has been found an easy way of paying debts: Enquiring of a correspondent what was become of a gentleman I had known at Paris; the answer was, that he was met in the street by a person considerably in his debt,

* Mr. Sheridan's Speech.

who no sooner saw than he attacked him as a traitor, and ordered him to goal. No known massacre was committed in that prison, but my acquaintance was heard of no more. It is easy to conjecture what became of the debt. Should the demons of discord effect a revolution in this kingdom, and bring Mr. Legislator Paine once more to Thetford, Sandwich, or Lewes, he would not find it difficult thus to satisfy all his creditors, however numerous—he would come well prepared with a French recipe for wiping off all their *scores*. In a country where such things are possible, every tie that binds property is broken. To imagine its security is a folly too gross to be endured, and to assert it a falsehood that should excite no emotion but contempt.

In a parish in the Clermontois (*Croté-le-Roy*) the steward of a gentleman residing at a distance, came to receive the rent of three considerable farmers. He was told that the Convention had decreed equality, and that paying rent was the most unequal thing in the world; for it was a man who did much to receive a little, paying to one, who receiving much, did nothing at all. The steward replied, that their joke might possibly be good, but that he came not for wit, but money; and money he must have; he was ordered instantly to depart or to slay and be hanged. The proprietor demanded justice, but in vain; the municipality was applied to; and the only result was, that body (the *veitry*) ordering the farmers to yield up the land; they were taken possession of by themselves in deposit redeemable for the nation; and actually divided in portions among the labouring poor, that is among themselves. What the event may be is nothing to the purpose: What becomes in the mean time of the Right of Property! The probable event however is, that the proprietor will be driven to emigration, for the mere convenience of retaining their plunder.

It can hardly be doubted but that robbery, even of land itself, must spread all the kingdom when the committee of general security could thus report to the Convention:—*The national resources may be augmented by imposing contributions upon persons of fortune, personnes aisées and the obstinate who wait tranquilly at home the event of the Revolution.* * Contributions

* Oct. 18, 1793.

tions imposed on persons for two reasons ; first, for the crime of being men of fortune ; and, secondly, for remaining in tranquillity ! With such a legislation can property be respected ?

With such a principle, recognized in the Convention, we need not ask how taxes are levied. The poor and small proprietors of a few acres, who every where form the majority of each municipality, escape all taxation, but are vigilant in forcing those of more considerable property to pay to the last farthing ; and as all taxes are assessed and levied by the parochial vote, at assemblies, to which *all* resort, the men without property order every thing at will, and have various ways, much more effective, for the division of property than a direct agrarian law would be.

Let the farmers of this kingdom represent to themselves a picture of what their situation would be, if their labourers, their servants, and the paupers whom they support by poor-rates, were all armed, and, in some measure, regimented, and in possession of the vestry, voting not only the money to be raised by rates, but the division of it among themselves ; decreeing what the price of all the farmer's products should be ; what wages should be paid to servants, and what pay to labourers. Under such a system of government I beg to ask, what security would remain for a single shilling in the pockets of those who are at present in a state of ease and affluence ? And whether such a tyranny would not be worse than that of the most determined despotism at present in Europe ?

While the farmer is thus exposed to parochial oppression, at the mercy of those who were so lately his inferiors, and who are even sed and supported by him, he is not exempted from attacks of a very different nature : to authorize the seizure of horses and arms was, in the National Assembly, a measure of violence and tyranny ; but as it issued from the legislature *de facto*, it had the authority of admitted power ; but the municipality of Paris have gone much further ; September 13, the minister of the home department complains to the Assembly, that the commissioners of the municipality of Paris, are sent into the country with such arbitrary

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arbitrary orders as are utterly inconsistent with his own responsibility; their orders are signed by four of the administrators of the public safety, for seizing suspected persons and precious effects. *Pour s'emparer des personnes suspectes & des effets precieux**. Seizing suspected persons and precious effects! A commission in a land of liberty; and given, not by the legislative body, but by a corporation! The corporation of a town sends commissioners, in other words, despotic monarchs, into the country, to arrest and to plunder, and this under the nose of the legislature. When the republican reader of Mr. Paine, on corporations in England, is well satiated with *rights*, it would do him good to take the actions of French municipalities as a comment on the text.

The watch-word, from one end of France to the other, is *equality*; they join liberty with it, as mountebanks annex a favourite epithet to the nostrum, whose only object is the money in the pockets of the credulous. But after all rank, title, nobility, and distinction have been abolished, what do they mean by equality? The word is absurd, if it attaches not to property, for there can be no equality while one man is rich and another poor. But the preceding facts speak what the new equality is in terms too clear to be misunderstood. *I am not astonished to see, says Buzot, an arrest come to us under the name of Momoro, who I, as president in the department of Eure, heard preaching the division of estates; but I am truly so to find such a man presiding in one of the sections of Paris* †.

We hear it asserted in England, that property is not attacked in France: There you hear no such assertions: on the return of the commissioners, members of the Convention, from the riots at Chartres, where they were nearly destroyed, it was asserted on facts in the Convention itself, *that all the principles of an Agrarian law were in agitation*, mis en avance ‡.

Before we quit this subject of the security of property at present in France, let us examine shortly the case of that most interesting portion of property, the crop in the hands of the farmer: we know well in England, from the con-

* Monit. Sept. 14.

† Monit. Oct. 13.

‡ Monit. Dec. 2.

viction of long experience, that if this species of property is not sacred, all the classes of the society instantly suffer; it is a vital wound that affects the whole system.

The late crop in that kingdom is said to be plentiful; but natural plenty, under a government of anarchy, avails little; the mob prohibiting the free transport of corn, the immediate consequence was so high a price in many districts, that the people found it more convenient to *seize* the corn than to *pay* for it: this, of course, added every where to the mischief; for the farmers were not ready to carry their products into the jaws of plunder. These distractions—these blessings of a government that had the power of converting even good crops into the means of famine, drew from the minister of the home department threats even of violence; he wrote to a variety of cities, from all which papers it would be too tedious to give extracts. He thus expresses himself to Tours: “The municipalities ought to use all possible means of persuasion with the farmers, for engaging them to supply the markets; for I must tell you, that if the possessors of corn resist these *paternal* invitations, **MEANS OF EXTREMITY** must be used against them: *on fera bien contraindre d’employer envers eux les moyens extremes*.” It is worth the attention of English farmers, to reflect well on the nature of this case: their brethren in France, content with a moderate and fair price for their corn, carry it freely to market; the operations of the people raise this price; and then, to revenge the result of their own violence, they plunder. Such a conduct is sure to create, at least, apprehensions of famine; and to obviate it, the minister does not threaten the mob, from whom all the mischief arises, but the **FARMERS**; he threatens them with **EXTREMITIES**, as a punishment for having been plundered by the rabble—by the *nation*. If the farmer, thus robbed, has the misfortune to be a proprietor, and particularly a large proprietor, he has first the oppression of paying those taxes which an armed populace will not pay; and, that he may be able to do this, his corn is seized by the consumer, and he is threatened with extremities by the minister; as if any extremities could be greater than taking his crops by violence: if more, however, was not meant, the folly of the denunciation was

equal to the knavery of it. Those intellects which can see any difference between such a government and the cudgel of a Turkish basha, are much more acute than mine.

The same minister writes to the Convention, Oct. 15.—
 “I am informed that the overseers of the military subsistences do not cease to fly through the country, and to force, with arms in their hands, the farmers to furnish their commodities. Such practices destroy every measure of order, and infinitely impede the free circulation of corn. I cannot dissemble with the Convention, that this conduct of the military contractors tends to spread disorder every where, and that if they continue to take by force, or at their own price, provision from the farmers, it will be impossible to insure the supply of Paris.”

Now this, if possible, exceeds every thing the Jacobin administration, acting on the ideas of Jacobin liberty, could devise to shew their perfect contempt of the whole farming race. He states the glaring magnitude of the evil to the Convention; and what is his conclusion? Why he tells them, that if such things are allowed, it will be impossible to supply Paris!!! There is the only evil; as to the poor plundered farmers, he allows, indeed, that robbing them is a disorder, but when he sums up to impress the legislature with the necessity of paying attention to the evil, he recurs solely to the supply of Paris! if Paris is supplied, all is well—as to the farmers, they may take care of themselves. Let those who tell us in England, that the Revolution of France was favourable in the beginning to agriculture (particularly in tythes) consider the value of a FREE MARKET; and then our farmers will not be long discovering, that no exemptions, no such favours will prove a recompense; for being forced, the pike or broad-sword in hand, to sell at the price offered by those who brandish the weapon over their heads. No wonder that such measures should stave the towns, as well as ruin the country; and that the commissioners of subsistence should report, that *the penury of grain in the great cities is extreme* *.

* Monit. Nov. 16.

In all these and a thousand other instances, we see the living and effective consequences of Paine's doctrines; he expatiated on the luxury of great estates, and recommended their seizure; French practice realized the doctrine, and doubtless there were French farmers, who rejoiced at the spectacle of all the great properties of the kingdom being levelled by the nation; they did not however foresee, that it would be their own turn next; that the principle of equality being once abroad, would infallibly level ALL property; and would give to the beggar, without a loaf, but with a pike on his shoulder, the means of levelling the enormous inequality between his own wallet without a kernel, and the well-stored granary of a warm farmer. Let ours, therefore, never forget, that the same principle which attacks a property of 40,000l. a year, because it is too large relatively to other properties, attacks also a farm of 200l. a year, for the same reason; nay, of 50l. a year, because that also is large, when compared with the property of those who have little. And let us all be well persuaded, that the fearful events at present passing in France, with a celerity of mischief that surpasses equally all that history has to offer, or fancy to conceive, afford a spectacle interesting to every man who possesses PROPERTY; and to none more than to farmers. The quarrel now raging in that once flourishing kingdom, is not between liberty and tyranny, or between protecting and oppressive systems of government; it is, on the contrary, collected to a single point,—it is alone a question of property; it is a trial at arms, whether those who have *nothing* shall not seize and possess the property of those who have *something*. A dreadful question—a horrid struggle, which can never end but in the equal and universal ruin of all; in which, he who gains by the loss of his neighbour, gains but to lose, in his turn, to some sturdier robber, till riot, confusion, and anarchy render property but the signal of invasion, and poverty the best shield against the attacks and tyranny of the mob*.

Such

* Pursue the declaration of rights through every article, and it will be found that there is not a single article registered as an imprescriptible right of man, that has not been violated under circumstances of the most odious and abominable cruelty.

Such being the state of government, liberty, and property in France, I shall unite these facts in one general conclusion, and venture the assertion, that the Revolution has absolutely ruined that Kingdom. I may be told, perhaps, in reply, that she carries no more appearance of ruin at this moment, than many months or years past. Her arms are even victorious on every side.

The inquiry into that degree of depression or violence which properly constitutes national ruin, would lead into an extensive and unnecessary discussion. If nothing merits the epithet but foreign conquest, Morocco was in no state of ruin under a barbarian, who put 40,000 men to death with his own hands; nor is Turkey ruined under the dominion of horse-tails and bow-strings. To every purpose of sober argument, the danger of life and property is effective ruin.

Life and property in France are in this situation, if raised a single point above the level of the populace; a gigantic and devouring despotism has levelled in the dust all security to those whose properties raise them above the mob. In one word, LAW does not reign; there is a power every where superior: a despotic authority may fill the ranks of their armies, as the slaves of Algiers are made to arm and to fight, but the kingdom is as much ruined with victory attending her standard, as if the German banners were flying at Paris, Marseilles and Bourdeaux.

The old government of France, with all its faults, was certainly the best enjoyed by any considerably country in Europe, England alone excepted; but there were many faults in it which every class of the people wished to remedy: This natural and laudable wish made Democrats in every

An Englishman is proud of the idea of his house being his castle; see the practice of Jacobin government in this respect! "Decreed, that the municipalities are authorized to search the houses of all persons for arms, and to take an account of horses and carriages applicable to the war." And soon after their absolute seizure decreed. This was sounding the alarm bell, in order to give up the houses of all the gentlemen in the kingdom to the plunder of brigands; and this by the legislature itself—elected by personal representation."

If we are asked what apology the tyrants of Paris have to make for their actions, their answer is *STATU SPADIUM ET*; which an English reformer calls the *offspring of hell*.

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order, amongst the possessors of property, as well as among those who had none. At the commencement of the Revolution, France possessed a very flourishing commerce; the richest colonies in the world; the greatest currency of solid money in Europe; her agriculture was improving; and her people, tho' from too great population much too numerous for the highest degrees of national prosperity, yet were more at their ease than in many other countries of Europe; the government was regular and mild; and what was of as much consequence as all the rest, her benignant sovereign, with a patriotism unequalled, was really willing to improve, by any reasonable means, the constitution of the kingdom. All these circumstances, if compared with England, would not make the proper impression. They are to be compared alone with what has since ensued; and her present state may thus, with truth, be correctly described.—Her government an anarchy, that values neither life nor property. Her agriculture fast sinking, her farmers the slaves of all; and her people starving. Her manufactures annihilated. Her commerce destroyed; and her colonies absolutely ruined. Her gold and silver disappeared, and her currency paper so depreciated, by its enormous amount of 3000 millions, besides incredible forgeries, that it advances, with rapid strides, to the entire stagnation of every species of industry and circulation. Her national revenue diminished three-fourths. Her cities scenes of revolt of massacre and starvation; and her provinces plundered by gangs of banditti. Her future prospect of peace and settlement, depending on a constitution that is to be formed by a convention of rabble, and factioned by the *sans culottes* of the kennel. It is not a few insulated crimes on some undeserving men; it is a series of horrid proscription, spreading far and near; it is the annihilation of rank, of right, of property; it is the destruction of the possessors of more than half France; it is the legislation of wolves, that govern only in destruction: and all these massacres, and plunderings, and burnings, and horrors of every denomination, are so far from being necessary for the establishment of liberty, that they have most effectually destroyed it. In one word, France is at present absolutely without government; anarchy reigns; the poniard and the pike of the mob give the law to all that once formed the higher classes, and to all that at present mocks with the shew of legislation. The mob
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of Paris have been long in the actual possession of unrivalled power; they will never freely relinquish it: if the Convention pretumes to be free, it will be massacred; and, after a circle of new horrors, will sink (should foreign aid fail) into the despotism of triumvirs or dictators: the change will be a Bourbon to a butcher!

“All former Revolutions,” says Paine, “till the American had been worked within the atmosphere of a court, and never on the great floor of a nation;” unfortunately for this miserable copy, she worked on a floor broad enough; her basis was the blood and property of France. The picture has no resemblance in “the insipid state of hereditary government.” She found in “scenes of horror and perfection of iniquity,” what “man is up to.” It is easy to see what they have lost; as to their gains, they have assignats, cockades, and the music of *ca ira*; it may be truly said, that they have made a wise barter: they have given their gold for paper; their bread for a ribbon, and their blood for a long. Heaven preserve us from the phrenzy of such exchanges! and leave Revolutions for the “order of the day,” for “the morning of reason rising upon man” † in France.

II.

Such are the consequences of the the French Revolution; our next enquiry is, from what have these evils arisen? They may be attributed to three prominent features in the new system of their *soi-disant* philosophers—1. Personal Representation.—2. The Rights of Man.—3. Equality.

* Rights of Man.

† The Convention declares, in the name of the French nation, that they will grant assistance to all people that wish to recover their liberty, and charges the executive power with giving the necessary orders to the generals for giving succour to such people, Nov. 19. ordered to be printed in all languages.

† Paine.

If

If there is any one circumstance to which all the horrors that have passed in France may be more properly attributed than to any other, it is the double representation given to the *tiers état* by Mr. Neckar, directly contrary to every respectable authority. The preponderancy of the people within the walls, united with the spirit of revolt without, was manifest in a moment; the court divided; and the King, conscientious and honest; these were not arms to meet the pressure of the moment. The mob triumphed: and all the world knows what followed. If a tree is to be judged by its fruits, we may fairly assert, that personal representation, which gives to the lowest of the people a direct influence in the government, must lead in a great capital to absolute anarchy, such as has ruined France.

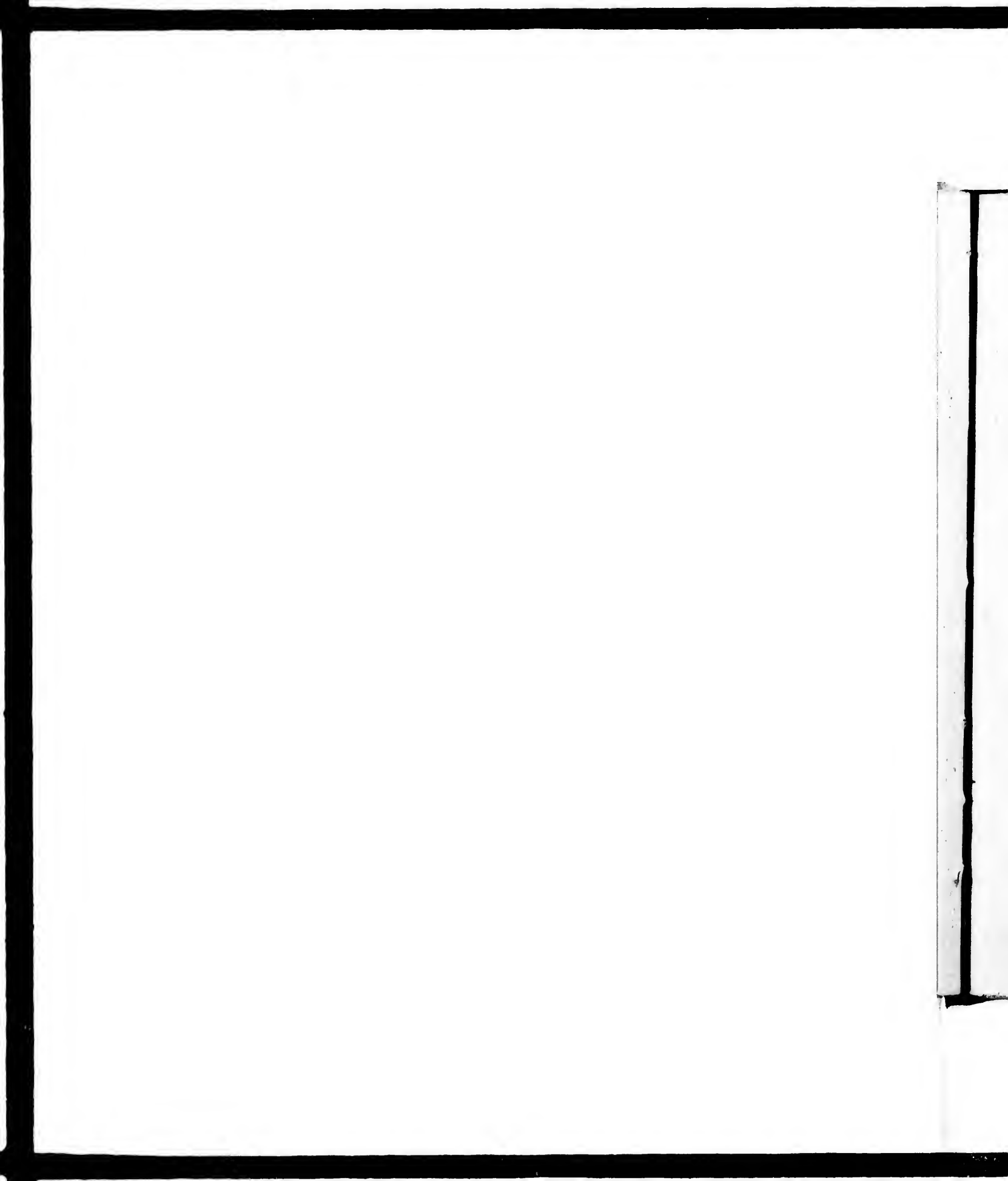
In any representative government, if persons only are represented, — that is to say, if a man without a shilling deputies equally with another who has property, and if men in the former situation are ten times more numerous than those in the latter; and if the representatives so chosen, sit for so short a time as to vote truly the wills of their constituents, it follows, by direct consequence, that all the property of the society is at the mercy of those who possess nothing; and could theory have blundered so stupidly as to suppose for a moment, that attack and plunder would not follow power in such hands; let it recur to France for *fact*, to prove what reason ought to have foreseen.

The abstract of Man, most preposterous of all ideas, which in fact have no political existence whatever, have effected all the mischief, since those rights, which cannot be exerted, or become efficient without the destruction of other rights, and the rights of other men, equally admitted are palpably visionary—the children of playful brains—but impossible in practice. But the French had these dreams; they imagined that personal representation would recognize and secure such rights, and they established their government accordingly:—they ridiculed the constitution of England for depending on a balance of powers; in which a *corporation of aristocracy* has a negative on the Rights of Man; and wove a web of theory from the phantasy of their brains, to secure those rights from all controul.

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Is this case in point? Is this a great political experiment on personal representation?

Let the works of Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Christie, and many other able writers, who have printed warm panegyrics on the French constitution, answer this question. They have answered it decisively; for the faults found, if any, are that the representation was not personal enough; the result has shewn it *so* personal, as to have annihilated property; this part of the question therefore is decided as soon as proposed.

There is a party in this kingdom who call loudly for a reform in the representation of the people, and who would have such reformation give a right of election indiscriminately to all mankind: I am myself in the number of those who wish a reform, but not of such a complexion, nor at a moment like this; I wish the middle classes of landed property better represented; I wish a new member for every county, elected by men who possess not less than an hundred a year in land, and not more than a thousand; and an equal number of members deducted from the most objectionable boroughs. But I would live at Constantinople rather than at Bradfield, if the wild and preposterous propositions founded on the Rights of Man, were to become effective in this kingdom. In other words, I have property; and I do not choose to live where the first beggar I met may, the sabre in one hand, and *Rights of Man* in the other, demand a share of that which a good government tells me is *my own*.

The fact is, that the French constitution was founded *absolutely* on personal representation. By the letter of the law, certain persons were excluded, but by collateral parts of the same system, the mob was armed; and the authors of the Revolution might not perhaps foresee the event, that elections made at the point of the bayonet, would be at the power of the bayonet. Examine not the letter of a visionary code, but EXPERIMENT, in the history of Paris; Marseilles, &c. from the first moment of the troubles.

That many who wish the reform, on popular principles, of that parliament; under the auspices of which we enjoy
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the security which makes us every hour (of anarchy in France) the object of the envy of other nations—that many who wish this reform, do it on meritorious motives, I have not a doubt:—they think, on theory, that personal representation may be consistent with the security of property; much as they are deceived in this idea, yet their error was once respectable*. They say to themselves, so far I would go and no farther †; but they forget, that by going so far they have given the power from their hands, by which alone others are prevented from pushing matters a little further; and that these again are impelled by a third set, who drive at the Rights of Man, and pulling down all that exists at present, with the temple of Dagon, by the Sampson of the mob. However respectable, well-meaning, but wrong-headed, men may be for their motives, let it not be imagined for a moment that there is any thing respectable in the levellers, your fellows of the Rights of Man, whose principles are not a jot better than those of highwaymen and house-breakers; for the object of both is *equalizing property*.

* Of such men, consisted many of the Constituent Assembly in France; but the absolute folly of the idea is now a matter of experiment: that assembly made the trial. They formed a government on the *Rights of Man*, and the foundation they built upon was so slippery, that the whole edifice has tumbled about their ears in a single year. I hardly know any thing more nauseous than the conversation one now and then hears at present on those *libre theories*, delivered pretty much in the same accents as a twelve-month ago, when the Constituent Assembly was as much praised as it is now condemned; such men forget that it is theory no longer: it is now fact and history; the experiment was made; we have seen the result; it failed totally and completely; in the name of common sense, let us, as farmers, regard experience only; and when these eternal theorists still recur to new visions of their heated brains, let us reply, *the thing is tried; that method of drilling has been experimented and found good for nothing; the crop did not answer*; the principles of farming are the principles of government; when you have experiment for your guide, will you resort to theory? When experiment has damned half a dozen theories from the same quarter, will you still listen to new fancies, and go to work again, because the same men tell you they have new imaginations for your employment? The leading conclusion, deducible from the French experiment, and written in characters, which he that runs may read, is this, **IF PERSONS ARE REPRESENTED, PROPERTY IS DESTROYED**. We know then what to think of the proposals for reform *libertés* made in this kingdom.

† The first leaders in the Revolution said this, and they now feel the consequence. Neckar, who gave the *double tiers*, banished with the loss of an hundred thousand pounds; Sérés who said *le tiers est tout* in disgrace; and Barnave, who asked if the first blood spilled was so pure, in a dungeon; *le beau jour* of Bailly shines at present in a garret at London; La Fayette feels in the prison of Wexel, that insurrection is not *la plus saint des devoirs*; and had Mirabeau been now alive, his head would have been on a pike. See these changes admirably touched in various passages of *La Dernière Tableau de Paris*, par M. Peltier.

Mr.

Mr. Wyvil, in his late pamphlet, talks of *temperate reformation*, and of *pointing the zeal of the people to a moderate correction of grievances*, (p. 89.) As if it was possible, after routing, by inflammatory publications, the mobbish spirit, that you could draw the line of *moderation*, beyond which the populace should not pass! You want to correct grievances by means of *the people*; who, with power to effect the purpose, must have power to do much more. If they have that power, will they use it? Go to Paris for the answer.

But that something more than temperate and moderate reform is really the object, we have an undoubted proof, in a work published the other day, by one of the heads of the reforming party, * who praises the French Revolution as not the *reformation* of a government, but its *utter destruction* (its *dissolution*, in the author's own words); and erecting in its room THAT which proved, so soon after the author dated his letter, and before he published it, a MONSTER; and is now the bloodiest and most detestable tyranny that has blotted the annals of modern Europe.

Power in the hands of *the people*, by means of personal representation, has ruined France: And the question in England is, whether the farmers and land proprietors shall preserve their property secure; by one and all considering the system with the horror it merits; or shall, by doubt and hesitation, unite with the enemies of public peace, and hazard all that we possess at present.

I cannot well understand on what principles republicans and friends of liberty, can now give their approbation to this eventful Revolution. To be consistent with their own doctrines, they ought to hold the actors, on the theatre of French affairs, as the most fatal enemies to human liberty the world has ever seen: they have not only shewn mankind in a new and hideous aspect of ingratitude, past all example, but they have proved that liberty, in the abstract and in theory, is unfit for the mass of mankind, and even pernicious to their interests, and the interest of practical freedom. They have given a lesson of tyranny to all the governments of the world; they have given a panegyric on the perpetuity of po-

* Major Catwright.
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litical darkness, and on the propagation of political ignorance.

Personal representation in cities must be apt to fall into the hands of a few of the most daring, restless, and profligate of the mob: of this, we have an instance, strangely remarkable, in the case of Paris; in that city there are about 150,000 voters, yet the number who have been brought to poll have varied from 9000 to 12000; it is, therefore, evident that the mass of the inhabitants, finding they could not vote freely and in safety, would not vote at all. What a satire is this on the universal suffrage of the mob, who regulate the right of their neighbours voting, as they distribute justice—by the pike! “Materials fit for all the purposes of government,” says Paine “may be found in every town.” He certainly means the pike, for that is the chief material in the new system.

“It is well known, says the deputation of Finistere, at the bar of the Convention, “that the sections of Paris are held by at most fifty individuals, to whom all cede with a facility perfectly incredible; astonished at such a general desertion, we have been careful to enquire the cause, and have been assured, that the only reason is, that none had the power of freely expressing their opinion without running the greatest danger: We are shocked to think of such a popular despotism.” If personal representation has, in the short period of four years, given the government of France into the hands of the mob—with two legislative bodies in succession most completely devoid of property; and, if the consequence has been the destruction of property, and delivery of its possessors, to be butchered or banished, we are surely justified in asserting that **THE EXPERIMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATION HAS BEEN MADE AND TOTALLY FAILED** †.

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* Monit. Dec. 26.

† The Jacobins boast the government of America, too soon to have experiment for their support, all countries fully settled must have a numerous and indigent poor: America with immense deserts of fertile land at command, has no indigent poor to govern: she is, therefore, exempt from the great difficulty of all government—but the time will come when she is no longer free from its pressure—when she has a numerous and indigent poor, poisoned or enlightened by a licentious press, it will then be found whether her system is so perfect as some pretend. “The truth is,” says Dr. Wilson, “that in our governments the

II.

The Rights of Man were the next pillar of the French system, and proved, in this eventful experiment, as visionary and mischievous as personal representation. The constitution was built on a declaration of these rights; and, as if every paragraph of the code had been formed only to be broken, practice has torn the whole into shivers, or trampled it under feet, with a contempt it never experienced in any other country. So that a man would go much readier to Constantinople than to Paris, for the exercise. Its commentator calls out for answers to his performance.—The French Revolution is an answer round and complete; there is not a page it does not reply to—there is not a position it does not damn: and the author has the daily mortification to see his marvellous efforts surpassed by his colleagues in the legislative banditti, who arrive at the same end by a shorter road; by engraving the Rights of Man, with poniards, dipt in the best blood in France.

When that prince of incendiaries, reviewing a train of his projects, asks, with an air of triumph, after each, *would not this be a good thing? This surely would be a good thing!* In like manner, take the French declaration of the Rights of Man, and there is hardly an article to be found, to which

the supreme, absolute, and uncontrollable power remains in the people; as our constitutions are superior to our legislature, so the people are superior to our constitutions. Indeed, the superiority in this last instance is much greater; for the people possess over our constitutions, control in act as well as in right. *Commentaries on the American Constitutions.* So able a writer, doubtless, is not mistaken in this; but if the fact is true, anarchy and confusion, and the concomitant destruction of property, will inevitably be the fate of that country, when indigence is found in the mass of her people. If they are in truth paramount, they will pass laws for their own relief, and how is that to be effected without attacking properties that will not want the epithets of unnecessary, luxurious, or aristocratic, for a pretence. To suppose that the mob will possess the sovereign authority *in act* as well as in right, and remain hungry, is a farce—and worthy only of the theories with which we have been amused, and who has instructed us clearly in the importance of such a character, as General Washington keeping heterogeneous parts to one common centre.

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the same writer and an hundred others, would not annex the same question, *is not this good? Can you deny this?* But concentrating the rays of right into one focus, and giving it in a declaration to the people as the imprescriptible right of man--the right of resistance against oppression became the power to oppress; the right to liberty crammed every prison on suspicion; the right to security fixed it at the point of the pike; the right to property was the signal of plunder; and the right to life became the power to cut throats. **ARE THESE GOOD THINGS?** If declarations of right and governments, founded on them are really good, the result must be good also. But these are the good things in practice, that flow in a direct line from the good things of French theory.

The madness of transferring such rights to Britain belongs to the mechanics and labourers at Stockport, *—who, complaining that the useful science of politics is *neglected*, assemble to diffuse it; they resolve that all men are born equal in their rights, that the sovereignty of every nation ought to be invested in the people as their birth-right; who have the chief right to possess all that labour produces: and it is a very curious circumstance in these resolutions, that though they resolve that the liberty of the press ought to be inviolable, yet do they not give one atom of a resolution, that any man has a right to property, except the right of the mechanic and the labourer to all that labour produces. These are resolutions perfectly congenial in their purview, to that degree of security to property which the revolution produced in France. These labourers and mechanics may tell us that *they detest riots*; but as they are so deep in the *science* of politics, they ought to know that their object and their resolutions tend pointedly and directly to the utter ruin and destruction of all government, peace, and security of either life or property. So also in the resolutions of a similar society at Derby, † they speak of *temperate and honest discussions*, and call on other societies to act with *unanimity and firmness*, *until the people be too wise to be imposed upon*; and their influence in the government be *commensurate with their dignity and importance*. Can any person, warm from the recital of the

* Manchester Herald, Sept. 1.

† Manchester Herald, Aug. 18.

horrors committed by the "swinish multitude" in France —by the most enlightened of all the mobs of France—who have most studied the *science of politics*, and most frequented societies similar to these—can any man of property, acquainted with these abominations—read such resolutions without indignation? *Temperate and honest discussion!* Why the discussions of the Jacobins were doubtless once temperate; their honesty is another question. But let us not be deceived by smooth words at the outset. These men demand THAT which they cannot have without possessing the power of seizing our property and cutting our throats—they associate and combine, in order to attain their end. To suppress at once, by vigorous and decisive measures, such hot-beds of sedition and plunder, is the first duty of parliament; resolutions less offensive than these began the business in France; we have seen the event. *Temperate resolutions* were the theory; plunder, rapine, and murder the practice.

Give us our rights, is an expression which has been used with a singular emphasis; the reply once proper, was an abstract reasoning on the nature of those rights: we have now something much surer to direct our judgments; and can answer with strict reference to the facts that govern the question, "you have your rights; you are in possession of every right that is consistent with safety to the life and property of others;—to give you more will endanger both,—to give you *much* more will infallibly destroy them, and eventually yourselves. You have, therefore, ALL your rights, for you have all that are consistent with your happiness; and those who associate to gain more, seek, by means which they know to be the high road to confusion, to seize what is NOT their right, at the expence of crimes similar to those that have destroyed the first kingdom of the world.

It is common to hear it asserted in France, that the ruin of the constitution, established on the Rights of Man, was owing only to the *perfidy* of the court, and not to those *Rights*, which is a wretched sophistry; these men do not perceive that that perfidy was a part of the constitution which include a court; if courts can be perfidious, you are to suppose they will be so; and if you have not so provided as to turn that perfidy to the benefit of the people, you confess

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at once that your constitution is visionary, and if you must destroy it, **THE EXPERIMENT FAILED:** The second experiment, which is now in execution, fails equally; for there is no provision whatever to secure to the representatives of the people the obedience of the people; and we accordingly find, that all is anarchy, on their own jacobin authority; in the first experiment there was no security against the perfidy of a court; and in the second, none against the violence of the people; to get rid of one evil they plunge into another, till, in the accumulation of opposite mischiefs, there is no better relief than Marat's grand specific of cutting off 150,000 heads. In this argument, I take the jacobin ground of supposing the court perfidious; which is an impudent lye, for a prisoner, deprived of his rights, cannot be perfidious.

Perhaps it will be said the present experiment is not finished, and that when a better executive power is established, things will go well; but this is absolutely inadmissible; for the whole force and colour of Jacobin argument in England is, that the legislative power is too weak, and the executive too strong; and that the remedy of this evil is to let the Commons be really the representative of the people: Now this is the case in France—and what is the evil? Why, precisely, that the people will not obey the men chosen by themselves;—they do not love the Convention enough to have confidence in it; this is an incurable evil, which no modification of the executive can affect; it strikes at the heart of personal representation—the mob elects, and the mob does not know how to chuse, and still less to obey.

III.

As to equality, the last support of the French system, it is too farcical and ridiculous to merit a serious observation.—it is worthy only of *Monsieur Egalité!* who has wasted three hundred thousand pounds a year, in order to stand on record the first fool in Europe, and to give the better part of his countrymen occasion to call that assumption great impudence; for he who was below all, could be *equal* to none. A genius, who sacrificed the first property of any subject in Europe, and the name of Bourbon, to become the subject of debate in an assembly of taylor, stay-makers, barbers and butchers, whether he should not be banished from that country which he had disgraced by his crimes!

The equal right of all citizens to equal laws, was declared in the first constitution; the new equality of the Convention, therefore, means something more. Equality of right to equal justice,—that in the law all are equal;—this equality was decreed by the Constituent Assembly, and clearly ascertained to be the law of the land; the new declaration of equality must therefore mean something more, or it meant nothing; if equality of rights were only in contemplation, why call the year 1792 the first year of equality? the fourth of liberty and first of equality? A clearer proof cannot be desired; that the equality of 1792 was not the equality of 1789; let the writers and speakers who assert the term in the two points to mean the same thing, reconcile the absurdity if they are able. To the apprehension of common understanding, property was glanced at;—that the French populace so understood it, there is abundant proof indeed, for propositions were immediately made for the equal division of wealth; and received in a manner that left no doubt of the measure being perfectly to their taste; and these propositions have been carried into execution much more than commonly admitted into England. The peasantry paying no taxes, while they force their richer neighbours to pay to the last shilling, is directly in point.

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But the curse of these principles of equality is, that they never can allow tranquility to be the inheritance of a people; supposing it possible for a country, infested with such doctrines, to be well governed, such good government will infallibly generate wealth and inequality; and by consequence the necessity of new civil wars and confusion to restore the equality which would for ever tend to variation; thus, under such fine spun principles, peace could never inhabit; tranquility would be banished, even by the merits, supposing there were any, of the system; and new arrangements of property would be periodically to make, at the caprice and tyranny of those who, possessing nothing, would look to confusion as their support, and to anarchy as their birth-right.

Such have been the three leading principles of the French Revolution; personal representation, the rights of man and equality; and the question for us to decide upon (a greater question never was before a nation,) is this: Shall we imitate the example of France, and by tampering with that Constitution to which we owe all our prosperity, hazard so immense a stake of happiness? There are men to be found who demand this, and even societies associated to enforce

Reform.

As the question has been discussed to satiety, the observations that follow shall be brief:—It is not uncommon to hear the expression of *restoring the Constitution to its original purity*.—Two words on this purity will not be entirely misplaced. This is an expression we often meet with in the writings and speeches of men, who apparently are not very intimately acquainted with the state of representation in former periods. It tends strongly to give an idea to the ignorant and unwary, that the constitution has declined, and is at present in a worse state for the liberty of the people than it was in former periods; and that the evils now complained of were not to be found in its practice or principles at times alluded to. There is no man acquainted with the history of England who does not know that this is a gross error, and that the circumstances now most complained of, such as inequality of representation

representation and burgage tenures, took place ages before the Revolution, and were established before we had any regular constitution at all. Let us throw a rapid eye over a few instances, which will be sufficient to shew that there never was, even in idea, such a principle as equal representation, and that as to the practice, no reformer has yet been able to shew its existence.

Camden, who wrote in Queen Elizabeth's reign, speaking of Dunwich, says, *that it lies in solitude and desolation.* Orford, he says, *was once populous.* At Eye, he finds nothing but the *rubbish* of an old monastery, and the ruins of a castle. He says of Castle-Rising, *it is ruined, and as it were expiring for age.* Yet this place had its charter to send members the last year of Philip and Mary; and Eye, the 13th of Elizabeth. This looks very little like any intention to give places of consequence only that privilege. Camel-ford, in Cornwall, he says, *is a little village.* Lestwithiel *is a little town, and not at all populous.* St. Germans, he calls *a small village of nothing but fishermen's huts,* yet this charter was no older than Elizabeth.

I have no time, at present, to search for the state of many boroughs in a former age, but these instances are sufficient to shew, not only that the constitution stood in this respect on as rotten a foundation in the reign of Elizabeth, as at present, but that charters for sending members to the House of Commons were actually granted to places of no kind of consideration. To what period then are we to look for that ideal perfection in this part of the constitution, which is not to be found in it at present?

Historians are agreed in the Parliament of 1265, summoned by a usurper, being the origin of the House of Commons: * the Earl of Leicester ordered the attendance of representatives, from such places only as he thought proper, that is, from such as were known to be in his interest; and it is now unknown whether the knights of shires were not

* I know it has been very boldly asserted, that some boroughs, particularly St. Alban's, sent members in the reign of King John—but it is a *supposition*, and founded on the implication of a single word: it is a gross error; Mr. Hume's account may be safely relied on. As to the old Parliaments, they were all aristocratical.

electd by the sheriffs. The legal monarchs followed this example, and gave the power of election to whatever towns they thought proper, and ordered, in many cases, in whom the right of election should reside. What reforming writer has presumed to shew a period in the number of centuries that have elapsed since, in which there ever existed, for one moment, an *equal* or a *personal* representation of the people? What then but empty factious nonsense is meant by the original purity of that system which was gradually formed in times of storm or despotism; and never deserved the name of settled freedom till the Revolution? I speak only of facts; as to the *principles* of the Constitution before that great æra, they are just what every writer pleases to call them; to term them *pure*, is *gratis dictum*; they may be pious or beautiful, or whatever the theory pleases; it is not theory we demand, but PRACTICE.

The fact is, that the present constitution of England was gradually extorted, sword in hand, from feudal sovereigns deriving *their* rights from the sword of a conqueror: Nobly extorted; but deriving from no other right. It is now legally established, and has the sanction of ages to give it the veneration that, with wise men, belongs to antient establishments; and those persons who demand the constitution of some preceding age, (which they ought to demand, when they speak of *purity*, greater than that of the present age) as a system better than what we enjoy, are bound to name the period, when the liberty of the subject was in theory better defined, or in practice better protected.

There is indeed a period to which our reformers allude with singular pleasure, and which is in their contemplation offener than they name it;—the republic in the middle of the last century; there was the *purity* admired by so many; a period, that bore some resemblance to the present in France. The parliament which met in 1640, are termed by a female historian, “Patriots, whose number, virtues, and abilities, were greater than had ever been convened in any age or country.” If such men were guilty of enormities and tyranny, it must arise from the situation, and not from the peculiar structure of their bosoms. Two words will dispatch their actions: they passed a triennial bill, and sat themselves 13 years. They quarrelled with the King for levying 200,000l.

200,000. a year illegally, and in five years they raised, by their own single authority, FORTY MILLIONS, fully equal to one hundred millions at present.—They were accused by one of their own party of dividing 300,000. among their own members—An accusation highly probable, when it is upon record, that in the assessments of those infinite burthens they laid on the people, their own members were exempted, so as to be taxed only by one another.—They instituted country committees, with power to fine, sequester, imprison, and corporally punish without appeal, and without law—They put an imprimatur on the press—and they abolished the trial by jury against their own accusations.—They pressed men into their armies; and then passed ordinances for punishing them if they ran away—The King and Parliament never yet clapped an excise on BREAD, flesh, and every consumable commodity; but the Parliament alone did it without compunction. If this manual of tyranny is good, they would do wisely to repeat it. The whole ended, as might have been foreseen, in a pure despotism, as the present copy of it will do in France.

There cannot be a more serious or a more awful subject for Parliament to enter upon, than that of any alterations in the constitution: that there could not be a better one, nobody will assert; it may be possible, that a nation might enjoy the same blessings at a less expence; but to give us a change under the name of an improvement, is a dangerous experiment. What is called a real representation of the people (that is, an equal representation) and biennial Parliaments, would certainly be a great change; property now has the power of this realm; and under such a change, population would have the power; in some governments of America this is the case; but America has an indigent poor, or at least very few, arising from plenty of land; thus America is no example applicable to us. We see very exactly in France, what is an indigent poor possessed of power. So great a change as taking the government of the kingdom from property, and giving it to population, is not restoring principles of purity, but establishing new ones, an absolutely untried experiment any where but in France. If it is once admitted that property ought to possess the power, it is of very little consequence whether the election is by burgage tenures or any other mode, as the men of the greatest property

erty will find themselves in the house; and as to the Crown, Orford and Harwich shew that it is as likely to lose a borough as to gain one. The question, however, is of such importance, that reasoning ought not to be admitted; the fact is, that property possesses the preponderancy of power at present in the House of Commons; the changes proposed, all tend to remove it from property to population; this is not a *restoration*, but an absolute *novelty*.

There are men pretending to be moderate, who argue for, and are ready to declare their approbation of the English Constitution, as fixed in King, Lords, and Commons, considering the Commons as the representatives of the people; and they contend that as the Commons do purport to be a representation of the people, they will for no other alteration in the government than to make that House really that which it purports to be. This is the most rational ground that any reformer can take, because here is a semblance of propriety. Very few words will be necessary to shew from *facts* that it is only a semblance.

I contend in reply, that it is mere theory to suppose that the House of Commons purports to be the representatives of the people, if by representation is meant *choices*. Being once chosen by the few, they represent the many. They purport to be nothing more than this—men sitting in a senate, and forming a third branch of the legislature, chosen by certain bodies, who by the constitution have the privilege of electing them. They may be accurately described without using the word, or referring to the idea of representation. To call them the representatives of the people, is a very inaccurate mode of expression; they ought never to be called by any other name than the House of Commons, to distinguish them from the House of Lords. If they were really the representatives of the people, they might in theory be good, or better; but they would be something else than what they are, and consequently different from that which has rendered us a great, a free, and a happy nation.

But there is not the least reason to think that they were ever deemed the representatives of the people; certainly not the Knights for the 40s. qualification of electors, the value of money considered, was nearer 40l. of present money.

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The notion of representation and delegation of rights and privileges from the electors, has vitiated and turned to confusion so many ideas on the subject, because writers and parliaments themselves, to suit the purposes of a moment, have thought it for their interest to be esteemed something different from what they really are. The electors of members of parliament do not delegate powers, nor entrust privileges, if, by delegation, is meant the transfer of something possessed by those who depute; for the electors have neither those powers nor those privileges, and therefore cannot delegate them. But the members when elected, and in combination with the other branches of the legislature, assume, and possess, and give themselves such powers and privileges, which those did not possess who sent them. Hence, then, the septennial act was just as constitutional as the biennial.

But, on the other hand, suppose a nation in any period of confusion or anarchy, or all constituted powers, should, by universal consent and suffrage, elect a convention or parliament, for the purpose of declaring what in future shall be the *National Will*; here you have palpably all the ideas of representation realized, and such deputies ought to speak the direct voice of the people, but such a republic (for it could be nothing else,) is a government as distinct from that of England as Algiers is; and our House of Commons has not the smallest resemblance with such an assembly in its origin, its progress, or its functions. It is not necessary to characterise such a government, the case of France is directly in point.

If the House of Commons were such representatives, and renewed in short parliaments, they would be guided by the passions, folly, and madness of the people; we see in France what that leads to: at present they are guided by their own wisdom. *But they are corrupt and bribed.* If they are bribed in order to act wisely, it is an argument directly against you, and tends to prove that there is something on the verge of danger in all numerous assemblies, which, if not controlled by prerogative or influence, would hazard the public peace. We know, on experience, that they do act wisely, for nothing but a wise government can make a happy people. If the nature of such an assembly demands

to be corrupted, in order to pursue the public good, who but a visionary can wish to remove corruption? Government would certainly have been carried on cheaper if honesty alone had induced our House of Commons to act as it is said corruption has induced them; but if the vices of mankind can, by a well-poised constitution, be made to contribute to their good government, would it not be insanity to change the system, and imitate the French, who depend only on their virtues?

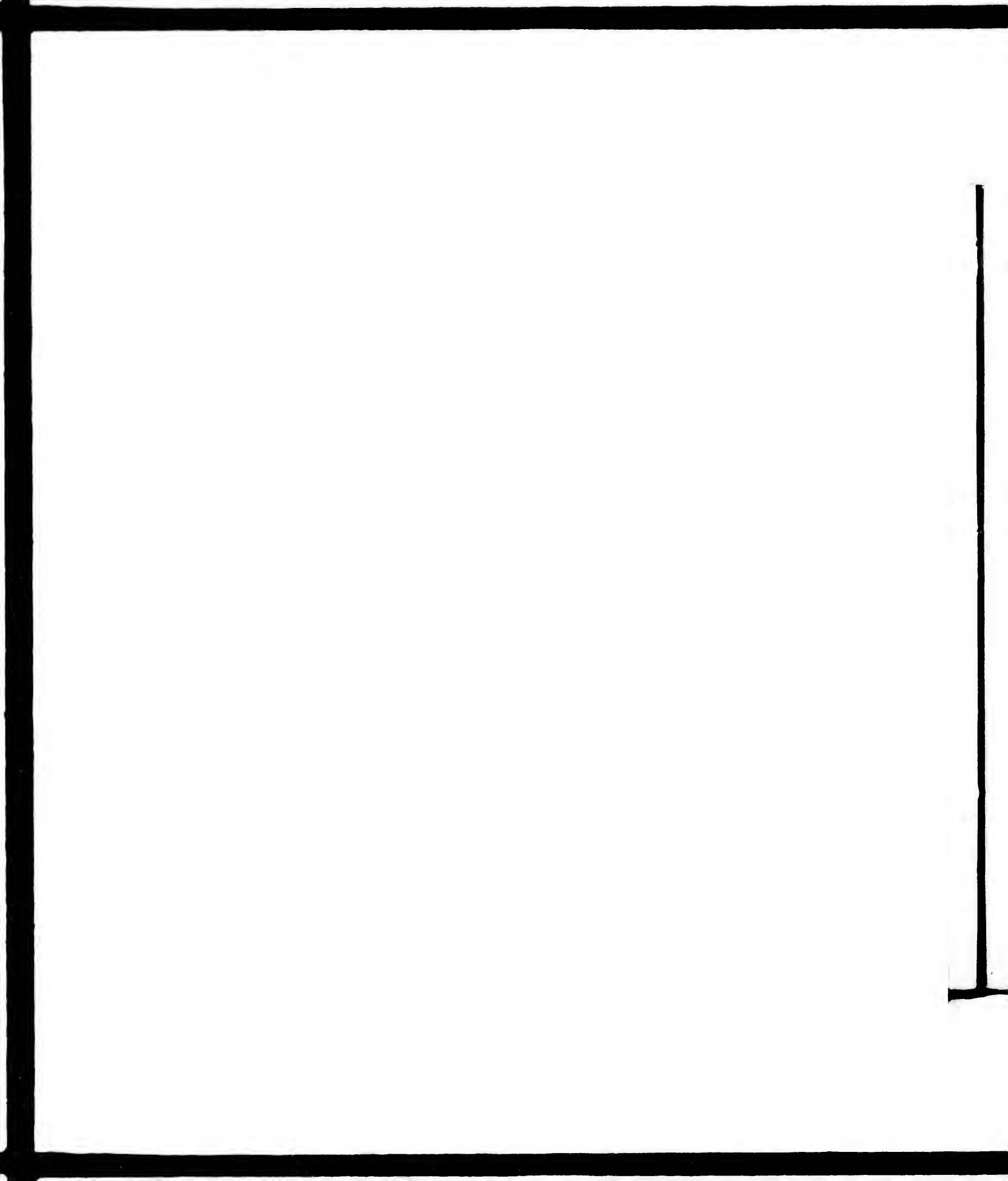
Examine the House of Commons in whatever light you will, and it will be found to possess in the power of the purse so enormous an authority, that the other branches of the legislature are absolutely at its mercy: What prevents it from swallowing them up? Is it good to prevent it? Is it necessary even for the liberty of the people? If it is necessary, how best done? Would the best way of effecting it be popular representation and short parliaments, a system in which all corruption, or even influence, would be impossible? The obvious reply finishes the chain of reasoning from fact, and proves the utter absurdity of such propositions. But grant for a moment the expedience of the experiment, and suppose that you have such a House of Commons, on what will you then depend? On their moderation and virtue: but this moderation and virtue have not been tried. If the theory of what moderation may do, and the speculation of what virtue may effect, are as just grounds to build on as fact and experiment; in such case I am ready to agree, that we may, without impropriety, exchange the positive possession of what we enjoy at present, for the hope and expectation of something better; and to fix here, you have only to prove that theory is as satisfactory as practice. To which fine enquiry I leave you as one fairly on a par with the philosophy of France.

Still the advocates for a reform return to the charge, and assert, that Parliament, as elected at present, does not speak the will of the people, and that a House of Commons ought to speak that will. The argument is a good one for those who relish theory. But I contend on the contrary line of fact, that the prosperity and happiness we have enjoyed for a century, and never so great as at present, is owing precisely

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to the House of Commons NOT speaking the will of the people; and I am founded in the fact so notorious to all the world, that such prosperity has grown to its present height under the influence of a House elected not by persons, but by property: If a parliament speaking the voice *not of the people*, has made us what we are, and if National Assemblies speaking the voice of the people, has brought France to her present situation, I have a double experiment to support me in the assertion, that reforming or changing the constitution of our House of Commons, so as to make it speak some new voice, untried in this kingdom, would be a procedure on theory, and worthy of theorists only.

If corruption and influence have given a century of happiness to this kingdom, if purity and patriotism can in four years so completely ruin an empire, as they have ruined our neighbour, I beg for one that the *vices* of England may govern me, and by no means the *virtues* of France; the vices of our government have wealth, ease, and prosperity in their train; the virtues of theirs operating by equal representation, biennial elections, and uncorrupt majorities, have brought with them bloodshed, anarchy, and ruin. The contrast carries decision in the front.

A word, however, might be said on the point of personal representation rendering the real will of the people supreme. The futility of the idea is demonstrated in the conduct of the Assemblies so chosen in France; their first merit on Jacobin principles is that of speaking the sovereign will of the people, by which expression is always understood *the majority*: But so truly abominable is this system of government, that there has not been a single instance of great and marked importance, in which the minority, and commonly a very small minority, has not, by means of terror, carried all before them. The Constituent Assembly acted, from the beginning, in direct defiance of their cahiers, which were the instructions given them by their constituents; and they did this with a mob raging at their doors, in their gallery, and even on their benches and in the chair of their president. The National Assembly acted equally under the dominion of the pikes of Paris, witness that memorable vote consecrated to eternal infamy, when 280 voices having driven, by menaces and

blood, and massacre, the majority to absence or silence; dethroned the King, and abolished the constitution, which all France had sworn to live and die with. The Convention, which assembled since, have exhibited the same spectacle, have been incessantly bullied by the mob in the galleries, have voted with a pike at their throats, and existed in the hourly expectation of being allowed to exist no longer. Such is personal representation; such is the sovereign will of a mob; such is the majesty of the people; such is liberty, when founded on Equality and Rights of Man! Representation destroys itself; and generates, with infallible certainty, an oligarchy of mobbish demagogues, till, of all other voices, that least heard is the real will of the people: 280 voices declare the will of 745 in the legislature; and 11,000 voices in Paris are the organ of 150,000 voters! Bad as you may make rotten boroughs, are they as bad as this?

The absolute nonsense of all that Paine says on the distinct natures of a constitution and a government, applied not to a federation of independent republics as America, but confounded as he confounds it with the new constitution of France, was gloriously exemplified in the National Assembly, (which was the *government*) destroying the Constitution; demanding of the people, (that is of anarchy) to make a new one. Here the fact clearly is, that an equal representation sitting in one house, and in a great city, had the power to destroy a constitution established and sworn to by all France; and the conclusion that let the next constitution be what it may, it will be equally in the power of the government of the day assembling at Paris, to destroy that also.

An argument I have heard much urged in this—that something should be granted to moderate men, in order to separate them from the *republican* party. It is urged that the obstinacy of the legislature granting nothing, drives moderate men to associate with others not equally moderate in their views; but if a temperate reform was to be effected or even commenced by the Legislature, all who are at present with reason discontented, would be detached from the reformers, and the violent party would sink for want of notice.

In replying to this common objection, I do not mean to assert, that all innovation should always be rejected; I would only
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only bring to the recollection of moderate men, certain circumstances which it is fair to weigh.

The clubs, associations, and societies, who assemble with views of enforcing reformation, on certain plans projected by various writers, some moderate, some violent, have published repeatedly to the world the principles on which they would found the national freedom, and the multifarious charges they would make in the constitution; these very generally go to great lengths. While imaginations are heated by the example of France; while the most unlimited panegyric is profusely lavished on the Revolution; while the demands made are of a nature that threaten the entire overthrow of our government; while those Rights of Man, which have deluged France in blood, are openly professed as leading principles in the improvements called for here, it may surely be admitted in candour, as a fair reply to the moderate—That to give a little, when a great deal is demanded, does not seem the way to quiet clamour; and when, by a thousand publications and resolutions, it is declared, that PERSONAL REPRESENTATION is the panacea for our evils, (though under a hundred various names,) and demanded even with threats and menaces, it must be palpable to every considerate man, that small concessions to satisfy the moderate would be lost in the agitation of the moment—despised as the concessions of timidity: wrested from fear not granted by conviction. They would be made a vantage ground for new demands; and clamour, instead of being silenced, would vociferate with renewed vigour.

All demands, therefore, that come under the theory or practice of personal representation, should be resisted on principle with firmness, and a determined resolution never to take that first step to anarchy, confusion, bloodshed, and Jacobinism, which, in one word, sums up all that is atrocious in political depravity. This ought to be considered as the only line of demarcation clearly defined, that separates moderation of sentiments from insanity of innovation.

“When the right,” says Paine, “to make a constitution 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." But here, as in every page of his work, the practice of France is the reply to the theory of his sedition. That kingdom *established* such right; and what was the consequence? Why it proved no more than the right to cut her own throat. It was employed to much more than her injury, for it was employed to her utter destruction. That a nation can have no interest in being wrong is a trueism; but in the full teeth of her own interest, she chose never to be right. What is the force and worth of such a writer's eternal strings of assertion, when brought to the test of French experiment!

The principle of our constitution is the representation of property; imperfectly in theory, but efficiently in practice; by means of apparent defects, but which, perhaps, are disguised merits; the great mass of property, both landed, monied, and commercial, finds itself represented; and that the evils of such representation are trivial, will appear from the ease, happiness, and security of all the lower classes, hence possibly virtual representation takes place, even where the real seems most remote.

If virtual representation is good, would not real representation be better?—No, replies experiment; it has been tried in France, and failed entirely; real personal representation is not a people well governed, but the government of the people; that is to say, anarchy and ruin. If parliament acts from the immediate impulse of the people, and it can act no otherwise with personal representation, the wisdom of the community is governed by the folly of it. While experience gives the living an energetic sanction to this principle, in the clearest and most unquestioned prosperity that any nation ever yet enjoyed, would it not be insanity to risk this fair inheritance, this rich possession, on the crude deductions of new theories; on supposititious improvement; ideal benefits; and speculative reformation? Yet this is pleaded for by the advocates for Rights of Man. On grounds of such pure theory, a prudent farmer would not change the culture of a turnep field; yet these reformers, on no better foundation, call for alterations in a government that has given prosperity to a great empire.

Nor let us forget that these men have been equal friends to the French Revolution from the beginning, and they are steadily

steadily so at this moment ; under the Constituent Assembly they approved, and published panegyrics on the annihilation of orders : under the next assembly they rejoiced at the demolition of royalty ; and under the Convention all the horrors we have seen are insufficient to remove their approbation. Does not this conduct prove clearly, that when these politicians tell us they mean and wish only moderate and temperate reform, they insult our understandings ? If they really desired any thing short of the total overthrow of our government, would they continue to enlist, to speak, and to write, under Jacobin banners ? Would they exalt the destruction of the old government of France, as the greatest event of history ? Would they glory in French events, effected as they have been by proscriptions and massacre ? You want only temperate reform ?—I will tell you what you want by the company you keep—if you are a party in associations, you want THAT for which those associations combine :—if you call for personal representation, you call for THAT which personal representation has given to France ;—if you demand a popular Assembly, subjected to popular phrenzy, you demand the effects which such an Assembly produced with our neighbours. You would go only certain lengths—but you herd with those, and give them your countenance who you know would push events much further ; have we not, therefore, reason for judging directly from your actions, that you mean more than you think political to avow ?

It is curious to remark the conduct of certain men, calling themselves moderate, who make the tour of reforming societies, but quit them when they go too far. There are such now clamorous amongst the *Friends of the People*, who have struck their names out of the *Constitutional Society*, as they found their views too bold : this is the exact miniature of a Revolution ; the first instigators want, perhaps, a moderate reform of abuses, and when their companions drive at more, they separate ; but such companions do not stop their pursuit for want of moderate men, who, by their countenance, brought the ill-designing into consequence, and it is then no longer in their power to suppress them. Thus the *Constitutional Society*, though quitted by the respectable, were not therefore silent, but at the bar of the Convention of France hail the coming Convention of England :

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land: these men will do the same with the *friends of the people*: when they have nursed up mischievous men into a society of importance, they will be driven out if they refuse to go all lengths, and will find that the only result of their moderate views has been to promote and bring into efficacy the immoderate designs of those who think our Constitution the temple of Dagon, and that to level it in the dust is a duty, in order that out of its ruins may arise the "heavenly form" and "delightful vision" of a French Convention. What is the conclusion?—That the first lines of discontent are in fact the most dangerous; that moderate reform, or any reform at all, *on principle*, is a sure step to all that followed reform in France; jacobinism, anarchy, and blood.

If any attempts, at so perilous a season, to reform the constitution, must be attended with such unquestionable danger, reasoning as we may justly do on the experiment of France; it will follow, that EVERY INTEREST in this kingdom is bound to resist, with the utmost solicitude, such mischievous projects, the execution of which amongst our neighbours, has deluged a great kingdom with universal ruin.

THE LANDED INTEREST is immediately and most essentially concerned; for the poison of equality in principle and in French practice tends directly to their ruin: the fate of landlords in France is too well known to want repetition; their estates seized; their chateaus plundered and burnt; their wives and daughters violated; and themselves either murdered or driven into exile; and this to an almost incredible extent. I have seen details which shew, that the landed property of more than half the kingdom has changed hands. The farmers have not much more to boast of, for they have paid dearly for their exemption from tythes in the violent attacks made on the size of farms and consequent division; the hard silver which, under the *old* government, was the price of their products, is become paper depreciated to half its value under the *new*; and even this wretched substitute they are not allowed to receive at a fair market; their treatment in this respect has been already detailed: cut-voted, and consequently cheated in taxation: at market plundered by the mob; at home plundered by the military.

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military. Are these facts to make our English yeomenry and farmers wish to try their skill at mending the constitution? Are they calculated to give us any respect for clubs and societies, whose object is the reform of that constitution which has rendered our situation directly the reverse of France? Do such facts give us reason to love the men who want to convert your plough-shares into pikes, and your coulter into daggers? Who would recommend you to change your sickles for the sabres of a company of patriot contractors? Gentlemen who have shewn themselves exceedingly adroit in cutting down fields of French corn. I wish you to make experiments in husbandry, but do not let them be of this complexion: do not let other men, and especially reformers, make experiments on your property, your bread, and your blood; three objects upon which many experiments have been tried in France, and we have seen that the success has not been such as gives us reason to try our hands at the same work: for, in one word, their property is gone; for bread they have the bark of trees; and as to blood, it is the only manure the fields of France have seen, from the first moment she listened to reformers. Is she then to us an example or a warning?

Traders and manufacturers can presently convert their wealth into money, and fly with it on paper wings wherever property remains secure; but the farmer is chained to a spot, his property is invested in the soil he cultivates;—he has no power of movement;—he must abide the beating of the storm, be it pitiless as it may.—To him, therefore, the new fangled doctrines of equality ought to appear in all their native deformity; for they are doctrines that tend directly to his destruction; and from whose pestilential influence he cannot, like others, fly.

THE MONIED INTEREST, in moments of convulsion, have some advantages from the more portable nature of their wealth, but the warning of France may instruct, that nothing can escape the depredations flowing from the Rights of Man. Their national debt, amounting to 300 millions, sterling, has been treated not altogether with the delicacy shewn to the public creditors of England, for every sort of bankruptcy, but a nominal and declared one has been committed; and the interest on funds and mortgages

mortgages paid, has been in assignats: if a man sells stock, he receives assignats, and though assignats are portable, what is their value on the exchange of London, or the Stadt-house at Amsterdam*?—Of ninety millions sterling of former currency, eighteen twentieths have disappeared. The monied men have, therefore, lost stock and cash; credit has followed; so, without funds, credit or cash, and nothing seen in the immense vacuity but assignats, the monied interest of France must flourish marvellously. Is there any thing in this picture that should make the monied interest of England fond of revolutions?

Unite these circumstances with the horrible deficiency of the present year's revenue; the expence they are at in hard cash for purchasing foreign corn, to prevent their starving; the immense efforts they must make for the next campaign; the growing habit of the people not to pay taxes; and the universal decline of both manufactures and commerce; it must then be apparent to every eye that their gasconading decree of war against the constitutions of all their neighbours, is an effort of despair; should rebellions fail them,—should they miss the safety which Paine bespoke for them, “when France shall be surrounded with Revolutions, she will be in peace and safety;” they will find internal ruin of every sort disseminating too fast to be supported: The people will find themselves in a situation helpless, proportioned to their success; for their paper, on the frontier, is not of half the value it bears in the interior of the kingdom. This is their real source of weakness, and it is absolutely irremediable; nor will the farmers continue to cultivate the

* The astonishing and daily coinage of assignats, by the Convention, must have effects which they do not seem clearly to foresee; from their readiness to issue paper, it should seem that they expect a possible continuance of the same facility, but in this they will certainly find themselves deceived. The amount in circulation much exceeds what is known. The number of forgers of false assignats now in their goals proves this fact; but the great deluge is not by men within their power. The Princes, the Duke of Brunswick, and all the enemies of France, in every place they came to, let in circulation immense quantities: and what is still worse their own successes in Flanders, and on the Rhine, had the same effect; no town was taken that was not well provided; though depreciated, this currency made good plunder for soldiers, who were hardly at the trouble of plundering in order to procure it. This excessive introduction was probably the reason for the countrymen absolutely refusing to take them. Dans les Belgique, les habitants des campagnes ne veulent pas recevoir d'assignats; Ce discredit vient de ce que les emigrés en ont repandu en multitude de faux. *Moril. Dec 14.*

ground for more than the physical necessities of their families, if paid only in a currency continually depreciated;—annual famines ensue;—in a word the seeds of ruin lie scattered so thickly that the most careless attention must recognize them. The nation feeling severely that equality means but equal misery; and that the Rights of Man produce only the right to be starved—will revolt, and call in, should they not be *too much pressed from without*, their lawful sovereign as the best and readiest means of safety.

THE COMMERCIAL INTEREST of France has been completely laid in the dust. Her colonies, by far the greatest source of her trade, have been totally ruined. Equality and the Rights of Man have, to the sugar of America, been as propitious as to the wheat of France. Assignats struck with a palsy all the imports of the kingdom, and her exports, after the destruction of St. Domingo, were a handful. The horrible convulsions in the great towns drove the merchants, and master manufacturers, with the remnant of their wealth, into other countries, or sunk them in ruin at home.

We have been told indeed, with some degree of confidence, that the French fabrics are not at present in such a state of depression as some have represented. As I have very late intelligence from that kingdom, and on which I can rely, I may venture to assert with confidence, and I could confirm it by referring to many representations made to government by the municipalities of the manufacturing towns, that every one wrought from foreign materials, such as the whole business of Lyons, and a considerable portion of the woollen fabrics are in absolute ruin; the masters and undertakers, bankrupts or fled, and the workmen begging in the streets, subsisting by charity, or wandering vagabond banditti—the *brigands* that infect the country, by endeavouring to wring from the peasantry a portion of that bread they are unable fairly to earn; such is the lot which the new doctrines of equality have produced for Lyons, the second city in France, as well as numerous other places that once were flourishing. The governing party in such towns have nothing to give the people but the flattery of equal rights; they starve on equality till the number, in the same desperate situation becomes great enough for their *sacred duty*

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of insurrection, then they rise, knock their governors on the head, and are themselves *elect* into their places; but this cures the evil scarcely for one in a thousand; the mass remains still poor; and must necessarily remain so, for such convulsions do not re-establish manufactures: Knocking brains out do not set looms a going; nor does the exercise of the pike in the guts of a mayor and his aldermen bring Italian silk to Lyons, or Spanish wool to Louviers.

In the manufacturing towns which work up native commodities, the misery is not equally great, because there is some employment that stirs; but let us examine a little more closely the nature of this circulation. I am informed, and common sense will tell one it must be so, that the only motive which induces master manufacturers to continue their business is that of *getting rid of Assignats*; they sold their stock in trade when paper was a better commodity, and accumulating, by degrees, what grew every day worse and worse, alarm incited them to do any thing rather than keep in their possession such a depreciated currency; dreading the inevitable moment when it would be worthless, they feared to keep what a breath might dissipate; they regarded it as an object of terror, and employed their workmen merely as a means of getting rid of what they knew carried a value merely nominal; and paid readily what they kept insecurely.

Turn your eyes from France and view the commercial state of England. Contemplate the immense—language cannot swell beyond the magnitude of reality,—the gigantic fabric reared on the industry of this kingdom: Throw into one vast amount the public funds,—the paper circulation of every species,—the gold and silver, whether money or plate,—the manufacturing establishments that have raised new cities, as it were, by enchantment,—the capitals invested in roads, canals, and other public works,—the shipping, magazines, and mercantile wealth of a thousand kinds, and spread throughout the globe. How would this enormous total, which, in England, has been nursed to maturity by the fond tenderness of parental protection—how would it support the storm which the Rights of Man have kindled in France? Mortal would be the blow. To touch on such a supposition is enough; every reader can picture the universal scene

scene of ruin that would blot so fair a canvas. But how has this prodigious capital, rising much above five hundred millions sterling, been formed? BY THE SECURITY WHICH THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION GIVES TO PROPERTY: Not by equality, personal representation, Rights of Man, Jacobinism, and the vile theories by which poor profligates, wanting to be rich rogues, become practical robbers! Such were not the paths of the commercial prosperity of Britain!

THE LABOURING INTEREST; the personal interest of the labourer, or has been attacked in an instance, the more remarkable as it was a ground of accusation against the old government. Those who recollect the complaints against it, on account of countrymen being enrolled for the militia, and consequently liable to be called into service, have probably read much, in the public prints, of the number of *volunteers*, which flock from all parts of France to the armies on the frontiers. Until within these few days, I was ignorant and foolish enough to believe that these were *really* volunteers; but an English labourer, returning from a farm in France, to which I had sent him, has explained to me the nature of this voluntary service. All the men in the parish, able to serve, were enrolled, and then drew lots to see who should go to form the number demanded; and, though an Englishman, my informant himself drew. Such is the mode of calling forth VOLUNTEERS, and so grossly are we deceived by names, which under a semblance of freedom, cover the vilest tyranny that can disgrace a people, and precisely in those articles which, under the old government, were made the subject of the loudest complaint. When we shall read in future of the *eagernejs* with which citizens fly to the frontiers, *P'empressement avec lequel tous les citoyens volent aux frontieres*, we shall know what it means. May not such miserables ask, "What inducement has the farmer, while following the plough, to lay aside his peaceful pursuits, and go to war with the farmer of another country?"

At first sight it should appear that a Revolution in England, in favour of principles of equality, would be most favourable

vourable to the poor classes, the labouring part of the society,—and yet, perhaps, in fact, being still governed by the experiment of France, there is no class in the state, the great landed possessors alone excepted, to whom it would prove so completely mischievous. There is every reason to have confidence in the honesty, moral feelings, and good intentions of the great mass of our lower and poorer classes, and to be rationally certain, that in case of general confusion, like that which has ruined France, they would absolutely refuse to become cut throats, blood hounds, and assassins: The mass in France were honest also, but they were driven like sheep by forward determined wretches who, getting together in arms, seized on the power which they pretended to assign to the people; plunder followed this, and the great body of the nation found, dreadfully to their cost, that they had only changed masters; but this change from a king to bands of ruffians, brought with it fruits of fore digestion; money absolutely disappeared; the rich, who formerly gave employment, were hunted down, and destroyed like wild beasts; the convulsions of the moment banished the rich merchants and manufacturers; EMPLOYMENT, which converted labour into bread, was dried up with the springs that fed it. Amidst the mockery of pay, if the poor workman cannot eat his assignats he starves—he has but one resource—he dips them in blood;—with pike in hand he attacks the corn destined to satisfy the hunger of others; and the tragedy so often acted in that miserable kingdom, is again performed till equality ends as every where else, in equality of ruin. “The manufacturers make nothing; nothing is bought; commerce is alive only in soldiers. I see nothing in trade but our imprudence and our blood. Nothing will soon be seen in France but misery and paper*.” This from the mouth of a Jacobin in the Convention! Can any doubt remain? †

Nov.

* St. Just. Monit. Dec. 1.

† The price of wheat now, in many of the departments, is 4l. 10s. a quarter English; but as that price is paid in assignats, men not well informed, may imagine that the poor being themselves paid in paper, might be proportionably able to buy; but the reverse is the case; the paper while it has raised the price of bread has destroyed both manufactures and commerce, and is now attacking agriculture itself; the people are absolutely without employment, and have no more the means to procure an assignat than a louis. This degree of misery is not yet of a year standing, for manufactures were active in some parts of

Nov. 26, at the bar the deputation from Loire and Eure tell the Convention: *The laws are without energy, and without vigour. The price of bread renders it inaccessible to the poor. MISERY IS AT ITS HEIGHT. If the dearness continues the greatest misfortunes may be expected.* With troops marching about the country to force the farmers to sell their corn at half the current price, and yet half paid with assignats, nay, who seize it at any price.—“Illegal troops of men in many departments seize the corn in the markets without paying for it *.” At Louviers 5 or 6000 workmen arose to force the magistrates to go at their head to seek corn in the granaries of the farmers. Last week, at Passy, they seized all that was in the market, while 600 others spread devastation through the forests †.”

The state of the roads (under the old government, the envy of Europe) is such as would alone, without other addition, very much impede the transport of corn, and add to the scarcity in many situations. I am informed by a person who lately travelled across the kingdom, that no repairs whatever have been done for three years past, and that he was informed, on enquiry, in several districts, that the people absolutely refused to contribute either money or labour to mend them. The minister of the Interior, Jan. 6, complains to the Convention, that they are in a shocking state of ruin; *dans un état de délabrement épouvantable.* In a state of anarchy, the object of roads may be thought small, but it shews that in a point where the people themselves are so intimately concerned, government for every purpose of doing good is absolutely at an end, and that it remains for evils only. You abolish tithes, and feudal payments; the next step is the people will not pay the land tax, and then will not repair the roads that are for their own use. Such is the state, and there are politicians in England who tell us, all will end well in France, as if it were possible to remedy such evils by new experiments. The absolute and unequivocal restoration of the old government, with terrors in its

of France last spring. The affairs of that kingdom demand an attention that never sleeps, or we are sure to be deceived. The operation of the paper money has been very singular, for, to a certain period, it appeared to be beneficial; but *the line once passed*, every thing has been rapidly declining.

* The minister of the Interior to the Convention, Nov. 28. Moniteur.

† Monit. Jan. 9.

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train, not the beneficence of Louis XVI. seems now to be the only remedy.

IT WAS NOT THUS UNDER OLD GOVERNMENT; but they were not content. The next day the minister of the Interior writes to the Convention, complaining of the Commons of Paris, *in the midst of abundance we are ready to perish with famine. Such is the fruit of eternal declamation to beat the people. Administration is neglected: It is all a horrible disorder.* "Our food" says Saint Just, "has disappeared, in proportion as our liberty has extended*." There, in two words, is the evil and the cause.

The deputation of the department of Loire and Cher at the bar of the Convention, Nov. 26, declare an insurrection of 25,000 men, on account of the high price of corn.—They assert, however, that there is corn enough in the country for a year, but the operations of the people occasion such distress, that a poor woman of the parish of l'Hovital, went three times to the market of Romorentin for corn, but not being able to get it, she went home, and, driven to excess of hunger, she killed her infant, for which she was since hanged †. This surely merits some attention from our labouring poor,—from those classes of society amongst whom our Jacobin reformers distribute their poison of equality and Rights of Man. These rights have produced delicious fruits in France, where the poor are driven to the gallows for **KILLING THEIR OWN CHILDREN, TO PREVENT THEIR DYING OF FAMINE, with corn enough in the country!!!** And it is for these rights, for such equality, for this fine system of French philosophy and **NEW LIGHTS**; this moonshine of theoretical benefit, but starvation of practical fact, that our poor are to give up all their present comforts! To change what Old England gives them, whether good or bad, for *rights* that drive them, by famine, to kill their own children, amidst Jacobin plenty; and then be hanged by that law which would have suffered them to die of hunger! Oh, John Bull! it is not thus that thy government treats wild beasts. Thou mayst be shut up in the tower, John, but thou wilt not be made to eat children! *Manual.* "We see every day in the streets, and even at the

* Monit. Dec. 1.

† Monit. Nov. 27.

doors of the sanctuary of the laws, miserables who want both bread * and cloathing." "Our situation is such," says a member of the Convention, "that tyranny will spring with victory and vengeance from popular commotions; and if the Rights of Man shall continue to exist, they will be written with the blood of the people on the tomb of liberty. The asylum of our farmers will be violated; the hope of future harvests destroyed; and our nation become the jest of Europe. †" *This city illustrious, but miserable,* said the mayor of Paris, at the bar of the Convention, *Oh! were the good citizens to rally we should see conspirators repulsed in darkness as on the 10th of August.* This calling for new revolts—for new massacres.—The Rights of Man are WRITTEN IN THEIR BLOOD! This, the present language of Frenchmen, even in the National Convention. Here is experience of what those blessed rights are which our English reformers are so desirous of establishing in this kingdom as the best boon of heaven! What a change have THE PEOPLE of that unhappy country experienced in the short period of four years?

To contrast this with the situation of the working poor in the manufacturing towns of England, would be an insult to your understandings. You know, and what is much better you feel, that industry here meets its reward; that you are paid in hard cash every Saturday night; that you have something better, for your Sunday dinner than an assignat; that a warm house covers you better than a branch of the tree of liberty; that a good coat, or stout pair of shoes, would be ill exchanged for a three coloured cockade; and lastly, that whatever evil you have to complain of would be very ill remedied by any measures that tended sooner or later to change your beef and pudding for frogs and soup meagre; your coal fires, for the pillaged sticks of a national forest; your shuttles for a hatchet; or your hammer for a pike; and the shillings and guineas of Old England for the paper assignats of Jacobin philosophers.

Before I finish the detail of that unhappy and ruined country, it will not be unamusing to contrast the *regal evils* of France, with the *republican cures*.

* Monit. Dec. 11,

† Saint Just. Mon. Dec. 1.

Land taxes, the *evil*;—*cure*—seizing the land that paid them.—

Feudal quit-rents paid by the estate of the people, the *grievances*;—*remedy*—seizing the estate itself of the nobility and clergy.—

A deficit of 56 millions in the revenue, the *misfortune*;—*covered*—by a new deficit of 300 millions.—

Ten millions of royal paper, the *complaint*;—three thousand millions of assignats—the *cure*.

A national debt of 300 millions, the *malady*;—one of 9000 millions, the *remedy*.

Marie Antonietta *condemned* for the follies of a necklace.—Mademoiselle Theroigne *applauded* for leading prisoners to slaughter.—

The arbitrary government of Louis XVI.—*changed*—for the despotism of Marat.—

Drawing men for the militia, the *crudelty*;—forcing them into volunteer corps, the *favour*.—

Lawyers and suits, the *misfortune*;—*cure*—the summary jurisdiction of the lanthorn.—

Twenty-five millions, the expence of one king, the *burthen*;—150 millions the charge of 700 kings, the *ease*.

Seven prisoners in the Bastile, the *grievance*;—7000 in the municipal dungeons, the *cure*.—

Trial by jury, *instituted*;—and 1200 throats in one night, in trial by pike.—

Militia.

IN the preceding pages I have said little of innovation: to declare against any measure, because an innovation, is a conduct worthy of children, there are, in every period, most valuable innovations; Mr. Grenville's bill for trying contested elections was an innovation; the *habeas corpus* was an innovation; the House of Commons itself was an innovation. The question now is not general; it is not for or against all innovation; but what the nature of the innovation shall be? There are some unquestionably wanted—whilst the spirit of equality is abroad—while all property—while life itself are menaced;—can it remain a doubt what those innovations should be? Exists there a man of property stupid enough to question whether the innovations of this period should not be directed to its security? Whether, instead of bringing forward the many-headed monster into clubs of riot, and associations of confusion?—whether, instead of nursing a spirit, and cherishing a principle that has laid France in the dust, we ought not to meditate innovations, that shall provide a mound against the billows when they shall flow; a shelter against the storm when the hurricane shall come. The innovation we want, and ought with one voice to call for, is a MILITIA, RANK AND FILE, OF PROPERTY.

¶ It is scarce worth a note, to obviate the palpable objection, that clubs have met without riot, and associations assembled without confusion:—so they did once in France, but what did they end in? The moderate well-meaning men instituted some of those clubs, and saw themselves pushed out or trampled down, by new comers who had nothing of moderation in their views. It will be so in all associations into which men, without property, are admitted; they must always be most numerous, and the most violent propositions ever most to their taste: they think that they have nothing to lose—there is the pivot on which such meetings turn, from, perhaps original good intentions to ultimate destruction.

Militia.

I

Popular

Popular tyranny is a catching phrenzy; that will surely spread, if effective measures be not taken in time to prevent it. Every country in Europe depends, in the last resort, on a soldiery taken from the dregs of the people, whose imaginary interest is to join insurgents of whatever complexion. Such a reliance is, to the plainest apprehension, preposterous, and must, in the nature of things, fail in the long run. While danger, too manifest to question, and too formidable to palliate, presents itself on every side, nothing but insatiation can prevent some decisive and efficient measure from being embraced; some system of defence and security to property.

Were such a militia established, property would be secure; and those who possess it might view, with a more calm patience, the attacks, whether insidious or open, of men who possessing nothing from the arts of peace and tranquillity, seek public confusion, and to kindle the storm on which to mount by the fall and ruin of others.

But, after all that can be said, this idea of the division of property is so sweet a medicine to the great mass of mankind, that it will find enthusiastic followers in every country, and no where more than in the ranks of an army; hence the necessity of property securing itself, by being armed in a militia. A regiment of a thousand cavalry in every county of moderate extent, just disciplined enough to obey orders and keep their ranks, might be enrolled and assembled in companies three days in every year, and in regiments once in seven, at a very moderate expence to the public: such an establishment would give certain and permanent security against the mischievous example of France, and the equally mischievous propagation of principles in England, which tend to the same anarchy, civil war, and bloodshed, that has reduced our neighbour to her present desperate situation.

It has been said, that such a militia is impracticable: I will not reason on a case absolutely new, but we may venture to assert, that a law which legalizes and regulates the mode in which all the land proprietors in the kingdom, who do not desire the overthrow of the constitution, under the pretence of its improvement, may instantly assemble, armed, in troops and regiments, ready to oppose the friends of anarchy;

anarchy; I say that a law which prepares the means of security and *defence*, while the rage of *attack* unites and electrifies the enemies of peace and order, must be good, and may be essential to the salvation of the community. All reference to former militia laws is beside the question—it was not of capital consequence whether executed or not, but the present moment is perilous, the danger is too imminent to be trifled with; while anarchy is at our doors, determined measures can alone preserve us.

Associations.

NEXT to the establishment of such a militia, the present spirit of association amongst the friends of the constitution, is a noble and genuine effort of feeling truly worthy Britons. There is no real friend to his country that does not rejoice to see this electric stroke of true patriotism spread with vital energy through the empire: it carries confusion to Jacobinism: it gives confidence in a just cause, and security to every generous bosom. Rapidly as the effort has shot, with genial influence through our counties, it could not be expected that the views would be uniformly directed to the same determinate objects. In a little time the scope and meaning will be well impressed, and then it will doubtless be found necessary to fix on places of rendezvous to which honest men may resort when the wicked are abroad. The national spirit is at last roused; it has seen long enough the desperate and abominable associations of those, who *do* wish and *did* openly demand the overthrow of our excellent Constitution, under pretences of Jacobin reformation: we have seen the danger—we have been shocked at the insolent threats of "Invincible mobs," we have sought the right means of safety; with a vigour of defence equal to the malignity of attack, a great nation will prove that she is not to be insulted with impunity. Had such associations existed in France, or any thing tending to them at the early stage of the Revolution, all the horrors that flowed from it might have been prevented; but the higher orders of society knew not their danger—Here the case is directly contrary.—We are in-

fructed by their calamitous experience—and of all effective means to be ready to meet a storm, this of association is (next to a militia of property) the most direct.

It may be said with truth, that a moment never yet occurred, which demanded equally the united, firm, and determined assistance—the heart and hand of men, friends of peace, to prevent, while yet it is possible to prevent, the horrors that so lately awaited us. It is a moment that ought to bring political agitation to every bosom.—The question concerns not empires, kings, and ministers alone—it comes home to our fortunes, our houses, our families: Will you, by the nerve and vigour of your measures, by the broad basis of universal property, on which you build the associations, by the prudence of the resolutions, and the energy of their execution, will you avoid the miseries of France? Listen not to the insidious pretences of Jacobin reformers—there is no medium in moments like these.—With the example of France in full display, propositions of reform, which in that kingdom produced only conflagration and massacre, will, in this, have the effect of putting the nation on its guard against men, who so openly profess a readiness to stake all we enjoy, on the desperate throw of a new Revolution. This is the question that ought to collect the enemies of Jacobinism, and which ought to have *seasonable influence on all the orders of Society, by which they may know and learn that we shall ever rally round the constitution**, uncontaminated by reforms, or the *tree of liberty*, the true symbol of Jacobin confusion. The danger has lessened since government has awakened to the nature of the present crisis, and since the admirable spirit of the people has manifested itself, the enemies of the public peace will not dare now to profess those Jacobin tenets, which, till lately, met us in such a multitude of shapes: They will put on the garb of more moderate and more temperate measures—they will now appear merely in the character of reformers—a character more dangerous perhaps, because more masked and insidious: not less pointed in effect to equality and sedition; for these men know sufficiently, by the great experiment of France, that an equal personal representation of the people would infallibly produce here, as it did there, the absolute ruin of all legal authorities. This

* Mr. Fox's Speech to the Whig Club.—RIBOWAY.

character of a reformer ought, therefore, to be an object of as much jealousy and distrust, as that of a professed Jacobin; and the associations spreading so laudably through the kingdom, should be on their guard equally against them and their doctrines. The prosperity of England, as neutral, is an eye-sore to the Jacobins, and, as an enemy, an object of terror. The question, then, is the means these cunning leaders are taking to spread the same confusion through this country, that has ruined theirs; most assuredly they will not open shops, and write JACOBIN over the doors—No; they know their business better—they find materials much more to their purpose; they find half their work done to their hands by our *Opposition-men*, and our *reformers* of the constitution. Seeing that the *result* of the labours of such men answers exactly their own *views*, they chime in, and cry reform! with a more energetic vociferation than ever they did à la lanterne in France. Their views, and this union of the Jacobin destroyers, with the English reformers, ought to open the eyes of honest men, and make them, one and all, unite in the firmest associations. Not in the milk and water declarations of loyalty*, that mean any thing or nothing, and will be forgotten in six months, but in the most vigorous opposition to every idea of reform on principles of giving more power to the people:—Here lies our danger in the pre-

* In great numbers of the associations, there seems to have been a marked attention in drawing up their declarations of loyalty and veneration for the constitution, either to use phrases of equivocal meaning, or that might be palatable to reformers, as if it was a wish to include all descriptions of men, whatever their political sentiments: If such management had been carried a little farther, declarations would have been produced, which direct Jacobins would have signed; but the original intention was wrong, and tended strongly to weaken the force and vigour of association. In the rational terror of a perilous moment, and struck with a common sensation of common danger, men fly to association, to secure them against the attacks of men already allocated to destroy them: At such an instant, what can be so futile, what can be such imbecility, as to seek, by an ill-timed compliance of candour, to express their feelings, that associations of a direct contrary complexion, men who professedly seek to change the constitution on French principles, (for there has not been a single proposition of reform that is not on those principles) that such men may be induced hypocritically to unite with you? The weakness of such a proceeding is inexcusable. On the contrary, these declarations ought all of them to have been so framed, as expressly and purposely to exclude a union with men so dangerous, as those who would not feel a horror at the idea of tampering with the constitution, at such a season as this:—By such an exclusion, it would be found, that, however numerous the reformers were before the 10th of August, that at present not one man in a thousand would listen, with patience, to hear the word Reform firmly pronounced; nor fail to deprecate the idea, as pregnant with national ruin.

sent moment ; it is not the rank Jacobin with bare and bloody arms, pike in hand, and ready for your throat ; it is his gentleman usher, your modest reformer, who, meaning a great deal, asks a little, and knows how to make that little much. But be not so cajoled—resist ALL CHANGES in that constitution, which gives you the means of wealth, and protects you in the enjoyment. Come to resolutions declaratory of the abhorrence of changes ; and of every proposition for such that does not originate in the legislature ; and petition Parliament to render illegal all meetings and clubs, whose object is to make experiments on British happiness ; to discover rights better than those of an Englishman ; to change your laws, religion, and government ; and give you, in lieu of them, the NEW LIGHTS OF FRENCH PHILOSOPHY.

If any man doubts whether I have reason for these assertions, let him consider the transaction of the Society that call themselves the Constitutional Society of London. Here is the French register of their application to the Convention, Nov. 27. *Similar Societies with ours are actually forming in all parts of England. Applauses. After the example which France has given Revolutions become easy: It will not be extraordinary, in a short space of time, if it should happen, that felicitations should arrive to a National Convention in England. New applauses**. It has been said, even in Parliament, since Government was sufficiently alarmed to call out the militia, and put the nation on her guard, that the King's Ministers ought to be impeached for their conduct. Can any one doubt whether the men who sent that infamous deputation, and the men who composed it, would not avow directly the same opinion? But let the people at large know, by these abominable facts, the unquestionable reality of their danger. Let them here discover—their intellects must be weak indeed, if they cannot discover, in this deputation, what those men mean who drink equal liberty to all mankind—NATIONAL CONVENTIONS EQUALLY EVERY WHERE !! is the sentiment of their bosoms, and would have been sung about the streets, had Government slept six weeks longer. Who can read without horror the following Address to the Volunteer Corps of Ireland, from an Irish Society of the same complexion, so lately as Dec. 20.

* *Moniteur*, Nov. 29.

" Citizen soldiers to arms. When your country has been declared in danger, we conjure you by your glory to stand to your arms, and in spite of a police, in spite of a fencible militia, to maintain good order: it is only by military array that you can obtain the speedy resurrection of liberty and equality." Here is abundant proof that we are far distant from entire safety; and that the least relaxation in that associated preparation, which is now our only salvation, would give new animation to these societies of desperate men with desperate views; to these enemies of government, of order, and of property.

While the spirit of the people is alert and animated with due zeal in defence of their lives and properties, both may be safe: but this exertion is not likely to be durable; and should that languor and indolence, the children of a foolish security, once more slacken the tension which results from the present impression; the courage of our enemies will revive; and those execrable societies, whose aim is plunder, and the means confusion, will resume the same pernicious activity in mischief that has effected the ruin of France, and had brought England almost to the brink of the same precipice down which her neighbour has been hurled. To guard against a neglect so fatal, becomes the first and greatest duty of government. It is firmness, energy, and vigour, against our domestic foes that can alone preserve the constitution uncontaminated by Jacobin reform; moderation, lenity, and the mild virtues of one man, have deluged France in blood; such are not weapons with which to combat in an hour like this: while the lamp-post, or the pike, is the imprimatur on the press in France; while suspicion fills the prisons, and massacre is the gaol delivery—if the Legislature of England does not take precautions, energetic and effective, but trusts too much to private efforts, we may, in the event, amidst confusion and terror, have reason to regret a want of policy, which an example so pregnant ought to have inspired.

Nor ought either government or the public to be driven from their purpose by the answer not uncommonly heard, which accuses the associators of going to the contrary extreme, and endangering the liberty of the people by professions of loyalty; this accusation may be considered as the last effort

effort of disappointed sedition: the men who feel with the deepest chagrin the security such associations give to the constitution, as at present established, have nothing left during the vigour now exerted, but to retort accusations—and to tell us, that we mean, or act as if we meant, to render the King absolute: but such assertions scarcely merit attention: those men, if there are such, who wished before to change our government to a despotism, certainly wish it now; but that associations directly declaring a determination to maintain the constitution *as it is*—free as it is now—mean really an intention to overturn it, is too preposterous to be credited—and worthy only of the reforming quarter from which it proceeds.

But neither a militia, association, nor any other measure to be devised would yield security were the licentiousness (not the liberty) of the press to be permitted to so shameful and destructive a length, as we have of late years experienced in England. It will probably be found after this period that no constitution, whether good or bad, can possibly exist against a licentious press. The old government of France was ruined unquestionably by inattention to this engine: the new tyranny established there are well aware of that momentous truth, and have accordingly converted it like the lantern into an engine of government. Where the licentiousness of the press is in any degree allowed, the general instruction of the lower classes must become the seed of revolt, and it is for this reason that the friends of reform, and zealous admirers of French equality, are strenuous for Sunday and charity schools.

The gentlemen who consider Paine as a *conspicuous friend of mankind, and an admirable writer**, would have a system of national education established, in which every person may become informed what are the *rights of a citizen*†; what *privileges they are deprived of*‡, and how to bring *capabilities into action by a glorious career of improvement*. The French have been wonderfully well instructed in all this; they have indeed brought their capabilities into action; they have not been wanting in *leisure, unremittingly employed, or in best*

* Mr. Cooper's Reply to Mr. Burke's *Invective*, p. 75.

† P. 75.

‡ P. 76.

endeavours exerted to hasten * improvement. Since associations are found to distribute treason and sedition, to teach the exertion of capabilities, and to point out the glorious career of France as an object of imitation for England; the poison thus expanded, does not render the vehicle more respectable. I do not find on my farm, in the village, or its vicinity, that those are the best ploughmen and carriers who are the deepest adepts in the Rights of Man. If there must be hewers of wood and drawers of water, why preach equality? Will not French horrors tell us, that to teach, is to bewilder; that to enlighten, is to destroy?

But, contrary to all this, with a press regulated for the benefit of society, and not vomiting forth poison for its destruction; the lower classes cannot well be injured by instruction: what a duty then devolves on government to guard against abuses, the neglect of which may be attended with danger, and even ruin to the whole community!

I feel but one great objection that may probably be made to the general conclusions I have drawn from the example of France: it may be said that my reasoning goes too far, because if just, a nation however enslaved, and however miserable, should submit to all evils rather than attempt the greater evil of a Revolution. The argument is common, and, dissected by reasoning, would lead on both sides into a discussion that would here be misplaced. But reasoning is endless, and facts are few; one motive, were there no other, for preferring them.

In the former revolutions of the modern world, whether in Sweden, Switzerland, Portugal, Holland, or England, the people soon settled into a form of government nearly resembling that which they had enjoyed before the troubles; they never dreamed of making new experiments *on principle*.

* Mr. Cooper says of the approach of the Revolution he looks for in England, the *down of a glorious day* (p. 12.): "my leisure shall be unremittingly employed, and my best endeavours exerted to hasten its approach." p. 77. Doubtless well prepared for the business by his conversations with Mademoiselle Theroigne, of whom he says, "I have seldom met with views more enlarged, more just, more truly patriotic."

Even in the case of America the fact holds true in almost every instance; for there is not now in the world a constitution so near the British as that of the United States; I think, *since the events in France*, that it is inferior, for the plain reason of not providing so well against the danger now most to be apprehended, *popular power*: the despotism of a monarch was every where the object of rational apprehension; it is so no longer: a worse monster has shewn itself in the world, that carries a venom in its fangs more *rabid* than the canine. In all former revolutions, therefore, the people reasoned in argument, and felt in fact, that whatever might be the event of a struggle, it could scarcely place them in a worse situation; and this with exception only to America. Experiment therefore justified the nations who felt themselves oppressed in the attempts they made to effect a revolution.

Reverse the medal, and let us ask how this great question stands at present: the principles of equality and Rights of Man are afloat, and an *experimentum crucis* tells us, that a nation, though under a very bad government, may change for one a thousand times worse. This great and disastrous event will give men, let their rank be what it may—the honest workman equally with the prince—a horror at the idea of revolutions; will teach men rather to bear the ills they have, than fly to others that they know not of; and consequently has done more against the cause of that real and safe liberty which was gradually pervading the world, than any other event in the power of mischief to effect. A reflection that ought to make us loathe a Jacobin with the same detestation as noxious animals of hideous deformity.

Take the worst of the German military governments, and compare the situation of the people in any point whatever, and it may be asserted truly that they are in a happier and better situation than the French under the anarchy given them by the Rights of Man: to answer that this anarchy may subside and produce a good government at last, is so completely beside the question, reasoning on facts, that I am astonished to hear it so often recurred to; the experiment of the new government in France was complete—it was finished—decreed and accepted—It is farcical to suppose that

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that Louis XVI. had more power to sap or destroy it than any other king: if it could not go on with him, it could not go on at all, and therefore was rotten at heart. It had made a thousand provisions against a disarmed king, but had made none against an armed mob: this mob broke into the sanctuary and kicked the constitution out of doors. Massacres followed, till no man felt his head more safe on his shoulders than the subjects of Achen or Algiers; and, as to property, it was given to the winds: where are the subjects of a German despot whose situation matches this? And as to the hope of seeing something better; the hope of the German is more likely to be realized than that of the Frenchman, who has nothing in perspective but new evils and new revolutions to cure them. A German, therefore, would be wise to renounce the thoughts of liberty, rather than pursue the idea of it through a revolution similar to that of France. Time and a happy coincidence of events may give them such an opportunity as France, worse than lost. They have her example to instruct them.

The plain conclusion to be drawn is this; nations should proceed as individuals; rely only on experimented cases. When philosophers advised the French to seek some system of freedom better than experiment (*Great Britain*) offered, they advised a trust in theory; and at this moment when Jacobins and reformists advise us to improve our constitution, is it not a question directly in point to ask them, whether the experimented freedom we enjoy at present ought to be hazarded on projects of theory? An unequal representation, rotten boroughs, long parliaments, extravagant courts, selfish ministers, and corrupt majorities, are so intimately interwoven with our practical freedom, that it would require better political anatomists than our modern reformers, to shew on fact that we did not owe our liberty to the identical evils which they want to expunge. In France none of these are to be found, a representation equal, no burgage tenures, biennial parliaments, no court, ministers of straw, and majorities corrupted only by themselves, but with these envied blessings is France free?—Here is an equal representation of the people—an experiment compleat—and the result “heavenly” in the eye of English reformers; but not so in the mouths even of Jacobins in the Convention—1789 tell you

that it is anarchy, bloodshed, and famine. "The abolition of formal government brings society closer together," is one of Paine's mountebank maxims; his theories should always be brought to the test of French practice; this compression, this contact of society, is there well understood; it is the pike of one man in the belly of another. Is this so very encouraging as to induce an imitation in England? It is not, however, sufficient to satisfy those who demand a reform; no slight reason for supposing they look further—and that through the obscure of such a foreground, there is a prospect behind, bright enough to fix attention, and allure hope—the prospect of copying in England the example of France; the regal, noble, ecclesiastical, national properties, the spoil of equal citizens!

There is in Mons. Mounier's last admirable performance an observation which merits great attention; that when once a kingdom possesses a free assembly, with the power of the purse, the real apprehension is not for liberty, but for the existence of the crown. And again, "In England the number of representatives of the people is very unequally divided: Simple boroughs, which contain few inhabitants, have, from custom, the right of deputation; while districts, very populous, do not participate in elections. This irregularity appears contrary to many incontestible principles; but it could not be rectified without augmenting the force of the democratical part of the government, without danger of breaking the equilibrium, which has been so well preserved for a century; and if ever they consent to render the representation more equal, it would be indispensable to strengthen the other two branches. Inequality of representation, above all, produces this advantage; that a great part of the people identify themselves much less with the deputies of the commons, and the public opinion is less corrupted by the passions that may agitate the lower house*." There is deep sense in this remark! The author, who is one of the best of men, and most honest of politicians, who was a leader in the constituent assembly, and marked, with great acumen, their er-

* Recherches sur les Causes qui ont empêché les François de devenir Libres, 1792, tom 2. p. 274.

rors, felt the truth he here delineates, and saw the overthrow of their constitution in the eagerness with which the people, incorporated as it were, with the deputies, till those without talents became as corrupt as those whose only talent was corrupting the hearts of others. What fact, what experiment, do our reformers pretend to, on which to ground the certainty, that if those apparent defects of the constitution were removed, the power of the people, without property, would not, in consequence, gain enough—enable them to gain more—and to advance by means of those steps—till they gained *all*? The case of the French revolution is much stronger in the affirmative than any other to be produced in the negative; but to speak of cases is absurd, with the reformers, for they proceed absolutely on theory and Rights of Man; those well adapted foundations for a republic in Bedlam.

There appears to me to be a singular propriety in the associations which are at present spreading through the kingdom, petitioning parliament to pass an act to declare all clubs, associations, societies and meetings of men, that assemble for the purpose of obtaining changes in the constitution, illegal, and that no meeting can legally correspond, either in their own name, or in the names of their secretary, or other officer, with any foreign body or government, unless such meeting is sanctioned by charter. The friends of order and good government are now collected, the time is precious, and ought not to be lost; and while we are threatened with the horrors of anarchy, it behoves us to have as much activity and energy in our defence as the violators of all human rights have exerted in their attack: for men to tell us in such a moment as this, and situated as we are with the enemy of mankind, triumphant on one side, and the torch of revolt lighting in Ireland on another side—that they are not Jacobins, but moderate men, wishing *reform*, is as impudent as it would be for a thief to say that he is not an assassin, because he only held a candle while another cut my throat.

That governments cannot be improved, and that legislation should be the only science to stand still, by no means follows: experiment proscribes only great changes; small and gradual advances, in times of serenity; such advances

as put nothing to hazard, must be good. It is easy to lay the finger on grievances in England, which every honest and moderate man would wish removed; but it is not when much is demanded, that little should be given; for the plain reason that the little will not THEN satisfy.

I shall not be suspected of thinking tythes a light grievance; but they are a grievance that would be ill remedied by the loss of the crops that pay them; the enormity of the taxes I pay is known to every man that reads the tracts I publish; heavy as they are, let them remain rather than be changed for a *contribution fonciere*; the little left me is my own, which might not be the case under the pure dispensations of Jacobin equality. Evils certainly exist in our system, and they are such as will, I trust, be remedied, gradually, by the legislature, acting from its own impulse; and not from the influence of clubs and reforming societies.

It was an old observation, that a republic could subsist on the trappings of a monarchy. The French have set the seal of experience here, as in every other case, and have shewn that citizen Robespierre, and citizen Rolland, can out-do *Emperor Joseph*, and *King George*, in extravagance; the most enormous expences, that ever any nation was deluged with, are the present in France; a single month's DEFICIENCY is 176 millions, or 7,700,000*l.* sterling; this is spending at the rate of 90 millions a year. Paine says, "It is cruel to think of a million a year to a king;" but it is not a breakfast to an assembly of citizens. There is a great deal in the civil list of England that does not concern *trappings*. The payment, for the support of those *trappings*, do not probably amount to sixpence a head upon the population of Great Britain, for which sixpence every man has the support of a chief constable that keeps all the other constables to their duty. Instead of sixpence a head paid for tranquillity; the French now pay five shillings a head for keeping a gang of cut throats, and an assembly of mad dogs. A splendid imperial court might be supported out of something worse than *trappings* of the French republic.

If France should ever again possess the precious moment of improving her government without convulsions, which opportunity

opportunity she had, and lost ; or if any other great country, having an indigent poor, should meet such a moment—experiment speaks to them but one language.—TAKE THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION, not because it is theoretically the best, but because it is practically good ; but take special care not to mistake that constitution, and give the poison of personal representation, for in such an error your import of British liberty would become the establishment of French anarchy.

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The conclusion of the whole may be compressed in a few lines ; the danger of the moment is great indeed ; and only to be guarded against by the most unremitting diligence and activity :—Exert that diligence, and bring that activity into play by a unanimous support of the administration, entrusted at present with the public safety : The question is not whether you are a friend or an enemy of that administration ; you are certainly a friend to the lives and properties of mankind. Join in associations for our defence against banditti, cut-throats, and Jacobins ; join against an enemy more subtle, and, therefore, more dangerous, the friends of reform ; the associators who would plant the tree of equal liberty ; the mountebanks who have a French nostrum, and Birmingham daggers, for the diseases of our English constitution. Guard against such miscreant attempts by pointed resolutions ; and call, with one voice, on the legislature to suppress, by vigorous and decisive laws, the clubs of sedition ; the associations that call themselves our “ constitutional ” instructors and our “ friends ; ” whose lessons are institutes of anarchy ; and whose friendship,——should their tenets prevail,——would cement with our best blood, that National Convention of Britain with which those societies have so lately threatened us.

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A P P E N D I X.

IN a period so abounding with events, or rather with atrocities, like the present, it is scarcely possible for the most rapid pen to keep pace with the new efforts which are making for the introduction of real French horrors, as remedies to the imaginary evils of these kingdoms.

The "*Proceedings of the Association of the Friends of the Constitution*." Dublin. The Duke of Leinster!! in the chair," is a publication that deserves notice; because it proves, too clearly to be doubted, that our dangers are not at an end. Jacobinism hardly sleeps, in spite of all our associations; the enemies of law and of order never relax their efforts; Ireland is their favourite ground; and should these new principles of equality, the new French "rights," be there established, it will not be long before they are raging in our own vitals. These "friends" call on the people to "SUBDUE the corruption," "the infamy," "the foulest acts under the foulest names," which form the "regular system of government," by "a RADICAL RE-
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FORM;" by a body of "representatives, an integral and essential part of the constitution, derived from the people by GENERAL election."—The English language could scarcely, in an equal number of words, paint in stronger terms the fire-brands of sedition. To call on the people not to crave, or pray, or petition, but to SUBDUÉ the errors of government,—to SUBDUÉ them by a RADICAL reform, and GENERAL representation, is, in other words, to demand a Convention, the King at Tyburn, the Lords annihilated, and Property the reward of new Roberespieres, Brissots and Marats. But these expressions are too remarkable to be accidental; they coincide too exactly with the theatre of the Jacobins in France, to allow us, for one moment, to believe that there is not a clear intelligence and union between them.

The minister of the marine, to the friends of liberty and equality in the maritime cities: "Will the ENGLISH REPUBLICANS SUFFER the King and his Parliament to make war? Already these free men testify their discontent and their repugnance to carry arms against their French brothers. Well; we will fly to THEIR ASSISTANCE; we will invade that isle, and send 50,000 caps of liberty to plant the SACRED TREE, and to offer our open arms to our REPUBLICAN BROTHERS, to PURIFY English liberty, and REFORM the vices of the government." Here the Jacobins threaten to *purify our liberty, in conjunction with English republicans, and reform our vices with 50,000 bayonets.* What this is but to *subdue us by a radical reform!!!* If any doubt could remain of the tendency of the operations of our reformers, surely such declarations are sufficient to remove them? To open our eyes to the horrible situation we should be in, if our legislature were absurd enough to listen to such incendiaries; or weak enough not to take effective measures to controul their treasonable practices.

Very much in the same spirits, as the Irish Friends, is Lord Sempil, D. Adams, Joel Barlow, and J. Frost, in the name of the London Constitutional Society, congratulating the Convention on the revolution of the 2d of September, and hoping that other nations would soon follow their

their example; presenting their cut-throats at the same time with 1000 pair of shoes, and 1000*l.* in money. To give such felicitations and hopes, the 28th of November was approbation direct of the 2d of September.

Page 7.—*Insurrection against the National Convention.*

The deputies of the department of Loire, tell the Convention at the bar. *Your scandalous debates are known in every corner of France. The afflicted people sent you to make laws, and you know not how to make a regulation; they sent you to render France respected, and you know not how to respect it yourselves; they sent you to establish liberty, and you have not known how to maintain your own. You tremble before these tribunes †.*

Paine is of an opinion directly contrary, "they sprang not from the filth of rotten boroughs—they debate in the language of gentlemen—their dignity is serene—they preserve the right angled character of man." We well know what their language is; and if a right angled character produces right angled actions, we know what those are also. For the serenity of their dignity !!!—It is a fit subject for mirth but not for argument.

* *Ed. State*, No. 12.

† *Monit.* Jan. 10, 1793.

Page 8.—*First great cause of all.*

Jan. 16, The minister of the interior to the committee of general safety; every day for a month past, they have talked of renewing the proscriptions; I have, for many days, received and laid before you assurances of projects of massacre and murder, publickly preached.

Page 8.—*Respecting the laws.*

What multiplied proofs of that fact, that without a king, and some *body* between the king and the people, where there is an indigent poor, all falls to confusion. The Jacobin Rabbeau once knew this:—

“ Dans un grand empire il faut absolument des hommes décorés, sans quoi l'état tombera dans une vaste popularité, dans une immense démocratie, qui doit finir par l'anarchie, ou par le despotisme selon que le prince ou le peuple seront l'un ou l'autre, le plus fort.” *

The Nation, says Paine, not *Parliament*, should reform abuses: the idea of vitiated bodies reforming themselves is a paradox. Exactly in proportion then to a nation interfering and taking the remedy of abuses into its own hands should be the effect in wiping them out. Apply to France for a

* *Considérations sur les Intérêts du Tiers Etat.* Par Rabbeau St. Etienne, 1788. 2d edit. P. 641.

commentary on this text. Has it been so? As *she* advanced in *reform*, did abuses disappear? Never was doctrine so belied by events as the doctrine of this great politician.

Page 9.—*Go to the Rights of Man.*

Perhaps experience will justify us in asserting, that that government is best which is best calculated to stand still and do nothing; because the thing wanted in government is not activity, but repose; and to do nothing is nineteen times in twenty better than readily to do any thing. The vetos of different orders, or houses, therefore must be good, as they are so many impediments to action. No government is so restlessly active as a pure democracy, voting in a single assembly; the mob are satisfied no longer than a torrent of events keeps them in breathless expectation. We see, in the case of France, that such bustle is the energy of mischief, the motion of despotism. Their late successes, so unlooked for and surprising, made them speak commonly, in the streets of Paris, of conquering Europe; should farther success attend their arms, they will infallibly attempt it. The leaders, who owe their importance to the present hurricane of events, would sink too low in a calm, for such men to allow the storm to subside.

Page 17.—*Comment on the text.*

The abuses and plunder in the sale of the possessions of the emigrants, may be easily conceived from the complaint which

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which Sillery makes in the Convention:—"The furniture of the chateau of Nangus, belonging to the Baron de Bretueil, was worth at least 1,500,000 liv. and has produced scarcely any thing. Six tapestries of the Gobelins, which cost 30,000 liv. in money, were sold for 2800 liv. in assignats. A clock, that cost 24,000 liv. in money, sold for 800 in paper*." Such is the virtuous administration of the *res-publica* among republicans!

Page 26.—*His head on a pike.*

And the minister Rolland, who, in his impudent letter to the King, said, that *as the voice of truth is not heard in courts, revolutions become necessary*, now, crouching under the uplifted pike, finds, in the dispensations of Jacobin justice, that the voice of truth is heard as little in conventions as in courts, and curses the folly that called for revolutions.

Page 28.—*Popular despotism.*

The federates at the bar, January 13th:—"The public force is disorganized, and poniards intimidate the good citizens."

* Monit. Dec. 31, 1792.

Spare not the liberticide members, who vote in favour of Louis, we devote them to infamy.—Marseilles to the Sections of Paris.

Page 30.—*French theory.*

The declarations of rights, says Paine, is of more value to the world than all the laws and statutes that have yet been promulgated. It stares corruption in the face. The venal tribe are all alarmed: from such opposition the revolution receives an homage. The more it is struck, the more sparks it will emit; and THE FEAR IS IT WILL NOT BE STRUCK ENOUGH. I copy this infamy to bring to the reader's recollection the confidence with which this charlatan predicted in opposition to the predictions of Mr. Burke; whose ideas, he says, tumbled over and destroyed one another, for want of a polar truth. The polar truths, by which Paine steered across the boundless and unfathomable ocean of the French revolution, make one smile; he now finds, sorely to the cost of his reputed penetration, that all the polarity which guided him was a will-o'-the-wisp meteor, that led his frail bark o'er rocks and quick-sands:—yet ingulphed as he is, he says, Mr. Burke takes a ground of sand. Events have amply told us which of them was upon sand.

Page 41.—*Direct defiance.*

I mean in the fundamentals of the constitution, such as maintaining the monarchy, &c.; in many secondary objects of

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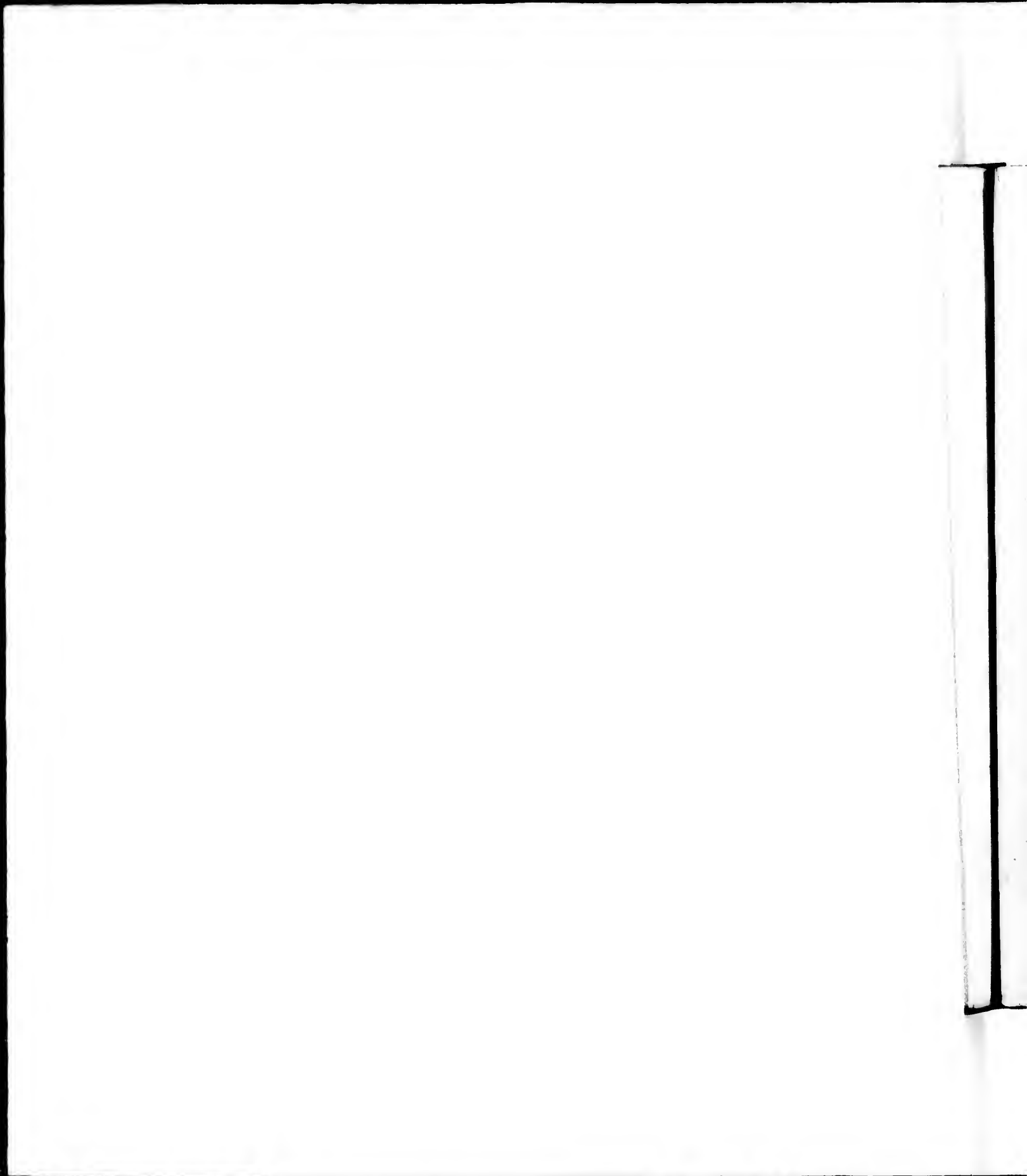
of importance, the Constituent Assembly obeyed their cahiers, as I have shewn in another place. What that Assembly did that was good, is however of the least possible consequence, for the plainest of all reasons; they formed, at the same time, a Constitution that could not support itself, and consequently the good things they did were committed to the winds. Whatever has appeared respectable in representation in France, was in that first Assembly; the second was mob; and for the third the kennels were swept. The second, at one stroke, knocked down all that was built by the first. It remains yet to be seen whether the third will not do the same by the second; every step they have hitherto taken has been a page from the code of anarchy.

Page 42.—*Dethroned the King,*

And murdered him by a majority of *five* voices, though their law required three-fourths at least for declaring guilt, or for pronouncing death; and the majority obtained by the menaces of the assassins paid by *Egalité*. The consummation of political infamy! The murder of the best prince that ever sat upon the throne of France: the only monarch that country ever knew, that was a real friend to liberty, or that ever sincerely wished to render his people truly happy. A great and awful lesson to all the princes of the world;—not a lesson teaching mildness; attention to complaints; an ear to the friends of innovation; a protection of arts, and literature, and philosophy; not an instruction to enlighten; not a call to teach the ignorant; not a wish to soften power into persuasion, or to change the stern dictates of authority for the mild voice of humanity and feeling. NO: this great abomination demands other sentiments; and ought to generate (for the real felicity of the human race) a tighter rein in the jaws of that monster, the worst and most hideous caricature of human depravity, the metaphysical, philosophical, atheistical, Jacobin republican;—abhorred for ever, for holding

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holding out to all the sovereigns of the earth, that the only prince who ever voluntarily placed bounds to his own power,—DIED FOR IT ON THE SCAFFOLD; and ruined his people, while he destroyed himself. He gave ear to those who told him of abuses; he wished to ease his people; he sought popularity; he allowed the liberty of the press, and would not restrain even its licentiousness; he cherished the arts, to produce a David, and nourished, in the bosom of protected science, a Condorcet*; he would not shed the blood of traitors, conspirators, and rebels †; he listened to those who petitioned for a REFORM.—We also have those who demand a REFORM:—and when the legislature of Great Britain, unwarned by this great example, shall listen to the doctrines that have drenched France with blood, we also shall see spectacles too horrid now to think of; did not the late tragedy tell us, that no iniquity is too black for republican reformation.

This damned event, deep written in the characters of hell, has thrown a stupor over mankind: when the princes and legislators of the world recover from it, the observation of Machiavelli, will not probably be forgotten: *Perche con pochiissimi esempi sarai più pietoso, che quelli li quali per troppa pietà lasciano seguire i disordini onde naschino occisioni o rapine.*

* That is to say, the virtuous meritorious character, of whom we have peers who have publicly declared themselves proud of his correspondence. Let those who would wish to know him well, read his character in *La Métrie Journal Physique*, and the memoirs of the assassination of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld.

† And this humanity called on his memory the abominably unfeeling remark, which I have somewhere read, in the register, I suppose, of some night cellar, that the physical pain he suffered in his execution was less than the slow torments of *La Fayette*. Did the innocent Louisa declare that insurrection, by which they both fell, to be the most sacred of duties? And are the children of the author of that sentiment clinging to the knees of a father leading to execution? The more Jacobinism we read, the more amiable it appears.

It is well enough amongst men who never see a remote cause, when an immediate one is before them, to attribute this deep stain in human annals, to the butchers who are in the Convention; in like manner the ambition of Cromwell was the direct cause of the death of Charles I.: but these are not the first causes; they are rather the natural result of preceding events. It is not Robespierre and Egalité that have murdered Louis, it was Neckar with his *double tiers*; it is PERSONAL REPRESENTATION to which this horrible crime, preceded (and which will be followed) by so many others, is alone to be attributed. And should ever similar deeds again blot the national character of this kingdom, it is not the wretches who shall form some distant convention of anarchy, to whom the mischief should be attributed, but to our REFORMERS; to our Jacobin advocates for *improving* our representation; for doing that here which has deluged France in her best blood.

Page 48.—*Multitude de faux.*

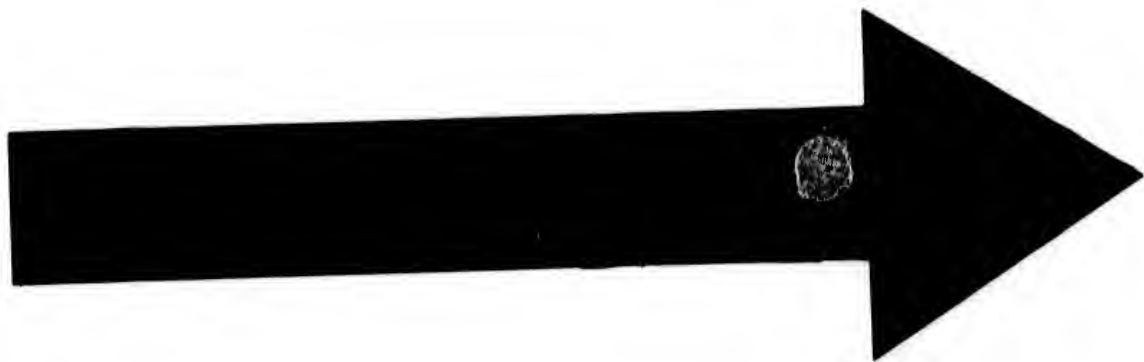
They have their own *conventional forgeries* as well as others, for it is a curious circumstance that the new assignats are issued without being numbered, and consequently may be by *milliards* instead of millions; this has been asserted in the Convention, and yet uncontradicted. Of the same complexion is the fact, that in the *Moniteur* the National Gazette; the price of the louis d'or in assignats, has not been published for some months past, which was always regularly done before.

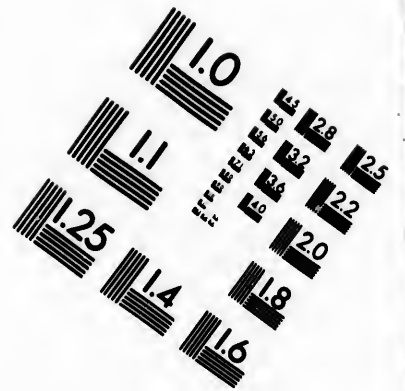
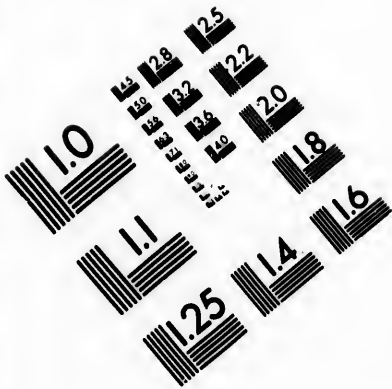
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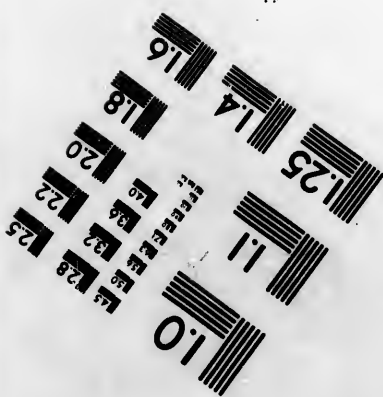
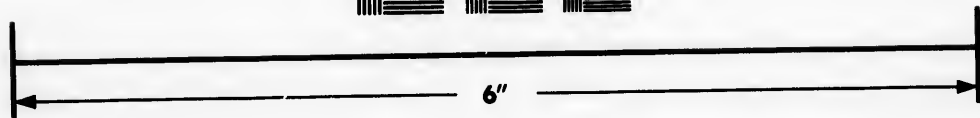
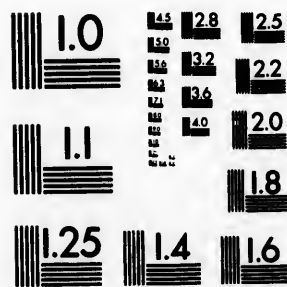
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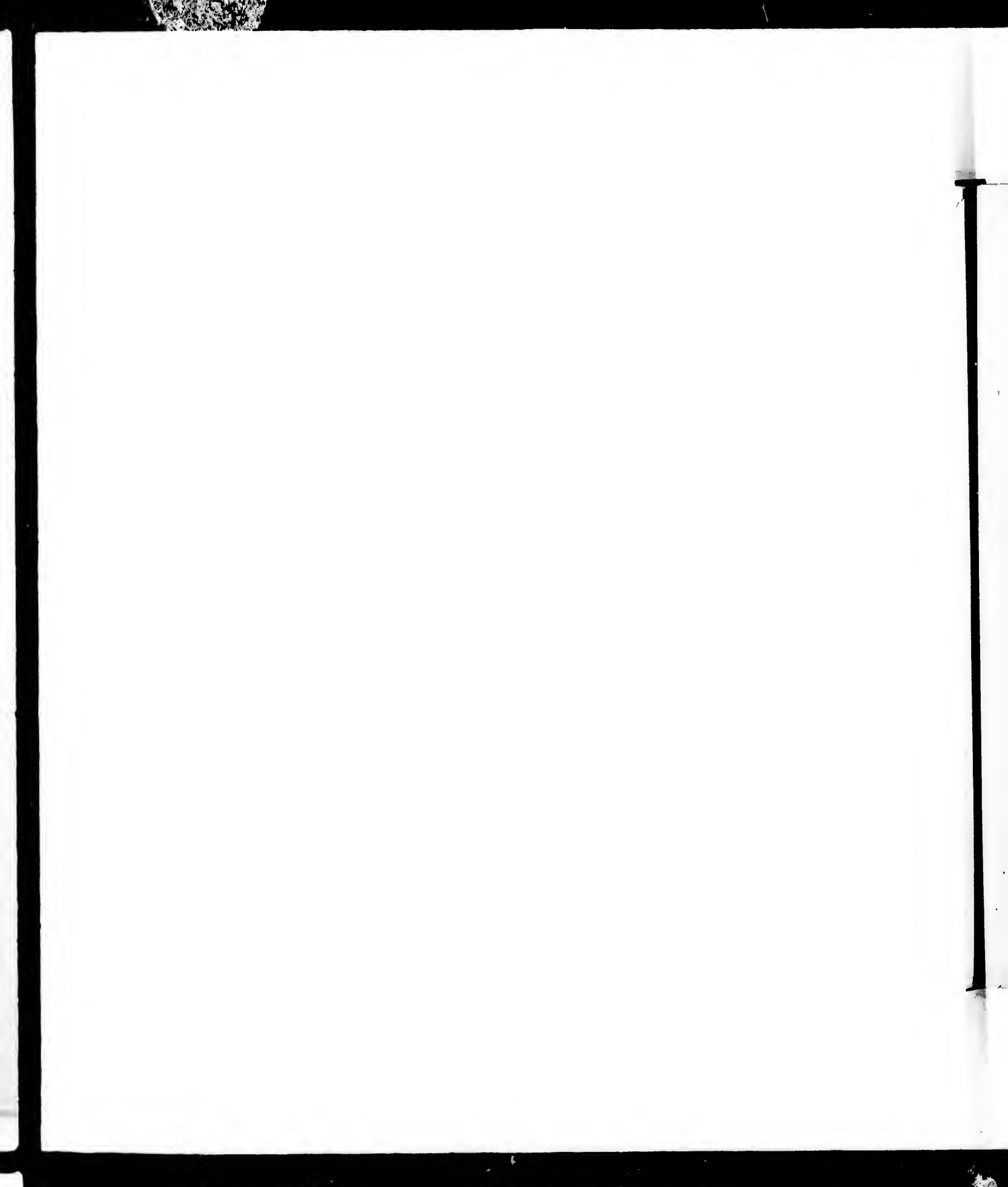
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Page 50.—*Kept insecurely.*

There is a passage, in Swift's Draper's Letters, which accounts fully for gold and silver so absolutely disappearing in France; I change only *Wood's pence* for *assignats*.—"For my own part I am already resolved what to do; I have a pretty good shop of stuffs and silks, and instead of taking *assignats*, I intend to truck with my neighbours, the butcher, and baker, and brewer, and the rest, goods for goods; and the little gold and silver I have, I WILL KEEP BY ME LIKE MY HEART'S BLOOD, TILL BETTER TIMES, till I am just ready to starve; and then I will buy *assignats*."

Page 52.—*Corn enough in old country.*

"By means of revolutions," says Paine, "civilization will be left to the enjoyment of that abundance, of which it is now deprived"—The abundance produced by revolutions is a text for Frenchmen to preach on.

Page 9.—Go to Rights of Man.

The authority of future assemblies, says Paine, will be to legislate according to the principles prescribed in the constitution; and if experience should shew, that alterations are necessary, they will not be left to the discretionary power of the government. Before his book was well circulated, that future government pulled down the constitution. He goes on:—
A government arising out of society, cannot have the right of altering itself; if it had, it would be arbitrary. Here he levels point blank the system he wrote five hundred pages to support. Then the French government IS arbitrary.

Page 50.—Religion.

The point of religion, *politically* considered, is a great and arduous question, which demands talents fully to examine and arrange, greater perhaps than any other branch of legislation. The ablest men of the age seem rather to split on this rock than to escape it. When I read in a tract
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a complaint of the author, that, *because he objects to particular religious tenets, he has been represented as an enemy of order and of government*; and in the same tract meet with the assertion, that *the revolution of the 10th of August, was a happy and necessary completion of that of the 14th of July*, I see an instance which affords a proof of this. The latter sentiment makes one's blood run cold, for it implies more than it professes. Freezing with its effect, I turned hastily to the end of the work, to see if it was not explained (as the publication took place after the death of the King) in a chapter of additions and corrections; but no such matter. The question comes surely with force; is such a man represented as an enemy of government, on account of his *religious tenets*, or on account of his *political opinions*?

When such sentiments are abroad, and even gloried in, and found most wonderfully connected, one knows not how, with religious tenets, infinitely difficult becomes the business, I will not say of toleration, but of the whole system of legislation, so far as it connects with religion. Would you have a unitarian take a seat on the bench of bishops? Religious reasons have not yet been given why they should not. But would you have a man there who publicly declares, that the revolution of the 10th of August was a HAPPY one? No; most assuredly. Hence then, in the *repeal* of tests and subscriptions, are they to be considered as levelled against heterodox doctrines of religion; or, as political securities, that the power and emoluments of the church shall be lodged with men whose opinions do not tend to the utter destruction of our admirable constitution IN STATE? And further, if there are any particular sects of religion, whose professors are generally tinged with republicanism and Jacobinism, will any man of common sense suppose, that the non-repeal of tests and restrictions are persisted in merely on religious motives?

There is one object in associations which has not been thought of, but which would, perhaps, be a useful and effective as any other, and that is, for associators to resolve against dealing with any sort of Jacobin tradesmen: if the atrocity of attempts to alter a constitution, which so effectually protects property, as that of England does, on comparison with any other that Europe sees, be well considered, the supineness of mankind, in giving encouragement to those whose utmost efforts are aimed at its destruction, will surely appear the most marvellous stupidity. Who, acquainted with the *complexions* of men, in any town in England, does not sometimes hear the wealth of the disaffected made a boast of? If you name the danger of the political principles of certain men to property—you hear it exclaimed, *How?* Do you consider the wealth of such and such persons? Are they not rich? Have they not a stake? Yes; they have a stake; commonly moveable as their persons, and therefore the readiness with which they hazard public confusion. But whence this boast of property? Because, probably, the landed-men in their vicinity, and the monied-men of other principles, have, with this gross blindness, which I at present allude to, been for years in the habit of assisting such disaffected republican Jacobin reformers, to accumulate that wealth which is now ready to be employed in their own destruction: they have been paying their incomes into the hands of men who are ready to convert the interest they make upon it to the establishment of a Convention in England, to consist of brother citizens of equality; to subscribe money, food, cloaths, and arms for the assassins and regicides of France, to enable them, by success at home, to subdue the *vices* of
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the British constitution by a radical reform. This supine inattention, which turns a man's money to his own destruction, is highly reprehensible. Let those who are real friends to the constitution expend their income with men whose principles are known—and not become, unthinkingly, promoters of sedition, and encouragers of republicanism. Go amongst sectaries of various denominations, political and religious, and examine if the individuals are not attentive to this point.

Page 58.—*Right to relieve.*

But Paine thinks differently of our *no* constitution. —“The country governs itself at its own expence, by means of magistrates, juries, sessions, and assize;—what is called government, is only boundless extravagance.” This is one of the false and stippant remarks of that endless prevaricator, who has not fact to support him in more than one of a thousand assertions. What are magistrates without the controul of sessions, but tyrants? What would sessions be without the King's Bench? What would the King's Bench be without a superior? You can finish in none of these steps without tyranny being the consequence. It is the gradation and controul of powers which forms the true balance. It is **THE CROWN** that keeps all these meaner stars in their respective orbits: there is no similar power in France, and *therefore* all is confusion and tyranny. The admirable utility of magistrates, sessions, assize, &c. are felt and admitted:—you would have this without a supreme magistrate, that is, you would have attraction without matter, and solar heat without a sun.

Paine

Paine is fond of running parallels, and so are most men of genius; but he is rarely happy in them:—"The generality of the people in America," says he, "especially the poor, are more able to pay taxes than the generality of people either in France or England." And he unites with this, the "cruelty" of a civil list of a million sterling, which he compares with the civil list of America, which is only 300,000 dollars. One must search many writers with talents, to find one who can compress such multitudes of falsehoods and blunders into the same space with this captain-general of mountebanks.

The ability to pay taxes does not depend on a people being at their ease,—that is, having few or no indigent poor. This assertion will seem a paradox only to the ignorant. That ability depends on the quantity of *money exchanges*; in other words, on **CONCENTRATED CIRCULATION**. The ease, the plenty, and happiness of the people have nothing to do in this business; for give a man a thousand acres of rich land, which produces beef, mutton, pork, wheat, wool, hemp, flax, &c. to profusion; let the family that possess it, live in the utmost conceivable plenty, there does not result from this outline the capability of paying one shilling of taxes. Even taxes on solid property, like land-taxes, must be paid by *cash in circulation*: land does not pay a land-tax, but *money*. It is not, therefore, the *ease* of the people that enables them to pay, but the superfluity that goes beyond that ease. In the consumption of a thousand pounds worth of products forming the ease, the physical "ability" mentioned by Paine, what is the taxable amount? Possibly not a penny beyond the consumption of foreign wine, coffee, spices, &c. I used the expression *concentrated circulation*; America, if she wanted heavy taxes, would feel what it means: let a settler in the woods, two hundred miles from a city, sell his hemp or his wool to a store-keeper for money, there is a step in circulation where the state might levy a tax; but in a wild country, it would cost ten times more to levy it, than the tax would be worth. We know what distilleries are in the Highlands of Scotland; the Americans have that tax also, but they

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they can levy it only in peopled districts: nay, there are districts in America, where the land-tax will not pay for the collecting!!! It would be easy to pursue these observations to demonstration; and to shew, that the reverse of his proposition is true, and that the people of England and of France (*before the revolution, for nothing since has circulated but blood and rapine*) are infinitely more able to pay taxes than those of America, for this plain reason, that they have a circulation infinitely more rapid.

When I consider the boundless wealth of this kingdom; its enormous consumption; its rapid circulation of 40 millions sterling, in gold and silver, and of paper to an infinitely greater amount; its exportation and importation, which, if valued truly, would exceed 50 millions sterling; the facilities of movement, exchange, transfer, of life, if I may use the expression, arising from the size of our cities and the mass of our circulation; I should think it a moderate calculation to say, that in case of any unforeseen emergency of the state, that called for some great exertion, it would be easier to raise, by taxation in Great Britain, five pounds a head on the people than it would be to raise 5s. a head in America: for in taxation, speaking at large of a nation, the quantum *paid*, is not so much the object to regard as the quantum *left* after taxes are paid. Suppose the people of one country pay 20s. a head, and the people of another country 40s. (not very far from the fact of England and France)—what does this prove? Just nothing. What is left in their pockets after the tax is paid? There is the inquiry; and in the Englishman's pocket you would find a purse of guineas and shillings*; in the Frenchman's, the

* The mass of our taxes is not so great an evil as their inequality, the burthens paid by a country gentleman, of small estate, are hideous, and leaves him, like the Frenchman, with empty pockets.

maladie de la poche, vacuity. Perhaps the happiest and most enviable people in America, the *comfortable* freeholder, in the back country, is, of all the men in Europe or America, the one least able to pay taxes. What do I deduce from this? That the comparison of the English civil list of 898,468l. *, amounting to 1s. 7½d. a head is not at all unreasonable, when compared with the American civil list of 300,000 dollars, (66,000l). or 5½d a head. But no comparison can be drawn justly, between a new country that did not form itself and an old one that did, and now pays the expence of forming that new one. Let the American account be charged with the expence of the war of 1756, or one hundred millions, and then compare taxation.

Page 50.—Anarchy.

If any doubt could be entertained whether Paine's principles were those of *real* reformation or of anarchy, it would be removed by his declaring, *I am contending for the rights of the living, against their being controuled by the manuscript authority of the dead.* This is a direct revolt against the authority of all LAW; he meant it against government, and did not see that it applies equally against law, and every link of civilization.

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* Sir John Sinclair's History of the Public Revenue, vol. ii. p. 76.

Page 55.—*Abuses.*

But if this maxim had always governed, where would our present liberty have been? It was reforming abuses that gave us our present constitution. Admiable logic! Because when you had a bad constitution you changed to get a good one; therefore having a good one, you should change to get a better? The Italian, who being well, took phylic to be better, seems a case in point.

Page 3.—*Experimenter.*

This circumstance of there being men who having been friends to the revolution, before the 10th of August, yet continue friends to it, proves clearly one of two things; that they are either republicans, and therefore only approved

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proved of the revolution before the 10th of August as a step to the 21st of January, thinking, with Dr. Priestley, the revolution of the 10th *necessary and HAPPY*;—or, that they have changed their principles. The revolution before the 10th of August, was as different from the revolution after that day, as light from darkness; as clearly distinct in principle and practice, as liberty and slavery; for the same man to approve therefore of both, he must either be uncandid or changeable; uncandid in his approbation before that period; changeable in his approbation after it. How little reason therefore for reproaching me with sentiments contrary to those I published before the 10th of August! I am not changeable but steady and consistent, the same principles which directed me to approve the revolution, in its commencement (the principles of real liberty), led me to detest it after the 10th of August. The reproach of changeableness or *something worse*, belongs entirely to those who did *not* then change their opinion, but approve the *republic*, as they had approved the *limited monarchy*.

Monf. de Mounier's just character of Louis XVI. here merits quoting:—"The abuses in France were prior to the reign of Louis XVI.: a debt of five milliards (218,750,000l.) existed when he mounted the throne. Never was the crown of France worn by a prince who was more the friend of humanity. A tender father and husband; an enemy of all fast and prodigality; full of respect for public law, he was anxious to do all the good that was in his power. The *corvées* abolished; the torture suppressed; the miserable condition of those in hospitals and prisons eased; the reformation of our absurd criminal

riminal jurisprudence begun; the provincial administrations instituted; the servitude of the *glebe* abolished in his domains; civil rights restored to those who do not profess the catholic religion; the navy raised from annihilation; new ports created; commerce extended by the most useful public establishments. What titles these for the gratitude of his people! Even in his errors he was still guided by the love of his subjects; and it is hatred against abuses, and his too facile goodness, that precipitated him from his throne. It is shocking to think, that with a mind less beneficent, another prince might perhaps have found the means of preserving his power." *Recherches sur les causes, &c.* Tom. i. p. 23. Louis, *who, very different from the general class called by that name, is a man of a good heart*, is the character of this prince given by the incendiary Paine, whose writings contributed to bring him to the block.

THE END.

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