







FRAGMENTS  
OF  
*POLITICS AND HISTORY.*

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BY M. MERCIER.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# FRAGMENTS

## POLITICS AND HISTOR

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### OF LUXURY.

**W**HERE is the boundary, the line of separation between laudable and pernicious luxury? I am unable to mark it. I grieve to see so many hands employed on frivolous pieces of furniture, on useless jewels, on superfluous articles of decoration, and on transitory and puerile forms; yet I love to behold the same luxury supply us with wines, with compound drinks, and with the fruits of the earth, which, in the wild state, are poor and austere, but, by high cultivation, are brought to our tables independently of the seasons, and acquire a plumpness and an exquisite flavour. I condemn the luxury which engrosses vast enclosures for the blood territory of the chace; but I cherish that luxury which creates amusements, Ælean games,

games, and theatrical entertainments; those entertainments which, by softening the manners of the people, enlarge their understanding, and which would be the most perfect school, if a wise police were to check the licentiousness of authors, and to admit into the profession of actors men only of regular deportment.

I love the luxury which corrects the bitters inseparable from life; but I detest that which drains the substance of men to form transient enjoyments. How shall we separate these two kinds of luxury, how shall we distinguish them even in our language? I would not choose to be a stupid or ferocious savage, with the bow as the only pledge of my sustenance, differing little from a brute, and almost as miserable; yet still less would I be one of those young men of fashion who, to indulge their cruel and fanciful caprices, torment horses, dogs, valets, and whatever they encounter with.

There is a luxury which, by quickening nature, opens the stores of her fecundity; which, if I may use the expression, perfects the designs of the Creator; and which makes man a social and enlightened being, kindling the torch of genius, and throwing on all that surrounds him a cheerful splendour, by the pliancy and variety of arts and talents. There is another luxury  
-which

which intoxicates man, which renders him obdurate, and which fervilely attaches him to wretchedness, to puerility, and to pursuits which pride glosses, but which destroy instead of animating the human species. Still it bears the name of luxury, a word vague and undefinable, and which ought to be expunged, as breeding false notions. But without luxury there would be no arts. This reflection reconciles us somewhat to the term; for music, poetry, and dancing, are delicious arts which touch the soul.

Finally, when luxury, in times considered as barbarous, maintained many domestics, and sometimes four or five hundred gentlemen in the service of a baron, though reprehensible, it was much preferable to that which heaps diamonds upon an ugly or dull courtesan.

I should at present be almost equally afraid either to abolish luxury or to give it a still greater extension. This word seems fated to embarrass philosophers, who know not where to stop, or to draw the line of demarcation; for the ages without luxury are remarkable in history for dreadful famines, witness the chronicles and statutes of Charlemagne. But if reproduction depend on luxury; if, without this attraction, the hands of the cultivator would grow

languid; if enchased watches be intimately connected with the procuring of food; let us tolerate trinkets, that we may have cattle. This chain of connexion, though incomprehensible, may really exist; and it belongs not to moral theory to combat what seems to satisfy all the world. Every one dreads abstinence; and Diogenes alone could fancy that, if well borne, it might equal fruition.

The words most used are almost invariably the worst understood. What is termed *luxury* is the perpetual spur which incites man to labour, which whets his industry, which animates him to lofty deeds, and which creates all the fruits and the varied blessings of the earth: it is a spring ever in action, that quickens nature; for nothing is produced but by the love of pleasure and the humour of the consumer.

Thus, there are no bounds to this taste for luxury, which displays all the views of the creation. Assuredly the human race is happiest in countries where luxury is known: whatever is for the use of man, all arts, and all inventions, flow incessantly from one hand into another. But in climates where the industry of man is cramped, the most luxuriant soil bears only useless vegetables. Man is there weak, and traverses only deserts.

To the word *luxury* let us therefore substitute the explanatory terms *spur* of man, *spur* of his labour, *ferment* of reproduction.

Luxury confers upon the earth its fertility. Separate then, it will be said, the pernicious from the luxury that is useful. I would attempt it; but the task is difficult, and I shall defer it until another time. Meanwhile, if you cannot control yourself, why should you restrain the taste of the consumer? He always gives you a labour for yours: the sign which he presents to you is the representative symbol of his own industry, or of that of his ancestors. Why deprive a man of his enjoyment? Do you wish that he should sink into sloth, that he should stifle the chief faculties of his soul and body, that he should clog the habitual activity with which he is endowed? Suffer him to give nature every possible form; suffer him to combine matter; for from this modification will spring abundance. Speak not of the mere necessities of life; he will never acquire them without having the idea of superfluities, without the pain of labour, without the fruit of attention. To the end that all may enjoy, all must labour. The whole consists in this, that the hand of man never shall remain idle, that his brain shall never grow torpid.

Luxury is a perpetual stimulant; leave to this stimulant the task of creating many different substances. What corrects the inequality of riches, is only this varied desire of enjoyments; and thus it is that each finds his support in the caprices of another.

You who quarrel with luxury, ascribe to it ills which it does not occasion; they have other causes. Consider that this luxury which you condemn is what invigorates man, what triples his life, what charms his existence. Man is not rendered happy by your moral precepts, but by furniture, clothes, utensils, commodious houses, wholesome and well-prepared food: and without the luxury of enamelled gold-boxes, diamonds, pictures, bronzes, and statues, we should not have a multitude of agreeable and useful articles which are reckoned essential to our comforts.

The political machine is of large dimensions, and has a connexion between all its parts. Disclaimer, stop. Know you what you are about to say? Have you reflected well? Would you wish to deprive man of whatever is useful, convenient, and agreeable? Take care; the first invention was a luxury; the rudest clothing is a modification of nature; it is the effect of labour. Luxury is likewise a work of man's hands;

hands; it must please some one since it is accepted. The more labours, the more enjoyments; and the more enjoyments, the more reproductions. Stop no species of toil, whatever it may be; for man knows for what he toils.

Disclaimer, you would eat very coarse bread, if the other arts did not improve baking; for it is an art to make bread. The finest pastry, the lightest biscuit, is no more a luxury than the worst bread ill made. A more attentive labour is all that distinguishes good from bad food.

Activity in the circulation, ardour for labour, fertile and varied productions, these are what spring from luxury, that great incentive which toils incessantly on nature, because it puts all in motion: and if it brings diamonds from Golconda, the first and annual advances of specie necessary to cultivation are, on that very account, the more considerable.

Let the word *luxury* be no longer cited, therefore, in a bad sense; let it be considered as a ferment of emulation diffused among men, which animates their industry, and which, from their reciprocal efforts, combines different inventions of which human genius profits. It is by the concurrence of so many effects that society is elaborated, and gains every day a multitude



of little enjoyments which form the national prosperity.

As soon as primitive equality is interrupted, and the right of property admitted, it must be left to luxury to break down the large estates, and throw the fragments into the hands of the class worst provided for. Such is the work of luxury, which will restore some degree of equality, by making the rich perpetual contributors to the poor; no man will flourish in indolence; and the best cultivated and most prosperous kingdoms are those where luxury reproduces subsistence. There are unquestionably some luxuries that are less useful than others: it is better to spend money on the fields than in the shop of a lapidary or a jeweller; it is better to plant three thousand fruit-trees, than to condemn a piece of ground to supply a fertile shade, which may afford a cool retreat for an hour or two in a year; or to cover the fingers with rings. But a false computation, or an erroneous whim, hinders not luxury, under another name, from being the spur of labour, the animator of empires, and the comforter of the human race; since by means of industry, kept perpetually in action, it gives birth to reproduction, and affords a multitude of enjoyments to all those who love pleasure, that is, to the whole race of men.

The evils which are ascribed to luxury originate from the bad administration of governments. Besides, luxury exists in infinite shades; republics and monarchies are at this time nearly upon a level, and do not resist luxury. Man has too decided a taste for pleasures to banish it. If it be an evil, it is an evil which at present pervades all Europe. London, Paris, Naples, Amsterdam, Vienna, Petersburg, Berne, and Venice, are in this respect nearly on a par. Luxury has found its way even into republics; they have discovered that this word is merely a bugbear; for the luxury of individuals can never exceed the general abilities of a nation.

All the clamours against luxury will not produce a reform of it. Civilisation necessarily brought along with it the progress of luxury, and the love of sensual pleasures. But if an age, emasculated by the indulgence of luxury, has lost the chivalric virtues, it has acquired in return the knowledge proper to form a good legislation. It frames laws which are truly calculated for men, and which secure the destiny of future generations. Poor and virtuous nations cannot trace the plan of public felicity; their hearts are upright, but their ideas are confined. Good education is the lot of nations which have many enjoyments; man reasons  
 most

most profoundly in those times which the rigid condemn. Thus every thing is compensated, and a nation which possesses no longer the war-like virtues in the same vigour, has, at least for its support, maxims of polity which the administrators of nations will not dare to infringe.

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#### VICIOUS LEGISLATIONS.

VICIOUS legislations form bad governments, which were never so in their origin. Under an arbitrary monarch these legislations sleep: he perceives confusedly that they are useful to his power, provided he wants that elevated genius which could lead him to reform the laws that oppress in detail, while he himself oppresses in the aggregate. It is an instinct of *arbitrary sovereignty* to permit the continuance of whatever can harass the inhabitants of this earth.

A good legislation restores to each citizen a degree of liberty; and it is easy to perceive whether the government tends to despotism, by appreciating the repugnance of the sovereign or his ministers to a reform of the civil laws: it is impossible that these laws, when improved, should not favour that *natural right* the very  
name

name of which terrifies the administrators of a despotic state.

There can be no liberty where knowledge and science do not flourish : the more these are diffused, the more does the haughtiness of power lose its oppressing force.

Whatever belongs to despotism is vain : it places all its grandeur in a fastidious pomp ; and caresses vices, because it finds its account in particular ones. Those who are tenacious of futile, and, most frequently, unjust privileges, bring about the destruction of states : the nobles, who in several kingdoms have too great an ascendancy, are a *wedge* which separates the sovereign from his subjects, which disunites them by acting equally on both. Replete with vanity, and infected by egotism, the public good occupies but little of their attention.

It has been remarked, that the best of the civil laws have been established either during civil wars, or immediately after. This ought not to surprise us ; the principles of government, whether good or bad, being in similar conjunctures shaken, every one recurs to the natural rights of society.

During civil wars the destruction of the state is not to be dreaded. Notwithstanding the people may be divided into factions, it is far  
from

from being annihilated: it has, on the other hand, a superabundance of vital action. If the father contends against the son, brother against brother, and citizen against citizen, the country is distracted, but not destroyed. The love of the public weal, predominating in the breast of each individual, is only deceived as to the means; and in all these *reparative* wars (which evinces the necessity sometimes, and even the goodness of them) the triumphant party has invariably justice on its side.

What is a state? is it not an assemblage of all the individuals of whom a nation is formed? Ought we to be surprised that these individuals have passions? can they be exempt from feeling, like the corpses ranged in a line in a cemetery?

The insurrection of a nation constantly crimines the administration: it at the least wards off a greater danger; for citizens bear with patience supportable ills, and when they proceed to a formal disobedience, it is because there has been an infringement of certain privileges, of certain customs to which nations are sometimes more attached than to the fundamental laws.

These violent commotions are rarely without a real motive: the people find themselves aggrieved, either because an attempt has been made

to deprive them of the usages to which custom has attached them, or because their confidence has been shaken by an attack on their religious principles, or on the body of magistracy.

The tie which binds several thousands of men to a single individual has always appeared to me inexplicable: as it is drawn tighter, so it relaxes and elongates by a multitude of little unperceived causes. Men feel the necessity of a government: they applaud the acts of the sovereign, when these acts are worthy the majesty of the throne and that of the nation; but they detest the caprices of the man, more especially when, by hasty edicts, he appears to entertain a high contempt for popular opinion.

The people bear more patiently great attacks, than little ones made repeatedly and at intervals, because in the former they either see or suspect the work of necessity, or of the general good; while in the latter they can only perceive a design to thwart and juggle them in what regards their tastes, pleasures, or habits.

The surest expedient to appease sedition is to satisfy the people. A prudent and wise prince will reap a full harvest of glory by retracting in time: he ought to know that in every political body there is a reaction; and if he has not been surprised

surprised at obedience, neither ought he to be astonished at resistance.

Whenever the horse winces, it is because he is ill at ease, and because his rider is impatient or unskilful. The prince will display a true greatness of soul, by not founding his obstinacy on a false policy. If he errs in this particular, genius takes advantage of his error, fully aware that every legislation, to have its full effect, ought to concur with the consent of the people. If they are not sufficiently enlightened to receive a beneficent law, the prince should wait till their eyes are more clearly opened; and it behoves him to subdue in himself every human passion, to the end that he may preserve the glorious title of legislator—a title to which he can have no legitimate claim, provided he does not discover, by an insurrection of the people, that their grievances are urgent, and demand redress. As every thing in this world is composed of parts infinitely small, he ought, in cases of popular murmuring, to consider whether these may not have a concealed reason at least tantamount to his own. Whatever he may have done in haste, he ought to reconsider and amend.

If the revolt of the citizens has not had a justifiable cause, the sedition will fall of itself,  
and

and will never gain over the superior classes. But if the citizens have grievances that call aloud for redress, how can the prince conceive that the political body will be destitute of action, sentiment, and life? Would he be honoured by commanding a troop of slaves, always trembling and submissive in the renunciation of their will? Would he, in such a case, be placed over men, at the head of whom he could be proud of his station? The reaction of the citizens is a proof of national liberty.

The prince ought never to neglect the means of appeasing a revolt; and here it more especially becomes him to subdue in himself every personal emotion of vanity: he would render himself little and contemptible by an endeavour to give to his own will a predominancy, when it is opposed by the general will; he would furnish to the revolters those most formidable weapons, the courage and fury of despair; and he would be responsible for all the mischiefs which might ensue.

I know of nothing finer in a sovereign than an honourable retreat, a majestic pacification, or a generous avowal of a political error, even though he himself should not have been deceived. A monarch whose judgment is sound and clear will wait for a more favourable season



to effect those great changes which are the result of many causes happily combined: the clemency of a prince ought to descend from the throne like those pleasant and refreshing showers which, on a tempestuous day, fall on the earth amid the clatter of the thunder and the majesty of the storm.

In almost all insurrections the people of the inferior classes are principally concerned. The power of the sovereign being superior to that of the subject, it may be expected, in the history of nations, that the power of the people will, at certain intervals, be in its turn greater than that of the sovereign.

In China there is a very wise law. When a province revolts, and the murmurs of the people are loudly manifested, the Mandarin is instantly deposed. In politics, the first general clamour ought to be obeyed; and it is not until the second or third that the popular movement can assume the character of sedition or revolt. The people in their earliest effervescence are often appeased.

The public felicity is proportioned to the more or less lively sentiment of personal independence. When encroachments are made on liberty, the people act in every possible manner, until they are quieted by a redress of their wrongs.

Anaxarchus observed to Alexander, that every act or will of a prince was equally just and legitimate. In 1771 another Anaxarchus made his appearance in France.

Oppose to Anaxarchus, Theopompeius king of Sparta, who considered that he gave a new strength and consistency to his authority, by setting limits to it. Theopompeius was right: royalty has its bounds.

The ocean has its limits: so has the universe; and the sun, which animates all nature, cannot deviate from the track which has been assigned to it. God himself, concentrated in the immensity of his attributes, does no evil: he punishes, he ought to do so; but he is a stranger to revenge, because it is beneath him, unworthy of him, and would degrade his divinity!

#### LOUVOIS.

ALL those great military bodies which at present harass and overburden Europe; all those armed soldiers who act against each other; those military constitutions which copy reciprocally, and which ruin the state, by taking from population the finest race of men; the science of

tactics and its skill in murderous manœuvres; that horrid quantity of artillery; those forces which drag after them two or three hundred pieces of cannon; the frontiers of states stuck over with fortresses; these fortresses buried under fortifications; immense armies; the equipments of war, and its incumbrances still more immense; the mathematics lending their aid to this infernal art: such is the work of Louvois. It was this minister who gave a wide field to the apparatus and preparations of war, who multiplied its resources so extensively, that the details of subsistence are as difficult as the springs by which he contrived to move upwards of an hundred thousand automata clad in arms. The fatal imitation extended even to petty princes.

The science of the commissary of the army, or of the quarter-master-general, is now ranked with that of the general. What man is now capable of commanding armies, when it is necessary for him to possess such a variety and extent of knowledge?

Thus is the military art totally different from what it was an hundred and twenty years ago. Chance and lucky accidents are at present the gods of armies, subordinate to the blind prudence of cabinets. Louvois was the real former of those numerous military bodies which have  
every

every where struck alarm into civil and political liberty. But what is most deplorable, luxury has penetrated into the heart of armies, and the officer who braves death cannot support the slightest privations. These effeminate creatures will no longer, in the same degree, be susceptible to honour, fortitude, and the love of their country; they will give way, not to fear, but to the indulgence of pleasure; and Europe must at present maintain near two millions of men carrying a musket on their shoulders. Fortunately they counterpoise each other; but were the number of these soldiers smaller, would the equilibrium no longer subsist?

It has been said, that the god Mars sided with great armies. But what means this expression? Signifies it *numerous phalanxes, thick battalions*? We cannot be too much on our guard against the science of professional people; the event of battles has almost always deceived them.

Listen to facts. The innumerable hosts of Persians were defeated and destroyed by a handful of Greeks: thirty-six thousand Macedonians shook and overturned their immense empire: a few Roman legions conquered the world. Since the invention of gunpowder, a few thousand Swifs triumphed over Austrian haughtiness and the potent house of Burgundy. With a few

piquets Turenne routed whole armies. In every where behold genius and skill put to flight, in spite of numerous battalions. For the most part, it is a single regiment that turns the tide of success. Navarre, Normandy, La Marine, I appeal to you, how often has victory perched on your standards? What obligations did Cesar owe to his tenth legion? Was it not strange that an oversight, a word misconceived, should have occasioned, through the medium of Louvois, that deluge of soldiers which impoverish Europe?

It is in the Louvois, therefore, that political war is held in overrated; that in one country volunteers are raised, in another levies are compelled; inasmuch that all the citizens are transformed into soldiers. Hence that tyrannical discipline, which, perpetually changing according to caprice, has ranked the soldiers of the European princes among the most wretched slaves on the globe.

It is since Louvois, therefore, that the petty princes of Germany sell men for war as they sell cattle for the shambles. The exercise of arms, which in free states possesses a mighty attraction, becomes degrading and humiliating when no longer the result of voluntary choice. In Prussia a grievous law imposes military slavery  
 . . . on

on every subject : every Prussian is obliged to serve in the army from the age of eighteen to that of seventy ; and, as if this were not enough, levies are made in foreign countries. Thus are vast military bodies multiplied in our times, to the misery of human kind ; and states, whether great or small, overburdened with regiments and legions of every kind, are exposed to the convulsions of pratorian anarchy ; a dreadful calamity, which threatens us all, more or less, from Madrid to Peteriburg.

It is since Louvois, finally, that the officer and soldier are almost at open variance with the citizen ; that the former of these is proud, overbearing, and disdainful ; and that these hirelings exact the highest respect, and would fain enjoy it exclusively. Since the minister Louvois it may be said that the kingdom is comprehended in the army ; for, by a fatal prejudice, the military functions have acquired the lead of the civil employments. The legionary fashions are obtruded every where with a sort of audacity that seems to despise all the other conditions of society. Those military bodies which are formed to brave the enemy, that fatal multiplication of soldiers dispersed and every where introducing a corruption of manners and libertinism, seem to threaten on all sides their fellow-citizens, their

C 3

countrymen,

countrymen, and are much more dangerous in peace than they are useful in war. It is in their excessive number that the danger lies; and of this Louvois was unquestionably the author.

Powerful voice of philosophy, advance to the foot of the throne, penetrate into the magistracy, and may the thinking class arm all that can counterbalance this terrible load which oppresses equally the monarch and the people!

IN POLITICS, MORAL INSTINCT IS TOO  
LITTLE SEEN AND APPRECIATED.

MORAL instinct divines what the real grievances of the people are: it appreciates their miseries, and discloses the means calculated to restore the tranquillity that has been disturbed; because it is a natural inspiration, it is sure to gain its end. The romance of politics falls into vague systems; and the intelligence with which the placeman fancies himself to be gifted is not so sure as this prompt sentiment he carries within himself. Political theories are all of them incomplete. Had Fenelon been seated on the throne he would undoubtedly have filled it better than the most decided politician, because sentiment is of universal acceptance, and less bounded

bounded than human intelligencies. He would have possessed less sagacity than a Ximenes, or an Alberoni, but would have been subject to fewer errors, under the guidance of the instinct which swayed Louis XII. and Henry IV. In rising states, or in those which are absolutely on the verge of decay, more genius is required than in a state so constituted as to give to every part of the political machine its proper play.

In spite of a bad government, of extravagant laws, and the caprices and passions of men in a public capacity, there is in the human mind, thanks to the part which instructs, a practice which influences states. In all modern revolutions it is probable that the change has been but superficial: the fall of empires, as well as their rise, seems to depend on those insensible ideas which are formed and maintained among nations. When the part which governs is unskilfully opposed to the part which instructs, the discordance is sure to be detrimental to the former: it loses its real force, and the contempt which necessarily ensues deprives it of the ascendancy it had abused. A contention like this is always indiscreet, not to say extravagant. Alas! why should not statesmen keep up a good understanding with the men who dispense them from long and painful meditations, who abridge



their labours, and, after having done a part of their work, bestow on them a celebrity in addition?

Monarchs ought to regard the human race as a part of themselves; and in this way every sovereign should reason. These men are my equal.— I might have been in their place; and my nearest relatives, if they are not so now, may perhaps one day be confounded among them. These men, many of them mutilated by battles, and all of them exposing a naked front to the rude tempests of life, belong to me, be it so they think, act, and feel as I do.

#### OF GOOD LAWS

WHILE laws are good and useful, they survive the fall of empires: thus several of the Roman laws, on account of the sagacity by which they were dictated, have been since adopted by various nations, notwithstanding the difference of time and manners. Having been founded on reason and humanity, the maxims they contain are equitable in the extreme; and we ought not therefore to be surpris'd on seeing the eighteenth century obey edicts framed  
thirteen

thirteen hundred years ago. But what ought in reality to surprisè us is, that these nations, inheriting as they have done the sage and profound ideas of the ancients, did not reject what neither the government nor policy could consistently or ought to have admitted. It would be absurd to disdain majestic laws on account of their antiquity; and a new code might be made perfectly to harmonize with the enlightened reason of our predecessors, by a modification, not a destruction, of the edifice of the laws. The chef-d'œuvre of legislation would consist in framing a civil code exactly according with the political government of a state; for the interior government has such an affinity with the exterior, that the civil code ought to be founded on this double basis. The wishèd for reform of the civil code can only be effected by removing the incongruity of certain laws with our principles and manners.

At certain periods states ought therefore to change the aspect of a jurisprudence which has been long received. Old existing laws, rendered nugatory by human malice, cease to have their wonted efficacy; and seeing that at this time manners accomplish more than laws, the latter ought constantly to change with the former.

Indulgence

Indolence opposes a stronger resistance to the reform of several abusive laws than a superstitious respect for them. The science of right has gradually been obscured ; and the more the darkness thickens, the more difficult is it to find a courageous genius with sufficient talents or audacity to simplify the laws, that is to say, to reduce them to fundamental and incontestible points.

Whenever the jurisprudence has lost its perspicuity, its force and dignity vanish. Science, in its increase, multiplies errors and becomes oppressive. A multitude of men plunge into the obscurity ; and taking advantage of the ignorance of others, and their propensity to litigation, form a nation devoted to chicanery and fond of law suits. Then does the idiom employed in the tribunals cease to be heard : commentaries, dispersing round them the shades of crudition, leave every question undecided ; and the civil jurisprudence becomes to all a dark cavern, in which decisions are formed at the will and pleasure of those to whom the power of deciding has been entrusted.

## DATA IN POLITICS.

IN politics there are so many *data*, that it is almost impossible to foresee future events. The issue of the war between England and her American Colonies was altogether problematical, in-  
 somuch that he who should at the origin of that great quarrel have calculated without prejudice, and without enthusiasm, could never have been persuaded but that the advantage would have been on the side of England. She had in her favour the unanimity of her commanders, the unmolested transport of warlike stores, the discipline of her troops, and gold. As a sovereign nation, she promulged a strong, persuasive, and energetic manifesto, recalling to the recollection of the rebels the titles by which she possessed the territory they disputed with her; the succors with which she had supplied them against their enemies and her own; her costly protection at all times; the constitution under which they had lived; and the sovereignty of the mother country: notwithstanding appearances were so much in her favour, North America slipped through her fingers. That dazzling and overawing prosperity which extended from the banks of the Ganges to those of the Tagus,

Tagus, vanished before a handful of what were called *revolters*.

And at this time, where is the event that impresses the mind of the attentive observer with greater astonishment than that mute agitation of the *thirteen United States*, in their search after a fixed point! Who will hazard a conjecture at what the result will be? The necessity and the nature of things, which policy thwarts but does not destroy, will establish forms that will unquestionably surprise us equally with the great revolution we have seen effected.

#### MANUFACTURES.

COMMERCE, says Montefquieu, at one time destroyed by conquerors, at another cramped by monarchs, shifts over the globe and flies wherever it is oppressed.

The history of commerce is that of the intercourse of nations. A happy and almost general revolution has been effected on the surface of the earth, which is due alone to commerce.

But foreign commerce often carries away useful articles, and even those which are the most useful, in return for more superfluities.

Perhaps

Perhaps manufactures have been too much vaunted and multiplied. At Lyons, at Geneva, and in the neighbourhood of Neûchatel in Switzerland, I have seen workshops filled with a degraded set of men. Manufactures merely tend to steal and waste the time, the strength, the youth, and the existence of a multitude of active poor. These workmen are perpetually contending with the indolent rapacity of their employer. The keenness of the dispute for wages begets hatred. In the neighbourhood of Neûchatel in Switzerland especially, I have lamented to see manufacturers entice men from the pure and simple life of the country, where they constantly dwelt with nature, to confine them within the walls of dismal prisons.

Cultivation is neglected for these *manufactures*, which enrich only a few families where the league of rapacity is established and maintained. Morals are ruined in these workshops, where men forget their virtues, where they become unfeeling, harsh, and bad fathers, because they have to struggle with the dastardly avarice of a superior.

Thus are the fields insensibly deprived of the precious class of labourers, of that class virtuous by nature, because it has no relation but with the earth; and the soul is always endued with  
a mild

a mild disposition, when the body, employed in the cheerful toils of agriculture, breathes a wholesome air, and knows not oppression. What pure and innocent enjoyments are the lot of the plough-boy compared with those of the lad engaged in manufacture? Behold the inhabitant of the country, he loves all around him, the grounds, the vineyards, the animals, the children; his little field is daily courted by his hands: the artificer has a contracted soul, he is an egotist, he does not marry, he hates his master, his *prison*, his labour. The husbandman is obliging, because there necessarily subsists between cultivators a reciprocity of services: the artificer stands unconnected; his disposition is altered as much as his health. The forsaking of a rural life spreads vice in a district, and all the tract in the vicinity of manufactures is infected with bad subjects. I appeal to experience: the *principality of Neuchâtel*, among others, has lost its morals and the advantages of its situation by the manufactures of *Indian gauzes* and *watches*: there a few avaricious masters have literally changed a free and worthy people into a slavish unprincipled race of men.

## COLONIES.

IN proportion as the frontiers of a state are more distant, the government, formed on the model of the domestic state, degenerates: such a model is alone calculated for a rising monarchy confined within narrow limits.

During the minority of children, the paternal authority has its full scope: when once they are of age, they become in their turn heads of families, and the father ceases to have over them the same power.

Thus, when a state has planted distant colonies, or by the junction of several foreign provinces has augmented its force and its riches, as soon as these colonies or provinces can support themselves, they are tempted by their distance to throw off the yoke of the sovereign authority. It is more difficult to direct the course of a great river, and to stay its rapidity, at the part adjacent to its mouth, than at that which borders on its source. Thus the struggles of colonies, and the insurrections of distant provinces, are always extremely harassing to the sovereign, who has need of all his art and all his vigilance to maintain tranquillity. In spite of the nicest management, colonies sometimes throw off their dependance on a monarch, as well by reason



reason of their distance. as because it is in the nature of nations to attempt, whenever they find an opportunity, the recovery of whatever power they have granted.

Is it not a violent and extraordinary effort to exact obedience from a man separated by the barrier of the ocean, and situated in another hemisphere? Was America created for Europe? Placed beneath another sky, America is not within our natural limits; in her climate the European degenerates; her fields are to us a grave, and her productions in a manner so many poisons. How costly an enterprize to have equivocal subjects!

It would be curious and interesting to consider the existing but invisible causes of all the political events which we assign to *chance*, as an abyss which would stupify and deafen those who should attempt to sound it is hidden.

The war the English waged against the Americans, the possession of whose sea coast they had gained, drove the citizens into the interior parts of the country; and by this forced transplantation, the population was rapidly and advantageously increased. The effect of the predatory incursions made at the mouths of the rivers, was that lands which would otherwise have remained uncultivated were turned up by the

the spade and the plough-share : the enemy rendered more effectual service to the colonies than the latter would have rendered to themselves.

To subject the events which spring up to political computations is a task of extreme difficulty : the profoundest investigation cannot succeed in estimating what will one day be the correspondencies of the United States of America, either between themselves, or with other nations. One thing is, however, certain, that the liberty of the new world will considerably influence the old.

As in eventual calculations the greatest uncertainty prevails, it would be highly presumptuous to aim at giving a stamp and physiognomy to the future. By considering the manners and habitudes of the people, and the character of the soil and climate of any country, we may be enabled to foresee with some degree of precision that what will be will partake of what has been : but the political convulsions that are to take place cannot be appreciated. The more we attend to history, the more we follow the inexplicable interweavings of facts, the more are we convinced that polity is the science of the moment, that, instead of attempting to divine it, we must wait the first play of the machine. Polity is the art of judging of imperceptible as

well as real movements: but if it strikes the blow before the precise time, it loses its force, and throws a considerable and lasting impediment in the way of its progress.

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#### CENTRAL POINT.

THE government ought to be one, that is to say, the *sovereign* ought to be acknowledged unequivocally and without partition. The principle of unity is rigorous, so much so indeed, that the monarch who has abdicated his throne in favour of his son, when he aims at repossessing himself of the sovereign authority, is no other than a subject in revolt against his King; and the son has then a right to punish him as a traitor who has forfeited his oath of fealty and obedience. Thus Victor Amadeus, when he endeavoured to reascend the throne, was treated as a conspirator, and was legitimately imprisoned by his son during the rest of his life.

In these cases the interest of the government prevails over the ties of blood and the laws of nature. The father is subjected to the legitimate monarch, because there can be but one sovereign in a state.

Upon

Upon the same principle, the sovereign is invincibly bound to the state he governs: he cannot at his pleasure and caprice break through the compact which obliges him to reign. This law is founded on the danger nations would incur, by that greatest of all political vices, the diffusion of authority.

It has not been for this that nations have necessarily attached themselves to one individual rather than to another: the general will is invariably the supreme law; and on an occasion so important the people ought not to be perplexed and harassed.

In high polity extreme laws are useful and expedient: the obligation of obeying supposes the obligation of reigning. On the other hand the punishment of Cesar and some other sovereigns was justifiable, because they unlawfully extended the prerogatives of royalty.

The cases in which a sovereign can abdicate his throne are extremely rare; he can have no other excuse than a frank avowal to the nation: "I am altogether without capacity, and have not even the resource of a choice of ministers; permit me, faithful subjects, to live as a private man." Such an heroic avowal would make an abdication more honourable than any we meet with in history.

But to abandon a nation which has invested him with the supreme authority, to deprive the government of its best support, is to betray the confidence his subjects have reposed in him, and to expose them to national calamities. Can there be a spectacle more outrageously scandalous than the flight of Henry III. who stole away secretly from his capital, and abandoned his crown to take up a richer one? What an infraction of a solemn oath! Is it possible for a monarch to display a higher mark of contempt? Had Henry III. been arrested in his flight, the nation would certainly have been justified in bringing him to trial; for every engagement is reciprocal.

Chagrin, disgust, and a levity of humour have caused several abdications. The sovereigns were afterwards preyed upon by a violent regret, as if in the human mind nothing could compensate for the honour of being at the head of a great nation.

Thus ought the person of kings to be eminently respected, as the part of the government most essential to public repose and good order. The sovereign is the individual who crushes all the practicable views of a lofty, blind, and unbridled ambition. It is for this reason, and on account of the high interest of the state, that  
fanatics

fanatics and madmen, when they make an attempt on the person of the sovereign, are not excused. It may appear, at first sight, inconsistent to punish a man who is without the guidance of reason; but in these cases policy requires what equity would otherwise condemn.

Finally, that which in a state constitutes the sovereign ought to be determined by regular, invariable, and constant rules. This may explain why an infant of fourteen years has been permitted to reign over France: policy will have it so, to avert greater calamities.

An African prince is assassinated in the midst of his army, without either the privity or concurrence of the soldiery. Three conspirators are sufficient to dethrone the sovereign: the murderer places himself on the throne he has imbued in blood; and he is acknowledged by the army. Why is it so? Because the soldiery have need of a chief. The head of the government is of little import to them, provided when it falls off or is cut off, it regenerates. The army knows by experience that a coward will not supply the place of a brave man; and that the man who is unworthy of the supreme rank will not hold it long. He may for the moment be despotic, but he himself is not secure from the

blow of the poignard. Such a form of government is, it is true, very imperfect; but under such an one many nations have existed and still continue to exist.

### OF QUEENS.

WHEN the immensity of a state requires a considerable propelling power, a central and weighty point, and when a despotic throne has erected itself in the midst of a vast empire, it is then to be desired that the despot may be a *woman*; because the pity so natural to the sex recoils at sanguinary and terrible executions, and because a woman is calculated to soften the ferocity of the government. The slave will feel less repugnance at prostrating himself before her; obedience will blend itself with the ascendancy heaven has bestowed on woman; and the male subjects, disguising their servile state, will act the part of admirers.

In a mixed form of government such as that of England the throne is by no means improperly filled by women: as the sovereign forms only one part of the political machine, the sex is of little importance. In an unlimited monarchy,

on the other hand, a woman seated on the throne is out of her place.

In Ruffia a woman governs ; and the women enjoy no confideration whatever. In France the women are excluded from the throne : they prefide over all domeftic concerns, and not unfrequently govern domeftic affairs. What is it that the miftreffes of our kings have not done ? during the laft two reigns there have been feveral of their regencies.

#### OF GREAT STATES.

GREAT States are fupported by their own mañs, and this is the reafon why they are more fubject to abufes than any others. Great States commit great faults with more impunity than follows the commiffion of fmall faults in little States. Large Empires neceffarily produce a certain number of great men ; and only one of thefe is required at any given epoch to render the kingdom illuftrious. It fometimes happens that great States can even difpenfe with great men ; for when the monarch does not fupport the empire, the empire fupports the monarch.

After the unfortunate iffue of the battles of Hochtet, Ramillies, and Malplaquet, France



seemed to be verging towards her ruin : in two years she recovered herself. Empires of a vast extent will invariably have proportionate resources ; and nothing but a reiteration of continued abuses and absurdities can give them a deadly wound. The citizens may be for a long time wretched ; they may struggle under a variety of sufferings ; but as empires such as these convert their enormous mass into a rampart, they subsist notwithstanding, and survive their immediate population. This is the greatest political calamity which can afflict the human race.

Like that of an individual, the strength of a state is merely relative : small states may therefore possess a considerable degree of force and power, according to their position, and their commerce more especially.

A state which shackles the industry of its citizens, which clogs the exercise of the arts and of the various branches of commerce by eternal prohibitions, and subjects its manufacturers to a variety of taxes, undergoes a diminution of its strength and grandeur, provided the neighbouring state forbears to impose any restraints by its legislative acts, and allows the number of sellers of every description to multiply freely ; for the more sellers there are, the  
more

more purchasers will there be. The abundance of every species of merchandize favours the consumption; and the consumption will invariably be the most certain pledge of the reproduction.

The state which is desirous to enjoy its full vigour should allow the activity of men to exert itself freely: the country in which commerce meets with a house of customs and receipts at every turning can never enter into a rivalry with the neighbouring states. Money ought to be allowed the least possible rest; and sales should be multiplied by a rapid and continual circulation. It is to the circulation that nations are indebted for peculiar advantages; for those even which nature herself had refused.

#### OF A STATE TOO NARROW.

POLITY, being unable to establish a real equality in the fortune of the citizens, seems instinctively to reject a popular government. In vain have little republics imagined that the people would never cease to be free; there is an invincible progression, above all in modern states, where commerce so quickly modifies the members of the same society. The more  
limited

limited it is, the more does the alteration become inevitable. The poorer citizens necessarily come under the influence of the rich. And these little republics, after having raised some unsuccessful storms, fall into all the snares laid for them.

It is the height of folly, in a Lilliputian state, to believe that it will recover by force what has before been refused to its remonstrances. The people are blinded indeed when they imagine they either can or must possess the chief power, because they are more numerous than the party of the rich.

A poor nation has no other weapons than the incessant complaints and lamentations it makes. It must tease and weary out its adversaries like beggars.

If, in a late instance, the people of Geneva had maintained the war of the pen, if it had not stepped out of the circle of pamphlets, if it had continued to refine on politics with the same obstinacy, it would have tired the adverse party, and have carried all its points even by disputing in an unintelligible manner. But instead of disputing in circles until the extinction of its natural heat, that nation of watchmakers seized the musket, and mounted its mouldered ramparts. This ridiculous attitude hurt it  
more

more than all the metaphyfico-political arguments it could have employed would have benefited it. It was a child that took in its hand a lance with which to wound itself, that covered its head with a helmet which could not fail to fiddle it. The powerful, that is, the rich, plundered its borrowed arsenal; and the whole terminated by this expression full of justice and truth: *A tempest in a glass of water.*

Aristocracy, especially when it is confined within the limits of a city, is more merciless and unjust than despotism. In the latter, there is only one master, and the equality of condition affords some consolation; the name of subject is shared among fifteen or twenty millions of men, who belong to a magnificent monarch. But to depend on the grandees in a district, a circuit, or a town, without a hope that equality can ever be renewed; to see the proud independance of several extending itself; to feel yourselves degraded by men perpetually intriguing, who barter away even your paternal abode; to witness an offensive league of a very small number who quietly divide all the riches, and bend the people under their yoke, granting them nevertheless bread, a favour which they are at sufficient pains to extol—this is the utmost pitch of misery and outrage.

## DESTRUCTIVE VICES.

THE internal vices which prey on a great state are the wasteful expenditure of the public money, immoderate gifts and gratuities, and a non-observance of the laws. If the military body exhausts the treasury, if the nobility are prodigal in their claims, if the great have the address to obtain a peculiar justice for themselves, then do these mischiefs become so many incurable wounds, which impair the strength a fine kingdom, and destroy the admirable effects of brilliant enthusiasm and heroic valour.

Augustus maintained forty legions for twelve millions of livres (half a million sterling) a year: his secret has been lost. The worst kings are those who have dissipated the most, because they have held in their hands the public money.

In monarchies the greatest defect has consisted in not paying sufficient attention to the interior of the kingdom to secure the triumph of the sovereign without. The perfection of this form of government would therefore consist in provincial assemblies, by which the most distant parts of the monarchy would be kindled to life, the burthen of the taxes alle-

viated, and the people encouraged to prefer their complaints and make their requisitions.

When the administration is divided into several departments independent of each other, they encounter and clash in their operations, for want of a principle of unity. The regulations are at every instant changed; from the office of each department peculiar laws are promulgated; and the public are entirely at a loss to know by whom they have been enacted. Under these circumstances the authority is always prohibitive, because such an administration is perfectly well adapted to sloth and ignorance. Lastly, no one can tell where the government resides, each of the departments seizing on the legislative authority, and extending its boundaries. Public debates which announce that men's minds are in a salutary agitation, that they are zealous to render the government prosperous, are no longer heard. The disorder of to-day, and the uncertainty of to-morrow, banish confidence. The citizen trembles for his property, because he perceives with pain that every contract is broken through: anarchy prevails; and the social contract is secretly dissolved. There is more danger in all this than if each of the citizens brandished in his hand a sword.

## NEW DISCOVERIES.

THE discoveries which may be at this time attempted are :

1. The examination of the fifth continent which lies in what is called *terra australis*, situated between Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope. The existence of this continent, about which doubts were entertained, is at length acknowledged : it ought to extend from twenty, thirty, or forty degrees to the antarctic pole.

2. The land to the northward of Japan, the great Jesso, and that which ought to lie between the extremity of southern Tartary, and the extremity of America.

3. A passage by Hudson's bay to the East Indies; and a passage by the frozen ocean to China, leaving Japan. As these two passages, the latter particularly, would considerably abridge the voyage from Europe to Asia, an immense advantage would be derived from them to the nation which should make the discovery, as well by the convenience of the navigation, as by the new tribes which might be discovered on the way. We know that two skilful navigators have determined one of these passages to be absolutely impracticable; but what one does not find, another, more fortunate, discovers. .

4. In

4. In America itself we have still to discover all the land which lies between the Cordillera mountains, the Straits of Magellan, and the river of the Amazons—an immense tract which ought to contain prodigious riches, and which is partly inhabited by the Arauco tribes and Patagonians, partly by a great number of other savage or unknown nations.

5. The great continent of Africa situated between the source of the Nile and the Cape of Good Hope.

6. The islands scattered over the Pacific Ocean, in the direction both of north and south. In the different parts of the globe the tracts of land I have just pointed out are as extensive as the whole of the known world.

The possibility of these great discoveries is a subject I shall again take up; for Europe is not the world.

#### THE LOANS OF A SOVEREIGN \*.

THE conventions sovereigns make with their subjects are sacred in proportion to the facility

\* It will readily be perceived that this fragment was composed before the revolution, when the question was agitated whether *the king would not find his account in a state bankruptcy.*

with



with which they can break them. The reigning king represents his predecessor, since he retains for him the revenues, the homages, and the supreme authority. If, after a century or more, he constrains his subjects to pay to him what is his due, for a still stronger reason ought he to liquidate the recent debts of the throne, when the palace in which he resides, and the magnificence with which he is surrounded, are the product of public confidence. The force of his empire is founded on the sums advanced by his faithful and defunct subjects; by the unfortunate men who have delivered into his hands their *little flock*, the fruit of their labour, their savings, their privations, the consolation and prop of their old age: is he to be unjust, instead of being just and even grateful?

Are not the subjects culpable if they revolt? And does not the sovereign revolt against his subjects when he breaks a solemn contract, when he annuls it by opposing his might to equity, sheltering himself under the rank which places him above all restraint? He will speak of the public wants, as if the wants of individuals were not equally forcible. Since he can either retard or dispense with the payment, on that very account he ought to be more prompt and more faithful, to shun the reproach

of not having executed a convention synonymous to public faith; for what can be more sacred than the words of a sovereign, when he addresses his subjects thus: *Lend to me, my children, for the good of the state; the debt shall be discharged by the state and myself.* Now, the inheritor of the throne of the deceased prince is politically considered as the same person; and every argument to the contrary is a sophism which attacks the probity of the monarch, who should be less considered as the proprietor, than as the depositary of an immense treasure.

If a state could for a long time support the credit of a fictitious money, without the possibility of its being counterfeited, there would no longer be any need either of taxes or finances; but it would be necessary in such a case that the state should be isolated. This fictitious money then answering every purpose of metals, would be still more advantageous to a state than coined specie, since it would be more portable and more convenient. But the incomparable advantage would consist in this, that the articles essential to the support of life would no longer be sent out of the kingdom, at the same time that the fictitious money would fertilize the lands, by its susceptibility of a prodigious use. According to this wonderful hypothesis,

hypothesis, the state would gain every thing without the individual sustaining any loss: but it would also be necessary to come at the secret of isolating a kingdom.

In every state, indeed, fictitious money is infinitely preferable to the augmentation of the value of specie, or to the slightest alteration it can undergo: therefore in any country in which paper money is circulated, especial care ought to be taken not on any pretext to change the value of the coined metals. A state in debt acquits itself of its obligations without any disbursement, in the course of time, provided it understands how to balance the paper money with the metallic money, in such a proportion as that the merchandizes rising progressively in their value, each debtor shall in a given time gain the amount of the half of his debt. This is the only remedy; and in no other way can a state in debt free itself from its burthens without destroying the equilibrium, either by circulating too great a mass of specie among the lenders and the borrowers, or by draining them by an impolitic depreciation of the metallic money, if the fictitious money is no longer in circulation.

But we will quit these hypotheses, which are at the bottom no better than palliatives, although

though preferable to those that have been adopted: the period is at length arrived when we see *loans* under their true aspect.

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### OF NATIONAL PRIDE.

IT is important to establish and uphold a certain national pride; for this it is that prompts to great achievements. National customs, imbibed in infancy, contract the force of practicable principles, and influence the ordinary course of life. The peculiar usages and turn of thought which prevail in an empire are its basis, the spring of the government; and beget a respect for the national character. It would be a dangerous imprudence to attack them; it would plainly be to alter the constitution; and when the natural force of public principles subsists no longer, their only support is the power of custom.

Administrators, interest the national pride, and it will perform prodigies; humble it, you will destroy the animation of the people, and extinguish the patriotic spirit.

It would be ruin and desolation to cover the walls of cities with mournful hangings, after

the example of the Carthaginians, who thus expressed their despair in the sad days of their adversity, when a sovereign or his minister loses the reputation of a state, by one of those political blunders which involve the disgrace of a nation.

Those souls which feel an interest in the glory of their country, bear with the errors of kings; but pardon not in a minister the injuries he does to the citizens. We need not wonder therefore at the grief that seizes true patriots when they perceive the fatal consequence of those little passions which ought never to have entered the cabinet. No subject ought to be mortified; for if the national pride were totally extinct, the delicious feeling of a paternal land would be gone for ever.

The woman who, on being condemned by Philip, had the courage to exclaim, *I appeal to Philip fasting*, gave an example to subjects of appealing from all the passions of sovereigns which might have a seeming tendency to humble them.

Heroic actions become monarchs, because it is thus that they dazzle the people. The latter more readily give up their rights, when they behold brilliant achievements. The admiration entertained by the French for the conquests of Louis XIV. disposed them above every other consideration to an unlimited obedience. A monarch

narch should be constantly attentive to attract towards himself the regard of the public, by a multitude of generous acts; because the minds of his subjects should be occupied, nor ought they ever to lose sight of their chief magistrate.

### COUNCILS.

IF, to render himself the most powerful of mortals, and to apply this prodigious ascendancy to an extraordinary and generous purpose, a sovereign were to aim at the possession of a part of the liberty enjoyed by his subjects, there is one infallible mean by which he might accomplish this end, namely, to govern them in such a way as that they might themselves be the gainers, when they should, with a full confidence, have surrendered to him that portion of their freedom which would then be superfluous to them. Administrators of states, honour men, honour them in their respective professions, degrade none of them, and you will hold in your hands a power that has not yet been dreamed of.

A French writer, with a view of destroying the essential characteristics of monarchy, those intermediate powers which, according to Montesquieu, constitute the nature of the monarchi-

cal government, has attempted to prove that the kings of France have, without any exception, enjoyed an absolute authority. Since this writer's work made its appearance, the king of France has not possessed an authority greater than that of his predecessors. He might have demonstrated that from the reign of Clovis to the present day our government has been a pure and absolute monarchy, which it has never for a moment ceased to be; but that the springs and counterpoize which balance the power of the sovereign, created and combined by the general will, do nevertheless exist. The various tribunals might have granted to the kings of France the exercise of the highest despotism; but the tyranny would not press with too great a weight on the people, become enlightened, and the sovereign himself would retrench the power which urges obedience, to gain the confidence of his subjects. The primitive laws of the French might be destroyed; but the genius and manners would resist every measure of extreme violence.

In vain would two hundred volumes issue from the presses of the royal printing office: they would not render the power of kings more absolute, because nations are sensible that they will only obey to a certain degree, and that it is  
in

in vain to say to a monarch, *Nothing either can or ought to resist you*; the conscience of the monarch would whisper to him that he was abused, and the people would not be alarmed at this momentary decision.

The French will never dread their chief, whatever may be the authority with which he is invested. The genius of the nation will counterbalance the most unforeseen attacks. A reasonable authority will be the only one that will exact obedience: every other mean will be hazardous\*.

Let the inquisition be preached in France; let several bodies of the state unite their suffrages in favour of the establishment of that tribunal, it will never be acknowledged, because it is inconsistent with the genius of the French. The field of Mars, in which the legitimate power once resided, no longer exists; but the nation still contrives to make itself heard: it speaks out as it did at the time when the king was merely a general, a captain.

Finally, say to princes, *You have the exclusive right of exacting obedience, nothing can nor ought to resist you; the only restraint you have to dread is the public conscience and your own.* All this

\* Has not this prophecy of mine been fulfilled in the strictest sense?



will not augment their power. Let the intermediate authority, which is one of the constituent elements of our government, be or not be combated : it will in either case exist. This is not a modern invention of our philosophical writers ; it is because reaction is as certain as it is necessary. The Abbé Mably had no occasion to combat M. Moreau ; he had no need to cite the most ancient and most respectable monument of our history, the general assembly, convoked in the field of Mars, in which the acknowledged power resided. Whatever may be said of the fortune and manners of the French, even had national liberty never existed, nothing would have prevented them from establishing at this epoch a rigorous distinction between the power of the laws and the sovereign.

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#### STRETCHES OF AUTHORITY.

AN ill guided authority undertakes more than it can execute. This is the rock on which governments split, when, not knowing themselves, or rather wilfully misunderstanding their boundaries, they aim at the extension of the latter by a natural but dangerous propensity.

Governments

Governments are at this time too enlightened to recur to a violent authority: at least we have every reason to presume so much. But there is an imprudent authority which manifests itself when it ought to be buried in oblivion. Opinions are not to be restrained, neither are popular attachments nor hatreds to be commanded. A ministry is dishonoured by the alarms of which it is itself the cause. There are acts which by their very nature do not come under the cognizance of any tribunal; and to have recourse to violent measures in repressing slight abuses is to make an inconsiderate application of the royal or ministerial force. The sovereign should never allow himself to be governed by his passions; in his Majesty there should be a sort of apathy, which, like the law, should be mute, or at least tranquil.

The right of nations is so deeply engraven in the heart of man, that he constantly applies, both with reason and justice, the natural law to the affairs and conduct of sovereigns as well as of the nations themselves. He does not dispute about words; neither does he remark whether the right of nations has been often confounded with the right of nature: he condemns whatever according to his opinion tends to disturb general society, be the pretext

on which it has been done what it may. Hence arises that abhorrence which is attached to certain names, while others are equally cherished and beloved.

And hence that strong curiosity with which the conduct of sovereigns is watched, to the end that they may be judged, and according as they offend or respect the natural right, be either praised or blamed. Surrounded by their soldiers, public reason forbids them to be cruel, violent, and hasty : the loftiest authority is thus restrained ; and it is no difficult task to perceive, that from one end of the earth to the other the general felicity is dependant on individual felicity. He who outrages the latter incapacitates himself from founding the former.

Into some constitutions rarely to be met with, those of piratical states for instance, the spirit of injustice finds its way. As the character of the inhabitants is fraudulent and iniquitous, honour and the love of glory are not to be expected in the profession they exercise : and their rapine and extortions readily decide that the laws of these buccaneering nations correspond in a great degree with the pursuits they follow.

The earliest laws of Dracon and Charondas, written in blood, were unquestionably at that  
time

time rather restraining efforts than institutes of police. Before any attempt could be made to direct the course of the restraining virtues, it became necessary to prevent a violent and rapidly increasing evil, as well as to nip the vices in their bud.

In cruel and sanguinary nations it was the aim of their first legislators, to intimidate the banditti they had to govern, and by the terror of punishments to banish crimes. As well as the bents and propensities they were to restrain, the laws were then atrocious.

Represent to yourself Minos, a legislator at Algiers. Philosophy will there bestow on him the place the poets assign to Minos the inflexible judge of hell, seated in the depths of Tartarus.

What is most to be admired in the English government, is that all the sovereign's officers are responsible for their bad administration, and in general for whatever is done in their respective departments. The sovereign is accountable for no fault ; but his ministers are made to account for whatever they have done. In this mixture of respect for majesty, and firmness for the rights of the nation, we cannot fail to perceive a wise temperament which ensures happiness to the prince and the people. Arbitrary authority

authority is not terrible because it is placed in the hands of a single person, but because its exercise is delegated to several; it is a club which each wields in his turn.

The love of the country, recommended as a moral virtue, is a chimerical command, provided the citizen is not attached to that country by the security, ease, and prosperity, he finds in it. It is a romantic sentiment when it hinges solely on the transitory glory of a monarch. The love of the country, and that of the laws of the country, are two distinct objects. The love of the public weal is founded in the nice discrimination of such a political law over such another. The love of the country may be injurious to the love of humanity, in the same way that self love may be detrimental to generosity: but the interest of the country ought to prevail over every other interest; and to this consideration men are more or less impelled against their will.

How can a love for the country reside in a nation where the wretched inhabitants every where display poverty, tatters, and the hollow and sunken eye of misery?

## OF MILITARY BODIES.

THE foldier has no morality, and defpifés life more than he braves death. As his function is directly oppofite to that which frames the laws, he is of all men the moft ready to fubvert them. The foldier defends fociety, but the fame force likewife deftroys it. The foldier arrogates to himfelf a right of property in whatever comes within the reach of his fword. How neceffary is it in all governments to bridle the military body, and to hold it in a ftate of complete dependance ! How formidable a depot ! In whofe hand fhall it be entrusted ? It is on the knowledge of the juft and precife point that the liberty of the citizens depends.

We cannot help admiring the policy of the French government, which has controled the regular troops in fuch a way as that they are formidable neither to the prince nor the fubject ; whereas at Rome, at Peterfburg, and at Conftantinople, alternately the terror of monarchs and the firebrand of revolutions, they have fo often convulfed the empire and difpofed of the crown.

In France, the military body has no afcendency over the municipal. The foldier re-  
pects

spects the citizen; and civil forms restrain the regiments which have no communication with the tradesmen, or the other peaceable inhabitants of the cities.

The French army, all composed of distinct bodies, cannot possibly coalesce into one mass; because some parts of it have no communication with the rest, so different are their functions, and so various the principles by which they are disciplined.

Had the government introduced into the management of the revenue a part of those strict and sensible regulations which have been framed for the military, we should not have seen the administration of the finances open gulf on gulf;—we should not have seen one abyss leading into another, and the wretched subjects, acquainted with these robberies, reduced to fruitless complaints, and compelled to make good the peculations of certain public characters in favour. The sweat of a whole nation, instead of augmenting at least the patrimony of the state, would not have swelled private fortunes, shamefully acquired, and more shamefully squandered; horrid wounds which draw tears from whoever loves his country; disgraceful calamities and perhaps irreparable, while all other ills may be repaired!

Whither is it gone, that river of gold, the life of the political body, and which was destined to nourish all its parts? It has disappeared in a way equally mean and criminal; and at its horrid deperdition every citizen is alarmed, since it threatens to burthen him with new and enormous imposts. The finances of the state, totally drained, leave not even, as in Egypt, immense edifices; like the pyramids, which though uselefs labours, attested at least the passage through which the golden stream had strayed.

He who has land just sufficient for his subsistence will be obliged to sell it, or to labour in repairing the unpunished crime of certain individuals. O! grief. O! my country.

The imposts in France affect us in three ways: the first of these is personal; the second assesses properties; and the third attaches itself to the articles of commerce and provisions: but there are so many other fiscal inventions that they might compose a dictionary.

The royal treasury is really immense, amounting annually to 900 millions of livres, 40 millions sterling.

How moderate ought the imposts to be, when the state possesses such a capital? What great abuses must prevail in the management of the

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the public treasures, to make it necessary still to borrow, if such a mass of money be every year laid at the foot of the throne? But, like a wave of the ocean, it retires the instant it advances, and the state bears the shock of this terrible undulation. The depredations are not discovered till they almost exceed calculation.

These horrible abuses originate from great military establishments.

#### OF THE LABOURS OF A PLACEMAN.

THE skilful minister who, immediately on his becoming an administrator, assembles and unites all the parts of a shattered government, and who, without destroying any thing, frees the political body from a multitude of ancient vices, providing it more particularly with a central point, a point of unity, is a man very rare to be found. He knows that it is impossible to give an absolutely new regimen to a worn out body, because the civil government is altogether distinct from the political government, and because in every state this double government resides.

When the mind of man has strayed into sciences which give no satisfactory result, he concludes

concludes by looking around him, and by seeking order in the point he inhabits. How much ought we to venerate the qualities of a statesman directing millions of men, whose character he is obliged to study, to convert to his own advantage their passions, their virtues, and their vices even; and producing general order from some partial disorders, at the same time that he anticipates the mischiefs he cannot shun!

There are abuses which the statesman can attack with an almost infallible success. It is easy to perceive whether the public mind is prepared, and whether the blow which is ready to be struck is authorized before hand by the sound part of the nation. It is then that he puts the axe to the root of the tree, which he severs; and because its fall was expected, it is viewed with calmness: its trunk rotted, and its branches decayed, its destruction cannot fail to be acceptable.

Thus then ought the part of the nation which instructs, aware of its rights and its high destiny, never to despair of those who govern, whatever their fate and their prejudices may be.

The part which instructs, or, if you will, the thinking class, will make it its daily study to purify the laws, to render them more simple and better calculated for man, and more espe-

cially to destroy a shapeless assemblage of prohibitory laws which make culprits. Oh ! ought not the statesman himself to suspend their terrible and formidable action ? His own conscience would reproach him, were he to follow the literal sense and expression of the code. It often happens that he dares not invoke the law ; a secret power repels his effort, because the law in question has been insensibly undermined by public reason : it has been demonstrated to be false and absurd by the part which instructs, at whose voice it has fallen into disuse. The placeman who should contend for its re-establishment, would seem to aim at the sudden renewal of the barbarous age which gave it birth, and in which it was unquestionably no more than one violence opposed to another still more dangerous in its nature. The storm has subsided ; humane and eternal principles must be had recourse to ; and nothing but extraordinary and unforeseen cases can justify, not a different, but a particular course.

The part which instructs has therefore established the ideas experience has in the sequel confirmed. It has decided on the contentions between public and private interest ; but it would in its turn have its moments of error, if it were despotically to require that its ideas should be  
suddenly

suddenly realized: it should propose, and not command.

The writer, in his cabinet, can by a bold flight compass the most arduous and difficult reforms; nothing resists him, but all yields to his accomplished and transcendant pen. He seems to act on a soft clay which he moulds at his will, and which in an instant undergoes a new modification. Animated by the audacity of his conceptions, and powerful in his virtues, he feels no obstacle. He is penetrated by a love for the public weal, and dreams of the fine romance of universal felicity. He communicates around him the flame which is kindled in his breast; and he fancies that in the soul of his fellow citizens it will consume each degrading and personal passion.

The patriotic views of this writer cannot but be applauded; but if he were to be obliged to combine practice with theory; if his enthusiasm were to encounter a resistance, how astonished would he be at the shock and force of the little passions that are inimical to order! Miserable accessaries, a glimpse even of which had not come across his sight.

It is not from the great passions that the danger is to be apprehended: these are combated by open force and in the face of the nation. It re-

sides in the obscure passions which are working far from the public eye, and in their dark and secret recesses undermining the patriotic virtues. It is by these concealed attacks that generous projects are rendered abortive, as little contemptible worms sap and insensibly destroy the solid banks which are the ramparts and security of a nation surrounded by the formidable ocean.

How would the writer then find his book perpetually deranged! All those threads which he fancied he held so nicely arranged in his hand would be entangled or perhaps totally escape from his grasp; and he would soon perceive that the operations of meditating genius are unfortunately incapable of calculating their possibilities, unless by the lapse of ages and the united labours of several generations.

The felicity of a nation, the sudden regeneration of which is impracticable (and these insurrections are extremely rare in history) is but partial, and cannot be otherwise than so. The love of the public weal itself enjoins the placeman to resist too strong an enthusiasm, and to be fully persuaded that the happiest changes are those which are the slowest wrought. He ought to know that whatever is hastened is in danger of being destroyed; that projects are confirmed by their maturity; and that without patience  
and

and a sage caution, they can have neither solidity nor depth. On the banks of certain rivers in Africa, there is a beautiful and richly coloured fruit which invites the hand to pluck it, and the mouth to taste it: as soon as it is touched it crumbles to dust.

The world belongs to men of phlegmatic constitutions, say the Italians. Their meaning is that these men are the best calculated to possess themselves of the reins of government, and to govern.

#### FREDERIC.

WHEN nature forms the head of a Frederic, the force of his genius becomes a new law to which the human race is obliged to submit, and which in a manner constitutes a peculiar government. Frederic, at his accession to the throne, found the basis of his authority to consist in a large, well constituted, and well commanded military power, the danger of which he well knew how to conceal from his subjects. He was skilful, and his genius was grand: he did not stretch the cords of his instrument too tight; for he was also a musician. His superior capacity was enlightened by philosophy; and he in-

roduced into polity a perfect knowledge of men: he knew with an admirable precision the degree of liberty that they ought to be allowed.

Frederic cherished the arts, because he was aware that they never fail to present to man an image of grandeur and liberty, and that, above every other consideration, they disguise his chains. The idea his subjects entertained that he daily exercised the functions of his kingly office, encouraged the weaker to hope that they should not be tyrannised over by the stronger: each peasant had free access to him either personally or by letter. By this expedient the cultivators were universally attached to him.

Of how many combinations, then, is not the organization of a state susceptible, since the despotism of Frederic was able to create a kind of liberty for his subjects, and since, while he cherished his army, he protected the peasants against the violence of the soldiery? The spade had nothing to dread from the sword. This great friend to soldiers would not suffer a recruit to be taken from the canton without the approbation of the provincial council; and the land proprietors and their immediate heirs were more particularly excused from service. Unceasingly tempering his power, Frederic knew how to aug-  
ment

ment it : the Prussian peasant forgot that he was a slave, and fancied his destiny bettered by every victory his sovereign obtained. With what surprising address did this warlike prince contrive thus effectually to disguise the terrible scourge of enrolments, and the servitude of the highways, concealing the true stamp and form of these harsh and tyrannical institutions ! But the philosophy of Frederic smoothed every difficulty : he had the art of consoling the oppressed ; and, combining natural and artificial means, evinced that a despot at once dexterous and moderate can supply the place of civil liberty, which, surrounded even by his soldiery, he can create,—so much do constitutive principles, as capable of being ameliorated by a single man as by a nation, obey the principles of philosophy.

His subjects enjoyed the freedom of the press, an advantage which procured him the suffrages of the considerable number of men who instruct and direct the rest. Jests, which were one of his favourite weapons, and which he managed with dexterity, were useful in warding off the sarcastic attacks that might have been made against himself ; and this freedom of the press kept in awe the swarm of theologians and lawyers who might otherwise have discredited his



code, and have interrupted the course of his new and novel laws.

As Frederic governed by himself, he inspired a greater confidence, and obviated every pretext and ground of complaint against the subalterns: this is what constituted his force. No doubt could be entertained but that the sovereign was the fountain from whence good order issued; and as a respect was entertained for him who had displayed both genius and talents, the obedience became the submission of him who knows but little to him whose knowledge is vast and extensive, or is at least considered to be so.

More may at all times be expected from a sovereign who governs by himself, because he has greater opportunities to study the characteristic features of his people, whom he teaches to know him; and because his compassion, if he has any, is more frequently wrought upon by private misfortunes. Frederic reigned by himself; and this despot bestowed on his people a partial sum of liberty. He was in several circumstances greater and more generous, than if he had confided to subordinates the exercise of his authority.

The latter, having no responsibility of their own, observe in all cases a mode of conduct widely different from that of him who commands them. This has been too often experienced,

rienced, more especially in monarchical states, where the part which governs consists of offices and clerks. These are more stern and intractable than the ministers, because, wanting a name, they are insensible to glory, and direct their attacks without its being possible to recognize by whom they are aimed. In the discharge of their duties they are slovenly, because they can be so with impunity: they make their superiors answerable for all the faults they commit; and revenge themselves for their servile situation on all those who have either disdained or not heeded them. By such men are our monarchies ordinarily governed.

It often happens that a statesman, satisfied with the title of minister, and anxious not to have his pleasures interrupted, abandons his trust to some one who will suit his purpose, and ease him of its weight: the other parcels it out, and divides it according to his caprice or his interest, converting it to his own account in the most advantageous way he can.

In monarchies, therefore, the misfortune which attends men in place is, that they confide in subordinates, who, perfectly forgetful of the glory attached to the faithful discharge of the trust reposed in them, seek their own individual interest, sell whatever they can sell, and  
do

do capriciously whatever they can do, without even being sensible to the least remorse or the smallest shame.

The statesman placed at the helm of public affairs having received a false light, is forced to adopt it, however good his intentions may be, because he can perceive nothing else. He is guided without any will of his own, and it is impossible that he should not fall into the snare. As he needs a decision of some sort, he takes that which presents itself: on this he seizes in the multiplicity of affairs, fancying, because he has modified it a little, that he has imagined it. He offers it as boldly as he would offer a truth; and while he is deceived, he himself deceives.

#### JUSTIFICATION OF ALEXANDER.

I HAVE heard Voltaire eloquent when he joined his voice to that of the few apologists of this most renowned conqueror. I shall here give the substance of what Voltaire used to say with much fire and with a gesture no less animated: he was fond of the thesis, he returned to it, and maintained it during the space of nearly four-score years.

Alexandre,

Alexander, said he, followed up the plan of his father Philip, who had formed the project of turning against Persia the forces which the Greeks had so long employed against themselves. Alexander, educated under Aristotle, united absolute power and knowledge, which had almost ever been disjoined; he was desirous that his conquests should produce on earth a revolution different from all those seen before; his scheme surpassed in grandeur the schemes of all the preceding conquerors.

When once at the head of all the forces of Greece and shortly after of Persia, he believed himself destined not only to conquer provinces and subdue states, but to unite men under the same law, which should enlighten and guide all, as the sun alone illumines the universe; which should remove from among men all the differences that render them enemies; and which should instruct them to live and think differently without hating each other, and without disturbing the world, to compel others to change their sentiments.

It was, if the expression can be allowed, the views of Socrates, of Plato, and of Zeno, so promising in theory, that he wished to reduce into practice; but to accomplish this great work, it was necessary to unite authority to knowledge,  
and

and to be sufficiently powerful on the earth to establish in it this happy and wise government, which virtue held out to those philosophers. Alexander believed that he was able to subdue by force all those whom reason could not persuade. In a similar character has Mahomet since appeared to the world, but with views infinitely less wise. The vast project which we ascribe to the Macedonian hero is not the offspring of our own imagination. Plutarch positively asserts that *Alexander held himself to be sent from heaven as a reformer, a governor, and a reconciler of the universe.* Finally, Alexander built more cities than he destroyed.

#### PRECIPITATE LAW.

IN one of the wars of Germany an officer was carried to the hospital with a leg shattered by a ball. As he was covered with blood, the surgeon, who was running from bed to bed, ordered amputation, and continued his round. A leg clotted over with blood was laid hold of: *what are you doing, my friends,* exclaimed the officer, *that is my good leg.* However, notwithstanding his protestations and entreaties, as there

was

was a great deal to do, the barber surgeons cut it off. The surgeon major arrived with the bandages, perceived the mistake, and anxiously set about saving the wounded limb, which with much pains and difficulty he effected: but the poor officer paid dearly for the officious precipitation of the understrappers.

This is the true image of a precipitate law. And thus the fatal and too prompt decree enacted in *the unfortunate affair of Nancy*, authorized a sanguinary man, whose character has since been well understood, to perform *an amputation*. Alas! we know now how grievous the error was!

#### OF CIVIL LIBERTY.

CIVIL liberty consists in being dependant on no other power than the legislative.

The people, forming every where the major part of the society, should not only have a share in the legislation, but their interests ought even to predominate. Accordingly, from the origin of the French republic, the people have always formed the basis of the legislative assemblies.

Political society can be lawfully derived from a primitive contract alone, either express or tacit,  
which

which at the beginning mutually connected the members of that society.

That is a vile and superstitious system, which, making the will of God to interpose in the establishment of societies, invests the chiefs of nations with a celestial authority; this system must be considered as proceeding from no other than the most erroneous notions of the nature of man and of that of the divinity.

Between equal beings endowed with the same physical and moral powers, conventions alone can modify their primitive state; conventions are the basis of every state of institution, and consequently, of every civil state.

The preponderance of the general interest over all private interests is what constitutes political liberty.

Every power relative to intelligent beings is a power of direction; it exists, and ought to exist, only for the good of the being over whom it is exercised.

The sovereign power is indefeasibly annexed to the body of the nation, because in the sole will of this body dwells that necessary tendency towards the public interest absolutely essential to the directing will of the body politic. *The interest of a people, says Harrington, resides only in the whole body of the people.*

The right of watching over his own preservation is inherent in the individual ; the right of watching over the collective preservation of those associated is inherent in the body politic.

Wherever the people do not personally enjoy, by virtue of the constitution, the transcendant power of inspecting all parts of the *sovereignty*, there is neither political liberty nor individual security, and by consequence the social aim is totally missed.

Let not the people however attempt to part what is essentially indivisible.

If the will of the representative body, perpetually deranged, were to pass by turns into certain individual wills, under the pretext of uniting the *sum* of all the individual wills, this would be anarchy.

#### OF THE AGRARIAN LAW.

THE advantage of society requires property to be distinct and sacred ; an equality of fortunes cannot subsist : make a new partition, and it will not last the space of a year. The enjoyment of the fruits of my industry belongs to me exclusively ; I ought to have the full and entire disposal of them. If my savings and my  
acquisitions



acquisitions are not secured to me in the most inviolable manner, my emulation is extinguished. Those who have but little have still a right of property, and if the indigent were to attempt to ravish it, who would not exclaim at the injustice? The right of property was the first institution of infant societies; and without inequality, no labour, no reproduction, no abundance could exist. The political body, deprived of its incitement, would remain stagnant, and the earth would withhold her treasures: an equal and daily repartition would effectually stifle industry.

The agrarian law proposed at Rome by the elder Gracchus seemed to favour the poor merely by a sudden augmentation of their number: it could have no general utility. The prosperity of a state being essentially connected with the right of property, ought we, for the interest of the present generation, to ruin that of posterity? ought we, for an apparent good, to destroy the *meum et tuum*, equally founded on nature, justice, and reason? Labour, industry, and perseverance, make essential differences in the lot of those who are placed under equal circumstances. Men, who are never mistaken in matters of practice because their sensations quickly set them aright, have perceived that  
they

they would all soon be indigent, if each had a right to an equal portion of land : the indolence of some, the lethargy and heedlessness of others, the want of talents or of genius, all the vices would speedily confound this equality ; and all these little proprietors, feeling no want, and sleeping over their first crop, would neglect both their person and their property : soon would these who should fancy themselves above want, and who would therefore indulge themselves in a torpid inactivity, sink into poverty, and shortly into indigence. Happily the good sense which nature has granted to man, preserves him from carrying into practice the errors of speculation. Every one, sensible that he would have something to lose, has refused to give up what might augment the comforts of his existence ; he has not yielded to so limited a plan, to so cold a symmetry, to such computed partitions ; he has thought it better to take his chance whether prosperous or unfortunate, and to abandon to his personal faculties the right of satisfying his imperious appetites ; he would not renounce even in idea all the enjoyments that fall to the rich ; for pleasure belongs to the most assiduous labourers, and it is the love of property that begets attention to the cultivation, preservation, and increase of

one's possessions. A man destitute of talents is not formed for enjoyment : abolish inequality, you will quickly leave half the lands uncultivated, you will plunge every individual into indolence and torpor. The nerve of public prosperity would be so materially injured, that it would require ages to heal the wound of this delusive equality. But the people themselves have instinctively perceived the error, and have withstood the seduction of a captivating but most false doctrine : none except mad enthusiasts would now venture to preach it up. The people see wealth, foolishly squandered by the prodigal, pass into the hands of the frugal, who better understand how to husband it ; they are conscious that the mutual interests of men require opulent families, and such as are otherwise ; they are aware that the poor who are industrious, active, and laborious, can alone grow rich, and that, in the meanwhile, they may eat without humiliation the bread which they acquire by their honest occupation ; lastly, they feel that the public derives more advantage from a general emulation than it could from the equal division which must annihilate the productive motion of the society.

The rich and poor living together, supply the bustle, the splendour, and the enlivening industry

dustry which embellish an empire; and as the unequal distribution of wealth is unavoidable, that want which rouses ingenuity and urges to labour, restores to the society all its force, and gives birth to an infinite multitude of arts, which, without inequality, would leave the human mind in its original state of ignorance.

#### FENELON.

LOUIS XIV. was jealous of Fenelon. The writings of this virtuous man lessened the glory of his victories, of his buildings, and of his sumptuous entertainments. Yet it was not Fenelon that censured his haughty government; it was that cool body which reads in silence, which weighs the actions of kings, and judges them, not by their palaces and their architects, but by the tranquillity and happiness of the country at large. The English who are just estimators, have always honoured Fenelon. Why? Because his Telemachus breathes a sentiment of peace, a wish for the good of mankind, which touches the soul. He directs all the powers of the state to patriotic objects; if his ideas are not profound, they are at least useful. This preceptor of the Duke of Bur-

gundy has divined the science of politics by his own heart ; for the heart, as much as the most refined understanding, is deeply impressed with that knowledge, when it is truly animated with the pure flame of humanity.

Fenelon appears throughout an enemy of luxury ; he regards every artificial multiplication of our wants as a beginning of depravation which perpetually increases. Such is the danger of luxury ; it never stops, and becomes by little and little an exclusive and disproportioned taste. Our natural wants are limited ; as soon as we pass these limits, the imagination, kindled up, becomes depraved : soon do all the vices germinate in us ; and Fenelon teaches us that every excess of enjoyment, every soft and delicate mode of life, corrupts the mind of man.

His opinion is exactly consonant to mine when he indignantly censures all those numberless artists, wholly occupied on the surface of things, on preparing superfluities. The earth would quickly assume a different aspect, he says, if we could dry up the source of all those artificial operations which are generally ruinous to the people, such as statues, pictures, decorations, proud monuments, &c. ; if we could renounce those factitious arts which cost so much time, care, and pains, to the injury of the useful

ful and productive arts. We ought to distinguish the simple arts from those complicated ones which, for the few, create, with infinite labour, pleasures that fall not to the share of the general mass. Perhaps the time will come, so ardently desired by Fenelon, when, enlightened by a sound philosophy, every one will gladly exclaim, *How many things can I dispense with!* in such a self-denial consists a real opulence.

It is luxury that destroys all proportion in the distribution of the labours and productions of the earth: this Fenelon has asserted in all his writings; but he mistook the cause, for the word luxury has never been accurately defined. He saw everywhere the many obliged to feed and to amuse the few; his sensibility revolted because he perceived that the most burdensome charges, the severest employments, constantly fell to the lot of the poorest and most laborious men. On whom could he lay the blame of these calamities, when the true fundamental principles of every society ought to consist in the maintenance of moral equality and the security of the natural independence of men? Fenelon felt that the dignity of the human species ought to reside in the perfection of the political laws; he on this basis formed

his famous *novel*. But there is no interval in reason between the philosopher and the true friend of men: either he must fully and openly take the part of oppressed and degraded humanity against tyrants, or he must sink into an ordinary man, the pusillanimous and unconcerned spectator of the calamities of his fellows, and must feel not that sacred fire, that consoling energy, which dares bid defiance to arrogant and perfidious falsehood, to despotic and powerful pride.

Mighty truths are tremendous thunders which overwhelm tyrants. Louis XIV. amidst all his grandeur, felt the bolt of truth. Happy then was Fenelon, who, inspired by the genius of reason, dared to pay a profound homage to nature and truth; to preach the rights of man, his liberty, and his repose; to thunder against political superstitions; to predict the progress of reason; to announce to posterity, in the transports of a tender philosophy, calmer days, virtues firmer and more vigorous, men more enlightened, more feeling, and more just! Happy age! the great family of men will one day be united, and will thenceforth form but one and the same society; then will the code of natural laws be the only authority required to guide the multitude; moral equality will no longer be a problem; relative liberty and individual security will

will be essentially sacred to all ; and universal order will one day be established, because the system of reason must finally prevail.

Such was the novel of Fenelon, and such, with but a shade of difference, was mine \*. If the first right of man is that of existing, the second is that of thinking : the latter is unquestionably the most grateful ; but he who dares to attack the one or the other offends equally against nature and reason.

I have met in the works of Fenelon, with this curious passage of most difficult solution ; “ If certain nations could not be brought to a sort of civilization but by giving them some superstitious ideas, ought we to hesitate ? I think not.”

All the excellent writings which at present reflect honour on France have been anathematized by the priests, or condemned to be burnt by the hands of the hangman, as if despotism had hoped in their flames (to use the expression of Tacitus) to stifle the cry of ages, and to extinguish the consciousness of the human race. The author of *Telemachus* was persecuted, and his book long underwent the severest prohibitions.

\* See my year 2440.



## CATO OF UTICA.

HE was a personage much more accomplished than Cato the censor, his grand-uncle; his manner of life was simple, his occupation the service of his country; justice is not purer in its sanctuary than it was in his heart; his virtue was neither cynical, nor arrogant; never led away by friendship or by enmity, he loved above all truth and the republic, and bore no hatred to men, but only to the disorders which sapped the constitution of the state.

Cato, at the age of fourteen, was frequently carried by his governor to the house of Sylla: he there witnessed the tyranny exercised over the citizens. Why, said he to Serpedon, don't they kill this tyrant? Because, rejoined his governor, they fear him still more than they hate him. Then give me a sword, replied he; I do not fear him.

The sun is not more constant in his course than was Cato in that line of conduct which he had embraced from reflection. Little anxious about what is commonly styled glory, he was captivated with that particular fame alone which accompanies the strict discharge of duty; he  
fought

fought to render to his country solid rather than brilliant services. He entered on the scene of war to become acquainted with it, and after having, in a distinguished manner, commanded a legion, he forsook the trade of arms, perhaps to the misfortune of the republic. From his youth, he acted up to the principles suited to the force and vigour of his mind; he went always with his head bare, early inured to the heat of summer and the cold of winter; he travelled only on foot, beside his friends on horseback, while his domestics followed him mounted; he had no desire for riches, and was generous and liberal to such a degree, that having succeeded to a valuable inheritance, he converted it into money, which he lent to those of his friends who needed it.

The purity of his morals was the more remarkable, since he lived in an age when corruption was general, and in a manner fashionable.

After he had attained the years required to be quaestor, he solicited that office, but not until he had carefully studied the laws and ordinances of the post he was to fill. The young Romans, who submitted to that charge only as a step to subsequent advancement, ignorant of the pre-  
scribed

scribed regulations of finance, left the discharge of their function to registers or commissaries. Mulversation was there enthroned. Cato reformed abuses, punished frauds and falsehoods, and rendered the charge of the treasury as respectable as was that of the senate : he was said to have transferred the dignity of the consulate to the office of quaestor.

As quaestor, he brought to justice the assassins yet remaining whom Sylla had employed in his last proscription ; and confining himself to the object of his charge, he required them to restore to the treasury what had been paid to them by orders from that treasury as the reward of their murders. Some of them had touched to the amount of two thousand crowns for their bloody services. Of these sums he commanded the restitution, and the ruffians, impeached immediately after for murder, and convicted by the first sentence, received the punishment due to their crimes. The profoundness of this stroke of policy is sufficient to immortalize him.

Having been admitted into the order of senators, he pleaded against Claudius, who had calumniated the vestal virgins, and had, by his accusation, endangered the life of Terentia, the sister-in-law of Cicero ; he covered the accuser with

with confusion, and obtained an order to banish him a while from the city. Cicero thanked the patriot: you mistake me, replied Cato, thank the city, I had it only in view.

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### REFRACTORY CLERGY.

WHAT then is this fictitious being whose existence, reason, philosophy, and time even, seemed to have undermined. Nay! it rears an audacious and rebellious head!

Despotism, disguised for fourteen centuries under the name of monarchy, has fallen into non-existence by the voice of the nation; the privileged order which embraced a rank of noxious feudality, and which pretended to be interwoven with the national essence, has vanished like a shadow; and when the law has declared the general will not to annihilate the priesthood but to modify it, the clergy have with united force summoned up a resistance which neither the king, nor the nobility, nor the ancient bodies of judicature have ever dared to plan: and the love of so much usurped riches has struggled more obstinately than the delirium of pride.

What

What then is this phantom, which with one hand pointing to heaven and the other to hell, rules the earth with a look or a word? The clergy entwine their own cause with that of religion, which they pretend is wounded by the blows directed against its ministers; hence the ardour of that body to promote sedition, to profit by the fear natural to the heart of man, and to collect in him the awe inspired by the presence of divine majesty; that religious awe, which begets adoration, and which is a virtue in an intelligent being conscious of his unworthiness. The priests have marred human nature, and substituting themselves to God, the only worthy object of our homage, they have dejected the mind of man, instead of raising it on the wings of love and of confidence. These priests, these unnatural men, who have no country, no social laws, no ties of blood, no humanity, nothing, in short, but their interest, sacrifice to a papal idol only to show the *non plus ultra* of insolent imposture and audacious madness: they abuse the most sacred names only to disguise the vile convulsions of avarice. Thus the centaur who ravished the comely Dejanira, pierced by an avenging arrow, bellowed with pain, and staining with his impure blood the innocent beauty whom he embraced, reared in agony  
that

that she was slain. No, monstrous impostor! Dejanira is always beautiful, always alive; religion still remains untouched in spite of the rude grasps of priests. The centaur may expiate his crimes, the clergy lose their mitres, but the adoration of the supreme Being still lives unabated in the heart of man, and the tie which binds him to the divinity is equally strong, equally close.

The refractory clergy will, if they can, kindle up the flames of civil war to recover their excessive opulence; let our country perish, they will say, it will be better than that we should return to the rule of the apostles, to the morality which they have taught. Here, by perfidious and sacrilegious insinuations, they will separate the wife from the husband, the son from the father; there, they will disturb the last moments of the dying man; they will close the grave over the corpse, and will wish to light up in the other world the fires they have been so eager to kindle in this. Such is the genius of the wicked priests who deplore the ~~revenue~~ revenue of the altars, those ancient offerings of ignorance and fear, and the immense treasures extorted from families by a thousand fraudulent means, or which have at least been shamefully styled sacred property. Baneful priests! alas,  
you

you have corrupted what was most holy in the world, Christian morality. *Corruptio optimi pessima.*

How can priests presumptuously seek to form an *order* in the *assemblies of our states*; they, whose kingdom, by their own confession, is not of this world!

ON THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE TWENTIETH OF  
JUNE,  
THE FOURTH YEAR OF LIBERTY.

IT has always been easy for the enemies of liberty and equality to calumniate the people, more especially when the latter had not even dreamt of meriting the calumnies of the next day. The malignity of the court is known; it smiles, then resumes its natural ferocity. What has not been said against the people! Yes! on the 20th of June they were calm and well intentioned. Why is the house of the prince not always open to the people? Why, if he refuses to communicate with them, should the people not go to present their requests?

Let us suffer the *Calot* \* of history to paint Louis XVI. with the *red cap* on his head

\* Calot was a celebrated French painter and engraver.

tippling prettily *to the health of the nation*, and on the morrow causing a *prosecution* to be commenced for a few panes of glass broken and *a silver chamber-pot stolen*, the whole to excite the pity of foreign powers; and commanding the promulgation of that false and unconstitutional proclamation which was a real declaration of war against the people. Ah! if, in the *name of the king*, the musketry could have been discharged against the citizens carrying *pikes*! What a happy day for the palace of the Tuileries! But the magistrate chose not to display the *red flag* for a *red cap*, because he saw that the plot went to assassinate the people, and recollected perhaps the joy of the bailiff in the comedy who called out: *Do give me a blow or two, I beseech you, for I have four children to maintain.*

Impartial history will give this procession to the palace the appellation of a civic *festival*, and will repeat this *bon mot* of Peter Manuel: *Never were there fewer thieves in the Tuileries; for all the courtiers had betaken themselves to flight.*

Let us suffer the calumniators of the people to gain a few crowns from the *civil list*; the language of slavery is familiar to them. The people, generous in the extreme, despise, forget, and pardon them.

I shall



I shall make a few reflections on *that day*. The policy which consists in shedding blood is a very short sighted policy indeed : it was that of Breteuil, of Calonne, of Conde, and of d'Artois ; but should we not also have in our view a justifiable resistance ? And did not the sage Petion plainly save, on that day, the palace of the Tuileries ? For the gentlest people on earth would have wreaked their just vengeance for a massacre *in the name of the king*.

It may be held a general rule, that when the majority of the people assemble, it is very rare indeed that they are not influenced by the most excusable of motives. It is the preponderating sum of all the personal interests united that necessarily impels every man to an enterprise which is executed as soon as conceived : and as the general good is and must be composed of the greatest number of private benefits, such a crisis requires the material possession of certain rights, effaced or forgotten, but which must always be renewed when claimed by the majority. During such a crisis, plain good sense needs only to be consulted for the spirit of the social regulations. As the legislator could never foresee all, he ought never to give to this spirit a *cruel* interpretation. All excess of justice becomes injustice, and circumstances should rectify

tify the law, when there is a positive evidence of equity or of public utility.

When the principles of equity and benevolence are applied to the laws, when attention is paid to the relations of social life, the art of governing men is attained. The vulgar know the laws only by their immediate effect, and the people are seldom mistaken with regard to their utility. The practice of consulting the public voice will become one of the great springs of government; the people redouble their patriotism and zeal when they are honoured, and consequently when they are honourable in their own eyes.

A way to make good laws in extreme unforeseen cases, is to ask in one's own mind; *if the public had its choice, would it confirm such a statute or such a law?* This question would resolve in a simple manner a multitude of political and civil problems apparently very difficult.

It is expedient to establish an invariable principle to which all the others should refer, and this is the principle which we never cease to repeat, *public utility*.

The last appeal of the laws ought to be to common sense. Liberty consists in the enjoyment of individual independence as far as its re-

striction is not indispensibly necessary to the support of the society in general. If this definition be a good one, as I believe it to be, admitting that the individual liberty of the king was for *a moment* violated, ought he to have attacked the independence of every individual, and the fate of the empire, merely to interrupt *a civic festival*? The mayor of Paris therefore acted in obedience to true principles, for the *law* must not *slay* us. Let those who adore an idol of flesh be the slaves of their base thoughts; let them be the constant enemies of humanity: the Pétions and the Manuels, and all those who will tread in their steps, will be its respectable defenders. History will blot their unreasonable and cruel adversaries.

#### LAWYERS.

DOES it appear credible, and yet the fact is true, that certain lawyers, with heads on their shoulders like other men, have pushed fanaticism so far as to start a question whether the Emperor of Germany is not the natural sovereign of the world? Bartholus, by way of adding to this absurdity, considers as heretics all those who dare to doubt that such is the case.

case. In *books*, and more especially in those of lawyers, we meet with *every thing*.

### BLINDNESS.

IT is impossible to account for that blind attachment of people to their sovereigns, who often wrong them, or seem very little disposed to benefit them, unless it be from the confused idea of the riches and power which encircle thrones. To this involuntary respect for the splendour of monarchy, is added the antiquity of possession, which nourishes a sort of superstitious adherence in subjects, in spite of the neglect or injustice which they experience. Nations always presume that their heads cannot be their enemies; they behold these chiefs drowned in sensual delights, and cannot imagine them to be cruel. It is only the most outrageous tyranny that can undeceive them, and show these crowned men to be unfeeling or ungrateful beings who abuse their tenderness and docility.

The king of the French constitution has constantly appeared its most unreasonable enemy. Yet his numerous *political faults*, not to say more, have been all pardoned. Why? Merely

because he bears the name of *king*; it is a magical name which works like enchantment upon the brain of mortals. It is needless to trace the obscure moral causes of this kind of superstition, when the facts are so clear in point. Words have governed, and still will long govern men. Poor humanity!

A nation will not complain without having the most serious grievances. Naturally patient and forgiving, the people love kings, and never proceed to violence but in the last extremities. Force is then the only remedy against force, and every citizen is obliged to aid his country in resisting despotism, else he is guilty of treason.

We stand in need of our own thoughts, and not of those of others; but thought is the work of God, why then should I stop its course? Since the unalterable and indestructible principle which constitutes us, is the same with that of the divinity, all men are by nature *prophets*, and their vices alone hinder them from displaying their privileges.

Political science is a simple matter, it consists in distinguishing what is pure from what is impure. The ambitious and the wicked have an interest in involving it in intricacy, and in preventing things from being seen in a simple manner.

manner. Yes, the science of politics is so simple, that in this age men can hardly venture to suspect it.

#### DOUBTS.

MAN is made to govern and to be governed : and over the various combinations of governments chance presides. The variety of these plans cannot but be infinite ; and accordingly we find that each country has its government, differing from that of every other country, at the same time that it does not preserve the same constitutional form for thirty years together. Here, the supreme authority is concentrated in the hands of a single person, who, with the help of time, has usurped the absolute right of prescribing laws and of causing them to be executed. There, this right is restricted, and belongs to a legislative senate, the conduct of which is subject to the investigation of a few men who, under the denomination of the executive power, act as a counterpoise to its power. Elsewhere, the legislative authority is entirely confided to a few ; while in other states it is in a greater or less degree partaken by the many.

In a multitude of circumstances all these governments have a surprising conformity: for example, there is no one in which this is not a principle,—*that the safety of the ruling power is the supreme law.* If we consult the great book of history and the experience of ages, we shall perceive that the difference of governments is far more apparent than real, a circumstance which does not, however, prevent very different effects resulting from them, both with respect to external security and the internal happiness of the societies. It is, notwithstanding, equally true that the safety of the people being every where the supreme law, and that for the most simple reason in the world, namely, that in the people the supreme power resides, and is employed by them in the natural way which human reason dictates, despotism itself has seldom been able to establish any other besides laws equally favourable to the safety of all. This is so true, that there are states where in reality the weight of the despotism falls on certain grandees alone, leaving the people tranquil and unmolested: if governments were to be appreciated rather by their *effects* than their *principles*, the theory would unquestionably be altogether changed.

Without public knowledge no government  
can

can make any progress: it very frequently happens that the government still remains imperfect, because the people either sleep or are accustomed to the yoke; and this is the reason why the freedom of the press will invariably be the true thermometer of political liberty. It founds the security of the nation by which it is established; and affords to each citizen the means of carrying before the tribunal of the public each erroneous decision, enabling him to fix the scandal of an iniquitous action on its real author or authors: no nation that is zealous to preserve the freedom of the press can ever be subjugated.

The French government, utterly destroyed in 1789, bore no small resemblance to that of Morocco; and this I prove thus. In Morocco, the legislative and executive authorities entirely belong to the prince: accordingly he either makes laws or abolishes them, extends them or restricts them, suspends them or enforces them, as it seems meet to his pride, his caprice, or his passions. In his royal head alone all the laws are written: the royal understanding is the author of them, their commentator, and their depository; and sometimes the prince, with his royal scimitar, amuses himself by executing them himself, which is what the king



of France certainly did not do, but he had janissaries and bastiles for that purpose.

*The king of France required armed guards and unarmed subjects.*

It is, however, at the same time not to be doubted but that the worst of administrations is preferable to no administration at all. Any government whatever has an advantage over anarchy; and it is better to have a murderer on the throne, as at Morocco, than to risk the meeting of a despot at the corner of every street.

#### ROMULUS.

WE cannot enough admire the policy of Romulus. Happily that barbarian knew not the Greeks, nor the ancients in general, and perceived how dangerous it was to suffer the independance of the priesthood on the state, and to detach it from the political and secular power. He succeeded in his first attempt. Romulus alone, of all the profane legislators, discovered the true mixture of military and religious duties. He separated royalty and priesthood, and destroyed that immense fund of attributes and credit, as well as those political, civil, and sacred qualities

qualities which the priests of antiquity united in their persons. Romulus created himself high-priest in a growing state, which the division of the hierarchy and empire would have too much weakened. By this expedient he prevented the Roman mythology from multiplying without end, like the Grecian.

The office of high-priest, the privileges of the altar, the auguries, the auspices, and all the ceremonies of religion, were directed by a philosophical spirit, being entrusted to grave personages, sincerely attached to the republic, to men of experience. Thus was religion liable to no interpretations contrary to the interest of the state.

The Romans having confounded the hierarchy with the empire, the state was freed from that perpetual discord between the two powers which has so much harassed other nations: subtle and dangerous questions were banished; the consuls, occupied with their civil functions and with war, were not apt to lose themselves in the study of theological controversies. The interests of the consuls and of the heads of religion were the same; and the people knew neither fanaticism nor irreligion, but followed implicitly the customs of their ancestors. The Romans were never seen to make the porticos  
and

and baths resound with a multitude of vain discussions, as did the Greeks when they disputed on the immortality of the soul. And moral controversies were a distemper unheard of at Rome. Cicero, in discussing as a philosopher the advantages of his nation, commends the Romans on the article of religion, which contributed much to their victories, by banishing all frivolous disputes, the first seeds of incredulity: for we may infer the felicity of a nation from the rank which its priests occupy; every thing flows from this. Religious polity rigidly circumscribed is the first token of public tranquillity.

#### INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY.

BY the laws of equilibrium we are enabled to support a weight of about thirty-one thousand pounds, well distributed over the whole surface of our body; and we cannot stir without raising this enormous weight. Thus, environed by a multitude of laws, that which secures to us *individual liberty* is the counterpoise of ~~all~~ the others; and without it we should be every instant crushed.

## PORTRAIT OF CHOISEUL.

RICHELIEU depressed the *grande*s to elevate the throne on which he himself was in reality seated, while the people were kept amused by the sight of a royal phantom. His vigorous and consistent policy curbed each haughty pretension of the nobility: the blood-stained hatchet of the executioners warned the *titled lords* and factious judges, that they were soon to expect an absolute master who would silence both the importunate laws and the puerile declamations of the parliamentary magistracy. Richelieu made the interests of the kingdom his own: her enemies were his; and the glory of France was the constant object of all his toils. Throughout Europe the nation was respected, even by the monarchs who bowed to her yoke.

The dangerous Choiseul did precisely the contrary of all this. He made himself the king of the *grande*s, flattered them to be flattered by them, and allowed each of them to exercise the most absolute despotism, which soon found its way into each department, and from thence into every part of the administration. Choiseul tolerated, I say, all these concealed and subordinate

nate tyrannies, provided they finally met and concentrated in his own.

This may be considered as the language he held out to the *grande*s. I have made the king, who dreads me, subordinate to you ; to preserve your power you must in your turn submit to me. I shall exercise a co-partnership of authority, which you may be assured you shall inherit under me. We will all of us govern together ; we will be so many kings, and I will be the chief.

Each courtier relished the treaty, and co-operated effectually towards the nullity of the monarch, who had simply the power of nominating to the ranks, posts, and employments, which the *grande*s enjoyed to the exclusion of all who were not noble. Thus did Choiseul muster around him all the passions that corrupt ; and in this way did he form that system of a haughty and devouring aristocracy, which, after having collected in one centre every vice and every encroachment that avarice and pride could suggest, was to make an immense space between itself and the people.

From that moment Choiseul ordered the courtiers, those political giants rotten with corruption, to seize on the four or five departments of the ministry, and all the employments of the empire,

empire, undermining by every possible expedient the glory and the power of the monarch. While Richelieu was careful to humble all those among the haughty chiefs of the aristocracy who entered into a competition with the throne, Choiseul elevated them, not without a view of his own, and taught them to laugh at the idol, while, like the priests of old, they were eating the largest and best part of what was offered to it. Perhaps in France no man ever did so much mischief as Choiseul: he certainly of all others entertained the highest contempt for the people; and he considered as a strong evidence of genius the facility with which he took advantage of their torpor and passiveness.

It may easily be conceived that the grantees consented without difficulty to reign under him, because, when an employment fell to the disposal of any one of them, he exercised the same authority in his own particular district. An anecdote is recorded that the courtiers deserted the king's card parties, to rendezvous at the house of Choiseul, or at that of the duchess, sister to the minister, who, not having been able to subjugate Louis XV. subdued the master of the monarch. From that time the courtiers formed a determination to remain inviolably attached to the royal treasury, to help to fill it for themselves,

themselves, and to accompany the king in his hunting parties merely to hunt for themselves whatever should fall vacant.

This character, by turns vile and audacious, governed by a woman who had entrapped the minister, just as the latter had *harpooned* his master, found his ruin accomplished by a little girl, by the king's new mistress, to whom he refused the homage he had lavished on others. By this inadvertency he was lost. It would appear that one meanness more would not have been so great a sacrifice to him : he had attached himself to Madame Pompadour to betray her interest ; but towards Madame du Barry he was lofty and disdainful. As it frequently happens, this ambitious minister then made the falsest of all calculations.

To Choiseul we are indebted for Marie Antoinette ; and it is to be observed here that he destined for the father the princess he bestowed on the son.

The nobles beheld with a secret satisfaction one of themselves exercising this all-puissance, from which they drew immense advantages. Choiseul connected himself with the peerage by inclination, with the magistracy by dread : but he employed the parliaments just as we make use of the pawns at a game of chess.

The

The gentlemen of the long robe were far from suspecting this artifice; their pride and their pedantry made them view the matter in a serious light. After much dissimulation, Choiseul caused a declaration to be made, that *the parliament of Paris was essentially and primitively the court of the king and peers*. His motive for this was founded on his being himself a peer of the realm: he thus depressed and humbled the other parliaments, which were somewhat inconvenient to him, and with the same blow formed for himself a rampart against the authority of the master, provided the latter should one day open his eyes. In making use of the expression *the master*, in this place, I employ the language of courtiers. In this new court, *the court of the peers*, Conty, a prince of the blood, was heard to exclaim from iron lungs, that *the people were from their very nature taxable and corvéable* \*. This exclamation, at which humanity was outraged, was merely an echo of the iniquitous and favourite maxim of Choiseul: ah! could the arch-fiend himself have employed more infernal terms in the pandemonium of Milton.

\* The *corvées* were personal services required of the peasants, &c. for the making and repairing of the highways.



Finding himself the real king of France, Choiseul did not manifest such a loftiness of ideas as might have been expected: he conceived the design of becoming the minister of a foreign power, and for that purpose connected himself with, or rather entirely submitted to, Austria, rendering himself the passive executor of her will. Vienna was destitute of finances; he remitted thither those of France, and was also at the same time desirous of becoming the minister of the court of Russia. He was guilty, however, of the very fault there which lost him with Madame du Barry: he took offence at an idle ceremonial, and alienated the affections of that court. Our political interests long felt the effects of this accident; and since that time the cabinet of St. Petersburg nourished a secret desire of revenge and reprisals on ours. This renunciation on the part of Choiseul to the house of Austria utterly prevented him from appreciating the extent of the sacrifices he made to his idol.

He unquestionably did not perceive how burthensome the perfidious alliance of this house of Austria was to the nation: but the ruin of France was of little import to him; he was fearful of losing his place, and therefore made the cabinet of Versailles subject to the cabinet of Vienna,

Vienna, which would no longer allow in the ministry any other besides men perfectly devoted to its interests. Then it was that Choiseul gave his approbation to the treaty of Cardinal de Bernis, which treaty he rendered still more burthensome to France : he was in reality the author of that unfortunate *family compact*, which sunk in Europe the political credit, and more especially the consideration annexed to the power of France. Alas ! why were her interests sacrificed to such a degree ? Because this Minister was desirous so to connect himself with the throne, as that no earthly power should sever him from it. It was with the same view that he protected the *crown of Spain*, which through an interested weakness he put on a footing with that of France. Thus was he the minister of Louis XV. merely to serve the other powers.

At the same time that he humbled himself before Spain, he was able to comprehend neither the genius nor the ascendancy of the King of Prussia : he was utterly averse to England, because a free government ; and it may be said with justice that he was the enemy of whatever was great.

It is known that he refused the propositions of Mr. Pitt, in 1761, relative to peace. His

idle vanity led him to think that it would be derogatory to treat with a government in the structure of which the *republican* form was blended: all his gasconadings, however, did not prevent the English from shortly imposing on us conditions more galling and severe than the preceding ones. His menaces were vain; and in the issue he gave up the part of Louisiana which still remained ours. All this was done to satisfy the caprice of a king of Spain; and he thus sacrificed, in a most dastardly way, the finest territory in North America.

What an enterprize was the establishment of Cayenne! This trivial occurrence will in the page of history blend all the horrors of guilt and robbery with all the ridicule attached to ignorance and presumptuous incapacity.

If it is Choiseul who planted in the American colonies the germe which has since developed itself, we almost owe him thanks; since the example of these states has served to awaken our courage: but Choiseul, who saw nothing in the world except a *league of kings*, provided these kings were to be the *mannakins* of their ministers, favoured the liberty of France without knowing that he did so, and certainly without foreseeing such a result.

It was invariably the case that with immense  
means

means he encompassed very small ends, and all these means were subordinate to Vienna: provided Vienna was content, every other object was to him a matter of indifference. But the English must needs be combated, because he could neither sway them to his will, nor make them subservient to his personal ambition: the numerous affronts we then received originated in him, and in that criminal coalition with the foreign powers, which, while Choiseul affected to be apprehensive of their menaces, exhausted our treasury of its gold and silver. How did he usurp the title of statesman, seeing that he did nothing that was great nor even rational? It was by having creatures whom he enriched; and as he lavished on them the public treasures, they repaid him by unceasing eulogies in the saloons of the capital.

He subdued Corsica! it will require a long time to find out what this conquest could ever return for all it had cost. He at the same time entertained a hankering after Switzerland; but a small inconsiderable Canton resisted successfully all his efforts, and he was as much foiled there as he was by the Genoese populace.

Let me again ask what he did? He made himself *king of the nobility*; and sheltered himself under the protecting wing of Austria against

the monarch himself: for an endeavour to lead him into a maritime war, which his blind hatred of the English suggested to him, he was disgraced and exiled. During his exile however, as he had long been master of the *posts* and *police*, in the latter of which departments, and at its head, he had stationed his valets, *Sartine* and *Le Noir*, two names to be for ever execrated, these slaves supplied him with all the secrets of the state, insomuch that by the intrigues he set on foot he was very near being recalled. It is to be observed that this banishment of his wrought no change in his innate fondness for despotism, which he considered as the only spring a statesman ought to employ.

Shortly after, Madame Pompadour died, the presumptive heir of the throne died, his own wife died, the queen died, and those he did not love died also. Throughout Europe the reputation of Choiseul was tarnished, but he turned a deaf ear to every scandal, which he was at no pains whatever to wipe away. The writers who after his decease made out an inventory of all his *goods* and *chattels*, paid no attention whatever to his ancient renown, notwithstanding his bounties enabled several of them to amass princely fortunes: his laurels were blasted; but it will require some time to develop the historical

cal

cal facts respecting him which are still hid in a great degree of obscurity.

Had Choiseul lived he would undoubtedly have been the greatest enemy to liberty: he would have bestowed whole provinces on foreigners, provided the royal mannekin should be all-puissant, and he should be allowed to direct in the sequel, as was both reasonable and just, the said mannekin.

When public utility is reckoned as *every thing* the government is good; when it is esteemed as *nothing*, the government is bad. Choiseul gave efficiency to the supreme power merely to favour a small number of individuals distinguished by their birth or by their riches.

It is a curious speculation at this time to observe how *all the powers* were united in *the same person*. The Minister considering his master as a dolt, put himself in his place without any ceremony: the king, obedient with no other view than that of having more leisure for his pleasures, was careful at the same time to have his share of *rich royalty*. For example, Louis XV. after having *leased out* the farms as king, reserved to himself certain rights in them as a private individual. Choiseul found no difficulty in consenting to this, because he studied by every possible means to degrade the sovereign.

He was desirous that the genealogists should prevail over the philosophers; and propagated the illusion of the greater part of the nobles, which consisted in a belief that nobility in them was a natural character. In the time of Choiseul, the nobles therefore were not the slaves, but on the other hand the masters of despotism; since by a few falsehoods, a few reverences, and a few humiliations, they obtained ranks, posts, and employments, the lucrative salaries annexed to which constantly formed their basis, and which required no other task than that of flattering the master somewhat more expressively.

It must be confessed that Choiseul scarcely ever, in *his own name*, unbarred the doors of the royal prisons, citadels, and bastiles, for the admission of state criminals: he, however, abandoned these subordinate functions to the lieutenants of police and other ministers. As the nobles of his own party escaped the vengeful blow, he did not consider the imprisonment of the others as a crime. With money this minister commanded every thing, and knew of no other besides pecuniary recompenses.

Voltaire, dreading at Ferney the assaults of royal and sacerdotal despotism, knew how to sooth the despotism of the minister. As Louis XV, however, read sometimes, he one day

day found himself abused in a *pamphlet* : in addressing Voltaire, Choiseul confined himself to two words—*be silent, you old fool*. Voltaire only escaped the bastille because he was considered as a *nobleman*.

Our minister had an adversary in the duke d'Aguillon, who certainly of the two had the greatest share of talents, and who was repeatedly on the point of accomplishing his ruin. D'Aguillon, fervently attached to his sovereign, would no more than the other have concurred towards the liberty of the nation ; but he would have been somewhat more adroit in his despotism. La Chalotais, the unhappy victim of their contentions, was indebted for life merely to the aversion of the former to the latter.

Choiseul's beds of justice, those of Meaupou, and those of Laménie — d'Aguillon would as well as the others have had his beds of justice, for every minister under the old regimen held them to be indispensable. Ah ! was not an attempt made to introduce them even into the national assemblies ?

But the greatest reproach to Choiseul's memory, is that he neglected to give efficiency to the national force. Ours was embarrassed under his administration by a formidable number of parasitical members under the denomination of



officers; and hence arose the prostitution of command which gave rise to so many colonels and superfluous officers.

The officers have ever since imagined that the soldiers were their property; and this laid the foundation for a treatment both impolitic and bad. Each war minister was determined to have a *military ordonnance* promulged in his name.

To Choiseul we are indebted for that aristocracy which preyed on the kingdom. What could be more absurd than the swarm of young colonels of his creation, so cruel and imperious to the soldiery, such rigid partizans of blows inflicted with the sabre, and who have been since termed the *framers of ordonnances*.

A dexterous policy is a true mechanician: it removes heavy loads with slight machines, inso-much that a great effect is perceived without the cause being divined. Choiseul invariably made great efforts to accomplish little aims; he sold France to pacify her, and converted her into a granary for all Europe: among the surrounding nations he had therefore the name of a great minister. Thus had he a centre foreign to his own country; and from hence other views, other plans of ambition, and other interests besides the universality of the French. Choiseul considered the cabinet at the head of  
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which he was feated as all France, and he parcelled out that domain to please crowned heads : it never once occurred to him that the first duty of a monarch was to convert every thing to the advantage of his people. Let us be no longer astonished if the nobles bestow on Choiseul their remembrance and their regret, discovering absurdity in every plan contradictory to his ;—if, when they are told that, rigorously speaking, it is of no importance to the constitution that the authority should be placed in the hands of a single person, and that the whole consists in its execution being inseparable from the law, they refuse to comprehend you : they were accustomed to have as a king one of their equals, and as a banker a monarch squeezing the people for their profit. Oh ! the good time ! could any government be better calculated for the nobles ! and if they dare not all at once call for its re-establishment, they at least make every effort to prevent there being either laws or people : the nobles with them are to be every thing ; for how can we comprehend a government without nobility ?

An adroit polity is diametrically opposite to that which allows insincerity and scandalous finesses of every description ; degrading artifices that are within the reach of every man of a  
common

common understanding. Poison, deception, and treachery, are false traits of a political character : the true ones are stamped by a genius able to conduct and combine, and whose enterprises are great and well-concerted, while he possesses the strength and elevation of soul necessary to great designs. Can we by these traits recognize Choiseul, he who knew alone how to intrigue, or to sacrifice in its stead the dearest interests of France ; while a true policy consists in coming at the means of giving to the surrounding states an appropriate form and natural limits, thus rendering them, by the just relation which ensues, the support of the state with the direction of which the minister is charged ?

A subtle, close, and ambitious man is considered by the vulgar as well skilled in polity, at the same time that these traits denote a little genius. My politician has an almost inexhaustible fund of great resources, and is neither elevated by good, nor depressed by bad fortune : with a glance he calculates precisely the degrees of obstacle and possibility ; he knows the seasons when he ought either to conceal or publish his views, to act with precaution or to proceed with a bold and firm step : he understands above all how to direct with a skilful hand the springs necessary to his operations, and is convinced that  
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the most sublime political systems are nothing more than the execution of the simplest principles. Lastly, the most essential object of policy is the general and particular knowledge of characters, by the help of which the minister converts men into his instruments. It is difficult to apply to Choiseul any one of these rare attainments.

One of the maxims of policy is to mask a design by contrary appearances: this is a stratagem which may be seen through; and therefore every plan in politics ought to be entirely concealed, since a quick, impetuous, and decisive sentiment is precisely the contrast of a phlegmatic policy. Now, there never was a minister more heedless than Choiseul, at the same time that he never understood, sudden as he was in his resolutions, to strike a great stroke. This proves that while many set up for politicians few are fitted for the task in which they engage.

If it were possible for me to restore Choiseul to life, I would address him thus: "Even although all those you called subjects should consent to establish and support the most absolute and most despotical authority, it would not on that account be the more lawful, seeing that men cannot renounce, either for themselves or for  
their

their descendants, the eternal laws which prohibit tyranny.”

Let nobles regret Choiseul, and endeavour to give him the stamp of a great man; they have their reasons: but he will never be such in the eyes of the impartial judge. I consider the panegyrists of Choiseul as the warm partizans of public depredations: the French nation has too grievous complaints against the nobles to consider them otherwise than as the most determined enemies of its rights and its liberty. They have armed their odious privileges against the country; they exhausted the state treasury, and the people were condemned to fill it; and while the cultivator bedewed the earth with the sweat of his brow, the chase of the nobles devoured his crops: if the peasant drove the game from his kitchen-garden, the galleys were his portion; if he had the audacity to repel the attacks of *Monseigneur's* dogs, the prison doors were unbarred to receive him.

The posts of honour and emolument were bestowed on the nobles alone, while the troublesome and ill paid employments were constantly the lot of one class. The nobles were at the head of our armies, but this was merely to serve their private ambition: to obtain their consent to march, they were to be dearly paid; and the

the degraded foldier who gained the victories was to be shot at and exposed to every danger for five fous a day.

When the task of regeneration was effected, the nobles could not comprehend it : ignorance made them obstinate ; they were desirous that what was called the third estate should remain in its pristine state of degradation ; and on the 29th day of June 1789 they marched troops against the National Assembly ! Through the organ of the King they dared to demand the maintenance of their insolent privileges.

It was a noble who, a few days after, took upon him, sword in hand, to assail the people in the garden of the Thuilleries, and to murder a defenceless old man. On the preceding 12th of July, the nobles projected the massacre of the Parisians, who were so generous as to pardon them, and to suffer them to make their escape.

In the month of September 1789 the nobles attempted to convey the King to Metz : on the February following they formed a plan to carry him off ; and four months after they effected a similar plan.

In the army the nobles took an oath to fight for the constitution, and they broke it the next day, betaking themselves to flight, and plunder-

ing the *military chests*: they unceasingly tormented and harassed the patriotic soldiers, tried to corrupt and disorganize the army of the line and the marine, and to light up the flames of civil war.

They dared to menace our frontiers, to combine with the deceased Leopold and Francis, to unsheath against their country their sacrilegious swords, to levy troops, to treat with foreign powers, to bestow on one of their accomplices the title of regent of the kingdom, and to provoke the coalition of monarchs against liberty and the rights of man. They thirst after our blood because they have lost a few ravenous privileges: and if they could come off victorious, the French would in their eyes be no other than so many negroes.

Lastly, the nobles formed the Austrian committee: conspirators at Paris as well as at Vienna and Coblenz, they insult human reason, the national dignity, and the majesty of the people. They bellow with rage at not having any longer a Choiseul for a *king*, one who should subjugate the monarch for them, and afterwards abandon to them the spoils of the country. Have not the officers of our armies been constantly found to be the greatest enemies  
of

of public liberty? This again brings Choiseul to my recollection.

If we recollect that no one in that day could do more good than the minister of the *king of France*; that the latter reigned over his people by affection, the people over Europe by the urbanity of their manners, and Europe over the rest of the world by power, we shall find that Choiseul, far from availing himself of this advantageous preponderancy, diminished in every sense both the royal and national authority; and that finally he has inflicted almost incurable wounds, in the contemplation of which Austria now prides herself with the arrogance that is so familiar to her.

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#### CHAIR OF ST. PETER.

IT is natural enough that several nations should have chosen the *Sun* as the object of their veneration and as the emblem of the divinity. Of all the objects which strike the eye, no one is more resplendent: as well as all nature, it animates and enlivens our existence. Unquestionably the homage of antiquity was addressed to this luminary as the most distinguished



guished object in the universe, conveying the sublimest idea of the divinity. It is very wrong surely to bestow the name of idolaters on the Magi, and Guèbres \* ; by means of great visible images these philosophical priests raised the ideas of the people to the great invisible being, concealed behind that sun which each morning is sent to manifest his glory. If, in process of time, the religion of the Magi, disguised by covetous ministers under impenetrable mysteries, was clad beneath a thick and obscure veil, it was the consequence of an interested policy, totally independent of the first principle, which led to the adoration of the supreme being in the most beautiful of his works.

The religion of the Magi never produced the calamities which have encompassed and stained with blood *the chair of St. Peter*. Undoubtedly an emblem like this cannot be compared to that of the sun. Around this *chair* we see bishops and popes, holding a crucifix in one hand, and a poniard in the other ; and, guided by their example, men who profaned the name of Christians, and who sacrificed twelve millions of their fellow creatures in the new world, who sacri-

\* The old inhabitants of Persia who worshipped the fire and the sun, and whose descendants, refusing to become Mahomedans, still adhere to the ancient worship. Translator.

ficed them, I fay, to the crofs! Oh! moft holy religion! thou haft had moft execrable chiefs. On the pretext of fupporting your moft facred doctrines, they have endeavoured to lay the eternal foundation of their infatiable ambition, of their fordid avarice. John XI, John XII, John XVIII, Gregory VII, Boniface VIII, and Alexander VI, have filled the vatican with facrilège, poisoning, and inceft. The voice of their fucceffors has lighted up inquisitorial fires in every part of the world. Were ever mafſacres occaſioned by the Elements of Euclid, by the problems and theorems of Archimedes, or by the morality of Socrates or of Marcus Aurelius? No.

#### OF MOSES.

HIS altar yet ſtands. What a great man was Moſes, who at once diſcloſed the religion moſt adverſe to idolatry, and the religion that announced a juſt, an auſtere, and an only inviſible God.

Alas! if the ſuperſtitious to which a carnal and groſs people were prone, had not diſfigured this important dogma, ſo powerful a truth would have been ſufficient to command the adoration

of the universe through endless ages ; and all the idolatrous kinds of worships, of which some engendered others, could not have obscured that continual revelation which enabled man to live incessantly in fellowship with God.

A great idea obtrudes itself upon me while I contemplate Moses. Perhaps incredulity would never have planted its dangerous standards, if the theology of Moses, so simple and so majestic, had constantly rejected the marvellous dogmas which were propagated on pretext of embellishing or reforming that great and primitive light, whence flowed morality and all its admirable precepts.

How powerful is the sway of religion over man ! Of all the influences on private morals, none has so much efficacy. Humble yourselves, ye who spurn adoration ; you can never admire nor exalt your frame ; you will continue little, naked, and miserable, since you are insensible to the affecting truths of the majestic harmony of the universe ; your heart will remain cold, and you will perceive nothing in nature but your voluntary abjection.

With the idea of God, all is alive and animated. However superstitious a religion may be, it is always admirable in one view ; for it enjoins the adoration of the supreme Being,  
which

which awakens in us the thoughts of a just, beneficent God, who governs the world and reads the bottom of our heart. While the earth is covered with an innumerable multitude of men condemned to the most painful toils, they cannot dispense with a consoling religion; for the unfortunate need a God the protector of the feeble, a God who counts their sighs, and who will reward their submission.

The intention is what constitutes the sincere adorer. Though he be surrounded with superstitious rites, it is always the supreme Being that he seeks through the darkness of his understanding; it is the confidence he reposes in the assistance of the God who directs him in his prayers and in his sacrifices. An able legislator ought to avail himself of this propensity, to favour the cause of morality and complete the triumph of good order; but he can expect nothing beneficial to result from atheism. Whimsical ceremonies refine by degrees, and the most absurd theology falls, and becomes the religion of Aristides, of Socrates, and of Plato.

Let religion then have its temples, its altars, and its worship. God needs not our homage, but it is of moment to us that we should pay it. It is religion which teaches man that God loves us, and has created us to raise us to a level with  
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himself.

himself. Atheism degrades man by depriving the universe of that luminary of splendor and justice which is indispensable to him, and by denying him the comforts of society: it ought therefore to be held in detestation. Religion informs men that there is above them an ever present judge, whose eye, continually open, observes their actions and thoughts: this reflection justly alarms the wicked, and encourages the good. All the religious sentiments combined have in every nation given birth to public worship: if happy, men assemble instinctively to honour God in their gladness; if miserable, they meet together to implore his aid.

Religion claims our veneration, because it establishes the most entire equality among the children of men. When they shall have studied it carefully, they will be convinced that nature never formed the distinction of master and slave. As all created beings are equal in the sight of God, so religious nations, convinced of the justness of many exalted maxims, will be less tempted to adopt a government in which every thing is cast into the one scale to depress the other, to create, for example, an order of *patricians* and an order of *plebeians*.

## ANARCHY.

CIVIL society has two extremes to fear; human passions may either precipitate it into despotism or into anarchy. Courtiers establish despotism by extending immoderately the royal prerogative, by perverting the laws to their private views, by imposing ruinous taxes, and by converting the soldiers of the country into the executioners of the citizens. Courtiers, actuated by caprice or by a desire to protect the invaders of the rights of men, have contrived to turn the military force against the social body, and to tear out the bowels of the state.

But anarchy, which is the other extreme, presents images if possible still more frightful. All the bases of government are deranged; ancient regulations no longer exist; the laws sleep; the functions of justice are interrupted; unity, so necessary in every government, gives place to multiplied powers, to discordant interests, to contradictory orders; the multiplicity of means serves only to render the springs of government more complicated; punctuality, celerity, and œconomy, become impossible in the exercise of administration; it injures itself, and, incessantly opposed, it attacks all the properties which were

formerly supported by solid foundations. Thus mankind wishing to avoid one precipice, fall into another. A despot may be softened, a tyrant may be enlightened; but nothing can instruct a furious multitude, which makes of its violent and blind passions as many laws, perpetually growing worse and worse. Anarchy is then most to be dreaded; it is the most grievous distemper that can afflict the political body. Let him therefore who possesses wisdom, prudence, or force, become a magistrate in this crisis, let him recall every thing to unity of action, let him show the madness of the little private passions and their baneful effects on general order. Nothing can be accomplished without an union of wills; but it is tranquillity alone that can restore their purity and their gravity.

The calumniators of our revolution have not failed to talk of the pretended anarchy that prevails in France. But he who can deliberately consider the play of the political machine will set a far greater value on the judiciary laws and the laws of police, than on those political laws of which the application is often uncertain and almost always of unfrequent occurrence. But it is a matter of fact that the decisions of the courts have their full and due execution over the whole of the French territory; that the sentences

sentences of the police have no where met with the least obstruction ; that commercial articles of every description are sacred on all the roads ; and that real property has never received the smallest attack. Now, when the laws of police possess energy, he who can form a right estimate regards them as infinitely more precious than the other laws : partial disorders have never been communicated to the general mass. The enemies of liberty have in vain contrived plots and ushered in new crimes ; but all these impious efforts have been unable to disorganize the nation ; it has survived every catastrophe, because, though divided on its political laws, it has been united on the laws of utility and daily application. The throne could not do the people all the mischief it meditated, because the people made an effectual resistance, and because by knowledge the effect of every base libel was defeated. If the cruel and cowardly enemies of this people, so patient and so generous, have sometimes drawn on their heads a precipitate vengeance, clemency has instantly succeeded to these acts of rigour or of justice ; the people, constitutionally mild, pardoned their executioners : they saw treason lurking under the diadem, and they expected and still expect that



time will change a system of perfidy for the interest of him who dares to pursue it. Lastly, taking the amount of the loss of men, inseparable from great events, we shall find it to be inferior to what Louis XIV. sacrificed in a single battle dictated by his pride.

These dealers in human blood, who have empurpled the earth, and whose ferocious intentions have ever pursued the traces of liberty, these are the persons, and it well becomes them, who would condemn us to slavery, by upbraiding us with what we have been obliged to do in order to secure our independence and the happiness of our posterity, with what we have done for the cause of France and that of the human race.

What would they not attempt against the standards of liberty, if their soldiers were not ready to open their eyes; if these soldiers, compelled by force to serve against the cause of equality, against their own cause, and disciplined by blows of the cane, began not already to reflect that all the violences, all the crimes imposed on them, must necessarily recoil upon themselves, and their children, in their turn, become slaves; and that the horrible obligation to shed the blood of men for the whim of a despot

pot will be the greatest of crimes if they should hesitate longer to break through so unreasonable an engagement.

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#### HORATIUS WHO KILLED HIS SISTER.

THE love of the country, the love of liberty, begets men who do not resemble those of another age. When the famous Horatius, on his return from battle, killed his sister, it was necessary to have been born and educated at Rome to form a competent judgment of the deed. Horatius returned from a combat terrible to him, but decisive to the liberty, the glory, and the safety of the country: covered with the blood of his brothers, whose death he had witnessed, and covered also with the spoils of the Curiatii, whom he had had the courage and good fortune to subdue, he displayed these to his fellow citizens with the transports of a Roman who had just saved Rome, had freed her from the yoke with which she was menaced.

One of his sisters was betrothed to one of the Curiatii: she saw in her brother's hand the scarf she had given to her lover; and, necessary and inevitable as the combat was, she reproached him with it, and assailed him with  
all

all the fury of despair. It was a lover who spoke, and it was to him who had been the murderer of her lover that her reproaches were addressed : the ties of blood lost their force in that which attached her, and which had just been broken. On another hand, it was a brother who had just escaped from the utmost peril, the vanquisher of the mortal enemies of Rome, and her deliverer : all these titles were absorbed in grief ; and this sister could find in her brother no other than the murderer of Curiatius. A barbarous and unnatural monster, a tiger thirsting after and glutted with blood, were the only names she could find for a conqueror who had achieved an immortal deed useful to his country. Miserable wretch ! replied Horatius, threatening her, you reckon as nothing two brothers you have just lost ; you load with curses the only one that remains ; your heart is filled by the passion alone for your lover ! Covered as I am by your own blood, nature, mute and betrayed in your heart, does not even allow you to perceive the losses you have sustained : your love knows the loss of him only ; in my presence you regret Curiatius ; and you have not a tear to shed for your generous brothers ! You are by birth a Roman, you  
speak

ſpeak in Rome, I have juſt ſaved Rome, and it is I whom you reproach.

His furious ſiſter made him this reply :  
 “ Rome, the ſole object of my hatred ; Rome, to which you have juſt ſacrificed my lover ; Rome, which gave you birth, and which you adore ; Rome, finally, which I deteſt, becauſe ſhe honours you ; may all her neighbours, conſpiring together, ſap her badly ſecured foundations ; and if all Italy will not ſuffice, may the Eaſt unite againſt her with the Weſt. May an hundred nations collected together from the extremities of the univerſe paſs mountains and ſeas to deſtroy her ; may ſhe overturn her own walls on herſelf and tear her entrails with her own hands ; may the anger of heaven, kindled by my prayers, pour on her a deluge of fire, which, accompanied by Jove’s thunders, may reduce her laurels to powder, and her houſes to aſhes ; and may I, the ſole cauſe, hear the laſt Roman breathe his laſt ſigh, myſelf expiring with pleaſure !”

Horace, not yet recovered from the agitation he had been thrown into by a combat in which death had preſented itſelf to his view with more than common terrors ; Horace, overwhelmed with grief at the loſs of his brothers ; Horace ſtill furious, and with reaſon, at the mention of  
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the name of Curiatius, was no longer master of his indignation :—he poignarded her.

#### THE VAUDOIS \*.

IN the year 1685, the court of Versailles, having revoked the edict of Nantes, pressed that of Turin at the same time to expel all the protestants from the vallies of Piedmont. The orders which the Vaudois received in consequence of this sollicitation were so prompt and so rigorous that they had not leisure to consider what steps to take. Their goods, their houses, and their flocks, were seized. No consolation was left them, but to lead away their wives and their children, without knowing what country would receive them. The entrance of Dauphiné, where they had yet many brethren of the same communion, was shut against them; Italy presented no favourable asylum, still less did it afford the hope of succour and of comfort. Distant more than fifty leagues from Switzerland, and igno-

\* These people received their name from Peter Waldo, a merchant in Lyons, who exposed the superstition of the Romish church in 1160. Banished out of France, he retired with his disciples to Piedmont, where they settled and cherished undisturbed their religious principles. *Translator.*

rant whether in that country they might settle, or at least receive any assistance, they durst not hazard the journey. In this state of perplexity, what choice remained to people sunk at once from easy circumstances into the most frightful poverty? Despair drove them to take arms, with the firm resolution of perishing or of retaining their possessions.

Of about twenty thousand men, fourteen thousand stood on the defensive, but without chiefs, without guides, and without skill in the military art. They were brave from constitution, and rash from necessity, but timid from ignorance. Some regular troops were dispatched against them with orders to engage. The officer who commanded this party having overtaken them, poured on them a volley of small arms, which killed thirty, and then summoned the rest to lay down their arms, with a promise that they should depart unmolested. All of them were married men, and at this instant their wives and children, in the hope of saving the stay of their misery, intreated them to yield. These poor unfortunate men, too credulous and too fearful, urged by the sentiment of a genuine tenderness, and unacquainted besides with the talent of capitulating, surrendered at discretion. But Oh! perfidy! far from suffering them to depart, they were

were conducted, to the number of fourteen thousand, into different prisons, where the bulk of them perished amidst all the evils which misery and captivity engender.

A very great number of women and children, who were incapable of prevailing on themselves to quit their country, were obliged to change their religion, to remain where they were. The rest passed into Switzerland, Germany, and Holland, having nothing for their support but the alms which pity distributes always in too scanty portions. These poor women with their children languished in foreign countries, while their husbands rotted alive in the dungeons of Piedmont. They were kept there till England and Holland solicited their enlargement. Of fourteen thousand, scarcely three thousand escaped from their cells: the rest, not so robust in point of constitution, sunk under the inhuman treatment of the slaves of fanaticism.—This recital would move the most obdurate heart.

#### IDEAS ON RELIGION.

I SHALL not examine whether the idea of the Divinity is innate, or the effect of the conviction of a supernatural power, the existence of  
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which is demonstrated by the contemplation of all nature. All the nations of the earth have entertained a notion of a more than human power, which they have made to reside in one or several beings: with these the elements have been filled; and from hence mysteries have arisen. Every perfected religion consists in three things, the kind of idea it affords of the supernatural power, the worship, and the moral.

May we not resort to the axiom of Paschal, which I shall translate in a clear and intelligible style? It is dangerous not to believe enough, and it is not inconvenient to believe more than is necessary, when that only is believed which accords with the ideas of a supreme and veiled grandeur that environs man, and forbids him in his pride to comprehend every thing: it is certain that the laws of absolute necessity, the laws of the human race, spring from religion, that is to say, from the idea of the Divinity. I do not think that civil laws have ever been known to subsist without a religious worship of some kind. The connection of public morals with religious forms appears to me to be demonstrated in each page of the History of Nations.

We are acquainted with thirteen hundred different faiths, and perhaps there are as many of



these as there are men on the surface of the earth, seeing how probable it is that two men are not to be found who think in a manner exactly conformable on every point : but to reject that which all faiths, with an unanimous consent, admit, appears to me to be a presumption not less absurd than it is daring.

The completest victory of the atheist is reduced to the establishing of doubt ; and a doubt supposes the possibility of the thing doubted.

To have a deep sense of religion, that is to say, of the system in which man adores and humbles himself, becomes a sublime sentiment : then it is that the soul of man is elevated, and his being ennobled, while he is borne above terrestrial things, and made to embrace a future state of grandeur and felicity. Hymns of gratitude are poured forth from the bottom of his heart ; an elevation of thought follows each humble adoration he pays ; and it is in prostrating himself before God, that man discovers in himself his noble origin, and the end for which he was created.

## GREAT IMPULSION OF THE HUMAN MIND.

THE epoch of revolutions is arrived. After ages of slavery and error, people have felt the necessity of acquiring knowledge; and reason, revolting against these tyrants, combats in defence of human dignity, and promises the earth triumphs as yet unknown. Perhaps Africa and India, witnessing our activity, will quickly share it, and resolve at last to rise from their humiliating sloth. Nothing is beyond human sagacity; if it has hitherto failed, we cannot infer from thence that it will always fail. I admit the superb hopes of certain orators of the human race; and prefer them to those contracted, discouraging ideas which dwell in cold minds: I therefore believe that states may be founded on the solid bases of justice and reason. I can conceive this. A few clear laws are sufficient to heal every disorder; but unfortunately that simplicity is not recurred to till after errors innumerable are exhausted.

I delight to contemplate the progress of reason in the world. A true cosmopolite enjoys all the blessings that light upon his fellow-creatures; nothing is foreign to his heart, which dilates over the whole earth; he fancies himself

assisting in all the triumphs of patriotism; he perceives the inquisition expiring under its extinguished piles; he views men of genius, the true friends of humanity, rivalling the sun that illumines the deserts of space. Has the improvement of the human species attained its utmost limit? No. France, the depository of the sacred fire, will continue to cherish in its bosom the germs of talents and of genius. As Greece anciently gave laws to Italy, and Egypt to Greece; so our legislators, while they labour for the felicity of France, are the benefactors of all mankind; they will renew in our sight, but with a livelier splendour, the prosperous days of Memphis, of Rome, and of Athens.

Yes, even the people yoked to the car of the Sultans, must soar above their present condition; they will fly from the miry paths of ignorance, and in spite of barbarous policy, in spite of habitual indolence, will cease to merit contempt. The imperious cry of misfortune proclaims to them the necessity of the arts and the influence of cultivated genius; philosophy, accompanied with the engraver and the printer, is about to descend from the Tanais to the Bosphorus; it will open the gates of the seraglio, and the porch of the Divan will resound in half  
a century

a century with the oracles recorded in the declaration of the rights of men.

On reading the history and annals of ancient nations, we perceive with pain that many held a retrograde course. Under those famous porticos where Socrates and Plato enlightened the universe, the Califs, the Imans, the Dervishes, and the Muphtis, thicken the shades of barbarity; the unfeeling Ottoman tramples under foot the ashes of Aristides and of Solon; the trophies of human glory lie neglected in the midst of deserts; and the traveller, wandering among the ruins of Thebes, of Palmyra, and of Alexandria, can hardly discover the traces of their ancient splendour. But the invaluable art of printing will suffer men no longer to retrograde in their steps.

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#### OF WOMEN AMONG THE ANCIENTS.

IN Greece the women seldom appeared in public, and never at the Olympic games: it was on this account that the spirit, the magnificence, the glory, and the liberty of the Greeks did not suffice to give to the mind the degree of heat which belonged to it; love was wanting.

A false philosophy often separates us from the society of women ; while a true and exalted one constantly urges us towards them.

In their treatment of the women the Romans were greater and more equitable than the Greeks : it was worthy of their good sense. At Rome a great consideration was paid to females, who had every where a distinguished place assigned them, and whose funeral orations were pronounced.

The women, however, were alone seen at the shows, the theatres, and, during the latter periods, at the festivals given by the Emperors. There was none of that general society which characterizes our manners, and consequently the urbanity and suavity of our usages were unknown there. It is not precisely ascertained whether at Rome the women were for any considerable length of time in the enjoyment of a kind of equality in the society of the men.

The more we advance northward, the more we find the authority of the women augmented, and jealousy proportionably diminished : notwithstanding their barbarity, neither the savages, Scythians, nor Goths, ever entertained a thought of depriving them of their liberty. In Europe their happiness began as soon as these nations had formed any establishments : however, when  
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the northern nations were transplanted in Spain, they borrowed the jealous usages natural to that country, and, if we may credit what travellers tell us of the incontinence of the women who are in any degree unrestrained at Gusco, Lima, and Goa, necessary to such climates. By similar usages men cannot be bound or restrained, because with them love is an ardent and exclusive passion.

VOLTAIRE.

I WISH to exculpate myself from the charge brought against me in several journals of having been unjust in my criticisms on Voltaire, who was himself extremely unjust towards Rousseau. I have constantly allowed Voltaire to be a great poet, and have not denied the services he has rendered humanity, whether by attacking fanaticism and imposture, or by making theatrical poetry subservient to a tolerancy of opinions, or, finally, by interspersing, in the smallest of his works even, those humane and amiable maxims, which, indeed, with an unpardonable levity, he forgot, when he took upon him to censure in his verses the Abbé Desfontaines and Fréron.

But had Voltaire the strong and thinking head of the author of the social contract? Had he his temperament and philosophical countenance? Did he conceive, embrace, and analyze the political principles by which nations are to be regenerated? Did he penetrate into that which constitutes society, the equality of rights, the separation of powers, and the national sovereignty? Has he not produced a very weak criticism on the *spirit of laws*? Has he not called the *social contract* a sorry pamphlet? Montesquieu characterized this poet very finely, when he made use of this expression: Voltaire! Oh! he has too much wit to comprehend me.

It was certainly proper to pierce the *Centaur* who was carrying off the beautiful *Dejanira*; but alas! was it necessary to wound by the same blow the innocent beauty the ravisher held in his arms? Rousseau, equally vigorous, was more adroit; his arrow pierced the monster without wounding the moral.

I have remarked that when nature produces a great man, she immediately creates another who seems to be born to temper and correct the ideas of his rival, Rousseau is the corrective of Voltaire: by blending the writings of these two great men the accents of their genius

become no longer discordant, and the great harmonies of universal morality are revealed to the intelligent reader. This is, if I mistake not, a most admirable *final cause*, which, unfortunately for him, the author of *Candide* did not perceive.

Even although I may have leaned rather too much to the side of Rousseau, was I so greatly in fault, when we owe to him the finest parts of our constitution? Could we have introduced into it *three lines* of Voltaire? I doubt the fact. The generation now springing up will view our books in a very different light from the one in which we see them; and we ourselves have revived many old books which had been contemned and misunderstood. Who will take upon him to affirm what will remain of Voltaire an hundred years hence? It is an argument of extreme rashness to weigh, in any particular case, the amount of the human capacity: to these intrepid judges time gives the most formal lie. But there are readers who will not allow themselves to be imposed on by the great celebrity of a name, who spend whole nights and days in the study of a *pamphlet*, and who can find nothing but four or five of the ideas of *Bayle*, repeated in sixty or seventy volumes: to them the sportive sallies of a luxuriant fancy, and the



stile which fascinates without convincing, are of no account.

### NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

A REPRESENTATIVE assembly alone can act with grandeur and amplitude. As it exhibits the general will of the nation, its power is universal, and its wide empire comprehends and regulates every object, without regard to local considerations: the great end which it proposes is the good of the whole.

A single house of legislation has simplified our government; for it needs no counterpoise. The right delegated to the king of refusing his sanction to the decrees of that body is surely only a right of salutary revision, *an appeal to the people*, and nothing more.

Never was the dignity of the monarch greater; he was advanced to respect by the legislative assembly; but, by an inconceivable blindness, he has mistaken the exaltation of his glory and the lustre of his throne. No one of his ministers has followed the spirit of the revolution; they have never chosen to exercise an active authority; and the efficacious interposition of the monarchs has never come seasonably,

sonably. Nothing now remains but that the executive power should influence by its action the aggregate of the political hierarchy ; but this, however, it is unwilling to do. When force is really employed for the public good, it is always sacred.

Every thing is now subject to the national authority ; it holds a permanent sway. The absolute ascendancy of public opinion has established these indestructible bases. We were right when we formed the legislative body into one house, and spoke with some disdain of English liberty. With us an impious, a destructive system, obliged a general arming of the kingdom ; yet it was at the same time requisite that the ministers, in circumstances so urgent, should no longer be subject to the supreme will of the king, but to that of events ; for they were no longer the depositaries of the royal authority. The executive power is therefore become the enemy of the country, since it is no longer absolute master of the finances. But this order of things cannot subsist ; as the executive power refuses to act, it will be compelled to act, and the majestic simplicity of the political machine will then unfold its sublime play.

Invited to liberty, which puts it in our power to reform our government, to regulate the monarchy, to dictate laws, to set the springs of the state in motion, to dispose the physical and moral forces of the nation, to what a height are we arrived !

The most towering political systems merely consist in the simplest principles reduced to practice. Establish two houses, you will speedily have two orders, and no doubt the aristocracy will then preponderate ; and aristocracy, composed of the great, whose lustre can be no other than an emanation from the throne, must by its very nature dread the power of the people, and favour that of the prince, the clear fountain of titles, of honours, of pensions, and of favours. Thus, the aristocratical interests are evidently confounded with those of the monarch, and can scarcely ever be separated.

Louis XVI. in *a resolve of the council of state*, dated the 8th of August 1788, had promised in the face of Europe to restore to the nation the full exercise of all the rights which belonged to it ; but he wished only to deceive the national assembly, to make it subservient to the re-establishment of the finances, and the filling up of the deficiency ; after which he would have opened a new account.

Agésilas,

Agefilaus, finding that he had been deceived by Tiffaphernes, who had perjured himself, conceived from thence great hopes of success in the war, and inspired his troops with a strong contempt of a prince, who, by his false oaths, and his contravention of the most solemn treaties, had provoked the indignation both of gods and of men.

Every chief is dependant, because nature admits neither despot nor slave: it is the perfection of the political state that the chief of the nation be only the preserver of its liberty, its protector, and not its master.

Our princes wished literally to make a different race of men among men; but the people are in their turn the kings of the earth.

A great state, resting on itself by its own weight, is the most proper for expelling ancient abuses, as the ocean casts upon its shores every substance foreign to it: nature there facilitates all the efforts, renders all the labours profitable, and favours the true principles of political œconomy, by affording the productions which industry can raise from an extensive territory: in this vast reservoir of individual faculties, the general interest prompts to great undertakings, by securing to each labourer, and that in the  
 most

most sacred manner, the full enjoyment of the fruit of his ideas and of his toil.

The crisis of revolutions discovers and brings forward the most concealed talents. Every one finds his station; and we are astonished at the sudden appearance of extraordinary men of consummate skill in affairs, and endued with all the public virtues, but whose name was even unknown.

Our constitution approximates those of the Greeks, that is to say, it has a republican cast. That these forms of government were favourable to the production of talents, has been demonstrated. Every road was open, whether by the short duration of the magistracies and of the command of the army, or by the authority of eloquence and the hope of attaining all the employments of the state. The bar and the army formed two immense fields for different geniuses. Accordingly, if we survey all the nations which have figured on the globe, it seems impossible not to regard the Romans during the purest ages of their republic, as the people, observes Montesquieu, who have the most honoured human nature.

The great questions on the rights of the people, on the theory of legislation, and on the influence

fluence of the freedom of thinking and writing, are become familiar to us; we are thoroughly acquainted with every thing that regards the public weal.

If politics be the morality of states, was the vain and barbarous distinction of noble and plebeian calculated to subsist in a country where all the citizens must labour in concert to support the rights of reason and of justice?

Our seigneurs, with their *immunities* and *privileges*, after having annihilated the rights of the people, have made every effort in the eighteenth century to prevent their renewal.

The title of *monarch* was never justly applied to the kings of France; there is the same difference as between *administration* and *despotism*, *I will it, I ordain it, my will, my good pleasure*. Will nations long be satisfied with these terms?

The pope, as a judicious historian remarks, would have desired to be constantly considered as the sole magistrate and the only sovereign in the world.

But philosophers began happily to triumph over *priests* and *tyrants*, when it was impossible to silence the voice of those men of every nation and of every age, who, connecting their own cause with the interest of all, have enlightened and aided humanity.

In proportion as the number of men who think increases, their propensity to independence acts with more energy; they feel themselves stronger; and they perceive, by a natural instinct, that their liberty augments, because they afford each other mutual assistance. Thus, are large states destined to great convulsions: in their wide extent the current of mighty revolutions cannot be stopped; the obstacles only create a new energy, and the events correspond to the boldness of the enterprize.

France is the first and the finest kingdom of the world, that which possesses most acquired riches, and where it is easier than elsewhere to augment and preserve them, where men are more industrious, more laborious, and more sober, and where the love which they naturally bear to glory has all the effects of patriotism: this kingdom will therefore soon be filled with freemen. The resources of the French nation will ever prove superior to all her possible wants.

Our aristocrates resemble the old wolf in the fable, who having lost his teeth offered to make peace with the shepherd; but the shepherd smiled at his proposal, and instantly dispatched him.

A free people, brave and virtuous, quickly enjoy  
joy

joy all the fruits of the arts and all the treasures of the earth.—Let us appeal to antiquity.

The league of Aratus displays the highest skill; it comprehended in idea all the Greek cities. The plan of Aratus was to expel the kings and tyrants, and give to Greece a liberty more solid than that which had hitherto been to it a source of perplexity. Aratus formed a single power out of many, which he connected together in a close confederacy. Here was really the image of the new *departments of France*; equality must have subsisted among the towns as among the citizens. No one gave its name to the republic, no one was disdained as unfit for the place of meeting of the general council: the jealousy of honours or pre-eminence could not disunite them: all at once subjects, and sovereigns, no domination was felt. This noble project, extremely laudable, and the greatest that could present itself to the mind of a Greek, has been renewed in our own days by the national assembly.

Add to this that Aratus preferred a foreign king, whom the Greeks styled a barbarian, to any Greek of eminence like himself.

Society may attain a degree of perfection that far exceeds our most sanguine imagination. No! man was not born to misery and servitude;



tude ; nor are there two modes of well being ; truth is one and indivisible, and the spirit of liberty necessarily doubles the force of man.

How many writers are there who examine nothing but the bottom of their own heart, and, deciding from their own conscience, calumniate mankind by that mean disposition to detract which is the portion of narrow minds ? But self-interest cannot be regarded as the sole motive of human actions. Man is naturally disposed to restrain his rights, that he may leave to others the free exercise of theirs. He keeps therefore in view the general interest of the human race ; for the societies which men form with each other tend by their nature to maintain and secure the independence and equality of men. It often happens that we cannot labour for the public good without incurring a certain, inevitable loss. How often have men been seen courageously to sacrifice their life for the advantage of their country ?

Every thing plainly shows, that upon the whole, man acts generally from natural impulse, and rather for the general benefit and preservation of the human race than with a view to his own.

Many violent, and sometimes indecent scenes, which disturb the deliberations of the national assembly,

assembly, are severely blamed : they evidently proceed from the insolent minority, and from that cruel and base party which pretends to dictate laws to us, but which would not even enjoy, if unfortunately victorious, its hateful victory. These storms are perhaps necessary ; the tempest which assails the vessel also speeds it on its way. When the people unanimously regard liberty as their patrimony, that character always creates a certain keenness of temper, and produces most violent contentions between those who hold different opinions concerning state affairs. The writings of Aristophanes and Theophrastus are full of nothing but raillery against the faults committed in the assemblies of the Greeks. Only recollect the mutual abuse of Æschinus and Demosthenes : and in full senate, Cato and Cæsar attacked each other in the most opprobrious language. So that we must not seek in their public assemblies for what we are told of Athenian and Roman politeness. The greater the danger appears, the easier is the eloquence which takes fire justified, if not by its excess, at least by its triumph. The executive power, ever rebellious and preparing behind covered entrenchments the ruin of the laws of the country, provoked the indignation and the voice of furious eloquence ; for the latter, luckily for

us, rose to the level of the monstrous and sanguinary audacity of the former. Eloquence has more than once thundered against criminal measures emboldened by indulgence, and has disposed the people to assume a stern and determined attitude.

Finally, the despots threaten us : all kings, it is said, style each other brothers. But are not all nations sisters, and can they behold with indifference the disasters which afflict them? Nations will be seen to unite and rally ; for it is the interest of all to chain down despotism. But if the power of a state consists in the number of its subjects, in their means, in their capacity, and the accumulated product of their forces and resources, France has nothing to fear from its neighbours. Let all her citizens adhere to the legislative body : submission to the laws is the pledge of victory. Hobbes remarks very judiciously, that there can be no solid government without a centre of authority from which no recourse can be had to another power.

## OF VIRTUOUS MEN OF LETTERS.

WHILE time brings revolutions over the whole face of the globe, and infinitely varies the picture of events, it causes new ideas to circulate which have also their force and their empire.

Emanated from a few thinking heads, they penetrate the minds of the great body, and make a permanent impresson. This course of morality has its ascendancy and its duration. Since the different parts of Europe have kept up a correspondence, and all knowledge tends to the same focus, the voice of philosophers produces a cry almost unanimous, that swells, resounds, and rules even the thrones, which seemed the last term of human power.

There is certainly something above *them*, opinion. The imprudent monarch who defies it, weakens and disjoins his authority : and such is the undoubted empire of new and luminous ideas, that, by their beauty, their evidence, their depth, and their utility, they give law to the part which governs. Knowledge is become useful in all governments : they seem now ready to submit (with more or less opposition) to those opinions which are destined to produce by degrees the most incredible changes.

This new action of *a few individuals* upon the universe, this moral empire which directs the physical force, is a thing truly new, and which never occurred in history till the invention of printing.

These opinions are mixed with good and evil, like every thing else; they have at once their utility and their danger. Sometimes the minds of men are not ripe enough to adopt them; and, on the other hand, they may too much inflame unprepared heads, and derange the political balance too suddenly. Enthusiasm might then assume the place of reason; and though enthusiasm be the worker of great achievements, it is never beneficial or desirable except in a serious, important, and arduous crisis.

Perhaps there exists an art of judging these new opinions, of elaborating them, and of rendering them thus more salutary. Amidst the progress of the human mind, evil, by an almost invincible destiny, places itself by the side of good. Often the virtuous man is forced to fight, even while he is filled with admiration. Might not a more attentive choice separate what is baneful in the mixture of those real benefits lately poured upon society?

When the human mind has conceived a new idea, it can seldom preserve a just medium; for  
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man delights in extremes. The effort he makes in bursting from his old chains precipitates him into the opposite extreme, and, proud of having got rid of his weighty fetters, he does not perceive that he is only adopting new prejudices, and that he submits to the most absolute prepossession, at the very moment he thinks he has escaped from it for ever. Thus man has confounded distinct notions, and has believed that he had improved all, because he trampled with a haughty foot upon many wrecks.

Such is more especially the disposition of the present age. Elated with some undoubted conquests, it seems more impatient to destroy than to rear. It has brought the ancient opinions under its examination; but was it not too much elated when it gave them up to ridicule and contempt? This love of novelty may have its dangers and its excesses. Will the continual struggle against error suffice to guard against it? And if genius were as cautious as it is impetuous; would it not rest contented with having overturned cruel and pernicious prejudices alone? We ought to irrigate and fertilize, and not to overflow and lay waste. Among the new and prevailing ideas, there are some which, judiciously chosen, may afford the greatest advantage

vantage to society, and complete the triumph of reason.

After genius has expanded fully in every direction, it would be desirable, I think, that some one should start up endued with a calm and penetrating judgment, to separate truth from error. It is he alone that can weigh without partiality, can decide without presumption, can moderate the heat of enthusiasm, and yet not weaken truth: finally, it is he that can safely proceed between the excessive timidity which superstitiously reveres ancient customs, and the temerity which would break down every barrier.

The spirit of the age has diffused much light, partly by conducting reflection towards useful objects, and partly by generalizing principles which were lost because scattered and diffused. There is no science at present but must acknowledge that this spirit has enlarged the bounds of its circles. If it has erred, it was by the immensity of the objects which it embraced; it was by attempting to apply too hasty a calculation to complicated operations: it was perhaps, if I dare declare it, by not reposing sufficient confidence in human virtue, and by not estimating the efficacy of that active force.

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Such is the first error, if I am not mistaken, of the governing body: it has expected every thing from its material springs; it has reasoned on objects which it ought rather to have felt, as if sentiment were not likewise a stream of light, still prompter and more active. Why not believe that enlightened virtue, in any man, as in a nation, is more knowing than the most quick-sighted policy?

It is virtue that perceives rapidly, and by instinct what must turn out for the general advantage: with the eye constantly fixed upon suffering humanity, it has that generous emotion which dictates the best maxims. Reasoning, with its insidious language, may bestow bewitching colours upon ambiguous enterprises. Never will the heart of the virtuous man of letters forget the interest of the meanest citizen; and if he be compelled to select his sacrifice, the numerous and unfortunate class will be present in his memory. He will choose the least evil, and in such a way as not to dread the pen of the historian who will describe to posterity his combats and his decisions.

Thus, in their origin, growing nations have divined the state best calculated for them; and remote from political light, or even despising it, they have had the advantage of improving a



perception vastly superior to the rage of systems, which aiming to control every event, give occasion to numberless oversights.

Place, then, the virtuous man before the able politician, resting assured that the former will discover by his love of the public good what the other will not perceive by the pride of his conceptions.

If he watches the spirit of the age it is not with an intention to crush it, or to stay its progress, but only to give it a more useful direction. The pilot obeys the sea on which he is borne; he follows the inevitable currents; he varies his management according as the weather is calm or tempestuous. In like manner, the man in office yields to the national bent, and turns his thoughts to the general will; he chooses to follow this movement rather than to oppose it. If he is attentive to catch the wind of this predominating spirit (a wind vehement and irresistible), he will bring about great things without convulsion and without requiring an effort. He will hold a lever of vast power, calculated to overturn the most numerous obstacles: he will bargain for the glory and felicity of the nation, and will find the minds of all disposed to obey, because they will be moved only by their own inclination. They will go greater lengths with  
peaceful

peaceful legislators such as these, than if they were impelled to obedience by force, and even by the empire of the laws.

Most writers agree to praise the past ages at the expence of the present ; but the reading of history is sufficient to controvert such an opinion. The superstition and barbarity which darken remote times, extinguish every wish we might entertain that we had come into the world at those fatal periods.

Unquestionably the art of living in society is improved ; and errors and prejudices, in passing from one age to another, are blunted by degrees. In reading ancient history, and reflecting on what has passed, it appears that the human race then enjoyed a very slender portion of happiness. But taught by fatal experience the miseries attending superstition, we have contrived to dam up the source of that scourge, to enjoy the light which surrounds us, and to improve the benefits of it for our own felicity, for that of our contemporaries, and for posterity.

Europe, in general, is better cultivated, better inhabited, better defended : those sudden invasions which formerly destroyed kingdoms, are no longer practicable ; artillery has made war less slow in its operations and less dangerous ; the invention of printing has rendered the communication

munication of ideas prompt and easy between the different parts of the world ; and amidst the most bloody war, invincible and necessary ties maintain the right of property and avert great calamities.

However remote we may be from perfection, we constantly advance in improvement. We debate on the means of bestowing felicity on our own country, on our society; and these *dreams* lead invariably to some wise result. Excellent and sound principles establish order in *theory*, which announces an ensuing *practice*, not perfect, but bringing a greater sum of tranquillity and happiness.

Good books have diffused knowledge through all classes of the people; they adorn truth. These writings already govern Europe; they instruct governments in their duties, they apprise them of their faults, their true interest, and the public opinion to which they must listen and conform. These books are patient masters that wait till the administrators of states are awake and their passions calm.

Policy is founded, like geometry, on the most simple principles; the whole consists in knowing how to deduce consequences. The character of a people changes from age to age, and that change ought to be strictly attended to.

The politician would never make erroneous combinations, without the extreme variety and fickleness of national character. It is requisite therefore that he bestow particular attention on this subject, and estimate more especially the possible range of the extravagance which enters the human brain.

Such is the difficult part of his art : he must build his plans on the character of a people viewed at large. When he shall possess the true knowledge of its manners, he will obtain over the nation an ascendancy which the most fortunate warrior could never expect.

The latter rushes like a torrent, and like a torrent passes away. The bloody trophies of victory are always dearly purchased; the conqueror often misses the fruits of his success. He retains nothing, if policy does not assist him.

The greatest and most formidable state may be ruined by a vigilant policy, which, protecting a neighbouring state of less strength, shall be able to steal almost imperceptibly from its rival the secret and vital strength that formed its flourishing condition.

A body of perfect laws, with regard to what concerns policy, would be a master-piece of human genius. It would consist perhaps in an exquisite selection of what is most excellent in  
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the political and civil laws, and in a simple and ingenious application of these laws to the customs of the nation to be governed by them.

It would be the business of the *sublime compiler* of these laws to connect together the ancient and modern codes, in order to form a new one. If he should possess abilities, if he should have a profound knowledge of the human heart, and, above all, of the genius of the nation, he would maintain such an unity of design, follow such certain rules, and preserve such exact proportions, that a state with such laws for its guidance would resemble those mechanical engines, all of whose springs conspire to the same end.

This great man is still to appear among us, because the perfection of politics is an eminent step to which the human powers can with much difficulty attain.

But every thing announces the possibility of such a genius starting up; and if so many men endued with a profound sagacity and a sensible heart had not wasted their talents in the deceitful charms of the fine arts, we should have found this happy junction of moral and political laws: all would have been marked out at least in theory; all would have been combined, and this eloquent type would have led us insensibly to the practice.

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Without possessing that genius, I have done what has been in my power ; I have, for twenty-five years, collected ideas with the intention of their entering into the sublime plan which another should trace, and which far exceeds my abilities. To collect every idea into a focus of unity, and apply each with precision to the national genius; this is the philosopher's stone of politics. It is less chimerical than that of the alchemists, since we see governments which enjoy a certain degree of perfection, that is to say, such a degree as may be assimilated to the passions of human nature.

Happy the people who, by the help of their writers, have given to authority that knowledge which will permit it neither to step beyond the law nor to turn it aside!

Since legislation cannot be the work of political circumstances, does it not proceed from the information and conceptions of men of genius?

#### GEOGRAPHY CONSIDERED IN A POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW.

WHOEVER admits an original plan in the universe, whoever rejects the words fatality and chance, and surveys with an attentive eye the empires

empires of ancient and modern times, will perceive an order of demarcation upon the surface of our globe, and will not fail to recognize the hand that traced the limits and erected the ramparts. He will behold nations mutually contending till they are confined within the geographical circle drawn by nature; in that enclosure they enjoy the repose which was denied them when they overleaped the bounds.

When in the height of metaphysics, we feel something that resists, that repels us forcibly, that defeats us in spite of our efforts, it is a decisive mark that we go beyond our limits, and strain to surpass our natural capacity: it is a secret admonition which reminds us of our frailty, and corrects a presumptuous weakness. But, in the material world, when an evident principle enlightens reason at the commencement of its researches, it is a certain token that the mind possesses a fund of resources which will enable it to draw infallible conclusions. Let us first be natural philosophers: I have thought I could discern on the globe a decided intention of nature to separate states without too much disjoining them, to delineate geometrically the form of empires, and to domiciliate kingdoms; I have thought I could perceive that the globe was so configured as that navigation would one day be  
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the tie to bind together the human race. These ideas will no doubt please those, who, struck with the harmonious immensity, believe, that the government of the universe presides majestically and necessarily over all other governments. We need only use our eyes, perhaps, to be convinced of these new truths: an attentive survey of geographical charts, determines in some measure the positive extent of states; for the mountains, the rivers, and the lakes, are the unquestionable boundaries and guardians which kind nature has placed for the preservation and tranquillity of human associations.

But if the order of nature have visibly separated empires, it has on another hand decreed that they shall have a mutual commerce of knowledge; its design in this respect is not concealed. When I hold in my hand a fragment of loadstone, and reflect that this stone, which appears in no way remarkable, informs us constantly of the direction of the north, and renders possible and easy the navigation of the most unknown seas, I have about me a convincing proof that nature intended a social life for man. All these indications of design seem, therefore, to evince that her views tend simply to unite men, and make them share in common the good things disseminated over the globe.

Whenever,



Whenever, for the preservation of the whole, a great crisis of nature occasions the disruption of a small portion of the globe, you suddenly perceive seas arise where islands were swallowed up. Never has a gulf, never has a large gap invincibly separated the different parts of the globe; on the contrary, the soft girdle of the waters everywhere invites man, everywhere presents to him roads more dangerous than difficult, and which his courage and genius have surmounted. The celebrated English navigator who discovered the inhabited islands in the Pacific Ocean, sailed from the Thames, passed the Antipodes of London, and performed the circuit of the earth.—Lastly, since it has latterly been discovered, by a never erring experience, that winds which blow constantly during a certain season of the year, waft our ships to India, and that contrary winds, prevailing during another season, convey them back again to our ports—it is impossible not to recognize certain admirable guides calculated to approximate and unite the most remote nations. If man has learned to construct a vessel, a bridge upon the ocean, if this frail machine nevertheless braves the angry elements: it is because the primary intention of nature was that men of all climates should not be strangers to each other. A dark  
cloud

cloud conceals from us the nations which inhabit the northern extremity of America; but a slight convulsion of the globe may suddenly form a sea, to conduct our vessels among these new nations; and in a similar way, although the interior parts of Africa be nearly as much unknown as the centre of the earth, it requires only a happy occurrence to open for us the route. The great views of nature will sooner or later be accomplished.

For the same reason that she gives mountains a gentle slope, to allow a free access to them and facilitate the entrance into the vallies, she has distributed in all directions a profusion of rivers and seas; every thing announces a circulation similar to that in the human body. She therefore wills that all the people of the earth should be knit by the bonds of union, but without clashing suddenly and being too readily blended. Thus, by extending and connecting our various branches of knowledge, we shall find that they all tend to the improvement of the human species; and in this view art is nature.

At first sight, Europe, Asia, and Africa, form only the same continent. It is not certain but America has a communication near the pole with the other parts of the earth. These continents, which nature has united, have a natural

*right to procure, by means of navigation, an easy intercourse between one country and another.*

If Japan forms in a manner a kind of solitary state, it may be replied that, when the Corea and the adjacent countries shall one day grow commercial states, the ports of Japan, becoming then necessary to these states for facilitating commerce, will be opened, and that empire obliged to enter into the general plan.

Let political œconomy consult above all the geographical chart of a country; it will perceive that happy consequences depend on the resources and natural advantages of a state. The passage of the sound alone gives existence to the kingdom of Denmark: the dukes of Savoy take a most important share in the wars of Italy, not so much on account of the forces they can bring into the field, as by their having possession of the lofty chain of mountains which enables them to open or dispute the entrance.

There is manifestly a necessary correspondence between the political laws and the ascendancy of situation; it is false that the same interests can equally suit all nations. The geographical situation constitutes a positive law which cannot be misconceived. Theories are absurd when they

they pretend to enjoin in one state what is practicable in another.

Local circumstances sway every thing: men may enact laws, but the most admirable regulations can never be separated from their application. When the genius of Frederic shall be totally extinct in Prussia, that country will no longer comprehend a kingdom, but marquisates; while the mountains of Switzerland will constantly have in their view the same forms of government.

In the administration of states how great is the disparity occasioned by the hilly or plain surface, the southern aspect or the exposure to the north wind, a natural haven or a promontory, an easy anchorage or a road crowded with rocks? Hence arises an infinite variety in the political institutions.

If the geography of a country be not seriously examined, if its hydrography be slighted, all will rest upon ruinous foundations; for nature has ordained that the moral conduct of nations should be intimately connected with their physical qualities, and a chart is the most luminous torch for statesmen:—a torch which reflects a much clearer light than the idle speculations of cabinets, that have so long been deceived by insignificant terms. It is impossible to behold

without admiration how great an accession the empress of the Russias could have made to the grandeur of her provinces, by uniting the rivers her empire embraces. This admirable plan, so worthy of being happily executed, was abandoned upon the event of the war against the Turks. It presented to the industry of many nations all the resources indicated or formed by nature. Catherine would have imitated the example of Alexander, had she not for the sake of personal repose, preferred the removal of her military forces from the vicinity of her throne, and the employment of them in distant expeditions.

If we may still judge from the site of Alexandria, its founder possessed a genius superior to his success; the one passed away like a gleam of light, and outlived not the conqueror of the Persians, but the other will last for ages.

View the situation of Tyre, of Carthage, of Venice, of Genoa, of Amsterdam, and of London; you will acknowledge that nature has made these different points the centre of a vast commerce. Change the site, and the resources, the means of strength and prosperity, will no longer be the same. Venice was formerly the emporium of an universal trade, and as it were the bond of union of the three parts of the world

world then known. The passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope has caused that grandeur to disappear which was the object of the jealousy of thirty sovereigns.

When an empire is extensive and compact, it can speedily acquire wealth and protect itself. The sovereign of several disjointed states, such for instance, as the Prussian monarch, may command and give laws to rich but straggling provinces; but he will never have the force of him who reigns over provinces united and connected in one centre. France eminently enjoys this advantage, by which the different parts that compose it, forming a contiguous whole, afford to each other mutual aid, support, comfort, knowledge, and defence. This kingdom owes its natural dominion to its compact regions, wedged in between three great seas and many chains of craggy mountains: the rivers and mountains of this fine country have latterly given names to various of the departments; and it was a most happy idea to hit upon, that nature, in forming kingdoms, had also traced the divisions, by giving them distinct and material limits,

Who sees not that France, that Spain, if Portugal were again united to her, that England, Ireland, Switzerland, Sardinia, and Sicily, are

in a manner placed on the foundations of the globe! When you beheld (at a time when the rest of Europe was enslaved) liberty extending her sway over the British isles, it was because these isles are especially formed for the throne of liberty. If the Hungarians are oftener convulsed than any other nation, the reason is, that they occupy an abundant territory, capable of supplying to them every thing within themselves. Behold Poland exposed on all sides; she has needed incessantly for her defence all her valour: her children are obliged to be perpetually in arms; and her soldiery, far too numerous to maintain, keep her peasants in abjection, indigence, and slavery. That the Polish territory is entirely open, is the primary cause of these mischiefs. The well-known calamities of that unhappy republic result less from the defects of its constitution than from its geographical situation, which leaves it a prey on every side to the invasion of foreign troops.

If we consider Italy, it requires only, as was the case formerly, one central point; and as soon as the papal phantom shall fall with the most incredible of all superstitions, it will be revived by this single and probable event. Russia announces plainly that it will soon be divided into two states, because the capital of  
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that empire being badly situated, it is a giant with an excessive head which it cannot support. The comparison shows that nature has been prodigal to France; this is her favourite kingdom: it is accurately circumscribed, and this circumstance forms and will form its invincible strength; for we have only to stretch our dominion to the Rhine and unite Savoy, and it will be difficult to find on the face of the globe an empire better situated and of a nobler and more commanding figure.

Although the Grand Signor possesses, in Europe, in Asia, and in Africa, immense countries, yet the double despotism of the scimitar and the koran, the victories of Selim and of Mahomet, have not hitherto been able to form one whole of the Ottoman empire, because nature opposed it by frittering too much these spacious and magnificent shreds. If an arm of the sea were suddenly to cross the Germanic states, instead of being divided into so many particular sovereignties the interests of which mutually clash, there would certainly be no more than two, and each of these would be incomparably stronger than all the sovereignties collectively that now exist. What constituted the force of the United Provinces, those seven little provinces which the Spanish monarchy seemed ready to swallow up.



What created that republic, so feeble in its origin and the poorest in Europe, though grown the richest in the world? The sea. It was the sea that multiplied its hands to protect and enrich it; it was the herrings, which it raised from the abyss of the ocean, that laid the foundation of its commerce and its opulence, that began to make its name known and respected in every quarter of the civilized globe. These herrings gave it in Africa the Cape of Good Hope, and in Asia opened to it the invaluable traffic of its East India company.

I form, therefore, no hypothesis; but would it not be curious at least to fix in speculation the dimensions of all the modern states; to lop the overgrown empires, and measure them by prudent and sage proportions; to give solidity to those which are too small; to ingraft between the great powers little states which, serving as barriers or wedges, may oppose each over-violent hostile encounter; and to communicate the benefit of the seas without shutting up the passage of the rivers? In measuring certain states according to their latitudes, a new order would spring up, and the august designs of Providence would still be manifested in those vast masses which seemed committed to *chance*: but this opprobrious word chance, ought no longer to have

have a place in our books. - Order prevails every where, though concealed; and if it escapes our view in great objects, it nevertheless exists. Geography must give the first lesson on these important objects. We can already trace the outlines of this grand system in the present position of empires, and war often introduces by violence what reason would have brought about peaceably. Nothing is then more absurd than the ambitious chimeras of those great states which seek to encounter and swallow up other great states. Consult antiquity: the Tigris and Euphrates have always defended with success the countries through which they flow against the ambition of conquerors; Arabia has repelled every attack; and Egypt, though become a province, has still retained the majesty of a kingdom.

At the appearance of the Romans, the empires for the greater part had acquired their natural site, when the ambition of that nation deranged every thing. The world, still new at that period, exhibited powerful kingdoms in Asia alone, the true cradle of the first race of men. Africa, and especially the western world, was peopled much later, and was filled merely by a multitude of little republics or of little rival nations, jealous of each other.

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They were, however, able for many years to contend against the Romans, weak as they were, and incapable of maintaining expensive wars of any considerable duration. It accordingly required ages for these Romans to subdue Italy; but when once they had acquired the dominion of that noble country, Sicily and the then separated kingdoms of Spain were conquered, the empire of the Carthaginians shaken, Macedonia and Greece invaded, and Africa and Asia swallowed up.

Undoubtedly the whole world would then have come under the yoke of the Romans, if considerate and provident nature had not afforded secure and almost inaccessible retreats for the liberty of the human race: she had in this way provided so well, that these conquerors fell back, and certain of the states were saved by their mere configuration. Universal monarchy was, even in those times, a chimerical pretension: these conquerors ravaged on all sides, but retained nothing.

Had the Romans consulted political geography, they would not have reduced into provinces the great kingdoms which they conquered. Rome, content with a moderate grandeur, could have fixed certain limits within which all would have been Roman. Nothing was more consonant

consonant to nature than such a compacted circle of territory ; and in our own days, the constituent assembly has judged well that France must be circumscribed, to double its force. .

The vast conquests of the Roman empire may be regarded as one of the causes of its declension. The Romans had within their grasp the most efficacious method of securing its salvation ; it was, to form small states, independant of each other, under different forms of government.

They might easily have retained over these states a superiority which should keep them always dependant in a certain degree on the empire. The people who would have formed these states would have been happier, and Rome would thence have better retained her power ; the barbarians, obliged to attack separately each of these small states, must have met with infinitely more resistance than in attacking in many points at once this immense colossus, whose magnitude was such as afterwards to form the empires of the East and of the West.

A small state has its peculiar principle of existence ; it sometimes successfully resists the most violent attacks, and makes head against forces which might appear sufficient to annihilate it. Rome, protected by private states, would undoubtedly have repulsed the enemy ; and a conqueror

queror of the distant provinces would never have dared to attack the capital of the world. Of all conquerors Alexander is the most famous; but, in his rapid progress, he gave unwittingly a salutary shock to the universe: he subverted the empire of the Persians, who ventured to pass the boundaries which the Euphrates and the Tigris had opposed between them and the people of upper Asia; and order was thus re-established in that vast part of the globe.

Parthia, from that time included within its natural limits, resisted with glory those Roman legions that carried their victorious arms over the most distant frontiers; and was itself repulsed by them when it attempted to transgress those bounds.

On the other hand, Egypt, protected and enriched by the Red Sea, by the Nile, and the Mediterranean, defended by sands which fought for it and buried whole armies; Egypt resumed under the Ptolemies its place among nations, and has since preserved an imposing dignity, even beneath the fetters of despotism.

Arabia, bordering on fertile Egypt, and entrenched by the Red Sea, the ocean, the Persian gulf, its deserts and its rocks; Arabia triumphs over the efforts of all the conquerors who have attempted to master it. If the liberty  
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of man, dear to the Supreme Being, has prepared retreats, after the plan of nature, in the vast forests of Germany and amidst the frozen tracts of the North, it seems to have fixed its eternal empire in Arabia. The Arab, by his deserts and his mode of life, which has never varied and appears in him a kind of instinct, seems by his destiny to be the immortal child of independence. How indeed could the yoke be fastened round a wandering being who, in his immense plains, changes continually his spot of residence, who can endure fatigue and hunger, and who regards a sedentary life as a punishment? Should the rest of the globe be covered with slaves, the stamp of freedom would be still preserved among these roving tribes.

I repeat it, I doubt not but by improving political geography, people will discover sooner or later that nature has traced visibly with her finger the walls and boundaries of empires, and will be convinced that it is against the eternal order of things for a kingdom to extend itself and diverge into separate and unconnected provinces. It is by following this simple and fertile speculation that we shall probably come to know the great designs of the author of nature, who, having with profound wisdom ordained every thing, has undoubtedly not abandoned the physical

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fical form of states to the ambitious grasp of a few madmen named conquerors. In proof of this it is to be observed that empires of preposterous dimensions have perished, while the regular masses have subsisted.

The geographer would therefore become a first rate politician, if, knowing how to estimate the value of rivers, of mountains, and of maritime coasts, he were in a manner to trace in detail the felicities and enjoyments of a nation, by shewing that it could neither be contracted nor aggrandized without imminent danger; if he were to say to a nation, "*This is the ocean which confines you; this the continent which tells you to extend your territory to such a mountain; this the river which forms your separation from other states,—and the mouth of which cannot be closed up by vain treaties, while the merchandises of two bordering states can traverse over the extent of its waters.*" The sovereign laws of nature are much superior to the diplomatic code: they are imprinted upon the globe. When these laws are violated, there is a resisting effort which convulses for ages, till the states adjacent to each other acquire the form prescribed to them by nature. Rousseau thus addressed the Poles: *Fear not being conquered, so long as they are unable to digest you.*

After so many useless treaties, it is necessary to recur to these eternal laws, because, in the real order of things, the right of nature is the first of rights: when political right shall advance supported by those beautiful and material forms which nature displays to the contemplative eye, it will not go astray. The success of this plan appears to be demonstrated, since, notwithstanding the extravagance of family compacts and treaties of inheritance, the coalition of crowned heads, and the violence of their despotism, the physical mass of the globe has withstood the agitation of those sovereigns, who, wishing to efface some of the lines of nature's eternal graver, have only shown the vacuity and nothingness of proud imbecility.

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#### OF THE STATE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION.

THE people form the government, and for this reason, that the general opinion in every state regulates the administration, which never clashes with impunity against the public voice, a voice that resists and opposes an insurmountable obstacle to the proud will of the sovereign.

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Those nations merit our scorn and contempt that would have an administration great and enlightened, and yet betray the utmost levity, or rather an absolute inattention, in the weightiest public affairs.

The most consummate minister always springs from the class of citizens, and can carry into the national council that expansion of mind alone which the nation has attained, unless he be supposed to possess such an extraordinary genius as is exceedingly rare. He will have no other ideas than those which have been circulated around him.

The minister will be heedless and fickle, if the nation is heedless and fickle; he will be devoid of genius and intelligence, if political matters should by all be abandoned to chance. What use would he make of a genius vastly above his age, if the nation were to be incapable of profiting by all the superiority of his knowledge? He would not be understood, and his political genius, in a manner insulated, would not be able to combine execution with theory. But let this same minister, legislator, or administrator, placed (no matter how) in the governing body, see his system, till then uncertain even in his own eyes, confirmed by the public opinion, and he will acquire confidence,  
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and advance with the train of thinking men. Those who are capable of reflecting will bestow their approbation; the weakness of the administrator will disappear; and he will become strong in his intellectual operations, because a very great number of men will have adopted before hand his ideas. Thus is every well enlightened nation always well governed. As a great number of men can, by their united efforts, raise the most ponderous masses and erect obelisks; so the opinion of all and the vigilance of all, meet and strike out in practice the more important truths of political œconomy. For when the subjects which interest administration shall be publicly debated, they will be cleared up in a short time; the most intricate questions will become plain axioms which the ignorance of some and the treachery of others can no longer obscure.

When people complain of the administration, they often accuse themselves; they confess that they have not bestowed on public affairs the attention these deserve, and the minister has perhaps in the sequel reason to advance this great absurdity, *that it is lawful for the minister alone to examine what interests the general order.* The people having ceased to reflect, it becomes

the minister, however unqualified for the task, to reflect for them.

When the sovereign or his council is not well informed, the nation must supply the limited ideas of the ministry; and this is what happens in those states over which a degree of political knowledge is diffused: the false ideas of ministers are there rectified, a general clamour is raised, and the happy effects of a well directed education among all the classes of citizens are perceived. No dastardly or servile fear is entertained; justice is rendered to the real statesman, the superficial theorist is hunted down, and if there be no city for slaves, as is observed by one of the ancients, there is always a government for enlightened men.

Every head of a society depends on the society, and is accountable to it, even in the most imperfect governments. The good citizens are the true reformers of the state; they expect from a placeman a statement of his public conduct, because men, being rational beings, are calculated to know their own interests. They submit to be in some little degree deceived, because they are sensible that administrators are surrounded by tribes of mercenaries; but, after having rejected these factions, they discover the truth,

truth, which is destined to subsist eternally, and, what is still more astonishing, they pass sentence as posterity will do after them.

If laws were to be precise, clear, and simple, and if all the strength of human reason were to be manifested in a nervous style, the wisdom of institutions would be understood: and why has not eloquence applied itself to write with force and simplicity the sacred text of the laws?

A code in the vulgar tongue still remains a great desideratum: amidst so many bills posted up, we have never seen one which contained an ordinance replete with simple and moving reflections.

When we consider that the laws ought to be read and understood by all men, and yet that we know not where to find the national code, we are surpris'd at this culpable negligence; and the legislator has lost his noblest right, that of speaking to the heart of man.

Is there a single individual who cannot comprehend the conventions of which the utility is clear and known, who cannot judge that he enjoys the advantages of the law, and that, without it, other men might arm and conspire against him? The minds of the people become enlightened when an attempt is made to enlighten them, when an attention is paid to the

efforts of the men of intelligence who seek alone to propagate knowledge. The most ignorant people are at the same time the most wicked; stupidity is the parent of every disorder. We teach grammar and the catechism, yet we have neglected to teach the code of laws.

Maxims (who would believe it?) direct empires. All history bears testimony that there is a fashion in the polity of nations. The Romans, who were persuaded that the fates had decreed to them the empire of the world, looked upon every thing as just which conducted them to greatness. The treaties of the republic were always so many snares: the prince whom it was its interest to raise up, was always held to be the lawful prince. We must not imagine that the Romans affected even any sense of shame; they believed that their will ought to be the rule of the world. Their perfidy towards the Carthaginians, the Rhodians, the Ætolians, and Jugurtha, is well known. The Roman republic never feared but two men, Hannibal and Mithridates; but the enemies of the Romans failed in their designs, because they continued to employ the same policy when new circumstances required a different one. Rome was invariably guided by the same principles; and the exile of the Tarquins and the destruction

tion of Carthage tended to but one object. Rome moulded itself, from its origin till the time it over-ran the world, to all the virtues which ought to serve as the basis of greatness. It watched the neighbouring, as well as the most distant states, and surpris'd them under such predicaments as must necessarily have hasten'd their fall. When the Romans had not an immediate plea to make war upon a nation, they recurr'd to the ages prior even to the foundation of Rome. All these heroic attacks had their foundation in the lofty maxims which promis'd to them the dominion of the universe. Thus a few words, when they have made a lively impression on a people, are a rallying point which supports and re-establishes their courage; and such a Power has become predominant because its standards bore such a device and not such another.

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#### THE NEW GENERATION.

THE sentiment of liberty is universally diffus'd; the birds, the fishes enjoy it; it accompanies the lion in his deserts, the chamois-goat on his mountain-summits, and the rein-deer amidst his snows: and yet there are slaves so

mean and debased as to dispute this innate feeling in man, and to dare assert that he is from his birth in a subjected state.

Man is born free, and has a freedom annexed to his very existence : his rights and titles are at each generation renewed, for nature bestows on all a *new title*.

If all beings are free, nature, ever the same and ever uniform, is no where in a state of slavery. Who has fancied himself able to strip man of his noblest inheritance ?

Since, when they united in society, the first men framed a *contract*, this contract unquestionably cannot be revoked. Society requires common and equal rights ; but this contract could only bind those who made it. A father has no lawful authority over his children, except during their minority, and before they are grown men and able to act for themselves : otherwise he would abase and degrade his posterity for ever, by a breach of justice, which is repugnant to good sense, to reason, and to paternal affection.

Nature, always entire, always new, and always a *minor*, does she not continually demonstrate that her rights are unalterable and independant ? Every individual brings into the world his rights at his birth ; he has therefore

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the liberty of examining, of approving, of renewing, and of changing the contract made by his father. The father, a fierce warrior, fixes his views on war alone; the son, a peaceful labourer, breathes only peace: the one flies to the field of Mars; the other repairs to the temple of Minerva. Can their laws be the same?

Besides, in the perpetual ebb and flow on the surface of our earth, it is impossible but that human ideas must change. How could it enter the head of man to enact stable and permanent laws, in which it was prohibited to make the slightest alteration? Are we a community of beavers or a hive of bees, that we are thus reduced to mere instinct? The sparrow, hatched to-day, will be the same as his parent, his grandfere, and all his ancestors, as high as the Adam of his race: the son is equal to his father, since their nature and essence are absolutely the same. But what matters this to me; I am neither a sparrow nor a beaver.

Besides, if man be considered as a slave, why are laws framed? How can virtues be required of him? If he were in reality a slave, then would all be in the same condition; but then would not all be equal?

Of what benefit are reason, knowledge, and



humanity, if we must remain subject to laws written with the point of the sword, by people alike barbarous and ignorant? Are the rights of humanity to be discussed with a lance in the hand? And yet was it not in this manner that most of the nations of Europe received their laws? Does not the spirit of the Goths, the Visigoths, the Burgundians, the Lombards, the Saxons, the Franks, and the Alani, almost every where prevail?

Reason, ever slow and tardy, has arrived always too late, and has not had force sufficient to destroy old prejudices rooted by long habit, and supported by obstinacy and ignorance. Hence the absurd code of barbarism, which endeavoured to make man a sort of beast of burden, by attaching him to the *glebe*.

But, if our ancestors sought thus to degrade the human race, on the other hand they ennobled the ground. With them it became a fief, a marquisate, a viscounty, a county, a barony, &c. Ought such an extravagance to be sanctioned by us because it originated in the brain of our forefathers? Had the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, and all the most enlightened nations of the universe, ideas so fantastic? Assuredly they never ennobled the ground, even that in which they planted their  
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gods, the bean, the onion, the garlic, and such other divinities.

And what is there in common between us and our forefathers? They were ignorant and barbarous, we are enlightened and civilized; they were enemies to the fine arts, we derive lustre from them, our mode of life being diametrically opposite to theirs; if their code was reasonable for them, it is absurd for us; and if it was irrational when they formed it, how much more irrational is it that we should suffer ourselves to be governed by it!

Ought not this noble ground to be trodden, cultivated, and reaped by nobles only? Ought it not to be manured with noble compost alone? Ought it not to be tilled by no other than a noble plough, and noble horses? In that case, all must be ennobled, not excepting the dew which shall fall from heaven to fertilize these noble fields.

The only noble ground, in my apprehension, is that which yields most food to its inhabitants. The land only exists and has a real value, by the labour of the peasants: and the noblest of all lands, were it peopled with dukes, and earls, and barons, with pride and indolence, would be strewed by their noble carcases, and inhabited by birds of prey and fallow deer, allured thither

to devour the noble carrion, if none but noble hands were allowed to touch the noble domain.

To ennoble the *ground* and to degrade the nature of man who renders it fertile, is one of those cruel follies which could only be fallen upon in times of barbarity, when the human understanding was totally debased and eclipsed. It belongs to the divinity alone to ennoble the clay, by animating it with his breath; nor is it more possible for men to change the nature of things and to suppress human liberty, than to prescribe another road to the chariot of the sun.

Man, being free, has on that account preserved all his rights, and no one could contract for him without having been fully authorized. As soon as age permits him to enter into society and to form a part of the public, he has a claim in the *public concerns*. This is the moment nature has assigned him for the complete expansion of his organs and of his intellectual powers: let him stipulate his interests; he is master of them. But, since it is proved, by the most accurate calculations, and by the experience of ages, that ninety years compose three ages of men, we should thence conclude that in every thirty years there ought to be a general

ral assembly, to establish a revision in great societies.

What a truly august spectacle would a new generation present, exerting its most uncontested privilege, that of settling, in its own name, the rights of humanity, and thus correcting, in the face of heaven, all sorts of outrages committed in every corner of the world ! *This social regeneration*, to be renewed every thirty years, would stamp on government a majesty that would no longer allow it to adopt those pitiful little laws which public reason would treat with contempt ; for many old laws are only the testament of cruelty and insolence. A new generation can annul the revengeful or absurd edicts which are contrary to the immediate and general interest.

#### MUNICIPALITIES.

A MUNICIPAL government is the one the most conformable to the happiness both of the nation and the sovereign \*. Each city has its own interests more especially in view, and there

\* What I mean by the term "Sovereign" cannot but be well understood : it is most unquestionably not a single man.

are an abundance of things which depend on locality. The sovereign is therefore interested to hear the representations of the various corporations which compose the nation, seeing that each of them has particular observations resulting from its situation to make. A bridge, a river, a mountain, constitutes either the riches or the indigence of this or that city. In nature the great whole is composed of parts infinitely small; and in politics this general rule is still clearer observed.

A municipal form \* strengthens the ties which attach the people to the sovereign, whose especial duty it becomes to direct to the general interest the interests of individuals. He facilitates the gathering of taxes, and diminishes both the expenditure, and that swarm of useless beings who would otherwise be a burthen to, and in the pay of the supreme authority. The sovereign whose aim is to accomplish every thing, and to leave every where the traces of his power, is not an enlightened sovereign. Love and confidence know how to make sacrifices; and the people fancy themselves free when they are placed in a line with their magistrates, of the

\* Here I protest that this chapter, as were also the preceding ones of the present volume, was first published by me in 1786.

justice of whose awards they are then persuaded, as well as that the magistracy is calculated to favour liberty.

The people, while they see the power in the hands of the sovereign, perceive at the same time the laws confided to those of the magistrates, by whom the prince and his subjects are united. The strength of the society resides in its well-informed, laborious, and zealous citizens. Nothing can therefore be better conceived, nor more wisely established, than provincial assemblies, by which the people will of themselves be led into a faith and confidence of the goodness of the government, and their view, wearied unceasingly with the display of military preparations, will be guided towards the patriotic functions of this happy magistracy.

The municipal government gives, in a manner, a higher policy to the political government, renders knaves of no utility, bestows additional respect on men of worth, and makes the citizen still freer. Taxation is managed in a direct way: it passes immediately from its source into the hands by which it is to be expended, a simple mode which is certainly vastly preferable to the system of farming out the taxes. Were such a plan to be adopted in France, the revenues of the state would be as constant as ever, and that  
kingdom

kingdom would be delivered from its greatest scourge, the farmers-general, who heap up riches, obtain a mischievous credit, and multiply the agents of their avarice and the accomplices of their extortions; who, while they vex and torment their fellow citizens, live at their expense. By employing the municipal body in the collection of the taxes, the latter become simple, equitable, and little burthensome, at the same time that all the inconveniences which are now dreaded, and have been so sorely felt, are avoided.

The municipal government is a stranger to all commerce except that which is useful, or, in other words, that which tends more to the advantage of the state than of the merchant. A more limited commerce which bestows ease, not riches, which gives a value to the productions of the soil, not foreign productions, is preferable to that external commerce by which money is accumulated without commodities being multiplied, and which brings in its train a luxury destructive of cultivation, to favour the importation of certain superfluities reserved for the rich. Mercantile prosperity is not always the criterion of the prosperity of the state. An exclusive commerce, a commerce in which there shall be no competition, is one of those extreme vio-  
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lences more detrimental to him by whom it is obtained than to him who submits to it. All the *good* it can produce is an accumulation of pernicious money. The municipal government at once retains the cultivator and the artist, encourages them without enriching them too much, and above all prevents them from transporting elsewhere their talents and their industry. All these opinions are founded on facts; and it is to be wished that every opposite opinion should be laid aside, in favour of truths either certain or evident.

Lastly, Municipalities lead to the perfect organization of the different parts of the state, and enter into an harmonious combination with monarchy, which they gradually and effectually improve. Each province, that is to say, each municipal division of the kingdom, has an *interpreter* to explain its wants and its true situation. Municipal administrations form the political bond of union, by giving to the people an apparent liberty: they are established to prevent great abuses. In politics every benefit results from a concurrence and union of intelligences. Men constantly gain something when they are interrogated on that which interests them in a direct way; and obedience thus becomes more ready, even confounding itself with love. In France  
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the pens of generous writers have just effected the happiest plan of provincial administrations, as well as that of the intermediate assemblies of the cantons and dioceses : such a service rendered to the nation could not without a most absurd ingratitude have been passed over in silence.

A good internal economical administration therefore depends on these municipalities so fruitful in local advantages : it is impossible that the eye which embraces the politics without, can superintend all the details of the towns, villages, and small cities.

We see then that the part which instructs has taken a form and consistence ; and the more it shall be dispersed among the people of the provinces, the more will it, in entering into a still closer intimacy with them, be enabled to bring about very useful ameliorations.

#### PERPETUAL OSCILLATION.

WHO does not see (this applies, however, to those who know how to see) a *real* oscillation in each government? Here the abuse of the power termed monarchical has given rise to the idea of republics; and farther on the abuse  
of

of liberty has restored the monarchical state. The Danes, to extricate themselves from a monstrous government, ventured to establish and legalize a despot, because, suffering as they then did, it was the smaller evil of the two.

He who thinks, examines, and judges by effects should not be the dupe of those vague notions, expressed by terms still more vague, which every one understands in his own way. The names we are pleased to bestow on different governments, can in no way change their relations to each other, and these relations are what it is important for us to know.

The blind admirers of the constitution of the republics of antiquity will not give to these a new birth among us, because men can merely correct and not change the nature of things. States, like individuals, will undergo continual modifications, but will never lose a certain character.

The particular circumstances of the position of every state determine on the more or less extensive employment of its means. Run over all the systems of the different governments, and you will see that the same causes constantly produce the same effects. If the people are happy and tranquil in a state, of what import is it that the denomination of the government is

held to be bad, when the system is a better one than is to be found elsewhere?

To pretend to subject states to certain administrative principles, while the science of politics is no other than an assemblage of facts incessantly varied by causes which man is permitted neither to foresee nor to shun, is to place the remedy for the evil in impotent hands, and to deprive man both of his resources and his means: to him it belongs, by an unceasing labour, to correct the *minutiae* of the political economy.

Upon the slightest examination we perceive a multitude of governments, which, carrying as they do the same title, still differ from each other. The term *monarchy* alone calls up several ideas. *Absolute* monarchy; *limited* monarchy; a monarchy *tempered* by a senate, and modified by states general; a monarchy *modified* by a national diet, (not merely composed of the grandees of the nation, but in which are blended the magistrates or deputies of the second order, such as the *communes*, these last by their profession and their moral habits having a stronger inclination towards the people and their interests;) and a monarchy chiefly *tempered* by the prevailing manners.

The republican state of government is split  
into

into as many divisions and sub-divisions, as its form has from age to age been varied, at times by the ascendancy of some citizen of extraordinary talents, at others by its own intrinsic rudeness, and, finally, by the insensible passage of a nation that loses its liberty, into a submission to monarchical authority.

There is a servitude so pleasant and so natural, that under its yoke liberty is forgotten. A nation may be found that will not govern itself, because it fears being exposed to commotions of a nature and magnitude not to be borne. It dreads an energetical constitution like that of England; and resists that economy and that gravity which found the basis of free governments. It neither thirsts after universal dominion, as did the Romans, nor after an universal system of commerce. It wishes to taste, if I may be permitted the expression, every species of legislation; and as it judges its character incompatible with the republican constitution, it adopts a reasonable but reserved obedience. It preserves a love and a respect for the sovereign, provided he does not bear too hardly with his sceptre. It cherishes a delicate idea, the point of honour, which it will never allow to be wounded, while a severity of discipline is not suited to its courage. It fancies itself pos-

P ?

sessed

feffed of more freedom than it choofes to exprefs, and, contented with its lot, envies not other nations, depending equally on its own fidelity and the moderation of its monarch. Is not this the picture of the French nation \*? It feels within itfelf that fublime ardour which would be fo excellent a principle for the formation of an Englifh liberty, but as that would be too great a tax on its gaiety and its pleasures, it pants after tranquil movements alone, and, to fecure its glory and repofe, will never ceafe to pay its court to the genius of monarchy.

To judge aright of the different conftitutions of ftates, their effects muft neceffarily be feen. When a legislation is purely fpeculative, it is changed by the physical pofition of the country and the character of its inhabitants. Every nation has within itfelf fome caufes which require particular regulations. If the legislation be inflexible it will be turned againft itfelf: if it be fagacioufly contrived it will adapt itfelf to the

\* When this fragment was penned, the author had perhaps a right to think fo. Louis XVI. divested of an abfolute fway he had always been too good to exercife, but the right of which, abandoned as was its ufe for a feafon, had been notwithstanding a grievance, was then the idol of his people—of fubjects who feemed to be bound in an eternal obedience to him and his defcendants; how ftangely has the picture been fince reverfed! *Translator.*

physical and moral character of the nation by which it shall have been received ; and as every national character is subject to variations, the legislation will follow these movements, and will never thwart the propensity of the national spirit.

### TRIBUTES.

“ *TRIBUTES,*” observes the author of the Spirit of Laws, “ *should be so readily collected, and so clearly established, as to render it impossible for the receivers either to augment or diminish them.*”

In these few words every thing is comprehended. The tribute will not be burthensome when limited and defined by law. The legislator, therefore, to avoid being forced to be equitable, will aim at being clear and precise ;—he will frame laws of easy execution.

Edicts of exemption from tribute have never been promulgated. “ *Princes,*” as Montesquieu further observes, “ *speak constantly of their own necessities ;—never of ours.*”

Can a man bless the laws of the society in which he lives, when in reality he derives from them no advantage whatever ; when in their

name he is obliged to make full and absolute sacrifices ; and when, in common with himself, the greater part of the kingdom is borne down and oppressed by these very laws, which by every impartial observer must be held to be arbitrary ? There is a certain burthen which I am sensible must necessarily incline more to the one side than the other, but it ought to be supportable to all.

The happiness of man, and the property he has acquired, attach him to the soil, the foster-mother that provides for all our wants, and discharges all the costs of our stay here below. Man brings nothing with him into this world but his nakedness, a poor security, and but badly calculated to till the *royal treasury*. The earth therefore is to be our paymaster, and to discharge the taxes.

Monarchs make war to subjugate a province and augment the state revenues, not to subdue men who can fly and establish themselves elsewhere. The man who has his hands alone gives us our rich harvests, builds our houses, and defends our frontiers ; but if the enemy approach, I ask whether he has any thing to lose, and whether he can be made to carry a *staff* in each hand to the contest.

He has nothing then to dread, and the terror  
belongs

belongs to the landholder alone. To the latter the conqueror may say: this is mine; *hinc migrate coloni*. The holder of contracts is expressly in the same predicament, since he lends his money on no other pledge than that of houses or fixed revenues: he has consequently every thing to fear when the enemy plans the seizure of the domains on which his security reposes; and he should therefore be made to reimburse the royal tax paid by the property pledged, which has a value annexed to it to discharge his claim. Man in himself owes nothing: the earth is bound to pay both for him and for herself. France can exist without Frenchmen; a German carries thither his industry, and gives a new value to the deserted territory: the produce is the same, and the state has lost nothing.

Ought land to be taxed according to a rate of estimation, according to the lease at which it is granted, or in proportion to the productions it affords?

The mode of estimation is liable to a thousand errors; and, putting man and his labour entirely out of the question, the ground changes and degenerates, either through accidents, ignorance, or the unskilful management of the cultivator. It supplies every one with a pretext that his



land is over-rated, and enables those who have weight and interest at all times to obtain favour and have their contribution lessened, while the great weight of the tax falls on the weak. How many opportunities does it create to torment the people !

A taxation proportioned to the lease is subject pretty nearly to the same inconveniences. Leases at an under rate are collusively drawn up, and others are diminished by a yearly *present* of some part of the produce. The farmer in the mean time is not favoured a shilling: the whole of the gain flows into the purse of the lordly landholder, or perhaps, to speak more correctly, into those of his receiver, superintendant, and domestics in general.

The tax in kind, which fulfils all the conditions required by Montesquieu, is therefore the only one that can be efficaciously adopted. It is a kind of tribute easy to collect, and so clear in its establishment, that it can be neither augmented nor diminished by the receivers. A law to this effect will give no scope to the will and caprice of individuals, and it would be very easy to prove that on that account the tribute will not be *burthensome*.

But to the end that this tax may be just, its uniformity is a necessary condition. I am far  
from

from admitting those erroneous proportions which exact from the good lands twice as much as from the bad. It has been for a long time said, that the good has no greater enemy than the better; and such a regulation as the above would open the door to every description of abuses, and expose France to an arbitrary law.

My idea is that the great, urged by the noble desire of contributing, ought to forget their titles, their privileges, and their exemptions, shunning every expedient which can prevent their paying less than the poorest peasant. But are all the lands of a vast empire equally calculated for productions of every description? Does not every one know that our lands are for the greater part more or less good or more or less bad, according to the genius or industry of him who gives them their value, whatever it may be? This field, which has hitherto produced bad wheat only, will be excellent for the vine, and *vice versa*; while such a one will yield more in wood, in trefoil, in sainfoin, &c. &c. Certain lands are very good in years of drought, and others in rainy years. This land which has yielded nothing for want of manure, will turn out of the best quality in the hands of a labourer who shall take care to manure it,  
and

and bestow on it other attentions. I think I have said enough to demonstrate that an estimation of lands, such as I have hinted at, is a chimera which can only occasion much expence, difficulty, and clamour, and all for a pure loss. The culture, the manure, the seasons, the highways, commerce, the species of productions in the growth of which the land is employed, &c. &c. changing its value incessantly, it is clear that no determinate value can be assigned to it with any degree of equity. We must therefore resort to the tax in kind, and collect it in the same way that the ecclesiastical tythes are raised. In the latter case no attention is paid to whether the land is good or bad, and whether the labourer has bestowed more time or seeds in the cultivation of this land than of that; and still we do not see that this omission excites any clamour, or meets with the smallest difficulty.

As to the objections drawn from the expences of culture, seed-crops, &c. to prove that more attention ought to be paid to good than to bad lands, these objections are remarkable on this account, that they are the very reverse of what is now practised, with respect to the poor who are made to pay, while the rich accumulate wealth under shelter of their privileges,

lèges, exemptions, titles of nobility, &c. &c. Nothing is so easy as to prove that they belong to the class of those reasonings, or rather mental delusions, which are to be found in each page of the books of the economists.

For example, I suppose myself in possession of a farm of thirty *arpens* of wheat, six of which *arpens* are of the best quality, six of an inferior quality, six middling, six below mediocrity, and six of a bad quality.

The first six produce me each of them two hundred sheafs: at a tithe rate each of them will therefore pay of these sheafs 20 - 120

6 at 150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	90
6 at 100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60
6 at 75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
6 at 50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30

It is easy to see that the good *arpent* pays more than that of an inferior quality, and infinitely more than that of a bad quality.

The expense of culture, seed-crops, &c. ought to go for nothing, for this reason, that the land itself pays all the costs. When I hire two *arpens* of ground belonging to M. B——, he lets me one of these at 60 livres and the other at 10: here is a difference of 50 livres in the rent. These 50 livres of abatement on the bad land are to indemnify me for my expenses and

and the smallness of my crops. Thus has M. B—— paid for the latter *arpent* 200 livres only, while the other has cost him 1200 livres, which to him comes to the same thing. If, by my affiduities, this bad *arpent* yields me as much as the good one, will not my case be a very sad one? And shall I not have good reason to exclaim against the injustice done me, and to say: this *arpent* paid but five sheafs, when it produced fifty only, and now that I have succeeded in making it produce two hundred, I pay twenty of them? Would not this man whom you pity have an hundred and thirty-five sheafs more for himself, sufficient to recompense him amply for his pains and attentions?

Have you much? you shall give much. Have you little? you shall pay little. If I pay much, it is because I gather much, and am rich; and on the contrary, if I have little, I pay little. By such a regulation the fortune of our monarchs would for the first time be wedded to that of their subjects, whom it would become their best duty to enrich and protect from the voracity of financiers.

I am fully persuaded that every other impost besides that of a tax on the soil is a source of errors: but I lament at the same time that such

a law seems calculated for a pure and virgin state alone. The regeneration of imposts in France hinges on another regeneration\*; and the code of prosperity can only be engraven on tablets from which there is nothing to efface.

With respect to the impost on the consumption, it is in every point of view bad, because it is at once cruel and unjust. To the end that it might be equitable, men should all of them have an income proportioned to their wants, to the end that the tax should not be sensibly felt unless by those who should consume more than they ought. *Peter* would have enough to satisfy the demand upon him; and *Paul*, in paying more, would not have to complain, since it was in his power to pay less. But is not the taxing of *the first necessities of life*, condemning the multitude to the hard lot of misery? The rich smile at it: they do not dread such an impost, because they never find any difficulty in procuring what is necessary. If they retrench, it is at the expense of the artizan alone, who

\* This chapter was penned by me in 1786, to which period many others must be referred. I am very indifferent about the charge of aristocracy, having frequently said that I should prefer the *despot of Morocco* to those vile little aristocratical senates with which Switzerland abounds, notwithstanding that country has the character of being free!

on that account gaining less, becomes oppressed by want, and sells his articles at a lower price, to be enabled to prolong his life and provide for the present moment. The tax on consumption is evidently a burthen on the poor; and there is nothing more cruel and more barbarous than to say to him who is famishing, *Begin by paying me, and you may afterwards take a small supply of nourishment; if you are not able to do so, die.*

The gains of workmen are besides not the same, there being a very great disproportion between the wages of a day labourer, and those of an artizan or of an artist. Their wants are notwithstanding the same; and among these there are sacred ones, which nature has ordered, and which must be respected. Lay a tax of 200 livres on a load of wood: a fourth part of the inhabitants of Paris will still warm themselves; but the rest will die of cold. Moreover, as men gain more in proportion to their inutility, and as what they produce is an object of luxury, if the consumption of articles were to be too highly rated, all the useful and necessary arts would no longer be able to supply the wants of those who cultivate them: the country would be deserted; misery would seek a refuge in the cities under the designation of *lackeys, milliners, and sempstresses*; and the streets  
 6 would

would be filled with wretches, vagabondizing round the palaces of sloth, luxury, and libertinism! Then would misfortune be the lot of the many, at the same time that pity would fly, because incapable of affording any effectual relief. Probity would be no more than an empty name; and while necessity would overturn every thing, there would be no barrier to stay its merciless course.

In 1654 a tax was laid on baptisms and burials.

In 1695 the capitation tax was fallen on.

In 1721 came the tax on all the hereditary titles to property. And

In 1751 the tax named *industry* was brought forward.

These four imposts are scandalous, because they despotically tax the existence, life, and death of those whom poverty has already made wretched; and punish the labour of assiduous citizens who are desirous to make themselves useful.

The capitation tax ought to have ceased at the peace of Riswick, that is to say, a year after it was laid on; but it still exists [in 1786], 97 years after its creation.

A woman engaged in a laborious occupation, or in trade, who becomes a widow with four children,



children, pays her own personal capitation tax and that of her helpless infants. They are punished for having lost that which gave them bread. To tax misfortune and wretchedness! without doubt this was the dernier resource of cupidity, for such an impost was assuredly fallen on in the first instance for the rich alone. But was it necessary to make it bear on indigence?

The control over all the heirs of families is not less tyrannical, since it is demonstrated that in the course of the succession from grandfather to grandson, a full third of that succession was already swallowed up by the successive rights which prey upon inheritances.

The tax on industry carries with it the air of ennobling the idle, useless man, without talents, and without profession. It is a second personal capitation tax levelled exclusively at the laborious man.

If to these imposts we add the aids and gabelles, disadvantageous to society through the inequality of their rate and servitude, we must acknowledge that the taxation, already so terrible in itself, is rendered still more so in France by the arbitrary will which directs the partition.

To bring about the necessary reforms, a profound inquiry must be made into what is due to the state, and every vile, odious, and tyrannical project

process must be banished, to render the impost conformable to physical nature, by requiring of the earth and what it bears the necessary tribute.

By *what it bears* is to be understood, not only its fruits and productions of every description, but also the houses, mills, taverns, &c.

I shall without doubt be told that a tithe on the revenues of the land, an unique tax, would not suffice at a time when the state is so burthened as it now is. This is evident; but before I reply, let me in the first place ask how much a tithe on the productions of the kingdom, and a proportioned impost on the houses of the cities, towns, &c. would produce? Nothing on earth can be easier than this operation, which would cost the state nothing; and in less than six weeks the necessary information might be come at, by taking the commencement of May or the end of April, when the earth is rich in productions.

But I already hear the modern doctors exclaim that this is impracticable. To prove their skill in arithmetic, they will say that the granaries to hold all these tithes would cost more than 33 millions of livres—a monstrous burthen to the state. But I maintain that, in imitation of what is daily practised in the provinces, it would not

be necessary to construct a single barn: and thus against all their economical figures I place a zero which would certainly cost the kingdom nothing.

When it shall be known how many hundreds of millions such a process shall have produced, and which will besides ascertain all the descriptions of the resources and riches of the kingdom, it will no longer be difficult to come at the number of millions which will be still required to make the receipts agree with the expenditure. But as it is not merely sufficient to pay the current expenses, and seeing that a state so rich and powerful as France ought not to be in the situation of a workman who lives from day to day, and whom the smallest accident plunges in difficulties, the sovereign should be enabled to liquidate the debts, to extinguish those rent-charges with which France is so heavily oppressed, and to maintain the wars which happen at the moment when they are least thought of. Men of intelligence and information, who know the chapter of events and the position of the kingdom, will undoubtedly think with me that an hundred millions more than the annual expense will not be allowing too much.

It will therefore only remain to class all the inhabitants of the kingdom, beginning with the church

Church and the nobleſſe, for with reſpect to the *tiers-état* no difficulty can ſurely ariſe from that quarter. Vanity will pay, induſtry will pay, and ſloth itſelf will not be exempted. The dukes, the marquiſſes, the counts, the ſief lords, and the chevaliers, will be ranged each in his claſs, as will the notaries, advocates, and proctors, in theirs, &c. The claſſes once formed, and the numbers in each claſs preciſely aſcertained, it will be very eaſy ſo to lay on the general impoſt as to procure the neceſſary ſums; and by this expedient France will be in a ſituation worthy of herſelf and ſupported by the prop of her own reſources. Then will the rich have a juſt claim to the title of the columns of the ſtate; they who are of all others the moſt intereſted to maintain and defend a country in which they find themſelves ſo much at eaſe, and where they enjoy ſo many brilliant advantages. Loaded with ſtate benefits and recompenſes, does it become them to adduce their old titles in proof that they owe nothing to the ſtate? What would it beſides coſt them? the ſurrender of the enjoyment of a party of *vingt-un* for one day in the year, which aſſuredly cannot be conſidered as a very great grievance.

But again, with all their exemptions, titles, and privileges, is it not in truth they who pay?

The poor, who possess nothing, can certainly surrender nothing to the royal treasury : they can give their industry alone ; and if it is not the rich, who is it that pays ? All the difference that I can find, is that the poor live badly, and the rich at a great cost. In spite of all the prerogatives of the latter, they are on every side environed with taxation. Their hats pay, their coats pay, their linen pays, their stockings, and their head : their horses pay for their corn, their hay, and their straw ; their kitchen utensils, their spit, their fire, and their wine, every thing, in short, pays : and who does not see, that, loftily as they carry themselves, they are every way besieged ? By the mode I have suggested they will pay each in his class, and they will assuredly be great gainers. They will no longer be searched at the barriers ; while the armies of commissaries and financiers who devour France will be more usefully employed, and, instead of laying the basis for the ruin of their country, will become its best riches. The treasures of the state will cease to be altogether buried in the coffers of finance ; and the frontiers no longer infested by smugglers. The ranks being perfectly distinct and well marked, the nobility will no longer see themselves confounded with the swarm of newly created gentry

try who dishonour them. The impost will no longer attach itself to the commodity; and a multitude of individuals now engaged in plunder, again restored to themselves, will apply to commerce and industrious employments, which will more than ever flourish among us. France will become the rival of England, and will even possess a far greater sum of happiness, since with a much greater extent of territory and population, she has certainly within herself many more resources.

The tax on consumption necessarily establishes the odious administration of farms and the army of commissaries at the barriers: it seems to view the citizens in the light of so many swindlers, and degrades the nation that it oppresses, as well as him who is the source of the oppression. Now, can there be a calamity greater than the degradation of the human species? Jews and Lombards were formerly the instruments of the public miseries of France.

The tax on consumption is a long sharp-edged weapon, which plunges itself into the body of the poor, while it just scratches the skin of the rich, whom it cannot effectually reach, and who station themselves behind the wretched as a bulwark of defence.

. Men have equal wants to satisfy. Lay a very heavy duty on wine, and water will be-

come the sole drink of the poor : it is true that the rich will drink less of the former liquor, but they will not dispense with its use. Who in this case will be the sufferers ? the poor in the first instance, and the vine-planters, who will sell less wine than before. Under whatever point of view we regard it, the tax on consumption is always an evil ; and, besides, as each production pays by rent, tallage, and capitation, it is extremely unjust to make it pay also for the grant of the right of consumption.

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#### OF THE MULTIPLICATION OF THE HUMAN SPECIES.

THE multiplication of the human species is to be dreaded according to the circumstances which attend it.

*There are countries, says Montesquieu, where a man is worth nothing ; there are others where he is worth less than nothing.* This must be understood of countries poorly civilized, where food is wanting to man.

And even in civilized countries, when the resources are disproportioned to the inhabitants, and consequently many of them are unemployed

or useless to the state, men are obliged to migrate into other regions, especially if, living wholly by the chase or on the milk of their flocks, they require a vast extent of ground to support them.

These emigrations are still seen in our own days ; men continually resort to countries where the arts and sciences afford them the means of subsistence.

Seldom a year passes but Switzerland sends abroad several thousand men. A very great number also leave Germany.

The American colonies will become valuable to the human race, because they alone are capable of opening immense retreats to the surplus population of Europe.

Is there then a degree of multiplication destructive to states ? If life be the great end of the creation, subsistence is indispensably necessary. But it appears that nature has left to polity the charge of completing this great work ; the arts and the laws hinder men from devouring each other.

War has unquestionably its horrors, but the spectacle it presents is far from being so terrible as that of famine : in this consists absolute disorder, a ruin which scandalizes, the last term of wretchedness, and the disgrace of humanity.



The teeth of man fixing upon the flesh of his fellow creature ! This image makes us recoil with horror more than all the thundering canons which spread carnage from a distance.

To man are subjected the air, the earth, and the sea, that from these he may draw his subsistence ; and the multiplication of the human species will not affright the contemplator, when man shall call to his aid the means which secure and increase subsistances.

How immense is the quantity of living matter diffused over the whole face of the earth !

I shall here lay aside metaphysical ideas : when we treat of nature, it is the effect alone that can inform us of the true state of things. All devour and all are devoured ; animal life is a fire which consumes but does not extinguish ; the whole earth is for the convenience of the human race, which in reality will never be too numerous when it shall be enabled to select its food by an assiduous toil and an enlightened industry.

Who would have believed that the swarm of men who sought a refuge in Holland in the time of the duke of Alva, could have subsisted there ? It was sufficient for these people to possess a knowledge of the arts and the sciences, and to have found a spot where they could apply themselves

themselves in safety to procure by their industry that subsistence which their marshes could not afford.

The carnivorous beasts, whom nature has subjected to the power of man, are destined in their turn to serve as a barrier to the multiplication of the granivorous tribes: and thus are all creatures dependant on those general laws which nature has established for the production and preservation of that immense quantity of living matter which circulates in the world.

Some states have dreaded the propagation of the human species, and have enacted laws to restrain its multiplication. But if certain nations not yet emerged from barbarity made no regulations to check the too great exuberance of children, it may in general be asserted that civilized societies ought still less to dread this superabundance; since, besides the resources which surround them, they are subject to coercive causes; so that, in every situation, there is always some one of these causes which acts, and favours this retrenchment, equally necessary in animal and in vegetable life.

Nature throughout employs a multitude of powers which, in all the species of beings, oppose the production of too great a number of individuals: she has exposed men to war, to pestilence,

pestilence, to disease, to melancholy; she has divided the human race into different bodies, which encounter each other often without a cause, and which lose invariably some part of their mass in this reciprocal action and collision.

If Aristotle advises to procure the wife an abortion before the foetus is quick, when the father has children beyond the number prescribed by the law; if, in China and Tonquin, the parents are permitted to sell or expose their children; if, in the isle of Formosa, religion prohibits the women from bearing children until the age of thirty-five years: it has been because these people and these legislators considered nothing so terrible as the spectacle of famine. But a larger sum of industry, a more attentive husbandry, will shew that famines are not inevitable ills, and that polity should leave the human race to general laws; these will confine the multiplication of the species within due bounds, and the equipoise will be maintained by the wonderful œconomy of nature, for its laws are all mutually connected.

If there are still countries in Europe which are insufficient to the multiplication of the human species, they suffer not from this penury, because their surplus inhabitants pass continually into the neighbouring countries, where the arts  
dependant

dependant on cultivation and those resulting from them, afford them the means of subsistence. We no longer behold these inundations and these emigrations marked with continual ravages and massacres: the ancient inhabitants of Europe, warriors and robbers by inclination, became such in a manner through necessity.

The poets imagined gods who had arms, legs, and in a word a body like that of man; but who had not blood like men, and required not food like them. Others came afterwards and made human flesh and blood invulnerable, invisible, and immortal. They next described those happy times when men lived solely on acorns, and when the tygers, the lions, and the bears, were so courteous as to lick the feet of those who played on the lyre.

I esteem these fables as much as those which teach that the lives of animals should be revered and exempted from all destruction. It is with this law of nature which ordains the destruction of one part of animal life for the good of the other as with all the laws which Providence has established for maintaining order in the universe: this law does not consult partial benefit, and yet it is wise and equitable, even with regard to those beings whose felicity it seems

seems to oppose. It must happen that general laws, laws which have for their object the preservation of the universe, and consequently that of an innumerable multitude of beings, will from time to time clash with some particular good; and as the preservation of the whole ought to be preferred to that of a part, the general laws of nature ought for that reason alone to be fixed and immovable: a truth which is not comprehended, because men usually do not comprehend what is beyond the sphere of their particular wants, and because each requires for himself the well-being of the part, considered independantly of the whole.

But without that physical law which directs the living substance to feed on animals, without such an appointment of nature, the equilibrium would be broken, and life would extinguish of itself. It would have required a world proportionally vast to support the vital flame. The case would have been such as if the earth were stocked with gigantic tribes, as if individuals were admitted into the animal system which the seas could not swallow and which the mountains could not crush: the mass of the world would then have been subject to them; but what is mortal and corruptible cannot at the same

same time be immortal and incorruptible. All the inhabitants of this world, formed of dust, must necessarily be re-converted into dust.

Animal life most necessarily supposes new generations; and we observe nature follow up one generation by another, and multiply them sixfold, tenfold, an hundredfold, and sometimes more, that, when the different species shall have suffered considerable losses by the catastrophes which happen in this world, they may quickly repair themselves, and leave in life no vacuum whatever.

No vacuum in life, what an expression! Be prepared then to die, proud man; thou who believest thyself the centre of all, while thou oughtest to obey the laws general and physical.

Nature seems cruel in thus establishing the law of multiplication. We blame the short space of life; but the natural fragility of animal life calls for the short duration of its existence. This rock stood in past ages, but it sees not, it feels not, it is one of the members of nature.

I shall carefully avoid attempting to explain the origin of physical evil in the world: all the philosophers have bewildered themselves on this theme. They have endeavoured to reconcile  
certain

certain phænomena in nature with the idea of infinite wisdom and goodness ; but in such abstruse discussions, as in the calculations of Algebra, the mistaking of the denomination of a single term is enough to make the conclusion for ever false, however just the reasoning may otherwise be.

What reasoning canst thou frame : *worm, be silent!* Thou hast called evil what was not evil.

But while the law of propagation maintains animal life in all its plenitude, it multiplies pleasures. Can we otherwise term those sweet affections, and those still sweeter returns of tenderness, which, in the train of ardent desires, complete felicity ? These amiable illusions form the transports of life ; for nature, that powerful spring, while she subjects us to some afflictions, has created the bonds of love which unite all individuals : hence the reciprocal commerce of aid, of consolation, and of good offices. In the law which ordains the multiplication of individuals in each species nature has placed the most exquisite pleasure, that which comes nearest to supreme felicity ; for it obliterates sorrow, and is the sovereign mover of human actions. What indeed are they not capable of performing, whom love inspires ? It gives strength to the weak, boldness to the timid, activity to the indolent ;

indolent ; it softens the most savage manners, it stamps animation on the calmest tempers ; and, lastly, it blends itself with all the sentiments of the soul, and communicates a certain air of nobleness and grandeur. If love be not the cause of the fairest virtues, at least it disposes to them. We may observe that the period of life when men are accessible to the emotions of benevolence, of generosity, and of compassion, is that in which this passion reigns imperiously over the mind. The moment this fire begins to be quenched, the heart of man contracts, and its utmost fallies surpass not certain private virtues.

Thus is there a fixed end to which all nature tends ; this consists in the production and conservation of life, and, by the universal consent of animated beings, life is a blessing.

Yes, a blessing ! it is fondly cherished by all. Men love life, and are attached to it ; it is a sort of gratitude paid to him who has bestowed on them their existence. If there are melancholy spirits who consider it as a burden, they labour under disease ; and their judgment ought not to overbalance that of the human race. The poorest of individuals has the pleasures of sentiment : as lover, husband, father, the measure of his happiness always somewhat exceeds that of his misery.

If,



If, by eternal and immutable laws, every thing is converted into living substance; if all secondary causes, all events, and all beings, are subservient to the reproduction and preservation of life; if the time of the existence of these individuals is confined within certain limits, it is in order that the multiplication may not be excessive in the different species, which would destroy the scene of the universe.

We may boldly pronounce that the contradictions which appear in the plan of Providence are only apparent; that she could not employ more effectual means towards the full accomplishment of her ends; and that the contemplation alone of her works must raise us to admiration and confidence.

God has given us understanding to know, reason to distinguish, and a heart to love truth; we ought then to admire his works, to respect the general whole, and to humble ourselves before what we do not comprehend. Of what avail would be our mental obstinacy? Only to conceal still more the great designs of Providence, and to deprive us of hope.

But nature has lessened in some degree the empire bestowed on man over other animals. The thousandth part of these is not consumed as food: they have much sagacity in discover-

ing the snares laid for them, and great address in avoiding them ; they have a multitude of diversified retreats over the surface of the earth ; and the woods, forests, mountains, and inaccessible rocks, shelter by far the greater number from the hunger of man. The species which are subservient to the wants of others are besides extremely prolific.

But nothing can release us from the pity which we owe to animals. They ought to share the happy emotions that flow from our beneficent dispositions ; and when the desire of our own preservation obliges us to exert our rights over them, attentive to their sufferings and their groans, we ought to shorten their pains, and not to stifle that sentiment of grief which swells in our breast when we perpetrate those acts of necessity connected with the totality of nature, and which compassion ought at least to render prompt and as little cruel as possible.

#### POLITICAL ENTHUSIASM.

ENTHUSIASM in matters of religion has had its day, and the public mind is now led by the word *liberty* : but can political enthusiasm

be attended by effects equally fatal with those that have sprung from religious enthusiasm? Authority is viewed under the aspect alone of the restraints it prescribes, and in governments we still obstinately refuse to see the power which strengthens individual liberty. We perceive the necessity of a power which may restrain audacity and repress injustice, and we are at the same time desirous to enjoy liberty in the fullest extent of which it is susceptible, that is to say, in the state in which it degenerates into licentiousness: this is a manifest contradiction. Wherever the powers are accumulated, political danger exists: let them be placed in the hands of the people, it is all over with liberty; and place them in the hands of a government, tyranny ensues. In an enlightened state, however, the rare union of extreme authority and extreme mildness may be found; but nothing good can be expected from absolute authority in the hands of the people. In such a case fanaticism has too great a scope, and each individual, enthusiastically jealous of his power, pushes it to excess. Every democracy plunges itself into the most imprudent enterprises: each individual acts as a sovereign, because all the citizens are so when legally united; but they recollect it too well when separated. It is on this account that  
every

every sensible man will shun a democratical, or what is still worse, an aristo-democratic government.

The constitution of democracies is subject to so many causes of agitation, that their tranquillity is a kind of constant miracle. Their delicate organization tends to disconnect the chain that should link together all the parts, which naturally seek a separation. How can good order and harmony spring up where there is an eternal tendency to discord? and how, where there is so much dissension, can concord prevail?

The constitution of states engenders in the brain of man chimerical ideas: the subject of a monarch fancies himself a slave, while a republican believes himself to be a monarch, for want of having observed society in its great and immutable relations.

The people feel themselves not a little flattered by those who recommend to them to push liberty to its highest degree; but were they to proceed from enterprise to enterprise, they would annihilate this liberty of theirs, and the state would be dissolved. If the spirit of moderation could reside in a nation, that is to say, if it knew how to estimate in the constitution the law which bounds its power, it would not be

dangerous to live under its empire : but in its blind passion for liberty, it breaks through the boundary which separates the latter from licentiousness, and fancies it exercises its legitimate rights alone, while it vexes the other bodies of the state.

A truth which no one will contest is that the national authority never ceases : every description of power emanates from the nation ; but at the same time it is next to an impossibility that a very numerous nation should exercise in a body this supreme power.

Thus is a patient and vigorous struggle, when the government ceases to be tolerable, more consistent at the early onset than the bursting out into a civil war. Authority never becomes arbitrary when the nation attends carefully to the suppression of certain abuses ; and an unrestrained power can never be suddenly established. It is the long slumber of the people which emboldens tyranny ; but if the nation is watchful in the recollection of its prerogatives, and in reclaiming them under a variety of circumstances, the depositaries of the public authority will never exceed the limits prescribed to them by the laws.

Despotism is so monstrous that it even sacrifices the man by whom it is exercised : he will  
never

never dare of himself to make any violent attacks, unless he sees men formed for servitude, and disposed to pardon his attempts.

If all governments have the same aim, namely, the maintenance of the laws which are to restrain the passions of the citizens, there must be in every government, as a necessary consequence, a *primum mobile*, that is to say, a power which shall ascertain the necessary subordination. The citizens of no state whatever have reserved to themselves the right of disobedience: from one end of the earth to the other, every nation has perceived how necessary it is that private passions should be subjected to the laws; and this aim excites in the mind the idea of an exact subordination, and consequently of a supreme and incontestible power in those who govern.

The word *liberty* cannot be other than relative, seeing that it would have no significant import if it were to be applied to all the private acts of individuals. The freest nations have the most despotical laws; and in a republic there is at least as much restraint as in a monarchical government. Provided each part be not disunited from its whole, and does not find, or think that it finds, its particular advantage in the weakness or ruin of the other parts, the government, by whatever name it may be called,

will unite all the qualities which are essential to it.

Governments therefore differ from each other merely by the various combinations of which the same thing is susceptible: they diverge from or approximate more or less nearer to the degree of perfection which policy requires, according to the relations that subsist between the part which governs and that which is governed. A barbarous government is corrected by the progress of knowledge, and the improvement of morals: by degrees the confusion of laws, and that anarchical equality which invariably terminates in the oppression of the weak, disappear.

The passions are the soul and strength of society, but they must be governed by a dexterous policy, since they would otherwise tend to the destruction of the society itself. The social rights become equivocal, and the laws inefficacious, if knowledge does not establish the true subordination, that is to say, the one which enjoins obedience in the subjects, and the nicest vigilance in those who govern. It is thus that circulating knowledge and science establish as much disparity in states, as education places between the different orders of citizens of the same kingdom.

## THE GREEKS.

THE Greeks entertained a nice sense of honour ; and this delicate idea, to which they sacrificed for a long time, was national among them, while the Tyrians and Carthaginians applied themselves to the cultivation of the principle of private interest.

The Phenicians were the first who colonized Greece : at the time of their arrival they were more enlightened than the aborigines of the country.

The mythology of the Greeks was the chronicle of their heroes. This theological system, connected with the national interest, contributed rather to elevate than to depress the courage of individuals. The secrets of civil polity, as well as those of the polity of war, were entrusted to the flowery imagination of the poets, by whose verses each citizen was inspired with an heroic enthusiasm, inasmuch that the plan of defensive state polity may be said to have been formed and executed by the genius of literary men.

The Greeks were better acquainted than any other nation with the value of the cultivation of the fine arts, and with the science of rendering them subservient to the public weal. Policy,



obscure and enigmatical among their neighbours, was with them both luminous and practical.

Their miscellaneous knowledge was productive of a variety of characteristics, which, when blended, served to sharpen the understanding and to correct the morals.

If the Greeks, notwithstanding the very limited state of their national power, daringly undertook to give laws to other nations, their arrogance is justified by the zeal they manifested in disseminating knowledge, and in serving essentially the cause of humanity.

Inferior in population and riches to the oriental nations, they established public and national schools of honour and the art of war. Gymnastic exercises were in high esteem among them; and in those warlike spectacles to which the youths from all the cities repaired, they were placed, by the glory of which they entertained so high an idea, above the other nations that were so superior to them in force.

Thus did the sentiment of honour produce an infinite number of great effects among the Greeks, who were the more fertile in expedients, in proportion as they had better supported the dignity of citizens, and combated in defence of the true interests of humanity.

The idea of the public weal, like a ray of light, illumined on all occasions the liberties and advantages of the people: the civil virtues might be said to approximate moral perfection, because each Grecian, stimulated by honour, was desirous to be loved and applauded, and on that account prided himself in being really good, honest, and magnanimous. Greece was a new free world which had for its basis the principle of the public weal; and it was therefore not surprising, that while the sight was gladdened by a multitude of agreeable images, the beauties of civilization and those of nature should have belonged to the Greeks, who tasted in their fullest extent the sweets of a new beneficence.

The city of Athens, altogether different from Sparta, was founded on the intuitive idea of liberty. Its constitution was formed on the spirit of industry; and in this city all those who could labour with the head or the hands were received with open arms: the result was that commerce brought in its train the arts and sciences, which flourished in a pre-eminent degree, while the mind must have received the highest polish of which it is susceptible.

To the preservation of their national character, no people were ever more attentive than the Greeks. The enthusiasm of liberty, diffused in

the soul of each citizen, did not diminish that nice discriminating feeling which should characterize the magistrate: just in their estimation of truly illustrious deeds, the Greeks accustomed themselves to appreciate merit nicely, to distinguish the faults of genius and the successes of chance.

This spirit of civil equality maintained the constitution of Athens, a constitution by which the people, intelligent and enlightened, were permitted to be in a constant state of agitation. They were inquisitive, unquiet, and argumentative; and this mental ferment tended to prolong the epoch of liberty, the principles of which were inculcated, in a flowery and sonorous language, by the orators, poets, and individuals of all ranks. The theatre, the harangues from the tribunal, every thing, in short, favoured the only democracy which, throughout the whole world, was truly enlightened: the fine arts employed, for the last time, the delicacy of the pencil, and the elegance of the chisel under the direction of a government in which the simple citizen was equal to the chief magistrate.

In the history of the world Athens forms an exception; and the Athenians paid dearly for this rare authority, since they were perpetually  
 ■ mistrustful

mistrustful and suspicious, as if such a democracy had been a preternatural effort, and an unique moment unknown to any other nation.

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## EGYPT.

THE Egyptians have ever formed a distinct people in the history of nations. Egypt is the richest of all countries in natural curiosities. The grandeur and singularity of the soil, and its amazing fertility, filled the minds of those who dwelt on the banks of the Nile with strong and gigantic ideas. Their imagination rose to a pitch of sublimity, and delighted only in powerful and extraordinary impressions. Their religion was emblematical, and their edifices awfully majestic. Administration, constantly taking a higher flight, reared temples and pyramids: and proceeding from wonder to wonder, framed the structures of the Egyptians in a massy style, as it had wrapped their religious notions in venerable and mysterious shades.

The more the mind is prone to admiration, the more it cherishes confused ideas, and the more it becomes timid, diffident, and superstitious. The Egyptians, extreme in every thing,  
soon

soon assimilated their ideas, even the grandeur of that tyranny which their masters exercised over them. The pomp of their monarchs served to feed national vanity; but it was because the Egyptian monarchs, flattering the character of the people by exciting strong sensations, had constructed those immense works which regulated and directed the inundations of the Nile. The kings of Egypt acted in the fine arts as the priests had done in religion: the multitude obeyed none but supernatural impressions; they were amazed rather than instructed. Placed on a theatre of natural and artificial wonders, every thing that came in their way was to them an object of veneration. Divinities multiplied before their eyes; and as every thing was become an object of public adoration, innumerable gigantic images and unintelligible sounds served to add strength to the sentiment of terror. They prostrated themselves alike before the throne and the altar. Surrounded with prodigies, the Egyptian had all the weakness of a child of morbid sensibility, whose mind is credulous, and whose imagination is haunted with fear.

Thus people, caught with whatever produces vivid and forcible sensations, are unfit for cool reflection on their real political interests.

Monastic

Monastic life took its rise in Egypt, and the rage of dogmatizing passed from that country into all the regions of the East and of the West. The Copts still retain the timid and superstitious character of their ancestors. They have disfigured the christian religion in the same manner as the Egyptian priests had accumulated hieroglyphics, those mysterious symbols which the people never comprehended, and of which the true sense has eluded every research. The influence of climate has always been more felt in Egypt than in other countries, because the sands of Africa and the rocks of Arabia form the most striking contrast with that happy region, where the soil yields an hundred fold.

The Egyptians passed through all the degrees of curiosity, from the simplest to the most complicated. This was a singular national character; but in the earlier ages curiosity was unquestionably a livelier passion than at present.

In this way, the Egyptian was led by admiration to regard the assemblage of the objects around him as a system of wonders and prodigies.

Pleasurable sensations left him undetermined in the choice of a divinity. It was thus that he adopted religious customs, which with him were sentiments equally solemn and profound.

Hence

Hence those vigorous and extraordinary ideas which characterize that people:—and it may be observed that when religious sentiments are once established in a nation, they maintain an ascendancy over all others of a public nature.

We have lost the traces of those ancient governments where despotism reigned with unlimited sway. At Rome and Cathage, at Athens and at Sparta, religion was entirely subordinate to the state. The oracles were consulted merely from curiosity, from policy, or from despair. But we find religious despots established in the remotest antiquity, particularly among the Tartars, the Peruvians, the Jews, and the Japanese; and upon the ruins of the Jewish, the Christian, and the Arabian religions, there has arisen among the Mahometans a despotism more imperious still.

What was the social origin of religious states? I know that there were every where men of speculation in physics and in morals, theologians of all countries, who formed an abstract and systematic idea of the government of the universe. But these notions, being out of the reach of the people, could not powerfully influence either the political order or the manners of a nation.

It is necessary, therefore, to go back to some great calamity which overwhelmed men's minds with terror, or to some imminent danger from which a nation supposed all human means incapable of delivering it. Such was the case of the Jews, who could not escape from the servitude of Pharaoh, unless encouraged by the idea that they should receive miraculous aid from heaven. In this situation, a legislator gave them the wisest and sublimest idea of the Supreme Being, by inspiring them with a probable hope of safety and deliverance: but having to govern a people degraded by a long course of slavery, he was obliged to call in all the rigour of religious legislation.

The modes of constraint which he employed were derived from the fundamental ideas and sentiments of the Jewish nation. That people considered the land of Canaan as its inheritance. This legislator promised to a poor, wandering, and fugitive nation the possession of a country flowing with milk and honey: a country which, defended by mountains and deserts, was well suited to a people hated and despised by all the Arabian tribes.

Their legislator also strengthened the religious principle of the Jews, by rendering them dependant



dependant on the jurisdiction of God. *Jehovah* was the true and only sovereign of the country, and the office of his prime minister was filled by the sovereign Pontiff.

*Jehovah* exercised, therefore, the rights of sovereignty; and the police of the Jews being entirely religious, every crime by which the Divinity was attacked was necessarily punished with death. Every act of idolatry was treason against the Majesty of heaven. The legislator gave an infinite variety to religious customs, and extended them as much as possible, that a true Israelite might have his mind perpetually overawed by the presence of *Jehovah*. After having fixed the religious polity upon the firmest foundations, he found means to guard the land of Canaan against too great an inequality of conditions. He restrained avarice by the unalienable partition of lands, which like those of the Spartans, were handed down to all the descendants of the head of a family; and in default of these, they were transferred by marriage into the family of him who espoused an heiress, and who was always the nearest of kin.

An Israelite could mortgage his person and property; but, at the end of seven years, he recovered the possession of his personal liberty; and,

and, after a term of forty-nine years, he might claim the restoration of the estate of his forefathers.

If we coolly weigh the equity and wisdom of this institution we shall perceive it to be profound, and derived from the very nature of mankind.

With regard to divorce, he accommodated himself to the genius of the age and the interest of the nation, which required that population should in no way be impeded.

In a country which belonged to God, no person disputed with the sovereign pontiff the exercise of the most absolute sway; nor did any one murmur at the rigour of the penal laws. The judges were the lieutenants of the God of Israel in time of war, and the judges of civil causes in time of peace. But soon the Jewish people, harassed by the incursions of the Canaanites and Arabians, desired to have a military governor under the name of *king*. The nation therefore appointed a commander in chief, and the religious government changed, because the military authority served to abolish that of religion.

The Arabians had in reality a religious principle similar to that of the Jews. Mahomet commanded the Arabians to wage war against

all who maintained a different doctrine from that of the Koran. The Arabian lawgiver proclaimed to all nations his divine mission. He went to heaven for the fire with which he burnt all the temples that were not dedicated to the Mussulman faith. If, in our days, we are astonished at the temerity of a man who forms his monarchy according to that of God, and maintains it to have the same extent, we may observe, that it was this astonishment itself which in a former age subdued the spirit and the will.

The Sophis founded a religious monarchy in Persia upon the single idea of schism, or religious party. As the origin of their authority was religious, no person durst question the lawfulness of the use which they made of it.

But we see that the legislator of the Jews as well as of the Ottomans, inspired the people with moral, religious, and civil ideas, and composed books which were received as sacred: obedience has ever been the tribute of salutary ideas presented to mankind. Men are submissive only when they perceive universal reason addressing them for their own good. It is the sentiment of admiration rather than the sword of the conqueror that has reduced them to obedience. Lawgivers have ever employed religious sentiments to gain the most powerful ascendancy

ascendancy over the national mind; because these sentiments are the dearest to man; and because he is eager to feel and to know.

Religion was, among all nations, the first species of civilization.

#### OF THE ARABS.

THE Arabs are the true Tartars of the south; but the natural richness of their peninsula kept them at home, nor were they ever tempted to quit their mode of life. They continued divided into tribes, and wandering with their flocks.

The revolution of the prophet of Arabia had its centre in Mecca, from whence it spread over the whole peninsula. We presume that Mahomet would not have heated the imagination of the Tartars as he did that of the Arabs: the latter took fire for religious principles, because their manners and customs approached nearer to social life. They grew fanatical, and declined from their past grandeur, the abject wrecks of a nation that was once most renowned.

Yet the Arabs are still in our own days a free people, merely because they have not neglected their national manners. That nation, formerly

the master of Asia, seeks at present its safety in deserts and on the summits of mountains. But what is worthy of reflection, this people, unquestionably the most ancient and most illustrious on the face of the globe, has sunk to such a pitch of meanness as to supply the wants occasioned by its slothfulness, by plundering passengers. We may compare the glory of the Arabian nation to an old castle, once the residence of kings, now become the retreat of robbers and the haunt of wild beasts.

The possession of the temple of Mecca, the object of all the devotion of the Musulmans, constitutes its whole wealth. But the Arabs, somewhat like the *modern Italians*, know how to estimate the idol of which they have a nearer view. They are not over scrupulous in the article of religion, either because religious principles are never so fervent in free as in polished nations, or because the unconquerable love of independence has made the Arab reject with horror fetters of every kind.

Behold the Tartar.—Having no lands to cultivate, no mechanical arts to improve, he enjoys abundant leisure for the bodily exercises. It is for him that the horse exists; he is the centaur of ancient fiction. He is always in the open air; he passes over a vast extent of ground; his  
. fixed

speed is great, and his body robust. *Migrating* from place to place, he is of all men the most dexterous in the management of his steed. Nothing approaches to the natural equality which he enjoys, because the whole nation, being only an assemblage of hordes, it behoved them to elect a despotic chief, on condition that he should be active and experienced; for the more internal irregularities subsist in a society, the more it is fitting that external regularities should obtain.

A chief invested with absolute authority, was evidently necessary among a people at war with all the world, and whose safety consists wholly in the promptness of attack and the celerity of retreat. If the leader of these hordes was not a monarch, how could the Tartar give to his violent assaults the rapidity of lightning? How could he make his hasty incursions into the adjacent countries? What would courage avail without exact discipline? There can be no conquest, no victory, without a firm and undivided authority, especially when recourse is had to hazardous enterprises, for nothing should equal the vigilance of a people which disturbs the repose of all the earth.

Thus every warlike nation submits naturally to an absolute chief; and the greater his au-

thority is, the less risk does the nation run of perishing or of falling into slavery, because if the chief is weak, foolish, or cowardly, events will produce another in a few days.

We see the greatest conquests, marked with devastation and blood, achieved by this turbulent nation, although subjected to a master retaining the power of life and death. All the north of Europe, and perhaps that of America, was peopled by Tartarian hordes. It required order and conduct to put those military caravans in motion which intersected the globe, and made of the Tartars a single national body. Tartary collected under a single leader, twice gave law to Asia; while the Tartar nations which over-ran Europe, fixed their seal, as may be said, upon all the customs that prevail in the courts of the monarchs of Tartarian origin.

Religion and policy have changed many things; but amidst all these changes, we behold that the greatness of several European kings was built on the plan of those conquerors of the world. The despotism of the Tartarian monarch is mollified among us, and his character is only retained by the head of the armies. Laws, customs, and forms, restrain and modify that absolute authority; as in China the character of the people has controled the Tartarian  
genius,

genius, polished it, and led it to adopt ancient and wise laws. With the sword in its hand the savage nation has yielded to the civilized; and the Mantchews, respecting the moral character of an enlightened nation, submitted in their turn to the force of *reason*, the only arms that were opposed to them.

#### OF THE VENETIANS.

THE Venetians, flying from the fury of the Huns, sought a shelter on rocks intersected by canals. Of all governments that of Venice is *in its principle* the most truly despotic, if we except the government of Berne, of which, perhaps, it is the model. It speaks through the organ of a senate, and has neither the stern caprice of a sultan, nor the ferocity of a chief of an army. The laws alone are inexorable at Venice; but what old laws! they bear harder than they do in any place elsewhere on the *grandees* and the ministers of state. Rigour being equally exercised *on all*, secures to each the part in the management of public affairs he possesses in this government; and there results from hence, under this venerable despotism, a kind of liberty.



This republic has discovered the rare secret of securing its independence, by being particularly attentive to restrain the ambition of the nobles and the licentiousness of the people. Never was a senate more sagacious nor more friendly to national liberty than that of Venice. It is the government alone that inflicts the blow, and never without a just cause. If the nobleman is the sovereign of the people, he is at the same time ready to sacrifice himself for them: he is the first to venerate the republic, as a son during his minority respects the despotism of his father; he maintains the decency of a magistrate, and has all the pride of a Roman, without possessing his ambition.

These sage patricians having remarked that republics had for the greater part fallen through the want of an executive power, have remedied this imminent danger by the admirable establishment of a *council of ten*. Acts of heroism, similar to those among the Romans, embellish the annals of Venice, the subjects of which are perhaps as happy as any people on the surface of the globe: they are forbidden to intermeddle with a single object only, and their felicity is after that better secured to them than they could secure it to themselves.

The defect of this government resides in its  
political

political inquisition, which is pushed too far, and has a tinge of cruelty. Let this terrible inquisition be abolished, or let it never be employed without an extreme reserve, and Venice will present the spectacle of one of the finest governments in which the human race can pride itself.

#### OF THE NORTHERN NATIONS.

WHILE the orientalists, amid their sensual enjoyment and the perfection of the arts of mere luxury, never ceased to be cruel to the vanquished, to pay an absurd adoration to their sovereign, and to establish *slavery*, which began with them, on all sides, the northern nations, rude and uncultivated as they were, were not unacquainted with the rights of man. It may be said that our ancestors, the *Franks*, in pillaging and ravaging, and even in turning their victorious arms against themselves, preserved the *sacred fire*, liberty: it has indeed been extinguished for a time in Europe, so contagious was the influence of the south.

The immutability of the modern thrones, the good laws of succession, those fixed establishments the associations against the Normans in  
favour

favour of the *communes*, and the security of the highways, are due to our ancestors. They possessed that noble idea of the natural dignity and equality of man which is in a manner innate in the courageous, free, and warlike nations of Europe.

#### ECCLESIASTICAL BODIES.

IT is commonly said that in all religions the clergy are alike. Few proverbs are so strikingly true. The character of soldiers is less strongly marked than that of priests. The fulcrum of their lever is placed in heaven, and they must have nearly the same ideas. They can less bear contradiction than other men. If we carefully study the ecclesiastical life of one priest, we may form a judgment of almost all the rest. Their character is uniform.

Man dreads all that he knows and all that he does not know: his imagination is little else than the faculty of discovering on every side the concealed causes of fear and of sorrow.

The experience of the senses confirms his apprehensions. He beholds diseases, wild beasts, conquerors, the conflict of the elements, and the fire of heaven. He is the only being that  
has.

has an idea of death ; and he perceives it in every object. Alarmed at the countless evils which assail his short existence, he sought for recipes against the accidents of life ; and adopted most whimsical and various ones, with a confusion equal to the prodigious diversity of calamities which he strove to avoid.

Crafty knaves took advantage of this universal terror, and inspired weak and distempered imaginations with new alarms. They collected together in discourses the instances of past disasters, and presented them in a single point of view to the trembling eye of fear.

Amidst these multiplied terrors which distracted the human breast, religion naturally infused itself into the character of each nation. More or less cruel, it bathed the altars of its gods either with the blood of men or of animals.

The picture of human superstitions is only the picture of the timorous ignorance of man. Hence proceeded the chaos of those dogmas and of those absurd institutions which weighed heavily upon the heads of all nations, till they became enlightened, that is, till they received the vivifying beams of sound philosophy.

The Catholic faith has a fatal influence when mingled

mingled with maxims of government; the sacerdotal order disturbs and mars the political. Italy and Spain have witnessed the dismal effects of this interference. The protestant states, desirous that their clergy should always be quiet and submissive, have in general prohibited every ecclesiastic from enjoying a share of civil administration.

It must be confessed that the French, in adopting the Catholic religion, have not entrusted the sacerdotal order with that power which might tempt abuse. Celebrated writers have remanded the priest to the altar, and confined him to his proper office. By these means, extraordinary abuses have been prevented for the last fifty years; and the popes, who owe their temporal greatness to our kings, are very solicitous to exalt their personal authority over that of the whole church, and receive from us enlightened ideas in politics, which are very beneficial to them.

The refugees who escaped from France, despoiled it to people the neighbouring states. This emigration was a loss to the nation in proportion to its extent; but what was still more dangerous, they carried abroad their hatred to their persecutors, and fomented the antipathy of foreigners to such a degree, that we have seen  
 children

children shudder at the very name of French Catholics.

One fault in politics always involves another, commonly more dangerous. The dragoon missionaries far from stopping the migration, only lent it new force; revenge and hatred kindled on both sides a fanaticism which knew no bounds; nor was there in France a single man of such enlightened reason as to point out, in the revocation of the edict of Nantes, an error doubly monstrous, as it attacked at once humanity and sound policy.

Cardinal Richelieu, sensible of the importance of retaining the Protestants, proposed to give them the communion in reality, under appearances; so that by this expedient he left them a choice. This anecdote is true, though it must appear extraordinary.

## QUAKERS.

BEFORE the establishment of societies there were combats: one man attacked another and killed him; his brother, his neighbour, his friend, avenged his death, and blood was shed. But these fights, however frequent, probably

carried off a very small portion of mankind in comparison of modern wars, the intermittent fevers of the political body. It would require many private broils to equal the deaths occasioned by those general quarrels which arm five or six hundred thousand men at once to spread desolation over Europe, while standing themselves at the door of death. If they perish not by the stroke of violence, they fall miserable victims to hunger, fatigue, inclement seasons, and epidemical distempers. Murderous war, which at once attacks the aggressor and the defender, that double edged sword which wounds him who wields it, is then the fruit of political societies. Men unite to secure repose and felicity; and yet the shock of their calamities stops not at a single empire, but convulses the whole of Europe. A flag insulted in the regions of the Baltic sets the whole south in conflagration, and millions of men lose their lives for the honour of an ensign! Here then we behold mankind a prey to ills an hundred times more numerous than what they wished to avoid. They designed to preserve their existence; to save their property; and to guard against assaults: and in so doing they crowded together in such a manner that the shock extends to every individual. It is thus when one ball of ivory is struck, the im-

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pulsion

pulsion is propagated through all the rest in contact. The remedy is worse than the disease, and strikingly exhibits the moral of that fable, where the horse implores the assistance of man to revenge an affront. The chiefs of the human race have saddled and bridled it; and to seduce the imagination of mankind, it behoved them to ennoble war, to deck that hideous monster, to encircle it with the palms of glory, and to pronounce the swelling words of *valour*, *fortitude*, and *patriotism*. How otherwise could men be incited to rush into scenes of blood? What could persuade them to leave their peaceful fire-side, to forego the tender caresses of their wives, and the endearing smiles of their children, to court abroad the loss of ease and of health, to receive frightful wounds, and be exposed to all the ghastly forms of death? But kings have surely a magical talisman. The greatest of crimes, the subversion of all law, is termed *the supreme law*; and the contempt of honour is called *honour*. It was said to be great to butcher soldiers while asleep, to lay snares for them, to assassinate women and children; and, brutal ferocity, having masked its grim visage, claimed the name of justice, and the people believed it; a fatal blindness which nothing can dispel!

.. There is a nation in Europe esteemed virtuous,



ous, which, under the name of auxiliary troops, gives real assassins indiscriminately to all princes that will purchase them. This execrable traffic, contrary to the rights of nature, and the laws of nations, is performed under the specious name of liberty. But what dependance is more vile, what servitude more disgraceful, than, without feeling rage or resentment, and without taking any interest in the dispute, to sell one's self deliberately to the highest bidder, and to fight indiscriminately on either side? And what appellation shall we bestow on the trade of murdering in cold blood at the command of him who has first engrossed the mercenary butchers?

Never did history exhibit men so perverse. They take hire in the face of the world for committing massacres; brothers and fathers appear in opposite regiments, and rush into mutual conflict.

Thus this nation is at war with the human race; and it requires only gold to procure their children and their courage. Are they citizens, when they desert their homes? Do they merit the name of soldiers, when, serving under foreign ensigns, they have no interest in the country which they assist, or in that which they attack?

Open the volume of history, and search among the ancients for a nation capable of such an outrage upon humanity. Alas! what difference is there between dogs bought and trained for the chase, and these men of blood? They are only free that they may be the gladiators of Europe. How disgraceful this privilege! and what shame ought it to cast upon an unfeeling nation, that perceives not its conduct to be base, criminal, and even adverse to the true wealth of the country!

What ought to demonstrate the inutility of all the blood shed in battles, is that no great power was ever really enriched by the destruction of a neighbouring people. All the great states have kept nearly their first limits; they are what they were several centuries ago, the conquest of kingdoms being now impossible. France, Spain, Germany, Great Britain, and the northern states, occupy the same extent. Poland alone has suffered a partition, still incomprehensible though performed before our eyes; but perhaps, before a century has elapsed, a reaction will take place.

If we turn our views to the Asiatic nations, we shall see them vanquished without melting into the common mass; it is the same with the states of Africa. Those bloody commotions

derange the policy of nations, but neither alter their extent nor their character.

I cannot pardon geometry for promoting that execrable art which points the thunder of artillery, and teaches the most certain way of killing the greatest number of men in the least possible time. It is geometry, then, that has discovered a more destructive evolution, and the method of charging a cannon thrice in the space of twelve seconds! Wretched geometers! you have laboured coldly at the solution of such problems!

In his youth, Hannibal, at the close of a battle, seeing a ditch overflowing with human blood, kept his eyes long fixed on the spectacle, and exclaimed, *how charming!* The great Conde (for this is the name he bears in history) said, on beholding the bodies of twenty thousand men lying in gore, *one night of Paris will repair all this.* Demetrius uttered a like sentiment: he was besieging a town, and though he had no hopes of carrying the place, he commanded an assault to be made every day. His son having expressed a regret, that the lives of so many valiant soldiers were unnecessarily sacrificed—*Do you owe rations of bread to the slain?* was the reply of the father.—Such are warriors! Almighty God!

A very singular contradiction of the human mind, is the right of nations established amidst the horrors of war. Yet I admire this convention; it restrains the barbarity of plunder, so atrocious even in foldiers; and though it consoles not the philosopher, it will extort from him a sigh of pity at the inexplicable conduct of men. A trait of beneficence *then* touches him more than the virtues practised in peace; he recognizes the human character, though horribly disfigured; he beholds, in that moderation, a generous principle which will stop the progress of hatred. The charms of reconciliation present themselves amidst the thunders of war, which will soon be hushed at the voice of amiable concord. Then the philosopher breathes awhile, and seems disposed to pardon human nature.

#### LOANS.

A STATE borrows, either to *acquire*, or to *preserve*. The loan to acquire takes place when a sovereign buys a province, a city, &c. But if, on the one hand, potentates are always eager to purchase and to increase their possessions, on the

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other,

other, by the reason of contraries, they are all very little disposed to sell. Hence the first kind of borrowing hardly ever occurs in states.

But there is another sort of acquisition which may still oblige to borrow. I mean great commercial establishments, the clearing of lands, the draining of marshes, the cutting of navigable canals, and the constructing of new harbours, which invite or protect trade.

This sort of debt, incurred through a love of public prosperity, is infinitely less pernicious than the debt contracted for *preserving*, which is always dictated by necessity, and which always brings losses and damages in its train. Yet, though it has good for its object, it is still a loan, and we shall find that every loan is in its nature pernicious.

To *borrow*, is to ask assistance; and no one asks assistance unless compelled by real necessity. Every borrower is therefore placed in a disagreeable predicament, and exposed to receive the law from the lender, who will not consent that another shall become master of his property but in consideration of advantages offered to him. Borrowing therefore is in itself prejudicial to the person who has recourse to it.

Every wise state, a friend to its own welfare, will ever carefully avoid the expedient of borrowing.

rowing. It is besides contradictory that the sovereign power, from which all law ought to emanate, should submit to laws composed for it, and act a part so little becoming its dignity : its essence is to be sovereign and not subject.

But is it then never prudent to recur to loans? I do not assert this. Wisdom condemns equally all extremes, and its mighty ægis is not always successful in protecting great nations from accidents, and disasters, to which, notwithstanding the breadth of their base, they are no less subject than humble individuals. A calamitous war makes a breach in the frontier; famine and pestilence carry their ravages from one end of the empire to the other; the raging sea destroys formidable fleets; the earth, shaken to its foundations, swallows up spacious cities and sometimes whole provinces. Lisbon and Messina are reduced to a heap of ruins; and the wretched Calabrian secks, amidst the wrecks of his country, the places which witnessed his birth.—Pardon, Oh! sovereign power, Oh! mother of our country, pardon my temerity! But it then behoves thee to descend from the majesty of the throne, to solicit, to urge, to borrow; go, pledge your crown; go, with your sceptre in mourning to beg succour for your children, and the universe will fall at your

feet. So true it is that the love of humanity can ennoble actions which appear the least becoming the majesty of the throne! It was hence that Marcus Aurelius deserved to occupy one of the first places among the few princes who have been the benefactors, or rather the fathers, of the human race.

It is therefore proper to have recourse to loans for the relief of great calamities, or the formation of establishments useful to the country; and the more so, as its preservation and welfare concern alike the present and the future generation. But, unless in uncommon circumstances, the greatest misfortune that can befall a state, is borrowing; since if it be not able to answer its wants before borrowing, still less will it be capable when it shall have to repay the loan with accumulated interest. Borrowing necessarily requires imposts; and the coffers being drained, recourse must be had, on the event of a new war, to additional loans, which will draw on a multitude of taxes more and more burthenfome, and will quickly end with devouring the state and the power itself.

But, in absolute monarchies, the fatal effects of borrowing are beyond all calculation. Ministers, accustomed to extricate themselves from difficult situations by loans, act without œconomy,

nomy, and squander what comes to them in so easy a way. They are little disquieted about the fate of the state, which, after twelve or fifteen years, will feel itself overloaded, because a minister is a bird of passage, and transfers the burthen to another, who throws the weight off his own shoulders by new loans. Meanwhile as the public debt increases, the lenders, who entertain just apprehensions of losing their money, become more backward; and in order to tempt them, it is necessary to offer higher interest, and, therefore, more ruinous to the nation. The loans of the needy treasury make money scarce; commerce languishes, and industry declines from day to day. The lenders, who engross the specie, make bargains favourable to themselves and injurious to the state. That rapacious tribe get the management of affairs into their own hands, and every thing must submit to their control.

But the most deplorable consideration is, that the citizen who lends to government augments the power which oppresses him. All the stockholders become slaves of the royal treasury; they are ever under apprehensions for a deficiency. Individuals have henceforth nothing but ideal wealth, since the produce of the land



and industry of the kingdom is not increased, and yet the lenders live upon that produce.

A nation which lends to an absolute sovereign is, therefore, the most improvident in the world; it reasons not, and it foresees nothing. By lending its money, it suffers its energy to melt away; it loses its spring, and incautiously commits its gold to the same hand that already holds a rod of iron: blindness inconceivable! it forges its own chains! How can avarice lead citizens to a step so unreasonable? Indolence and sloth soon creep upon the annuitant, accumulating the interests of his capital; he becomes a stranger to all active industry. He loses the heart of a citizen for that of a financier; self becomes the only object of his narrowed affections; and the love of his country and of the public good is extinguished in his bosom.

It seldom happens that one state lends to another; but if it does, it exposes itself to a sort of slavery. When Genoa granted a loan to Spain, it was constrained to receive the law from that crown, and to enter into its views of ambition, though contrary to its own interest. If individual foreigners lend, the state that borrows becomes tributary to them. Thus France pays tribute to its neighbours, to its enemies;

and, during war, sends away sums of money which serve to feed the opposition of its adversaries. What a strange contradiction ! who can estimate the loss sustained by paying an enemy in time of war ! how formidable the yoke which seems then to oppress the borrower !

Thus the plan of borrowing not only humbles and degrades the citizen, but, by transferring strength to a hostile state, enfeebles and cramps the sovereign.

All political disasters may be said to originate from the facility of borrowing. Is it not this that multiplies wars, which have now grown so much more burdensome than formerly ? But for the dangerous facility of obtaining loans, we should not have experienced the fourth part of these that have ravaged Europe, since the discovery of the new world ; we should not have spread our fury over the whole earth. Without the expedient of borrowing, France and England, so rich in their internal resources, would not have approached the brink of the precipice. They have been led to ruin by their bankers. These mighty nations would have been obliged to enjoy in peace the genuine boons which nature has liberally bestowed on them, if the plan of procuring loans had not supplied the means of bathing the world in blood ; for nature has  
done

done us a most signal service in rendering the art of butchering so expensive as in a manner to exceed the abilities of contending powers. But the practice of funding supplies an hundred arms and an hundred hands to the dæmon of war; and two hostile states then attack each other at all points, and mutually inflict every evil in their power.

I put the question, what state would have made war, if it had been obliged to wait till its revenues were sufficient to defray the extraordinary expence, and if it had not borrowed the means? Oh! deplorable spectacle! Nations bending beneath the weight of debts and misery, have, in spite of their weakness, the madness to rush into mutual combat, still more to increase their debts and their taxes; for this generally is the issue of all wars. Nay, when too poor to exterminate each other, they solicit money from all quarters to fetch at a vast expence calamity from a distance!

It was by means of loans that Spain, France, and England, procured the arms of which they were in want, and with which they inflicted those deep wounds that still bleed and will require a long time to heal. These three noble nations, if deprived of the facility of borrowing, would not have been rich enough to support the  
fourth

fourth of the strokes under which they groan ; and while forced to remain in peace, would have enjoyed their local felicity. But since battles are fought by dint of money, they have borrowed money to multiply them in the four quarters of the globe.

The practice of funding, after giving the war fever to the present generation, entails poverty and wretchedness upon posterity. We are groaning to this day under the debts occasioned by the martial pride of Louis XIV. ; and our descendants will pay for our numerous political errors, since we shall transmit to them an inheritance encumbered in the most cruel manner. This load of taxes and misery will then fall upon the race yet unborn, and will destroy the bounties which nature had provided for it.

Who does not see that loans, which crush the existing race by fomenting wars and producing every form of wretchedness, lead the future generation between two precipices equally dangerous, and equally fatal ; evident ruin, a dreadful state of misery, or a dishonourable bankruptcy, the sad effects of which extend to the remotest futurity.

Loans are, therefore, equally injurious to the sovereign power of the monarch and to that of the nation, since they render the latter the slave  
both

both of the gold they have lent, and of him who has received it. In reality, loans are alike pernicious to the present and to future generations. He who invites or accedes to the contracting of public debts very nearly resembles a pilot, who, to escape a storm, should steer his vessel amid the rocks. Every minister who can command only that easy but sad resource, and who displays no other talents, ought never to enjoy any portion of esteem; he ought to be ranked among those ordinary mortals who have risen to high offices only to repeat the faults of their predecessors, and who, notwithstanding the goodness of their theory, proceed in practice along the same roads of destruction.

Every one knows that the individual who has recourse to borrowing, most frequently makes a miserable end. Prosecution, disgrace, and poverty, flight or a prison, become his portion. But, if at last, he die insolvent, all his debts die with him; death, less rigorous than his creditors, gives him a general acquittance, with which his ashes repose in peace. If he leaves nothing to his children, they are at least under no obligation to discharge the debts which they have not contracted. The law has chosen, in this instance, not to offend nature, by robbing them of that liberty which this tender mother  
has

has bestowed as the inheritance of every human being.

But it is not so with a state, which, notwithstanding its age, is always young, always, a minor, and which has not the melancholy hope of dying to pay its debts. Years, and ages, and generations may pass away, but the state is forever the same, and its obligations perpetually binding. The men, nay the cattle, the trees, the fishes, and the very air, are debtors. Nay, the monarch himself, if not a foreigner, becomes his own debtor, since he must pour his money into the treasury, if he wishes the treasury to make any payment. He and his heirs will remain for ages sucking to the public treasury; nor can any thing absolve these wretched coffers, for the creditor is no longer a patriot. The lenders are always inexorable; they are indifferent to the welfare of the country, and only solicitous for the punctual discharge of their annuity. The sovereignty, perpetually occupied in satisfying its creditors, loses its majestic character, as it is in the dependant situation of a debtor; and being unable to liquidate its debts, it is continually tormented in loading the people with imposts, to fill the royal coffers. Can the sovereign power then be called one, entire, the  
signal

signal protector and the pledge of public felicity ?

Without the practice of borrowing, the rich possessor of Peru, the sovereign of one of the finest kingdoms in the world, the son of Charles V. would not have been reduced to the necessity of dishonouring his name by bankruptcy, nor forced to cover his diadem with a *green cap*. Spain, once so formidable, would not have experienced, since that disgraceful era, a state of languor and distress, so unbecoming one of the most valiant and most generous nations upon earth.

A state first resolves to borrow during some critical juncture. The nation, sensible of the necessity of the measure, cheerfully submits to a light impost, for the purpose of securing payment to the lender. A certain term is appointed at which the loan is to be discharged ; but those through whose hands the money passes, always devise means to withhold it, and the debt and the impost still remain.

If a nation were made thoroughly acquainted with its true interests, it would most anxiously provide for the liquidation of its debt, since while this exists, it is a memento that, on the first emergency, recourse will be had to a new loan ;

loan ; it is an infallible thermometer which tells the people, *there is no money in the treasury, because the debt is not discharged; if a war break out what will become of us? Shall we not be placed between the hammer and the anvil? We must create new loans and new taxes, and thus will the nation be burdened more and more.* But a nation is a nation, as a ship is a ship, as a mule is a mule ; and after these have received a certain load, any additional weight will sink the one to the bottom, and bring the other to the ground. The lands of a state are capable of yielding only a certain produce ; the industry of the inhabitants can be carried only to a certain point, and any attempt to go beyond will soon prove that it cannot turn every thing to gold : *est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines, &c.*

A nation is not a sponge ; but admitting the comparison, it is well known that the humidity may be squeezed out. The extremities, or the common people, are first drained, and the centre, or the grandees, though always puffed up, soon contain nothing but wind. We should be strangely mistaken if we took this appearance of plumpness for vigorous health. The multitude of taxes are like a crowd of men who impede one  
another



another in striving to reach a particular spot at the same point of time.

The practice of funding may, therefore, be regarded as the heaviest scourge of modern states. Who has ever fully comprehended it? Not you, assuredly, O ministers! who have sought only temporary expedients, and who, under a specious title, have taken what would have been refused you under another; you have entrenched yourselves behind transient illusions, and you have filched renown with a dexterity that may attend you through life. But the terrible day of truth will arrive, and you will be rigorously called to account for administering only deceitful and dangerous palliatives; your dissimulation will even hasten the crisis of the gangrene, for the calamities interwoven with the national debt have never perhaps been estimated, for want of attending to its progress and extension. What a vast field opens before me! How I could enlarge!—But we should be in possession of the remedy before we exhibit all the magnitude of the evil.

though the least numerous, had not the less influence over the minds of men ; all the protestants who were not fanatical, all those who thought, were of this party, whose object was really to reform the abuses of the crown. The Duke of Alençon put himself at their head ; while the king of Navarre and the prince of Conde, reputed Catholics, ranged themselves under the same standard. Many virtuous men, eminent for their knowledge, joined this party, particularly the wise and brave Lanouc, who, after long deliberation, gave the signal for renewing the civil war. In whatever light, indeed, we view the league at its commencement, we cannot but consider it as a contest between tyranny and liberty.

The most irrefragable proof is, that all France, from one end of the kingdom to the other, rose in arms in an instant. Peasants, citizens, artists, all rushed with ardour into this civil war ; which shows that men were become so impatient of oppression, that, tired of suffering, they severed their bonds with the sword. They were seen to give their lives in exchange for the mere hope of relief\*.

When

\* While the people rose in France, the religionists of the Low Countries, generous partizans of the rights of man, began

When you behold tyranny, be assured that infurrection is not far distant.—We shall here offer a few reflections on civil war. It is unquestionably the most terrible of all; but it is the only war, perhaps, which is useful and sometimes necessary. When a state has reached a certain pitch of depravity and misfortune, it is convulsed by a thousand internal disorders. Peace, which is the greatest earthly blessing, has left it; and the restoration of peace unfortunately can only be the work of civil war. The balance is then to be restored by force of arms. The nation which slumbered in soft indolence, the habitual disposition of the slave, will not recover its greatness without undergoing those terrible trials, proper to regenerate it. The citizen must draw his sword to enjoy the privilege of the laws; a privilege which the despot would fain bury in eternal silence.

Two neighbouring nations of equal strength which engage in war, only gain, after long con-

gan to hold their meeting. They were at first called *beggars*, yet these beggars set Philip II. at defiance and founded the republic of Holland. They took for their *device* a little porringer, an ironical attribute.

In like manner aristocracy styled the patriots *sans culottes*; and these, resembling the *Greeks* and *Romans*, all of whom went without *breeches*, have led about the *breeched*.

flicts,

flicts, the advantage of having exhausted each other. Their disputes are always calamitous. They cannot coalesce into a single body; and, consequently, war serves but to widen and envenom their wounds. The author of the *Spirit of Laws* says, that the life of states is like that of men. Two armed nations do therefore irreparable mischief to each other, and blood is shed in useless battles. But civil war is a sort of fever which expels a dangerous stupor, and often strengthens the principle of life. The objects of this war are always clearly understood and universally discussed; and, after tyrannical attempts, it becomes even inevitable, as nature calls on each individual to maintain her indefeasible rights. A criminal neutrality becomes impossible in the meanest citizens. Ambition, folly, vain glory, family compacts, obscure or ridiculous treaties, and interests almost ever foreign to the people, occasion other wars. Civil war is derived from necessity and rigid justice: the indisputable rights of man being violated, a war of restoration becomes lawful, as no other expedient is left to the injured party. This war, which I would call sacred, is therefore really undertaken for the salvation of the state. As to the consequences, they are seldom fatal; nations rise more formid-

able from their internal contests. Political light is more diffused, and men are firmer and better exercised in arms. The fury and violence of this kind of war render it even of short continuance. It knows not those cruel delays which rulers calmly dictate from their cabinets; it knows not those reprisals which make hostilities eternal, and drain off, drop by drop, the blood of mankind. Here the blood flows seasonably, and spirts from generous veins; the quarrel is speedily decided, and the state either falls or recovers its pristine vigour.

Consult history, almost all civil wars, by elevating the mind, by giving greater energy to courage, by diffusing martial virtue through every bosom, and by inflaming men with the spirit of patriotism, have introduced republican liberty; and the expiring laws have revived amidst the din of arms. Each individual stipulates boldly for his own interests; and the nation, armed for that great cause, the restitution of its rights, rears a flourishing head, and becomes formidable to its neighbours, at the very time when it is imagined to be buried in ruins. Victory acquits the people from the charge of *revolt* and *rebellion*, which tyrants and slaves so liberally bestow.

This is what happened in the Roman Empire,

pire, in England, in Holland, and in all the states which now enjoy some portion of liberty. Such will, likewise, be soon the issue of the revolution in America, where are laid the foundations of a new and vast republic, which will become the asylum of the human race, oppressed in the old world. All these political concussions have everywhere produced happy changes: but, by a fatal exception, France has not reaped the fruit of its long discords. This was the moment for her, after so much instability, to take a permanent form; she was in a crisis where every thing indicated vigour and force. But the actors in the civil war, and even the political bodies, while tending so many ways, advanced not a single step towards liberty. Indifferent, or rather blind to their interests; the people could neither perceive nor study, nor even divine them by instinct,—an instinct found in the rudest nations, which were capable of the greatest achievements in ages of still greater darkness. I have to no purpose sought, in the writings of that time, to see if I could discover some trait which might indicate these circumstances as favourable for operating a salutary revolution. But the human mind was in that respect totally eclipsed:

all those writers dispute only about words void of sense, and, forgetting the essential privileges of man, talk of nothing but church ceremonies, and to them direct all their attention and their fears.

Those famous states held at Blois, those national assemblies before which royalty hid its diminished head, and which, in their solemn convocation, might have re-established the kingdom, by removing the principal abuses, wasted their time in miserable disputes; instead of defending the rights of the people, they turned their whole attention to *transubstantiation* and the council of Trent. The redress of ancient grievances, the noblest, and unquestionably the most important of all causes, came under discussion; but the wretched spirit of controversy spoiled all. They contended that there ought to be only one religion, because there was only one God in heaven; they spoke however, but as if by chance, of *punishing minions and farmers of the revenue, and of suppressing all arbitrary imposts*. Yet, more criminal than if they had entirely overlooked them, they abandoned these great objects so worthy examination and discussion. In reading their *papers*, we might fancy ourselves sitting on the benches

benches of the Sorbonne, and hearing the jargon of cavilling disputants instead of the language of statesmen.

The high spirited duke of Guise, the idol of Paris, and who had merited that admiration by his heroic and popular qualities, full of boldness and courage, touching with his foot the steps of the throne, turned to advantage the universal hatred towards Henry III. which was founded on the noblest motives that can actuate a nation; but he also despised his sovereign too much. He neither perceived his exalted fortune, nor all his favour with the people; and lost the opportunity of reigning over a nation which already adored him. Guise, contented with having degraded the throne by the superiority of his genius, temporized or disdained to fill it. He carried into the tomb, in the estimation of the people, the name of a magnanimous hero. It was believed that he would not purchase the crown by a crime so easy for him to commit, and from which he would have been absolved by the public sanction, and perhaps by the voice of posterity\*.

\* Cromwell has been termed an usurper: he rose from a much lower station than Guise. But did not the court of France go into public mourning on the death of that usurper?

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The weak Henry III. \*, during this time of commotion, appeared in public *with lap-dogs in a basket hanging from his neck*, squandering away immense sums for *monkeys, parrots, monks, and minions* : already tonsured in the public opinion, and shut up in a convent by the general wish, as ridiculous as he was detestable, he replied to his adversary by causing him to be assassinated. He could devise no better expedient to retain the crown which tottered on his head ; but it was an additional crime that only served to increase the public execration. He seemed to have murdered his sovereign from that moment.

\* The throne of Henry III. was destroyed in anticipation ; although young, he had no children, and had no brother alive. Catherine de Medicis believed that it would be easy to exclude the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé, on account of their professing the protestant faith. She wished to give the crown to the duke of Lorraine, her son-in-law. The duke of Guise on his part thought of confining the king in a convent, and of reigning in his stead : he would have set the cardinal of Bourbon in the van-guard, and have leaned upon the right of proximity ; then kicking over the phantom, he would have exhibited himself to the people, already disposed, by the love which he had inspired, to receive him. Henry III. on his side, regarding the kingdom as a patrimony, as a farm which he could dismember at pleasure, was not far from sharing it in favour of his minions ; and Joyeuse and d'Épernon would have had the best portion. Henry III. called Joyeuse and d'Épernon his children.

The universal voice directed the knife with which a jacobine monk soon pierced his vitals ; and all France, in the intoxication of joy and revenge, applauded the regicide \*.

What a lesson to prevaricating kings ! The children of Catherine de Medicis, as if smitten by the malediction of the people, all descended into the grave before their time and without offspring. Death, at an early age, cut off Charles IX. and Henry III. together with the dukes of Alençon and Anjou, and all that race of wicked and worthless princes, who were only active in doing ill. The nation immediately regarded itself as delivered from a scourge which was preparing its total ruin. All resounded with shouts of joy ; and this was perhaps the critical moment, during the *interregnum*, for restoring the rights of the nation. It was left to itself, and knew not as yet the heroic virtues of Henry IV. who was quite a distant object in

\* The death of the Guises filled the people with such universal and profound grief, that whoever reads history cannot help saying, that the people regarded these two brothers as the pillars of its rights and of its liberty. They loudly called on *God to extinguish the race of the Valois!* never did a nation vent so unanimous a cry. This slaughter of the king was considered not only in France, but even in Italy, as a virtuous action ; and some compared the regicide to Judith and Eleazar, and others to the greatest men of antiquity.

their

their eyes. The house of Valois was detested; and the house of Bourbon scarcely enjoyed more favour. All historians agree that it was considered as a *bastard, stray, and lost branch*.

The current of general favour set towards the Guises, who enjoyed popularity and displayed genius. Henry IV. was regarded by the people, only as a protestant who would soon outdo the crimes of a catholic king, and who would moreover forbid the saying of *mass* in Paris. The blood of the Guises still subsisted: it was traced back to Charlemagne, and this blood, shed in the popular cause, seemed as if it ought consequently to become dearer to the people. Mayenne had to revenge his two brothers slain at Blois. But though only a remnant of that formidable house, he did not conduct himself, as the leader of a party, with proper firmness and decision. In vain his mother demanded of him her murdered sons; in vain did the widow of the duke and his sister call out for vengeance; in vain the nation forsook the cause of royalty: calm, irresolute, and moderate, he seemed only to dread the being elected king. Having nothing that resembled the boiling blood of his brothers, he was not qualified to act at this great crisis of the state.

Mayenne,

Mayenne, with more boldness and resolution, might have put the crown on his head. The dukes and counts, in short all the nobility, were ready to come over to his interest. By judiciously conferring governments, by bestowing the principal appointments on the most ambitious, by using the most extreme means against the king of Navarre, it is probable he would have succeeded. The young duke of Guise, his nephew, confined at that time, could not have thwarted his designs; but Mayenne, though otherwise a skilful general, wanted activity, and knew not the value of time.

The nation, on this trying occasion, deeply sensible of its wrongs, and possessed of the greatest internal energy, wasted its courage, without establishing, or even proposing a form of government, that might obviate those cruel oppressions under which the people had groaned so long; it never dreamt of opposing a just resistance to that enormous power which since the reign of Louis XII. had borne down and debased the state. Deplorable blindness of the age! fatal error! France, called to elect, to appoint its monarch, conceived no political idea. Armed, strong, vigorous, clad in steel, she threw herself into the thorny labyrinth of theo-  
 logical

logical disputes; and wandering further and further through these crooked paths, forgot the weapons she held, and neglected the happiest and rarest epoch for framing a social contract.

Henry IV. drew his sword to reign: but he was justified by the consideration, that force only could be opposed to force. The success of the pretender to the crown was more than doubtful. His claims, though just, might be annulled by the will of the people, by their obstinate resistance, or by the course of events; the terrible ascendancy of religion and its multiplied anathemas, inviting the poignards of assassins, could also for ever remove him from the throne. He would then have willingly accepted any conditions imposed on him. He was endowed with an heroic mind, and would with joy have commanded a free nation; in putting the crown upon his head, it could have dictated a generous contract, which he would have magnanimously signed. But what was enjoined him? An obligation the most indifferent to the government of a state; *to turn catholic and every day bear mass*. This was the only condition required; and the nation then believed it had gained a most important point of legislation,

## OF THE DISSOLUTION OF STATES.

GREAT societies perish notwithstanding all the springs of policy and the support of real patriots. These revolutions are, however, flow, when great states are conducted by vigilant principles. They must fall in the event, because to accidental causes are annexed those other secret causes which nature ordains, to renew the face of the earth. Even were there nothing more than the declination of the plane of the ecliptic, the combination of which with the centrifugal force causes the surface of the ocean to circulate around the globe, who does not perceive that what the sea gains from the land must successively submit to the empire of the waves the most habitable grounds ?

Such is the effect of the hand which regulates every thing, and which by an unerring circle brings back every thing to the point from which it set out.

States that are too extensive will necessarily be partitioned out : those which are better proportioned will have a duration relative to their prudent limits.

Here the society dissolves without noise through the relaxation or extinction of the national

tional character imprudently wounded by weak administrators : and there it perishes, either laid waste by barbarians, or mutilated by conquerors. Thus the aged oak, in the foliage of which so many birds had nested and died, decays in its turn, falls, and crumbles to dust.

Great societies have their infancy and their decrepitude ; and politicians may readily distinguish whether they possess the fire of youth or the frost of age : in their youthful season they are actuated by a lively sentiment and are little argumentative ; in their old age they are profuse in harangues and sparing in action.

It is not uncommon to speak of the dissolution of states, when that dissolution is simply confined to the ruling dynasty. Because an empire is disjointed, it is not on that account destroyed : the advantages nature has bestowed on it subsist ; the number of the inhabitants is the same ; their industry, their talents remain ; the luxuriance of the soil, its extent, and position, are not annihilated by the conqueror. If the political body no longer makes a proud and ostentatious show, the subjects may in some cases be the gainers : the hands which formed the colossus of the armies return to the cultivation of the land ; and several nations have profited

fited by displaying a less considerable figure on the grand scene of the globe.

The false image by which states are compared to the human body has represented the word *dissolution* as the greatest danger which can befall a nation : even the chronical diseases of an empire have been spoken of. These extravagant figures engender the falsest and most puerile ideas ; as long as the soil exists, the people and the political body exist under another denomination. A state may change its master and its name ; but it dies not. If we pay attention to some writers, the physical existence of empires depends on the reigning houses : nature is nothing, the sovereignty every thing. But because there is no longer a Roman empire, is Italy destroyed ? If the ancient territory of Poland has three masters, has corn ceased to spring up in Poland ? Because her quondam North American colonies are separated from England, has England felt the spasms, the delirium, and the fever, which succeed the cutting off of an arm ? When a family changes its name, are the individuals which compose it changed ?

By earthquakes, and by the devastations of fire, states are dissolved. The barbarians have in the most incontestible way effaced empires, and having put themselves in the place of those



who occupied them, have been obliged to preserve in one way by destroying in another.

But so long as human societies preserve their laws, their institutions, their opinions, and their manners, of what moment is it that the government is destroyed? Another less brilliant perhaps, but not on that account less happy, will be very speedily formed. A monarch may lose his power, and the nation be the gainer by it. The perpetual action and re-action of physical bodies necessarily produce more or less considerable commotions; but so long as the soil shall not be condemned to sterility, moral beings will survive these transitory concussions; and the great shocks of nations, in shaking thrones, are unable to touch the immobility of states, provided physical revolutions are not blended with political ones.

Nature has ordained that human societies shall be sheltered from the sanguinary caprices of sovereigns: they may divide them, but their destruction is not within the scope of their authority. The dissolution of states is therefore altogether chimerical: they change names and forms; but when dismembered by an extraneous force, their independence, provided the institutions and manners subsist, is not to any considerable degree changed.

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The true dissolution of a state occurs when the citizens, detached from each other, cease to resent an affront or an injustice done to any one of them; when they no longer have their eyes fixed on the public operations; and, finally, when they entertain a contempt for themselves. The danger is then imminent because the general will is impaired; but this disaster does not befall enlightened nations which keep up an intercourse by the means of the press. Nations may oftentimes despise authority, but it very rarely happens that they despise themselves: they do not lose sight of their administrators, whom they either celebrate or stigmatize; and so long as the different bodies of the state contend against degradation, nothing is lost. Men are not annihilated unless when they cease to figure among moral beings: when they are sensible of their chains, there is an end to slavery, and insurrection cannot be far off.

The citizen is to be commended when he bears with a variety of ills, in preference to the risk of a dangerous rupture: but there is a certain point at which an enlightened nation, when it has once entered on its career, never retracts.

Nature, by an inevitable course, produces certain changes. Thus the existence of the ancient  
 U 3 empires

empires which figured so conspicuously on the face of the globe three thousand years ago has ceased, and from the same cause that has influenced the alterations which have been wrought in the form and height of mountains. All the genius of legislators, and all the prudence of sovereigns, cannot prevent nations from presenting one day, to the view of the universe, their grand and awful ruins. But a veneration will at least be entertained for a power which is no more, when its laws shall have been sage and sublime: these will be meditated on; and the name of the legislator who shall have yielded to time alone, the vanquisher of all sublunary things, will be respectfully mentioned.

#### POLITICAL QUESTION.

HOW happens it that the people are so happy in their choice of the men who are to act, and so little fitted for action themselves? Among the people the ministry was never altogether corrupted; the genius of the multitude does not form villains. The people do not allow their esteem to be surprised: they require at least the mask of great virtues; and thus, in  
 · free

free states, the trust and management of public affairs are bestowed on celebrated men alone. It is on this account that these states produce a greater number of extraordinary men than are to be met with in pure monarchies: in the troubles inseparable from a republican government the mind is forcibly agitated, and the imagination imperiously swayed; it is a beam of light added to the regard man has for his preservation.

But when it becomes necessary for this multitude to act, the love of the country engenders a brilliant and capricious virtue perfectly well fitted to produce confusion, insomuch that, notwithstanding all the heroism which is displayed, a point of unity is needed. Free states are calculated for defence, not for attack.

#### OF CLIMATE.

**GOVERNMENT** commonly performs more than climate; but government ought never to oppose the climate, for then it would split upon the national character.

Animals and vegetables are modified by the climate, but it is government that imprints all

moral ideas. It can produce courage and virtue in every latitude; but at the same time we must acknowledge the influence of climate with regard to manners and habits.

The climates of Egypt and of Greece are not changed; and yet a barbarous government has converted the Egyptians and Greeks into a sort of barbarians.

How could the English constitution, by taking root in the British isles, do otherwise than bestow a singular energy on those very English, once so superstitious, so patient under the yoke of despotism, and so ready to become the prey of the first invader?

Polity can, therefore, mould the most debased and most stubborn people; it can metamorphose them entirely, for men well governed will cease to impute to climate what was the fault of government: they are ennobled or degraded by the virtue or misconduct of their rulers, and the vices of a nation will always be a reproach to its administrators.

If the influence of climate on the government or the legislation is felt, it is chiefly in mountainous countries: a clear and pure air, and plants of great virtue, give the inhabitants vigour of mind and calmness of temper, without diminishing

nishing the sensibility of their organs or the acuteness of their intellect.

Among these people, youth is slower in ripening; they are ignorant of the disorders occasioned by incontinence. A mild government seems naturally to spring up among these men, whose blood slowly circulates through their veins, and whose cold temperament forms an invincible rampart against the turbulence of the passions.

Add, likewise, that mountaineers are religious: it should seem that the sublime objects around them raise the mind to devotion, and that those vast summits, which loudly testify their Creator's power, keep cheerless and frigid incredulity away; being nearer heaven, they seem to accept its favours with more gratitude. Their liberty, prepared by the hands of nature, becomes more precious to them; and they grow enamoured of those snowy heights which protect them from tyranny. Thus, they find in the structure of the earth the pledge of their felicity, being always ready to hurl their rocks upon the heads of the inhabitants of the plain who should attempt to disturb them in their happy retreats: their precipices are their ramparts; their flocks their riches; milk is their food;

food ; equality their law ; charity and the adoration of the supreme being, their religion. They are blessed with the incapacity of understanding the catechisms of our theologians.

The eternal ice of their transparent lakes, that heightens the sublimity of the landscape, impresses their minds with chaste sentiments, which are reflected on their fresh and ruddy complexions.

The libidinous passions have not disfigured those calm countenances on which are depicted serenity, and, to say all in a word, the true physiognomy of man.

The spectacles which they enjoy are tranquil, striking, and worthy the sanctuary of nature : they hear the cry of eagles, the roaring of foamy cascades, which, pouring from the rocks, dash wildly below, and fill the ear with awful sounds. Their cottages, the abode of innocence and liberty, founded on steeps, and rocks, and ruins, seem to tell us that a guiltless people has taken possession of a criminal and ruined world, to regenerate the earth and stock it with a mild and happy race of men.

These mountaineers, grown familiar with such grand objects, do not always admire them, but they sometimes fix their thoughts on the  
sanctuary

scenery about them, and have most assuredly dispositions analogous to the climate in which they live.

It is said that the Japanese, who live under a sky perpetually embroiled with thunder and hurricanes, are tormented with violent passions, and are hasty, cruel, and vindictive; their mind is shaken by their propensities, as their territory is by volcanos; and, while their coasts are assailed by the dashing of a stormy sea, ideas equally impetuous agitate their brain.

These are phænomena in the political order of things. I am far from denying it; but, at the same time, I believe that a wise and happy constitution of government will always restrain the tumultuous passions; for I am disposed to ascribe more to the effect of government than to that of climate, notwithstanding a few unaccountable exceptions.

The influence of climate is also perceivable in the fertile plains of Mesopotamia, which resemble those of Egypt. A great number of rivers intersect the country, and at first hindered population from spreading. The overflowing of the rivers cut off all communication, and the art of guarding the country against these inundations was still unknown. Each tribe, separated from the rest, was obliged to elect a chief within  
within



within its narrow territory. Hence the origin of the numerous princes who occur in the annals of the earlier ages.

That multitude of petty princes must have been divided, by the great opposition of their objects and views, and must, in the issue, have melted down into a single monarch ; which really happened.

The Assyrian monarchs, desirous of extending their empire, conceived the plan of extinguishing the courage of the people by the taste for pleasure on which they were constitutionally bent. These princes established the capital as the centre of luxury and debauchery. This expedient obtained all the success that could have been hoped for. The authority of the kings of Assyria, being that of effeminacy and voluptuousness, was the longest and the most peaceful of all. Agreeable sensations, diversified by the assistance of the fine arts, enchain all the faculties of man ; after he has once drank out of the cup of pleasure, he imagines himself following the instinct of nature ; he contracts the strongest and most invincible habit of indulgence, and he becomes reconciled to the most disorderly passions. The depravation of public morals totally ruins the firm and heroic virtues. The voluptuary is a  
man

man of repose; he shudders at the mention of the word fatigue; he is incapable of undergoing patriotic toil; he knows not, nor does he wish to know, the epoch of the decline of a state.'

The taste for pleasure having become the predominant character of the Assyrians and Babylonians, and the fertility of the soil favouring their luxury, the monarchs of Assyria were careful not to disturb the tranquillity of their subjects by alarming attempts; they lulled them into voluptuousness, but, at the same time, without sinking them to debasement and disgrace; for if the people are willing to be amused they will not suffer themselves to be degraded. The kings of Assyria fought only to render the nation effeminate, and to take away from their subjects the possibility of revolt.

When the last king of Assyria, disdaining the policy of his predecessors, affronted the body of the Median and Babylonish nation, the Arabs and Belesians planted their standard on the walls of Nineveh, to wash away the outrage in the blood of the monarch; for a voluptuous people must not be too much provoked, since their hatred will be as immoderate as their other unbridled propensities. The Babylonish monarchs who succeeded did not forbid the pleasures and comforts of life to a people fond of licentiousness;

*licentioufnefs* ; and these monarchs, who exacted divine adoration, and who issued so many extravagant orders, were tolerated by a nation which was permitted to indulge without reserve in all the caprices and all the refinements of a voluptuous life.

#### CONNECTION BETWEEN NEIGHBOURING STATES.

POLITICAL bodies have not been strangers to a mutual assistance: in times of calamity London has relieved Lisbon, and France has fed Italy. For a century past the most effectual succours have flown to a nation, which, in its distress, implored the aid of a neighbouring or even distant kingdom. These offices of humanity, which trench on the rigid policy of cabinets, console the friend of the human race, and lead him to presume that the natural law will one day become the law of policy. Ah! what a source of happiness to nations, to the great bodies of society, which will then, like simple individuals, exist by a mutual succour and support! So consolatory is this image, that the great scourges of nature, famine, pestilence, ci-

vil discord, and every concomitant horror, seem to vanish under its controul.

These reciprocal duties, scarcely known to the ancients, if duly extended, would place every nation under the protection of the neighbouring state, and preserve from total ruin a territory laid waste.

Oh ! should these amiable precepts of nature be at length fully developed ! should nations, already communicating to each other their knowledge, maintain a similar intercourse of aid and support, as we have every reason to trust may in time be effected, then would a profound peace reign over the earth, and a mutual gratitude, resulting from these disseminated benefits, no longer allow war to point its homicidal lance !

Europe would then become a great republic. Instead of the fervid hatred now manifested, the essence of man and his noble nature would be recognized, seeing that he is an intelligent and feeling being, and has a right to exact from another what is essential to his well doing. His preservation and perfection depend on these important relations ; and the love of duty consists in promoting in the most effectual way the felicity of whatever has an existence.

## FORCE OF INSTRUCTION.

WHENCE arose the great influence of the Brahmins over the Indians, of the Druids over the Gauls, and of the clergy over France? It was from the circumstance of their having the charge of instruction: they taught the people all that relates to religion and morality, and to eloquence, which inculcates them.

The Brahmins still practise medicine; they are skilled in the science of numbers, and calculate eclipses of the sun and moon; they perform the most difficult operations in arithmetic without pen or pencil. It is from their knowledge, that they are highly respected by the whole nation, and enjoy the greatest privileges.

In France, the ecclesiastics have long presided over education; they filled all the colleges and occupied all the chairs. Without their support, the arts and sciences would, at certain eras, have been lost; they have obtained their great prerogatives from the service rendered the nation by their religious and moral functions. When all the rest of the world was plunged in deep ignorance, it was very proper to bestow on them that respect which man never refuses to knowledge, that is to say, to him who teaches.

All

All the instructive and valuable books have been preserved from age to age by the care of priests, the true legislators in times of barbarism. And when philosophers came at last, they were only in the office of instruction the successors of men attached to the priesthood, and the restorers of opinions in which falsehood and extravagance were mingled with truth and utility.

The body which instructs has no longer the *same name*; its privileges are not so extensive, but its power is equally real. Its wise and salutary decisions command universal attention and regard. If the clergy and certain men of genius are now at war, it is because the latter dispute for pre-eminence with the former.

Among the Persians, the Magi formed the most valuable part, that which communicated instruction, the arts, and wisdom to the people. The Magi still subsist; they are represented by the eminent writers of Persia.

The Peruvians were better informed than the Tartars; they were accordingly cultivators, and had views of industry. The worship of the sun begot the social virtues, cheerfulness and serenity of mind, while the apotheosis of men engendered, in the old world, nothing but hatred and ferocity of disposition.

The law of Moses which forbade the eating of unclean animals, was calculated for the climate and conformable to the laws of nature.

Numa caused his institutions to proceed from the mouth of the nymph Egeria. Lycurgus asserted that his laws were dictated by the oracle at Delphos. When the object is to render men better and wiser, polity may employ an innocent artifice, provided it be neither savage nor cruel. As the first want of man is an enlightened legislation, if in his way to wisdom he must be led along the paths of extravagance, he should be led with care.

The sage Locke, employed to legislate for Carolina, placed under the protection of the laws every man who should insert his name in the register of some communion, whatever it might be; and thus laid the first foundations of religious toleration in the new world.

The American Lycurgus, Penn, instead of taking possession of the country by deluging it with the blood of the natives, purchased from them the tract granted to him by the crown of England. He acquired the confidence of the savage tribes, and exhibited to the world, in Pennsylvania, the model of a government founded on justice. What force of instruction!

Moses

Moses among the Hebrews, Mercurius Trismegistus among the Egyptians, Solon among the Athenians, Lycurgus among the Lacedæmonians, Anacharsis among the Scythians, and Numa Pompilius among the Romans, have given laws to men, and these laws are in our own times still subject, if I may so express it, to the most deliberate discussion.

Why then, in this enlightened age, does not some sovereign lay claim to that kind of glory, the most fit to command the admiration and respect of future generations? Many good laws are already made; it is only necessary to apply them with discernment.

#### OF THE EMPEROR OF CHINA.

THE Emperor of China enjoys an unlimited sway; all power resides in him and in him alone. His empire is the most extensive in the world, and requires an authority suited to its magnitude and capable of maintaining order throughout. The emperor has the sole disposal of all the offices in the state; he has a right to choose a successor to his mind, while in



other monarchical states the presumptive heir is regarded as a kind of sovereign.

Here we see the will of the despot in its full extent ; but here you may also behold the reaction. The lettered Mandarines share with the emperor the veneration of the people. The Mandarines of letters have the favour and preference over the Mandarines of arms, because China has more need of laws and instruction than of soldiers. The internal administration devolves on them ; they obtain the homage of the public, morality being the basis of Chinese polity : this system of government has given to the literati an ascendancy which overrules the management of public affairs. These literati compose a tribunal which carries its inspection over the whole empire, and presents to the emperor the strongest and most effectual remonstrances. If the monarch strike one of them, he strikes all ; their voice rebounds through the empire, nor is it appeased till he yield to the laws. The tribunal of history takes under its care the heir of the throne ; and, ever incorruptible, it intimidates the emperor by holding the inflexible graver of truth. In short, he is constrained to respect the national laws, for every infraction of them is recorded in history, and even the perfection which he might set  
on

on foot to punish them for their noble employment.—This government is, therefore, not subject to the opprobrious yoke of despotism, as I am about to show.

In China most of the imposts are paid in kind; two hundred millions of men contribute only about a milliard of our money (somewhat more than forty millions sterling). France pays more than the half, though containing only twenty-six millions of inhabitants. The register of lands has long subsisted in China, notwithstanding the prodigious extent of that empire.

In China, the public treasury is not in the hands of the emperor, but is intrusted to the care of a sovereign tribunal. This charge makes a notable difference in the distribution of power: take from the monarchs of Europe the privilege of disposing freely of the public treasury, and they will no longer have soldiers for purposes of oppression.

The emperor of China lives on his patrimonial possessions set apart for the maintenance of his household: he never touches the revenues of the state, which are deposited in the public treasury, for the regular payment of the troops and officers of the empire. What wisdom in this skilful separation!

The emperor is rich in cattle. China has to provide against the calamity of famine: accordingly the emperor is a farmer and cultivator, and agriculture is every where in high estimation; for there are two hundred millions of mouths to be fed. Hence the annual ceremony in honour of husbandry, in which the emperor holds the plough and turns up a furrow. The Chinese cultivate even the bottoms of rivers and lakes, their public gardens abound with aquatic plants, which are eatables still unknown to our industry.

The appellation of *father of his people* is evidently derived from the patriarchal authority, suited to primitive and narrow societies. But in great states, an immense family cannot regard a king as a father; for this father often chastises his children very cruelly, and exacts money for governing them. There, the monarch is an essential and indispensable piece in the machine of government, and nothing more; except from his personal qualities, which may be agreeable or useful to a few persons: but no individual, with whatever genius he may be endowed, can exercise a paternal care over many millions of men.

The abuse of terms confuses the science of  
politics

politics and renders it obscure. If the Grand Signior cuts off heads, they are the heads of his Pachas, the heads of his domestics. The mussulman subject is not at the mercy of a master; and the least attack upon the property of the people fires their indignation and produces a revolt.

If the Sultan exercise an absolute power, it is not legal; the laws of the Turkish empire are a restraint upon his will. This should be repeated to the ignorant and the dastardly, who comfort themselves amidst grievances and oppressions, by saying it is much worse in Turkey.

There ought to be many laws of police, but very few political laws; all those operations, which are conducted with mighty noise and a vast apparatus only disturb states. The laws of police, the municipal laws are what support life. The peaceful defenders of the fortunes and honour of their fellow citizens, the organs of justice which establish its throne; these are the roots which nourish the tree: these maintain the vast empire of China, and restrain the emperor from abusing the greatest power ever entrusted to a mortal.

## OF THE MULTITUDE.

IN every state it behoves the people to interest themselves in the government, since this is the surest means of attaching them to the state, and urging them on to the greatest sacrifices, when these may be called for by the public order: but it is altogether repugnant to good sense that the people should be the executors of their own wills.

The people have a knowledge of mankind, and in the choice of certain of their magistrates are usually happy; at the same time that their decisions, made with arms in their hands, are always dangerous. The emotions of the people are characterized either by languor or audacity. We know the ferocious excesses to which the people were carried at Athens and at Rome.

In the small Swiss republics I have observed the quality of *City Bourgeois* inspire in low and weak individuals an insupportable pride; and this absurd fanaticism has spread among the little inhabitants to such a degree that they fancied themselves strong and redoubtable: having no knowledge of the objects by which they were surrounded, they drew from intoxication, the goblet in their hand, their courage,  
and

and more especially their *science*. The little bourgeois is, in Switzerland, always ready to become ferocious, because he is to such a degree infatuated with certain privileges, that he metamorphoses them into an absolute sovereignty. In several of the Cantons a very trivial cause would induce the Swiss to encompass their ruin and annihilate their prosperity.

The people therefore, notwithstanding all sovereignty emanates from them, ought never to be invested with the executive power: they may sometimes be the avengers of their wrongs; but it would be the greatest of all calamities to see them in the possession of an exorbitant power, the consequences of which could not be other than fatal in the extreme. It requires no great political foresight to predict that all these little Swiss republics, or principalities, will be ruined by the insolence and *foi* *l'auteur* of the *bourgeoisie* of the small cities, the capitals more especially. They resist every amendment, and repel every political advantage.

Pure democracy is the worst of governments: if it agrees with an isolated, poor, and almost naked people, it destroys every genre of emulation, each partial assembly becoming at the same time a focus of contradictions. When men aim at being free in despite of the laws, all liberty

liberty must be at an end: democracy begets a frightful anarchy; it is a true chaos in which there is neither order nor subordination.

As the invisible mind gives impulsion to the human body, so ought the small number to rule the greater. If we change to-morrow what has been established to-day, nothing will be either stable or permanent.

A popular government is tumultuous, indiscreet, and slow: the people, who do not know their true interests, require representatives.

The evils of pure democracy are almost incurable. Men of low extraction are commonly more violent, more peremptory, and more intractable, than men born in a superior class. The nation which mistakes independence for liberty soon becomes delirious.

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#### A SENATE.

A SINGLE man, a Frederic, was able to carry a state to a high degree of splendour: but he died, and the cement which connected all its parts dissolved with the body of the sovereign.

A senate subsisting constantly, and animated by a sage and profound policy, such as was that  
of

of Rome, elevates an empire of a very small extent to a formidable height of power and energy. Policy rather belongs to a body of men than a single man; and at all times and in all places, says a writer, human nature, put in action under the government of several, has performed prodigies, and has risen to the *maximum* of its force and dignity.

The character of nations changes and depends much on government. View the modern Greeks, what have they in common with those of antiquity? Formerly the Spaniards were warlike, the English superstitious, the Dutch soldiery intrepid, the Parisians grave and serious. When the people have abandoned all their rights to the public administration, it is of little import to them by whom they are governed. The Romans, familiarized to slavery, refused the liberty, an offer of which was made them by Trajan.

But if the character of a nation changes, its original stamp is not lost: it constantly and after several ages retains what it has derived from climate and atmosphere. The character of a nation may suddenly recover its primitive energy, and this is what the regenerators of states, if men worthy of that name are to be found, ought constantly to have in view. The  
tree



tree cramped and distorted for several years by ligatures, recovers itself and resumes its natural form.

*It is important therefore to study the national character, which ought not to be crushed: if it is deprived of its originality, its strength and peculiar virtues are destroyed.*

By proceeding with the national character or genius, the skillful administrator will save himself much pains and labour; but he must not mistake appearances for realities. The true character of nations should be studied in their focus; and the truth will be come at by a comparative estimate of the judgments repeated from books to books, which were originally merely opinionative, and which are considered as established facts by the third and fourth generations.

It is this study which constitutes the rational politician, who will never force the national taste. It requires ages, and the reiterated efforts of a different education, to deprive a nation of that by which it is pleased and flattered.

A republic will not promulge a decree which will not be advantageous to all: a body so constituted cannot act against itself; it reflects, it embraces the future equally with the present, and generation succeeds generation. But in the monarchical state, the chief, whose life is tran-

sitory,

fitory, draws towards himself what his strength will permit him to grasp before he descends to the tomb: he dies and another form succeeds.

The Roman empire had for its boundaries, towards the east the river Euphrates, towards the west the ocean, towards the south the regions of Africa, and towards the north the Rhine and the Danube. This nation, which covered the surface of the known globe, was at the commencement poor: now, nothing can be more dangerous than a poor and warlike nation; possessing nothing itself, it seizes on the property of others; and thus Rome set out. Its ambitious maxims were the result of its poverty; and had it been rich, it would not have possessed such a spirit of conquest: the spirit of the Roman constitution would not then have been an open and insatiable ambition.

The grand principle of confederation, the *chef-d'œuvre* of senatorial policy, having been successful in Italy, the Romans applied it to Gaul, Spain, Africa, Greece, and Asia.

Their alliances were as skilfully conducted as their conquests; and with them the science of negotiation surpassed the military spirit.

Employing every occasion which appeared to them to be calculated to seize the spirit of a country,

country, they concluded by putting themselves in possession of it.

With all the force of Italy they fell on each of the nations they were desirous to plunder : they subjugated these by the care they took to foment a party, to unite it to their interest, and to intimidate the rest of the nation.

No nation was then capable of instructing the Romans with respect to their conduct, or of counterbalancing the spirit of order and combination which prevailed in all the decrees of the senate, while that nation had its eyes open on what was passing in the east and in the west.

Hannibal, whose penetration was profound, was the only man intimately acquainted with Roman polity : by detaching the colonies of higher Greece from the interests of the republic, he attacked Rome with her own weapons, and was within an ace of encompassing her destruction. Driven from Italy, and exiled from Carthage, he still contrived to unite against the Romans very formidable powers ; and this one adversary was more terrible to them than the rest of the world collectively.

## ELOQUENCE.

LET those great and august national assemblies in which the high interests of the state were discussed be renewed in France, and we shall again hear the eloquence of the fine ages of antiquity. Grand objects elevate and enrich the mind; and accordingly when the states were convened under Charles VIII. very fine harangues were made. A noble subject commands talents; while gravity and a noble diction flow from patriotic ideas, as the majestic rivers by which the earth is fertilized flow from the cavities of high mountains. The auditor makes the orator: never have folly and pusillanimity dared to speak in the presence of an august assembly, on subjects they have neither felt nor understood. As soon as circumstances shall permit, our orators will push forward in the noble career of emulation; and, finally, our frivolity will vanish, whenever the important cause shall manifest itself, and shall enable each writer and each speaker, as he very naturally will, to assume the tone which becomes him.

Despotism is merely the degenerate offspring of monarchy; but why has the latter degenerated? It is because the monarch, heaping together

gether riches, and securing to himself immense authority, more especially when his reign is of a considerable duration, tries his strength, and sets out by saying, *it is my will*. If in the issue the nation is enervated, he stretches onwards towards despotism; but if on the other hand it manifests virility, not decrepitude, he then retreats, and speaks of his paternal clemency.

What is entitled despotism is never established till after a considerable lapse of time, when by insensible layings up the monarch has amassed great riches, and consequently great authority, for when he is rich he soon becomes the only one that is so; and it is sometimes fortunate for the liberty of nations that the monarch feels those wants for the supply of which he solicits the love and attachment of his subjects.

A national assembly is well fitted to keep a monarchy within just bounds, because it balances in itself all the parts of the government, and because it is itself interested in maintaining the equilibrium. The monarch becomes the centre from which the wishes of all branch out; and the separation of the legislative from the executive power renders the laws majestically interesting. The monarch is then truly useful to the monarchy, because the third estate, enabled to speak out freely, tears off the veil under  
which

which the most dangerous and most vicious of all aristocracies was concealed. The monarch ceases to lend his name to a multitude of famished wolves, who rend asunder the state and his dominion to divide among themselves the shreds. His name becomes more venerated and respected, when, assembling around him all the members of the state, he speaks in the name of that general will which cannot be bad, and which is calculated to remedy the greatest calamities.

The monarch then destroys his worst adversary, the frightful monster that conceals itself behind the throne, whose maw is an insatiable gulf, whose talons are blood-stained, and which, like one of those mystical figures that terrify us in the apocalypsis, bears on its forehead, written with diamonds, *personal interest*. The monarch, aided by his people, has killed the horrid monster which allowed the yoke to be put round its neck, merely to be enabled the better to devour the power of its master.

In China imperial visitors go through the provinces, questioning the people whether it is their wish that such a mandarine should be continued in his office, or on the other hand punished. In the diets of Germany, not only the college of the electors and that of the princes are

heard, but also that of the free cities, which speak by their representatives.

Sweden, in her national assemblies, includes the *order of peasants*. Our forefathers themselves, until the reign of Louis XIII. were of opinion that the people were entitled to a place in the states general.

We are not unacquainted with the power of the House of Commons in England: in Holland and Switzerland we find the popular spirit prevail every where; and the very extensive American colonies have adopted a government diametrically opposite to despotism. Why, after so many examples, should it be said, that republics form an exception in the order of governments?

Man is placed at the head of the works of the creation: his relations with nature and society are immense; while his sensations give him a dependance on all that surrounds him, and hence arises his thirst after knowledge. Curiosity is the latent spring which presided over the early establishment of the arts: in the absence of physical necessities, the moral necessity of providing against *ennui* led man to develop the mechanism of his flexible hand. The delicacy and perfection of his intellects commanded him to labour; and his intelligence, by its faculty of reproducing,

ing, associating, and comparing the impressions of his ideas, did not allow him to leave in an absolute state of inaction his memory, his sensibility, and his imagination: had he done so, many a weary day and hour would have been his lot. Man is formed for the life and motion of society: his essence evinces that in nature no being is isolated, and that all human creatures are connected with each other, and manifest a reciprocal action.

From this relation spring up the natural laws, the foundation of all legislation. Man, to follow them, must therefore be acquainted with these laws: he must instruct and enlighten himself on what is best fitted for the establishment of public authority. The same law which obliges him to be attentive to his own comfortable existence, commands him to study the happiness of his fellows, to the end that his own may be enhanced, instead of being interrupted.

As it is by intelligence that man is distinguished from animals, so is it by speech more particularly that he has been enabled to form establishments, and to push them onwards towards perfection: he is fitted for a constant state of advancement, and for the production of new relations between himself and the universality of beings; he seizes on what is passed, and, to



lengthen the chain, takes advantage of present and future truths. Thus to man the state of nature is the state of society ; and to this latter state he is conducted by each propensity and each natural affection. Agriculture is the true destiny of man : by its aid he is enabled to convert a wild, barren, and dismal spot of earth into fertile and smiling fields ; through agriculture he tames, directs, and forms animals, enables them to bear a transplantation from climate to climate, almost changes their nature, disposes of their life, and converts their spoils to his use ; and by its means he has changed his own tastes and wants, has extended his power and his ideas.

As an agriculturer, not as a hunter, he feels that all men are united by the bonds of fraternity : and indeed as soon as the huts are erected, and the little colony formed, a secret and powerful tie unites all the individuals ; each one submits to it, and it is proved by the effect.

The societies which are not sensible of these primitive bonds, punish themselves : those that submit to them are themselves happy, and, even without knowing it, establish the happiness of the human race. It is in vain that you extend a kingdom ideally ; all the portions of an immense state, subdivided even into the smallest towns,

towns, will be no other than particular provinces of the vast empire of nature.

Primitive societies originated in domestic society, which is on that account entitled to tranquillity and repose; for it would be terrible that human legislation should be inferior to the rude laws of nature: the asylum, the last asylum ought never to be violated. The trust of future generations, of children, belongs to the mother, and the father belongs to them. The woman, by her destination, her weak frame, her faculties, and her duties, ought to be sedentary. Personal property is inalienable; and nothing can inspire more indignation than the laws which violate the last asylum, and which, urged on by a miserable thirst for gold, seize on the citizen, the father of a family: civil society having been formed for the protection of property, cannot attack it in the person of any individual without defeating its own aim. Society cannot be considered as separated from its members, every attempt on whom, by whatsoever name it may be decorated, tends to the destruction of the society itself. Thus imprisonment for civil debts is a most cruel outrage, invented and maintained by avarice, on the primitive compact: when a man ceases to have any property whatever, he belongs to  
 Y 3 himself,

himself, and the law which renders his hands inactive resists every amends on his side; it is at once erroneous and unjust.

In proportion as time introduces a change in things, a change ought to be made in the laws. Every thing now calls for a legislation in several respects new, because we have attained the point of force, civilization, and experience absolutely necessary to bring about such a work. It is time to abolish from our code the various contumacies, all of them gothic, minute, discordant, and embarrassing.

The laws ought to be grand, clear, and few in number. If directed to property, this ought to be rendered independent, to the end that it may be the better respected and guarded by the proprietor; and it ought to be transferred with facility, to the end that there may be a free circulation of riches, and that the love of labour, unceasingly in activity, may produce the possibility of acquiring. If the laws regard persons, the highest respect ought to be paid to man.

Such are the interesting objects which point themselves out to those who are born for a display of eloquence, or who have received from heaven the talent of speaking well on political subjects.

## IGNORANCE.

WHAT can be more ridiculous than to see one pope excommunicating those who believed in the Antipodes, and another bestowing countries, of which he knew neither the position nor existence, on two nations scarcely better acquainted with them than himself?

When at last there was no denying the existence of a new world, it was not admitted that the inhabitants were men; they were ranked in the class of *ourang-outangs*, or great monkeys; and the conscience of the Europeans being quieted by that fine distinction, they hunted these animals in human form as we hunt wild beasts.—Such was the blessed effect of ignorance.

An opposite conduct will be displayed in the following paragraphs.

It is only among a free and enlightened people that there can arise a Doctor Turnbull. Animated by a passion much superior to that of glory, by the love of liberty, Turnbull saw with grief the descendants of the Spartans and Athenians groaning under the yoke of the Turks, and conceived the generous plan of rescuing these unhappy Greeks from their chains, and

of transplanting them into a free country. Florida, ceded by Spain to England in 1763, was the field where he wished to rally that oppressed race, and to present them with the freedom they enjoyed in ancient times. Fellettoned to their country, offered to transport them to America at his own expense, to purchase for them a tract of ground, and to furnish them with provisions and utensils. A thousand Greek slaves accepted these generous proposals, embarked, crossed the seas, arrived and founded a town, around which sprang up a colony that soon perceived the inestimable advantages of liberty.

Never could a like idea have entered the head of a Spaniard, of a Frenchman, or of a German, impressed with false political notions. It required the glowing enthusiasm which a free constitution inspires, to feel compassion for the slavish condition of the modern Greeks, and to exert in their behalf a species of generosity so new and so singular.

Benezet, a quaker, speaks against the slavery of the negroes; he preaches every where for their liberty; he converts at first some of his countrymen, and these convert others in their turn. The emancipation of the negroes re-sounds on the footsteps of this apostle of humanity,

manity, who travels over all the United States, and awakens in the heart of mankind those dormant virtues which need only to be put in action. Benezet demonstrates to the Americans that they will be gainers by the abolition of that shameful traffic, and that, having become free by the visible protection of heaven, the Americans are destined to regenerate the dignity of man. At the voice of this virtuous orator, the emancipation of the negroes gains ground in every sect and throughout all the states. Those who were slow in being roused, enacted the severest laws against the slavery of the negroes, and scrupled not to disavow their old barbarism. Thus, a single man, by the majesty of the cause which he defends, by his noble and generous purpose, gains an unconquerable ascendancy over his nation, over the age he lives in, perhaps over the whole world; for the Europeans will never hear the name of *Benezet*, or read the humane code of the United States in favour of the blacks, without respecting virtues so new, which they must admire if they cannot attain.

The body which instructs will second every useful and generous idea; but, instead of snatching the helm from the hands of well-meaning statesmen, and of precipitating a measure of  
 which

which the maturity does not as yet warrant the success, it will arm the voice of sentiment, and turn the eyes of the West Indian planters upon the virtuous and peaceful inhabitants of Pennsylvania.

A sincere and eloquent voice will shew the fertility that crowns such fields as are cultivated by the hands of freemen, and will point to the happy and flourishing proprietors: these will no longer have to dread the stifled rage and the dark revenge of the slave, whose luring eye seeks the poisonous herb that may enable him to deal back death to his oppressor.

It will exhibit humane masters dividing with their servants the precious fruits of their common mother, without being the poorer, and above all without being obliged every day to repress the workings of remorse; for I am still disposed to believe that remorse pierces, with its inevitable point, the tyrant, who having made man a slave, and degraded the whole human race in his person, makes a property even of his children, and holds in chains, by an inconceivable assumption of power, the existing generation, and generations yet unborn.

## OF THE LEAGUE.

AS no league is comparable to the confederations that were formed in the civil wars against the hateful Henry III. and against Henry IV. whose good qualities were not yet known, from the year 1576 to 1593, the denomination of *the league* was particularly applied to the combats that resulted from that noble union, which, under the pretext of religion, was at bottom no more than a struggle between tyranny and liberty. What proves this is, that an article in the act of the confederation subscribed on entering into the league, presented to all the orders of the kingdom the hopes of seeing restored the *liberties, franchises, and privileges* which the provinces and nobility enjoyed *under the reign of Clovis*. Let us throw new light on this interesting part of our history. I know not any subject better adapted to elucidate what is transacting at present: we perceive the same people, the same genius, and the same courage, as well as a singular coincidence in the occurrences of these distant periods.

This love of liberty which agitated the minds of our forefathers was marred by theology; the arguments



arguments of the Sarbonne blunted the pikes of patriotism. Let us profit by the faults of those who have gone before us ; let us not be deceived by words, nor forget that kings never acquire so much power as at the close of a violent civil commotion. We shall see what melancholy consequences flowed from the prejudices of our brave ancestors. Let us take care not to be dragged into the same abyss by the mistaking of fantastic terms for realities.

Civil war is never so dangerous in a monarchy as in a republic ; in a monarchy, it always begins with destroying some usurpations and a number of abuses ; the people better their condition by force of arms, and one or two victories give new vigour to the laws. But a republic torn by civil war, continues in an everlasting state of agitation.

Every nation resembles a vast ocean of which the waves still remain in motion after the action of the winds has ceased. The ideas of the *league* and of the *fronde* \* have re-appeared with all the lustre which reason in a more perfect and enlightened state must produce among a people far advanced in improvement ; and their

\* The appellation given to the country-party in the civil broils during the minority of Louis XIV. *Translator.*

triumph

triumph is to be ascribed to the ripeness of men's minds. They have had time to know and to feel all the calamities inseparable from an unlimited monarchy.

How happened it that France did not then assume another form and a combination totally different? Every spirit was ardent and fiery to excess, and actuated by a vigorous and determined will. Every limb was nervous and clad in armour; strength, obstinacy, enthusiasm; all bespoke the life of the body-politic. Why was that immense force not directed in that age of superstition, by salutary ideas and by principles restorative of liberty? Why did a people wear out its constancy by contending for chimeras, instead of obtaining the real advantages which were then in its power?

Thus, by a fatal opposition, but too well evidenced by history, courage and knowledge seldom meet together\*. Habitual intrepidity belongs to such an age, but it is only a blind force which acts by chance. Political and just ideas spring up in another age, when men are softened and enervated, and their weak and degraded minds equally destitute of vigour and character.

\* The immortal year 1789 has happily belied my first proposition; for I wrote all this, word for word, in 1781.

The times of our civil wars, in spite of fanaticism, are those in which the philosopher loves to contemplate bold, intrepid, and impassioned souls; and he regrets that such rare virtues were not applied with more discernment to causes truly great, patriotic, and worthy of valorous deeds.

Thus, the fanaticism of that age ought to be doubly abhorred by philosophers, because it corrupted civil war, which to an oppressed and generous people is often the most useful of all possible events. England, Holland, Switzerland, &c. have purchased with their blood the rights of humanity; while we, after so many struggles and combats, when these same convulsions evinced the force of individuals and the strong temper of the state, tired and desponding, sunk down again to our old level, and submitted to the yoke of Richelieu twenty-two years after so many examples of firmness and resolution. Five and twenty years were spent in butchering one another for visionary notions; and the nation, with arms in its hands, could neither discover nor discuss its true political interests.

Let us go back to the origin of that famous league, which might have regenerated the  
state,

state, and yet only harassed it; which was instituted at first by the wisest motives, and degenerated through the fanaticism of priests\*; which was supported by great men and true patriots, and was afterwards shamefully lost in the absurdity of theological quarrels. Let us endeavour to discover what timid historians have, through prejudice or adulation, feared to declare. At a certain distance, the true causes of events disappear, and we behold only the predominant colours which certain pens, either venal or misled, have pleased to bestow upon objects. Let us appeal to facts; let us inquire above all what was then the disposition of the popular mind; it leaves a visible impression, and naked truth has a degree of energy peculiar to itself.

The administration of Louis XII. was unfortunately of short duration. Notwithstanding many political faults, he left the kingdom rich and well cultivated; and cultivation is the surest pledge of prosperous population. Casting his eye upon his successor, this good king, whose memory deserves to be blessed, and who was a good judge of mankind, exclaimed with a sigh, *Alas! we labour in vain; this big boy will spoil*

\* Thus in 1790 they diverted, marred, and brought to nothing, the revolution begun in Brabant.

*all.* He prophesied but too well. Francis I. had none of the qualities necessary to govern a state: he possessed those which are fatal to its happiness. A misplaced bravery, a prodigal disposition, a haughty presumption, an inclination for arbitrary sway, a pompous profusion, and a criminal rapacity, separated the interests of the prince from those of his people. His love of the arts was more allied to the love of luxury than to that of humanity: nor, in reality, do pictures, statues, palaces, music, verses, and songs, the particular pleasures of exactors and public robbers, establish the felicity of a nation. Writers themselves are too frequently deceived by these equivocal marks.

But the posterity of Francis I. filled the throne only to disgrace it. Four detestable and successive reigns, stained with all the most horrid and most destructive crimes, overwhelmed the kingdom; and during the space of forty-two years, there was nothing but one continued scene of violence, cruelty, and perfidy. The effeminacy of Henry II. and his obsequiousness to the duchess of Valentinois and her favourites; the puerile weakness of Francis II. and his implicit submission to the princes of Guise and their creatures; the ferocitv

city and madness of Charles IX.\*; the infamous debauchery, the vile superstition, and the immense profusion of Henry III.—All these wicked kings dishonoured royalty, the French nation, and human nature itself. History ought to brand with peculiar infamy those most odious enemies of their country who availed themselves of their elevation to tear it in pieces.

Catherine of Medicis, to extend her authority, kept poison on the one hand, and on the other a band of women of gallantry to corrupt and enervate the princes of the court, and to gain possession of their secrets: she sought the philosopher's stone with forcerers and alchemists; and, no less forward to trample upon the people than her Italian farmers of the revenue, she sent to the king to have the edicts

\* The massacre of St. Bartholomew was the crime of the throne; this crime was plotted during seven years between the courts of Charles IX. and of Philip II. Charles IX. signed the massacre of St. Bartholomew at an age when even the worst kings have shown virtues and sensibility. He fired upon his own subjects, and yet historians have shamefully made his youth a plea to extenuate his guilt. What proves that he was barbarous and not superstitious, is the express orders he gave to save the life of *Ambrose Paré*, his first surgeon. His reason was, that he ought not to take away the life of a man who might preserve his own.

fabricated by that infamous gang registered by the parliament. The king went, with a fort of intrepidity, to meet the hatred and disdain of the people.

Mankind are very patient ; but, when they are at last too bitterly provoked, they exact a dreadful penalty from tyrannical power. Public distress is always a sure sign that the government is bad. All the orders of the state, equally discontented, rose at once. It was this concurrence that gave force and character to the infant league ; and I think I can discover its true origin in the extreme wretchedness of the people. Men's minds were no doubt heated by different pretexts ; but all seemed united against the throne. The real motive of this civil war was not *the defence of the Catholic religion*. We may learn from the writings of the times the just and violent hatred borne to the children of Catherine of Medicis, and the loud complaints uttered on all sides. The people then cast their eyes upon the Duke of Guise, brave, generous, magnanimous, and popular ; they saw him lamenting the oppression they suffered, and giving them consolation and relief ; they beheld in him the protector of the nation and the assertor of its forgotten rights.

There was a party of *politicians*, which, al-  
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an eternal pledge of the public felicity \*. The grandees, more dexterous and more unprincipled, sold for *good hard cash* their servile obedience, and thought only of making private agreements. Henry IV. promised all they asked †, and engaged to pay the most considerable sums: every placeman in this tumultuous anarchy, minding only his little sordid concerns, appeared to neglect, or rather to despise, the general interest.

What was the consequence? The despotism of Richelieu, against the nature of things, arose out of these civil wars; it arose out of them to punish that people which had courage to take arms and to die, fighting bravely for barren opinions, without being able to form a chain of just reasoning ‡. Twenty-two years after, Richelieu

\* Paris is worth a mass, said he; and this mass gave him a crown. So Louis XVI. by accepting and kissing the three-coloured cockade on the 17th of July 1789, changed in a minute the general disposition of men's minds. Good people! you were marked out that day for slaughter! Good people! a trifle appeases you!

† The negotiations undertaken at Rome for obtaining from the pope the absolution of Henry, are really incredible; and it is equally hard to conceive the inflexibility of the pope and the necessity of a king of France for this absolution.

‡ Richelieu was only capable of making sacrifices. Henry IV. or any other great man, would have made the two religions



lieu was destined to reign ; that Richelieu who crushed the very grandees that sold themselves and their children. This cardinal, with the audacity of a priest who has neither country nor children, dared to destroy all the intermediate powers ; and Louis XIV. for whom he cleared the way with but too much success, entered booted and spurred among the depositaries, the organs, and the guardians of our laws, who, in the absence of the states-general, necessarily supplied their place. He forbade them even to *remonstrate* ; and afterwards, when these bodies of magistrates, vain shadows of our ancient liberties, and blasted by royal contempt, came humbly to represent at the feet of the throne his errors, oppressions, injustice, profusion, &c. the monarch replied theologically, by driving the petitioners out of the palace: *I owe no reckoning to the nation, I hold my crown of God alone.*

Let us pause, and consider the condition of the people who suffered so much and gained nothing at all ; let us examine the force of preju-

religions subsist together, by permitting a third or more to be established. But Richelieu calculated which half of the state he should crush, to subject it to the other half ; and the ascendant of his cruel character was mistaken for genius : fatal genius, which could only choose between crimes !

dices in that age, the slow progress of true knowledge, and what it is that occasions the debasement of the human mind: this view will abundantly evince the necessity of the light of beneficent philosophy, which, with all its power, may resist national servitude. While, in this state of ignorance, the people were performing prodigies of valour which might have been directed to a better purpose, the cardinal Granvelle, aided by Philip II. that ferocious enemy of all freedom, civil, political, and religious, was desirous to lay on them the additional load of the inquisition; and they stretched forth their hands to welcome this new curse, although withered by famine and imbrued in blood. And to what were all the claims of this valiant nation then limited? To this general and inconceivable cry, *can we take a heretic into the throne of St. Louis?*

Whence then arose this invincible horror to the protestant church? Did the catholic communion ever establish the smallest liberties of the subject? On the contrary, it was a new transalpine and shameful yoke, added to so many others. The people thought neither of a social compact, nor of its privileges, nor of its franchises. *To be king of France, they said, it was more necessary to be a catholic than a man.* All

the adherents of Henry were judged *guilty of treason against God and man*; an expression which has since grown so common among the fanatics of all sects.

Henry ascended the throne, after having fought like a true soldier. Paris opened to him its gates, and instantly had adieu to its ardent obstinacy, content with having courageously defended transubstantiation. France became his conquest; he purchased the dismembered parts from the rapacity of the great, who retained them some years, and blushed not afterwards to sell them to him a second time. We cannot see without surprize that their descendants have the assurance to style that *fidelity* and *affection*, which was nothing but rapacity disguised under the least deceitful appearances. Consult the memoirs of the age. The good Henry was reduced to the incapacity of discharging his promises, so many obligations had been imposed on him of a pecuniary and burdensome nature. He had already paid thirty-two millions to that venal and interested nobility which had made him purchase its respectful submission.

Henry undoubtedly stood in need of the qualities of a merchant to bring over the French, the Germans, the English, and the Dutch, who served in his army. He had to stifle the envy  
and

And jealousy of those grandees who were already moulding themselves to the art of the courtier. To establish union among so many subjects of discord, became a work that demanded uncommon address: he possessed it; he pardoned, he forgot past injuries; he was a good king on the throne, because he had endured bad fortune, and had been brought up in the best school of adversity. He had often been in want of the necessaries of life; and he had afterwards a fellow-feeling for those in the same situation. He was three years a state prisoner; never did he convert his authority to despotism. He had risked his life in battles; he was clement after victory. He had more than once seen the poignard raised against his breast; he respected the blood of mankind.

If he changed his religion, it was more from policy than conviction. We have indubitable evidences of his way of thinking. Exposed perpetually to the holy poignards of the catholics; outraged by the popes, who, well acquainted with the genius of their age, hurled from the top of the Vatican those thunders which re-echoed over all Europe; censured vehemently by the frantic declaimers so eloquent among the populace, and tired of their violence and perfidy, he wrote to Corisande of Andouin: *all these assassins, all these poisoners are papists, and you are*

*of that religion! I would rather be a Turk.* He explained the political reasons of his conversion to Elizabeth, queen of England, and sent to Gabrielle d'Estrées a letter, in which speaking of his abjuration, he says, *to-morrow I take the perilous leap.*

It is probable that, by persevering in the system of war, to the exclusion of every other, Henry IV. might have ascended the throne without abjuring his creed. The protestants would in that case have redoubled their zeal, their attachment, and their courage; and the catholics, struck with his heroic resolution, would have conceived a respect to him which they never entertained, for they imputed the conversion of Henry IV. to self-interest. That interest was indeed too predominant not to leave in the minds of men some doubts with regard to the sincerity of his change. Let us add that this valiant prince could by his firmness have rendered an eternal service to France by delivering her from the yoke of Rome; a yoke which he could have broken with the sword of victory; a yoke, despicable and yet fatal in its effects, which afterwards lighted up in this kingdom so many absurd and theological quarrels, the disgrace of human reason, and the cause of the longest and most inconceivable civil rage. The  
 revocation

revocation of the edict of Nantes, of which the baneful consequences defy all calculation; the persecution of the reformers; the disputes of the Jansenists and Molinists, continued down to our own days. These miserable and cruel errors make us pity the French nation, which, debased and lost in such ridiculous questions, appeared to neglect every other concern, though exposed to the eyes of all Europe, which is not yet recovered from its long astonishment. The protestant religion, stifling those shameful and dishonourable wars at their birth, would have conducted the kingdom to a degree of liberty, of population, and of force, which has passed over to our neighbours, grown powerful by our errors.

Much eulogy has been bestowed on Henry IV. \* and admiration has been carried to idolatry; but this idolatry, current only for half a century past, arose from the resentment that wished to create a strong opposition to the character of the reigning monarchs. It is always well for a nation to set up a phantom decorated with all the virtues which it would inspire into its monarchs; this is a skilful, useful, and there-

\* Too much unquestionably, but this was by Voltaire, and out of hatred to Louis XV. Henry IV. was a gentleman-king, rather than a citizen-king.

fore respectable convention. Besides, this model of princely virtues serves as an indirect satire upon all malversations; and the praises heaped on a deceased king are so many lessons which may touch the inattentive minds of monarchs, and make them comprehend the general will. Let us beware, then, of weakening an opinion calculated to keep his successors in awe, and to confine them by the only rein which they can now receive. They will always be great enough, if they imitate Henry IV. in several of his good qualities.

It was in order to show to mankind that *mistaken religious ideas lead to a multitude of political errors, and materially hurt the national felicity*, that I have undertaken this recital, which faithfully exhibits the actions and the prejudices of our brave, but deluded ancestors.

Alas! how mad is that abominable zeal, jealous of some particular mode of worship, attacking the refractory with fire and sword, sowing division in the state and discord among families! And what sacrilegious piety is that which tramples humanity under foot and makes a crime even of compassion! Can a man the most hostile to philosophy ever look on Francis I. as religious, who caused the protestants to be burnt in Paris, while he supported them in  
Germany

Germany, kept them in pay, and signed treaties with them? But the most absurd incongruities are the fairest features which characterize fanaticism.

Let us then exhibit vile and despicable superstition in its true colours! This is the only way to preserve man from the numerous errors into which he is ever apt to relapse from his propension to make heaven speak, and to mingle the most atrocious passions, hatred, ambition, and revenge, with the sublime and pure views of religion, calm and compassionate by its nature.

Thus sang the enlightened and elegant Lucretius near two thousand years ago:—

Humana ante oculos fœde cum vita jaceret  
 In terris oppressa gravi sub religione,  
 Quæ caput a cœli regionibus ostendebat,  
 Horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans;  
 Primum Graius homo mortaleis tollere contra  
 Est oculos ausus, primusque obistere contra:  
 Quem nec fama Deûm, nec fulmina, nec  
 minitanti

Murmure compressit cœlum.—————

Lib. I. 63.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the philosophical Epicurus, the monster has again made its



appearance in several ages. He delights in the thick darkness of barbarism; he dreads the smallest ray of light, which he would be happy to exclude. There is reason to apprehend that he still reigns triumphant in some parts of Europe. Does not he at this moment rear his hideous head in Spain, and endeavour to re-establish there the infernal throne of the holy inquisition? Has he not opposed in Poland the principles of civil and religious liberty? And have not the refractory priests been the most ardent and most implacable enemies of the French constitution? Have they not given the appellation of *impious sign* to the national cockade which is destined to pervade the universe? The philosopher should always stand sentinel, with the naked sword in his hand, to watch the approaches and attempts of this monster, to pursue and pierce him, and to plunge into his lacerated bowels the steel which he dreads and which he bites with foaming rage. No repose, no truce: the extent of past evils, the deep wounds inflicted upon humanity and not yet healed, the influence which despicable and despised ideas have had and still have on many sovereigns of Europe, the sort of yoke which they wear with trembling, and dare not shake off by reason of the ancient

frenzy with which the monster struck the whole earth; all these considerations should induce the writer to lift the club aloft in the air, and discharge redoubled blows upon fanaticism, which in our own days only resumes the language of heaven to deceive and oppress mankind.

As, after one shock of an earthquake, it usually happens that others follow, so to the commotion of men's minds in the league succeeded a kind of second league, the *fronde*. That civil war bore a ridiculous character, it must be allowed, but it wanted not a sort of energy; and if it was not in every respect rational, it was very prolific in discourses that contained many just ideas, and seemed to prepare for a greater and more successful explosion.

The arresting of a president and of a counsellor of the parliament excited a general revolt. Jokes were passed, it is true, but still the people were in arms; and why should we judge only from the success of the struggle? This war, because unimportant in its consequences and confined to a narrow territory, gave occasion to raillery, so congenial to Frenchmen. The parliament nevertheless passed decrees which amounted to a real *declaration of war*

*War* against the throne and against despotism. A bishop was declared generalissimo; this was whimsical, but it was energetic: the counterpoise of arbitrary power might have been then established. Twelve hundred barriers erected in a city in the space of twelve hours, behind which the townsmen fired, might intimidate the court, and serve as a presage of what the Parisians would one day perform when they should take the Bastille in two hours. The *frondeurs* had at their head the Duke of Beaufort, grandson of Henry IV. the coadjutor, whose counsels were surely not moderate, the prince of Conti, and the marshal Turenne: this looked not, I should think, like a riot, as M. Gaillard terms it. Historians and biographers have been short-sighted in ridiculing that war; for the revolt of the capital might have spread much farther, and the hour of revolution might then have struck.

The people had a real motive: they opposed the pecuniary edicts sent to parliament and the detention of two of its members whom it became necessary to liberate. This civil war, under a king who was a minor, might have turned out very serious. It stopt of itself; but I cannot find in it that contemptible character with which historians have wished to impress it.

We are apt to judge from events. The observer who places himself again in the true point of view, beholds the facts in a quite different light. I see Louis XIV. obliged to fly his capital: if at this juncture, Condé had been against him, what would have happened? Condé did not brave the throne till several years after. Imagine Condé to be then what he became in the sequel, and judge of the consequence.

Lastly, the duke of Beaufort, styled *the king of the market-halls*, a name which implies much in many circumstances, might have kindled and propagated the sedition and converted it into an insurrection. The parliament proceeded openly against the minister; passed acts against him, banished him, and set a price on his head.

Condé afterwards wished, as may be said, to have a taste of civil war; and entered into a league with the Spaniards. Observe likewise that the daughter of the Duke of Orleans gave orders to fire the cannon of the Bastille upon the royal army. The king of Spain created Condé generalissimo. It was Turenne that saved the king and the royal family, and chance had a great share in the side he took. If Condé and Turenne had not ranged themselves on opposite

posite sides, if these generals had united their skill, the war would have produced great and decisive consequences. It was during the same time, that Charles I. king of England, not juridically but very politically, lost his head on a scaffold, for betraying his people and his oaths. The principles of sedition and revolt in the two nations had a very different issue: the *fronde* disappeared and all the conspirators vanished, while the alliance of Cromwell was courted on all sides, and Mazarin made a treaty with him.

Although Mazarin returned to Paris as in triumph, the object of this civil war was to shake arbitrary power. But the volcano, richly fed with combustibles during the reigns of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. was not destined to make its great and successful explosion, till the 14th of July 1789. Every thing was prepared to swallow up that despotic Colossus which oppressed and debased the nation, but which fatal circumstances had always preserved from the stroke of the avenging thunder that it had provoked for five hundred years. Happy the man who has seen the flame of the volcano and the tempest which has overwhelmed the throne of despotism! He was born a subject and even a slave; he will fall to sleep in the tomb satisfied and free.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN HENRY AND SULLY.

HENRY.

COME, my dear Rosny, let us have a private conversation—They will hardly believe me to be a catholic. They persist in saying that I can be absolved only by the pope, and consequently reign only by his sufferance.

SULLY.

Sire, the way to render vain all the thunders of the Vatican is to conquer: then you will easily obtain your absolution. But if you are not victorious, you will remain for ever excommunicated.

HENRY.

I should already have vanquished; but I love my city of Paris; it is my eldest child. I am desirous of preserving it in all its splendor. It would have been necessary to lay it in waste with fire and sword\*. The chiefs of the league and the Spaniards have so little compassion on the poor Parisians! They are their tyrants; but I, who am their father and their king, cannot

\* He had no such intention, the good king! No prince of the blood, no man of the court durst make him the proposition, or deceive him on that head.

behold

Behold those calamities without being grieved to the heart. I have done every thing to find a remedy for them; nay I have got by heart and can repeat the catechism \* which they have given me.

SULLY.

You have done wisely, Sire; the theologians are not to be otherwise appeased. Believe me, the action most agreeable to God will always be to spare the blood of men, and put an end to the evils which they endure, whether from blindness, or from obstinacy.

HENRY.

But would there not have been more heroism and firmness in supporting the protestant doctrine, and in raising it with me to the throne, thus giving to my subjects a religion simpler, purer, and better calculated to destroy the numerous and incredible abuses of the sacerdotal authority?

\* The archbishop of Bourges made him several times recite his catechism; they imposed on him the personal obligation *to bear mass every day*, a custom constantly followed by his successors, *to attend the sacraments four times in the year, and to recall the Jesuits*. This last article is remarkable. The catholic must look on Henry as hypocritical, the calvinist as ungrateful, the courtier as covetous: the philosopher regards him in none of these lights.

SULLY.

SULLY.

If this could have been effected without risking your crown, without plunging France into endless war, it would have been very advantageous for the state to receive from you the principle of its felicity and of its grandeur, and to destroy the bud of the fatal discords sent to us from Rome. But it is evidently requisite first to subdue the capital, that you may afterwards drive your enemies from the centre of the kingdom to the frontiers.

HENRY.

This abjuration has cost my heart a violent struggle.

SULLY.

It was necessary—It was indispensable to my entry into Paris.

HENRY.

You were the first who advised me to go to mass, and yet you remain a protestant.

SULLY.

It becomes me so to do. They hated your religion and not your person; it was requisite that you should become a catholic. But with regard to me, I was free to remain faithful to the law of my fathers.

HENRY.

I have more than once reproached myself with  
with



with weakness; and only derive consolation from the idea that my conversion will re-establish peace. Alas! what should not be sacrificed to this great interest?

SULLY.

The minds of men are not yet prepared for a happy change—No remorse, Sire! Kings should be above particular sects, and attach themselves only to that religion which, composed of pure elements, emanates from the breast of the divinity, of which they are the images here below, when they are enlightened, firm, and beneficent: they ought to be superior to those superstitious practices which abase reason, degrade the people, and take away their energy and their virtues. It belongs to them to prepare by degrees for their subjects a rational worship, worthy of man, and to quash, either by contempt or by an attentive prudence, those miserable quarrels which have so often deluged the earth with blood. Thus it is, that sublime and provident lawgivers become the benefactors of the human race.

HENRY.

Would to God that I could appear in that character, and could conduct this age to truth! But bred in a religion which has restored to human reason a part of its liberty, I am constrained to

go backwards ; dragged along by the barbarism which surrounds me on all sides, I am obliged to embrace a mode of worship full of inocking absurdities. Alas ! what will become of my good intentions in favour of mankind ?

SULLY.

You will do much good by seeming to yield to the torrent which cannot be resisted. You ought first to attend to what is most urgent, and overthrow the fanaticism that butchers your subjects before your eyes. Give it the signal which it requires to appease its rage ; touch the altar where it will fall vanquished and disarmed ; and take away its dagger and its torch—One mass heard will chain the monster down, and prevent the effusion of blood : hear that mass, and consider this nation, sometimes mad, and sometimes furious, like a nation of children that must be kept in order by the illusions they are fond of.

HENRY, *with affection.*

Do thou, my dear Rosny, whom nothing urges to this sacrifice, do thou remain faithfully attached to the reformed religion. The weight of thy name, thy virtues, and thy manly probity, render thee head of a party which I can no longer favour too openly, but which will al-

ways retain my heart and affections : not that it is free from the filth which it has contracted by its vicinity to popery ; but it will shake off the remains of its vile superstitions, and soon we shall see a religion arise which the dignity of human reason may avow before the face of the divinity.

SULLY.

Prince ! if I am able to penetrate into futurity, and can foresee the progress of the human mind, the idol of Rome must fall by degrees ; abuses and knowledge will one day conduct France to the protestant communion ; and protestantism itself, having purified its worship, will at last exhibit to the universe the true worshippers of God in spirit and in truth. Then, freed from a ridiculous and disgraceful mixture of tenets, she will rise pure and resplendent, and lift up her head to heaven. She will captivate with ease all firm minds and virtuous hearts, who will cherish her chaste and noble attractions ; they who revolted at the degrading and injurious ideas under which divines dared to represent the Creator of the universe and the august Father of mankind.

HENRY.

Happy the prince who shall preside at that epoch, and who shall be assisted in the mighty change

change

change by national wisdom \* as much as I have been thwarted by madness and fanaticism !

SULLY.

One of your descendants, Sire, one of those vigorous and exalted souls that Providence keeps in reserve, who are passionately bent on doing good, who conceive, resolve on, and achieve great enterprizes, will break the yoke of the religious tyrants who fill men's minds with mystical chimeras, and whose idle opulence saps the force of the state. France, then delivered from the secret principle of its destruction, will resume its lustre and renown.

HENRY.

May he perform what I am not suffered to attempt amidst so many fierce spirits, doting upon their servitude ! This kingdom, degraded by its fatal union with Rome, will not recover the natural ascendant which it ought to have over all its neighbours till it shall have adopted the urgent reform that shall proscribe at once the immense and annual tribute paid to the chair of St. Peter, the scandalous celibacy of the priests, that useless army of cenobites, and all those arbitrary and ridiculous chains which attack alike the privileges of the man and of the citizen.

\* The reader will be pleased to remember that here I only reprint word for word what I published in 1782.

SULLY.

Time and reason will realize the generous emotions of your heart—Believe me your children, recollecting you, will restore to man that freedom which the atrocity of barbarous ages has ravished from him; and the imaginary power of Rome, reduced to its just level, will no longer provoke any thing but the smile of the sage.

HENRY.

I accept the omen, my dear Rosny; but will not my friends say that I have given way to interest, and to the desire of reigning?

SULLY.

You would have been culpable, when the vessel of the state was assailed by so furious a tempest, not to have put your hand to the helm. It was your part alone to save it. Restorer of France, no, they will never cast upon you that reproach. They are sensible that the first duty of a king is to provide for the repose of his country; that he is not a hypocrite for putting fanaticism off its scent:—My dear master, is it not the same God that we adore, the God who commands us to love mankind and to do for them all the good in our power?—It is the same gospel, that is, the same system of morality which you acknowledge as the rule of practice.

tice.—The rest, Sire, is a vain dispute about words.

HENRY.

Undoubtedly, my dear Rosny; and those who adore the same God, who follow the sublime morality of the gospel, ought at last to unite, embrace, and regard each other as brethren.—Are they not so indeed, since they agree on the same duties, and honour the same virtues?

SULLY.

A worship so rational, so simple, so pure, would shock too much the ambition and pride of the catholic priests, who have loaded religion with extraneous monstrosities. They have need of bewildering the mind of man in the dark confusion of their dogmas and their mysteries.

HENRY.

How anxiously do my wishes anticipate the day when France shall be enlightened, when the spirit of persecution shall cease, when, for want of disputants, the fantastic food of these shameful quarrels shall fail! In the mean time be assured, my dear Rosny, that, faithful to my principles as much as I can without rekindling divisions and discords, I shall establish toleration in my dominions: this alone constitutes the glory and the force of empires.

SULLY.

That conduct, Sire, is a duty recommended by humanity, by wisdom, by gratitude, and even by policy.

HENRY.

Ah! my dear Rosby, I never speak my thoughts aloud on these subjects unless with you—who ought more than myself to detest fanaticism? How often have I seen the knife lifted against my breast! I have ever before mine eyes the bleeding and lacerated body of the unfortunate Coligny \*, whose virtues and probity could not save him from the ferocity of the catholics. They will kill me, my friend, they will kill me: but no matter; I wish to hold both religions in my hand, and I will equally protect those, to my last breath, from whom I have been obliged to part †.

SULLY.

\* Coligny was the only man qualified to establish in France a free constitution. His virtue was firm, while that of others yielded to circumstances. The poignard of the assassins on the night of St. Bartholomew plunged into his tomb the most generous defender of the liberties of the people. L'Hopital was more attached to the throne than to the people.

† Henry IV. issued the famous edict of Nantes, revoked by the rigid intolerance of Louis XIV. The condition of the protestants was settled in France; they were satisfied and tranquil, and this edict was at once the work of his wisdom, of his gratitude, of his attachment, and of his toleration. What need had the blindest fanaticism to destroy that monument of concord?

SULLY.

Act and proceed always under the eye of God, and you need never fear men.

HENRY.

Yes, I submit entirely to providence. (*After a pause.*) I require, to make my people happy, a man possessed of your knowledge and of your firmness; for there are many criminals to withstand—Know you the term of my wishes, the desired object of my labours? It is, my friend, that every husbandman, even the meanest peasant, shall every Sunday have *a ben for his pot*. From that source, my friend, all is derived, joy, health, force, population, and the blessings which are sent up to heaven and fall afterwards upon the heads of kings—Believe me, I have your maxims deeply imprinted on my heart.

SULLY.

Generous prince, may you always have the courage to do good; for this is a very difficult task amidst those rapacious men, those haughty concord? The deep wound inflicted on our country is not yet healed. Alas! how wretched then is the constitution of our government, that a single man, misled or intoxicated with pride, could create in the kingdom such long and almost incurable evils! Why should an unjust and barbarous command still bear sway after him, when he has sunk into the tomb, loaded with the reproaches of the thinking part of the nation?



courtiers, who regard only themselves, and never the people.

HENRY.

Never conceal the truth from me, my dear Rosny. I desire it, I seek it, and believe myself born with a disposition to listen to it.

SULLY.

I will prove my absolute devotion to you, by never disguising any thing which may interest your glory and the happiness of your people.  
(*He retires.*)

#### THEOLOGIANs.

MOST theologians have separated what the Author of nature united, and out of one religion have made a thousand. It was the fruit of vast and profound reading in theological works that persuaded the illustrious Boerhaave, that religion, very simple as it issued from the mouth of God, is at present disfigured by vain, or rather vicious, philotophical subtleties, which have occasioned nothing but eternal dissensions and the fiercest of animosities. He was tempted to hold a public disputation on this question: *why christianity, preached formerly by ignorant men, had*  
*made*

*made such vast progress, and now makes so little when preached by the learned.*

If I may be allowed to investigate the reasons of this fact, I must refer them to their twisted and forced explanations; to the boldness of their decisions, which are often founded upon their own authority only, and dictated by pride or interest; to the absurd, fabulous doctrines, in every respect hostile to reason and the good of society; and to those tenets which superstition has mingled with the pure revelation proceeding from heaven. It cannot be doubted but the errors of a great many ecclesiastics, though very learned, have much injured religion, and checked its progress. One needs only open the annals of the church to be in a manner a witness and spectator of their bitter and obscure disputes. With what facility do they pour upon their antagonists the names of heretics and of schismatics? Far from instructing and edifying christians, they inspire them with a horror which must in some measure recoil upon religion. Wishing to extend the empire of certain dogmas which they forged themselves, they contracted the reign of that morality ordained by God, and which establishes peace and order among men. Even when right as to the fact, they were wrong in the form; and  
did

did we even approve their judgments, we could not help blaming their clamours, their abusive reproaches, and their violent proceedings. The ancients placed the graces in the train of wisdom ; but theologians have substituted hatred, revenge, and the dark passion of envy.

#### ON ASSIGNATS.

TO metallic tokens nature has assigned bounds ; and every industrious nation is therefore obliged to create new ones. But for *tokens*, how many things would remain unfold ; it is essentially necessary to possess that which shall establish an agreement between whatever is to be sold, and the *token* by which the merchandize is to be obtained.

Without an active and rapid token productive industry cannot exist, since it is the circulation alone which constitutes riches, and without a multiplicity of changes industry falls to the ground.

Favour then such a circulation, for this is the aim you ought to have in view : and when the national assembly, to revive productive industry, offers assignats on disposable inheritances,

how happens it that this magnificent security does not suffice? What other value can be offered, when terror, avarice, and a want of patriotism, cause the specie to disappear? Would you employ force to bring it again to light?

It enters into the *policy* of the *revolution* to have recourse to a great and firm resolve; and it is not a vulgar resource that must now be resorted to, since all the movements which have produced our security have been extraordinary ones.

Paper money has been often found to obtain a preference over gold and silver, by its rapid movement, and by favouring the circulation in a prodigious degree.

Silver has a *value*, and for that very reason cannot become a *token* of its own *value*: every *value* is therefore displaced and superfluous. When silver is given, a rude truck is made after the manner of savages, of certain islanders who employ fishes as pledges of exchange. The perfection of a polished state is to introduce *tokens* without *value*, to introduce them with security, and to multiply them with the profusion the want of tokens demands. Now, the whole of the specie is insufficient for the quantity of *labours* and of *merchandizes*; and it is not the *labours* which beget *tokens*, but the  
*tokens*

*tokens* which beget labours; or, in other words, it is the *hope*, the *promise*, which in politics as well as in morals puts every thing in motion. Paper of every description labours for the future; and even though it should only save the *present quarter of an hour*, since life consists entirely in the present, it would be infinitely profitable.

Gold and silver are not at the bottom representative tokens of all properties; they are themselves very *real properties*, but are at the same time *illusory riches*, which, if too much accumulated, would become entirely *useless*. The inutility of gold is demonstrable, since the chance that put it in your possession may one day deprive you of it: by ceasing to place the *real* against the *real*, a prodigious source of new riches would be created, seeing that a bit of *paper* might be much more successfully bartered against the simple faculty of obtaining the *real* at will; and we should at length be distinguished from savages by this *political work*, a work that would banish a false usage, and proportion the abundance of tokens to the extent of the need a nation has of them.

Give activity to *every hand*, and riches will spring up: multiply exchanges and trucks, no matter with what token, provided it be acknowledged

knowledged by the whole of the society, and it will invariably effect a real payment in one way or another.

In America certain savages employ cacáonuts as *pledges of their exchanges*: they would do better to eat their money, and circulate from hand to hand small pebbles. We do not eat our gold and silver; but *elevated* opinions are so different from *current* opinions, that the riches are placed in the *strong box*, while they merely reside in the head, that is to say, in the idea that the promise will be realized. *Credit* therefore constitutes the *riches*, and is greater than the material object.

A false half-crown, if it has passed through six hundred hands, has absolved its crime in the view of society: since, if it has deceived one man, it has served five hundred and ninety-nine others, who have enjoyed the phantom as effectually as if it had been a reality. This is above the comprehension of a vulgar mind, which is constantly desirous to destroy the *hen* for her *golden eggs*, and to see the *source* and *depot* of the metal.

Multiply money, and let it even be of the basest and most despicable kind: say to your labourers, this is the recompense of your toils; and these labourers, that is to say, the three  
and

and half fourths of your population, will take your money, your contemptible money, and if it circulates for one single day, it will circulate for a thousand years. Such is the bank of England: confidence is reposed in a monarch, but you will not repose the same confidence in a nation. With the soil of France for a *security*, you oppose *assignats*; and, notwithstanding, the single word *credit* puts in motion incalculable labours, which are paid for, it is true, sooner or later, but are always performed in advance. Speak to me after this of putting yourselves in the power of those who have heaped together *metals*. Riches are waiting the opportunity to give laws to you, because you will not declare that you will dispense with metallic specie.

And whence arises this privilege of *metal*, which is to be exchanged against every species of property! These *metals* are not amassed but by dint of time and labour; and the specie will never be sufficiently abundant to enable every man to be employed, and every merchantable article, finding one who covets it, to meet with a buyer. Considered as a *token*, the poverty of specie is manifest: considered as *riches*, of all riches it is the most *absurd*.

Throughout the extent of the French territory

tory there are thousands of things to sell which do not sell: and in every part we meet with day labourers who offer to sell their labour: for want of *tokens* every thing languishes. Create these, do not be afraid to *multiply* them, and you will in the event see them *pour* themselves over the *land*, because there the first materials are.

Without an abundant distribution of *new tokens*, millions of bargains which can and ought to be made will not be made, and thousands of men will remain without employment: public and private undertakings will be put a stop to, those who possess will not enjoy what they have, and those who might enjoy without possessing, will disturb society for want of employment.

Let the tokens of riches be precisely what they ought to be, *simple tokens*: those who confide in gold and silver alone, are *savages* and nothing better. Allow these tokens to circulate, and you will constantly see them find a level with the necessities of the nation. The true token of property is not gold, but paper; it is not a *truck*, to be employed as it is in the deserts of America, but a *promise*, a title given to a member of the society which assures him that he will one day obtain such a *value*.

Affignats



Assignats are terrifying to those alone who see society in one *unique* or transitory point of view;—to those who do not perceive in the circulation a remedy for every political evil. Movement, movement is needed! it matters not what the stimulus be, multiply the *token*, and if the leaf of paper, the parchment, the bit of leather rises one *farthing* above its *intrinsic* value, the state is saved. Trust to this token, and let it be *paper*; be careful even that it shall be nothing else. Shun the *real value*; for, let me repeat it to you, it is a *promise*: you must receive it or reject it, there is no medium. This paper supported by simple hope, has an advantage over gold; but as we are far above this simple hope, it will become a real and true payment of every value, from the greatest to the smallest.

Montesquieu has observed: “all goes well when money so perfectly represents things, that the things may be had as soon as the money is possessed, and when things so well represent money, that the money may be had as soon as the things are possessed.”

Draw without apprehension the boldest consequences from this fine truth, the newest and most important to be found in his book. Acknowledge with Montesquieu the terrible and  
uncertain

uncertain domination of *metals*, and the absolute want of *tokens*: to the word *specie* substitute the word *paper*; it will answer the same end, and will answer it much better; it will be twenty times more supple and more active, and will vivify the cold and stagnant parts of the kingdom. Polished society will not attain its full perfection, until the abundance of tokens shall have established no difference between *buying* and *selling*, that is to say, until the nation shall be as prompt as the action. With her two milliards of assignats, how very distant is France still from this point?

The wishes of enlightened men will not be accomplished on this head, until human prejudices shall have been subdued. How is the mass of society to be persuaded that their *idol* deceives them? Accustomed to *metals*, they will only be reconciled to paper when it advances the interest of opulence and avarice: they do not perceive that to give a new life to an empire, it is necessary not only to multiply the token, but to raise it also to the height of all the *moveable* and *territorial* property. They seem to feel for the people, and to dread on their account the good effect it will produce on persons in affluent circumstances: but where, unless in *assignats*, is the token to be found that

will free the ground from its sterility, and industry from its stagnation? Where the token that will replace the eclipsed specie; that will create riches by the simple movement of circulation; that will decompose the terrifying mass of accumulated merchandize; and, giving a new confidence to the state creditors, that will at once satisfy justice and public interest?

“ Allow me motion,” said Descartes, “ and I will create a world.” Give me, I say, an *abundant token*, and France will be saved.

The pyramids of Egypt were built with onions; and oak leaves alone will suffice to re-establish public affairs, provided there is prudence in the nation and firmness in the government. If a mine of gold or silver were to be discovered in France, France would be lost; by gold Spain has been undone.

If the token is multiplicable, there is a still stronger reason why it ought to be divisible: it is the indigent class that has the greatest need of this token, seeing that it possesses no credit in itself, but borrows one from the state. The state answers for all those who cannot make the smallest advance, which it makes for them, communicating to them all its force. Out of nothing, nothing can be made, and the slightest burthen requires a lever: the token, whatever

its value may be, is the leaven thrown into the paste ; it disappears, but imparts its substantial quality. So a multitude of men do nothing, and can do nothing, because with an immense quantity of *paste* they have not an atom of *leaven*.

Tyrants have always contrived to derive a great advantage from national credit, but have applied it to their insatiable cupidity, and made it the instrument of much mischief. If as much had been attempted for the splendor of the state, as has been done to accomplish its overthrow, France, the mistress of the finest productions of Europe, and exclusively so of several of them, would in commercial matters have invariably given the law to the surrounding nations ; since the nation that has need of the most essential productions is always tributary.

As a lumbering property specie is nothing ; when it is active it is every thing. Wherever any good and useful aim is to be accomplished, if the *specie* or the *token* be needed, the thing remains to be done : but I have already proved that the ideal token is infinitely preferable to the material token.

Two milliards of assignats have a terrific aspect ; but they are to be diffused over an immense and poor population : they are a vast re-

fervoir which is about to separate into a million of small streams, and these again are to terminate in the arts, in commerce, and more especially in agriculture. This capital, which the nation appears to lend, will be again poured into the national treasury, the people returning with the one hand what they shall have received with the other.

Even although assignats should bestow on a state merely a momentary strength with which it should triumph interiorly over its enemies, this first issue might be considered as a victory, seeing that it is important to give to the wheels of the new and superb machinery their full scope: the motion being once impressed, the machine will move by its own weight, and by the general interest. Then will the enemies of the constitution, themselves hurried on, abandon their romantic ideas; and the ancient idol of despotism, stripped of its last golden fringes, will have no longer either priests or adorers. The soil of France, a fine soil open on every side to cultivation, is the power which will receive the incense, and be cherished; while the slaves who sought gold at the foot of the throne, will search after it in the entrails of the common mother. The national assembly will thus imitate the father who addressed his children: *dig*

*the garden, my sons, you will there find a treasure.* But the garden is not to be broken up without a ploughing instrument; and assignats are the sole and great means of cultivation and fecundity.

\* \* \* This fragment was composed and published two months before the first emission of assignats in France, and when it was in contemplation to issue them to the amount of two milliards of livres. The measure then experienced a strenuous opposition; and the author flatters himself that by this effort of his the public were reconciled to the expedient.

#### ADDRESS TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

GENTLEMEN, *February 11, 1790.*

WHEN in your wisdom you decreed the liberty of the press, you wished to crush a despotism the most debasing and most dangerous of all, which hung upon the mind and depressed the flight of human genius, and which strove to extinguish all public knowledge. You were sensible that if it was important for nations to improve continually their internal organization, to enlighten their legislators, their administrators,

and directors of every kind; and it was of no less moment to erect a tribunal which might be at once the greatest restraint upon the enemies of the country, the first chastisement of established tyrants. This active sentinel roused the people at the very moment it was intended to load them with fetters; he it was that prepared and accomplished the revolution.

What is it that really creates the public opinion? The liberty of the press. This is the source of the great political truths upon which depends the fate of all the nations of the earth, and without which servitude and oppression alone would go unpunished.

You have recognized, Gentlemen, that nothing could belong to man, if thought belonged not to him; that to deny him the power of speech was to annihilate the freedom of thought; that there was no medium between the right of speaking and that of writing; and that, the industry of man having invented the press, it was his organ which acted wherever his thought was entitled to act.

The enemies of the revolution tremble at seeing the liberty of the press, that organ of the public opinion which dispenses glory or shame, established in the two worlds. They would fain interrupt that communication of the ideas which  
is

is the beginning of social felicity : it is to the interest of the republic that the wicked should be known, and this they fear. By whom would the faults or crimes of governments be now punished, if not by that moral action which, giving to obscure offences an avenging notoriety, transforms a bold denunciation into an act truly civic.

God has willed that there should exist on earth a thing superior to legislators, to the laws themselves, a thing to which every kind of power owes the homage of submission and respect :— it is the information of the public, and its organ is a free press. Alas ! that gift of the divinity, that great benefit of the legislation, is on the point of being destroyed—and by whom ? by the judges of the *Châtelet*.

If the press be a moral action, why do not our adversaries oppose to it a moral action ? Have ever the enemies of the constitution been laid under any constraint ? Are they not permitted to reply to every thing if they can ? Has their glaring aversion to public liberty been otherwise combated than by the style of compassion ? There is no distinction between citizen and citizen ; constitutional toleration extends to all civil and political opinions. You have not allowed fanaticism, banished from our



altars, to take refuge at the altar of our country. The partizans of the old government have enjoyed an unbounded freedom of the press, and have heaped up accusations and abusive reproaches upon the friends of the revolution, without the latter having ever deigned to complain.

By what wayward disposition have the judges of the *Cbâtelet*, in presence of a mild and tolerating legislature which abhors equally the persecutions of state and of religion, been induced to serve none but despotic ministers; and why have they listened only to their agents, and manifested a disposition to strike the friends of the constitution alone? Why have they not left the public, that supreme censor, to judge of the errors and immorality of authors? Why? It is because, enemies of the rights of man and of nations, they wish at present to stifle all patriotic writers, only, that they may crush the human race with impunity under the weight of arbitrary power.

Individual liberty being extinguished, the *Cbâtelet* has snatched the most odious weapon of tyrannic sway, the surest to intimidate a whole people, by having the air of punishing only a few. It is the public liberty that is menaced, it is the legislature itself, for the sentences of the  
judges

judges of the *Châtelet* shamefully contradict the law; their absurd sentences comprise all the excesses of the most dreadful aristocracy, and, to crown their audacity, the *Châtelet* would fain persuade us that it restrains the press only for the interest of virtue and of mankind.

To regulate the liberty of the press, is to annihilate it: to write is a moral act; it must be unlimited, or it must not exist. Determine then the limits of time and of space, if you would give bounds to thought. Establish an inquisition rather than create responsibility. Yes! an inquisition would be preferable, for one either braves it or is silent; but responsibility opens an immense field for constraint, violence, and tyranny. How mince a truth, how say that a thing is and is not, how soften the hideous colours of vice? There is no term to liberty when the public safety is concerned; and the slavery of thought becomes more shameful than its total absence. To deprive ideas of their independence, is entirely to eclipse the human mind; because its flight can only be measured by its energy, its virtue, and its grandeur.

If a man is born to have an influence upon society, who will dare to repress a prolific idea! an idea which may in an instant decompose

our calamitous and erroneous notions, and present to us a truth useful to mankind! Deny Providence, if you believe not that it has always in store some few men of genius who suddenly inundate the globe with a new flood of knowledge, descending with an accumulating progression from age to age.

The entire liberty of the press, or its annihilation! This is our request; for thought being infinite, the inviolable chain of ideas cannot be divided; and the power which transmits them, being equally unlimited, can suffer no constraint.

What would responsibility become? The perfidious dagger of despotism, claiming the appellation of the sword of justice; and soon this dagger would assassinate patriotism.

The pretext assumed for murdering the constitution is to call out a libel! At this vague word one would suppose it necessary to shut out truth, to obliterate the art of printing, to efface the shifting picture of the human mind, which by turns represents different things, and to extinguish in man the capacity of discerning between good and evil. Then would men be automata, and no longer stand in need of laws. But there is no such thing as a libel; it is a phantom which imposes upon a timorous imagination.

gination. If the composition contains some truths, it cannot be a libel ; and if it be a heap of falsehoods, let it be detected, and it will sink into contempt. Besides, are there vivid colours in the universe without strong contrasts? Every thing here below must endure opposition and contention ; and virtue in my opinion is only real, when it has maintained an obstinate contest. A thought is not an action, and tribunals can only restrain actions : if my fellow citizen adopt my thoughts, it is only from a conviction of their justness and propriety ; for I do not force his choice or adherence. My thoughts are nothing if nobody adopt them ; if my thoughts are formed to overturn a great abuse, that abuse will not fall till my equals have perceived the danger of it. The exercise of my mind is natural, and consequently lawful ; it is this that modifies the universe : but unless generally adopted, what would it become? I speak to intelligent beings like myself, and if their conceptions do not tally with mine, I have been mistaken ; if our notions agree, I no longer act, it is the general body, and that prohibitive law would then wither the nerves of activity and conscience. You wish man to act, and you forbid him to think ; annihilate all liberty, annihilate man ;  
there

there is no medium between slaves or mere machines, and citizens perfectly free.

Need I repeat here that thought is no more contained in a book than heat is in fire or cold in ice; it is the reader that creates the idea, and if his idea be not in concord with yours, the book is nothing but black upon white. Thus fall to the ground all foolish accusations, all senseless assertions; thus the negative destroys the affirmative; and thus, in the torrent of opinions, whatever is false sinks, and truth alone floats upon the surface. There is no libel when an answer is not prohibited. Patriotism may and ought to have its enthusiasts; it is a reaction against the overflowing of anti-patriotic cries. Although enthusiasm should give birth to a new world, the love of its country would excuse such extravagances; and since the days of Plato, those who dream of the great changes that may be effected by these three fundamental points, nature, liberty, and equilibrium, only view in anticipation the revolutions which time will infallibly bring about upon the earth.

I do not mean to say that there exist no criminal writings; but these criminal writings are such as contain treason against the nation; they alone provoke the public vengeance. When an individual attempts to be stronger than

than the whole mass of the nation, when he contemns the authority of the legislator, he is subject to the tribunal, which ought to punish the crimes of national treason; but where exists this tribunal, or where ought it to exist?

Enlightened Europe, and men of letters in particular, are not recovered from their surprise at seeing the national assembly create an extraordinary tribunal, which may combine with the enemies of the representative body to subdue and annihilate it. The crime of treason against the nation appears in the conduct of the judges of the *Châtelet*, and all France accuses them. The ministerial rage is absolute madness, and inflames these iniquitous judges. Thus among the Romans, the Decemvirs, who aspired to tyranny, took no care to follow the spirit of the republic; and was not their criminal intention fully unmasked? The judges of the *Châtelet*, in attacking patriotic writers, make a guilty essay of the means of dissolving the representative body of a sovereign nation; they employ the most odious means to bring it down to its former debasement. But the national assembly will not suffer the fairest attribute of sovereignty to pass into the hands of the judges of the *Châtelet*: that tribunal would be a principle

ciple of division which might dissolve the state, and France would exhibit only a fantastic government, if the national assembly should divest itself of the power of judging all crimes of national treason.

I accuse the judges of the *Châtelet* of the crime of treason against the nation, and appeal to the constituent power to have them cashiered. The constituent power emanates from the nation; the constituent power must either be denied or admitted without reserve; and where can it be, if it reside not in the representatives of the nation? The constituent power is sole; the other powers are produced by it: it equals, it surpasses all the other wills; and ought to accomplish the speedy abrogation of the *Châtelet*, because the national liberty is more in danger at this moment than when the soldiers of despotism surrounded the capital, since the atrocity of the plot excited an insurrection, and since the sword may be opposed to fire. But in the present case, it is inconceivable how a national decree could have been given up to the discretion of the judges of the *Châtelet*. This guilty transaction proves the insidious dexterity of the enemies of the revolution. But hear what Tacitus addresses to all nations who imagine themselves free when they have made laws, and yet at the same time

time abandon the execution of them too blindly to impure hands.

*Plus togâ quam ense tyrannus seipsum servabit.*

When one nation is threatened or attacked by another nation, what does it do? It employs its own forces to repel the assault. If the representatives of a nation, assembled to give it a political constitution, be attacked by private political bodies or by powerful persons, ought they to intrust the care of their defence and that of their operations to others than themselves? Will they proceed to create an extraordinary tribunal, which may combine with the enemies of the representative body of the nation to subdue or to overturn it altogether?

Is not all derived from the constituent power? It is an incredible mistake in the assembly of the representatives of the nation, not to defend itself by its own energy against the attacks that may be made upon it, and to take other measures of resistance than what the nation takes or would take when it is or should be attacked.

It is inconceivable that the national assembly should create a tribunal against the criminals who insult the respect which is its due: ought not the representatives of the nation to conduct themselves as the nation would do in case of attack? It would retain its defence in its own hands;



hands; it would charge a select number of its members to inquire into the offence, and to make a report according to which it would judge. To call another power to its aid, is not this unbecoming its sovereignty? And who ought to judge the crimes of national treason, if not the represented nation?

The representatives of the nation have already acted in conformity to this principle upon several occasions; among others in the case of Toulon, of the provost of Marseilles, of the court of vacation of the parliaments at Rennes, of Metz, and of Bordeaux. Why then has the national assembly bestowed on a particular tribunal, out of its own body, the cognizance of offences against its political life and against its decrees? It cannot be doubted but that the national assembly is not aware of the extent of the rights which the nation has conferred upon it; they can be those only which itself would have exercised, if it had not recurred to representation.

As the nation would have chosen a portion of its members to inquire into the offences against its majesty and to report the evidence, that it might pass impartial sentence; so the representatives of the nation ought to charge a part of their number with the business of taking information and of reporting the result to national

tional assembly, that it may be able to pronounce penalties suitable to the crimes of national treason.

It is false reasoning, to say that the nation or its representatives cannot have the right of exercising the judicial power, and that this would be to act both as judge and as party. Not only ought the nation or its representatives to reserve to themselves the cognizance of crimes against the national majesty, but I maintain that the former cannot bestow this power on any other tribunal without the greatest danger. Neither the assembled nation, nor its representatives, unquestionably can exercise the supreme executive power which is conferred upon the king, nor the judicial power in its details, such as judging between man and man; but when the matter relates to attacks on their political existence or on the constitution, the nation or its representatives are the sole judges, and the executive power cannot, without criminal neglect, dispense with the execution of the sentences pronounced by the nation or its representatives.

Montesquieu says, that the celebrated Machiavel imputes the loss of liberty at Florence to the people's not judging the crimes of treason committed against them in a body as at Rome: there were judges appointed for the purpose.

I conclude then, that the national assembly should decree, as a constitutive article, that the legislative body can take cognizance of and judge the crimes of national treason, without having the power of transferring the charge to any special tribunal.

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#### MORTMAINS.

THE ecclesiastical bodies have been the most eager to assume the odious right of servitude, and to give it an unbounded extension.

Among the subjects of the same monarch the separation of a road or a river condemns some to an eternal opprobrium, and degrades them to the condition of the vilest animals. There are still Frenchmen, who, when they die without posterity, cannot transmit to the next akin the land their labour has fertilized, who are not allowed to employ their own taste in the choice of a consort, and who, when they expatriate themselves to enjoy elsewhere the rights of humanity, are pursued by their *seigneurs*, who, wherever they can find them, seize on their property.

The entire abolition of this last trace of the  
ages

ages of barbarity, of this last crime propagated by the nobility even while they were heaping up enjoyments in the midst of the liberty of the capital, is what we have reason to expect from the reigning monarch; and it was necessary that the royal authority should be established in all its splendour, to the end that a most singular contradiction in our manners might be abolished. On one hand, we see natives of France the slaves of a fief-holder; and on the other, foreign slaves who become free the moment they put a foot on French ground.

The people have thus had to support at once the feudal dues, and the royal imposts: was it possible that they could groan under a more decided slavery? and if a griping intendant is to replace the possessor of the fief, will not the rural servitude be the same?

The mortmains will not feel that benevolent power of kings which can enfranchise the slaves of the feudal system, until several very burthensome imposts shall have been taken off: it is then that the liberty which has been restored to them will give them the courage entirely to shake off the shackles of misfortune.

The system of mortmain, whatever may have been said to the contrary, is evidently derived from the old military discipline: the term itself

is a solecism. The mainmortables were no other than *soldiers* subjected to *captains*: the abrogation of mortmain is therefore a claim, since the political constitution is entirely changed, and since those who have profited by this odious right bring to the state none of the advantages it formerly derived from them.

The positive laws of nations ought frequently to be composed afresh after the natural law: the *maritime law*, for instance, is still made up of odious usages, worthy of the ferocity of the ages of barbarity. The laws on which the highest encomiums are bestowed, are, in the view of the philosopher, no other than so many human errors. Whence arises it that they have obtained respect, when they are founded either on a long abuse or on an ignorance of what would be better? The progress we have made in knowledge must and ought to effect salutary changes.

#### OF AN INCOMMODIOUS PRIDE.

AMONG sovereigns there is no one who, going back a certain number of degrees, cannot count a shepherd in the number of his ancestors; nor is there any shepherd who, having recourse to the same reckoning, could not per-  
haps

haps count a sovereign or a lord among his, provided shepherds were as fond of reckoning the number of their ancestors as they are that of their sheep. But although nature ordains that all men shall be born equal, civil societies introduce a difference among them, because there is in the first place an inequality of strength, services, merit, and fortune; and because, secondly, public liberty is in reality composed of small sacrifices made by individual liberty.

We will therefore admit of unequal ranks, and allow such a man to occupy the highest station he can in his own imagination. The pride of the great is indestructible, and ought accordingly to be tolerated; but let it be directed towards useful aims. Nobility, in whatever ornaments it may be clad, can be no other than an accidental quality, so long as it is separated from virtue, that is to say, from noble and personal acts.

Birth alone can give no claim to glory; and when an idolatrous worship of titles is sought by those who possess them, it should be recollected that it is always in the power of an enlightened nation, to appreciate and correct these exaggerated pretensions by the instructions of its philosophers and comic poets, and to punish their authors by disdain and the influence of

opinion. It besides belongs to education to lessen the effect of these distinctions, which cease to be humiliating when men no longer consent to be humbled.

A firm reaction of thought is well calculated to check the overweening pride of those who are noble, and to ease from the load of their envy those who are not so: when personal qualities are in a manner fixed in a nation, they destroy the prejudices which have bestowed on birth, unaccompanied by merit, a dazzling splendour to which it cannot be entitled.

It therefore depends on an enlightened nation to mortify and subdue that incommensurable pride of the nobles, which is to be found at this time in hereditary monarchies alone. But seeing that the Majesty of the crown absorbs all these little grandeurs; and that these nobles, beginning with the first gentleman, are in the fullest extent of the term subjects, it must follow, that all subjects being necessarily at an equal distance from the throne, the inordinate pride of the nobles, a mania revived in latter times, ought to be combated, by holding out to their view a master under whom they cease to be independent. Thus will this illusion, not calculated for the present era, be destroyed, whenever the enlightened part of the nation

shall step forward, and point the well directed shaft of ridicule at that jargon of *armorial bearings* and *quarterings*, which is merely the base counterfeit of real grandeur and virtue. The spirit of philosophy has long *decomposed* these puerile absurdities, which the vanity of courtiers and the indolence of courts have so mistakenly aimed at establishing, among enlightened men who are superior to such prejudices.

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OF THE LAW NOT MADE AND NOT LESS  
EXISTING.

THE law is the rule prescribed to order and to forbid. Notwithstanding what certain writers have maintained, the true prototype of every law is the natural law, a deviation from which renders either of them vicious, and in the event detrimental. But the natural law is in its application, if I may be allowed so to express myself, a law *not yet made*, but as it were merely appreciated. Political superstitions, still more execrable than religious ones, have invented a kind of magical words and circles, beyond the boundaries of which we are threatened with destruction: the foot, however, which



passes them finds a sure and solid ground. The enlightened state of a renovated people can admit of no phantoms ; and we are urged on all sides to approach the law *not made*, but still existing.

As it belongs to the whole of the nation to make laws, and as a nation has neither force nor existence unless in the aggregate of all its parts, the code it ought to form should be variable, the laws being at the bottom nothing more than so many remedies perpetually applicable to the diseases of the political body : they ought therefore to be combined conformably to the most matured knowledge of the present genius of the nation ; and whatever is no longer analogous to this ought to be corrected in the code.

A nation, therefore, can never be bound by its primitive institutions, seeing that by such a tie, the very supposition of which is absurd, it would forbid itself every amelioration and improvement. The government absolutely depending on the genius of the people, its modifications ought eternally to spring out of the national will ; and a state can never become a legitimate association, unless when each individual obeys voluntarily and wittingly the laws framed by all.

Thus,

Thus, a nation cannot by a ridiculous contract bind itself to despotism, or to the excessive and unreasonable opulence of a single individual; and such a contract is for a still stronger reason null and void for the succeeding generation: a weak or extravagant nation would otherwise chain its prosperity, would crown tyranny and its coffers, and men would become merely vile subsidiaries.

Nations ought invariably to be considered as in the plenitude of their existence, that is to say, as making a daily and hourly progress from the state of nature to the state of civilization, compounding and recompounding themselves in a new and necessary way, by that moral power which ought unceasingly to act, and which forms the association by uniting the wishes of all.

This is the reason why every nation ought eternally to preserve the right of its independence, which belongs to the aggregated body. When we consider the deplorable errors of antiquity, there is so much to be forgotten, that the greatest service a nation could receive from its good genius, would be to be rendered absolutely forgetful of what is passed.

It is certain that we proceed from idea to idea, from reflexion to reflexion; and the  
 science

science of government is thus freed from its absurdities, while each diplomatic vision, and each chimerical terror it engenders cannot stay the progress of the political machine. It has already been clearly evinced that man can have no controul over his posterity, because the rights of man are the rights of each generation; and for a still stronger reason we can upon no plea impose on ourselves restraints and ties that fatigue and harass us. Policy can have no other rule than the greatest sum of liberty and happiness; and having a pre-eminence over every thing, it can only be controuled by what prudence and local circumstances may command it to do. It ought therefore to have constantly in its view the moral condition of man; and neither can nor ought to oppose any perfective means by which he aims at establishing a better order of things. Man, unwittingly even, has a tendency towards the laws which are as yet *not made*, but rest in the bosom of nature: there the life of the body politic reposes, and there is harboured the destruction of the extravagant and chimerical pride by which the human race has been degraded and bastardized.

To have a just comprehension of these new truths, it will be sufficient to examine the  
origin

origin of laws: now we can discover but two kinds of laws, the laws *made* and the laws *not made*.

The law *not made* is a relation which one thing has to another, which is independent of the things themselves, and which existed before them. Prior to the existence of a line, there was a law which, supposing a line, rendered it productile, and which, supposing another parallel line, had so ordered as that these two lines should never touch or meet, even were they to be lengthened out to infinity. Before the Creator formed any one individual, there existed a law according to which each individual was to depend on him from whom he was to receive being and support.

Before God had created essences, there was a law according to which of two equal essences one should be worth as much as the other; the *two* were to be worth the *two*, the man worth the man: consequently, it was already determined that the individual who should not esteem every other individual as highly as he should prize himself, would contravene this law *not made*; supposing the *two* intelligent, he ought to prize the *two*, and, failing to do so, would sin against the above-mentioned law.

Prior to the existence of a society of intelligent

gent men, there was a law according to which, such a society being supposed, each individual composing it could neither deceive, tyrannize over, nor contemn any other, because truth existed before things, because art is posterior to things, and because deception, fraud, and lying are posterior to art.

Before men existed, there was a law according to which, the supposed men being to be created equal to each other, they could obey their own conventions alone. In the same way also, supposing one man to oblige another, this law not made required that the latter should be grateful to the former, and that ingratitude should be punished, as diametrically opposite to the law which existed before things, that is to say, the law of gratitude. If, on the contrary, it should happen that one man should offend another, the same law required that he should be punished in proportion to the injury and mischief he had done to that other; and this punishment had for its object, not only the revenge due to him who received the injury, but also the establishing of an example to those by whom it should be witnessed.

This law not made is in itself an intrinsic and universal justice which comprehends all that has been created, but which existed before any thing

was created. This invariable and eternal law is the only one that can afford us just agreements, and can regulate with nicety the duties and relations of each individual to any other individual.

Man was visibly destined to live in society with man. The personal passions, inherent in all men, leading each individual to break through the bonds of society, men, by way of repressing these abuses, found themselves obliged to make such laws as should give force to the laws *not made*, and should equally bind the whole of the society : these laws were denominated the *right of nations*.

But as this universal society is composed of an infinite number of particular societies, placed in different climates, and the relations of which depend on the different situations of nature in which they are found, some of them being stationed at the sea side, others in forests, others on mountains, and others again being susceptible of various commercial intercourses, legislators have bestowed different laws on these different nations ; and these are what are termed *civil laws*. But as man might also often forget himself, and might cease to recollect his duties towards himself, philosophers have contrived what are called *moral laws*.

All these laws, however, whether written, civil, or traditional, are no other than so many means contrived to facilitate to us the intelligence and execution of the laws not made. These may properly be considered as the best and most sublime laws, because they spring out of the *natural right*, the transgression of which is the most extensive and most customary cause of the physical evils that oppress the human race. Men collected together in society ought therefore to be governed by the natural laws, by the laws which are not as yet *made*, but which nevertheless exist; because these alone can be productive of the positive good order which is most advantageous to men. To these sovereign laws, instituted by the Supreme Being, all men, and all human powers, ought to bend. They are immutable and irrefragable, since man has here below the right to make the most he can of his *portion of liberty*: this superiority of his belongs to his intelligence; he has received it from the author of nature, who has determined that it shall be so, by the laws of equality he has established in the order in which the universe has been formed. Now, what applies to moral also applies to political order: all the positive laws injurious to society ought to be annulled, however strenuously they may be supported, be-  
cause

cause we are here to exercise our reason, extended and perfected by the study of the physical and natural laws.

The laws *not made* are truly deserving of our admiration, and ought to be developed, being in themselves perfectly well calculated to convey to us a knowledge, founded on evidence, of the progress of the natural laws, and forming the rule by which the best government is squared. Since misery, complaints, and intestine commotions are the unequivocal effects of the greater part of our laws, we ought in the laws *not made* to seek the tutelary authority the protection of which secures the natural right of each individual, a right that is never restrained, and indeed cannot be so, since it is extended in proportion to the best possible laws which constitute the order that is most advantageous to all.

It is entirely for want of having recurred to these laws *not made* that writers have formed ideas so different and even contradictory on the natural right of man, misleading the people by an endeavour to reconcile things that can never be brought to meet. By adhering constantly to terms, they have unceasingly confounded the sovereign and the sovereignty; and hence have arisen all the errors by which the human species has



has been oppressed. How happens it that the periods which have been termed the ages of ignorance, have been those in which the wisest governments have been established! It is because the avidity of the rich had not yet learned to profit by the wants of the poor, because the inequality of the citizens was not as yet an obstacle to the work of reason.

The first principle of every government, and of every doctrine on the science of governing, ought to be the public weal; and this as well as every other principle must be independent, because by each of them distinctly, and all of them collectively, every thing is to be regulated. The laws established by the author of nature are just and perfect in the general plan, at the same time that they are immutable: we have for some time advanced towards them, but more still remains to be done, for they are not yet *made*. Has not man, endowed with intelligence, the prerogative at least to contemplate them, waiting until they shall be realized? When men shall at length have exhausted a multiplicity of errors, and all the evils which are the result of them, they will feel the necessity of renouncing the greater part of the made laws, and of recurring to those that are

*not*

*not made*, as the only ones which can constantly secure the glory and tranquillity of the human race. Nature herself holds out to them the invitation; and these *unmade* laws will be the imperious ones to which she will force them to recur. Then will mankind be sensible of all their beauty and utility, and will listen to the call of philosophy, without the help of which all legislation is vain. The empire of the laws of humanity has been misunderstood, and individual laws have been substituted in their stead: but if the dignity of man resides in the perfection of the political laws, and if men, equally provided with hands, give action and energy to every thing on this earth, the task of political regeneration is most assuredly theirs. In the august sanctuary of nature they will seek the laws *not yet made*: they will call these to their succour, and by no effort of resistance will their publicity be defeated. No, resplendent with their innate beauty, they will dazzle the view of each enchanted spectator, on the day appointed for the termination of the miseries and degradation of the human race.

FUNERAL ORATION ON THE CLERGY OF  
FRANCE.

MASTER Clergy, whose obsequies we now perform, my dearest friends, was born in France in the middle of the second century, of indigent Italian parents. To vex him you had only to mention his primitive origin; and he would blush and foam with rage. The duty of Master Clergy was to teach religion in France by the practice of the virtues which it enjoins; his power was confined to things *spiritual*; but, as early as the third century, he entertained the ambition of extending his rights and his power over things *temporal*.

In the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries, Master Clergy acquired immense wealth, increased his power, and obtained a great influence in affairs of state. Nothing was easier; the people, crushed beneath the load of various calamities, sought a refuge with him, and made rich donations to purchase a remission of their sins. Master Clergy made it an article of faith, that valuable presents to the church opened the gates of paradise and shut the gates of hell.

In the eighth century, Master Clergy manifested his discontent against Charles Martel, who held the slothful kings of France under his tutelage:

tutelage: Charles had made free with some of his possessions, and Master Clergy, who was not fond of losing his acquisitions, was prodigal of anathemas. At that time some of the laity had the cure of parishes.

In the ninth century, Charlemagne bitterly upbraided Master Clergy with his passion for worldly goods. What! said he: you have renounced the pomp of the world, and yet you seek every day to increase your wealth by all sorts of artifices; you promise paradise, you threaten hell, you employ the name of God, and that of certain saints, to strip the rich and the poor who have the simplicity to suffer themselves to be over-reached; you see plainly, Master Clergy, that you deprive the lawful heirs of their property—if this continue, my subjects will soon be ruined. My paternal heart is wrung while it thus reproaches you, and I therefore hope you will set bounds to your immoderate ambition. These reproaches had the same effect upon the mind of Master Clergy as the replies which overturned his sophisms had upon the Abbé Maury. The aristocrates are very sensible that they are in the wrong, but they never mend. Master Clergy did the same: he gave a loose to his fruitless rage; and soon afterwards, to revenge

the stern reprimand of Charlemagne, he revolted against the rights of the crown and against the person of the sovereign.

Louis the Debonnaire took it into his head to reform the manners of Master Clergy, but Master Clergy obliged him to wear the robe of penance, and found persons to execute that insolent and ridiculous farce; he disposed of the royal sceptre, and proceeded to this excess of audacity, because Charles the Bald had had the weakness to acknowledge his jurisdiction.

The voluptuous ignorance of Master Clergy in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, was such that he could not sign his name, or if he did, it was like the deceased Christopher de Beaumont, who was obliged to spell his clerical mandates. An author, no doubt a contemporary, pleasantly attacks this clerical ignorance. *Otius deditus erat (clerus) gulæ quam gloriæ. Otius colligebat libras quam libros; libentius intuebatur Mariam quam Marcum, malebat legere in Salomene quam in Salemon.*

Here is latin, my friends, more easy to comprehend than to explain. Notwithstanding his ignorance, Master Clergy knew how to turn the stupidity of the people to his own profit; the donations multiplied. There was at this time a theological war to support: Master Clergy

Clergy loved theological wars, because he could then perplex at will the smallest efforts of human reason. This theological war gave birth to a sect called *stercoronists*.

Master Clergy, plump with good cheer, wished to taste of the forbidden fruit. Complaints were made against his concubinage; but he replied triumphantly that they might seek angels to govern the church.

In the twelfth century, Master Clergy had some disputes with the monks, who having in their turns acquired a strong relish for the fruits of the people's credulity, carried off from the bishops some oblations of the living and of the dead. Master Clergy feared much lest these monks, already in possession of the minds of devotees, should take it into their head to seize upon his ring and his crozier.

It was in this age that Master Clergy was suddenly captivated with martial glory: he fought, in the crusades, conquests still more temporal than spiritual. All those who flocked to the standard of the cross obtained the full remission of their sins, and the souls of the soldiers in the army beyond sea who had the happiness to be killed, were instantly admitted to the joys of paradise. History speaks little of the deeds and achievements of Master Clergy

in these holy wars, but it represents him changing modes, and bedecked with precious stones: he wore a shoulder-belt, and handsome spurs; and a cutlafs, fludded with jewels, hung from his gilded girdle. Master Clergy loved a little expensive show, and carried that disposition to such lengths, that it was found necessary to reform his stables; he was not allowed to keep more than forty or fifty horses; he was restrained from hunting and hawking, especially when on an episcopal visitation to his vicars. His vicars were probably richer than they are now with their *portion congrue*; for their *portion congrue* would hardly have been sufficient to furnish Master Clergy with a light collation.

In the thirteenth century, Master Clergy felt his genius begin to dawn; he studied at the university of Paris. Scholastic theology, with its train of distinctions and subtleties, was then the master-piece of science; he wasted his intellects in discussions equally frivolous and laborious; and he encircled himself with fantastic ideas which he exchanged for others, eager to bestow a real body on all these impalpable beings. It was in the same century that Master Clergy established a tribunal of inquisition which roasted heretics alive, as victims pleasing to the Divinity.

In the fourteenth century, Philip the Fair assembled the states-general of his kingdom; the third estate was called now for the first time, and was much tickled by this honour, for it yet knew not that itself was the nation: this information it was afterwards to receive from philosophy and philosophers. In this assembly, Master Clergy began to shuffle, and afterwards gave very equivocal signs of adhesion. In the same century, he was excluded the parliament, and reduced to his spiritual government alone, which greatly humbled his worldly pride.

In the fifteenth century, Master Clergy was guilty of a heinous crime; he had a great share in the death of the brave Maid of Orleans, that martyr of her country who perished by the most cruel torments. About this time the disputes between the nominalists and the realists engaged the attention of Master Clergy, and, suitably to his rapacious policy, he made that controversy an affair of religion and even of state.

At all times, Master Clergy had a strong attachment to fire and faggot; he more than once regaled himself with the fumes of twenty or thirty thousand men burnt for a theological argument. Excommunication was always with him the prelude to the stake.

In the sixteenth century, a great dissension



having arisen among the inconceivable retailers of indulgences, the disorders of Master Clergy, his scandalous pleasures, and his haughty domination, gave birth to the reforms of Luther and Calvin. These great scourges of the insolence and rapacity of Master Clergy converted into current specie the gold and silver of the churches, burnt the archives; and uncloistered the monks and nuns. But while Master Clergy was fighting theologically, and had totally neglected morality in unintelligible controversies, the good Henry IV. tenderly censured him about his manner of instructing the people. Preach by your good examples, said he; let the people be incited to goodness by your behaviour: I would with all my heart conform to the doctrines you preach, but surely you cannot think that I am ignorant of what you do.

In the seventeenth century, Master Clergy, who had been intolerant during the four preceding ones, and desirous of crowning his intolerance with the royal diadem, thought to strike a great political blow by advising Louis XIV. to revoke the edict of Nantes: but he was egregiously mistaken; he sowed against the monarch, against himself, and against the national splendor, the seeds of indignation, of revenge, and of patriotism. In vain did he endeavour to  
bewilder

bewilder the minds of men in the disputes of Jansenism; in vain did he raise the confessors of the king, of the princes and princesses, to pre-eminent importance; his coalition with satrapism was to be of short duration. A century more and this Colossus, insulting to human reason, reduced to the rank of the lowest courtiers, was destined to fall, because his enormous opulence was not even apologized for by those virtues which the most ordinary policy would have enjoined him.

In the eighteenth century, Master Clergy was seized with a new species of ambition; this was an inordinate desire for the administration of public affairs. Master Clergy wished to rule the state. Mitred administrators are bad administrators indeed.

The opulence of Master Clergy, his inutility for instruction, his degrading occupation in the palaces of our monarchs, the palpable contradiction between his duties and his conduct, all showed that this pompous personage was a very ordinary mortal. This is but too true, my dearest brethren: a moral portrait, without the varnish of the virtues, is always a wretched performance. Our worthy representatives obliged Clergy the Great to swallow a draught, composed of masculine and thundering eloquence,  
of

of urgent logic, and of true and christian principles. In vain did the abbés Sieyès, Maury, and d'Eymar endeavour to oppose the salutary effect; it was requisite for his glory and his salvation that Clergy the Great should die: he is dead. All the family of Clergy the Great is overwhelmed with the deepest sorrow; his good mother the church of Rome is much offended at finding that her crossed and mitred son has made his will in favour of the nation. The nation has only resumed her own concessions: these, when purified, will afford salaries to useful functionaries. A great leprosy is cleared away from the political body: healthier and more robust, it will no longer be preyed upon by the *princes* styled *ecclesiastics*; and as the regeneration is complete, the altar of the God who was himself poor and humble will attract a greater affluence of worshippers: they will be more disposed to receive the words of the gospel. Clergy the Great is dead; those who shed tears for him are few; and soon will they join the numerous and sound part of the kingdom, which exclaims: *Long has Clergy the Great lived; let him rest in peace.*

P. S. Every kind of superstition had made its way in our country; the monks, the plurality of benefices, idle professions of every kind; devoured

devoured the sense of the people: theology seated on the benches made the schools re-echo with noisy disputes; furred doctors, and libraries stocked with commentaries on the canon law—what precious hours devoted to inutility!

We have pruned the voracious branches of ecclesiastical power; they are lopped: priests are no longer totally independant of political laws; the clergy is no longer associated with the *orders of the state*, with the right of pre-eminence; its superiority over the temporal power is now the object of derision; it no longer interposes its authority in all the affairs of sovereigns. The time is past when the sword of the church was eternally brandished, and its thunders hurled from the lofty seat of St. Peter. Its famous quarrels are buried in oblivion; the declamations of the monks have returned to their transalpine origin. We look from afar upon Spain and Portugal, subject to the inquisition, as nations stupidly flumbering under a facred yoke. The spirit of letters has restored to philosophers all their boldness; they have introduced into christian societies an exalted and mild harmony, a temperate subordination; and the respect for first principles has caught from the genius of religion its noblest attribute, forbearance,

## FEUDAL GOVERNMENT.

WOULD you wish to be made acquainted with the outrages of feudal government? The Empress of Russia ordered a whole village to be massacred for having killed its lord; neither the women nor children were spared. This act of cruelty is entirely suitable to the perverse genius of nobility.

Our *French princes* wished literally to form among men a distinct order; but the people in their turn become the kings of the earth. We, who were formerly subjects of a king, and even of princes, are at present subjects of our country.

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 OF THE TITLE OF EMPEROR.

UNFORTUNATELY for them, men are too apt to allow themselves to be governed by words. The supremacy of the empire of Germany was exclusively owing to the title of *emperor*, a title which aided the authority of the ambitious princes, and preserved that of the weak ones: the idea which the people attached to the word *empire* was the cause of their submission

miffion to the *emperor*. Thus by a ftrange ignorance of the rights of man, and by the yet ftranger acceptation of this term, did the houfe of Auftria, which, but for Richelieu perhaps, would have poffeffed no afcendancy whatever, aggrandize itfelf, and eftablifh a controul over all Europe.

From that time the emperors fancied themfelves the legitimate fucceffors to *the patrimony of the Cefars*; and, independently of thefe pretentions, they arrogated to themfelves rights degrading to man and to nations: impofed upon by a term, the latter acknowledged an ufurped fupremacy.

The grandees held fiefs, the titles of which they received from the emperors; feveral cities agreed that they were their flaves; fovereigns confented to appoint them the fole heirs of their domains and fubjects; and the popes alone refufed, after having fanced this abufive authority over the univerfe, to fubmit to it: being fhortly after zealous to preferve it for themfelves, over Italy at leaft, the pretentions which enfued on either fide occafioned for more than fix hundred years that bloody conteft between the papal fupremacy and the empire, in which the princes of Europe declared for the one party or the other, juft as their prejudices

happened

happened to sway them. Thus did the exaltation of a single word, and the misinterpretation of a title, desolate the human race.

When the popes rewarded the services of the predecessors of Charlemagne with the empty title of Roman patricians, Leo ventured to declare Charles *emperor* ! In doing so he displayed a policy at least equal to his gratitude : this flattery to a powerful prince enabled him to shake off all dependance on the emperors of the east, and secured him a protector against his enemies. Indeed, the new title so conferred did not appear to him to be more injurious either to his rights or authority than that of *Patrician*, as he entertained a full conviction that Charles would never reside at Rome. On their side, the people, dazzled by the warlike qualities of Charles, jealous of the credit of the bishops, considering themselves as degraded by the magistracy of private men who governed them under the dishonoured title of senators, and carried away by the attraction of novelty, received the new emperor with the transports and acclamations peculiar to Italian enthusiasm.

Charles was proclaimed. The *bishop* of Rome fancied that he merely bestowed a title, that he simply manifested his gratitude by the shadow of an uselessly apparent grandeur ; and the

the pope did not know what he bestowed: he, nevertheless, in reality invested Charles with the most dangerous authority with which a prince could possibly be armed; with a power, the conditions of which had not been regulated, nor its extent bounded by any convention or any contract between the sovereign and the people. Such a title could not fail to soothe and augment the vanity of the prince, because it conveyed the expression of the most noble of all sovereign dignities, and, as it was indeterminate, most effectually favoured his ambition. It was besides extremely well calculated to awe nations, exacting from them a higher respect and a more effectual submission, because they could but imperfectly appreciate its rights, at the same time that they were disposed to make still greater sacrifices, because they estimated these still more by the title of the prince than by the extent of their means. But the *bishop*, the people, and even Charles himself, were very far from conceiving a just idea either of the authority which this fatal title was about to place in the hands of the successors of the latter, or of the wars, devastations, crimes, and horrors of every description of which it was to be the source. Unless for this detestable flattery of *Leo*, no one of the weak, dastardly,

and



and perverse successors of Charles, would ever have thought of assuming the name of *emperor*, far from Rome, where no one of them ever resided! Never, at the extinction of this guilty race, would it have entered into the ideas of a teutonic count or duke, who commanded at most a few thousands of vassals in the forests of Franconia, or in the barren and rocky wastes of Bavaria or Suabia, to bestow on himself the title of the vanquisher of the earth, and to persuade himself that this title established his right over the states which had once composed the dominion of Rome in the west, and particularly over Germany and all Italy! But this *title* being once received and accredited, the nobleman who was decorated with it did not conceive a less idea of the high destiny of himself and his house, because, as was often the case, his descent and origin were mean and contemptible; while each of the titular princes strove with all his might to convert the authority it gave to the establishment or aggrandizement of the house of which he was the head. What served to inflame this passion still more in the greater part of them, was to see a priest, a resident at Rome, under shelter of *another title*, the import of which was not precisely understood, contrive in an insidious and indirect

indirect way to usurp a power he pretended to hold exclusively over Italy: this was another of the causes which rendered the empire and the emperors so disastrous to Italy.

The indiscreet admiration we have bestowed on the *throne of Rome* and that of Italy has contributed more effectually to their grandeur than even their successes. In the history of the unfortunate race of mortals we every where see the fatal example of the ascendancy of words over nations, and the peril which attends the adventitious usage of them.

Germany is an assemblage of states embarrassed with privileges, customs, laws, monies, prejudices, pretensions, ridiculous usages, barriers, and governments which unceasingly thwart each other. So many, and such little and needy sovereigns, every where in opposition, every where jealous, and every where affecting the importance of a natural enmity, announce that such a chaotic mass cannot long hold either its shape or its consistency.

#### DANGEROUS CALCULATIONS.

POLITICAL arithmetic originated in England. In the rectifying of errors it is absolutely necessary;

necessary; but it is at the same time useful to tyranny, because it teaches how far a nation may be loaded with taxes, and bear its burthens tranquilly and patiently.

In the hands of a statesman political arithmetic is admirable; but if you intrust it to those nice calculators who scarcely leave to men what is physically necessary to their existence, it becomes a dangerous weapon. If it is in the possession of a mere financier, tremble; he will augment the population, to increase the supplies.

If political calculations could be extended to the physical accidents and moral revolutions which change the fortune of the citizens, they would then contribute to the happiness of nations: but they are faulty and objectionable on this account, that they consider alone the money they can squeeze and extract. The result of M. Necker's work is terrible, when we reflect both what the nation paid under the ancient regimen, and what the spirit of financing still endeavoured to add to so enormous a charge: the nation proceeded under this annual load; and a bad policy calculated on how many millions more it would be able to bear without sinking under the accumulated weight.

If execution be the touchstone of the finest theories,

theories, political arithmetic has not wrought in France all the good that was expected from it, its calculations having altogether tended to invent new taxes on industry. Could any thing be more deplorable or more unjust ?

Thus, in the closet of the man who is not sincerely attached to his country, and still less so to the human race, does every thing become a poison.

We find in history that republican governments have oftentimes treated the citizens with the highest severity. An attachment to political justice does not therefore always belong to the freer governments ; and a simple society may become as tyrannical as the proudest despot. The English aspire at liberty, but it is for themselves alone, as is evidenced by the almost insupportable yoke they have imposed on the inhabitants of India.

A tyrant has occasionally his moments of humanity : in the hands of an individual possessing an unlimited power, a pure despotism may be less terrible than the decisions of republican societies, some of which have been known to follow up their principles with inflexibility, and to be in all cases devoid of pity.

A tyrant may open his eyes on the follies and enormity of his enemies : but an oppressive

republic neither blushes nor trembles. The most dangerous of all tyrannies resides in the breasts of those administrators who fancy they add to their own liberty when they reduce others to a state of slavery.

In the regions favoured by liberty, foreigners are oftentimes hardly dealt by: Switzerland abounds in exclusive privileges; the cruel citizen there pretends himself that the air and the sun's rays being his property, he can deprive him of them who sojourns on his territory.

When Rome had not yet completed her plan of conquest, the Romans studied to conciliate the affections of the conquered nations: they allowed the provinces to make choice of the government they should deem to be best calculated for their internal policy; and the subsidies they demanded from them were on the condition of enfranchisement: with respect to their laws, they were their own masters. But when the work of subjugation was completed, Rome, which had before enchanted the nations by her beneficent sway, did not neglect to terrify them: she sent her pretors and her presidents into the provinces. Paulus Emilius received an order from the senate to deliver up Epirus to pillage, and this order was executed throughout the  
whole

whole province: in one day an hundred and fifty thousand slaves were made, and seventy cities and towns sacked. Could any tyrant have given a more cruel order?

To come to less consequential objects, we will take a view of the small republics, and see there the insupportable pride of a little inhabitant, who with the quality of *bourgeois* fancies himself superior to the rest of the world, and who in the little village where he exercises his authority persecutes the stranger with all his might: his quality of *bourgeois* is his sole title and inheritance: and to such a degree does it infatuate him, that his insolence and audacity exceed every thing.

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#### OF PRECISE LAWS.

IN England there was a law which forbid *bigamy*, or the having of two wives. A man was accused of having five; and as this case had not been specified, the culprit was acquitted, upon a decision that the law ought to be interpreted literally, because, according to the English, it should never be equivocal. It was afterwards amended, and declared expressly,

that he who should take more than one wife should be considered as guilty of *bigamy*, and punished accordingly.

About the same time, and in the same country, a man cut off his adversary's nose: he was tried for this offence, and the charge of having mutilated a member was laid in the indictment. The counsel for the accused maintained, in his defence, that the nose was not a member; and upon this an act of parliament was framed, declaring that for the future it should be considered as such.

*Precise* laws afford no room for *subtleties*, while those that are equivocal beget processes to infinity: upon these the subaltern ministers of justice live, as worms are nourished by putrefied bodies.

In France, successions and contracts have been the most customary aliments of chicanery. Lawyers and proctors detest whatever is clear: and notaries, by their enigmatical expressions, seem in a manner to have nothing else in view besides veiling their ignorance and puzzling every thing. If the laws were to be literally expressed, they would be as literally interpreted; and the fortuitous intervention of a few absurd cases would not prevent their majestic display.

The most necessary reform in French jurisprudence that I know of, would therefore be to silence the advocates, the most determined wranglers in existence. They ought merely to narrate, to prove, and to conclude by a short recapitulation ; or rather, the instruction on each process ought to be made out in writing, an expedient that would put an end to the unnecessary and disgusting prattle of the bar. The pleaders would be more ashamed to write than to speak prolixly ; and their *obstreperous bawling* would cease to dishonour daily the sanctuary of the laws.

Lycurgus and Solon forbid the use of that verbose eloquence which they considered as having no other tendency than that of leading men astray from the path of truth. Some of these *speech-makers* have a knack of seizing on the minds of weak men, and of communicating their borrowed passions to their hearers, just as a madman communicates his distortions and grimaces to those who look upon him.

In proportion as patriotic eloquence is admirable in its great movements, when, by the mouth of public orators, it thunders in support of the national cause, as it once thundered at Athens and at Rome ;—in proportion as it is venerable when it speaks to the people on their



great interests, which it determines by an instinct more sure than reasoning, so is it ridiculous when it wastes itself in obscure controversies, and when, a slave to the little venal passions, it tends to no other effect than to weaken the wisest laws. It then begets a long course of *pleadings*, and the multitude of forms through which the pleader is obliged to pass before he can reach the end of a contest.

The subtlety of legal commentators throws a thick veil over the best right : and as whatever prolongs the trial is useful to the rich client and injurious to the poor one, those of the former class keep in pay the multitude of *intrepid, babbling* advocates, who would weary the patience of the judges, and exhaust their faculties, if silence were not to be imposed on them. They would drive Themis from her temple, and in despite of all justice would remain masters of the field of battle.

It is really distressing to see these advocates, perfectly indifferent to the cause chance throws in their way, follow it up with the most tenacious obstinacy : if there were as many tribunals as the mysterious ladder of Jacob had steps, every cause would have its appeal, and the disputes would be eternal.

I have introduced the above images into this  
serious

serious discussion, the better to describe the legal abuses which certainly call aloud for reform, and which are harassing in the extreme both to the judges and the public.

Let me ask who can digest the multiplicity of local customs in France ? and how can a way be seen through the prodigious number of foreign edicts ; the obscurity of the code, the digest, and the new laws ; the accession of the canonical ones ; the various ordonnances, statutes, and declarations ; the collection of resolutions and awards of tribunals ; and the commentaries and annotations of the legal body ? The patience, the reasoning, and the views of the philosopher are terrified at their recollection.

In the obscure jurisprudence of decrees chicanery sucks the blood of the people. Ah ! what bold spirit will step forward and simplify the laws ? A king of China had a diamond mine closed, to the end that the attention of his subjects might not be diverted from agriculture : but to what monarch will it belong to dispel the frightful chaos in which justice so often strays ? The Augean stable once found a Hercules to cleanse it : it cannot be that we are condemned everlastingly to grovel in filth.

## WISE LAW AMONG THE HEBREWS.

IF political equality is the impossible thing ; if Lycurgus himself saw during his life-time the derangement of his system ; if democracies have seen their principle of equality disappear ; and if the remedy of an equal division of lands is a greater evil than inequality, the government ought nevertheless to recollect that an individual can owe nothing to the state, provided the state owes him nothing ; that the basis of every political body resides in a just temperament ; that it has been formed to concur towards the general happiness by establishing that of each member ; and that the law ought to restrain as much as possible the cupidity which heaps up excessive wealth, afterwards to adopt such expedients as may tend to render properties less unequal,

Among the Hebrews there was a law eminently wise : land could not be alienated by sale for a longer period than forty-nine years. The purchaser's enjoyment was for a sufficiently long term ; and the seller was not irretrievably deprived of his property.

If the state were not occasionally to restrain the covetousness natural to certain men who derive enormous profits from the public revenues,

all

all the riches would soon be confined to a particular class. To destroy this monstrous disproportion, and the inconveniences that result from it, there are systems that make a sweep of riches, taking the treasure out of certain coffers that are too full to pour it in elsewhere. These commotions, notwithstanding they do not take place in a well ordered government, are still not without their utility, when they wage a species of war on fortunes illegitimately acquired, and founded on malversations authorized in times of trouble.

Wealth acquired by the misfortunes of the state perishes of itself as it were in an instant: a gnawing worm, which labours unceasingly to devour the root, is at the foot of the tree. Where is now the race of each of the Midasses in whose hands every thing was converted to gold? I have witnessed the ruin of thirty houses scandalously enriched, either in the subaltern departments of the ministry, or in the odious revenue appointments: I have seen the children of these criminal fathers dissipate the property on which the public malediction has fallen. A similar fate will befall the opulence of the jobbers, contractors, and monopolists of our days: their ill gotten wealth will be scattered abroad,  
and

and their names consigned to oblivion and contempt.

The list of all the rich financiers who have inundated France since the death of Henry the Great would be curious ! Where are they, and where their posterity ? Is it not surprising that not the smallest trace of them and theirs is to be found ? Certainly an exterminating angel must have been charged to destroy these fons of fortune, these ephemeral giants who threatened to swallow up every thing : how can otherwise such a phenomenon be explained ? What a consolation to groaning virtue, and what a lesson to the robbers who subsist on rapine alone ! they are destroyed the first by their own destructive systems.

However, waving all this, there are revolutions which, attacking in a manner the proprietors of specie only, are neither so injurious nor destructive as if they were to bear on the industrious classes, the cultivators more especially.

#### HISTORICAL APPROXIMATION.

IT is impossible not to call to our recollection the Gracchi, who refused to employ the prodigious advantages nature and renown had bestowed

flowed on them in any other way than for the good of their fellow citizens: the elder Gracchus fell; and as in this great man all the strength of the people resided, the people fell with him.

The younger of the Gracchi perished at the head of the same party, for the same cause, and under similar circumstances.

Nearly seventeen centuries after, history afforded a similar event in Holland. In the midst of his services and his toils, De Witt had no other objects than the glory, the happiness, and more especially the liberty of his country: it was attacked, and he defended it with wisdom and intrepidity. The party against which he had to combat esteemed him too much not to dread him: it was therefore judged expedient to get rid of him by assassination. He had a brother equally beloved and estimable, but not in the enjoyment of so high a reputation. The elder having survived his wounds, the party which attacked the grand pensionary changed its means: it attacked his virtue, and published a number of grievances, all tending to render him odious. These persecutions were so long protracted, so craftily managed, and so cruel and vindictive in their means, that De Witt formed the resolution to give up his post of grand pensioner

sioner of Holland: he sent in his resignation to the assembly of the states-general, and it was accepted. This resignation served to kindle up afresh the bitter animosity of his enemies: he became the abhorrence of the very people whose idol he had been; they were deceived, and in the sequel they murdered both the brothers.

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#### REVOLT.

CAN we question the lawfulness of the Roman insurrection, which expelled Tarquin and abolished royalty? Before that event, Athens and Sparta had substituted a new government in the place of those kings who so wantonly abused their powers. In our own times, Holland, Switzerland, America, and at length France, have renewed that great spectacle. Ah! if the Danes had put the cruel *Christian* to death, if the Hessians had deposed their last *Landgrave*, the Moguls *Aurengzeb*, the Maroquins *Muley-Imael*; if the princes, seconded by Philip the Fair, had repressed the insolent ambition of *Boniface VIII.* would these detestable sovereigns have been pitied in their merited fall?

*The first who ascended a throne was a fortunate soldier:*

*Soldier*\*: yes, and unfortunately, because men, for want of equality among them, could not choose a philosopher or a virtuous magistrate. At present, eloquence, profound sense, and genius, would pave the way to the throne: no one however is possessed of every accomplishment; and the man the most favoured by nature, is brought by innumerable points within the limits of moral equality.

Thomas Paine shows the great futility of the *monarchical* system, and demonstrates a decided superiority in the system termed *republican*. By *republicanism* he does not mean what this word imports in Holland and in some of the Italian states; he understands merely a government by representation, a government founded upon the invariable principles of the *declaration of rights*.

The monarchical government most of all shocks humanity, inasmuch as it degrades the honour and dignity of mankind by the disgust we experience in beholding them governed by children and commanded by brutes. It is impossible to disguise the ills which monarchy has spread on the earth, penury, exactions, wars,

\* A line from a tragedy of Voltaire. "Le premier que fut roi, fut un soldat heureux."



and murders. All hell, he adds, is to be found in a monarchy.

The whole of history shows that the monarchical form of government is always the most akin to extreme corruption, and that in it the individual will, with certain effect and in a concealed and insolent manner, annuls the general will:—this government becomes tyrannical.

When that false and monstrous idea was established that *kingdoms* were *private estates*, the property of one man, a wide door was opened to every absurdity and to every crime.

Aristotle commends monarchy; but he founds the excellence of that government upon the supposition that a man, firm, prudent, and intelligent, holds the reins and . . . according to laws wisely established. He depicts the sovereign elevated above others as much by his knowledge and his virtues as by his power; persuaded as he is that himself like the law exists only for the good of the people, the word of the prince may be more depended upon than the oath of other men: then the uniformity of plans, the secrecy of enterprises, and the celerity of their execution would inspire confidence and respect within the realm and fear abroad. But this ideal perfection which leads

us back to unity, that fertilizing principle in nature, has appeared only at vast intervals in the annals of the world.

Let us confess that liberty can scarcely be found except in the *democratic forms*, because these alone give to each citizen an inclination to obey; they render him master of himself, equal to others, and valuable to the state of which he forms a part.

But these forms are extremely difficult to establish. A nation of cultivators would be the best of all nations, as it is already framed for popular government.

Men are equal when they depend only upon the laws, and are all equally charged with the glorious employment of contributing to the repose and the felicity of their country. When the laws secure the independence of each individual, all the citizens may be free one as another; for the true character of a free government is that the individuals are not slaves to men, but only subject to the laws.

From the commencement of the French monarchy to the year 1254, the people were nothing at all; long after they had very small influence: but at last that gothic edifice is levelled with the dust, that insolent barbarism, that moral and political disorder.

Politics had always been calculated upon results closely connected with the force and necessity of the times ; and this had deceived the most intelligent. But sooner or later the laws awaken, according to the expression of the cardinal de Retz, the people recognize them, and deliverers and avengers arise.

Whatever language may be held, the republics of antiquity have equalled the monarchies in duration, because the entire administration of affairs becomes corrupt among the people, and because the disposition of the multitude, in general virtuous, does not produce villains, nor reward those known to be such, as the monarch does, who has constantly occasion for agents sworn to a blind obedience.

Nothing can equal the resources of republican genius ; labours and sacrifices attach it the more to its country. In the genius of the republican there always remains something fixed, I mean the love of freedom ; and whatever may be the asperity of internal divisions, the affection of the citizen is never entirely extinguished.

Let us sum up our discourse :—This unreasonable power has since the beginning of the world been the curse and scourge of society and of the human race. A lawful monarch becomes an usurper when he seizes what does not

belong to him : how idle a fancy to believe himself proprietor of a throne as if it were a farm ! what height of folly to believe in the pretended right of possessing a nation !

Never can a monarchy confer greatness on a people ; there offices are esteemed only according to their degree of emolument ; men are valued according to their influence, their rank, their income ; weakness is preferred to capacity ; and the base mind is preferred to the generous heart : he who breathes noble and patriotic sentiments receives the appellation of enthusiast ; and the most devoted submission is the only way to advancement. Weakness, ignorance, and abasement, descend by degrees from the first to the last classes of the society ; and the great mutually forgive each other their injustice, interweave it in every direction, and reduce it to a system.

The monarchical government favours hereditary aristocracy, which, in the opinion of the greatest philosophers, is the fittest of all things to stifle probity, talents, and patriotism.

Every nation, I admit, cannot soar at first to democracy ; it requires either the explosion of the greatest courage, or the effect of time, to sum up the concurrence of particular wills into a predominant will adapted to the public felicity.

When a nation is profoundly and truly enlightened, it will incline to the democratic form of government, because it will no longer take for leaders creatures at once stupid and wicked, because it will be careful to be directed by great men who may enlighten it, and because superior qualities will ever have over it a natural ascendant. What constitutes the liberty of such a government, is that a plurality of suffrages can never be procured in it without a more than ordinary capacity.

Thus knowledge introduces democracy, which elevates the people to the highest pitch of which they are capable: its influence upon great objects, and the habit of discussing them, sharpen the intellect and enlarge the mind to a degree unknown under every other form of government. What an immense difference between a peasant of Schwitz or of Appenzell, and a Russian or a Polish slave!

That democratic leaders should be a prey to the unruly passions of the populace, is indeed an inconvenience; but, in every view, is it not better that many thousands should avenge themselves upon one, than that one should amuse himself with persecuting thousands?

## CITIZEN-SOLDIER.

MAY these two words be never separated. Search history, and you will find that in all antiquity there was never any difference made between the condition of a citizen and that of a soldier: each was obliged to fight for his household gods. It was long before soldiers were enlisted; nor did the Romans enrolled in the army cease to be Roman citizens. Despotism began when the citizens believed that commerce and agriculture did not allow them sufficient leisure for the exercise of arms. Until the time of Louis XIV. moderate armies only had appeared in the field; when that monarch was enabled to keep on foot battalions formidable by their numbers, the national liberty received the greatest check. Men began to think that armies belonged to the monarch, and that, with numerous forces, a war is sooner finished. This was a double error: the war of the succession of Spain lasted more than twelve years; the war of 1756, which it was supposed at the commencement could not last above two campaigns, was protracted till the year 1763. After the conclusion of peace, war still subsisted under another form, because there yet remained

on foot numerous bodies of troops. These have been the true pillars of despotism, but at the same time they shook its lofty fabric as soon as they adopted the first patriotic ideas.

What is the wish of a crowned despot? To employ the army against its country, to behold army butcher army, and citizens murder citizens. It is in excluding the soldier from the citizen that he finds his principal force, and he thus destroys all that adopts the generous virtues of civism.

There have never been greater traitors to their country than those on whom it has conferred the highest honours and the most distinguished posts: the crowned potentate has always been disposed to make himself be considered as superior to human nature, and to give himself out for a being approaching nearer to the divinity than other men. He will take every method to pay his retainers; he will inspire them with ferocious ideas; he will entice them to show an open contempt for their country, the sovereignty of the nation, and the rights of the citizens; and to these eternal truths to oppose those words of a slave, *I serve the king*. It was thus the fanatics committed the murderous deeds on the night of St. Bartholomew, and, at every blow, exclaimed, *we serve God*.

But

But the citizen-foldier will despise the wheedling language of tyranny, he will always have present to his mind the fraternal law. As he will be taken from the middle class, he will be humane and just, for it is in that class that we shall find most probity and virtue. In this happy state of mediocrity, man, content with *his lot*, neither feels nor makes others feel the contemptuous pride inspired by rank, or the thirst of gold created by the aspect of the throne. This respectable order of citizen-foldiers loves the laws at the same time that it is susceptible of the greatest virtues.

#### THE SWISS WHO SELL THEMSELVES.

WHAT name shall we give to these people who make it a particular profession to butcher men? These mercenaries descend from their mountains to hire out their arms, to stain them with blood in foreign quarrels with which they are unconcerned, and to plunge them into the bowels of their fellow creatures. The issue of the war is indifferent to them, they are only carrying on trade—what a trade! The Swiss cantons may plead in vain that they want



money, and that they procure it by devastation and the carnage of mankind. No nation on the globe has committed such an insult upon humanity; for to leave one's country to murder and to sell one's blood to another, this fordid and cruel practice is so utterly disgraceful that no epithet is sufficiently harsh to characterize it.

They pretend to have freedom at home, an assertion which merits investigation; but surely they are the greatest enemies of the freedom of other people. The Swiss during the league always acted on the side of despotism: the greatest cruelties were perpetrated by them. That military body is without any sort of country, and consequently dear to every despot who retains it in his pay. I cannot help feeling a sentiment of horror and contempt at that cohort of satellites, which would blindly obey every crowned head, and would execute, if he should command it, a massacre like that of Thessalonica, the most atrocious recorded in history.

In true monarchies, the king is refused the right of enacting laws, but is charged with the execution of them; he possesses force sufficient to crush the violators of the laws, but not enough to oppress the nation. It is plain he ought not to have a body of troops of any kind

at

at his disposal, because he might abuse that trust; but he should enjoy the privilege of directing a proper force, to subdue the refractory. In the due measure of this force lies the great secret of legislation; when that balance is found, the constitution is good.

But if what surrounds the king inspires terror, if he encircles himself with a hired phalanx, with a sort of janissaries, the constitution is vicious. He will labour with this phalanx, however slender it may be, to attract other mercenaries, and to augment his revenue or his prerogatives rather than the glory of the empire; he is a satrap, and no longer a king.

The government is bad when the king has the baneful power of composing his guard of foreigners or of passive slaves, who will serve as instruments of his rage or caprice; all the causes of destruction then surround at once the people and the throne. The government, corrupted by the presence of these satellites, cannot naturally support itself without the most violent and most shameful means.

Foreign troops in the hands of the king! Why? Alas! have not nations at all times perceived the dreadful consequences of that horrid combination? Oh, Samuel! how wisely thou judgedst in holding out to a nation mad enough

to ask for a *king*, the most' hideous picture of the innumerable calamities which accompany royalty.

It would have been impossible for all the banditti and all the highway robbers on earth, to kill as many men in a thousand years as Louis XIV. destroyed in fifty ; and without foreign soldiers, perhaps he would not have been able to make the nation bow down its head beneath his ponderous sceptre.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A AND B.

A. IN what age did the clergy begin to form a body apart from the state ?

B. In the reign of Charlemagne.

A. Charlemagne then loved the church ?

B. As much as he did his concubines.

A. He is said nevertheless to have made excellent laws.

B. Very excellent !

A. What benefit do we enjoy from them ?

B. He introduced the Gregorian mode of singing into our churches ; he founded many bishoprics and monasteries ; and he brought to his court with much pomp the ministers of the humble religion which we profess.

A. Was

A. Was that prince a faint or a fool ?

B. Neither. He was ambitious, amorous, and fond of show; he made a distinct body of the sons of the church, who in the pompous assemblies of the states-general, trampled the third estate under foot. He was a high-spirited prince and a good christian, who demonstrated to the regions which he conquered, that those who were commanded to travel on foot with a single coat and without shoes, staff, or purse, might, without infringement of the divine precepts, travel in a carriage, keep mistresses and slaves, and clothe themselves with the spoils of Asia. Since his time the clergy were distinguished from the two orders of the kingdom by the privilege of paying no tribute except under the name of a benevolence or voluntary donation, of resisting the sovereign, and even of deposing him, when he would not comply with the views of the church. It is true, to the great scandal of God and of the angels, the power of that sacred body begins to decline.

A. What could occasion this revolution ?

B. Philosophy : and accordingly they thunder against it in the towns and in the villages. But our lords the clergy have a greater adversary to repel, and are destitute of strength; the league has totally exhausted them.

A. What

A. What is this terrible adversary ?

B. Pleasantry. The proud state with which they formerly intimidated both king and people is turned into ridicule ; and the title which they claim of the *divine organ*, affords excellent subject of raillery : they blush themselves at being what they are, and if they could lay aside the crozier and the mitre, and retain the revenues which they get by these hieroglyphics, we should see them with a sword by their side, eating flesh-meat on Friday, and keeping publicly an opera girl. What vexes them is, that every day well-digested plans are offered for stripping them of their riches, which however they employ to very useful purposes ; for without them how many shopkeepers would not have an honourable opportunity of becoming bankrupts ; how many tender chickens would not be acquainted with the prolific virtue of the holy Roman church ; how many farmers would be compelled to grow rich by the proper cultivation of the ground ?

A. Why deprive them of the possessions bestowed on them by the munificence of our ancestors ?

B. It is to imitate Catherine II, empress of all the Russias.

A. What has she done so remarkable ?

B. But

B. But a small matter : she seized the property of the ecclesiastics in 1768 ; and now pensions, perhaps too liberally, the archbishops, bishops, monks, and priests.

A. Churchmen are then very rich in France ?

B. They possess a full third of all the revenues of the kingdom.

A. Whence have they obtained such riches ?

B. From the weakness of our kings, from the superstition of the people, and from their own pious industry.

A. What do you mean by pious industry ?

B. I mean ; 1, the crusades ; 2, dispensations ; 3, indulgences ; 4, testaments ; 5, the inquisition ; 6, confession ; 7, purgatory ; 8, the Roman chancery ; 9, mafs ; 10, baptisms ; 11, marriages ; 12, interments ; 13, the civil wars ; 14, missions.

A. What mean you by the crusades ?

B. That famous expedition of the French, Germans, Italians, and English into Asia, in which, with a view of wresting Palestine from the hands of the Mussulmen, they pillaged, robbed, sacked, and ravished wherever they passed. The two first crusades cost Europe sixteen hundred thousand men.

A. But

A. But how were the crusades made subservient to the industry of ecclesiastics ?

B. In this way : the barons, in equipping themselves for the expedition, sold their estates at a low price ; the bishops and monks who had money, purchased them, without paying the fines of alienation ; the monks made their purchases with *oremuses*, and good passports to heaven.

A. Tell me what is a dispensation ?

B. It is a certain permission granted by the pope or the bishops to do what is forbidden by the laws of which the popes and the bishops are the authors.

A. And what is an indulgence ?

B. It is a kind of currency established to attract money ; it is an absolution of the sins committed against the holy church, and this absolution frees you, even beyond the grave, from the stripes, the faggots, the caldrons, and the red-hot coals of hell.

A. And how have testaments become, in sacerdotal hands, a pious kind of industry ?

B. Nothing was easier : an old debauchee, whom death hems in on all sides, calls a priest ; he recounts his wild follies, and, appalled at the imaginary horrors of hell, asks, with a voice interrupted by sobs, if he may hope for mercy.

Perhaps

Perhaps you may, perhaps not, replies the priest; divine justice must be satisfied, it must be appeased by sacrifices; no sacrifice is more agreeable in its eyes than a real and complete disengagement from the good things of this world. This abnegation cannot be entire and meritorious unless it be performed according to the canonical laws; these laws require that christians should divide their effects among the poor: now, the poor are the children of the church; it is therefore to the church that you ought to give your riches, that the distribution may be made in the best possible manner. The Jesuits were dexterous in recommending this expiatory satisfaction to their penitent hearers: they obtained seven thousand three hundred and fifty legacies in Flanders, twelve thousand throughout Germany, more than twenty thousand in Spain and the Indies, six thousand two hundred and thirty in Italy, and a great many in England, not to mention the gun-powder plot. Seeing in France that they could not prevail on Henry IV. to make a bequest in their favour, they contrived to assassinate him: the Jacobins had set them the example.

A. What is the inquisition?

B. It is a holy and pious tribunal established by the representatives of God on earth, to cur-  
comb



comb and burn those who believe not that the gospel commands to curry-comb and burn. The criminals at this tribunal forfeit their effects, which are shared between the holy father the pope, the reverend fathers the Jacobins, and the beneficent officers of that sacred court. When the accused is rich, he generally escapes the roasting. The kings of the south employ it to keep their grandees in servitude. In France, this tribunal is held in abhorrence; and, from a spirit of humanity, *letters de cachet* have been substituted. Formerly the bishops had blank ones in their pocket; at present, to obtain these letters, they must present memoirs, which are either not read, or, if read, not approved.

A. I should think that confession can scarcely be beneficial to the clergy; it concerns only the sins which all the world knows.

B. Let me take the liberty to say:—1. Confession is very useful in religious wars: 2. A penitent credits blindly what a holy director announces to him from heaven: he may indeed be enlightened, in which case he smiles at the confessor and returns to the war no more; but if he is not, which is the case with at least three fourths of the catholics, he obeys, and thereby the church gains its object: 3. Confession gives the priests of the Most High a perfect know-  
ledge

ledge of affairs and characters; it is by this mean that our worshipful prelates learn what passes among their rectors and in families: 4. Confession is wonderfully servicable in law-suits: 5. By confession our benign apostles become acquainted with all temperaments, and can with certainty fix on the object of their beloved mission: 6. Confession contributes to the augmentation of church casualties; it is enjoined by way of penance to lay masses at the rate of fifteen sous, to build a chapel, to found a charity,—and all this contributes to the priest's interest. The church is poor, and must be relieved from its embarrassments.

A. I have always heard it said that purgatory is the place where the souls of those who die under a venial sin wait a full justification to enter into celestial glory: I see no connection this has with priestly rapacity.

B. But you shall see; and so listen to me.—When Saint Odilon, abbot of Clung, discovered purgatory, he fancied that, to secure a decent subsistence for his monks, it was requisite to engage the people to embrace this discovery. The Roman Court, which foresaw the advantages that would accrue from this Benedictine dream, declared positively that Saint Odilon was

a man gifted with a strong discernment, and had found out a place unknown for more than sixty thousand years. This court afterwards persuaded the people that it would be neither prudent nor decent in them to allow their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, friends, &c. to be burned for a peccadillo; that the prayers which were established would shorten the duration of the chastisement; and that, by paying handsomely, a thousand souls at once might be liberated from that abode of darkness and horror. Twenty troops of monks inculcated so deeply this ridiculous jargon into the minds of the catholics, that the holy and poor church of Jesus was entirely deluged with effects moveable and immoveable, till Luther determined, out of spite, to shut up purgatory, into which none now enter except German and Italian bigots.

A. Does the Roman Chancery resemble that of France?

B. No. At Paris sums are paid, it is true, which ought not to be paid; but this is only to liquidate the debts of the chancellors. At Rome there are certain rates fixed for all the sins committed or to be committed: so much for having gone to bed to one's sister, one's  
aunt

aunt, or one's brother; so much for having murdered one's king, one's father, one's friend; so much for having blasphemed God, heaven, earth, and hell. When you wish to recommit a sin, you must there pay double.

A. Do the priests draw a great profit from the masses?

B. In Portugal, on All Souls Day, an hundred thousand piafters are received for masses: at Paris, among the Genovefains, the Cordeliers, the Capucins, and at St. Martin in the fields, a register is kept of the masses paid, and when there is a surplus, the sacristans who receive them at twelve sous, send them into the provinces at eight. I maintain that in this city there are sold, taking one year with another, a million of masses.

A. Money is also paid, is it not, for baptism and interment?

B. Undoubtedly: some of the funeral services cost 15 and 18 hundred livres. Besides every thing is well regulated in this article; an exact price fixed for the bell-tolling, for the lights, the hangings, the number of priests and of chandeliers, and the quality of the ornaments—this price, I say, protects christians from all imposition.

A. Of what service is marriage to the priests? It is a matter entirely secular.

B. You are ignorant then that the nuptial benediction is taxed, and that this taxation renders marriage a mixed business—nothing can be more just; for this being a carnal act, and consequently little suited to beings spiritualized by religion, it is very proper to mulct the parties, and make them feel all the vileness of their mutual intercourse. The sacred celibacy which leaves to the priests the advantage of a secret concubinage is of so high importance that marriage cannot be loaded with obligations too burdensome: it is well that the church does not reckon this union a crime. Besides, the casuists, Sanchez excepted, have bound it by so many shackles, that it is very difficult not to sin in the married state: every thing, even to dress, is prescribed in the new canons.

A. Civil wars surely cannot be useful to the church?

B. Very well, indeed! You are then ignorant that the clergy have excited almost all of these in Europe? It is by these wars that priests have acquired an absolute dominion over consciences; and if sometimes their hopes have been disappointed, as was the case in the north  
of

of Europe, they have elsewhere been gainers by them. If they do not stir up these wars, they come between the parties, and *shuffle the cards* with more address than does the Sieur Comus, the conjuror. Consult history, and it will instruct you better than polemical writings. There is no theological dispute of any note, but has overturned thrones, ruined empires, and deluged whole regions with blood.

A. Missions, far from being lucrative to the church, have on the contrary deprived it, and that frequently in the cruelest way, of its best subjects.

B. The subjects sacrificed were the devoted sentinels of the priestly army : while the pagans were murdering them, they were canonized at Rome, and this brought money. But all the missions have not been similar to those to Japan. Those to China produced 187,200,000 livres for the Jesuits ; 1,120,000 livres for the Dominicans ; and 1,400,500 livres for the secular priests : at Paraguay they afforded for the Jesuits alone 4,878,912,000 livres ; at Mexico, more than six billions for the whole clergy, &c.

## FINAL CAUSES.

ETERNAL order has willed that animals should devour each other ; one half of whatever is endued with life is perpetually at war with the other half ; and one part of the living substance constantly feeds upon the other part. We must confine ourselves to facts when we would form just notions of this eternal order ; observe the voracity of the eagle, the terrible force of his beak and his keen glances, which descry the remotest objects ; this aerial bird shoots upon its prey with the swiftness of lightning. Examine the net-work which the spider forms to entrap the insects ; what nicety ! what address ! But the law which ordains the destruction of one animal for the good of another contributes undoubtedly to the increase of life, and the world advances and improves by this immutable order. It loses none of the living substance ; and, by a wonderful œconomy of nature, its destruction serves for its reproduction. Thus the fire of life, extinguished in one class of animals, rekindles immediately in another, grows purer, and burns with increased vigour. Life is an impetuous tor-

rent which requires only to be diffused. A cod spawns a million of eggs ; and all fishes are prolific. The desire of multiplying is inherent in every species, and several of them need coercive forces to restrain their progress and maintain their just proportion with the other species. In the animal system therefore the reproduction of the carnivorous tribes is not injurious to the other species, but is on the contrary both useful and necessary to them. The birds of the air eat the insects and worms which gnaw the trees to the very sap, and strip the earth of all its riches ; this superabundance of life would occasion the horrors of famine, if certain species had not been placed by the eternal order to oppose these excesses.

Is it credible, after this prodigious multiplication, that men in the most civilized countries have still such difficulty in providing their subsistence ? Is not this owing to the scourge of a political error which destroys fecundity, and defeats the force of propagation ?

We must not, therefore, imagine that agriculture contributes every where to the increase of life ; there are countries in which it is at least doubtful if cultivation does not diminish its quantity. By clearing away the forests, many



advantages undoubtedly have been lost, since animals of the greatest utility in supplying food were extirpated.

It was necessary that nature either should cut off the stream of life and stop it in the universe, or, to prevent a single species from getting head, and causing a general mortality in the whole animal system, should set the different species at war with each other: she could admit no medium between the total extinction of life, or a counterpoise given to it, by directing that one part of the living substance should feed upon the other. Such are the eternal barriers which nature opposes to that excessive increase which would entirely destroy the balance; for it is of advantage to all the species, that there are insurmountable obstacles which confine each of them to its due progress.

In a dearth of the feathered tribes that feed upon insects, do you not perceive that the coldness of the season completes the destruction of the flies which pullulate in the air, and prevents a frightful redundance, which would engender pestilence or contagious diseases, if these insects were to continue to multiply only a few weeks longer.

If one part of the living substance is at war  
with

with the other, it is because supreme wisdom has so ordered it. We do not perceive that this law of nature has occasioned hitherto the extinction of a single species: on the contrary, it has preserved each of them in a state of vigour and of immortal youth; and without such a salutary appointment, life would long ere now, by breaking down the equilibrium between the different species of beings, have been totally effaced.

Is not the universal harmony of the living species manifested in those respective enemies which maintain the balance and are provided with all the weapons and all the faculties necessary for that end? Behold the insects and reptiles which, covering the surface of the earth, are opposed by an army of birds, active, vigilant, and voracious. The hares, the rabbits, the rats, and the field and house mice, which multiply so prodigiously, are preyed on by quadrupeds equally nimble in their motions, and endowed with more force and a quicker sight. The enormous weight of horned cattle and the swiftness of deer lessen not the empire which man holds over the brutes.

Lastly, carnivorous animals, notwithstanding their formidable weapons of defence, experience  
in

in the human race innumerable powers which every where check their progress, or drive them to the deserts in which to exercise their ferocity.

And man, alas ! who rules over other creatures, how often does he not direct his force against himself ! how often is man with respect to man what carnivorous beasts are to other animals ! And this is the fault of that intelligent being called man, of him who punishes himself by this dreadful error.

Hobbes has asserted that men are born in a state of warfare with each other. This opinion is false when applied to the individuals of the human race ; the organs of man are not adapted for destroying or tearing. His faculties, his wants, and his desires, all announce that he is formed to live in society, and that the more men are mutually connected by affection and benevolence, the nearer they approach to the state of felicity.

This opinion of Hobbes is also false with regard to civilized nations, considered in relation to each other, since they can obtain, from the inexhaustible cultivation of the arts and sciences, the means of preventing the cruel necessity of making war ; and the human race is very dif-  
tant

tant from that term of population, when a redundancy of numbers shall become pernicious. The agricultural life, the attention to the phænomena of vegetation, and useful experiments, will shortly justify, and for ages, the infinite wisdom and goodness of the Supreme Being. The first step towards truth is to sacrifice pride, and to acknowledge the dependance of all beings on those general laws which nature has established for the reproduction and preservation of that immense quantity of living matter which circulates in the world. Imaginary irregularities will thus disappear; for in the profound study of nature we shall have learned to recognize a *providence* and *final causes*, that is to say, the prosperity of the universe, and the limit to which it tends, *perfectibility*.

Without a certain degree of light cast upon the operations of nature, the phantoms of our imagination would displace important truths; our mind, alarmed by appearances, would lose those sentiments of confidence, those sublime and cheering sentiments which discover to us a *sole being* animating and governing all the mass of the world, and which imprint on this *necessary being*, besides his infinite power, the attributes, supremely amiable, of wisdom and goodness:

goodness: it is by this happy contemplation that the soul rises to the great whole, and disencumbers itself from those vile and earthly errors which load human reason in the schools.

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### HOW DARES COMMERCE TO DISPUTE THE PRE-EMINENCE WITH AGRICULTURE.

**THE** cultivator! To him is especially committed the deposit of public liberty. The men who are spread over the plains, these are the true true defenders of a free constitution! I reckon more on the cultivator than on the trader. The husbandman possesses confidence, and is disposed to be communicative; he is not satisfied with the success of an undertaking or of a simple experiment, unless he causes his neighbour to repeat it: he feels that people acquire only in common, and enjoy only in participation; he is not envious of another's field, because prosperity ought to be the same in all fields equally cultivated; the fertility of one field becoming the pledge of the fertility of that which is adjacent. The trader on the contrary stands aloof, because he dreads a rival;

his gain sometimes depends upon the secret of a particular enterprise, and oftener upon an obscure market, or a mercantile stratagem which he conceals from others. Every merchant's warehouse becomes a distinct republic; and the harmony of the whole affects not the proprietor, whose prosperity is only completed by the ruin of all his competitors.

The cultivator has a gentler, milder, and humaner soul. As he produces by the aid of nature, he desires not immoderate gains; he cannot pant after those which are arbitrary, and still less after those that are unlimited; he deals not in the lottery; he creates with the sun, with the seasons, with an experimental and daily industry. The merchant, whose object is to acquire exorbitant profits, tries and forces all kinds of enterprizes; bent on incidental gains, he despises them if they are moderate; he is not satisfied with a competence, but aspires to a fortune. Mercantile cunning invariably makes impressions which in time contract the most enlarged mind and most extensive capacity. The husbandman, whose aim is to labour and gain with the peaceful course of nature alone, nourishes not those preying conceptions which waste the keen merchant and place him perpetually

petually between a lofty criminal fortune and a bankruptcy; running all the hazardous chances, he is never acquainted with the repose enjoyed by the cultivator, who is moderate in his wishes, and, like the child on its mother's bosom, sleeps in the lap of the earth.

Have we witnessed humane and patriotic ideas in commercial bodies? No. All their views are exclusive. Hear the manufacturers; every thing must be sacrificed to their avarice: hear the merchants; war must be commenced on account of their commodities: hear the *white colonists*; humanity must be sacrificed, that they may sell their sugar and coffee at a higher price. The sordid idea of adding to their daily gain, of augmenting their yearly income, renders them strangers to sound political notions. They would have separate laws for themselves to favour continually their avarice, and would impose coercive regulations on others, calculated for their own interest.

There is no cultivator at this day who, in the hope of leading a happier life under a sky more suited to the freedom and expansion of genius, would quit France to retire into Germany, Holland, Spain, or Russia. The princes, the priests, and financiers have emigrated: nothing

thing proves better the excellence of our constitution. The English, the Poles, the Swifs, and the Swedes are not fo free.

The nobles, notwithstanding their subtlety of genius for intrigue, refemble favages; they admit with extreme difficulty new ideas, however analogous they may be to thofe which they already poffefs: their brain is quite impenetrable to notions out of their ordinary conception; they are and will be, in that refpect, much below the peafant.

Behold then the word *great* happily aboliſhed! The cultivators will feel that they ought to be governed folety by the laws, and not by thofe who difpenfe them. By the appellation of *great*, was always underſtood in France a man whoſe authority among his fellow citizens enabled him to do much injury; if he enjoyed in addition a lucrative poſt, he was completely *great*. An intendant was a *great* man in country places. Where are the intendants? Do you flatter yourſelf to re-eſta-bliſh them in the provinces? Though all the towns ſhould yield, ſtill would the cottages re-fiſt. The cultivators! theſe are the firmeſt ſupports of the revolution.

A government was to be eſta-bliſhed which  
ſhould



should admit men of office and not grandees. It was necessary to grant to all the cultivators the right of attending the primary assemblies, of filling the magistracy, of keeping arms in their houses, and of augmenting their strength by public exercises; for it is but equitable that the people employed in tillage should be under the immediate protection of the government, that they should be as much favoured as the rich in the prosecution of insults received, and that no law should raise bars to their fortune: if the fruits of their labour be not ravished from their hands, they will love the constitution.

Polity and laws in a society are good in proportion as they conform to the intention of Providence, which certainly has not connected happiness with the encroachments of ambition and pride.

To equality nature has linked the preservation of our social qualities; equality must produce every good, because it unites men, elevates their soul, and prepares them for the mutual sentiments of benevolence and friendship. We may hence conclude that inequality engenders every mischief, since it degrades them, sows among them division and strife, and takes away *political virtue*, and the ardent love of the community.

Providence

Providence has not permitted that the import of equality should be overstrained; but the stronger it is, the more will it contribute to felicity: never can it degenerate or become a vice, because it can never be unjust, and, removing us equally from tyranny and servitude, it unites men and gives them the same interest.

The import of equality is, therefore, no other than the import of our own dignity; by suffering it to weaken, men have grown slaves, and by its renovation alone will they become free.

If it was expedient for us to form new laws, it was on that account also expedient to renounce in the first instance our independance. But it was otherwise with our equality, for this is undeniably the source of true blessings, and cannot be lost without risking the greatest calamities.

A tyrannical government may be recognized by these features:—when it forbids the progress of knowledge, the free communication of such ideas as are calculated to enlighten men, and the assemblies which are to unite them; when it besets them with spies, and marks every word that is uttered.—Such a monstrous government must unavoidably fall, since the

hatred and contempt which it inspires will sooner or later avenge the majesty of an insulted nation. Authority will under such circumstances return to the source from whence it flowed.

But to confer the supreme magisterial appointments on personal qualities, without regard to fortune; to prevent the magistrates from enriching themselves by their employments: to oblige them to give an account to the public of their administration:—these are the principal points of every free government. And the husbandmen then feel that they are again become citizens, and have at last a country.



#### HISTORICAL PASSAGE WHICH DISPLEASED MARIA-THERESA.

THE house of Austria, it is well known, derives its origin from Hafburg, who, before his being elected emperor in 1273, had been, says Voltaire, the champion of the Abbé of Saint Gall against the bishop of Bâle, in a trivial contest about a few casks of wine. His fortune was then so disproportioned to his courage that  
he

he was at one time *High Steward* to Octocarius, king of Bohemia, who being afterwards urged to pay homage to him, replied *that he owed him nothing, since he had paid him his wages.* But what is known but to very few, this historical passage piqued Maria-Theresa so much that she made her son promise, during his travels in France, not to visit Voltaire. The vanity of the poet was not a little hurt at this.

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THE THIRTY-FIRST OF DECEMBER 1789.

ADIEU, memorable year, the most illustrious of this century! The distinguished and unique year in which the French have recovered to Gaul that liberty which despotism held in chains! Adieu, immortal year which has fixed a limit to the debasement of the people, by revealing to them the claims of which the originals were lost! Adieu, most glorious year distinguished by the courageous activity of the Parisians, by the death of the most lofty and most magnificent *clergy*, and by the decease of the most potent and most elevated *nobility*, who expired in convulsions.

Wonderful year! patriotifm has emerged in complete armour from your generous loins; it has in a moment placed in their due station a crowd of enlightened citizens, who have produced talents unknown, and have given to attentive and astonished Europe important lessons of which she will undoubtedly profit\*.

Incomparable year! you have seen the termination of the government of dreadful memory which had so close an intercourse with the *Bastille*, its favourite mistress, and the most pregnant and most enormous female ever beheld, who perished by a sudden and violent attack. On the same day you witnessed my brave countrymen save the national assembly which

\* The court of Spain lately issued an order prohibiting the parish of Varcarlos, situated a quarter of a league from the frontiers of France, to celebrate the festival which that parish gave every year on the 25th of July, and at which a great number of French attended to make merry with their brethren and neighbours the Spaniards. A penalty of 20 livres was to be inflicted on every house in case of disobedience. The inhabitants of Varcarlos asked the reason of the prohibition. The answer was that it was intended to prevent the intercourse of those Frenchmen who would no longer adore their priests, and who took it into their heads to make laws for themselves.

“ Well! we know how it stands,” replied an old man; “ but if we do not hold this festival, we shall soon celebrate another at which all Spain will dance, and the court of Madrid must pay the fidlers.”

was to be sacrificed, and intimidate the sword which the prince *De Lambesc* had already made to gleam, that perfidious sword placed in the hand of foreign troops, and which, whatever be alleged, was aimed to kill us in order to rid itself of the trouble of paying us.

What unexpected events does this year comprehend! In the space of a few months, the misfortunes and blunders of many ages have been repaired. Man has recovered his first dignity; and the system of feudality and oppression which insulted reason and humanity, is annulled\*.

I hear the country-people bless the year of the revolution. I present to you my incense, august year! you have changed my Paris †; it is now quite different, and will be the abode of happiness and freedom. I already breathe in it the air of the Swiss mountains. I am a soldier, not as a dog of war, set on by a choleric, weak, or whimsical despot, but as a citizen who will

\* *Nicolas Lefevre*, preceptor of the prince of Condé, under Henry IV. said to his pupil that *the court is always the enemy of the nation*. He was perhaps the only man then in France who knew that truth: we have since had deplorable proofs of the assertion.

† Alluding to the *Tableau de Paris* of the author. *Trans-*  
*fair*

joyfully surrender his life in the true cause of his country.

For these thirty years have I had the presentiment that I should not die without being witness to a great political event: I fed my soul and my writings with the rapturous prospect. This is the year for my pen; I offer you my warmest thanks, beneficent year! If my portrait needs to be drawn anew, it will one day at least be said, that in this year the Parisians displayed to heaven and to the throne an hundred thousand armed men within twenty-four hours! They did not suffer their city to be destroyed; and they made a general movement which has been communicated to France and to the rest of Europe.

Great year! you will be the year of regeneration; you will bear that name: you fly away to sink into the ocean of time. Adieu, since it is impossible for our wishes to prolong your stay! but at least tell my dear eldest daughter *the year two thousand four hundred and forty*, that we run to meet her with all our strength, and hasten to embrace her. Without flattery, you much resemble her; dear fleeting year; I had even a momentary persuasion, that it was needed only to change the date of your birth,

But

But your younger sister (be not jealous of her) will have more beauty and wit than yourself; because patriotism is a virtue which strengthens by exercise; because we must still meditate on the public felicity to rear an immoveable edifice; and because the grand effort of the human mind is not to frame good laws, but to put them into execution.

Adieu, unparalleled year in our history! I who was free long before the days of your liberty, can I neglect to be faithful to your memory? No. Every day will I pour forth my gratitude to the Supreme Being for having shown me the dawn of the sun of freedom: he shines upon my country, armed with all his rays: Montesquieu, Mably, Helvetius, Thomas, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Turgot, sleep in the tomb; they have not viewed the days of glory which their genius had prepared. Oh! with what acclamations would they have saluted the regenerated French nation! To their voice, alas! and not to mine, it belonged to chant your patriotic virtues! They have outrun my tardy expectation, they have surpassed my dearest hopes. But I will write at least what I have seen; that such events may never decay in the memory of men; that they may learn at all times



times and in all places, that they need only their hands and their heads to destroy every sort of tyranny; that they have only to wish it; and that God loves equally all his creatures formed of the same clay, and protects equally every generous insurrection, because the book of laws descended from his eternal throne. Adieu, tumultuous, but most dear and most respectable year!

T H E E N D.





