



Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

CONCIONES AD POPULUM.

OR

A D D R E S S E S

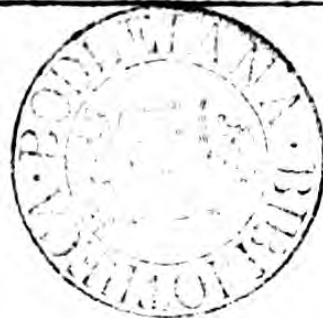
TO THE

PEOPLE.

(2)

By S. T. COLERIDGE.

1795.



Νυν εν ατεχνως ηρω παρεσκευασμενος

Βοαν, υποκρθειν, λοιδορειν της ρητορας,

Εαν τις αλλο πλην περι ειρηνης λεγη.

ARIST. ACHARN. 37.

P R E F A C E.

THE two following addreffes were delivered in the month February, 1795, and were followed by fix others in defence of natural and revealed Religion. There is “ a time to keep filence ” faith King Solomon ;—but when I proceeded to the first Verfe of the fourth Chapter of the Ecclefiastes, “ and confidered all the oppreffions that are done under the Sun, and behold the Tears of fuch as were oppreffed, and they had no comforter ; and on the fide of the oppreffors there was power ”—I concluded, that this was *not* the “ time to keep filence.”—For Truth fhould be fpoken at all times, but more efpecially at thofe times, when to fpeak Truth is dangerous.

*Clevedon,
November 16th,
1795.*

A LETTER from LIBERTY
To her dear Friend FAMINE.

DEAR FAMINE,

YOU will doubtless be surprized at receiving a petitionary Letter from a perfect Stranger. But *Fas est vel ab hoste*. All whom I once supposed my unalterable friends, I have found unable or unwilling to assist me. I first applied to GRATITUDE, entreating her to whisper into the ear of Majesty, that it was I, who had placed his forefathers on the throne of Great Britain—She told me, that she had frequently made the attempt, but as frequently had been baffled by FLATTERY: and that I might not doubt the truth of her apology, she led me (as the Spirit did the prophet Ezekiel) “to the Door of the COURT, and I went in, and saw—and behold! every form of *creeping Things*.” I was however somewhat consoled, when I heard that RELIGION was high in favour there, and possessed great influence. I myself had been her faithful servant, and always found her my best protectress: her service being indeed perfect Freedom. Accordingly in full confidence of success I entered her mansion—but alas! instead of my kind Mistress, horror-struck I beheld “a painted patched-up old Harlot.”

Harlot." She was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, and upon her Forehead was written "MYSTERY." I shriek'd, for I knew her to be the Dry-nurse of that detested Imp, Despotism. I next address'd myself to PRUDENCE—and earnestly besought her to plead my cause to the ministers; to urge the distresses of the lower order, and my fears lest so distress they should forget their obedience. For the prophet Isaiah had inform'd me "that it shall come to pass, that when the People shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves and curse the King." The grave matron heard me—and shaking her head learnedly replied, "Quos Deus vult perdere, dementat." Again I besought her to speak to the rich men of the nation, concerning ministers of whom it might soon become illegal even to complain—of long and ruinous wars—and whether *they* must not bear the damage. All this (quoth PRUDENCE) I have repeatedly urged; but a sly Impostor has usurped my name, and struck such a panic of Property, as hath steeled the heart of the wealthy and palsied their intellects. Lastly, I applied to CONSCIENCE. She inform'd me, that she was indeed a perfect ventriloquist and could throw her voice into any place she liked; but that she

she was seldom attended to, unless when she appeared to speak *out of the Pocket*.

Thus baffled and friendless, I was about to depart, and stood a fearful lingerer on the Isle, which I had so dearly loved—when tidings were brought me of *your* approach. I found myself impelled by a power superior to me to build my last hopes on you.—Liberty, the MOTHER of PLENTY, calls Famine to her aid. O FAMINE, most eloquent Goddess! plead thou my cause. I meantime will pray fervently that Heaven may unseal the ears of its vicegerents, so that they may listen to your first pleadings, while yet your voice is faint and distant, and your counsels peaceable.—

I remain

Your distressed Suppliant,

Dover Cliffs.

LIBERTY.



Introductory Address.



Αει γὰρ τῆς Ἐλευθερίας ἐφιέμαι· πολλὰ δὲ ἐν και
ροῖς φιλελευθεροῖς μίσῃτα, ἀντελευθερά.

INTRODUCTORY

ADDRESS.



WHEN the Wind is fair and the Planks of the Vessel sound, we may safely trust every thing to the management of professional Mariners: in a Tempest and on board a crazy Bark, all must contribute their Quota of Exertion. The Stripling is not exempted from it by his Youth, nor the Passenger by his Inexperience. Even so, in the present agitations of the public mind, every one ought to consider his intellectual faculties as in a state of immediate requisition. All may benefit Society in some degree. The exigences of the Times do not permit us to stay for the maturest years, lest the opportunity be lost, while we are waiting for an increase of power.

A Companies

Companies resembling the present will, from a variety of circumstances, consist *chiefly* of the zealous Advocates for Freedom. It will therefore be our endeavour, not so much to excite the torpid, as to regulate the feelings of the ardent: and above all, to evince the necessity of *bottoming* on fixed Principles, that so we may not be the unstable Patriots of Passion or Accident, nor hurried away by names of which we have not sifted the meaning, and by tenets of which we have not examined the consequences. The Times are trying; and in order to be prepared against their difficulties, we should have acquired a prompt facility of adverting in all our doubts to some grand and comprehensive Truth. In a deep and strong Soil must that Tree fix its Roots, the height of which, is to "reach to Heaven, and the Sight of it to the ends of all the Earth."

The Example of France is indeed a "Warning to Britain." A Nation wading to their Rights through Blood, and marking the track of Freedom by Devastation! Yet let us not embattle our Feelings against our Reason. Let us not indulge our malignant Passions under the mask of Humanity. Instead of railing with infuriate declamation
 against

against these excesses, we shall be more profitably employed in developing the sources of them. French Freedom is the Beacon, which while it guides to Equality, should shew us the Dangers that throng the road.

The Annals of the French Revolution have recorded in Letters of Blood, that the Knowledge of the Few cannot counteract the Ignorance of the Many; that the Light of Philosophy, when it is confined to a small Minority, points out the Possessors as the Victims, rather than the Illuminators, of the Multitude. The Patriots of France either hastened into the dangerous and gigantic Error of making certain Evil the means of contingent Good, or were sacrificed by the Mob, with whose prejudices and ferocity their unbending Virtue forbade them to assimilate. Like Sampson, the People were strong—like Sampson, the People were blind. Those two massy Pillars of Oppression's Temple, Monarchy and Aristocracy,

With horrible Convulsion to and fro
 They tugg'd, they shook—till down they came and drew
 The whole Roof after them with burst of Thunder
 Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
 Lords, Ladies, Captains, Counsellors, and Priests,
 Their choice Nobility!

MILTON. SAM. AGON.

A 2

There

There was not a Tyrant in Europe, who did not tremble on his Throne. Freedom herself heard the Crash aghast!—

The Girondists, who were the first republicans in power, were men of enlarged views and great literary attainments; but they seem to have been deficient in that vigour and daring activity, which circumstances made necessary. Men of genius are rarely either prompt in action or consistent in general conduct: their early habits have been those of contemplative indolence; and the day-dreams, with which they have been accustomed to amuse their solitude, adapt them for splendid speculation, not temperate and practicable counsels. Brissot, the leader of the Gironde party, is entitled to the character of a virtuous man, and an eloquent speaker; but he was rather a sublime visionary, than a quick-eyed politician; and his excellences equally with his faults rendered him unfit for the helm, in the stormy hour of Revolution. Robespierre, who displaced him, possessed a glowing ardor that still remembered the *end*, and a cool ferocity that never either overlooked, or scrupled, the *means*. What that *end* was, is not known: that it was a wicked one, has by no means

means been proved. I rather think, that the distant prospect, to which he was travelling, appeared to him grand and beautiful; but that he fixed his eye on it with such intense eagerness as to neglect the foulness of the road. If however his first intentions were pure, his subsequent enormities yield us a melancholy proof, that it is not the character of the possessor which directs the power, but the power which shapes and depraves the character of the possessor. In Robespierre, its influence was assisted by the properties of his disposition.—Enthusiasm, even in the gentlest temper, will frequently generate sensations of an unkindly order. If we clearly perceive any one thing to be of vast and infinite importance to ourselves and all mankind, our first feelings impel us to turn with angry contempt from those, who doubt and oppose it. The ardor of undisciplined benevolence seduces us into malignity: and whenever our hearts are warm, and our objects great and excellent, intolerance is the sin that does most easily beset us. But this enthusiasm in Robespierre was blended with gloom, and suspiciousness, and inordinate vanity. His dark imagination was still brooding over supposed plots against freedom—to prevent tyranny he became a Tyrant—

Tyrant—and having realized the evils which he suspected, a wild and dreadful Tyrant.—Those loud-tongued adulators, the mob, overpowered the lone-whispered denunciations of conscience—he despotized in all the pomp of Patriotism, and masqueraded on the bloody stage of Revolution, a Caligula with the cap of Liberty on his head.

It has been affirmed, and I believe with truth, that the system of Terrorism by suspending the struggles of contrariant Factions communicated an energy to the operations of the Republic, which had been hitherto unknown, and without which it could not have been preserved. The system depended for its existence on the general sense of its necessity, and when it had answered its end, it was soon destroyed by the same power that had given it birth—popular opinion. It must not however be disguised, that at *all* times, but more especially when the public feelings are wavy and tumultuous, artful Demagogues may create this opinion: and they, who are inclined to tolerate evil as the means of contingent good, should reflect, that if the excesses of terrorism gave to the Republic that efficiency and *repulsive* force
which

which its circumstances made necessary, they likewise afforded to the hostile Courts the most powerful support, and excited that indignation and horror, which every where precipitated the subject into the designs of the ruler. Nor let it be forgotten, that these excesses perpetuated the war in La Vendee and made it more terrible, both by the accession of numerous partizans, who had fled from the persecution of Robespierre, and by inspiring the Chouans with fresh fury, and an unsubmitting spirit of revenge and desperation.

Revolutions are sudden to the unthinking only. Political Disturbances happen not without their warning Harbingers. Strange Rumbings and confused Noises still precede these earthquakes and hurricanes of the moral World. The process of Revolution in France has been dreadful, and should incite us to examine with an anxious eye the motives and manners of those, whose conduct and opinions seem calculated to forward a similar event in our own country. The oppositionists to "things as they are," are divided into many and different classes. To delineate them with an unflattering accuracy may be a delicate, but it is

a necessary Task, in order that we may enlighten, or at least beware of, the misguided Men who have enlisted under the banners of Liberty, from no principles or with bad ones: whether they be those, who

admire they know not what,
And know not whom, but as one leads the other :

or whether those,

Whose end is private Hate, not help to Freedom,
Adverse and turbulent when she would lead
To Virtue.

The majority of Democrats appear to me to have attained that portion of knowledge in politics, which Infidels possess in religion. I would by no means be supposed to imply, that the objections of both are equally unfounded, but that they both attribute to the system which they reject, all the evils existing under it; and that both contemplating truth and justice "in the nakedness of abstraction," condemn constitutions and dispensations without having sufficiently examined the natures, circumstances, and capacities of their recipients.

The first Class among the professed Friends of Liberty is composed of Men, who unaccustomed

to

to the labour of thorough investigation, and not particularly oppressed by the Burthen of State, are yet impelled by their feelings to disapprove of its grosser depravities, and prepared to give an indolent Vote in favour of Reform. Their sensibilities unbraced by the co-operation of fixed Principles, they offer no sacrifices to the divinity of active Virtue. Their political Opinions depend with weather-cock uncertainty on the winds of rumour, that blow from France. On the report of French victories they blaze into Republicanism, at a tale of French excesses they darken into Aristocrats; and seek for shelter among those despicable adherents to fraud and tyranny, who ironically style themselves Constitutionalists.— These *dough-baked Patriots* are not however useless. This oscillation of political opinion will retard the day of Revolution, and it will operate as a preventive to its excesses. Indecisiveness of character, though the effect of timidity, is almost always associated with benevolence.

Wilder features characterize the second class. Sufficiently possessed of natural sense to despise the Priest, and of natural feeling to hate the Oppressor, they listen only to the inflammatory

B

harangues

harangues of some mad-headed Enthusiast, and imbibe from them Poison, not Food ; Rage, not Liberty. Unillumined by Philosophy, and stimulated to a lust of revenge by aggravated wrongs, they would make the Altar of Freedom stream with blood, while the grass grew in the desolated halls of Justice. These men are the rude materials from which a detestable Minister manufactures conspiracies. Among these men he sends a brood of sly political monsters, in the character of sanguinary Demagogues, and like Satan of old, "the Tempter ere the Accuser," ensnares a few into Treason, that he may alarm the whole into Slavery. He, who has dark purposes to serve, must use dark means—light would discover, reason would expose him : he must endeavour to shut out both—or if this prove impracticable, make them appear frightful by giving them frightful names : for farther than Names the Vulgar enquire not. Religion and Reason are but poor substitutes for "Church and Constitution ;" and the sable-vested Instigators of the Birmingham riots well knew, that a Syllogism could not disarm a drunken Incendiary of his Firebrand, or a Demonstration *helmet* a Philosopher's head against a Brickbat. But in the principles, which this

Apostate

Apostate has, by his emissaries, sown among a few blind zealots for Freedom, he has dugged a pit into which he himself may perhaps be doomed to fall. We contemplate those principles with horror. Yet they possess a kind of wild Justice well calculated to spread them among the grossly ignorant. To unenlightened minds, there are terrible charms in the idea of Retribution, however savagely it be inculcated. The Groans of the Oppressors make fearful yet pleasant music to the ear of him, whose mind is darkness, and into whose soul the iron has entered.

This class, at present, is comparatively small— Yet soon to form an overwhelming majority, unless great and immediate efforts are used to lessen the intolerable grievances of our poorer brethren, and infuse into their sorely wounded hearts the healing qualities of knowledge. For can we wonder that men should want humanity, who want all the circumstances of life that humanize? Can we wonder that with the ignorance of Brutes they should unite their ferocity? peace and comfort be with these! But let us shudder to hear from Men of dissimilar opportunities sentiments of similar revengefulness. The purifying
 B 2 alchemy

alchemy of Education may transmute the fierceness of an ignorant man into virtuous energy—but what remedy shall we apply to him, whom Plenty has not softened, whom Knowledge has not taught Benevolence? This is one among the many fatal effects which result from the want of fixed principles. Convinced that vice is error, we shall entertain sentiments of Pity for the vicious, not of Indignation—and even with respect to that bad Man, to whom we have before alluded, altho' we are now groaning beneath the burthen of his misconduct, we shall harbour no sentiments of Revenge; but rather *condole* with him that his chaotic Iniquities have exhibited such a complication of extravagance, inconsistency, and rashness as may *alarm* him with apprehensions of approaching lunacy!

There are a third class among the friends of Freedom, who possess not the wavering character of the first description, nor the ferocity last delineated. They pursue the interests of Freedom steadily, but with narrow and self-centering views: they anticipate with exultation the abolition of privileged orders, and of Acts that persecute by exclusion from the right of citizenship.

ship. They are prepared to join in digging up the rubbish of mouldering Establishments, and stripping off the tawdry pageantry of Governments. Whatever is above them they are most willing to drag down; but every proposed alteration, that would elevate the ranks of our poorer brethren, they regard with suspicious jealousy, as the dreams of the visionary; as if there were any thing in the superiority of Lord to Gentleman, so mortifying in the barrier, so fatal to happiness in the consequences, as the more real distinction of master and servant, of rich man and of poor. Wherein am I made worse by my ennobled neighbour? Do the childish titles of Aristocracy detract from my domestic comforts, or prevent my intellectual acquisitions? But those institutions of Society which should condemn me to the necessity of twelve hours daily toil, would make my *soul* a slave, and sink the *rational* being in the mere animal. It is a mockery of our fellow creatures' wrongs to call them equal in rights, when by the bitter compulsion of their wants we make them inferior to us in all that can soften the heart, or dignify the understanding. Let us not say that this is the work of time—that it is impracticable at present, unless
we

we each in our individual capacities do firenuously and perseveringly endeavour to diffuse among our domestics those comforts and that illumination which far beyond all political ordinances are the true equalizers of men.

We turn with pleasure to the contemplation of that small but glorious band, whom we may truly distinguish by the name of thinking and disinterested Patriots. These are the men who have encouraged the sympathetic passions till they have become irresistable habits, and made their duty a necessary part of their self-interest, by the long-continued cultivation of that moral taste which derives our most exquisite pleasures from the contemplation of possible perfection, and proportionate pain from the perception of existing *depravation*. Accustomed to regard all the affairs of man as a process, they never hurry and they never pause. Theirs is not that twilight of political knowledge which gives us just light enough to place one foot before the other; as they advance the scene still opens upon them, and they press right onward with a vast and various landscape of existence around them. Calmness and energy mark all their actions. Convinced that vice originates

originates not in the man, but in the surrounding circumstances; not in the heart, but in the understanding; he is hopeless concerning no one—to correct a vice or generate a virtuous conduct he pollutes not his hands with the scourge of coercion; but by endeavouring to alter the circumstances would remove, or by strengthening the intellect, disarms, the temptation. The unhappy children of vice and folly, whose tempers are adverse to their own happiness as well as to the happiness of others, will at times awaken a natural pang; but he looks forward with gladdened heart to that glorious period when Justice shall have established the universal fraternity of Love. These soul-ennobling views bestow the virtues which they anticipate. He whose mind is habitually impressed with them soars above the present state of humanity, and may be justly said to dwell in the presence of the Most High.

would the forms
 Of servile custom cramp the Patriot's power?
 Would fordid policies, the barbarous growth
 Of ignorance and rapine, bow him down
 To tame pursuits, to Indolence and Fear?
 Lo! he appeals to Nature, to the winds
 And rolling waves, the sun's unwearied course,
 The elements and seasons—all declare

For

For what the Eternal Maker has ordain'd
 The powers of Man: we feel within ourselves
 His energy divine: he tells the heart
 He meant, he made us to behold and love
 What he beholds and loves, the general orb
 Of Life and Being—to be great like him,
 Beneficent and active.

AKENSIDE.

Such is Joseph Gerald! Withering in the
 sickly and tainted gales of a prison, his healthful
 soul looks down from the citadel of his integrity
 on his impotent persecutors. I saw him in the
 foul and naked room of a jail—his cheek was
 fallow with confinement—his body was emaciated;
 yet his eye spoke the invincible purposes of his
 soul, and he still sounded with rapture the suc-
 cesses of Freeman, forgetful of his own lingering
 martyrdom! Such too were the illustrious Tri-
 umvirate* whom as a Greek Poet expresses it,
 its not lawful for bad men even to praise. I will
 not say that I have abused your patience in thus
 indulging my feelings in strains of unheard
 gratitude to those who may seem to justify God
 in the creation of man. It is with pleasure that I
 am permitted to recite a yet unpublished tribute
 to

* MUIR, PALMER, and MARGAROT.

to their merit, the production of one who has sacrificed all the energies of his heart and head, a splendid offering on the altar of Liberty.

TO THE EXILED PATRIOTS.

MARTYRS of FREEDOM—ye who firmly good
 Stept forth the Champions in her glorious cause,
 Ye who against Corruption nobly stood
 For Justice, Liberty, and equal Laws.

Ye who have urg'd the cause of man so well,
 Whilst proud Oppression's torrent swept along,
 Ye who so firmly stood, so nobly fell,
 Accept one ardent Briton's grateful song.

For shall Oppression vainly think by Fear
 To quench the fearless energy of mind?
 And glorying in your fall, exult it here
 As tho' no honest heart were left behind?

Thinks the proud Tyrant by the pliant law
 The timid jury and the judge unjust,
 To strike the soul of Liberty with awe,
 And scare the friends of freedom from their trust?

As eafy might the Defpot's empty pride
 The onward courfe of rufhing ocean ftay ;
 As eafy might his jealous caution hide
 From mortal eyes the orb of general day.

For like that general orb's eternal flame
 Glows the mild force of Virtue's constant light ;
 Tho' clouded by Misfortune, ftill the fame,
 For ever constant, and for ever bright.

Not till eternal chaos fhall that light
 Before Oppreffion's fury fade away ;
 Not till the fun himfelf be loft in night ;
 Not till the frame of Nature fhall decay.

Go then fecure, in fteady virtue go,
 Nor heed the peril of the ftormy feas,
 Nor heed the felon's name, the outcaft's woe ;
 Contempt and pain, and forrow and difeafe.

Tho' cankering cares corrode the finking frame,
 Tho' ficknefs rankle in the fallow breaft ;
 Tho' Death were quenching faft the vital flame,
 Think but for what ye fuffer, and be bleft.

So fhall your great examples fire each foul,
 So in each free-born breaft for ever dwell,
 Till Man fhall rife above the unjuft controul,
 Stand where ye ftood, and triumph where ye fell.

Yes!

Yes! there are those who have loved Freedom with wile ardor, and propagated its principles with unshaken courage! For it was ordained at the foundation of the world, that there should always remain Pure Ones and uncorrupt, who should shine like Lights in Darknes, reconciling us to our own nature.

That general Illumination should precede Revolution, is a truth as obvious, as that the Vessel should be cleansed before we fill it with a pure Liquor. But the mode of diffusing it is not discoverable with equal facility. We certainly should never attempt to make Profelytes by appeals to the *selfish* feelings—and consequently, should plead *for* the Oppressed, not *to* them. The Author of an essay on political Justice considers private Societies as the sphere of real utility—that (each one illuminating those immediately beneath him,) Truth by a gradual descent may at last reach the lowest order. But this is rather plausible than just or practicable. Society as at present constituted does not resemble a chain that ascends in a continuity of Links.—There are three ranks possessing an intercourse with each other: these are well comprized in the super-
C 2 scription

scription of a Perfumer's advertisement, which I lately saw—"the Nobility, Gentry, and People of Drefs." But alas! between the Parlour and the Kitchen, the Tap and the Coffee-Room—there is a gulph that may not be passed. He would appear to me to have adopted the best as well as the most benevolent mode of diffusing Truth, who uniting the zeal of the Methodist with the views of the Philosopher, should be *personally* among the Poor, and teach them their *Duties* in order that he may render them susceptible of their *Rights*.

Yet by what means can the lower Classes be made to learn their Duties, and urged to practise them? The human Race may perhaps possess the capability of all excellence; and Truth, I doubt not, is omnipotent to a mind already disciplined for its reception; but assuredly the over-worked Labourer, skulking into an Ale-house, is not likely to exemplify the one, or prove the other. In that barbarous tumult of inimical Interests, which the present state of Society exhibits, *Religion* appears to offer the only means universally *efficient*. The perfectness of future Men is indeed a benevolent tenet, and may
operate

operate on a few Visionaries, whose studious habits supply them with employment, and seclude them from temptation. But a distant prospect, which we are never to reach, will seldom quicken our footsteps, however lovely it may appear; and a Blessing, which not ourselves but *posterity* are destined to enjoy, will scarcely influence the actions of *any*—still less of the ignorant, the prejudiced, and the selfish.

“Go, preach the GOSPEL to the Poor.” By its Simplicity it will meet their comprehension, by its Benevolence soften their affections, by its Precepts it will direct their conduct, by the vastness of its Motives ensure their obedience. The situation of the Poor is perilous: they are indeed both

“from within and from without
Unarm'd to all Temptations.”

Prudential reasonings will in general be powerless with them. For the incitements of this world are weak in proportion as we are wretched—

The World is not *my* Friend, nor the World's Law.
The World has got no Law to make *me* rich.

They too, who live *from Hand to Mouth*, will most frequently become improvident. Possessing no
stock

stock of happiness they eagerly seize the gratifications of the moment, and snatch the froth from the wave as it passes by them. Nor is the desolate state of their families a restraining motive, unsoftened as they are by education, and benumbed into selfishness by the torpedo touch of extreme Want. Domestic affections depend on association. We love an object if, as often as we see or recollect it, an agreeable sensation arises in our minds. But alas! how should *he* glow with the charities of Father and Husband, who gaining scarcely more, than his own necessities demand, must have been accustomed to regard his wife and children, not as the Soothers of finished labour, but as Rivals for the insufficient meal! In a man so circumstanced the Tyranny of the *Present* can be overpowered only by the tenfold mightiness of the *Future*. Religion will cheer his gloom with her promises, and by habituating his mind to anticipate an infinitely great Revolution hereafter, may prepare it even for the sudden reception of a less degree of amelioration in this World.

But if we hope to instruct others, we should familiarize our own minds to some fixed and determinate principles of action. The World is

a vast labyrinth, in which almost every one is running a different way, and almost every one manifesting hatred to those who do not run the same way. A few indeed stand motionless, and not seeking to lead themselves or others out of the maze laugh at the failures of their brethren. Yet with little reason : for more grossly than the most bewildered wanderer does *he* err, who never aims to go right. It is more honourable to the Head, as well as to the Heart, to be misled by our eagerness in the pursuit of Truth, than to be safe from blundering by contempt of it. The happiness of Mankind is the *end* of Virtue, and Truth is the Knowledge of the *means*; which he will never seriously attempt to discover, who has not habitually interested himself in the welfare of others. The searcher after Truth must love and be beloved; for general Benevolence is a necessary motive to constancy of pursuit; and this general Benevolence is begotten and rendered permanent by social and domestic affections. Let us beware of that proud Philosophy, which affects to inculcate Philanthropy while it denounces every home-born feeling, by which it is produced and nurtured. The paternal and filial duties discipline the Heart and prepare it for the love of all
Mankind.

Mankind. The intensity of private attachments encourages, not prevents, universal Benevolence. The nearer we approach to the Sun, the more intense his heat: yet what corner of the system does he not cheer and vivify?

The Man who would find Truth, must likewise seek it with an humble and simple Heart, otherwise he will be precipitant and overlook it; or he will be prejudiced, and refuse to see it. *To emancipate itself from the Tyranny of Association*, is the most arduous effort of the mind, particularly in Religious and Political disquisitions. The asserters of the system has associated with it the preservation of Order, and public Virtue; the oppugner Imposture, and Wars, and Rapine. Hence, when they dispute, each trembles at the *consequences* of the other's opinions instead of attending to his train of arguments. Of this however we may be certain, whether we be Christians or Infidels, Aristocrats or Republicans, that our minds are in a state unsusceptible of Knowledge, when we feel an eagerness to detect the Falseness of an Adversary's reasonings, not a sincere wish to discover if there be Truth in them;—when we examine an argument in order that we may answer it, instead of answering because we have examined it.

Our opponents are chiefly successful in confuting the Theory of Freedom by the practices of its Advocates: from our lives they draw the most forcible arguments against our doctrines. Nor have they adopted an unfair mode of reasoning. In a Science the evidence suffers neither diminution or increase from the actions of its professors; but the comparative wisdom of political systems depends necessarily on the manners and capacities of the recipients. Why should all things be thrown into confusion to acquire that liberty which a faction of sensualists and gamblers will neither be able or willing to preserve? “The simplicity of wants and of pleasures may be taken as the criterion of Patriotism. Would you prove to me your Patriotism? Let me penetrate into the interior of your House. What! I see your antichamber full of insolent Lackies; they give you still those vain Titles, which Liberty treads under foot, and you suffer it and you call yourself a Patriot! I penetrate a little further;—your Cielings are gilded—magnificent Vases adorn your Chimney-Pieces—I walk upon the richest Carpets—the most costly Wines, the most exquisite Dishes, cover your Table—a crowd of Servants surround it—you treat them with haughtiness;—No! you are not

a Patriot. The most consummate pride reigns in your heart, the pride of Birth, of Riches, and of Talents. With this triple pride, a man never sincerely believes the doctrine of Equality : he may repeat its dogmas, but efficient Faith is not in him." *Preface to Brissot's Travels in America.*

You reply to Brissot, that these luxuries are the employment of industry, and the best means of circulating your property. Be it so. Renounce then the proud pretensions of democracy ; do not profess Tenets which it is impossible for you surrounded by all the symbols of superiority to wish realized. But you plead, it seems, for equalization of *Rights*, not of *Condition*. O mockery ! All that can delight the poor man's senses or strengthen his understanding, you preclude ; yet with generous condescension you would bid him exclaim " LIBERTY and EQUALITY ! " because, forsooth, he should possess the same *Right* to an Hovel which you claim to a Palace. This the Laws have already given. And what more do *you* promise ?

A system of fundamental Reform will scarcely be effected by massacres mechanized into Revolution. Yet rejected intreaty leads in its consequences to fierce coercion. And much as we deprecate

deprecate the event, we have reason to conjecture that throughout all Europe it may not be far distant. The folly of the rulers of mankind grows daily more wild and ruinous : Oppression is grievous—the oppressed feel and are restless. Such things *may* happen. We cannot therefore inculcate on the minds of each other too often or with too great earnestness the necessity of cultivating benevolent affections. We should be cautious how we indulge the feelings even of virtuous indignation. Indignation is the handsome brother of Anger and Hatred. The Temple of Despotism, like that of Tescalipoca, the Mexican Deity, is built of human skulls, and cemented with human blood;—let us beware that we be not transported into revenge while we are levelling the loathsome Pile; lest when we erect the edifice of Freedom we but vary the stile of Architecture, not change the materials. Let us not wantonly offend even the prejudices of our weaker brethren, nor by ill-timed and vehement declarations of opinion excite in them malignant feelings towards us. The energies of mind are wasted in these intemperate effusions. Those materials of projectile force, which now carelessly scattered explode with an offensive and useless noise, directed by wisdom and

union might heave Rocks from their base,—or perhaps (dismissing the metaphor) might produce the desired effect without the convulsion.

For this “subdued sobriety” of temper a practical faith in the doctrine of philosophical necessity seems the only preparative. That vice is the effect of error and the offspring of surrounding circumstances, the object therefore of condolence not of anger, is a proposition easily understood, and as easily demonstrated. But to make it spread from the understanding to the affections, to call it into action, not only in the great exertions of Patriotism, but in the daily and hourly occurrences of social life, requires the most watchful attentions of the most energetic mind. It is not enough that we have once swallowed these Truths—we must feed on them, as insects on a leaf, till the whole heart be coloured by their qualities, and shew its food in every the minutest fibre.

Finally, in the Words of an Apostle,

Watch ye! Stand fast in the principles of which ye have been convinced! Quit yourselves like Men! Be strong! Yet let all things be done in the spirit of Love.

February, 1795.

On the present War.

Bellum infandum ominibusque negatam
Movisti, funeste, aciem—

— te series orbarum excisa domorum
Planctibus assiduis, te diro horrore volantes
Mille et mille animæ circum noctesque diesque
Adfilient.

Te merito : ast horum miseret, quos sanguine viles
Conjugibus natisque infanda ad prælia raptos
Projicis excidio, *bone *** !* — Stat. Theb.
Lib. 2.

ON
THE
PRESENT WAR.

IN the disclosure of Opinion, it is our duty to consider the character of those, to whom we address ourselves, their situations, and probable degree of knowledge. We should be bold in the avowal of *political* Truth among those only whose minds are susceptible of reasoning: and never to the multitude, who ignorant and needy must necessarily act from the impulse of inflamed Passions. But however carefully the Advocate of Freedom may preserve this distinction, the Child of Prejudice and the Slave of Corruption will industriously represent it as confounded: whatever may be the sentiments and language of the present Address, the *attempt* to promote Discussion will be regarded as dangerous, and from
fools

fools and from bigots I shall be honoured with much complimentary Reviling, and many panegyric Abuses. But the Conduct of the speaker is determined chiefly by the nature of his Audience. He therefore, who shall proclaim me *sedition* because I speak "against wickedness in high places," must prove the majority of my hearers to be unenlightened, and therefore easily deluded—or Men of desperate fortunes, and therefore eager for the *Scramble* of a Revolution.

In private life well-informed Men are generally found the most quiet and friendly Neighbours; but in the Dictionary of aristocratic Prejudice, Illumination and Sedition are classed as synonyms, and Ignorance prescribed as the only infallible Preventive for Contention. It has been my lot to have had many fierce ARISTOCRATS obtruded on my notice. Their modes of Education and the peculiar direction of their immediate Interests have in general acted upon them with such blended Interest, that it was difficult or impossible either to impeach their Sincerity or praise their Honesty. Susceptibility of Truth depends on the temper of our Hearts more than even on the strength of our Understandings. The mind is
predisposed

predisposed by its situations : and when the prejudices of a man are strong, the most over-powering Evidence becomes weak. He "meets with darkness in the day time, and gropes in the noon-day as in night." Some unmeaning Term generally becomes the Watch-word, and acquires almost a mechanical power over his frame. The indistinctness of the Ideas associated with it increases its effect, as "objects look gigantic thro' a mist." The favorite phrases of the present Day are—"It may be very well in *Theory*"—and the "effects of Jacobine Principles." Aided by the one and alarmed by the other, the shuddering Bigot flings the door of Argument in your face, and excludes all Parley by gloomy anticipation of the *consequences*. There are however of this Class, who boldly provoke Discussion, but finding themselves unable to keep the field, are enraged where they should have been convinced, and probably *inform* against their Opponent. High-spirited Disputants! they first challenge you to box with them, and then call in the Constable. In all public meetings these Men signalize themselves. Argument they answer by inarticulate Noises, and their zeal for the Constitution they manifest by *breaking the Peace*. Certain to make a riot in their great ardor

to prevent one, and prepared to persecute what they are determined not to hear, they wilfully blind themselves to Truth, and like angry Cowards shut their Eyes as they strike the Blow.

But how can Truth or Virtue guide the Head
Where Love of Freedom from the Heart is fled?
Can lesser Wheels repeat their native Stroke
When the prime function of the Soul is broke?

Regardless of these Men I shall endeavor to preserve "the Unity of Truth in the Bond of Peace."

Yet deem not that these disquisitions are pleasant to me. He, who wanders in the maze of POLITICAL ENQUIRY, must tread over Corfes, and at every step detect some dark Conspirator against human happiness, or startle at the fierce visage of some imperial Murderer. Every ungentle feeling will be excited in his bosom, and now he will shiver with horror, and now glow with indignation, and now sicken with contempt. I delight not to paint Wickedness or Misery and if I followed Impulse rather than Duty should abandon myself to those Pursuits

That heighten to the youthful Poet's Eye
The Bloom of Nature, and before him place
The gayest happiest Attitude of Things.

But my reason confirms the regulation of the Athenian Lawgiver, which ordained, that it should be infamous for a Man, who had reached the years of discretion, not to have formed an opinion concerning the state of affairs in his country, and treasonable, having formed one, not to propagate it by every legal mean in his power. This Duty we should exert at all times, but with peculiar ardor in seasons of public Calamity, when there exists an Evil of such incalculable magnitude as the PRESENT WAR. Of its peculiar crimes and distresses we shall endeavor to give a comprehensive view, that each of us may proportion his energies to the vastness of the general evil, not to the weight of his individual grievances. But its total Causelessness must be proved:—as if the War had been just and necessary, it might be thought disputable whether any Calamities could justify our abandonment of it. On a subject so universally discussed it would be a vain endeavour to adduce any new argument. The War might probably have been prevented by Negotiation: Negotiation was never attempted. It cannot therefore be *proved* to have been a *necessary* war, and consequently it is not a just one.

It has been repeatedly said, that we could not honorably negotiate with men so stained with atrocious guilt, so avowedly the enemies of Religion, as the popular Leaders in France. Admire, I pray you, the cautious Delicacy of our Government! that will profess itself the Ally of the Immaculate only—of the MERCIFUL Catharine, the HONEST King of Prussia, and that most CHRISTIAN Arch-pirate, the Dey of Algiers! It is a more plausible objection, that the French possess no fixed Government; but this the War itself has disproved. The Girondists began it, the Jacobins carried it on, and the Moderate Party are now prosecuting it with increased vigor:—a fact, which while it shews the fickleness of their domestic Politics, demonstrates the uniformity of their measures with regard to foreign Nations.—But the ground of argument has been lately changed; and the dangerous Tendency of French Politics assigned as a sufficient reason for continuing the Contest. It has been asserted, that internal disturbances are the evil to be prevented, even by external distresses—a tenet which depraves the suspicious heart which adopts it, and realizes the event which it affects to prophecy. It was a favorite opinion with the unfortunate Charles,

that

that it was more honorable for a King to have his realm almost destroyed, and its very existence endangered by an Enemy, than to hazard the diminution of his prerogatives among his own Subjects. But the absurdity as well as iniquity of thus opposing the diffusion of popular principles by a foreign war, I shall not press on your recollection. If the People ever wish for a Revolution, this proneness to change must originate in the sense of their wants and grievances: and it must be a notable Remedy which cures the Disease by doubling the Causes of it. O the wonderful Wisdom of Ministers, who would *conjure* restlessness into content by adding famine to poverty, and calamities abroad to oppressions at home!

French Principles are widely different from those of the British Constitution: French Excesses are disgraceful to Humanity: it is therefore impossible to treat with the French. But might not the American States refuse to negotiate with us on the same foundation? The principles industriously propagated by the friends of our Government are opposite to the American Constitution—and indeed to Liberty every where; and in order to form a just estimate of our excesses, let us recollect that prominent feature of the late War—*Scalping!*

What the wisdom of Agur wished, the inhabitants of Wyoming enjoyed—they had neither Riches or Poverty: their climate was soft and salubrious, and their fertile soil asked of these blissful Settlers as much labor only for their sustenance, as would have been otherwise convenient for their health. The Fiend, whose crime was Ambition, leapt over into this Paradise—Hell-hounds laid it waste. *English* Generals invited the Indians “to banquet on blood:” the savage Indians headed by an Englishman attacked it. Universal massacre ensued. The Houses were destroyed: the Corn Fields burnt: and where under the broad Maple trees innocent Children used to play at noontide, there the Drinkers of human Blood, and the Feasters on human Flesh were seen in horrid circles, counting their scalps and anticipating their gains. The English Court bought Scalps at a fixed price! SCALPING this *pious* Court deemed a fit punishment for the crimes of those, whose only crime was, that being Men, and the descendants of Britons, they had refused to be Slaves. Unconditional Submission was the only Terms offered to the Americans—and Death the immediate Menace. Our Brethren, (if indeed we may presume to call so exalted a race *our* Brethren,)

Brethren,) indignantly rejected the terms, and resolved to hazard the execution of the menace. For this the Horrors of European Warfare afforded not a sufficient Punishment. Inventive in cruelty and undistinguishing in massacre, Savages must be hired against them : human Tygers must be called from their woods, their attacks regulated by Discipline, and their Ferocity increased by Intoxication. But did not this employment of merciless Scalpers rouse the indignation of Britons ? Did not they avert public Ignominy by public Vengeance ? The Hand, that subscribed these hellish orders, should have been withered ; the Voice, that proposed them, should have been echoed only by the arches of a Dungeon ! Alas ! the Nation slept—and the Sleep of Nations is followed by their Slavery. But perhaps this foul Iniquity was preserved among the secrets of the Cabinet ?—No ! the fact was publicly known : the Sun of Enquiry shone full and fierce upon it, and the Blood of the Innocent was steaming up to Heaven ! Yet during the whole war the Savages were regularly employed—and the Ministry, who authorized it, were not even removed. Such were our hideous excesses during that holy Rebellion :—yet who among the Americans considered them as precluding

precluding a treaty of Peace? Nor has their averfion from War been lefs exemplary fince the Revolution. Lord Dorchefter had roused the War-whoop among the Savages: infligated by his Agents the mercilefs Tribes poured in on the back fettlements; and the Algerines were incited againft their Commerce. The conduct of the Englifh was every where infolent, and through all the Union detefted. The lower claffes of the People cried aloud for War. But the Legiflature well knew, that the evils even of a *juft* war were not to be calculated, and that no war could be juft, unlefs it had been preceded by *fincere* negotiations for the permanence of Peace. They knew the Englifh Nation to be practical Atheifts, profefling to believe a God, yet acting as if there were none. In Europe the fmoaking Villages of Flanders, and the putrified Fields of La Vendee—from Africa the unnumbered Victims of a deteftable Slave-trade—in Afia the defolated plains of Indoftan and the Million whom a rice-contracting Governor caufed to perifh—in America the recent enormities of their Scalp-Merchants—the four Quarters of the Globe groan beneath the intolerable iniquity of this nation! Yet thefe high-minded Republicans did not refufe to negotiate with us.

They

They thought it criminal folly to make themselves miserable because their Enemies were wicked.— But a lying Spirit hath descended upon us, “ which hath made the heart of this People fat and shut their eyes”—and “ therefore Hell hath enlarged itself and opened her mouth without measure.”

We will now take a rapid survey of the consequences of this unjust because unnecessary War. I mean not to describe the distressful stagnation of Trade and Commerce: I direct not your attention to the wretches that sadden every street in this City, the pale and meagre Troop, who in the bitterness of reluctant Pride, are forced to beg the Morfel, for which they would be willing to “ work their fingers to the bone” in honest Industry: I will not frighten you by relating the distresses of that brave Army, which has been melted away on the Continent, nor picture to your imaginations the loathsome pestilence that has mocked our Victories in the West-Indies: I bid you not hear the screams of the deluded Citizens of Toulon—I will not press on your recollection the awful Truth, that in the course of this calamitous Contest more than a Million of

men have perished—a * MILLION of men, of each one of whom the mangled corse terrifies the dreams of her that loved him, and makes some mother, some sister, some widow start from slumber with a shriek! These arguments have been urged even to satiety—a British Senator has sneeringly styled them mere *common-place* against wars. I could weep for the criminal Patience of Humanity! These arguments are *hacknied*; yet *Wars* continue!

Horrors, the same in kind though perhaps not equal in degree, necessarily attend all wars: it was my intention to detail those only that are peculiar to the present. And first and least—the loss of our National Character. At the commencement of the War the Government solemnly disclaimed all intervention in the internal affairs of France: not six months passed, ere with matchless insincerity the Restitution of Monarchy became its avowed aim. This guilt however may perhaps rest on its first authors, and fly unclaimed by
the

* By the internal disturbances of France in La Vendee and other places, disturbances excited by English agents, and rendered obstinate by our Ministers' promises, more than *Three Hundred Thousand* have been butchered.

the People, unless it should be thought, that they, who permit, perpetrate. The depravation of private morals is a more serious and less transient evil. All our happiness and the greater part of our virtues depend on social confidence. This beautiful fabric of Love the system of Spies and Informers has shaken to the very foundation. There have been multiplied among us "Men who carry tales to shed blood!" Men who resemble the familiar Spirits described by Isaiah, as "dark ones, that peep and that mutter!" Men, who may seem to have been typically shadowed out in the Frogs that formed the second plague of Egypt: little low animals with chilly blood and staring eyes, that "come up into our houses and our bed-chambers!" These men are plenteously scattered among us: our very looks are decyphered into disaffection, and we cannot move without treading on some political spring-gun. Nor here has the evil stopped. We have breathed so long the atmosphere of Imposture and Panic, that many honest minds have caught an aguish disorder; in their cold fits they shiver at Freedom, in their hot fits they turn savage against its advocates; and sacrifice to party Rage what they would have scornfully refused to Corruption. Traitors to friendship,

that they may be faithful to the Constitution—
 Enemies of human nature, that they may prove
 themselves the Adorers of the God of Peace—they
 hide from themselves the sense of their crime by
 the merit of their motive. Thus every man begins
 to suspect his neighbour, the warm ebullience of
 our hearts is stagnating : and I dread, lest by long
 stifling the expressions of Patriotism, we may at
 last lose the Feeling. “ Society is in every state a
 blessing ; Government even in its best state but a
 necessary evil.” We are subverting this Blessing
 in order to support this Evil—or rather to support
 the desperate Quacks who are administering it
 with a Life-or-Death Temerity.

This causeless Panic prepared us to endure the
 further suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act—
 endure it, after three successive Verdicts of impar-
 tial Juries had proved, that a Conspiracy against
 the Constitution had existed only in the foul
 imagination of the Accusers. “ In the first of
 these Trials, (Mr. Sheridan observes,) one Pike
 was produced, which was afterwards withdrawn
 from mere shame—a formidable Instrument was
 talked of, to be employed against the Cavalry :—
 it appeared upon evidence to be no other than

a Te tohim in a window at Sheffield. These desperate Conspirators, it appeared, had formed their incampment in a back-garret—their arsenal was provided with Nine rusty muskets—and the formidable preparation which was to overturn the Constitution was supported by an exchequer containing nine pounds and one bad shilling—*all* to be directed against the armed Force and established Government of Great-Britain!—Fellow Citizens! our laughter may be raised by the cause, but our indignation and sorrow must be excited by the consequences. Not one definite reason assigned, not one fact proved, we have been impelled by dark and terrifying Generalities to sacrifice the personal Security of ourselves and perhaps of our posterity. The august and lofty Tree, which while it rose above the palace of the Monarch, sheltered the distant dwelling of the Cottager, stripped of its boughs, now stands the melancholy memorial of conquered Freedom.—We can only water its roots with our tears, or look forward with anxious eye to the distant Springtide, when it shall branch forth anew!—We are no longer Freemen, and if we be more secure here than in Morocco or at Constantinople, we owe this superiority to the mildness of our Masters, not
to

to the protection of our Laws. It is an insult to tell us that we cannot suffer Death at the pleasure of a Minister, as is the case under arbitrary Governments—Suffer death! we can be torn from the bleeding breast of domestic affection—we can be thrown into foul and damp dungeons—we can hear of the death of a dearly loved Wife, heart-broken by our Imprisonment—till overpowered by disease and wounded sensibilities we sink into the Grave; or if we live, live only to wish in bitterness of Soul, that th' "Almighty had not placed his Canon 'gainst Self-murder." And what if the Habeas Corpus act be restored?—O degenerate People, and bloated with the emptiness of recollected Liberty! SYLLA may resign the Dictatorship—but alas! he will have given a tempting proof to CÆSAR, how much ye can endure.

Who is this Minister, to whom we have thus implicitly trusted every blessing? Are his Qualities commensurate with the giant evils, which he has occasioned? My mind may be jaundiced by my abhorrence of the man's actions—but whether Truth or Prejudice be the source of my failure I must acknowledge that having investigated attentively the Speeches and Measures of William Pitt,

I

I am as little able to discover Genius in the one, as Virtue in the other. I think of Edmund Burke's declamatory Invectives with emotion; yet while I shudder at the excesses, I must admire the strength, of this Hercules Furens of Oratory. But our Premiers' Harangues!—Mystery concealing Meanness, as steam-clouds envelope a dunghill. To rouse the fears of the Wealthy, and the prejudices of the Ignorant is an easy task for one, who possesses the privilege of manufacturing Royal Eloquence and sticking up Royal Hand-bills. But what Question proposed to him by his great political Adversary has he ever directly answered? His speeches, which seemed so swoln with meaning, alas! what did they mean? In the outset of his political career he did indeed utter some sentences which a man and a citizen might acknowledge—and that his present conduct might not lose the advantages of contrast, he ably supported Mr. Fox's Motion to facilitate a Peace with America. “*The War* (he said) *was conceived in injustice and nurtured in folly: it was pregnant with every kind of mischief, and with every thing that constituted moral depravity and human turpitude. While in black revenge it meditated the destruction of others, the mischief recoiled upon the unhappy and deluded*

deluded people of this Country." William Pitt observed that, "*by this iniquitous and unjust War the Nation was drained of its vital resources of Men and Money.*" William Pitt exclaimed that "*our expences were enormous, while our victories were indecisive, and our defeats fatal—victories celebrated with short-lived triumph over men struggling in the holy cause of Freedom, and defeats which filled the Land with mourning.*" All this—O calumniated Judas Iscariot ! all this WILLIAM PITT said !

In opposing the address to his Majesty on the speech delivered from the Throne after the capture of Lord Cornwallis, William Pitt observed, that "*in the better days of Parliament the attempt to entrap the House into a countenance of assertions wholly unexplained and unexamined, on the mere authority of a Minister, would have been treated with the indignation and severity it deserved.*" — "*The fact was (he said) that the War was an appendage to the first Lord of the Treasury, too dear to be parted with : it was the grand pillar raised on the ruins of the Constitution, by which he held his situation.*" This man, William Pitt, did not then know that he should be a Minister compared with whom Lord North might be canonized : and that
with

with unheard of artifices and oppressions that may not be named, he should carry on a causeless War against a Patriot people, more fertile in horrors even than the American. The penetration of the great and good Dr. Jebb foresaw his Apostacy—and he is said to have been greatly agitated. “Elisha settled his countenance stedfastly on Hazael, and the Man of God wept. And Hazael said, Why weepeth my Lord? And he answered, because I know the evil that thou wilt do! Strong holds wilt thou set on fire! and the young men wilt thou slay with the sword! and because of thee the Widow and the Orphan shall cry for bread. And Hazael said—But what, is thy Servant a dog, that he should do these things? Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me, that *thou shalt be ruler over Syria.*”

If they, who mingled the cup of bitterness, drank its contents, we might look with a calm compassion on the wickedness of great Men. But alas! the storm which they raise, falls heaviest on the unprotected Innocent: and the Cottage of the poor Man is stripped of every Comfort, before the Oppressors, who send forth the mandate of Death, are amerced in one Luxury or one Vice. If a series

G

of

of calamities succeed each, they deprecate the anger of Heaven by a FAST!—A word that implies, Prayers of Hate to the God of Love—and after these, a Turbot Feast for the rich, and their usual scanty Morsel to the poor, if indeed debarred from their usual labor they can procure even this. But if Victory be the event,

They o'er the ravag'd Earth,
As at an Altar wet with human Blood
And flaming with the Fires of Cities burnt,
Sing their mad Hymns of Triumph, Hymns to God
O'er the destruction of his gracious Works,
Hymns to the Father o'er his slaughter'd Sons!

It is recorded in the shuddering hearts of Christians, that while Europe is reeking with Blood, and smoaking with unextinguished Fires, in a contest of unexampled crimes and unexampled calamities, every Bishop but one voted for the continuance of the War. They deemed the fate of their Religion to be involved in the contest!—Not the Religion of Peace, my Brethren, not the Religion of the meek and lowly Jesus, which forbids to his Disciples all alliance with the powers of this World—but the Religion of Mitres and Mysteries, the Religion of Pluralities and Persecution,

secution, the Eighteen-Thousand-Pound-a-Year Religion ‡ of Episcopacy. Instead of the Ministers of the Gospel, a Roman might recognize in these Dignitaries the High-priests of Mars—with this difference, that the Ancients fattened their Victims for the Altar, we prepare ours for sacrifice by leanness. War ruins our Manufactures; the ruin of our Manufactures throws Thousands out of employ; men cannot starve: they must either
pick

‡ Wherever Mens' temporal interests depend on the general belief of disputed tenets, we must expect to find hypocrisy and a persecuting Spirit, a jealousy of investigation, and an endeavor to hold the minds of the people in submissive Ignorance. That pattern of Christian meekness, Bishop Horsley, has declared it to be the vice of the age and government that it has suffered a free and general investigation of the most solemn Truths that regard Society—and there is a remark in the last charge of the disinterested Bishop Prettyman, that the same busy spirit which inclines men to be Unitarians in Religion, drive them into Republicanism in Politics. And truly, the most exalted Forms of Society are cemented and preserved by the purest Notions of Religion. But whatever I may deem of the justice of their Lordship's observations, the prudence and policy of them have gained my immediate assent. Alas! what room would there be for Bishops or for Priests in a Religion where Deity is the only object of Reverence, and our Immortality the only article of Faith—Immortality made probable to us by the Light of Nature, and proved to us by the Resurrection of Jesus. Him the High Priests crucified; but he has left us a Religion, which shall prove fatal to every HIGH PRIEST—a Religion, of which every true
G 2 Christian

pick their countrymen's Pockets—or cut the throats of their fellow-creatures, because they are Jacobins. If they chuse the latter, the chances are that their own lives are sacrificed : if the former, they are hung or transported to Botany Bay. And here we cannot but admire the deep and comprehensive Views of Ministers, who having starved the wretch
 into

Christian is the Priest, his own Heart the Altar, the Universe its Temple, and Errors and Vices its only Sacrifices. Ride on, mighty Jesus! because of thy words of Truth, of Love, and EQUALITY! The age of Priesthood will soon be no more—that of Philosophers and of Christians will succeed, and the torch of Superstition be extinguished for ever. Never, never more shall we behold that generous Loyalty to rank, which is prodigal of its own virtue and its own happiness to invest a few with unholy Splendors ;—that subordination of the Heart, which keeps alive the spirit of Servitude amid the empty forms of boasted Liberty! This dear-bought Grace of Cathedrals, this costly defence of Despotism, this nurse of grovelling sentiment and cold-hearted Lip-worship, will be gone—it will be gone, that sensibility to Interest, that jealous tenacity of Honors, which suspects in every argument a mortal wound ; which inspires Oppression, while it prompts Servility ;—which stains indelibly whatever it touches ; and under which supple Dullness loses half its shame by wearing a Mitre where reason would have placed a Fool's-Cap! The age of Priesthood will be no more—Peace to its departing spirit! With delighted ears should I listen to some fierce Orator from St. Omers' or from Bedlam, who should weep over its Pageantries rent and faded, and pour forth eloquent Nonsense in a funeral Oration.

into Vice send him to the barren shores of new Holland to be starved back again into Virtue. It must surely charm the eye of humanity to behold Men reclaimed from stealing by being banished to a Coast, where there is nothing to steal, and helpless Women, who had been

Bold from despair and prostitute for Bread, find motives to Reformation in the sources of their Depravity, refined by Ignorance, and famine-bitten into Chastity. Yet even these poor unfortunates, these disinherited ones of Happiness, appear to me more eligibly situated than the wretched Soldier—because more innocently! Father of Mercies! if we pluck a wing from the back of a Fly, not all the Ministers and Monarchs in Europe can restore it—yet they dare to send forth their mandates for the Death of Thousands, and if they succeed call the Massacre Victory. They with all that majestic serenity, which the sense of personal safety fails not to inspire, can “ Ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm,” or rather like the gloomy Spirits in Opian, “ sit on their distant clouds and enjoy the Death of the Mariner.”

In former wars the victims of Ambition had crowded to the standard from the influence of national

tional Antipathies; but this powerful stimulant has been so unceasingly applied, as to have well nigh produced an exhaustion. What remains? Hunger. Over a recruiting place in this city I have seen pieces of Beef hung up to attract the half-famished Mechanic. It has been said, that GOVERNMENT, though not the best preceptor of Virtue, procures us security from the attack of the lower Orders.—Alas! why should the lower Orders attack us, but because they are brutalized by Ignorance and rendered desperate by Want? And does Government remove this Ignorance by Education? And does not GOVERNMENT increase their want by Taxes?—Taxes rendered necessary by those national assassinations called Wars, and by that worst Corruption and Perjury, which a reverend Moralist has justified under the soft title of “secret Influence!” The poor Infant born in an English or Irish Hovel breathes indeed the air and partakes of the light of Heaven; but of its other Bounties he is disinherited. The powers of Intellect are given him in vain: to make him work like a brute Beast he is kept as ignorant as a brute Beast. It is not possible that this despised and oppressed Man should behold the rich and idle without malignant envy. And if in the bitter
cravings

cravings of Hunger the dark Tide of Passions should swell, and the poor Wretch rush from despair into guilt, then the GOVERNMENT indeed assumes the right of Punishment though it had neglected the duty of Instruction, and hangs the victim for crimes, to which its own wide-wasting follies and its own most sinful omissions had supplied the cause and the temptation. And yet how often have the fierce Bigots of Despotism told me, that the Poor are not to be pitied, however great their necessities: for if they be out of employ, the KING wants men!—They may be shipped off to the Slaughter-house abroad, if they wish to escape a Prison at home!—Fools! to commit ROBBERIES, and get hung, when they might MURDER with impunity—yea, and have Sixpence a day into the bargain!

Bounties in truth are offered—great and unexampled Bounties—tho' not always as faithfully paid as magnificently promised. The price of Man-flesh offered to the British Private has almost reached the sum paid to the German Princes—“Death's prime Slave merchants.” And here we may properly describe the method of raising and packing up the human Commodities in the German market.

market. Schiller, a German himself, (beneath the tremendous sublimity of whose genius we have glowed and shuddered, while we perused the "Robbers,") in his tragedy of "Cabal and Love," represents a German Prince as having sent a casket of jewels to his concubine. On her enquiring what might be the price of the jewels, she is told, they were bought with the money which the Prince had received from the English Government, for seven thousand young Men sent to America. "All by compulsion. No sooner were they counted over and their names taken down, than Huzza for America! was the dreadful word all over the plain. The Trumpets were ordered immediately to be sounded, and the Drums to be beaten, in order to drown the shrieks and cries of the young Men torn from their Parents at an instant's call!—Bride and Bridegroom parted by the pointed bayonet and drawn broad-sword! Father and Child separated by the inhuman threats and oaths of some savage Corporal. Just as they were out of the City they looked back, and with one voice exclaimed,—God bless you, Father! God bless you, Mother! at the Last Day we shall all meet again!"

But

But even these means have proved insufficient ; and the poor wretches, whom hunger had driven or artifice seduced into the deeds of death, have fallen so fast, that Crimping has been found necessary. CRIMPING has been established into a trade, and accompanied with such an apparatus of horrors, as would arm MERCY with the thunderbolt, The Irish † Regiment, recently landed at Pill near this City is a melancholy instance—By long confinement and by filth they have almost ceased to resemble men. My Brethren ! they who authorize or connive at such enormities, retain still less resemblance !

Lastly, in this inventory of guilt as the immediate and peculiar effect of the present War, and justly attributable to our Ministry, we must place the EXCESSES OF THE FRENCH, their massacres and blasphemies, all their crimes and all their distresses. This effect the War produced by a two-fold operation of terror :—First, on the people of France, secondly, on their Rulers.

H

First,

† They who wish to mangle their feelings by perusing the particulars of this complicated wickedness, are referred to a Pamphlet of William Bryant, who himself attended on, and medically relieved these disfigured wretches.

First, on the people of France. Instant death was threatened to all taken in arms;—beheading and confiscation to the members of the departments, districts, and municipalities; military execution to the members of the national assembly, magistrates, and all the inhabitants of Paris; and total destruction to that City. All places and towns shall incur the same punishments as those inflicted on the inhabitants of Paris.—Such was Brunswick's manifesto. "The mode of civilized War will not be practised," says Burke. Our Government were projecting to *starve* the whole nation, and many of our senators did not scruple to proclaim the war a war of *extermination*. If we by the shadow and mockery of unreal things have been alarmed into blind reliance on men the most weak and unprincipled, can we wonder that a nation, whose whole horizon was black with approaching tempests, should be equally incautious! Hunted on all sides, insulted by unceasing and brutal menaces, they felt the blended influence of terror and indignation—by the first they were impelled to become voluntary slaves to the bloody fanatics, whose wild energies seemed alone proportionate to the danger; by the latter their gentler feelings were suspended, and the
military

military spirit with all its virtues and all its vices seized at once a whole nation. In the truly prophetic words of Isaiah—"They have trode the wine-press alone, and of the nations there was none with them. They looked and there was none to help; they WONDERED that there was none to uphold. Therefore their own arm brought salvation unto them, and their FURY, *it* upheld them."

Secondly, on their Leaders. They and their country were in the case of "extreme necessity,"—which, according to Archdeacon Paley, dissolves the ordinary ties of morality. I mean not to imply approbation of such systems of morals: but doubtless the Terrorists at the commencement of their power knew that the general consequences of their actions would be evil, but they thought the occasion so vast and pressing, as to make the particular good consequences over-balance the general evil ones—especially as those actions could never be imitated in after times with any shew of reason, unless in the rage and tempest of some future Revolution.

Are

Are not the congregated clouds of War
 Black all around us? In our very vitals
 Works not the king-bred poison of rebellion?
 Say, what shall counteract the selfish plottings
 Of wretches, cold of heart, nor aw'd by fears
 Of Him, whose power directs th' eternal justice?
 Terror? or secret-sapping gold? The first
 Heavy, but transient as the ills that cause it,
 And to the virtuous Patriot rendered light
 By the necessities that gave it birth:
 The other fouls the fount of the Republic
 Making it flow polluted thro' all ages;
 Inoculates the state with a slow venom,
 That once imbib'd must be continued ever!

† FALL OF ROBESPIERRE.

Thus from the influence of the understanding they
 continued to do what the heart sickened at; but a
 course of action, which the heart disapproves,
 will vitiate the heart and make it callous: and
 when the heart is vitiated, the understanding will
 not long remain pure. But **TERROR** intoxicates
 more than strong wine; with the which, who
 forcibly drenches another man, is the real cause
 and sole responsible agent of all the excesses,
 which

† A Tragedy, of which the First Act was written by
 S. T. Coleridge.

which in the hour of drunkenness he shall have committed. It was a truth easily discovered, a truth on which our Minister has proceeded, that valour and victory would not be the determiners of this War. *They* would prove finally successful whose resources enabled them to hold out the longest. The commerce of France was annihilated; her money'd-men were slow and cold from that selfishness, with which Mammon fails not to incrust the heart of his votaries. Immense armies were to be supported—immense to the confusion of the faith of posterity. Alas! Freedom weeps! The Guillotine became the Financier-General.—That dreadful pilot, Robespierre, perceived that it would at once furnish wind to the sails, and free the vessel from those who were inclined to mutiny.—Who, my Brethren! was the cause of this guilt, if not He, who supplied the occasion and the motive?—Heaven hath bestowed on that man a portion of its ubiquity, and given him an actual presence in the Sacraments of Hell, wherever administered, in all the bread of bitterness, in all the cups of blood.

Such in addition to the evils attending all wars, are the peculiar horrors of the present. Our national

tional faith has been impaired; our social confidence hath been weakened, or made unsafe; our liberties have suffered a perilous breach, and even now are being (still more perilously) undermined; the Dearth, which would otherwise have been scarcely visible, hath enlarged its terrible features into the threatening face of Famine; and finally, of us will justice require a dreadful account of whatever guilt France has perpetrated, of whatever miseries France has endured. Are we men? Freemen? rational men? And shall we carry on this wild and priestly War against reason, against freedom, against human nature? If there be one among you, who departs from me without feeling it his immediate duty to petition or remonstrate against the continuance of it, I envy that man neither his head or his heart!

February, 1795.