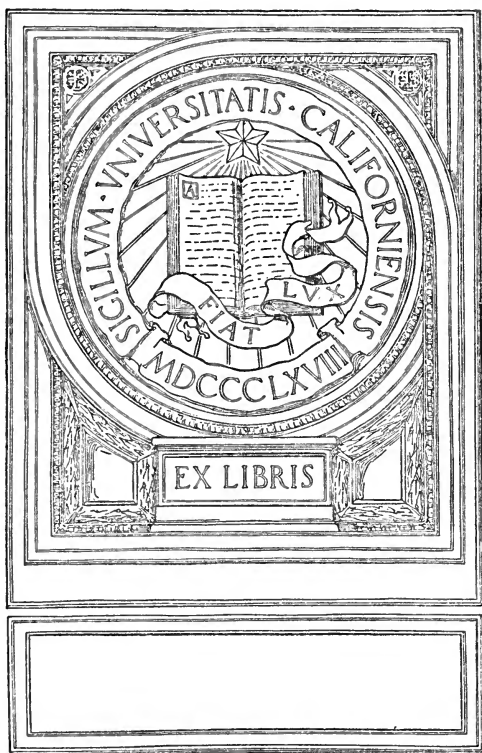




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THE  
**Political and Miscellaneous**  
**WORKS**  
OF  
**THOMAS PAINE.**

*IN TWO VOLUMES.*

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**VOL. II.**

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**1819.**



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A

# LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

# THE ADDRESSERS

ON THE

**Late Proclamation.**

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BY THOMAS PAINE.

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**London:**

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

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1819.

1877

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# LETTER,

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COULD I have commanded circumstances with a wish, I know not of any that would have more generally promoted the progress of knowledge, than the late Proclamation, and the numerous rotten Borough and Corporation Addresses thereon. They have not only served as advertisements, but they have excited a spirit of enquiry into principles of Government, and a desire to read the RIGHTS OF MAN, in places where that spirit and that work were before unknown.

The people of England, wearied and stunned with parties, and alternately deceived by each, had almost resigned the prerogative of thinking. Even curiosity had expired, and a universal languor had spread itself over the land. The opposition was visibly no other than a contest for power, whilst the mass of the Nation stood torpidly by as the prize.

In this hopeless state of things, the First Part of RIGHTS OF MAN made its appearance. It had to combat with a strange mixture of prejudice and indifference; it stood exposed to every species of newspaper abuse; and besides this, it had to remove the obstructions which Mr. Burke's rude and outrageous attack on the French Revolution had artfully raised.

But how easily does even the most illiterate reader distinguish the spontaneous sensation of the heart, from the laboured productions of the brain! Truth, whenever it can fully appear, is a thing so naturally familiar to the mind, that an acquaintance commences at first sight. No artificial light, yet discovered, can display all the properties of daylight; so neither can the best invented fiction fill the mind with every conviction which truth begets.

To overthrow Mr. Burke's fallacious work was scarcely the operation of a day. Even the phalanx of Placemen and Pensioners, who had given the tone to the multitude, by clamouring forth his political fame, became suddenly silent; and the final event to himself has been, that as he rose like a rocket, he fell like the stick.

It seldom happens, that the mind rests satisfied with the simple detection of error or imposition.—Once put into motion, that motion soon becomes accelerated. Where it had intended to stop, it discovers new reasons to proceed, and renews and continues the pursuit far beyond the limits it first prescribed to itself.—Thus it has happened to the people of England. From a detection of Mr. Burke's incoherent rhapsodies, and distorted facts, they began an enquiry into first principles of Government, whilst himself, like an object left far behind, became invisible and forgotten.

Much as the First Part of RIGHTS OF MAN impressed at its first appearance, the progressive mind soon discovered that it did not go far enough. It detected errors; it exposed absurdities; it shook the fabric of political superstition; it generated new ideas; but it did not produce a regular system of principles in the room of those which it displaced. And, if I may guess at the mind of the Government-party, they beheld it as an unexpected gale that would soon blow over, and they forbore, like sailors in threatening weather, to whistle, lest they should increase the wind. Every thing, on their part, was profound silence.

When the Second Part of "*RIGHTS OF MAN, combining Principle and Practice,*" was preparing to appear, they affected for a while, to act with the same policy as before; but finding their silence had no more influence in stilling the progress of the work, than it would have in stopping the progress of time, they changed their plan, and affected to treat it with clamorous contempt. The Speech-making Placemen and Pensioners, and Place-expectants, in both Houses of Parliament, the *Outs* as well as the *Ins*, represented it as a silly, insignificant performance; as a work incapable of producing any effect; as something, which they were sure the good sense of the people would either despise or indignantly spurn; but such was the overstrained awkwardness with which they harangued and encouraged each other, that in the very act of declaring their confidence, they betrayed their fears.

As most of the rotten Borough Addressers are obscured in holes and corners throughout the country, and to whom a

newspaper arrives as rarely as an almanack, they most probably have not had the opportunity of knowing how this part of the farce (the original prelude to all the Addresses) has been acted. For their information, I will suspend awhile the more serious purpose of my Letter, and entertain them with two or three Speeches in the last Session of Parliament, which will serve them for politics till Parliament meets again.

You must know, Gentlemen, that the Second Part of *RIGHTS OF MAN* (the book against which you have been presenting Addresses, though, it is most probable, that many of you did not know it) was to have come out precisely at the time that Parliament last met. It happened not to be published till a few days after. But as it was very well known that the book would shortly appear, the Parliamentary Orators entered into a very cordial coalition to cry the book down, and they began their attack by crying up the *blessings* of the Constitution.

Had it been your fate to have been there, you could not but have been moved at the heart-and-pocket-felt congratulations that passed between all the parties on this subject of *blessings*; for the *Outs* enjoy places, and pensions, and sinecures, as well as the *Ins*, and are as devoutly attached to the firm of the house.

One of the most conspicuous of this motley groupe is the Clerk of the Court of King's Bench, who calls himself Lord Stormont. He is also called Justice-General of Scotland, and Keeper of Scoon (an opposition man) and he drays from the public for these nominal offices, not less, as I am informed, than six thousand pounds a year, and he is, most probably, at the trouble of counting the money, and signing a receipt, to shew, perhaps, that he is qualified to be Clerk, as well as Justice. He spoke as follows:\*

“ THAT *we* shall *all* be unanimous, in expressing our attachment to the Constitution of these realms, *I am confident*. It is a subject upon which there can be *no* divided opinion in *this House*. I do not pretend to be deep read in the knowledge of the Constitution, but *I take upon me* to say, that from the extent of *my* knowledge (*for I have so many thousands a year for nothing*) it appears to *me*, that from the period of the Revolution, for it was by no means

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\* See his Speech in the Morning Chronicle of Feb. 1.

created then, it has been, both in *theory* and *practice*, the *wisest* system that ever was formed. I never was (he means he never was *till now*) a dealer in *political cant*. My life has not been occupied in *that way*, but the speculations of late years *seem to have taken a turn, for which I cannot account*. When I came into public life, the political pamphlets of the time, however they might be charged with the heat and violence of parties, were agreed in extolling the radical beauties of the Constitution itself. I remember (*he means he has forgotten*) a most captivating eulogium on its *charms* by Lord Bolingbroke, where he recommends his readers to contemplate it in all its aspects, with the assurance that it would be found more estimable the more it was *seen*. I do *not recollect* his precise words, but I wish that men who write upon these subjects would take *this for their model*, instead of the political pamphlets, which, I am told, are now in circulation, (such, I suppose, as *Rights of Man*)—pamphlets which I have *not read*, and whose purport I know only by *report*, (he means, perhaps, by the *noise* they make.) This, however, I am sure, that pamphlets tending to unsettle the public reverence for the *Constitution*, will have very little influence. They can do very little harm—for (*by the bye, he is no dealer in political cant*) *the English are a sober, thinking people, and are more intelligent, more solid, more steady in their opinions, than any people I ever had the fortune to see*. (This is pretty well laid on, though, for a new beginner). But if there should ever come a time when the propagation of those doctrines should agitate the public mind, I am *sure*, for *every one* of your Lordships, that no attack will be made on the Constitution, from which it is *truly said* that *we* derive *all our* prosperity, without raising *every one* of your Lordships to its support. It will then be found that there is no difference among *us*, but that *we* are *all* determined to *stand* or *fall* together, in defence of the inestimable system”—of places and pensions.

After Stormont, on the opposition side, sat down, up rose *another noble Lord!* on the ministerial side, *Grenville*. This man ought to be as strong in the back as a mule, or the sire of a mule, or it would crack with the weight of places and offices. He rose, however, without feeling any incumbrance, full master of his weight! and thus said *this* noble Lord to *another* noble Lord!

“The patriotic and manly manner in which the noble Lord has declared his sentiments on the subject of the Con-

stitution, demands *my cordial* approbation. The noble Viscount has *proved*, that however we may differ on *particular measures*, amidst all the jars and dissonance of *parties*, we are unanimous in *principle*. There is a *perfect* and *entire consent* (between *us*) in the love and maintenance of the Constitution as *happily subsisting*. It must *undoubtedly* give your Lordships *concern*, to find, that the *time is come!* (heigh ho!) when there is *propriety* in these expressions of regard TO (o! o! o!) THE CONSTITUTION. And that there are men (con-found—their—po-li-tics) who disseminate doctrines *hostile* to the *genuine spirit* of our *well-balanced system* (it is certainly well-balanced when both sides hold places and pensions at once). I agree with the noble Viscount that they have not (I hope) *much success*. I am convinced that there is no danger to be apprehended from their attempts: but it is *truly* important and *consolatory* (to us placemen, I suppose) to know, that if there should ever arise a serious alarm, there is but *one spirit*, *one sense*, (and that sense I presume is not *common sense*) and one determination in this House;”—which undoubtedly is to hold all their places and pensions as long as they can.

Both these speeches (excepting the parts enclosed in parentheses, which are added for the purpose of *illustration*) are copied *verbatim* from the Morning Chronicle of the 1st of February last; and when the situation of the speakers is considered, the one in the opposition, and the other in the ministry, and both of them living at the public expence, by sinecure, or nominal places and offices, it required a very unblushing front to be able to deliver them. Can those men seriously suppose any Nation to be so completely blind as not to see through them? Can Stormont imagine that the *political cant*, with which he has larded his harangue, will conceal the craft? Does he not know that there never was a cover large enough to hide *itself*? Or can Grenville believe, that his credit with the public increases with his avarice for places?

But, if these orators will accept a service from me, in return for the allusions they have made to the *Rights of Man*, I will make a speech for either of them to deliver on the excellence of the Constitution, that shall be as much to the purpose as what they have spoken, or as *Bolingbroke's captivating encomium*. Here it is.

“THAT we shall all be unanimous in expressing our attachment to the Constitution, I am confident. It is, my Lords, incomprehensibly good: but the great wonder of

all is the wisdom ; for it is, my Lords, *the wisest system that ever was formed.*

“ With respect to us noble Lords, though the world does not know it, it is very well known to us, that we have more wisdom than we know what to do with ; and what is still better, my Lords, we have it all in stock. I defy your Lordships to prove, that a tittle of it has been used as yet ; and if we do but go on, my Lords, with the frugality we have hitherto done, we shall leave to our heirs and successors, when we go out of the world, the whole stock of wisdom, *untouched*, that we brought in ; and there is no doubt but they will follow our example. This, my Lords, is one of the blessed effects of the hereditary system ; for we can never be without wisdom so long as we keep it by us, and do not use it.

“ But, my Lords, as all this wisdom is hereditary property, for the sole benefit of us and our heirs, and as it is necessary that the people should know where to get a supply for their own use, the excellence of our Constitution has provided a King for this very purpose, and for *no other*. But, my Lords, I perceive a defect to which the Constitution is subject, and which I propose to remedy by bringing a bill into Parliament for that purpose.

“ The Constitution, my Lords, out of delicacy, I presume, has left it as a matter of *choice* to a King whether he will be wise or not. It has not, I mean, my Lords, insisted upon it as a Constitutional point, which, I conceive, it ought to have done ; for I pledge myself to your Lordships to prove, and that with *true patriotic boldness*, that he has *no choice in the matter*. The bill, my Lords, that I shall bring in, will be to declare, that the Constitution, according to the true intent and meaning thereof, does not invest the King with this choice ; our ancestors were too wise to do that ; and, in order to prevent any doubts that might otherwise arise, I shall prepare, my Lords, an enacting clause, to fix the wisdom of Kings, by act of Parliament ; and then, my Lords, our Constitution will be the wonder of the world !

“ Wisdom, my Lords, is the one thing needful ; but that there may be no mistake in this matter, and that we may proceed consistently with the true wisdom of the Constitution, I shall propose a *certain criterion*, whereby the *exact quantity of wisdom* necessary for a King may be known. [Here should be a cry of Hear him ! Hear him !]

“ It is recorded, my Lords, in the Statutes at Large of the Jews, ‘ a book, my Lords, which I have not read, and whose purport I know only by report,’ *but perhaps the bench of Bishops can recollect something about it*, that Saul gave the most convincing proofs of royal wisdom before he was made a King, *for he was sent to seek his father’s asses, and he could not find them.*

“ Here, my Lords, we have, most happily for us, a case in point: this precedent ought to be established by act of Parliament; and every King, before he be crowned, should be sent to seek his father’s asses, and if he cannot find them, he shall be declared wise enough to be King, according to the true meaning of our excellent Constitution. All, therefore, my Lords, that will be necessary to be done, by the enacting clause that I shall bring in, will be to invest the King before-hand with the quantity of wisdom necessary for this purpose, lest he should happen not to possess it: and this, my Lords, we can do without making use of any of our own.

“ We further read, my Lords, in the said Statutes at Large of the Jews, that Samuel, who certainly was as mad as any Man-of-Rights-Man now-a-days, (*hear him! hear him!*) was highly displeased, and even exasperated, at the proposal of the Jews to have a King, and he warned them against it with all that assurance and impudence of which he was master. I have been, my Lords, at the trouble of going all the way to *Paternoster Row*, to procure an extract from the printed copy. I was told that I should meet with it there, or in *Amen Corner*, for I was then going, my Lords, to rummage for it among the curiosities of the *Antiquarian Society*. I will read the extract to your Lordships, to shew how little Samuel knew of the matter.

“ The extract, my Lords, is from 1 *Samuel*, chap. 8.

‘ And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people, that asked of him a King.

‘ And he said, this will be the manner of the King that shall reign over you: he will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots.

‘ And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war and instruments of his chariots.

‘ And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.

‘ And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.

‘ And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers and his servants.

‘ And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.

‘ And he will take the tenth of your sheep, and you shall be his servants.

‘ And ye shall cry out in that day, because of your King, which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you on that day.’

“ Now, my Lords, what can we think of this man Samuel? Is there a word of truth, or any thing like truth, in all that he has said? He pretended to be a prophet, or a wise man, but has not the event proved him to be a fool, or an incendiary? Look around, my Lords, and see if any thing has happened that he pretended to foretel? Has not the most profound peace reigned throughout the world ever since Kings were in fashion? Are not, for example, the present Kings of Europe the most peaceable of mankind, and the Empress of Russia the very milk of human kindness? It would not be worth having Kings, my Lords, if it were not that they never go to war.

“ If we look at home, my Lords, do we not see the same things here as are seen every where else? Are our young men taken to be horsemen, or foot soldiers, any more than in Germany or in Prussia, or in Hanover or in Hesse? Are not our sailors as safe at land as at sea? Are they ever dragged from their homes, like oxen to the slaughter-house, to serve on board ships of war? When they return from the perils of a long voyage with the merchandize of distant countries, does not every man sit down under his own vine and his own fig-tree, in perfect security? Is the tenth of our seed taken by tax-gatherers, or is any part of it given to the King’s servants? In short, *is not every thing as free from taxes as the light of Heaven?*

“ Ah! my Lords, do we not see the blessed effect of having Kings in every thing we look at? Is not the G. R. or the broad R. stamped upon every thing? Even the shoes, the gloves, and the hats that we wear, are enriched with the impression, and all our candles blaze a burnt-offering.

“ Besides these blessings, my Lords, that cover us from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, do we not see



a race of youths growing up to be Kings, who are the very paragons of virtue? There is not one of them, my Lords, but might be trusted with untold gold, as safely as the other. Are they not '*more sober, more intelligent, more solid, more steady,*' and withal, more learned, more wise, more every thing, than any youths *we* '*ever had the fortune to see?*' Ah! my Lords, they are a *hopeful family!*

"The blessed prospect of succession, which the Nation has at this moment before its eyes, is a most undeniable proof of the excellence of our Constitution, and of the blessed hereditary system; for nothing, my Lords, but a Constitution founded on the truest and purest wisdom, could admit such heaven-born and heaven-taught characters into the Government.—Permit me now, my Lords, to recal your attention to the libellous chapter I have just read about Kings. I mention this, my Lords, because it is my intention to move for a bill to be brought into the Parliament to expunge that chapter from the Bible; and that the Lord Chancellor, with the assistance of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and the Duke of Clarence, be requested to write a chapter in the room of it; and that Mr. Burke do see that it be truly canonical, and faithfully inserted."—  
FINIS.

If the Clerk of the Court of King's Bench should choose to be the orator of this luminous encomium on the Constitution, I hope he will get it well by heart before he attempts to deliver it, and not have to apologize to Parliament, as he did in the case of Bolingbroke's encomium, for forgetting his lesson, and with this admonition I leave him.

Having thus informed the Addressers of what passed at the meeting of Parliament, I return to take up the subject at the part where I broke off, in order to introduce the preceding speeches.

I was then stating, that the first policy of the Government party was silence, and the next, clamorous contempt; but as people generally choose to read and judge for themselves, the work still went on, and the affectation of contempt, like the silence that preceded it, passed for nothing.

Thus foiled in their second scheme, their evil genius, like a will-with-a-wisp, led them to a third; when all at once, as if it had been unfolded to them by a fortune-teller, or Mr. Dundas had discovered it by second sight, this once harmless, insignificant book, without undergoing the alteration of a single letter, became a most wicked and dangerous Libel. The whole Cabinet, like a ship's crew, became alarmed; all

hands were piped upon deck, as if a conspiracy of elements was forming around them, and out came the Proclamation and the Prosecution, and Addresses supplied the place of prayers.

Ye silly swains, thought I to myself, why do you torment yourselves thus? The RIGHTS OF MAN is a book calmly and rationally written; why then are you so disturbed? Did you see how little, or how suspicious such conduct makes you appear, even cunning alone, had you no other faculty, would hush you into prudence. The plans, principles, and arguments, contained in that work, are placed before the eyes of the Nation, and of the world, in a fair, open, and manly manner, and nothing more is necessary than to refute them. Do this, and the whole is done; but if ye cannot, so neither can ye suppress the reading, nor convict the Author, for that Law, in the opinion of all good men, would convict itself, that should condemn what cannot be refuted.

Having now shewn the Addressers the several stages of the business, prior to their being called upon, like Cæsar in the Tyber, crying to Cassius, "*Help, Cassius, or I sink!*" I next come to remark on the policy of the Government in promoting Addresses; on the consequences naturally resulting therefrom, and on the conduct of the persons concerned.

With respect to the policy, it evidently carries with it every mark and feature of disguised fear. And it will hereafter be placed in the history of extraordinary things, that a pamphlet should be produced by an individual, unconnected with any sect or party, and not seeking to make any, and almost a stranger in the land, that should completely frighten a whole Government, and that in the midst of its most triumphant security. Such a circumstance cannot fail to prove, that either the pamphlet has irresistible powers, or the Government very extraordinary defects, or both. The Nation exhibits no signs of fear at the RIGHTS OF MAN; why then should the Government, unless the interest of the two are really opposite to each other, and the secret is beginning to be known? That there are two distinct classes of men in the Nation, those who pay taxes, and those who receive and live upon the taxes, is evident at first sight; and when taxation is carried to excess, it cannot fail to disunite those two, and something of this kind is now beginning to appear.

It is also curious to observe, amidst all the fume and bustle about Proclamations and Addresses, kept up by a few noisy and interested men, how little the mass of the Nation seem to

care about either. They appear to me, by the indifference they shew, not to believe a word that the Proclamation contains; and as to the Addresses, they travel to London with the silence of a funeral, and having announced their arrival in the Gazette, are deposited with the ashes of their predecessors, and Mr. Dundas writes their *hic jacet*.

One of the best effects which the Proclamation, and its echo the Addresses have had, has been that of exciting and spreading curiosity; and it requires only a single reflection to discover, that the object of all curiosity is knowledge. When the mass of the Nation saw that Placemen, Pensioners, and Borough-mongers, were the persons that stood forward to promote Addresses, it could not fail to create suspicions that the public good was not their object; that the character of the books, or writings, to which such persons obscurely alluded, not daring to mention them, was directly contrary to what they described them to be, and that it was necessary that every man, for his own satisfaction, should exercise his proper right, and read and judge for himself.

But how will the persons who have been induced to read the RIGHTS OF MAN, by the clamour that has been raised against it, be surprised to find, that instead of a wicked, inflammatory work; instead of a licentious and profligate performance, it abounds with principles of Government that are incontrovertible—with arguments which every reader will feel are unanswerable—with plans for the increase of commerce and manufactures—for the extinction of war—for the education of the children of the poor—for the comfortable support of the aged and decayed persons of both sexes—for the relief of the army and navy; and, in short, for the promotion of every thing that can benefit the moral, civil, and political condition of Man.

Why, then, some calm observer will ask, why is the work prosecuted, if these be the goodly matters it contains? I will tell thee, friend,—it contains, also, a plan for the reduction of Taxes, for lessening the immense expences of Government, for abolishing *Sinecure Places* and *Pensions*; and it proposes applying the redundant taxes that shall be saved by these reforms, to the purposes mentioned in the former paragraph, instead of applying them to the support of idle and profligate Placemen and Pensioners.

Is it, then, any wonder that Placemen and Pensioners, and the whole train of Court expectants, should become the promoters of Addresses, Proclamations, and Prosecutions? Or is it any wonder that Corporations and rotten Boroughs,

which are attacked and exposed, both in the First and Second Part of RIGHTS OF MAN, as unjust monopolies and public nuisances, should join in the cavalcade? Yet these are the sources from which Addresses have sprung. Had not such persons come forward to oppose the RIGHTS OF MAN, I should have doubted the efficacy of my own writings; but those opposers have now proved to me, that the blow was well directed, and they have done it justice by confessing the smart.

The principal deception in this business of Addresses has been, that the promoters of them have not come forward in their proper characters. They have assumed to pass themselves upon the Public as a part of the Public, bearing a share of the burthen of Taxes, and acting for the public good; whereas, they are in general that part of it that adds to the public burthen, by living on the produce of the public taxes. They are to the public, what the locusts are to the tree: the burthen would be less, and the prosperity would be greater, if they were shaken off.

"I do not come here," said ONSLOW, at the Surrey County meeting," as Lord Lieutenant and Custus Rotulorum of the county, but I come here as a plain country gentleman." The fact is, that he came there as what he was, and as no other, and, consequently, he came as one of the beings I have been describing. If it be the character of a gentleman to be fed by the public, as a pauper is by the parish, Onslow has a fair claim to the title; and the same description will suit the Duke of Richmond, who led the Address at the Sussex meeting.—He also may set up for a gentleman.

As to the meeting in the next adjoining county, (Kent) it was a scene of disgrace. About two hundred persons met, when a small part of them drew privately away from the rest, and voted an Address; the consequence of which was, that they got together by the ears, and produced a riot, in the very act of producing an Address to prevent Riots.

That the Proclamation and the Addresses have failed of their intended effect, may be collected from the silence which the Government party itself observes. The number of Addresses has been weekly retailed in the Gazette; but the number of Addressers has been concealed. Several of the Addresses have been voted by not more than ten or twelve persons; and a considerable number of them by not more than thirty. The whole number of Addresses presented at the time of writing this letter, is three hundred and

twenty, (rotten Boroughs and Corporations included,) and even admitting, on an average, one hundred Addressers to each Address, the whole number of Addressers would be but thirty-two thousand, and nearly three months have been taken up in procuring this number. That the success of the Proclamation has been less than the success of the Work it was intended to discourage, is a matter within my own knowledge; for a greater number of the cheap edition of the First and Second Part of RIGHTS OF MAN has been sold in the space of only one month, than the whole number of Addressers (admitting them to be thirty-two thousand) have amounted to in three months.

It is a dangerous attempt in any Government to say to a Nation, "*thou shalt not read.*" This is now done in Spain, and was formerly done under the old Government of France; but it served to procure the downfall of the latter, and is subverting that of the former; and it will have the same tendency in all countries; because *thought*, by some means or other, is got abroad in the world, and cannot be restrained, though reading may.

If RIGHTS OF MAN were a book that deserved the vile description which the promoters of the Addressers have given of it, why did not these men prove their charge, and satisfy the people, by producing it, and reading it publicly? This most certainly ought to have been done, and would also have been done, had they believed it would have answered their purpose. But the fact is, that the book contains truths, which those time-servers dreaded to hear, and dreaded that the people should know; and it is now following up the Addresses in every part of the Nation, and convicting them of falsehoods.

Among the unwarrantable proceedings to which the Proclamation has given rise, the meetings of the Justices in several of the towns and counties ought to be noticed. Those men have assumed to re-act the farce of General Warrants, and to suppress, by their own authority, whatever publications they please. This is an attempt at power, equalled only by the conduct of the minor despots of the most despotic Governments in Europe, and yet these Justices affect to call England a free Country. But even this, perhaps, like the scheme for garrisoning the country, by building military barracks, is necessary to awaken the country to a sense of its Rights, and, as such, it will have a good effect.

Another part of the conduct of such Justices has been that

of threatening to take away the licences from taverns and public-houses, where the inhabitants of the neighbourhood associated to read and discuss the principles of Government, and to inform each other thereon. This, again, is similar to what is doing in Spain and Russia; and the reflection which it cannot fail to suggest is, that the principles and conduct of any Government must be bad, when that Government dreads and startles at discussion, and seeks security by a prevention of knowledge.

If the Government, or the Constitution, or by whatever name it be called, be that miracle of perfection which the Proclamation and the Addresses have trumpeted it forth to be, it ought to have defied discussion and investigation, instead of dreading it. Whereas, every attempt it makes, either by Proclamation, Prosecution, or Address, to suppress investigation, is a confession that it feels itself unable to bear it. It is error only, and not truth, that shrinks from enquiry. All the numerous pamphlets, and all the newspaper falsehood and abuse, that have been published against the "RIGHTS OF MAN," have fallen before it like pointless arrows; and, in like manner, would any work have fallen before the Constitution, had the Constitution, as it is called, been founded on as good political principles as those on which the RIGHTS OF MAN is written.

It is a good Constitution for Courtiers, Placemen, Pensioners, Borough-holders, and the leaders of Parties, and these are the men that have been the active leaders of Addresses; but it is a bad Constitution for at least ninety-nine parts of the Nation out of an hundred, and this truth is every day making its way.

It is bad, first, because it entails upon the Nation the unnecessary expence of supporting three forms and systems of Government at once, namely, the monarchical, the aristocratical, and the democratical.

Secondly, because it is impossible to unite such a discordant composition by any other means than perpetual corruption; and therefore the corruption so loudly and so universally complained of, is no other than the natural consequence of such an unnatural compound of Governments; and in this consists that excellence which the numerous herd of Placemen and Pensioners so loudly extol, and which, at the same time, occasions that enormous load of taxes under which the rest of the Nation groans.

Among the mass of National delusions calculated to amuse and impose upon the multitude, the standing one

has been, that of flattering them into taxes, by calling the Government, (or as they please to express it, the English Constitution) "*the envy and the admiration of the world.*" Scarcely an address has been voted in which some of the speakers have not uttered this hackneyed, nonsensical falsehood.

Two Revolutions have taken place, those of America and France; and both of them have rejected the unnatural compounded system of the English Government. America has declared against all hereditary Government, and established the representative system of Government only. France has entirely rejected the aristocratical part, and is now discovering the absurdities of the monarchical, and is approaching fast to the representative system. On what ground, then, do those men continue a declaration, respecting what they call the *envy and admiration of other Nations*, which the voluntary practice of such Nations, as have had the opportunity of establishing Government, contradicts and falsifies? Will such men never confine themselves to truth? Will they be for ever the deceivers of the people?

But I will go further, and shew, that, were Government now to begin in England, the people could not be brought to establish the same system they now submit to.

In speaking upon this subject, or on any other, *on the pure ground of principle*, antiquity and precedent cease to be authority, and hoary-headed error loses its effect. The reasonableness and propriety of things must be examined abstractedly from custom and usage; and in this point of view, the right which grows into practice to-day is as much a right, and as old in principle and theory, as if it had the customary sanction of a thousand ages. Principles have no connection with time, nor characters with names.

To say that the Government of this country is composed of King, Lords, and Commons, is the mere phraseology of custom. It is composed of men; and whoever the men be, to whom the Government of any country is entrusted, they ought to be the best, and wisest that can be found, and if they are not so, they are not fit for the station. A man derives no more excellence from the change of a name, or calling him King, or calling him Lord, than I should do by changing my name from Thomas to George, or from Paine to Guelph. I should not be a whit the more able to write a book because my name were altered; neither would any man, now called a King or a Lord, have a whit the more sense than he now has, were he to call himself Thomas Paine.

As to the word "Commons," applied as it is in England, it is a term of degradation and reproach, and ought to be abolished. It is a term unknown in free countries.

But to the point.—Let us suppose that Government was now to begin in England, and that the plan of Government, offered to the Nation for its approbation or rejection, consisted of the following parts:

First—That some one individual should be taken from all the rest of the Nation, and to whom all the rest should swear obedience, and never be permitted to sit down in his presence, and that they should give to him one million sterling a year.—That the Nation should never after have power or authority to make laws but with his express consent, and that his sons, and his sons' sons, whether wise or foolish, good men or bad, fit or unfit, should have the same power, and also the same money annually paid to them for ever.

Secondly—That there should be two houses of Legislators to assist in making laws, one of which should, in the first instance, be entirely appointed by the aforesaid person, and that their sons, and their sons' sons, whether wise or foolish, good men or bad, fit or unfit, should for ever after be hereditary Legislators.

Thirdly—That the other house should be chosen in the same manner as the house now called the House of Commons, is chosen, and should be subject to the controul of the two aforesaid hereditary Powers in all things.

It would be impossible to cram such a farrago of imposition and absurdity down the throat of this, or any other Nation, that was capable of reasoning upon its rights and its interest.

They would ask, in the first place, on what ground of right, or on what principle, such irrational and preposterous distinctions could, or ought to be made; and what pretensions any man could have, or what services he could render, to entitle him to a million a year? They would go farther, and revolt at the idea of consigning their children, and their children's children, to the domination of persons hereafter to be born, who might, for any thing they could foresee, turn out to be knaves or fools; and they would finally discover, that the project of hereditary Governors and Legislators, *was a treasonable usurpation over the rights of posterity*. Not only the calm dictates of reason, and the force of natural affection, but the integrity of manly pride would impel men to spurn such proposals.



From the grosser absurdities of such a scheme, they would extend their examination to the practical defects.— They would soon see that it would end in tyranny accomplished by fraud; that in the operation of it, it would be two to one against them, because the two parts that were to be made hereditary, would form a common interest, and stick to each other; and that themselves, and their representatives, would become no better than hewers of wood and drawers of water, for the other parts of the Government.— Yet call one of those powers King, the other Lords, and the third the Commons, and it gives the model of what is called the English Government.

I have asserted, and have shewn, both in the First and Second Part of RIGHTS OF MAN, that there is not such a thing as an English Constitution, and that the people have yet a Constitution to form. *A Constitution is a thing antecedent to a Government; it is the act of the people creating a Government, and giving it powers, and defining the limits and exercise of the powers so given.* But whenever did the people of England, acting in their original constituent character, by a delegation elected for that express purpose, declare and say “*We the people of this land do constitute and appoint this to be our system and form of Government?*” The Government has assumed to constitute itself, but it never was constituted by the people, in whom alone the right of constituting resides.

I will here recite the preamble to the Federal Constitution of the United States of America. I have shewn in the Second Part of RIGHTS OF MAN, the manner by which the Constitution was formed and afterwards ratified; and to which I refer the reader. The preamble is in the following words:

“WE, THE PEOPLE of the United States, in order to  
 “form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure  
 “domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence,  
 “promote the general welfare, secure the blessings of  
 “liberty, to ourselves and our posterity, DO ORDAIN  
 “AND ESTABLISH this CONSTITUTION for the United  
 “States of America.”

Then follow the several articles which appoint the manner in which the several component parts of the Government, legislative and executive, shall be elected, and the period of their duration, and the powers they shall have: also, the manner by which future additions, alterations, or amendments, shall be made to the Constitution. Consequently, every improvement that can be made in the science of Go-

vernment, follows in that country as a matter of order. It is only in Governments, founded on assumption, and false principles, that reasoning upon, and investigating systems and principles of Government, and shewing their several excellencies and defects, are termed libellous and seditious. Those terms were made part of the charge brought against Locke, Hampden, and Sydney, and will continue to be brought against all good men, so long as bad Governments shall continue.

The Government of this country has been ostentatiously giving challenges for more than an hundred years past, upon what it called its own excellence and perfection. Scarcely a King's Speech or a Parliamentary Speech has been uttered, in which this glove has not been thrown, till the world has been insulted with their challenges. But it now appears that all this was vapour and vain boasting, or that it was intended to conceal abuses and defects, and hush the people into taxes. I have taken the challenge up, and in behalf of the public have shewn, in a fair, open, and candid manner, both the radical and practical defects of the system; when, lo! those champions of the Civil List have fled away, and sent the Attorney-General to deny the challenge, by turning the acceptance of it into an attack, and defending their Places and Pensions by a prosecution.

I will here drop part of the subject, and state a few particulars respecting the prosecution now pending, by which the Addressers will see that they have been used as tools to the prosecuting party and their dependants. The case is as follows:

The original edition of the First and Second Part of RIGHTS OF MAN, having been expensively printed (in the modern style of printing pamphlets, that they might be bound up with Mr. Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution,) the high price precluded the generality of people from purchasing; and many applications were made to me from various parts of the country to print the work in a cheaper manner. The people of Sheffield requested leave to print two thousand copies for themselves, with which request I immediately complied. The same request came to me from Rotherham, from Leicester, from Chester, from several towns in Scotland; and Mr. James Mackintosh, Author of *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, brought me a request from Warwickshire, for leave to print ten thousand copies in that county. I had already sent a cheap edition to Scotland; and finding the applications increase, I concluded that the

best method of complying therewith, would be to print a very numerous edition, in London, under my own direction, by which means the work would be more perfect, and the price be reduced lower than it could be by printing small editions in the country of only a few thousands each.

The cheap edition of the First Part, was begun about the middle of last April, and from that moment, and not before, I expected a prosecution, and the event has proved that I was not mistaken. I had then occasion to write to Mr. Thomas Walker, of Manchester, and after informing him of my intention of giving up the work for the purpose of general information, I informed him of what I apprehended would be the consequence; that while the work was at a price that precluded an extensive circulation, the Government-party, not able to controvert the plans, arguments, and principles it contained, had chosen to remain silent; but that I expected they would make an attempt to deprive the mass of the Nation, and especially the poor, of the right of reading, by the pretence of prosecuting either the Author, or the Publisher, or both. They chose to begin with the Publisher.

Nearly a month, however, passed, before I had any information given me of their intentions. I was then at Bromley, in Kent, upon which I came immediately to town, (May 14,) and went to Mr. Jordan, the publisher of the original edition. He had, that evening, been served with a summons, to appear at the Court of King's Bench on the Monday following, but for what purpose was not stated. Supposing it to be on account of the work, I appointed a meeting with him on the next morning, which was accordingly had, when I provided an attorney, and took the expence of the defence on myself. But finding afterwards that he absented himself from the attorney employed, and employed another, and that he had been closeted with the Solicitors of the Treasury, I left him to follow his own choice, and he chose to plead Guilty. This he might do if he pleased; and I make no objection against him for it. I believe that his idea by the word *Guilty*, was no other than declaring himself to be the Publisher, without any regard to the merits or demerits of the work; for were it to be construed otherwise, it would amount to the absurdity of converting a Publisher into a Jury, and his confession into a verdict upon the work itself. This would be the highest possible refinement upon packing of Juries.

On the 21st of May, they commenced their prosecution

against me, as the Author, by leaving a summons at my lodgings in town, to appear at the Court of King's Bench on the 8th of June following; and, on the same day, (May 21,) *they issued also their Proclamation*. Thus the Court of St. James's, and the Court of King's Bench, were playing into each other's hands at the same instant of time, and the farce of Addresses brought up the rear; and this mode of proceeding is called by the prostituted name of Law. Such a thundering rapidity, after a ministerial dormancy of almost eighteen months, can be attributed to no other cause than their having gained information of the forwardness of the cheap edition, and the dread they felt at the progressive increase of political knowledge.

I was strongly advised by several gentlemen, as well those in the practice of the Law, as others, to prefer a bill of indictment against the Publisher of the Proclamation, as a publication tending to influence, or rather to dictate the verdict of a Jury on the issue of a matter then pending; but it appeared to me much better to avail myself of the opportunity which such a precedent justified me in using, by meeting the Proclamation and the Addresses on their own ground, and publicly defending the Work which had been thus unwarrantably attacked and traduced.—And conscious as I now am, that the Work entitled RIGHTS OF MAN, so far from being, as has been maliciously or erroneously represented, a false, wicked, and seditious Libel, is a Work abounding with unanswerable truths, with principles of the purest morality and benevolence, and with arguments not to be controverted. Conscious, I say, of these things, and having no object in view but the happiness of mankind, I have now put the matter to the best proof in my power, by giving to the public a cheap edition of the First and Second Parts of that Work. Let every man read and judge for himself, not only of the merits and demerits of the Work, but of the matters therein contained, which relate to his own interest and happiness.

If, to expose the fraud and imposition of monarchy, and every species of hereditary government—to lessen the oppression of taxes—to propose plans for the education of helpless infancy, and the comfortable support of the aged and distressed—to endeavour to conciliate Nations to each other—to extirpate the horrid practice of war—to promote universal peace, civilization, and commerce—and to break the chains of political superstition, and raise degraded man to his proper rank;—if these things be libellous, let me live the

life of a Libeller, and let the name of LIBELLER be engraven on my tomb.

Of all the weak and ill-judged measures which fear, ignorance, or arrogance, could suggest, the Proclamation, and the project for Addresses, are two of the worst. They served to advertise the Work which the promoters of those measures wished to keep unknown; and in doing this, they offered violence to the judgment of the people, by calling on them to condemn what they forbade them to know, and they put the strength of their party to that hazardous issue that prudence would have avoided.—The County Meeting for Middlesex was attended by only one hundred and eighteen Addressers. They, no doubt, expected, that thousands would flock to their standard, and clamour against the RIGHTS OF MAN. But the case most probably is, that men, in all countries, are not so blind to their Rights and their Interest, as Governments believe.

Having thus shewn the extraordinary manner in which the Government-party commenced their attack, I proceed to offer a few observations on the prosecution, and on the mode of trial by Special Jury.

In the first place, I have written a book; and if it cannot be refuted, it cannot be condemned. But I do not consider the prosecution as particularly levelled against me, but against the general right, or the right of every man, of investigating systems and principles of Government, and shewing their several excellencies or defects. If the press be free only to flatter Government, as Mr. Burke has done, and to cry up and extol what certain Court-sycophants are pleased to call a “glorious Constitution,” and not free to examine into its errors or abuses, or whether a Constitution really exist or not, such freedom is no other than that of Spain, Turkey, or Russia; and a Jury, in this case, would not be a Jury to try, but an Inquisition to condemn.

I have asserted, and by fair and open argument maintained, the Right of every Nation, at all times, to establish such a system and form of Government for itself, as best accords with its disposition, interest, and happiness; and to change, or alter it, as it sees occasion. Will any Jury deny to the Nation this right? If they do, they are Traitors, and their Verdict would be null and void. And if they admit the right, the means must be admitted also; for it would be the highest absurdity to say that the right existed, but the means did not. The question, then is,—What are the means by which the possession and exercise of this National Right

are to be secured? the answer will be, that of maintaining, inviolably, the rights of free investigation; for investigation always serves to detect error, and to bring forth truth.

I have, as an individual, given my opinion upon what I believe to be not only the best, but the true system of Government, which is the representative system, and I have given reasons for that opinion.

First, Because, in the representative system, no Office of very extraordinary power, or extravagant pay, is attached to any individual; and, consequently, there is nothing to excite those National contentions and civil wars, with which countries under monarchical Governments are frequently convulsed, and of which the History of England exhibits such numerous instances.

Secondly, Because the representative system, is a system of Government always in maturity; whereas, monarchical Government fluctuates through all the stages, from non-age to dotage.

Thirdly, Because the representative system admits of none but men properly qualified, into the Government, or removes them, if they prove to be otherwise. Whereas, in the hereditary system, a Nation may be incumbered with a knave, or an idiot, for a whole life-time, and not be benefited by a successor.

Fourthly, Because there does not exist a right to establish hereditary Government, or, in other words, hereditary successors, because hereditary Government always means a Government yet to come, and the case always is, that those who are to live afterwards, have the same right to establish Government for themselves, as the people had who lived before them: and, therefore, all laws attempting to establish hereditary Government, are founded on assumption and political fiction.

If these positions be truths, and I challenge any man to prove the contrary; if they tend to instruct and enlighten mankind, and to free them from error, oppression, and political superstition, which are the objects I have in view in publishing them, that Jury would commit an act of injustice to their country and to me, if not an act of perjury, that should call them *false, wicked, and malicious*.

Dragonetti, in his Treatise "On Virtue and Rewards," has a paragraph worthy of being recorded in every country in the world.—"The science," says he, "of the politician, consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should

discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of *individual happiness* with the least *National expence*." But if Juries are to be made use of to prohibit inquiry, to suppress truth, and to stop the progress of knowledge, this boasted palladium of liberty becomes the most successful instrument of tyranny.

Among the arts practised at the Bar, and from the Bench, to impose upon the understanding of a Jury, and obtain a Verdict where the consciences of men could not otherwise consent, one of the most successful has been that of calling *truth a libel*, and of insinuating, that the words "*falsely, wickedly, and maliciously*," though they are made the formidable and high sounding part of the charge, are not matters for consideration with a Jury. For what purpose, then, are they retained, unless it be for that of imposition and wilful defamation?

I cannot conceive a greater violation of order, nor a more abominable insult upon morality, and upon human understanding, than to see a man sitting in the judgment seat, affecting, by an antiquated foppery of dress, to impress the audience with awe; then causing witnesses and Jury to be sworn to truth and justice, himself having officially sworn the same; then causing to be read a prosecution against a man, charging him with having *wickedly and maliciously written and published a certain false, wicked, and seditious book*; and having gone through all this with a shew of solemnity, as if he saw the eye of the Almighty darting through the roof of the building like a ray of light, turn, in an instant, the whole into a farce, and, in order to obtain a verdict that could not otherwise be obtained, tell the Jury that the charge of *falsely, wickedly, and seditiously*, meant nothing; that *truth* was out of the question; and that whether the person accused, spoke truth or falsehood, or intended *virtuously* or *wickedly*, was the same thing; and finally conclude the wretched inquisitorial scene, by stating some antiquated precedent, equally as abominable as that which is then acting, or giving some opinion of his own, and *falsely calling the one and the other—Law*. It was, most probably, to such a Judge as this, that the most solemn of all reproofs was given—"The Lord will smite thee, thou whitened wall."

I now proceed to offer some remarks on what is called a Special Jury.—As to what is called a Special Verdict, I shall make no other remark upon it, than that it is in reality *not* a verdict. It is an attempt on the part of the Jury to

delegate, or of the bench to obtain, the exercise of that right which is committed to the Jury only.

With respect to Special Juries, I shall state such matters as I have been able to collect, for I do not find any uniform opinion concerning the mode of appointing them.

In the first place, this mode of trial is but of modern invention, and the origin of it, as I am told, is as follows:

Formerly, when disputes arose between Merchants, and were brought before a Court, the case was, that the nature of their commerce, and the method of keeping Merchants' accounts, not being sufficiently understood by persons out of their own line, it became necessary to depart from the common mode of appointing Juries, and to select such persons for a Jury whose *practical knowledge* would enable them to decide upon the case. From this introduction, Special Juries became more general; but some doubts having arisen as to their legality, an act was passed in the 3d of George II. to establish them as legal, and also to extend them to all cases, not only between individuals, but in cases where *the Government itself should be the Prosecutor*. This most probably gave rise to the suspicion so generally entertained of packing a Jury; because, by this act, when the Crown, as it is called, is the Prosecutor, the Master of the Crown Office, who holds his office under the Crown, is the person who either wholly nominates, or has great power in nominating the Jury, and therefore it has greatly the appearance of the prosecuting party selecting a Jury.

The process is as follows:

On motion being made in Court, by either the Plaintiff or Defendant, for a Special Jury, the Court grants it or not, at its own discretion.

If it be granted, the Solicitor of the party that applied for the Special Jury, gives notice to the Solicitor of the adverse party, and a day and hour are appointed for them to meet at the office of the Master of the Crown Office. The Master of the Crown Office sends to the Sheriff or his Deputy, who attends with the Sheriff's book of Freeholders. From this book, forty-eight names are *taken*, and a copy thereof given to each of the parties; and on a future day notice is again given, and the Solicitors meet a second time, and each strikes out twelve names. The list being thus reduced from forty-eight to twenty-four, the first twelve that appear in Court, and answer to their names, is the Special Jury for that cause. The first operation, that



of taking the forty-eight names, is called nominating the Jury; and the reducing them to twenty-four, is called striking the Jury.

Having thus stated the general process, I come to particulars, and the first question will be, how are the forty-eight names, out of which the Jury is to be struck, obtained from the Sheriff's book? for herein lies the principal ground of suspicion, with respect to what is understood by packing of Juries.

Either they must be taken by some rule agreed upon between the parties, or by some common rule known and established before-hand, or at the discretion of some person who, in such a case, ought to be perfectly disinterested in the issue, as well officially as otherwise.

In the case of Merchants, and in all cases between individuals, the Master of the office, called the Crown Office, is officially an indifferent person, and as such may be a proper person to act between the parties and present them with a list of forty-eight names, out of which each party is to strike twelve. But the case assumes an entirely different character when the Government itself is the Prosecutor. The Master of the Crown Office is then an officer holding his office under the Prosecutor; and it is therefore no wonder that the suspicion of packing Juries should, in such cases, have been so prevalent.

This will apply with additional force, when the prosecution is commenced against the Author or Publisher of such Works as treat of reforms, and of the abolition of superfluous places and offices, &c. because in such cases every person holding an office subject to that suspicion becomes interested as a party; and the office, called the Crown Office, may, upon examination, be found to be of this description.

I have heard it asserted, that the Master of the Crown Office is to open the Sheriff's book as it were per hazard, and take thereout forty-eight *following* names, to which the word Merchant or Esquire is affixed. The former of these are certainly proper, when the case is between Merchants, and it has reference to the origin of the custom, and to nothing else. As to the word Esquire, every man is an Esquire who pleases to call himself Esquire; and the sensible part of mankind are leaving it off. But the matter for inquiry is, whether there be any existing law to direct the mode by which the forty-eight names shall be taken, or whether the mode be merely that of custom which the

office has created ; or whether the selection of the forty-eight names be wholly at the discretion and choice of the Master of the Crown Office ? One or other of the two latter appears to be the case, because the act already mentioned, of the 3d of Geo. II. lays down no rule or mode, nor refers to any preceding law—but says only, that Special Juries shall hereafter be struck, “ *in such manner as Special Juries have been and are usually struck.*”

This act appears to me to have been what is generally understood by a “ *deep take in.*” It was fitted to the spur of the moment in which it was passed, 3d of Geo. II. when parties ran high, and it served to throw into the hands of Walpole, who was then Minister, the management of Juries in Crown prosecutions, by making the nomination of the forty-eight persons, from whom the Jury was to be struck, follow the precedent established by custom between individuals, and by this means it slipped into practice with less suspicion. Now, the manner of obtaining Special Juries through the medium of an officer of the Government, such for instance as a Master of the Crown Office, may be impartial in the case of Merchants, or other individuals, but it becomes highly improper, and suspicious, in cases where the Government itself is one of the parties. And it must upon the whole, appear a strange inconsistency, that a Government should keep one officer to commence prosecutions, and another officer to nominate the forty-eight persons from whom the Jury is to be struck, *both of whom are officers of the Civil List*, and yet continue to call this by the pompous name of *the glorious Right of trial by Jury!*

In the case of the King against Jordan, for publishing RIGHTS OF MAN, the Attorney-General moved for the appointment of a Special Jury, and the master of the Crown Office nominated the forty-eight persons himself, and took them from such parts of the Sheriff's book as he pleased. The trial did not come on, occasioned by Jordan withdrawing his plea : but if it had, it might have afforded an opportunity of discussing the subject of Special Juries ; for though such discussion might have had no effect in the Court of King's Bench, it would, in the present disposition for inquiry, have had a considerable effect upon the Country ; and in all National reforms, this is the proper point to begin at. Put a Country right, and it will soon put Government right. Among the improper things acted by the Government in the case of Special Juries, on their own motion, one has been that of treating the Jury with a

dinner, and afterwards giving each Jurymen two guineas, if a verdict be found for the prosecution, and only one if otherwise; and it has been long observed, that in London, and Westminster, there are persons who appear to make a trade of serving, by being so frequently seen upon Special Juries.

Thus much for Special Juries. As to what is called a *Common Jury*, upon any Government-prosecution against the Author or Publisher of **RIGHTS OF MAN**, during the time of the *present Sheriffry*, I have one question to offer, which is—*whether the present Sheriffs of London, having publicly prejudged the case, by the part they have taken in procuring an Address from the county of Middlesex, (however diminutive and insignificant the number of Addressers were, being only one hundred and eighteen) are eligible or proper persons to be entrusted with the power of returning a Jury to try the issue of any such prosecution?*

But the whole matter appears, at least to me, to be worthy of a more extensive consideration than what relates to any Jury, whether Special or Common; for the case is, whether any part of a whole Nation, locally selected as a Jury of twelve men always is, be competent to judge and determine for the whole Nation, on any matter that relates to systems and principles of Government, and whether it be not applying the institution of Juries to purposes for which such institution was not intended? For example:

I have asserted in the **Work RIGHTS OF MAN**, that as every man in the Nation pays taxes, so has every man a right to a share in Government, and consequently that the people of Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Halifax, &c. &c. have the same right as those of London. Shall then twelve men picked out between Temple-bar and Whitechapel, because the book happened to be first published there, decide upon the rights of the inhabitants of those towns, or of any other town or village in the Nation?

Having thus spoken of the Juries, I come next to offer a few observations on the matter contained in the information, or prosecution.

The **Work RIGHTS OF MAN**, consists of Part the First, and Part the Second. The First Part, the prosecutor has thought it most proper to let alone; and from the Second Part he has selected a few short paragraphs, making in the whole not quite two pages of the same printing as in the cheap edition. Those paragraphs relate chiefly to certain

facts, such as the Revolution of 1688, and the coming of George the First, commonly called of the House of Hanover, or the House of Brunswick, or some such House. The arguments, plans, and principles, contained in the Work, the prosecutor has not ventured to attack. They are beyond his reach.

The Act which the prosecutor appears to rest most upon for the support of the prosecution, is the Act intituled, "An Act, declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and settling the succession of the crown," passed in the first year of William and Mary, and more commonly known by the name of the "Bill of Rights."

I have called this Bill, "*A Bill of Wrongs, and of Insult.*" My reasons; and also my proofs, are as follow:

The method and principle which this Bill takes for declaring rights and liberties, are in direct contradiction to rights and liberties: it is an assumed attempt to take them wholly away from posterity,—for the declaration in the said Bill is as follows:

"The Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, do, *in the name of all the people*, most humbly and faithfully *submit themselves, their heirs, and posterity for ever*;" that is, to William and Mary his wife, their heirs and successors. This is a strange way of declaring rights and liberties! But the Parliament who made this declaration in the name, and on the part of the people, had no authority from them for so doing—and with respect to *posterity for ever*, they had no right or authority whatever in the case. It was assumption and usurpation. I have reasoned very extensively against the principle of this Bill in the first part of Rights of Man; the prosecutor has silently admitted that reasoning, and he now commences a prosecution on the authority of the Bill, after admitting the reasoning against it.

It is also to be observed, that the declaration in this Bill, abject and irrational as it is, had no other intentional operation than against the family of the Stuarts, and their abettors. The idea did not then exist, that in the space of an hundred years, posterity might discover a different and much better system of Government, and that every species of hereditary Government might fall, as Popes and Monks had fallen before. This, I say, was not then thought of, and therefore the application of the Bill, in the present case, is a new, erroneous, and illegal application, and is the same as creating a new bill, *ex post facto*.

It has ever been the craft of Courtiers, for the purpose of

keeping up an expensive and enormous Civil List, and a nummery of useless and antiquated places, and offices at the public expence, to be continually hanging England upon some individual or other, called *King*, though the man might not have capacity to be a parish constable. The folly and absurdity of this is appearing more and more every day, and still those men continue to act as if no alteration in the public opinion had taken place. They hear each other's nonsense, and suppose the whole Nation talks the same Gibberish.

Letsuch men cry up the House of Orange, or the House of Brunswick, if they please. They would cry up any other house if it suited their purpose, and give as good reasons for it. But what is this house, or that house, or any house to a Nation? "*For a Nation to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it.*" Her freedom depends wholly upon herself, and not on any house, or on any individual. I ask not in what light this cargo of foreign Houses appears to others, but I will say in what light it appears to me.—It was like the trees of the forest saying unto the bramble, — Come thou and reign over us.

Thus much for both their Houses. I now come to speak of two other Houses, which are also put into the information, and those are, the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Here, I suppose, the Attorney-General intends to prove me guilty of speaking either truth or falsehood; for, according to the modern interpretation of Libels, it does not signify which, and the only improvement necessary to shew the complete absurdity of such doctrine, would be, to prosecute a man for uttering a most *false and wicked truth*.

I will quote the part I am going to give, from the Office Copy, with the Attorney General's inuendoes, enclosed in parentheses, as they stand in the information, and I hope that civil list officer will caution the Court not to laugh when he reads them, and also take care not to laugh himself.

The information states, that *Thomas Paine, being a wicked, malicious, seditious, and evil-disposed person, hath, with force and arms, and most wicked cunning, written and published a certain false, scandalous, malicious, and seditious libel; in one part thereof, to the tenor and effect following, that is to say—*

“ With respect to the two Houses, of which the English Parliament (*meaning the Parliament of this Kingdom*) is

composed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a Legislature, to have no temper of its own. The Minister, (*meaning the Minister employed by the King of this Realm, in the administration of the Government thereof*) whoever he, at any time may be, touches IT, (*meaning the two Houses of Parliament of this Kingdom*) as with an opium wand, and IT (*meaning the two Houses of Parliament of this Kingdom*) sleeps obedience."—As I am not malicious enough to disturb their repose, though it be time they should awake, I leave the two Houses, and the Attorney-General to the enjoyment of their dreams, and proceed to a new subject.

The Gentlemen to whom I shall next address myself, are those who have styled themselves "*Friends of the People*," holding their meeting at the Freemasons' Tavern, London.

One of the principal Members of this society is Mr. Grey, who, I believe, is also one of the most independent Members in Parliament. I collect this opinion from what Mr. Burke formerly mentioned to me, rather than from any knowledge of my own. The occasion was as follows:

I was in England at the time the bubble broke forth about Nootka Sound; and the day after the King's Message, as it is called, was sent to Parliament, I wrote a note to Mr. Burke, that upon the condition the French Revolution should not be a subject, (for he was then writing the book I have since answered) I would call on him the next day, and mention some matters I was acquainted with, respecting that affair; for it appeared to me extraordinary, that any body of men, calling themselves Representatives, should commit themselves so precipitately, or, "sleep obedience," as Parliament was then doing, and run a Nation into expence, and perhaps a war, without so much as inquiring into the case, or the subject, of both which I had some knowledge.

When I saw Mr. Burke, and mentioned the circumstances to him, he particularly spoke of Mr. Grey, as the fittest Member to bring such matters forward; for, said Mr. Burke, "*I am not the proper person to do it, as I am in a treaty with Mr. Pitt about Mr. Hastings' trial.*" I hope the Attorney-General will allow, that Mr. Burke was then *sleeping his obedience*.—But to return to the Society—

I cannot bring myself to believe, that the general motive of this Society is any thing more than that by which every former Parliamentary opposition has been governed, and

by which the present is sufficiently known. Failing in their pursuit of power and place within doors, they have now (and that not in a very mannerly manner) endeavoured to possess themselves of that ground out of doors, which, had it not been made by others, would not have been made by them. They appear to me to have watched, with more cunning than candour, the progress of a certain publication, and when they saw it had excited a spirit of enquiry, and was rapidly spreading, they stepped forward to profit by the opportunity, and Mr. Fox *then* called it a Libel. In saying this, he libelled himself. Politicians of this cast, such, I mean, as those who trim between parties, and lie by for events, are to be found in every country, and it never yet happened that they did not do more harm than good. They embarrass business, fritter it to nothing, perplex the people, and the event to themselves generally is, that they go just far enough to make enemies of the few, without going far enough to make friends of the many.

Whoever will read the declaration of this Society, of the 25th April, and 5th of May, will find a studied reserve upon all the points that are real abuses. They speak not once of the extravagance of Government, of the abominable list of unnecessary and sinecure places and pensions, of the enormity of the Civil List, of the excess of taxes, nor of any one matter that substantially affects the Nation; and from some conversation that has passed in that Society, it does not appear to me that it is any part of their plan to carry this class of reform into practice. No Opposition Party ever did when it gained possession.

In making these free observations, I mean not to enter into a contention with this Society; their incivility towards me, is what I should expect from place-hunting reformers. They are welcome, however, to the ground they have advanced upon, and I wish that every individual among them may act in the same upright, uninfluenced, and public spirited manner that I have done. Whatever reforms may be obtained, and by whatever means, they will be for the benefit of others, and not of me. I have no other interest in the cause than the interest of my heart. The part I have acted has been wholly that of a volunteer, unconnected with party; and when I quit, it shall be as honourably as I began.

I consider the Reform of Parliament, by an application to Parliament, as proposed by the Society, to be a worn-out, hackneyed subject, about which the Nation is tired, and

the parties are deceiving each other. It is not a subject that is cognizable before Parliament, because no Government has a right to alter itself, either in the whole or in part. The right, and the exercise of that right, appertains to the Nation only, and the proper means is by a National Convention, elected for the purpose, by all the people. By this, the will of the Nation, whether to reform or not, or what the reform shall be, or how far it shall extend, will be known, and it cannot be known by any other means. Partial addresses, or separate associations, are not testimonies of the general will.

It is, however, certain that the opinions of men, with respect to systems and principles of Government, are changing fast in all countries. The alteration in England, within the space of little more than a year, is far greater than could then have been believed, and it is daily and hourly increasing. It moves along the country with the silence of thought. The enormous expence of Government has provoked man to think, by making them feel; and the Proclamation has served to increase jealousy and disgust. To prevent, therefore, those commotions which too often, and too suddenly arise from suffocated discontents, it is best that the general WILL should have the full and free opportunity of being publicly ascertained, and known. Wretched as the state of representation is in England, it is every day becoming worse, because the unrepresented parts of the Nation are increasing in population and property, and the represented parts are decreasing. It is, therefore, no ill-grounded estimation to say, that as not one person in seven is represented, at least fourteen millions of taxes out of the seventeen millions are paid by the unrepresented part; for although copyholds and leaseholds are assessed to the land-tax, the holders are unrepresented. Should then a general demur take place as to the obligation of paying taxes, on the ground of not being represented, it is not the Representatives of rotten Boroughs, nor Special Juries, that can decide the question. This is one of the possible cases that ought to be foreseen, in order to prevent the inconveniencies that might arise to numerous individuals, by provoking it.

I confess I have no idea of petitioning for rights. Whatever the Rights of the People are, they have a right to them, and none have a right either to withhold them, or to grant them. Government ought to be established on such principles of justice as to exclude the occasion of all such



applications, for wherever they appear they are virtually accusations.

I wish that Mr. Grey, since he has embarked in the business, would take the whole of it into consideration. He will then see that the right of reforming the state of the Representation does not reside in Parliament, and that the only motion he could consistently make, would be, that Parliament should *recommend* the election of a Convention by all the people, because all pay taxes. But whether Parliament recommended it or not, the right of the Nation would neither be lessened, nor increased thereby.

As to Petitions from the unrepresented part, they ought not to be looked for. As well might it be expected that Manchester, Sheffield, &c. should petition the rotten Boroughs, as that they should petition the Representatives of those Boroughs. Those two towns alone pay far more taxes than all the rotten Boroughs put together, and it is scarcely to be expected they should pay their court either to the Boroughs, or the Borough-mongers.

It ought also to be observed, that what is called Parliament, is composed of two houses, that have always declared against the right of each other to interfere in any matter that related to the circumstances of either, particularly that of election. A reform, therefore, in the representation, cannot, on the ground they have individually taken, become the subject of an act of Parliament, because such a mode would include the interference, against which the Commons, on their part, have protested; but must, as well on the ground of formality, as on that of right, proceed from a National Convention.

Let Mr. Grey, or any other man, sit down and endeavour to put his thoughts together for the purpose of drawing up an application to Parliament for a Reform of Parliament, and he will soon convince himself of the folly of the attempt. He will find that he cannot get on; that he cannot make his thoughts join, so as to produce any effect; for whatever formality of words he may use, they will unavoidably include two ideas directly opposed to each other; the one in setting forth the reasons, the other in praying for the relief; and the two, when placed together, would stand thus: —“*The Representation in Parliament is so very corrupt, that we can no longer confide in it,—and, therefore, confiding in the justice and wisdom of Parliament, we pray,*” &c. &c.

The heavy manner in which every former proposed application to Parliament has dragged, sufficiently shews, that

though the Nation might not exactly see the awkwardness of the measure, it could not clearly see its way by that means. To this also may be added, another remark, which is, that the worse Parliament is, the less will be the inclination to petition it. This indifference, viewed as it ought to be, is one of the strongest censures the public can express. It is as if they were to say, "Ye are not worth reforming."

Let any man examine the Court-Calendar of Placemen in both Houses, and the manner in which the Civil List operates, and he will be at no loss to account for this indifference and want of confidence on one side, nor of the opposition to reforms on the other.

Besides the numerous list of paid persons exhibited in the Court Calendar, which so indecently stares the Nation in the face, there are an unknown number of marked Pensioners, which render Parliament still more suspected.

Who would have supposed that Mr. Burke, holding forth as he formerly did, against secret influence and corrupt majorities, should become a concealed Pensioner? I will now state the case, not for the little purpose of exposing Mr. Burke, but to shew the inconsistency of any application to a body of men, more than half of whom, as far as the Nation can at present know, may be in the same case with himself.

Towards the end of Lord North's administration, Mr. Burke brought a bill into Parliament, generally known by the name of Mr. Burke's Reform Bill; in which, among other things, it is enacted, "That no pension exceeding the sum of three hundred pounds a-year shall be granted to any one person, and that the whole amount of the pensions granted in one year shall not exceed six hundred pounds; a list of which, together with the *names of the persons* to whom the same are granted, shall be laid before Parliament in twenty days after the beginning of each Session, until the whole pension list shall be reduced to ninety thousand pounds." A provisory clause is afterwards added, "That it shall be lawful for the First Commissioner of the Treasury to return into the exchequer any pension or annuity *without a name*, on his making oath that such pension or annuity is not directly or indirectly for the benefit, use, or behoof, of any Member of the House of Commons."

But soon after that Administration ended, and the party Mr. Burke acted with came into power, it appears, from the circumstances I am going to relate, that Mr. Burke became

himself a Pensioner in disguise in a similar manner, as if a pension had been granted in the name of John Nokes, to be privately paid to and enjoyed by Tom Stiles. The name of Edmund Burke does not appear in the original transaction; but after the pension was obtained, Mr. Burke wanted to make the most of it at once, by selling or mortgaging it; and the gentleman, in whose name the pension stands, applied to one of the public offices for that purpose. This unfortunately brought forth the name of *Edmund Burke*, as the real Pensioner of one thousand five hundred pounds per annum. When men trumpet forth what they call the blessings of the Constitution, it ought to be known what sort of blessings they allude to.

As to the Civil List, of a million a year, it is not to be supposed that any one man can eat, drink, or consume the whole upon himself. The case is, that above half this sum is annually apportioned among Courtiers, and Court Members, of both Houses, in places and offices, altogether insignificant and perfectly useless, as to every purpose of civil, rational, and manly Government. For instance:

Of what use in the science and system of Government is what is called a Lord Chamberlain, a Master and a Mistress of the Robes, a Master of the Horse, a Master of the Hawks, and an hundred other such things? Laws derive no additional force, nor additional excellence, from such mummery.

In the disbursements of the Civil List for the year 1786 (which may be seen in Sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue) are four separate charges for this mummery office of Chamberlain.

1st .....	£38,778	17	0
2d .....	3,000	0	0
3d .....	24,069	19	0
4th .....	10,000	18	3
<hr/>			
	75,849	14	3

besides £1,119 charged for alms.

From this sample, the rest may be guessed at. As to the Master of the Hawks, (there are no Hawks kept, and if there were, it is no reason the people should pay the expence of feeding them, many of whom are hard put to it to get bread for their children) his salary is £1,372l. 10s.

And besides a list of items of this kind, sufficient to fill a quire of paper, the Pension Lists alone are £107,404. 13s. 4d.

which is a greater sum than all the expences of the federal Government in America amount to.

Among the items, there are two I had no expectation of finding, and which, in this day of enquiry after Civil List influence, ought to be exposed. The one is an annual payment of one thousand seven hundred pounds to the Dissenting Ministers in England, and eight hundred pounds to those of Ireland.

This is the fact; and the distribution, *as I am informed*, is as follows. The whole sum of £1,700 is paid to one person, a Dissenting Minister in London, who divides it among eight others, and those eight among such others as they please. The Lay-body of the Dissenters, and many of their principal Ministers, have long considered it as dishonourable, and have endeavoured to prevent it, but still it continues to be secretly paid, and as the world has sometimes seen very fulsome Addresses from parts of that body, it may naturally be supposed that the receivers, like Bishops, and other Court Clergy, are not idle in promoting them. How the money is distributed in Ireland, I know not.

To recount all the secret history of the Civil List is not the intention of this publication. It is sufficient, in this place, to expose its general character, and the mass of influence it keeps alive. It will necessarily become one of the objects of reform; and, therefore, enough is said to shew that, under its operation, no application to Parliament can be expected to succeed, nor can consistently be made.

Such reforms will not be promoted by the Party that is in possession of those places, nor by the Opposition who are waiting for them; and as to a *mere reform* in the state of the Representation, under the idea that another Parliament, differently elected to the present, but still a component third part of the same system, and subject to the controul of the other two parts, will abolish those abuses, is altogether delusion; because it is not only impracticable on the ground of formality, but it is unwisely exposing another set of men to the same corruptions that have tainted the present.

Were all the objects that require a reform accomplishable by a mere reform in the state of the Representation, the persons who compose the present Parliament might, with rather more propriety, be asked to abolish all the abuses themselves, than be applied to as the mere instruments of doing it by a future Parliament. If the virtue be wanting to abolish the abuse, it is also wanting to act as the means, and the Nation must, of necessity, proceed by some other plan.

Having thus endeavoured to shew what the abject condition of Parliament is, and the impropriety of going a second time over the same ground that has before miscarried, I come to the remaining part of the subject.

There ought to be, in the Constitution of every country, a mode of referring back, on any extraordinary occasion, to the sovereign and original constituent power, which is the Nation itself. The right of altering any part of a Government cannot, as already observed, reside in the Government, or that Government might make itself what it pleased.

It ought also to be taken for granted, that though a Nation may feel inconveniencies, either in the excess of taxation or in the mode of expenditure, or in any thing else, it may not at first be sufficiently assured in what part of its Government the defect lies, or where the evil originates. It may be supposed to be in one part, and on enquiry be found to be in another; or partly in all. This obscurity is naturally interwoven with what are called mixed Governments.

Be, however, the reform to be accomplished whatever it may, it can only follow in consequence of first obtaining a full knowledge of all the causes that have rendered such reform necessary, and every thing short of this is guess-work or frivolous cunning. In this case, it cannot be supposed that any application to Parliament can bring forward this knowledge. That body is itself the supposed cause, or one of the supposed causes, of the abuses in question; and cannot be expected, and ought not to be asked, to give evidence against itself. The enquiry, therefore, which is, of necessity, the first step in the business, cannot be entrusted to Parliament, but must be undertaken by a distinct body of men, separated from every suspicion of corruption or influence.

Instead, then, of referring to rotten Boroughs and absurd Corporations for addresses, or hawking them about the country, to be signed by a few dependent tenants, the real and effectual mode would be to come at once to the point, and to ascertain the sense of the Nation, by electing a National Convention. By this method, as already observed, the general WILL, whether to reform or not, or what the reform shall be, or how far it shall extend, will be known, and it cannot be known by any other means. Such a body, empowered and supported by the Nation, will have authority to demand information upon all matters necessary to be enquired into; and no Minister, nor any other person, will dare to refuse it. It will then be seen whether seventeen millions of taxes are necessary, and for what purposes they

are expended. The concealed Pensioners will then be obliged to unmask; and the source of influence and corruption, if any such there be, will be laid open to the Nation, not for the purpose of revenge, but of redress.

By taking this Public and National ground, all objections against partial Addresses on one side, or private Associations on the other, will be done away. THE NATION WILL DECREE ITS OWN REFORMS; and the clamour about Party and Faction, or Ins or Outs, will become ridiculous.

The plan and organization of a Convention is easy in practice.

In the first place, the number of inhabitants in every county can be sufficiently enough known, from the number of houses assessed to the House and Window-light tax in each county. This will give the rule for apportioning the number of Members to be elected to the National Convention in each of the counties.

If the total number of inhabitants in England be seven millions, and the total number of Members to be elected to the Convention be one thousand, the number of Members to be elected in a county containing one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, will be *twenty-one*, and in like proportion for any other county.

As the election of a Convention must, in order to ascertain the general sense of the Nation, go on grounds different from that of Parliamentary elections, the mode that best promises this end will have no difficulties to combat with from absurd customs, and pretended rights. The right of every man will be the same, whether he live in a city, town, or a village. The custom of attaching Rights to *place*, or in other words to inanimate matter, instead of to the *person*, independently of place, is too absurd to make any part of a rational argument.

As every man in the Nation of the age of twenty-one years, pays taxes either out of the property he possesses, or out of the product of his labour, which is property to him, and is amenable in his own person to every law of the land; so has every one the same equal right to vote, and no one part of a Nation, nor any individual, has a right to dispute the right of another. The man who should do this, ought to forfeit the exercise of his *own* right for a term of years. This would render the punishment consistent with the crime.

When a qualification to vote is regulated by years, it is placed on the firmest possible ground, because the qualifica-

tion is such as nothing but dying before the time can take away ; and the equality of Rights, as a principle, is recognized in the act of regulating the exercise. But when Rights are placed upon, or made dependent upon property, they are on the most precarious of all tenures. " Riches make themselves wings, and fly away," and the rights fly with them ; and thus they become lost to the man when they would be of most value.

It is from a strange mixture of tyranny and cowardice that exclusions have been set up and continued. The boldness to do wrong at first, changes afterwards into cowardly craft, and at last into fear. The Representatives in England appear now to act as if they were afraid to do right, even in part, lest it should awaken the nation to a sense of all the wrongs it has endured. This case serves to shew that the same conduct that best constitutes the safety of an individual, namely, a strict adherence to principle, constitutes also the safety of a Government, and that without it safety is but an empty name. When the rich plunder the poor of his rights, it becomes an example to the poor to plunder the rich of his property, for the rights of the one are as much property to him as wealth is property to the other, and the *little all* is as dear as the *much*. It is only by setting out on just principles that men are trained to be just to each other ; and it will always be found, that when the rich protect the rights of the poor, the poor will protect the property of the rich. But the guarantee, to be effectual, must be parliamenterarily reciprocal.

Exclusions are not only unjust, but they frequently operate as injuriously to the party who monopolizes, as to those who are excluded. When men seek to exclude others from participating in the exercise of any right, they should, at least, be assured that they can effectually perform the whole of the business they undertake ; for unless they do this, themselves will be losers by the monopoly. This has been the case with respect to the monopolized right of Election. The monopolizing party has not been able to keep the Parliamentary Representation, to whom the power of taxation was entrusted, in the state it ought to have been, and have thereby multiplied taxes upon themselves equally with those who were excluded.

A great deal has been, and will continue to be said, about disqualifications, arising from the commission of offences ; but were this subject urged to its full extent, it would disqualify a great number of the present Electors, together with

their Representatives; for, of all offences, none are more destructive to the morals of Society than Bribery and Corruption. It is, therefore, civility to such persons to pass this subject over, and to give them a fair opportunity of recovering, or rather of creating character.

Every thing, in the present mode of electioneering in England is the reverse of what it ought to be, and the vulgarity that attends elections is no other than the natural consequence of inverting the order of the system.

In the first place, the Candidate seeks the Elector, instead of the Elector seeking for a Representative; and the Electors are advertised as being in the interest of the Candidate, instead of the Candidate being in the interest of the Electors. The Candidate pays the Elector for his vote, instead of the Nation paying the Representative for his time and attendance on public business. The complaint for an undue election is brought by the Candidate, as if he, and not the Electors, were the party aggrieved; and he takes on himself at any period of the election to break it up, by declining, as if the election was in his right, and not in theirs.

The compact that was entered into at the last Westminster election, between two of the Candidates (Mr. Fox and Lord Hood) was an indecent violation of the principles of election. The Candidates assumed, in their own persons, the rights of the Electors; for it was only in the body of the Electors, and not at all in the Candidates, that the right of making any such compact or compromise could exist. But the principle of Election and Representation is so completely done away, in every stage thereof, that inconsistency has no longer the power of surprising.

Neither from Elections thus conducted, nor from rotten Borough Addressers, nor from County-meetings, promoted by Placemen and Pensioners, can the sense of the Nation be known. It is still corruption appealing to itself. But a Convention of a thousand persons fairly elected would bring every matter to a decided issue.

As to County-meetings, it is only persons of leisure, or those who live near to the place of meeting, that can attend, and the number on such occasions is but like a drop in the bucket, compared with the whole. The only consistent service which such meetings could render, would be that of apportioning the county into convenient districts; and when this is done, each district might, according to its number of inhabitants, elect its quota of County Members to the National Convention; and the vote of each Elector might



be taken in the parish where he resided, either by ballot or by voice, as he should chuse to give it.

A National Convention thus formed, would bring together the sense and opinions of every part of the nation, fairly taken. The science of Government, and the interest of the Public, and of the several parts thereof, would then undergo an ample and rational discussion, freed from the language of Parliamentary disguise.

But in all deliberations of this kind, though men have a right to reason with, and endeavour to convince each other, upon any matter that respects their common good, yet, in point of practice, the majority of opinions, when known, forms a rule for the whole, and to this rule every good citizen practically conforms.

Mr. Burke, as if he knew (for every concealed Pensioner has the opportunity of knowing) that the abuses acted under the present system are too flagrant to be palliated, and that the majority of opinions, whenever such abuses should be made public, would be for a general and effectual reform, has endeavoured to preclude the event, by sturdily denying the right of a majority of a Nation to act as a whole. Let us bestow a thought upon this case.

When any matter is proposed as a subject for consultation, it necessarily implies some mode of decision. Common consent, arising from absolute necessity, has placed this in a majority of opinions; because without it there can be no decision, and consequently no order. It is, perhaps, the only case in which mankind, however various in their ideas upon other matters, can consistently be unanimous; because it is a mode of decision derived from the primary original right of every individual concerned; *that* right being first individually exercised in giving an opinion, and whether that opinion shall arrange with the minority or the majority is a subsequent accidental thing that neither increases nor diminishes the individual, original right itself. Prior to any debate, inquiry, or investigation, it is not supposed to be known on which side the majority of opinions will fall, and therefore whilst this mode of decision secures to every one the right of giving an opinion, it admits to every one an equal chance in the ultimate event.

Among the matters that will present themselves to the consideration of a National Convention, there is one, wholly of a domestic nature, but so marvellously loaded with confusion, as to appear, at first sight, almost impossible to be reformed. I mean the condition of what is called Law.

But if we examine into the cause from whence this confusion, now so much the subject of universal complaint, is produced, not only the remedy will immediately present itself, but with it the means of preventing the like case hereafter.

In the first place, the confusion has generated itself from the absurdity of every Parliament assuming to be eternal in power, and the laws partake in a similar manner of this assumption. They have no period of legal or natural expiration, and however absurd in principle, or inconsistent in practice, many of them have become, they still are, if not especially repealed, considered as making a part of the general mass. By this means the body of what is called Law, is spread over a space of *several hundred years*, comprehending laws obsolete, laws repugnant, laws ridiculous, and every other kind of laws, forgotten, or remembered; and what renders the case still worse is, that the confusion multiplies with the progress of time.\*

To bring this mis-shapen monster into form, and to prevent its lapsing again into a wilderness state, only two things, and those very simple, are necessary.

The first is, to review the whole mass of laws, and to bring forward such only as are worth retaining, and let all the rest drop; and to give to the laws so brought forward a new era commencing from the time of such reform.

Secondly, that at the expiration of every twenty-one years, (or any other stated period) a like review shall again be taken, and the laws found proper to be retained, be again carried forward commencing with that date, and the useless laws dropped and discontinued. By this means there can be no obsolete laws, and scarcely such a thing as laws standing in direct or equivocal contradiction to each other, and every person will know the period of time to which he is to look back for all the laws in being.

It is worth remarking, that whilst every other branch of science is brought within some commodious system, and the study of it simplified by easy methods, the laws take the contrary course, and become every year more complicated, entangled, confused, and obscure.

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\* In the time of Henry the Fourth, a law was passed making it felony "to multiply gold or silver, or to make use of the craft of multiplication," and this law remained two hundred and eighty-six years upon the statute books. It was then repealed as being ridiculous and injurious.

Among the paragraphs which the Attorney-General has taken from the *Rights of Man*, and put into his information, one is, that where I have said, "that with respect to regular law, there is *scarcely such a thing*."

As I do not know whether the Attorney-General means to shew this expression to be libellous, because it is TRUE, or because it is FALSE, I shall make no other reply to him in this place than by remarking, that if almanack-makers had not been more judicious than law-makers, the study of almanacks would by this time have become as abstruse as the study of law, and we should hear of a library of almanacks as we now do of statutes; but by the simple operation of letting the obsolete matter drop, and carrying forward that only which is proper to be retained, all that is necessary to be known is found within the space of a year, and laws also admit of being kept within some given period.

I shall here close this letter, so far as it respects the Addresses, the Proclamation, and the Prosecution; and shall offer a few observations to the Society styling itself, "THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE."

That the science of Government is beginning to be better understood than in former times, and that the age of fiction and political superstition, and of craft and mystery, is passing away, are matters which the experience of every day proves to be true, as well in England as in other countries.

As therefore it is impossible to calculate the silent progress of opinion, and also impossible to govern a Nation after it has changed its habits of thinking, by the craft or policy that it was governed by before, the only true method to prevent popular discontents and commotions is, to throw, by every fair and rational argument, all the light upon the subject that can possibly be thrown; and, at the same time, to open the means of collecting the general sense of the Nation; and this cannot, as already observed, be done by any plan so effectually as a National Convention. Here individual opinion will quiet itself by having a centre to rest upon.

The Society already mentioned, (which is made up of men of various descriptions, but chiefly of those called Foxites,) appears to me, either to have taken wrong grounds from want of judgment, or to have acted with cunning reserve. It is now amusing the people with a new phrase, namely, that of "a temperate and moderate reform," the interpretation of which is, *a continuance of the abuses as long as possible. If we cannot hold all, let us hold some.*

Who are those that are frightened at reforms? Are the

public afraid that their taxes should be lessened too much? Are they afraid that sinecure places, and pensions, should be abolished too fast? Are the poor afraid that their condition should be rendered too comfortable? Is the worn-out mechanic, or the aged and decayed tradesman, frightened at the prospect of receiving ten pounds a year out of the surplus taxes? Is the soldier frightened at the thoughts of his discharge, and three shillings per week during life? Is the sailor afraid that press-warrants will be abolished? The Society mistakes the fears of borough-mongers, placemen, and pensioners, for the fears of the people, and the *temperate and moderate Reform* it talks of, is calculated to suit the condition of the former.

Those words, "temperate and moderate," are words either of political cowardice, or of cunning, or seduction.—A thing, moderately good, is not so good as it ought to be. Moderation in temper is always a virtue; but moderation in principle is a species of vice. But who is to be the judge of what is a temperate and moderate Reform? The Society is the representative of nobody; neither can the unrepresented part of the Nation commit this power to those in Parliament, in whose election they had no choice; and, therefore, even upon the ground the Society has taken, recourse must be had to a National Convention.

The objection which Mr. Fox made to Mr. Grey's proposed Motion for a Parliamentary Reform was, that it contained no plan.—It certainly did not. But the plan very easily presents itself; and whilst it is fair for all parties, it prevents the dangers that might otherwise arise from private or popular discontent.

THOMAS PAINE.

# DISSERTATION

ON

**First Principles**

OF

**G O V E R N M E N T.**

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BY

**THOMAS PAINE.**

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1819.

REPORT

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# DISSERTATION

ON

## *FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT.*

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THERE is no subject more interesting to every man than the subject of government. His security, be he rich or poor, and, in a great measure, his prosperity, is connected therewith; it is therefore his interest, as well as his duty, to make himself acquainted with its principles, and what the practice ought to be.

Every art and science, however imperfectly known at first, has been studied, improved, and brought to what we call perfection, by the progressive labours of succeeding generations; but the science of government has stood still. No improvement has been made in the principle, and scarcely any in the practice, till the American revolution began. In all the countries of Europe (except in France) the same forms and systems that were erected in the remote ages of ignorance still continue, and their antiquity is put in the place of principle: it is forbidden to investigate their origin or by what right they exist. If it be asked how has this happened, the answer is easy; they are established on a principle that is false, and they employ their power to prevent detection.

Notwithstanding the mystery with which the science of government has been enveloped, for the purpose of enslaving, plundering, and imposing upon mankind, it is of all things the least mysterious and the most easy to be understood. The meanest capacity cannot be at a loss, if it begins its enquiries at the right point. Every art and science has some point, or alphabet, at which the study of that art or science begins, and by the assistance of which

the progress is facilitated. The same method ought to be observed with respect to the science of government.

Instead then of embarrassing the subject in the outset with the numerous subdivisions, under which different forms of government have been classed, such, as aristocracy, democracy, oligarchy, monarchy, &c. the better method will be to begin with what may be called primary divisions, or those under which all the several subdivisions will be comprehended.

The primary divisions are but two.

First, Government by election and representation.

Secondly, Government by hereditary succession.

All the several forms and systems of government, however numerous or diversified, class themselves under one or other of those primary divisions; for either they are on the system of representation, or on that of hereditary succession. As to that equivocal thing called mixed government, such as the late government of Holland, and the present government of England, it does not make an exception to the general rule, because the parts separately considered, are either representative or hereditary.

Beginning then our enquiries at this point, we have first to examine into the nature of those two primary divisions. If they are equally right in principle, it is mere matter of opinion which we prefer. If the one be demonstratively better than the other, that difference directs our choice; but if one of them should be so absolutely false, as not to have a right to existence, the matter settles itself at once; because a negative proved on one thing, where two only are offered, and one must be accepted, amounts to an affirmative on the other.

The revolutions that are now spreading themselves in the world have their origin in this state of the case; and the present war is a conflict between the representative system, founded on the rights of the people, and the hereditary system, founded in usurpation. As to what are called Monarchy, Royalty, and Aristocracy, they do not, either as things or as terms, sufficiently describe the hereditary system; they are but secondary things or signs of the hereditary system, and which fall of themselves if that system has not a right to exist. Were there no such terms as Monarchy, Royalty, and Aristocracy, or were other terms substituted in their place, the hereditary system, if it continued, would not be altered thereby. It would be the same system under any other titular name as it is now.



The character therefore of the revolutions of the present day distinguishes itself most definitively by grounding itself on the system of representative government, in opposition to the hereditary. No other distinction reaches the whole of the principle.

Having thus opened the case generally, I proceed, in the first place, to examine the hereditary system, because it has the priority in point of time. The representative system is the invention of the modern world; and that no doubt may arise as to my own opinion, I declare it beforehand, which is, *that there is not a problem in Euclid more mathematically true, than that hereditary government has not a right to exist. When, therefore, we take from any man the exercise of hereditary power, we take away that which he never had the right to possess, and which no law or custom could, or ever can, give him a title to.*

The arguments that have hitherto been employed against the hereditary system have been chiefly founded upon the absurdity of it, and its incompetency to the purpose of good government. Nothing can present to our judgment, or to our imagination, a figure of greater absurdity than that of seeing the government of a nation fall, as it frequently does, into the hands of a lad necessarily destitute of experience, and often little better than a fool. It is an insult to every man of years, of character, and of talent, in a country. The moment we begin to reason upon the hereditary system, it falls into derision: let but a single idea begin, and a thousand will soon follow. Insignificance, imbecility, childhood, dotage, want of moral character; in fine, every defect serious or laughable, unite to hold up the hereditary system as a figure of ridicule. Leaving however the ridiculousness of the thing, to the reflections of the reader, I proceed to the more important part of the question, namely, whether such a system has a right to exist?

To be satisfied of the right of a thing to exist, we must be satisfied that it had a right to begin; if it had not a right to begin, it has not a right to continue. By what right then did the hereditary system begin? Let a man but ask himself this question, and he will find that he cannot satisfy himself with an answer.

The right which any man, or any family had to set itself up at first to govern a nation, and to establish itself hereditarily, was no other than the right which Robespierre had to do the same thing in France. If he had none, they had none. If they had any, he had as much; for it is impossi-

ble to discover superiority of right in any family, by virtue of which hereditary governments could begin. The Capets, the Guelphs, the Robespierres, the Marats, are all on the same standing as to the question of right. It belongs exclusively to none.

It is one step towards liberty, to perceive that hereditary government could not begin as an exclusive right in any family. The next point will be, whether, having once began, it could grow into a right by the influence of time?

This would be supposing an absurdity; for either it is putting time in the place of principle, or making it superior to principle; whereas time has no more connection with, or influence upon principle, than principle has upon time. The wrong which began a thousand years ago, is as much a wrong as if it began to-day; and the right which originates to-day, is as much a right as if it had the sanction of a thousand years. Time, with respect to principles, is an eternal NOW: it has no operation upon them: it changes nothing of their nature and qualities. But what have we to do with a thousand years? Our life-time is but a short portion to that period, and if we find the wrong in existence as soon as we begin to live, that is the point of time at which it begins to us: and our right to resist it, is the same as if it had never existed before.

As hereditary government could not begin as a natural right in any family, nor derive after its commencement, any right from time, we have only to examine whether there exists in a nation a right to set it up and establish it by what is called law, as has been done in England? I answer, NO; and that any law or any constitution made for that purpose is an act of treason against the rights of every minor in the nation, at the time it is made, and against the rights of all succeeding generations. I shall speak upon each of those cases. First, of the minor, at the time such law is made. Secondly, of the generations that are to follow.

A nation, in a collective sense, comprehends all the individuals of whatever age, from just born to just dying. Of these, one part will be minors, the other aged. The average of life is not exactly the same in every climate and country, but in general, the minority in years are the majority in numbers, that is, the number of persons under twenty-one years, is greater than the number of persons above that age. This difference in numbers, is not necessary to the establishment of the principle I mean to lay down, but it serves to shew the justice of it more strongly. The principle would

be equally good, if the majority in years were also the majority in numbers.

The rights of minors are as sacred as the rights of the aged. The difference is altogether in the different age of the two parties, and nothing in the nature of the rights; the rights are the same rights; and are to be preserved inviolate for the inheritance of the minors when they shall come of age. During the minority of minors, their rights are under the sacred guardianship of the aged. The minor cannot surrender them; the guardian cannot dispossess him; consequently, the aged part of a nation, who are the law-makers for the *time being*, and who, in the march of life, are but a few years a-head of those who are yet minors, and to whom they must shortly give place, have not and cannot have the right to make a law to set up and establish hereditary government, or, to speak more distinctly, *an hereditary succession of governors*; because it is an attempt to deprive every minor in the nation, at the time such a law is made, of his inheritance of rights when he shall come of age, and to subjugate him to a system of government, to which, during his minority, he could neither consent nor object.

If a person, who is a minor at the time such a law is proposed, had happened to have been born a few years sooner, so as to be of the age of twenty-one years at the time of proposing it, his right to have objected against it, to have exposed the injustice and tyrannical principles of it, and to have voted against it, will be admitted on all sides. If, therefore, the law operates to prevent his exercising the same rights after he comes of age as he would have had a right to exercise had he been of age at the time, it is, undeniably, a law to take away and annul the rights of every person in the nation who shall be a minor at the time of making such a law, and consequently the right to make it cannot exist.

I come now to speak of government by hereditary succession as it applies to succeeding generations; and to shew that in this case, as in the case of minors, there does not exist in a nation a right to set it up.

A nation, though continually existing, is continually in a state of renewal and succession. It is never stationary. Every day produces new births, carries minors forward to maturity, and old persons from the stage. In this ever-running flood of generations there is no part superior in authority to another. Could we conceive an idea of superiority

in any, at what point of time, or in what century of the world, are we to fix it? To what cause are we to ascribe it? By what evidence are we to prove it? By what criterion are we to know it? A single reflection will teach us that our ancestors, like ourselves, were but tenants for life in the great freehold of rights. The fee-absolute was not in them, it is not in us, it belongs to the whole family of man, through all ages. If we think otherwise than this, we think either as slaves or as tyrants. As slaves, if we think that any former generation had a right to bind us; as tyrants, if we think that we have authority to bind the generations that are to follow.

It may not be inapplicable to the subject, to endeavour to define what is to be understood by a generation in the sense the word is here used.

As a natural term, its meaning is sufficiently clear. The father, the son, the grandson, are so many distinct generations. But when we speak of a generation as describing the persons in whom legal authority resides, as distinct from another generation of the same description who are to succeed them, it comprehends all those who are above the age of twenty-one years, at the time we count from; and a generation of this kind will continue in authority between fourteen and twenty-one years, that is, until the number of minors, who shall have arrived at age, shall be greater than the number of persons remaining of the former stock.

For example, if France at this or any other moment, contain twenty-four millions of souls, twelve millions will be males, and twelve females. Of the twelve millions of males, six millions will be of the age of twenty-one years, and six will be under, and the authority to govern will reside in the first six. But every day will make some alteration, and in twenty-one years, every one of those minors who survive will have arrived at age, and the greater part of the former stock will be gone: the majority of persons then living, in whom the legal authority resides, will be composed of those who, twenty-one years before, had no legal existence. Those will be fathers and grandfathers in their turn, and in the next twenty-one years, (or less) another race of minors, arrived at age, will succeed them, and so on.

As this is ever the case, and as every generation is equal in rights to another, it consequently follows, that there cannot be a right in any, to establish government by hereditary succession, because it would be supposing itself possessed of a right superior to the rest, namely, that of com-

manding by its own authority how the world shall be hereafter governed, and who shall govern it. Every age and generation is and must be (as a matter of right) as free to act for itself in all cases, as the age and generation that preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man, neither has one generation a property in the generations that are to follow.

In the first part of *Rights of Man*, I have spoken of government by hereditary succession; and I will here close the subject with an extract from that work, which states it under the two following heads.

“First, of the right of any family to establish itself with hereditary power.

“Secondly, of the right of a nation to establish a particular family.

“With respect to the first of those heads, that of a family establishing itself with hereditary powers on its own authority independent of the nation, all men will concur in calling it despotism, and it would be trespassing on their understanding to attempt to prove it.

“But the second head, that of a nation, that is, of a generation for the time being, establishing a particular family with hereditary powers, it does not present itself as despotism on the first reflection; but if men will permit a second reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward, even but one remove out of their own persons to that of their offspring, they will then see, that hereditary succession becomes the same despotism to others, which the first persons reprobated for themselves. It operates to preclude the consent of the succeeding generation, and the preclusion of consent is despotism.

“In order to see this matter more clearly, let us consider the generation which undertakes to establish a family with hereditary powers, separately from the generations which are to follow.

“The generation which first selects a person and puts him at the head of its government, either with the title of king, or any other nominal distinction, acts its own choice, as a free agent for itself, be that choice wise or foolish. The person so set up is *not hereditary*, but selected and appointed; and the generation which sets him up, does not live under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice. Were the person so set up, and the generation who sets him up, to live for ever, it never could become

hereditary succession, and of consequence, hereditary succession could only follow on the death of the first parties.

“As therefore hereditary succession is out of the question with respect to the first generation, we have next to consider the character in which that generation acts towards the commencing generation, and to all succeeding ones.

“It assumes a character to which it has neither right nor title; for it changes itself from a legislator to a testator, and affects to make a will and testament which is to have operation after the demise of the makers, to bequeath the government; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to establish on the succeeding generation a new and different form of government under which itself lived. Itself, as already observed, lived not under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice; and it now attempts by virtue of a will and testament, which it has not authority to make, to take from the commencing generation, and from all future ones, the right, and free agency by which itself acted.

“In whatever light hereditary succession, as growing out of the will and testament of some former generation, presents itself, it is both criminal and absurd. A. cannot make a will to take from B. the property of B. and give it to C.; yet this is the manner in which what is called hereditary succession by law, operates. A certain generation makes a will, under the form of a law, to take away the rights of the commencing generation, and of all future generations, and convey those rights to a third person, who afterwards comes forward, and assumes the government in consequence of that illicit conveyance.”

The history of the English parliament furnishes an example of this kind; and which merits to be recorded, as being the greatest instance of legislative ignorance and want of principle that is to be found in the history of any country. The case is as follows:—

The English parliament of 1688, imported a man and his wife from Holland, *William and Mary*, and made them king and queen of England. Having done this, the said parliament made a law to convey the government of the country to the heirs of William and Mary, in the following words: “We, the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in the name of the People of England, most humbly and faithfully submit *ourselves, our heirs, and posterities*, to William and Mary, *their heirs and posterities* for

ever." And in a subsequent law, as quoted by Edmund Burke, the said Parliament, in the name of the People of England then living, *binds the said people, their heirs, and posterities, to William and Mary, their heirs, and posterities, to the end of time.*

It is not sufficient that we laugh at the ignorance of such law-makers, it is necessary that we reprobate their want of principle. The constituent assembly of France (1789) fell into the same vice as the Parliament of England had done, and assumed to establish an hereditary succession in the family of the Capets, as an act of the constitution of that year. That every nation *for the time being*, has a right to govern itself as it pleases, must always be admitted; but government by hereditary succession is government for another race of people, and not for itself; and as those on whom it is to operate are not yet in existence, or are minors, so neither is the right in existence to set it up for them, and to assume such a right is treason against the right of posterity.

I here close the arguments on the first head, that of government by hereditary succession; and proceed to the second, that of government by election and representation; or, as it may be concisely expressed, *representative government* in contradistinction to *hereditary government*.

Reasoning by exclusion, if *hereditary government* has not a right to exist, and that it has not, is proveable, *representative government* is admitted of course.

In contemplating government by election and representation, we amuse not ourselves in enquiring when or how, or by what right it began. Its origin is ever in view. Man is himself the origin and the evidence of the right. It appertains to him in right of his existence, and his person is the title-deed.

The true, and only true basis of representative government is equality of rights. Every man has a right to one vote, and no more, in the choice of representatives. The rich have no more right to exclude the poor from the right of voting or of electing and being elected, than the poor have to exclude the rich; and wherever it is attempted, or proposed on either side, it is a question of force, and not of right. Who is he that would exclude another?—That other has a right to exclude him.

That which is now called aristocracy, implies an inequality of rights; but who are the persons that have a right to establish this inequality? Will the rich exclude themselves?

No! Will the poor exclude themselves? No! By what right then can any be excluded? It would be a question, if any man, or class of men, have a right to exclude themselves; but be this as it may, they cannot have the right to exclude another. The poor will not delegate such a right to the rich, nor the rich to the poor, and to assume it, is not only to assume arbitrary power, but to assume a right to commit robbery. Personal rights, of which the right of voting representatives is one, are a species of property of the most sacred kind; and he that would employ his pecuniary property, or presume upon the influence it gives him to dispossess or rob another of his property of rights, uses that pecuniary property as he would use fire-arms, and merits to have it taken from him.

Inequality of rights is created by a combination in one part of the community to exclude another part from its rights. Whenever it be made an article of a constitution, or a law, that the right of voting, or of electing and being elected, shall appertain exclusively to persons possessing a certain quantity of property, be it little or much, it is a combination of the persons possessing that quantity, to exclude those who do not possess the same quantity. It is investing themselves with powers as a self-created part of society, to the exclusion of the rest.

It is always to be taken for granted, that those who oppose an equality of rights, never mean the exclusion should take place on themselves; and in this view of the case, pardoning the vanity of the thing, aristocracy is a subject of laughter. This self-soothing vanity is encouraged by another idea not less selfish, which is, that the opposers conceive they are playing a safe game, in which there is a chance to gain and none to lose; that at any rate the doctrine of equality includes *them*, and that if they cannot get more rights than those whom they oppose and would exclude, they shall not have less. This opinion has already been fatal to thousands who, not contented with *equal rights*, have sought more till they lost all, and experienced in themselves, the degrading *inequality* they endeavoured to fix upon others.

In any view of the case it is dangerous and impolitic, sometimes ridiculous, and always unjust, to make property the criterion of the right of voting. If the sum, or value of the property upon which the right is to take place be considerable, it will exclude a majority of the people, and unite them in a common interest against the government,



and against those who support it, and as the power is always with the majority, they can overturn such a government and its supporters whenever they please.

If, in order to avoid this danger, a small quantity of property be fixed, as the criterion of the right, it exhibits liberty in disgrace, by putting it in competition with accident and insignificance. When a brood mare shall fortunately produce a foal or a mule, that by being worth the sum in question, shall convey to its owner the right of voting, or by its death take it from him, in whom does the origin of such a right exist? Is it in the man, or in the mule? When we consider how many ways property may be acquired without merit, and lost without a crime, we ought to spurn the idea of making it a criterion of rights.

But the offensive part of the case is, that this exclusion from the right of voting, implies a stigma on the moral character of the persons excluded; and this is what no part of the community has a right to pronounce upon another part. No external circumstance can justify it; wealth is no proof of moral character; nor poverty of the want of it. On the contrary, wealth is often the presumptive evidence of dishonesty; and poverty the negative evidence of innocence. If, therefore, property, whether little or much, be made a criterion, the means by which that property has been acquired, ought to be made a criterion also.

The only ground upon which exclusion from the right of voting is consistent with justice, would be to inflict it as a punishment for a certain time upon those who should propose to take away that right from others. The right of voting for representatives, is the primary right by which other rights are protected. To take away this right, is to reduce a man to a state of slavery, for slavery consists in being subject to the will of another, and he that has not a vote in the election of representatives, is in this case. The proposal, therefore, to disfranchise any class of men is as criminal as the proposal to take away property. When we speak of right, we ought always to unite with it the idea of duties; right becomes duties by reciprocity. The right which I enjoy becomes my duty to guarantee it to another, and he to me; and those who violate the duty justly incur a forfeiture of the right.

In a political view of the case, the strength and permanent security of government is in proportion to the number of people interested in supporting it. The true policy, therefore, is to interest the whole by an equality of rights,

for the danger arises from exclusions. It is possible to exclude men from the right of voting; but it is impossible to exclude them from the right of rebelling against that exclusion; and when all other rights are taken away, the right of rebellion is made perfect.

While men could be persuaded they had no rights, or that rights appertained only to a certain class of men, or that government was a thing existing in right of itself, it was not difficult to govern them authoritatively. The ignorance in which they were held, and the superstition in which they were instructed, furnished the means of doing it; but when the ignorance is gone, and the superstition with it; when they perceive the imposition that has been acted upon them; when they reflect that the cultivator and the manufacturer are the primary means of all the wealth that exists in the world, beyond what nature spontaneously produces; when they begin to feel their consequence by their usefulness, and their right as members of society, it is then no longer possible to govern them as before. The fraud once detected cannot be re-acted. To attempt it is to provoke derision, or invite destruction.

That property will ever be unequal is certain. Industry, superiority of talents, dexterity of management, extreme frugality, fortunate opportunities, or the opposite, or the mean of those things, will ever produce that effect without having recourse to the harsh, ill-sounding names of avarice and oppression; and besides this, there are some men who, though they do not despise wealth, will not stoop to the drudgery of the means of acquiring it, nor will be troubled with the care of it, beyond their wants or their independence; whilst in others there is an avidity to obtain it by every means not punishable; it makes the sole business of their lives, and they follow it as a religion. *All that is required with respect to property, is to obtain it honestly, and not employ it criminally; but it is always criminally employed, when it is made a criterion for exclusive rights.*

In institutions that are purely pecuniary, such as that of a bank or a commercial company, the rights of the members composing that company are wholly created by the property they invest therein; and no other rights are represented in the government of that company, than what arise out of that property; neither has that government cognizance of *any thing but property.*

But the case is totally different with respect to the institution of civil government, organized on the system of

representation. Such a government has cognizance of *every thing* and of *every man* as a member of the national society, whether he has property or not; and therefore the principle requires that *every man* and *every kind of right* be represented, of which the right to acquire and to hold property is but one, and that not of the most essential kind. The protection of a man's person is more sacred than the protection of property; and besides this, the faculty of performing any kind of work or service by which he acquires a livelihood, or maintains his family, is of the nature of property. It is property to him; he has acquired it; and it is as much the object of his protection, as exterior property, possessed without that faculty, can be the object of protection to another person.

I have always believed that the best security for property, be it much or little, is to remove from every part of the community, as far as can possibly be done, every cause of complaint, and every motive to violence; and this can only be done by an equality of rights. When rights are secure, property is secure in consequence. But when property is made a pretence for unequal or exclusive rights, it weakens the right to hold the property, and provokes indignation and tumult: for it is unnatural to believe that property can be secure under the guarantee of a society injured in its rights by the influence of that property.

Next to the injustice and ill-policy of making property a pretence for exclusive rights, is the unaccountable absurdity of giving to mere *sound* the idea of property, and annexing to it certain rights; for what else is a *title* but *sound*? Nature is often giving to the world some extraordinary men who arrive at fame by merit and universal consent, such as Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, &c. These were truly great or noble. But when government sets up a manufactory of nobles, it is as absurd, as if she undertook to manufacture wise men. *Her nobles are all counterfeits.*

This wax-work order has assumed the name of aristocracy; and the disgrace of it would be lessened if it could be considered as only childish imbecility. We pardon foppery because of its insignificance, and on the same ground we might pardon the foppery of titles. But the origin of aristocracy was worse than foppery. It was robbery. *The first aristocrats in all countries were brigands.* Those of latter times, sycophants.

It is very well known that in England, (and the same will

be found in other countries) the great landed estates now held in descent were plundered from the quiet inhabitants at the conquest. The possibility did not exist of acquiring such estates honestly. If it be asked how they could have been acquired, no answer but that of robbery can be given. That they were not acquired by trade, by commerce, by manufactures, by agriculture, or by any reputable employment, is certain. How then were they acquired? Blush aristocracy to hear your origin, for your progenitors were thieves. They were the Robespierres and the Jacobins of that day. When they had committed the robbery, they endeavoured to lose the disgrace of it, by sinking their real names under fictitious ones, which they called titles. It is ever the practice of felons to act in this manner.

As property honestly obtained, is best secured by an equality of rights, so ill-gotten property depends for protection on a monopoly of rights. He who has robbed another of his property, will next endeavour to disarm him of his rights, to secure that property; for when the robber becomes the legislator, he believes himself secure. That part of the government of England that is called the House of Lords was originally composed of persons who had committed the robberies of which I have been speaking. It was an association for the protection of the property they had stolen.

But besides the criminality of the origin of aristocracy, it has an injurious effect on the moral and physical character of man. Like slavery, it debilitates the human faculties; for as the mind, bowed down by slavery, loses in silence its elastic powers, so, in the contrary extreme, when it is buoyed up by folly, it becomes incapable of exerting them, and dwindles into imbecility. It is impossible that a mind employed upon ribands and titles can ever be great. The childishness of the objects consumes the man.

It is at all times necessary, and more particularly so during the progress of a revolution, and until right ideas confirm themselves by habit, that we frequently refresh our patriotism by reference to first principles. It is by tracing things to their origin that we learn to understand them; and it is by keeping that line and that origin always in view, that we never forget them.

An enquiry into the origin of rights, will demonstrate to us, that *rights* are not *gifts* from one man to another, nor from one class of men to another; for who is he who could be the first giver? Or by what principle, or on what au-

thority, could he possess the right of giving? A declaration of rights is not a creation of them, nor a donation of them. It is a manifest of the principle by which they exist, followed by a detail of what the rights are; for every civil right has a natural right for its foundation, and it includes the principle of a reciprocal guarantee of those rights from man to man. As therefore, it is impossible to discover any origin of rights otherwise than in the origin of man, it consequently follows, that rights appertain to man in right of his existence only, and must therefore be equal to every man. The principle of an *equality of rights*, is clear and simple. Every man can understand it, and it is by understanding his rights that he learns his duties: for where the rights of men are equal, every man must finally see the necessity of protecting the rights of others as the most effectual security for his own. But if, in the formation of a constitution we depart from the principle of equal rights, or attempt any modification of it, we plunge into a labyrinth of difficulties, from which there is no way out but by retreating. Where are we to stop? Or by what principle are we to find out the point to stop at, that shall discriminate between men of the same country, part of whom shall be free, and the rest not? If property is to be made the criterion, it is a total departure from every moral principle of liberty, because it is attaching rights to mere matter, and making man the agent of that matter. It is moreover holding up property as an apple of discord, and not only exciting but justifying war against it; for I maintain the principle, that when property is used as an instrument to take away the rights of those who may happen not to possess property, it is used to an unlawful purpose, as fire-arms would be in a similar case.

In a state of nature, all men are equal in rights, but they are not equal in power; the weak cannot protect himself against the strong. This being the case, the institution of civil society is for the purpose of making an equalization of powers that shall be parallel to, and a guarantee of the equality of rights. The laws of a country when properly constructed apply to this purpose. Every man takes the arm of the law for his protection as more effectual than his own; and therefore every man has an equal right in the formation of the government and of the laws by which he is to be governed and judged. In extensive countries and societies, such as America and France, this right, in the individual, can only be exercised by dele-

gation, that is, by election and representation ; and hence it is that the institution of representative government arises.

Hitherto I have confined myself to matters of principle only. First, that hereditary government has not a right to exist: that it cannot be established on any principle of right; and that it is a violation of all principle. Secondly, that government by election and representation, has its origin in the natural and eternal rights of man; for whether a man be his own law-giver, as he would be in a state of nature; or whether he exercises his portion of legislative sovereignty in his own person, as might be the case in small democracies where all could assemble for the formation of the laws by which they were to be governed; or whether he exercises it in the choice of persons to represent him in a national assembly of representatives, the origin of the right is the same in all cases. The first, as is before observed, is defective in power; the second, is practicable only in democracies of small extent; the third, is the greatest scale upon which human government can be instituted.

Next to matters of *principle*, are matters of *opinion*, and it is necessary to distinguish between the two. Whether the rights of men shall be equal is not a matter of opinion but of right, and consequently of principle; for men do not hold their rights as grants from each other, but each one in right of himself. Society is the guardian but not the giver. And as in extensive societies, such as America and France, the right of the individual, in matters of government, cannot be exercised but by election and representation; it consequently follows that the only system of government, consistent with principle, where simple democracy is impracticable, is the representative system. But as to the organical part, or the manner in which the several parts of government shall be arranged and composed, it is altogether *matter of opinion*. It is necessary that all the parts be conformable with the *principle of equal rights*; and as long as this principle be religiously adhered to, no very material error can take place, neither can any error continue long in that part that falls within the province of opinion.

In all matters of opinion, the social compact, or the principle by which society is held together, requires that the majority of opinions become the rule for the whole, and that the minority yields practical obedience thereto. This is perfectly conformable to the principle of equal rights;

for, in the first place, every man has a *right to give an opinion*; but no man has a right that his opinion should *govern the rest*. In the second place, it is not supposed to be known before-hand on which side of any question, whether for or against, any man's opinion will fall. He may happen to be in a majority upon some questions, and in a minority upon others; and by the same rule that he expects obedience in the one case, he must yield it in the other. All the disorders that have arisen in France, during the progress of the revolution have had their origin, not in the *principle of equal rights*, but in the violation of that principle. The principle of equal rights has been repeatedly violated, and that not by the majority, but by the minority and *that minority has been composed of men possessing property, as well as of men without property; property, therefore, even upon the experience already had, is no more a criterion of character than it is of rights*. It will sometimes happen that the minority are right, and the majority are wrong, but as soon as experience proves this to be the case, the minority will increase to a majority, and the error will reform itself by the tranquil operation of freedom of opinion and equality of rights. Nothing therefore can justify an insurrection, neither can it ever be necessary, where rights are equal and opinions free.

Taking then the principle of equal rights as the foundation of the revolution, and consequently of the constitution, the organical part, or the manner in which the several parts of the government shall be arranged in the constitution, will, as is already said, fall within the province of opinion.

Various methods will present themselves upon a question of this kind; and though experience is yet wanting to determine which is the best, it has, I think sufficiently decided which is the worst. That is the worst, which in its deliberations and decisions is subject to the precipitancy and passion of an individual; and when the whole legislature is crowded into one body, it is an individual in mass. In all cases of deliberation it is necessary to have a corps of reserve, and it would be better to divide the representation by lot into two parts, and let them revise and correct each other, than that the whole should sit together and debate at once.

Representative government is not necessarily confined to any one particular form. The principle is the same in all the forms under which it can be arranged. The equal rights of the people is the root from which the whole

springs, and the branches may be arranged as present opinion or future experience shall best direct. As to that *hospital of incurables*, (as Chesterfield calls it) the British House of Peers, it is an excrescence growing out of corruption; and there is no more affinity or resemblance between any of the branches of a legislative body originating from the rights of the people, and the aforesaid house of peers, than between a regular member of the human body and an ulcerated wen.

As to that part of government that is called the *executive*, it is necessary in the first place to fix a precise meaning to the word.

There are but two divisions into which power can be arranged. First, that of willing or decreeing the laws; secondly, that of executing, or putting them in practice. The former corresponds to the intellectual faculties of the human mind, which reasons and determines what shall be done; the second, to the mechanical powers of the human body, that puts that determination into practice. If the former decides, and the latter does not perform, it is a state of imbecility; and if the latter acts without the pre-determination of the former, it is a state of lunacy. The executive department therefore is official, and is subordinate to the legislative, as the body is to the mind in a state of health; for it is impossible to conceive the idea of two sovereignties, a sovereignty to *will*, and a sovereignty to *act*. The executive is not invested with the power of deliberating whether it shall act or not; it has no discretionary authority in the case; for it can *act no other thing* than what the laws decree, and it is *obliged* to act conformably thereto; and in this view of the case, the executive is made up of all the official departments that execute the laws, of which, that which is called the judiciary is the chief.

But mankind have conceived an idea that *some kind of authority* is necessary to *superintend* the execution of the laws, and to see that they are faithfully performed; and it is by confounding this superintending authority with the official execution, that we get embarrassed about the term *executive power*.—All the parts in the government of the United States of America that are called THE EXECUTIVE, are no other than authorities to superintend the execution of the laws; and they are so far independent of the legislative, that they know the legislative only through the laws and cannot be controuled or directed by it through any other medium.



In what manner this superintending authority shall be appointed or composed, is a matter that falls within the province of opinion. Some may prefer one method, and some another; and in all cases, where opinion only, and not principle, is concerned, the majority of opinions forms the rule for all. There are, however, some things deducible from reason, and evinced by experience, that serve to guide our decision upon the case. The one is, never to invest any individual with extraordinary power; for besides his being tempted to mis-use it, it will excite contention and commotion in the nation for the office. Secondly, never to invest power long in the hands of any number of individuals. The inconveniencies that may be supposed to accompany frequent changes, are less to be feared than the danger that arises from long continuance.

I shall conclude this discourse with offering some observations on the means of *preserving liberty*; for it is not only necessary that we establish it, but that we preserve it.

It is, in the first place, necessary that we distinguish between the means made use of to overthrow despotism, in order to prepare the way for the establishment of liberty, and the means to be used after the despotism is overthrown.

The means made use of in the first case are justified by necessity. Those means are in general, insurrections; for whilst the established government of despotism continues in any country, it is scarcely possible that any other means can be used. It is also certain that in the commencement of a revolution, the revolutionary party permit to themselves a *discretionary exercise of power*, regulated more by circumstances than by principle, which were the practice to continue, liberty would never be established, or if established would soon be overthrown. It is never to be expected in a revolution, that every man is to change his opinion at the same moment. There never yet was any truth or any principle so irresistibly obvious, that all men believed it at once. Time and reason must co-operate with each other to the final establishment of any principle; and therefore those who may happen to be first convinced have no right to persecute others, on whom conviction operates more slowly. The moral principle of revolutions is to instruct; not to destroy.

Had a constitution been established two years ago, (as ought to have been done) the violences that have since desolated France, and injured the character of the revolution, would, in my opinion, have been prevented. The nation

would then have been a bond of union, and every individual would have known the line of conduct he was to follow. But instead of this, a revolutionary government, a thing without either principle or authority, was substituted in its place; virtue and crime depended upon accident; and that which was patriotism one day became treason the next. All these things have followed from the want of a constitution; for it is the nature and intention of a constitution to *prevent governing by party*, by establishing a common principle that shall limit and controul the power and impulse of party, and that says to all parties, **THUS FAR SHALT THOU GO AND NO FARTHER.** But in the absence of a constitution men look entirely to party; and instead of principle governing party, party governs principle.

An avidity to punish is always dangerous to liberty. It leads men to stretch, to misinterpret, and to misapply even the best of laws. He that would make his own liberty secure, must guard even his enemy from oppression; for if he violates this duty, he establishes a precedent that will reach to himself.

**THOMAS PAINE,**

# AGRARIAN JUSTICE

OPPOSED TO

**Agrarian Law,**

AND TO

**AGRARIAN MONOPOLY;**

BEING A PLAN FOR

*MELIORATING THE CONDITION OF MAN,*

BY CREATING IN EVERY NATION

**A National Fund,**

To pay to every Person, when arrived at the Age of Twenty-one Years, the Sum of Fifteen Pounds Sterling, to enable him, or her, to begin the World.

AND ALSO,

Ten Pounds Sterling per Annum during Life to every Person now living, of the Age of Fifty Years, and to all Others when they shall arrive at that Age, to enable them to live in Old Age without Wretchedness, and go decently out of the World.

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BY THOMAS PAINE.

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1819.

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

Reference is made to the report of the [Illegible] dated [Illegible] and the report of the [Illegible] dated [Illegible].

The [Illegible] has been reviewed and it is recommended that the [Illegible] be [Illegible].

Very truly yours,

[Illegible Signature]

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

## PREFACE.

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THE following little piece was written in the winter of 1795 and 96 ; and, as I had not determined whether to publish it during the present war, or to wait till the commencement of a peace, it has lain by me, without addition, from the time it was written.

What has determined me to publish it now is, a Sermon, preached by Watson, Bishop of Llandaff. Some of my readers will recollect, that this Bishop wrote a book, entitled “ An Apology for the Bible,” in answer to my “ Second Part of the Age of Reason.” I procured a copy of his book, and he may depend upon hearing from me on that subject.

At the end of the Bishop's book is a list of the works he has written, among which is the Sermon alluded to ; it is entitled “ The Wisdom and Goodness of God in having made both rich and poor ; with an Appendix containing Reflections on the present State of England and France.”

The error contained in the title of this Sermon, determined me to publish my *Agrarian Justice*. It is wrong to say that God made *Rich* and *Poor* ; he

made only *Male* and *Female*; and he gave them the earth for their inheritance.\*

Instead of preaching to encourage one part of mankind in insolence

it would be better that the Priests employed their time to render the condition of man less miserable than it is. Practical Religion consists in doing good; and the only way of serving God is, that of endeavouring to make his creation happy.—All preaching that has not this for its object is nonsense and hypocrisy.

THOMAS PAINE.

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\* Considerable pains have been taken to procure a perfect copy of this pamphlet, but it does not appear that any such thing was ever printed in England. The publisher is therefore reluctantly compelled to insert the hiatuses, as in the former edition.

# AGRARIAN JUSTICE.

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To preserve the benefits of what is called civilized life, and to remedy, at the same time, the evils it has produced, ought to be considered as one of the first objects of reformed legislation.

Whether that state that is proudly, perhaps erroneously, called civilization, has most promoted or most injured the general happiness of man, is a question that may be strongly contested. On one side the spectator is dazzled by splendid appearances; on the other he is shocked by extremes of wretchedness; both of which it has created. The most affluent and the most miserable of the human race are to be found in the countries that are called civilized.

To understand what the state of society ought to be, it is necessary to have some idea of the natural and primitive state of man; such as it is at this day among the Indians of North America. There is not, in that state, any of those spectacles of human misery which poverty and want present to our eyes in all the towns and streets in Europe. Poverty, therefore, is a thing created by that which is called civilized life. It exists not in the natural state. On the other hand, the natural state is without those advantages which flow from Agriculture, Arts, Sciences, and Manufactures.

The life of an Indian is a continual holiday, compared with the poor of Europe; and on the other hand, it appears to be abject when compared to the rich. Civilization, therefore, or that which is so called, has operated two ways, to make one part of society more affluent, and the other part more wretched than would have been the lot of either in a natural state.

It is always possible to go from the natural to the civilized state, but it is never possible to go from the civilized to the natural state. The reason is, that man, in a natural state, subsisting by hunting, requires ten times the quantity of land to range over to procure himself sustenance, than would

support him in a civilized state, where the earth is cultivated. When, therefore, a country becomes populous by the additional aids of cultivation, arts, and science, there is a necessity of preserving things in that state; without it, there cannot be sustenance for more, perhaps, than a tenth part of its inhabitants. The thing, therefore, now to be done, is to remedy the evils, and preserve the benefits that have arisen to society, by passing from the natural to that which is called the civilized state.

Taking then the matter upon this ground, the first principle of civilization ought to have been, and ought still to be, that the condition of every person born into the world, after a state of civilization commences, ought not to be worse than if he had been born before that period. But the fact is, that the condition of millions in every country in Europe, is far worse than if they had been born before civilization began, or had been born among the Indians of North America of the present day. I will shew how this fact has happened.

It is a position not to be controverted, that the earth, in its natural uncultivated state, was, and ever would have continued to be, the **COMMON PROPERTY OF THE HUMAN RACE**. In that state every man would have been born to property. He would have been a joint life-proprietor with the rest in the property of the soil, and in all its natural productions, vegetable and animal.

But the earth in its natural state, as before said, is capable of supporting but a small number of inhabitants compared with what it is capable of doing in a cultivated state. And as it is impossible to separate the improvement made by cultivation, from the earth itself, upon which that improvement is made, the idea of landed property arose from that inseparable connection; but it is nevertheless true, that it is the value of the improvement only, and not the earth itself, that is individual property. Every proprietor, therefore, of cultivated land, owes to the community a *ground-rent*, for I know no better term to express the idea by, for the land which he holds; and it is from this ground-rent that the fund proposed in this plan is to issue.

It is deducible, as well from the nature of the thing, as from all the histories transmitted to us, that the idea of landed property commenced with cultivation, and that there was no such thing as landed property before that time. It could not exist in the first state of man, that of hunters; it



did not exist in the second state, that of shepherds: neither Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, or Job, so far as the history of the Bible may be credited in probable things, were owners of land. Their property consisted, as is always enumerated, in flocks and herds, and they travelled with them from place to place. The frequent contentions at that time about the use of a well in the dry country of Arabia, where those people lived, shew also there was no landed property. It was not admitted that land could be located as property.

There could be no such thing as landed property originally. Man did not make the earth, and though he had a natural right to *occupy* it, he had no right to *locate* as *his property* in perpetuity any part of it; neither did the Creator of the earth open a land-office, from whence the first title-deeds should issue.—From whence then arose the idea of landed property? I answer as before, that when cultivation began, the idea of landed property began with it; from the impossibility of separating the improvement made by cultivation from the earth itself upon which that improvement was made. The value of the improvement so far exceeded the value of the natural earth, at that time as to absorb it; till, in the end, the common right of all became confounded into the cultivated right of the individual. But they are, nevertheless, distinct species of rights, and will continue to be so as long as the world endures.

It is only by tracing things to their origin, that we can gain rightful ideas of them; and it is by gaining such ideas that we discover the boundary that divides right from wrong, and which teaches every man to know his own. I have entitled this tract *Agrarian Justice*, to distinguish it from *Agrarian Law*. Nothing could be more unjust than *Agrarian Law* in a country improved by cultivation; for though every man as an inhabitant of the earth, is a joint proprietor of it in its natural state, it does not follow that he is a joint proprietor of cultivated earth. The additional value made by cultivation, after the system was admitted, became the property of those who did it, or who inherited it from them, or who purchased it. It had originally an owner. Whilst, therefore, I advocate the right and interest myself in the hard case of all those who have been thrown out of their natural inheritance by the introduction of the system of landed property, I equally defend the right of the possessor to the part which is his.

Cultivation is, at least, one of the greatest natural im-

provements ever made by human invention. It has given to created earth a ten-fold value. But the landed monopoly, that began with it, has produced the greatest evil. It has dispossessed more than half the inhabitants of every nation of their natural inheritance, without providing for them, as ought to have been done, an indemnification for that loss; and has thereby created a species of poverty and wretchedness that did not exist before.

In advocating the case of the persons thus dispossessed, it is a right and not a charity that I am pleading for. But it is that kind of right which, being neglected at first, could not be brought forward afterwards, till heaven had opened the way by a revolution in the system of government. Let us then do honour to revolutions by justice, and give currency to their principles by blessings.

Having thus, in a few words, opened the merits of the case, I proceed to the plan I have to propose, which is,

*To create a National Fund, out of which there shall be paid to every person, when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, the sum of Fifteen Pounds sterling, as a compensation in part for the loss of his or her natural inheritance by the introduction of the system of landed property; and also the sum of Ten Pounds per annum, during life, to every person now living of the age of fifty years, and to all others as they shall arrive at that age.*

#### MEANS BY WHICH THE FUND IS TO BE CREATED.

I have already established the principle, namely, that the earth, in its natural uncultivated state, was, and ever would have continued to be, the COMMON PROPERTY OF THE HUMAN RACE.—that in that state every person would have been born to property—and that the system of landed property, by its inseparable connection with cultivation, and with what is called civilized life, has absorbed the property of all those whom it dispossessed, without providing, as ought to have been done, an indemnification for that loss.

The fault, however, is not in the present possessors. No complaint is intended, or ought to be alleged against them, unless they adopt the crime by opposing justice. The fault is in the system, and it has stolen imperceptibly upon the world, aided afterwards by the Agrarian law of the sword. But the fault can be made to reform itself by successive ge-

nerations, without diminishing or deranging the property of any of the present possessors, and yet the operation of the fund can commence, and be in full activity the first year of its establishment, or soon after, as I shall shew.

It is proposed that the payments, as already stated, be made to every person, rich or poor. It is best to make it so, to prevent invidious distinctions. It is also right it should be so, because it is in lieu of the natural inheritance, which, as a right, belongs to every man, over and above the property he may have created or inherited from those who did. Such persons as do not chuse to receive it, can throw it into the common fund.

Taking it then for granted, that no person ought to be in a worse condition when born under what is called a state of civilization, than he would have been, had he been born in a state of nature, and that civilization ought to have made, and ought still to make, provision for that purpose, it can only be done by subtracting from property a portion equal in value to the natural inheritance it has absorbed.

Various methods may be proposed for this purpose, but that which appears to be the best, not only because it will operate without deranging any present possessions, or without interfering with the collection of taxes, or emprunts necessary for the purpose of Government and the Revolution, but because it will be the least troublesome and the most effectual, and also because the subtraction will be made at a time that best admits it, which is, at the moment that property is passing by the death of one person to the possession of another. In this case, the bequeather gives nothing; the receiver pays nothing. The only matter to him is, that the monopoly of natural inheritance, to which there never was a right, begins to cease in his person. A generous man would wish it not to continue, and a just man will rejoice to see it abolished.

My state of health prevents my making sufficient inquiries with respect to the doctrine of probabilities, whereon to found calculations with such degrees of certainty as they are capable of. What, therefore, I offer on this head is more the result of observation and reflection, than of received information; but I believe it will be found to agree sufficiently enough with fact.

In the first place, taking twenty-one years as the epoch of maturity, all the property of a Nation, real and personal, is always in the possession of persons above that age. It is

then necessary to know as a datum of calculation, the average of years which persons above that age will live. I take this average to be about thirty years, for though many persons will live forty, fifty, or sixty years after the age of twenty-one years, others will die much sooner, and some in every year of that time.

Taking, then, thirty years as the average of time, it will give without any material variation, one way or other, the average of time in which the whole property or capital of a Nation, or a sum equal thereto, will have passed through one entire revolution in descent, that is, will have gone by deaths to new possessors; for though, in many instances, some parts of this capital will remain forty, fifty, or sixty years in the possession of one person, other parts will have revolved two or three times before that thirty years expire, which will bring it to that average; for were one half the capital of a Nation to revolve twice in thirty years, it would produce the same fund as if the whole revolved once.

Taking, then, thirty years as the average of time in which the whole capital of a Nation, or a sum equal thereto, will revolve once, the thirtieth part thereof will be the sum that will revolve every year, that is, will go by deaths to new possessors, and this last sum being thus known, and the ratio per cent. to be subtracted from it being determined, will give the annual amount or income of the proposed fund, to be applied as already mentioned.

In looking over the discourse of the English Minister, Pitt, in his opening of what is called in England *the budget*, (the scheme of finance for the year 1796) I find an estimate of the national capital of that country. As this estimate of a national capital is prepared ready to my hand, I take it as a datum to act upon. When a calculation is made upon the known capital of any Nation combined with its population, it will serve as a scale for any other nation, in proportion as its capital and population be more or less. I am the more disposed to take this estimate of Mr. Pitt, for the purpose of shewing to that Minister, upon his own calculation, how much better money may be employed, than in wasting it, as he has done, on the wild project of setting up Bourbon kings. What, in the name of Heaven, are Bourbon kings to the people of England? It is better that the people of England have bread.

Mr. Pitt states the national capital of England, real and personal, to be one thousand three hundred millions sterling, which is about one fourth part of the national capital of

France, including Belgia. The event of the last harvest in each country proves that the soil of France is more productive than that of England, and that it can better support twenty four or twenty-five millions of inhabitants than that of England can seven, or seven and a half.

The thirtieth part of this capital of £1,300,000,000 is £43,333,333, which is the part that will revolve every year by deaths in that country to new possessors; and the sum that will annually revolve in France in the proportion of four to one, will be about one hundred and seventy-three millions sterling. From this sum of £43,333,333 annually revolving, is to be subtracted the value of the natural inheritance absorbed in it, which perhaps, in fair justice, cannot be taken at less, and ought not to be taken at more, than a tenth part.

It will always happen, that of the property thus revolving by deaths every year, part will descend in a direct line to sons and daughters, and the other part collaterally, and the proportion will be found to be about three to one; that is, about thirty million of the above sum will descend to direct heirs, and the remaining sum of £13,333,333 to more distant relations, and part to strangers.

Considering then that man is always related to society, that relationship will become comparatively greater in proportion as the next of kin is more distant. It is therefore consistent with civilization, to say, that where there are no direct heirs, society shall be heir to a part over and above the tenth part due to society. If this additional part be from five to ten or twelve per cent. in proportion as the next of kin be nearer or more remote, so as to average with the escheats that may fall, which ought always to go to society and not to the Government, an addition of ten per cent. more, the produce from the annual sum of £43,333,333 will be.

From 30,000,000—at 10 per cent. ....	3,000,000
From 13,333,333—at 10 per cent. with addition	} 2,666,666
10 per cent. more .....	
<hr/> £43,333,333	<hr/> £5,666,666

Having thus arrived at the annual amount of the proposed fund, I come, in the next place, to speak of the population proportioned to this fund, and to compare it with the uses to which the fund is to be applied.

The population (I mean that of England) does not exceed seven millions and a half, and the number of persons, above the age of fifty will, in that case, be about four hundred thousand. There would not, however, be more than that number that would accept the proposed ten pounds sterling per annum, though they would be entitled to it. I have no idea it would be accepted by many persons who had a yearly income of two or three hundred pounds sterling. But as we often see instances of rich people falling into sudden poverty, even at the age of sixty, they would always have the right of drawing all the arrears due to them.—Four millions, therefore, of the above annual sum of £5,666,666 will be required for four hundred thousand aged persons, at ten pounds sterling each.

I come now to speak of the persons annually arriving at twenty-one years of age. If all the persons who died were above the age of twenty-one years, the number of persons annually arriving at that age, must be equal to the annual number of deaths to keep the population stationary. But the greater part die under the age of twenty-one, and therefore the number of persons annually arriving at twenty-one, will be less than half the number of deaths. The whole number of deaths upon a population of seven millions and a half, will be about 220,000 annually.—The number at twenty-one years of age will be about 100,000. The whole number of these will not receive the proposed fifteen pounds, for the reasons already mentioned, though, as in the former case, they would be entitled to it. Admitting, then, that a tenth part declined receiving it, the amount would stand thus:

Fund annually ... ..	£5,666,666	
To 400,000 aged persons, at 10% each ... ..	£4,000,000	} 5,350,000
To 90,000 persons of twenty-one years, 15% sterling each ... ..	1,350,000	
		<hr/>
	Remains	£ 316,666

There is in every country a number of blind and lame persons, totally incapable of earning a livelihood. But as it will happen that the greater number of blind persons will be among those who are above the age of fifty years, they will be provided for in that class. The remaining sum of

£316,666, will provide for the lame and blind under that age, at the same rate of 10% annually for each person.

Having now gone through all the necessary calculations, and stated the particulars of the plan, I shall conclude with some observations.

It is not charity but a right—not bounty but justice, that I am pleading for. The present state of what is called civilization is *It is the reverse of what it ought to be, and* The contrast of affluence and wretchedness continually meeting and offending the eye, is like dead and living bodies chained together. Though I care as little about riches as any man, I am a friend to riches, because they are capable of good. I care not how affluent some may be, provided that none be miserable in consequence of it.—But it is impossible to enjoy affluence with the felicity it is capable of being enjoyed, whilst so much misery is mingled in the scene. The sight of the misery, and the unpleasant sensations it suggests, which though they may be suffocated, cannot be extinguished, are a greater drawback upon the felicity of affluence than the proposed ten per cent. upon property is worth. He that would not give the one to get rid of the other, has no charity, even for himself.

There are, in every country, some magnificent charities established by individuals. It is, however, but little that any individual can do when the whole extent of the misery to be relieved is considered. He may satisfy his conscience, but not his heart. He may give all that he has, and that all will relieve but little. It is only by organizing civilization upon such principles as to act like a system of pulleys, that the whole weight of misery can be removed.

The plan here proposed will reach the whole. It will immediately relieve and take out of view three classes of wretchedness; the blind, the lame, and the aged poor. It will furnish the rising generation with means to prevent their becoming poor; and it will do this, without deranging or interfering with any national measures.

To shew that this will be the case, it is sufficient to observe, that the operation and effect of the plan will, in all cases, be the same, as if every individual was *voluntarily* to make his will, and dispose of his property, in the manner here proposed.

But it is justice, and not charity, that is the principle of the plan. In all great cases it is necessary to have a prin-

ciple more universally active than charity ; and with respect to justice, it ought not to be left to the choice of detached individuals, whether they will do justice or not. Considering, then, the plan on the ground of justice, it ought to be the act of the whole, growing spontaneously out of the principles of the revolution, and the reputation of it to be national, and not individual.

A plan upon this principle would benefit the revolution by the energy that springs from the consciousness of justice. It would multiply also the national resources ; for property, like vegetation, increases by off-sets. When a young couple begin the world, the difference is exceedingly great, whether they begin with nothing or with fifteen pounds a piece. With this aid they could buy a cow, and implements to cultivate a few acres of land ; and instead of becoming burthens upon society, which is always the case, where children are produced faster than they can be fed, they would be put in the way of becoming useful and profitable citizens. The national domains also would sell the better, if pecuniary aids were provided to cultivate them in small lots.

It is the practice of what has unjustly obtained the name of civilization (and the practice merits not to be called either charity or policy) to make some provision for persons becoming poor and wretched, only at the time they become so.—Would it not, even as a matter of economy, be far better to devise means to prevent their becoming poor ? This can best be done by making every person, when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, an inheritor of something to begin with. The rugged face of society, checquered with the extremes of affluence and of want, proves that some extraordinary violence has been committed upon it, and calls on justice for redress. The great mass of the poor, in all countries, are become an hereditary race, and it is next to impossible for them to get out of that state of themselves. It ought also to be observed, that this mass increases in all the countries that are called civilized. More persons fall annually into it, than get out of it.

Though in a plan in which justice and humanity are the foundation principles, interest ought not to be admitted into the calculation, yet it is always of advantage to the establishment of any plan, to shew that it is beneficial as a matter of interest. The success of any proposed plan, submitted to public consideration, must finally depend on the numbers interested in supporting it, united with the justice of its principles.



The plan here proposed will benefit all without injuring any. It will consolidate the interest of the republic with that of the individual. To the numerous class dispossessed of their natural inheritance by the system of landed property, it will be an act of national justice. To persons dying possessed of moderate fortunes, it will operate as a tontine to their children, more beneficial than the sum of money paid into the fund; and it will give to the accumulation of riches a degree of security that none of the old Governments of Europe, now tottering on their foundation, can give.

I do not suppose, that more than one family in ten, in any of the countries of Europe, has, when the head of the family dies, a clear property left of five hundred pounds sterling. To all such the plan is advantageous. That property would pay fifty pounds into the fund, and if there were only two children under age, they would receive fifteen pounds each (thirty pounds) on coming of age, and be entitled to ten pounds a year after fifty. It is from the overgrown acquisition of property that the fund will support itself; and I know that the possessors of such property in England, though they would eventually be benefited by the protection of nine-tenths of it, will exclaim against the plan. But, without entering into any enquiry how they came by that property, let them recollect, that they have been the advocates of this war, and that Mr. Pitt has already laid on more new taxes to be raised annually upon the People of England, and that for supporting the despotism of Austria and the Bourbons, against the liberties of France, than would annually pay all the sums proposed in this plan.

I have made the calculations, stated in this plan, upon what is called personal, as well as upon landed property. The reason for making it upon land is already explained; and the reason for taking personal property into the calculation, is equally well founded, though on a different principle. Land, as before said, is the free gift of the Creator in common to the human race. Personal property is the *effect of Society*; and it is as impossible for an individual to acquire personal property without the aid of Society, as it is for him to make land originally. Separate an individual from society, and give him an island or a continent to possess, and he cannot acquire personal property. He cannot become rich. So inseparably are the means connected with the end, in all cases, that where the former do not exist, the

latter cannot be obtained. All accumulation, therefore, of personal property, beyond what a man's own hands produce, is derived to him by living in society; and he owes, on every principle of justice, of gratitude, and of civilization, a part of that accumulation back again to society from whence the whole came. This is putting the matter on a general principle, and perhaps it is best to do so; for if we examine the case minutely, it will be found, that the accumulation of personal property is, in many instances, the effect of paying too little for the labour that produced it; the consequence of which is, that the working hand perishes in old age, and the employer abounds in affluence. It is, perhaps, impossible to proportion exactly the price of labour to the profits it produces; and it will also be said, as an apology for injustice, that were a workman to receive an increase of wages daily, he would not save it against old age, nor be much the better for it in the interim. Make, then, Society the treasurer to guard it for him in a common fund; for it is no reason that because he might not make a good use of it for himself, that another shall take it.

The state of civilization that has prevailed throughout Europe, is as unjust in its principle, as it is horrid in its effects; and it is the consciousness of this, and the apprehension that such a state cannot continue when once investigation begins in any country, that makes the possessors dread every idea of a revolution. It is the *hazard*, and not the principles of a revolution, that retards their progress. This being the case, it is necessary, as well for the protection of property, as for the sake of justice and humanity, to form a system, that whilst it preserves one part of society from wretchedness, shall secure the other from depredation.

The superstitious awe, the enslaving reverence, that formerly surrounded affluence, is passing away in all countries, and leaving the possessor of property to the convulsion of accidents. When wealth and splendour, instead of fascinating the multitude, excite emotions of disgust; when, instead of drawing forth admiration, it is beheld as an insult upon wretchedness; when the ostentatious appearance it makes serves to call the right of it in question, the case of property becomes critical, and it is only in a system of justice that the possessor can contemplate security.

To remove the danger, it is necessary to remove the antipathies, and this can only be done by making property productive of a national blessing, extending to every indi-

vidual. When the riches of one man above another shall increase the national fund in the same proportion; when it shall be seen that the prosperity of that fund depends on the prosperity of individuals; when the more riches a man acquires, the better it shall be for the general mass; it is then that antipathies will cease, and property be placed on the permanent basis of natural interest and protection.

I have no property in France to become subject to the plan I propose. What I have, which is not much, is in the United States of America. But I will pay one hundred pounds sterling towards this fund in France, the instant it shall be established; and I will pay the same sum in England, whenever a similar establishment shall take place in that country.

A revolution in the state of civilization is the necessary companion of revolutions in the system of government. If a revolution in any country be from bad to good, or from good to bad, the state of what is called civilization in that country, must be made conformable thereto, to give that revolution effect. Despotic Government supports itself by abject civilization, in which debasement of the human mind, and wretchedness in the mass of the people, are the chief criterions. Such Governments consider man merely as an animal; that the exercise of the intellectual faculty is not his privilege; *that he has nothing to do with the laws, but to obey them*;\* and they politically depend more upon breaking the spirit of the people by poverty, than they fear enraging it by desperation.

It is a revolution in the state of civilization, that will give perfection to the revolution of France. Already the conviction that Government by representation, is the true system of Government, is spreading itself fast in the world. The reasonableness of it can be seen by all. The justness of it makes itself felt even by its opposers. But when a system of civilization, growing out of that system of government, shall be so organized, that not a man or woman born in the Republic, but shall inherit some means of beginning the world, and see before them the certainty of escaping the miseries, that under other Governments accompany old age, the revolution of France will have an advocate and an ally in the hearts of all nations.

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\* Expression of Horsley, an English Bishop, in the English Parliament.

An army of principles will penetrate where an army of soldiers cannot—It will succeed where diplomatic management would fail—It is neither the Rhine, the Channel, nor the Ocean, that can arrest its progress—It will march on the horizon of the world, and it will conquer.

THOMAS PAINE.

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MEANS FOR CARRYING THE PROPOSED PLAN INTO  
EXECUTION, AND TO RENDER IT AT THE SAME TIME  
CONDUCTIVE TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST.

I. Each canton shall elect in its primary assemblies, three persons, as commissioners for that canton, who shall take cognizance, and keep a register of all matters happening in that canton, conformable to the charter that shall be established by law, for carrying this plan into execution.

II. The law shall fix the manner in which the property of deceased persons shall be ascertained.

III. When the amount of the property of any deceased person shall be ascertained, the principal heir to that property, or the eldest of the co-heirs, if of lawful age, or if under age, the person authorized by the will of the deceased to represent him, or them, shall give bond to the commissioners of the canton, to pay the said tenth part thereof within the space of one year, in four equal quarterly payments, or sooner, at the choice of the payers. One half of the whole property shall remain as security until the bond be paid off.

IV. The bonds shall be registered in the office of the commissioners of the canton, and the original bonds shall be deposited in the national bank at Paris. The bank shall publish every quarter of a year the amount of the bonds in its possession, and also the bonds that shall have been paid off, or what parts thereof, since the last quarterly publication.

V. The national bank shall issue bank notes upon the security of the bonds in its possession. The notes so issued shall be applied to pay the pensions of aged persons, and the compensation of persons arriving at twenty-one years of age. It is both reasonable and generous to suppose, that persons not under immediate necessity will suspend their right of drawing on the fund, until it acquire, as it will do,

a greater degree of ability. In this case, it is proposed, that an honorary register be kept in each canton, of the names of the persons thus suspending that right, at least during the present war.

VI. As the inheritors of the property must always take up their bonds in four quarterly payments, or sooner if they chuse, there will always be numeraire arriving at the bank after the expiration of the first quarter, to exchange for the bank notes that shall be brought in.

VII. The bank notes being thus got into circulation, upon the best of all possible security, that of actual property to more than four times the amount of the bonds upon which the notes are issued, and with numeraire continually arriving at the bank to exchange or pay them off whenever they shall be presented for that purpose, they will acquire a permanent value in all parts of the republic. They can therefore be received in payment of taxes or emprunts, equal to numeraire, because the Government can always receive numeraire for them at the bank.

VIII. It will be necessary that the payments of the ten *per cent.* be made in numeraire for the first year, from the establishment of the plan. But after the expiration of the first year, the inheritors of property may pay the ten *per cent.* either in bank notes issued upon the fund, or in numeraire. It will lie as a deposit at the bank, to be exchanged for a quantity of notes equal to that amount; and if in notes issued upon the fund, it will cause a demand upon the fund equal thereto; and thus the operation of the plan will create means to carry itself into execution.



THE  
DECLINE AND FALL  
OF THE  
ENGLISH SYSTEM  
OF  
*Finance.*

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BY THOMAS PAINE.

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1819.

THE

DEPARTMENT OF THE

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THE  
DECLINE AND FALL,

&c. &c.

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NOTHING, they say, is more certain than death, and nothing more uncertain than the time of dying; yet we can always fix a period beyond which man cannot live, and within some moment of which he will die. We are enabled to do this, not by any spirit of prophecy, or foresight into the event, but by observation of what has happened in all cases of human or animal existence. If, then, any other subject, such, for instance, as a System of Finance, exhibits in its progress, a series of symptoms indicating decay, its final dissolution is certain, and the period of it can be calculated from the symptoms it exhibits.

Those who have hitherto written on the English System of Finance (the Funding System) have been uniformly impressed with the idea of its downfall happening *some time or other*. They took, however, no data for that opinion, but expressed it predictively, or merely as opinion, from a conviction that the perpetual duration of such a system was a natural impossibility. It is in this manner that Doctor Price has spoken of it; and Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations*, has spoken in the same manner; that is, merely as opinion without data. "The progress (says Smith) of the enormous debts, which at present oppress, and will, in the long run, *most probably ruin* all the great *Nations* in Europe, (he should have said *Governments*) has been pretty uniform." But this general manner of speaking, though it might make some impression, carried with it no conviction.

It is not my intention to predict any thing; but I will shew from data already known, from symptoms and facts which the English funding system has already exhibited publicly, that it will not continue to the end of Mr. Pitt's life, supposing him to live the usual age of a man. How much sooner it may fall, I leave to others to predict.

Let financiers diversify systems of credit as they will, it

is nevertheless true, that every system of credit is a system of paper money. Two experiments have already been had upon paper money; the one in America, the other in France. In both those cases the whole capital was emitted, and that whole capital, which, in America, was called continental money, and in France assignats, appeared in circulation; the consequence of which was, that the quantity became so enormous, and so disproportioned to the quantity of population, and to the quantity of objects upon which it could be employed, that the market, if I may so express it, was glutted with it, and the value of it fell. Between five and six years determined the fate of those experiments. The same fate would have happened to gold and silver, could gold and silver have been issued in the same abundant manner as paper had been, and confined within the country as paper money always is, by having no circulation out of it; or, to speak on a larger scale, the same thing would happen in the world, could the world be glutted with gold and silver, as America and France have been with paper.

The English system differs from that of America and France in this one particular, that its capital is kept out of sight; that is, it does not appear in circulation. Were the whole capital of the National debt, which at the time I write this is almost four hundred million pounds sterling, to be emitted in assignats or bills, and that whole quantity put into circulation, as was done in America and in France, those English assignats, or bills, would sink in value as those of America and France have done; and that in a greater degree, because the quantity of them would be more disproportioned to the quantity of population in England, than was the case in either of the other two countries. A nominal pound sterling in such bills would not be worth one penny.

But though the English system, by thus keeping the capital out of sight, is preserved from hasty destruction, as in the case of America and France, it nevertheless approaches the same fate, and will arrive at it with the same certainty, though by a slower progress. The difference is altogether in the degree of speed by which the two systems approach their fate, which, to speak in round numbers, is as twenty is to one; that is, the English system, that of funding the capital instead of issuing it, contained within itself a capacity of enduring twenty times longer than the system adopted by America and France; and at the end of that time it would arrive at the same common grave, the Potter's field, of paper money.

The datum, I take for this proportion of twenty to one, is the difference between a capital and the interest at five per cent. Twenty times the interest is equal to the capital. The accumulation of paper money in England is in proportion to the accumulation of the interest upon every new loan; and therefore the progress to dissolution is twenty times slower than if the capital were to be emitted and put into circulation immediately. Every twenty years in the English system is equal to one year in the French and American systems.

Having thus stated the duration of the two systems, that of funding upon interest and that of emitting the whole capital without funding, to be as twenty to one, I come to examine the symptoms of decay approaching to dissolution that the English system has already exhibited, and to compare them with similar symptoms in the French and American systems.

The English funding system began one hundred years ago; in which time there have been six wars, including the war that ended in 1697.

1. The war that ended, as I have just said, in 1697.
2. The war that began in 1702.
3. The war that began in 1739.
4. The war that began in 1756.
5. The American war that began in 1775.
6. The present war that began in 1793.

The National debt at the conclusion of the war, which ended in 1697, was twenty-one millions and a half. (See Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, chapter on Public Debts.) We now see it approaching fast to four hundred millions. If between these two extremes of twenty-one millions and four hundred millions, embracing the several expenses of all the including wars, there exists some common ratio that will ascertain arithmetically the amount of the debt at the end of each war, as certainly as the fact is now known to be, that ratio will in like manner determine what the amount of the debt will be in all future wars, and will ascertain the period within which the funding system will expire in a bankruptcy of the Government; for the ratio I allude to is the ratio which the nature of the thing has established for itself.

Hitherto no idea has been entertained that any such ratio existed, or could exist, that could determine a problem of this kind, that is, that could ascertain, without having any knowledge of the fact, what the expense of any former war

had been, or what the expense of any future war would be; but it is nevertheless true that such a ratio does exist, as I shall shew, and also the mode of applying it.

The ratio I allude to is not in arithmetical progression, like the numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; nor yet in geometrical progression, like the numbers 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256; but is in the series of one half upon each preceding number; like the numbers 8, 12, 18, 27, 40, 60, 90, 135.

Any person can perceive that the second number, 12, is produced by the preceding number, 8, and half 8; and that the third number, 18, is in like manner produced by the preceding number, 12, and half 12; and so on for the rest. They can also see how rapidly the sums increase as the ratio proceeds. The difference between the two first numbers is but four; but the difference between the two last is forty-five; and from thence they may see with what immense rapidity the National debt has increased, and will continue to increase, till it exceeds the ordinary power of calculation, and loses itself in cyphers.

I come now to apply the ratio as a rule to determine all the cases.

I began with the war that ended in 1697, which was the war in which the funding system began. The expense of that war was twenty-one millions and a half. In order to ascertain the expense of the next war, I add to 21 millions and a half the half thereof, 10 millions and three quarters, which make thirty-two millions and a quarter for the expense of that war. This thirty-two millions and a quarter, added to the former debt of twenty-one millions and a half, carries the National debt to fifty-three millions and three quarters. Smith, in his chapter on Public Debts, says, the National debt was at this time fifty-three millions.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the next war, that of 1739, by adding, as in the former case, one half to the expense of the preceding war. The expense of the preceding war was thirty-two millions and a quarter; for the sake of even numbers, say thirty-two millions; the half of which 16, makes forty-eight millions for the expense of that war.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the war of 1756, by adding, according to the ratio, one half to the expense of the preceding war. The expense of the preceding war was taken at forty-eight millions, the half of which, 24, makes seventy-two millions for the expense of that war. Smith (chapter on Public Debts) says, the expense of the war of 1756, was twenty-two millions and a quarter.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the American war, of 1775, by adding, as in the former cases, one half to the expense of the preceding war. The expense of the preceding war was 72 millions, the half of which, 36, makes 108 millions for the expense of that war. In the last edition of Smith (chapter on Public Debts) he says the expense of the American war was *more than a hundred millions*.

I come now to ascertain the expense of the present war, supposing it to continue as long as former wars have done, and the funding system not to break up before that period. The expense of the preceding war was 108 millions, the half of which, 54, makes 162 millions for the expense of the present war. It gives symptoms of going beyond this sum, supposing the funding system not to break up; for the loans of the last year and of the present year, are 22 millions each, which exceeds the ratio compared with the loans of the preceding war. It will not be from the inability of procuring loans that the system will break up. On the contrary, it is the facility with which loans can be procured, that hastens that event. The loans are altogether paper transactions; and it is the excess of them that brings on, with accelerating speed, that progressive depreciation of funded paper money that will dissolve the funding system.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of future wars, and I do this merely to shew the impossibility of the continuance of the funding system, and the certainty of its dissolution.

The expense of the next war after the present war, according to the ratio that has ascertained the preceding cases, will be .....

Expense of the second war..... ..	243,000,000
————— third war .....	364,000,000
————— fourth war .....	546,000,000
————— fifth war .....	819,000,000
—————	1,228,000,000
	3,200,000,000

which, at only 4 per cent. will require taxes to the nominal amount of one hundred and twenty-eight millions to pay the annual interest, besides the interest of the present debt, and the expenses of Government, which are not included in this account. Is there a man so mad, so stupid, as to suppose this system can continue?

When I first conceived the idea of seeking for some common ratio that should apply as a rule of measurement to all the cases of the funding system, so far as to ascertain the several stages of its approach to dissolution, I had no expectation that any ratio could be found that would apply

with so much exactness as this does. I was led to the idea merely by observing that the funding system was a thing in continual progression, and that whatever was in a state of progression, might be supposed to admit of, at least, some general ratio or measurement, that would apply without any very great variation. But who could have supposed that falling systems, or falling opinions, admitted of a ratio apparently as true as the descent of falling bodies? I have not *made* the ratio, any more than Newton made the ratio of gravitation. I have only discovered it, and explained the mode of applying it.

To shew at one view the rapid progression of the funding system to destruction, and to expose the folly of those who blindly believe in its continuance, or who artfully endeavour to impose that belief upon others, I exhibit in the annexed table, the expense of each of the six wars since the funding system began, as ascertained by the ratio, and the expense of six wars yet to come, ascertained by the same ratio.

<i>First Six Wars.</i>		<i>Second Six Wars.</i>	
1 .....	21,000,000	1 .....	243,000,000
2 .....	33,000,000	2 .....	364,000,000
3 .....	48,000,000	3 .....	546,000,000
4 .....	72,000,000*	4 .....	819,000,000
5 ... ..	108,000,000	5 .....	1,228,000,000
6 .....	162,000,000	6 .....	1,842,000,000
Total ... 444,000,000		Total ... 5,042,000,000	

Those who are acquainted with the power with which even a small ratio, acting in progression, multiplies in a long

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\* The actual expense of the war of 1739 did not come up to the sum ascertained by the ratio. But as that which is the natural disposition of a thing, as it is the natural disposition of a stream of water to descend, will, if impeded in its course, overcome by a new effort what it had lost by that impediment, so it was with respect to this war and the next (1756) taken collectively; for the expense of the war of 1756 restored the equilibrium of the ratio, as fully as if it had not been impeded. A circumstance that serves to prove the truth of the ratio more fully than if the interruption had not taken place. The war of 1739 was languid: the efforts were below the value of money at that time; for the ratio is the measure of the depreciation of money in consequence of the funding system; or, what comes to the same end, it is the measure of the increase of paper. Every additional quantity of it, whether in Bank notes or otherwise, diminishes the *real*, though not the *nominal*, value of the former quantity.

series, will see nothing to wonder at in this table. Those who are not acquainted with that subject, and not knowing what else to say, may be inclined to deny it. But it is not their opinion one way, nor mine the other, that can influence the event. The table exhibits the natural march of the funding system to its irredeemable dissolution. Supposing the present Government of England to continue, and go on as it has gone on since the funding system began, I would not give twenty shillings for one hundred pounds in the funds to be paid twenty years hence. I do not speak this predictively; I produce the data upon which that belief is founded; and which data it is every body's interest to know, who have any thing to do with the funds, or who are going to bequeath property to their descendants, to be paid at a future day.

Perhaps it may be asked, that, as Governments or Ministers proceeded by no ratio in making loans or incurring debts, and as nobody intended any ratio, or thought of any, how does it happen that there is one? I answer that the ratio is founded in necessity, and I now go to explain what that necessity is.

It will always happen that the price of labour, or of the produce of labour, be that produce what it may, will be in proportion to the quantity of money in a country, admitting things to take their natural course. Before the invention of the funding system, there was no other money than gold and silver: and as nature gives out those metals with a sparing hand, and in regular annual quantities from the mines, the several prices of things were proportioned to the quantity of money at that time, and so nearly stationary as to vary but little in any fifty or sixty years of that period.

When the funding system began, a substitute for gold and silver began also. That substitute was paper; and the quantity of it increased as the quantity of interest increased upon accumulated loans. This appearance of a new and additional species of money in the Nation soon began to break the relative value which money and the things it will purchase bore to each other before. Every thing rose in price; but the rise at first was little and slow, like the difference in units between the two first numbers, 8 and 12, compared with the two last numbers, 90 and 135, in the tables. It was, however, sufficient to make itself considerably felt in a large transaction. When, therefore, Government, by engaging in a new war, required a new loan, it was obliged to make a higher loan than the former loan, to balance the in-

creased price to which things had risen; and as that new loan increased the quantity of paper in proportion to the new quantity of interest, it carried the price of things still higher than before. The next loan was again higher, to balance that further increased price; and all this in the same manner, though not in the same degree, that every new emission of continental money in America, or of assignats in France, were greater than the preceding emission, to make head against the advance of prices, till the combat could be maintained no longer. Herein is founded the necessity of which I have just spoken. That necessity proceeds with accelerating velocity, and the ratio I have laid down is the measure of that acceleration; or, to speak the technical language of the subject, it is the measure of the increasing depreciation of funded paper-money, which it is impossible to prevent, while the quantity of that money and of Bank notes continues to multiply. What else but this can account for the difference between one war costing 21 millions, and another war costing 160 millions?

The difference cannot be accounted for on the score of extraordinary efforts or extraordinary achievements. The war that cost 21 millions was the war of the confederates, historically called the Grand Alliance, consisting of England, Austria, and Holland, in the time of William the Third, against Louis the Fourteenth, and in which the confederates were victorious. The present is a war of a much greater confederacy—a confederacy of England, Austria, Prussia, the German Empire, Spain, Holland, Naples, and Sardinia, eight powers against the French Republic singly, and the Republic has beaten the whole confederacy.—But to return to my subject—

It is said in England, that the value of paper keeps equal with the value of gold and silver. But the case is not rightly stated; for the fact is, that the paper has *pulled down* the value of gold and silver to a level with itself. Gold and silver will not purchase so much of any purchaseable article at this day as if no paper had appeared, nor so much as it will in any country in Europe where there is no paper. How long this hanging together of money and paper will continue, makes a new case; because it daily exposes the system to sudden death, independent of the natural death it would otherwise suffer.

I consider the funding system as being now advanced into the last twenty years of its existence. The single circumstance, were there no other, that a war should now cost



*nominally* one hundred and sixty millions, which when the system began cost but 21 millions, or that the loan for one year only (including the loan to the Emperor) should now be *nominally* greater than the whole expense of that war, shews the state of depreciation to which the funding system has arrived. Its depreciation is in the proportion of eight for one, compared with the value of its money when the system began, which is the state the French assignats stood in a year ago (March, 1795) compared with gold and silver. It is therefore that I say, that the English funding system, has entered into the last twenty years of its existence, comparing each twenty years of the English system with every single year of the American and French systems, as before stated.

Again, supposing the present war to close as former wars have done, and without producing either revolution or reform in England, another war, at least, must be looked for in the space of the twenty years I allude to ; for it has never yet happened that twenty years have passed off without a war, and that more especially since the English Government has dabbled in German politics, and shewn a disposition to insult the world, and to engross the commerce of the world with her navy. The next war will carry the National debt to very nearly seven-hundred millions, the interest of which, at four per cent. will be twenty-eight millions, besides the taxes for the then expenses of Government, which will increase in the same proportion, and which will carry the taxes to at least forty millions : and if another war only begins, it will quickly carry them to above fifty : for it is in the last twenty years of the funding system, as in the last year of the American and French systems without funding, that all the great shocks began to operate.

I have just mentioned that paper, in England, has *pulled down* the value of gold and silver to a level with itself ; and that this *pulling down* of gold and silver money has created the appearance of paper money keeping up. The same thing, and the same mistake, took place in America and in France, and continued for a considerable time after the commencement of their system of paper ; and the actual depreciation of money was hidden under that mistake.

It was said in America, at that time, that every thing was becoming *dear* ; but gold and silver could then buy those dear articles no cheaper than paper could ; and therefore it was not called depreciation. The idea of *dearness* established itself for the idea of depreciation. The same was

the case in France. Though every thing rose in price soon after assignats appeared, yet those dear articles could be purchased no cheaper with gold and silver than with paper, and it was only said that things were *dear*. The same is still the language in England. They call it *dearness*. But they will soon find that it is in an actual depreciation, and that this depreciation is the effect of the funding system; which, by crowding such a continually increasing mass of paper into circulation, carries down the value of gold and silver with it. But gold and silver will, in the long run, revolt against depreciation, and separate from the value of paper; for the progress of all such systems appears to be, that the paper will take the command in the beginning, and gold and silver in the end.

But this succession in the command of gold and silver over paper, makes a crisis far more eventful to the funding system than to any other system upon which paper can be issued; for, strictly speaking, it is not a crisis of danger, but a symptom of death. It is a death stroke to the funding system. It is a revolution in the whole of its affairs.

If paper be issued without being funded upon interest, emissions of it can be continued after the value of it separates from gold and silver, as we have seen in the two cases of America and France. But the funding system rests altogether upon the value of paper being equal to gold and silver; which will be as long as the paper can continue carrying down the value of gold and silver to the same level to which itself descends, and no longer. But even in this state, that of descending equally together, the Minister, whoever he may be, will find himself beset with accumulating difficulties; because the loans and taxes voted for the service of each ensuing year will wither in his hands before the year expires, or before they can be applied. This will force him to have recourse to emissions of what are called Exchequer and Navy bills, which, by still increasing the mass of paper in circulation, will drive on the depreciation still more rapidly.

It ought to be known, that taxes in England are not paid in gold and silver, but in paper (Bank notes). Every person who pays any considerable quantity of taxes, such as maltsters, brewers, distillers, (I appeal for the truth of it to any of the collectors of excise in England, or to Mr. Whitbread) knows this to be the case. There is not gold and silver enough in the Nation to pay the taxes in coin, as I shall shew; and, consequently, there is not money enough in the

Bank to pay the notes. The interest of the National funded debt is paid at the Bank in the same kind of paper in which the taxes are collected. When people find, as they will find, a reservedness among each other in giving gold and silver for Bank notes, or the least preference for the former over the latter, they will go for payment to the Bank, where they have a right to go. They will do this as a measure of prudence, each one for himself, and the truth or delusion of the funding system will then be proved.

I have said in the foregoing paragraph that there is not gold and silver enough in the Nation to pay the taxes in coin, and consequently that there cannot be enough in the Bank to pay the notes. As I do not choose to rest any thing upon assertion, I appeal for the truth of this to the publications of Mr. Eden (now called Lord Auckland) and George Chalmers, Secretary to the Board of Trade and Plantation, of which Jenkinson (now called Lord Hawkesbury) is president. (*This sort of folks change their names so often, that it is as difficult to know them as it is to know a thief.*) Chalmers gives the quantity of gold and silver coin from the returns of coinage at the mint; and, after deducting for the light gold recoined, says, that the amount of gold and silver coin is *about twenty millions*. He had better not have proved this, especially if he had reflected, that public credit is *suspicion asleep*. The quantity is much too little.

Of this twenty millions (which is not a fourth part of the quantity of gold and silver there is in France, as is shewn in M. Neckar's Treatise on the Administration of the Finances) three millions at least must be supposed to be in Ireland, some in Scotland, and in the West Indies, Newfoundland, &c. The quantity, therefore, in England cannot be more than 16 millions, which is four millions less than the amount of the taxes. But admitting there to be 16 millions, not more than a fourth part thereof (four millions) can be in London, when it is considered, that every city, town, village, and farm house in the Nation must have a part of it; and that all the great manufactories, which most require cash, are out of London. Of this four millions in London, every banker, merchant, tradesman, in short, every individual must have some. He must be a poor shopkeeper indeed, who has not a few guineas in his till. The quantity of cash, therefore, in the Bank can never, on the evidence of circumstances, be so much as two millions: most probably not more than one million; and on this slender twig, always liable to be broken, hangs the whole funding system of four

hundred millions, besides many millions in Bank notes. The sum in the Bank is not sufficient to pay one fourth of only one year's interest of the National debt, were the creditors to demand payment in cash, or to demand cash for the Bank notes in which the interest is paid : a circumstance always liable to happen.

One of the amusements that have kept up the farce of the funding system is, that the interest is regularly paid. But as the interest is always paid in Bank notes, and as Bank notes can always be coined for the purpose, this mode of payment proves nothing. The point of proof is—can the Bank give cash for the Bank notes on which the interest is paid? If it cannot, and it is evident it cannot, some millions of Bank notes must go without payment, and those holders of Bank notes who apply last will be worst off. When the present quantity of cash in the Bank shall be paid away, it is next to impossible to see how any new quantity is to arrive. None will arrive from taxes, for the taxes will all be paid in Bank notes; and should the Government refuse Bank notes in payment of taxes, the credit of Bank notes will be gone at once. No cash will arrive from the business of discounting merchants' bills; for every merchant will pay off those bills in Bank notes, and not in cash. There is therefore no means left for the Bank to obtain a new supply of cash, after the present quantity be paid away. But, besides the impossibility of paying the interest of the funded debt in cash, there are many thousand persons in London and in the country, who are holders of Bank notes that came into their hands in the fair way of trade, and who are not stockholders in the funds; and as such persons have had no hand in increasing the demand upon the Bank, as those have had who, for their own private interest, like Boyd and others, are contracting, or pretending to contract, for new loans, they will conceive they have a just right their Bank notes should be paid first. Boyd has been very sly in France, in changing his paper into cash. He will just be as sly in doing the same thing in London; for he has learned to calculate: and then it is probable he will set off for America.

A stoppage of payment at the Bank is not a new thing. Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations*, book ii. ch. 2, says that in the year 1696, Exchequer bills fell forty, fifty, and sixty per cent.; Bank notes twenty per cent.; and the Bank stopped payment.—That which happened in 1696 may happen again in 1796. The period in which it happened was the last year of the war of King William. It necessarily put a stop to

the further emission of exchequer and navy bills, and to the raising of new loans; and the peace which took place the next year was probably hurried on by this circumstance, and saved the Bank from bankruptcy. Smith, in speaking of the circumstances of the Bank, upon another occasion, says (book ii. chap. 3,)—"This great company has been reduced to the necessity of paying in sixpences." When a bank adopts the expedient of paying in sixpences, it is a confession of insolvency.

It is worthy of observation, that every case of a failure in finances, since the system of paper began, has produced a revolution in government, either total or partial. A failure in the finances of France produced the French revolution. A failure in the finance of the assignats broke up the revolutionary government, and produced the present French Constitution. A failure in the finances of the old Congress of America, and the embarrassments it brought upon commerce, broke up the system of the old confederation, and produced the present federal constitution. If, then, we admit of reasoning by comparison of causes and events, a failure in the English finances will produce some change in the government of that country.

As to Mr. Pitt's project of paying off the national debt by applying a million a year for that purpose, while he continues adding more than twenty millions a year to it, it is like setting a man with a wooden leg to run after a hare. The longer he runs the farther he is off.

When I said that the funding system had entered the last twenty years of its existence, I certainly did not mean that it would continue twenty years, and then expire as a lease would do. I meant to describe that age of decrepitude in which death is every day to be expected, and life cannot continue long. But the death of credit, or that state that is called bankruptcy, is not always marked by those progressive stages of visible decline, that mark the decline of natural life. In the progression of natural life, age cannot counterfeit youth, nor conceal the departure of juvenile abilities. But it is otherwise with respect to the death of credit; for though all the approaches to bankruptcy may actually exist in circumstances, they admit of being concealed by appearances. Nothing is more common than to see the bankrupt of to day a man of credit but the day before; yet no sooner is the real state of his affairs known, than every body can see he had been insolvent long before. In London, the

greatest theatre of bankruptcy in Europe, this part of the subject will be well and feelingly understood.

Mr. Pitt continually talks of credit and of the national resources. These are two of the feigned appearances by which the approaches to bankruptcy are concealed. That which he calls credit may exist, as I have just shewn, in a state of insolvency, and is always what I have before described it to be, *suspicion asleep*.

As to the national resources, Mr. Pitt, like all the English financiers that preceded him since the funding system began, has uniformly mistaken the nature of a resource; that is, they have mistaken it consistently with the delusion of the funding system; but time is explaining the delusion. That which he calls, and which they call a resource, is not a resource, but is the *anticipation* of a resource. They have anticipated what *would have been* a resource in another generation, had not the use of it been so anticipated. The funding system is a system of anticipation. Those who established it a hundred years ago, anticipated the resources of those who were to live a hundred years after; for the people of the present day have to pay the interest of the debt contracted at that time, and of all debts contracted since. But it is the last feather that breaks the horse's back. Had the system began a hundred years before, the amount of taxes at this time to pay the annual interest at four per cent. (could we suppose such a system of insanity could have continued) would be two hundred and twenty millions annually; for the capital of the debt would be five thousand four hundred and eighty-six millions, according to the ratio that ascertains the expense of the wars for the hundred years that are past. But long before it could have reached this period, the value of Bank notes, from the immense quantity of them, (for it is in paper only that such a nominal revenue could be collected) would have been as low or lower than continental paper money has been in America, or assignats in France; and as to the idea of exchanging them for gold and silver, it is too absurd to be contradicted.

Do we not see that nature, in all her operations, disowns the visionary basis upon which the funding system is built? She acts always by renewed successions, and never by accumulating additions perpetually progressing. Animals and vegetables, men and trees, have existed ever since the world began; but that existence has been carried on by succession of generations, and not by continuing the same men

and the same trees in existence that existed first; and to make room for the new she removes the old. Every natural idiot can see this. It is the stock-jobbing idiot only that mistakes. He has conceived that art can do what nature cannot. He is teaching her a new system—that there is no occasion for man to die—that the scheme of creation can be carried on upon the plan of the funding system—that it can proceed by continual additions of new beings, like new loans, and all live together in eternal youth. Go, count the graves, thou idiot, and learn the folly of thy arithmetic!

But besides these things, there is something visibly farcical in the whole operation of loaning. It is scarcely more than four years ago, that such a rot of bankruptcy spread itself over London, that the whole commercial fabric tottered; trade and credit were at a stand; and such was the state of things, that to prevent, or suspend, a general bankruptcy, the Government lent the merchants six millions in *Government* paper, and now the merchants lend the Government twenty-two millions in *their* paper; and two parties, Boyd and Morgan, men but little known, contend who shall be the lenders. What a farce is this! It reduces the operation of loaning to accommodation paper, in which the competitors contend, not who shall lend, but who shall sign, because there is something to be got for signing.

Every English stock-jobber and Minister boasts of the credit of England. Its credit, say they, is greater than that of any country in Europe. There is a good reason for this; for there is not another country in Europe that could be made the dupe of such a delusion. The English funding system will remain a monument of wonder, not so much on account of the extent to which it has been carried, as of the folly of believing in it.

Those who had formerly predicted that the funding system would break up when the debt amounted to one hundred or one hundred and fifty millions, erred only in not distinguishing between insolvency and actual bankruptcy; for the insolvency commenced as soon as the Government became unable to pay the interest in cash, or to give cash for the Bank notes in which the interest was paid, whether that inability was known or not, or whether it was suspected or not. Insolvency always takes place before bankruptcy; for bankruptcy is nothing more than the publication of that insolvency. In the affairs of an individual it often happens, that insolvency exists several years before bankruptcy, and that the insolvency is concealed and carried on

till the individual is not able to pay 1s. in the pound. A Government can ward off bankruptcy longer than an individual; but insolvency will inevitably produce bankruptcy, whether in an individual or in a Government. If then the quantity of Bank notes payable on demand, which the Bank has issued, are greater than the Bank can pay off, the Bank is insolvent; and when that insolvency be declared, it is bankruptcy.\*

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\* Among the delusions that have been imposed upon the Nation by Ministers, to give a false colouring to its affairs, and by none more than by Mr. Pitt, is a motley, amphibious charactered thing called the *balance of trade*. This balance of trade, as it is called, is taken from the Custom House books, in which entries are made of all cargoes exported, and also of all cargoes imported, in each year; and when the value of the exports, according to the price set upon them by the exporter or by the Custom House, is greater than the value of the imports, estimated in the same manner, they say, the balance of trade is so much in their favour.

The Custom House books prove regularly enough that so many cargoes have been exported, and so many imported; but this is all that they prove, or were intended to prove. They have nothing to do with the balance of profit or loss; and it is ignorance to appeal to them upon that account: for the case is, that the greater the loss is in any one year, the higher will this thing called the balance of trade appear to be according to the Custom House books. For example, nearly the whole of the Mediterranean convoy has been taken by the French this year; consequently those cargoes will not appear as imports on the Custom House books, and therefore the balance of trade, by which they mean the profits of it, will appear to be so much the greater as the loss amounts to; and on the other hand, had the loss not happened, the profits would have appeared to have been so much the less. All the losses happening at sea to returning cargoes, by accidents, by the elements, or by capture, make the balance appear the higher on the side of the exports; and, were they all lost at sea, it would appear to be all profit on the Custom House books.—Also every cargo of exports that is lost that occasions another to be sent, adds in like manner to the side of the exports, and appears as profit. This year the balance of trade will appear high, because the losses have been great by capture and by storms. The ignorance of the British Parliament, in listening to this hacknied imposition of Ministers about the balance of trade, is astonishing. It shews how little they know of National affairs; and Mr. Grey may as well talk Greek to them, as make motions about the state of the Nation. They understand fox-hunting and the game-laws.



I come now to shew the several ways by which Bank notes get into circulation. I shall afterwards offer an estimate on the total quantity or amount of Bank notes existing at this moment.

The Bank acts in three capacities. As a bank of discount; as a bank of deposit; and as a banker for the Government.

First, as a bank of discount. The Bank discounts merchants' bills of exchange for two months. When a merchant has a bill that will become due at the end of two months, and wants payment before that time, the Bank advances that payment to him, deducting therefrom at the rate of five per cent. per annum. The bill of exchange remains at the Bank as a pledge or pawn, and at the end of two months must be redeemed. This transaction is done altogether in paper; for the profits of the Bank, as a bank of discount, arise entirely from its making use of paper as money. The Bank gives Bank notes to the merchant in discounting the bill of exchange, and the redeemer of the bill pays Bank notes to the Bank in redeeming it. It very seldom happens that any real money passes between them.

If the profits of a bank be, for example, two hundred thousand pounds a year, (a great sum to be made merely by exchanging one sort of paper for another, and which shews also that the merchants of that place are pressed for money for payments, instead of having money to spare to lend to Government,) it proves that the Bank discounts to the amount of four millions annually, or £666,666 every two months; and as there never remains in the Bank more than two months pledges, of the value of £666,666 at any one time, the amount of Bank notes in circulation at any one time should not be more than to that amount. This is sufficient to shew that the present immense quantity of Bank notes, which are distributed through every city, town, village, and farm-house, in England, cannot be accounted for on the score of discounting.

Secondly, as a bank of deposit. To deposit money at the Bank means to lodge it there for the sake of convenience, and to be drawn out at any moment the depositor pleases, or to be paid away to his order. When the business of discounting is great, that of depositing is necessarily small. No man deposits and applies for discounts at the same time; for it would be like paying interest for lending money, instead of for borrowing it. The deposits that are now made

at the Bank, are almost entirely in Bank notes, and consequently they add nothing to the ability of the Bank to pay off the Bank notes that may be presented for payment; and besides this, the deposits are no more the property of the Bank, than the cash or Bank notes in a merchant's counting-house, are the property of his book-keeper. No great increase, therefore, of Bank notes, beyond what the discounting business admits, can be accounted for on the score of deposits.

Thirdly, the Bank acts as banker for the Government. This is the connection that threatens ruin to every public bank. It is through this connection that the credit of a bank is forced far beyond what it ought to be, and still further beyond its ability to pay. It is through this connection that such an immense redundant quantity of Bank notes have gotten into circulation; and which, instead of being issued because there was property in the Bank, have been issued because there was none.

When the treasury is empty, which happens in almost every year of every war, its coffers at the Bank are empty also. It is in this condition of emptiness, that the Minister has recourse to emissions of what are called Exchequer and Navy bills, which continually generates a new increase of Bank notes, and which are sported upon the public without there being property in the Bank to pay them.—These Exchequer and Navy bills (being, as I have before said, emitted because the Treasury and its coffers at the Bank are empty, and cannot pay the demands that come in) are no other than an acknowledgement that the bearer is entitled to receive so much money. They may be compared to the settlement of an account, in which the debtor acknowledges the balance he owes, and for which he gives a note of hand; or to a note of hand given to raise money upon it.

Sometimes the Bank discounts those bills as it would discount merchants bills of exchange; sometimes it purchases them of the holders at the current price; and sometimes it agrees with the Minister to pay an interest upon them to the holders, and keep them in circulation. In every one of those cases an additional quantity of Bank notes get into circulation, and are sported, as I have said, upon the public, without there being property in the Bank, as banker for the Government, to pay them: and besides this, the Bank has now no money of its own; for the money that was originally subscribed to begin the credit of the Bank with, at its first

establishment, has been lent to Government, and wasted long ago.

“The Bank (says Smith, book ii. chap. 2,) acts not only as an ordinary bank, but as an engine of state; it receives and pays the greater part of the annuities which are due to the creditors of the *public*.” (It is worth observing, that the *public*, or the *Nation*, is always put for the Government in speaking of debts.) “It circulates (says Smith) exchequer bills, and it advances to Government the annual amount of the land and malt taxes, which are frequently not paid till several years afterwards.” (This advancement is also done in Bank notes, for which there is not property in the Bank.) “In those different operations (says Smith) *its duty to the public* may sometimes have obliged it, without any fault of its directors, *to overstock the circulation with paper money*,” —Bank notes. How *its duty to the public* can induce it *to overstock that public* with promissory Bank notes, which it *cannot pay*, and thereby expose the individuals of that public to ruin, is too paradoxical to be explained; for it is on the credit which individuals *give to the Bank*, by receiving and circulating its notes, and not upon its *own* credit, or its *own* property, for it has none, that the Bank sports. If, however, it be the duty of the Bank to expose the public to this hazard, it is at least equally the duty of the individuals of that public, to get their money and take care of themselves; and leave it to placemen, pensioners, Government contractors, Reeves’s Association, and the Members of both Houses of Parliament, who have voted away the money at the nod of the Minister, to continue the credit if they can, and for which their estates, individually and collectively, ought to answer, as far as they will go.

There has always existed, and still exists, a mysterious, suspicious connection, between the Minister and the directors of the Bank, and which explains itself no otherwise than by a continual increase of Bank notes. Without, therefore, entering into any further details of the various contrivances by which Bank notes are issued, and thrown upon the public, I proceed, as I before mentioned, to offer an estimate on the total quantity of Bank notes in circulation.

However disposed Governments may be to wring money by taxes from the people, there is a limit to the practice established in the nature of things. That limit is the proportion between the quantity of money in a Nation, be that quantity of money what it may, and the greatest quantity of

taxes that can be raised upon it. People have other uses for money besides paying taxes; and it is only a proportional part of that money they can spare for taxes, as it is only a proportional part they can spare for house-rent, for clothing, or for any other particular use. These proportions find out and establish themselves; and that with such exactness, that if any one part exceeds its proportion, all the other parts feel it.

Before the invention of paper money, (Bank notes) there was no other money in the Nation than gold and silver, and the greatest quantity of money that ever was raised in taxes during that period, never exceeded a fourth part of the quantity of money in the Nation. It was high taxing when it came to this point. The taxes in the time of William the Third never reached to four millions before the invention of paper, and the quantity of money in the Nation at that time was estimated to be about sixteen millions. The same proportions established themselves in France. There was no paper money in France before the present Revolution, and the taxes were collected in gold and silver money. The highest quantity of taxes never exceeded twenty-two millions sterling; and the quantity of gold and silver money in the Nation at the same time, as stated by M. Neckar, from returns of coinage at the mints, in his Treatise on the Administration of the Finances, was about ninety millions sterling. To go beyond this limit of a fourth part in England, they were obliged to introduce paper money; and the attempts to go beyond it in France, where paper could not be introduced, broke up the Government. This proportion, therefore, of a fourth part, is the limit which the nature of the thing establishes for itself, be the quantity of money in a Nation more or less.

The amount of taxes in England at this time is full twenty millions; and therefore the quantity of gold and silver, and of Bank notes, taken together, amounts to eighty millions. The quantity of gold and silver, as stated by Lord Hawkesbury's secretary, (George Chalmers) as I have before shewn, is twenty millions, and therefore the total amount in circulation, all made payable on demand, is sixty millions. This enormous sum will astonish the most stupid stock-jobber, and overpower the credulity of the most thoughtless Englishman: but were it only a third part of that sum, the Bank cannot pay half-a-crown in the pound.

There is something curious in the movements of this

modern complicated machine, the funding system; and it is only now that it is beginning to unfold the full extent of its movements. In the first part of its movements it gives great powers into the hands of Government, and in the last part it takes them completely away.

The funding system set out with raising revenues under the name of loans, by means of which, Government became both prodigal and powerful. The loaners assumed the name of creditors, and though it was soon discovered that loaning was Government jobbing, those pretended loaners, or the persons who purchased into the funds afterwards, conceived themselves not only to be creditors, but to be the *only* creditors.

But such has been the operation of the complicated machine, the funding system, that it has produced, unperceived, a second generation of creditors, more numerous and far more formidable, and withal, more real than the first generation; for every holder of a Bank note is a creditor, and a real creditor, and the debt due to him is made payable on demand. The debt, therefore, which the Government owes to individuals, is composed of two parts; the one about four hundred millions bearing interest, the other about sixty millions payable on demand. The one is called the funded debt, the other is the debt due in Bank notes.

This second debt (that contained in the Bank notes) has in a great measure been incurred to pay the interest of the first debt; so that, in fact, little or no real interest has been paid by Government. The whole has been delusion and fraud. Government at first contracted a debt in the form of loans with one class of people, and then run clandestinely into debt with another class, by means of Bank notes, to pay the interest. Government acted of itself in contracting the first debt, and made a machine of the Bank to contract the second.

It is this second debt that changes the seat of power, and the order of things: for it puts it in the power of even a small part of the holders of Bank notes, (had they no other motive than disgust at Pitt and Grenville's seditious bills) to control any measure of Government they found to be injurious to their interest; and that not by popular meetings, or popular societies, but by the simple and easy operation of withholding their credit from that Government; that is, by individually demanding payment at the Bank for every

Bank note that comes into their hands. Why should Pitt and Grenville expect that the very men whom they insult and injure, should at the same time continue to support the measures of Pitt and Grenville, by giving credit to their promissory notes of payment? No new emission of Bank notes could go on while payment was demanding on the old, and the cash in the Bank wasting daily away; nor any new advances be made to Government or to the Emperor, to carry on the war; nor any new emission be made of exchequer bills.

"*The Bank*," says Smith (book ii. chap. 2.) "*is a great engine of State.*" And, in the same paragraph, he says, "*The stability of the Bank, is equal to that of the British Government;*" which is the same as to say, that the stability of the Government is equal to that of the Bank, and no more. If then the Bank cannot pay, the *Arch-Treasurer of the Holy Roman Empire* (S. R. I. A.\*) is a bankrupt. When Folly invented titles, she did not attend to their application; for ever since the Government of England has been in the hands of *arch-treasurers*, it has been running into bankruptcy; and as to the arch-treasurer *apparent* he has been a bankrupt long ago. What a miserable prospect has England before its eyes!

Before the war of 1775 there were no Bank notes lower than twenty pounds. During that war Bank notes of fifteen pounds and ten pounds were coined; and now, since the commencement of the present war, they are coined as low as five pounds. These five pound notes will circulate chiefly among little shop-keepers, butchers, bakers, market people, renters of small houses, lodgers, &c. All the high departments of commerce, and the affluent stations of life were already *overstocked*, as Smith expresses it, with the Bank notes. No place remained open wherein to crowd an additional quantity of Bank notes but among the class of people I have just mentioned, and the means of doing this could be best effected by coining five pound notes. This conduct has the appearance of that of an unprincipled insolvent, who, when on the verge of bankruptcy to the amount of many thousands, will borrow as low as five pounds of the servants in his house, and break the next day.

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\* Part of the inscription on an English Guinea.

But whatever momentary relief or aid the Minister and his bank might expect from this low contrivance of five pound notes, it will increase the inability of the Bank to pay the higher notes, and hasten the destruction of all; for even the small taxes that used to be paid in money, will now be paid in these notes, and the Bank will soon find itself with scarcely any other money than what the hair powder guinea tax brings in.

The Bank notes make the most serious part of the business of finance; what is called the national funded debt is but a trifle when put in comparison with it; yet the case of the Bank notes has never been touched upon. But it certainly ought to be known upon what authority, whether that of the Ministers or of the Directors, and upon what foundation, such immense quantities are issued. I have stated the amount of them at sixty millions sterling; I have produced data for that estimation; and besides this, the apparent quantity of them, far beyond that of gold and silver in the nation, corroborates therewith. But were there but a third part of sixty millions, the Bank cannot pay half-a-crown in the pound; for no new supply of money, as before said, can arrive at the Bank, as all the taxes will be paid in paper.

When the funding system began, it was not doubted that the loans that had been borrowed would be repaid. Government not only propagated that belief, but it began paying them off. In time this profession came to be abandoned; and it is not difficult to see that Bank notes will march the same way; for the amount of them is only another debt under another name; and the probability is, that Mr. Pitt will at last propose funding them. In that case Bank notes will not be so valuable as French assignats. The assignats have a solid property in reserve in the national domains; Bank notes have none; and besides this, the English revenue must then sink down to what the amount of it was before the funding system began; between three and four millions. One of which the *arch-treasurer* would require for himself, and the *arch-treasurer apparent* would require three quarters of a million more to pay his debts. "*In France,*" says Sterne, "*they order these things better.*"

I have now exposed the English system of Finance to the eyes of all nations; for this work will be published in all languages. In doing this, I have done an act of justice to those numerous citizens of neutral nations who have been

imposed upon by that fraudulent system, and who have property at stake upon the event.

As an individual citizen of America, and as far as an individual can go, I have revenged (if I may use the expression without any immoral meaning) the piratical depredations committed on the American commerce by the English Government.—I have retaliated for France on the subject of Finance; and I conclude with retorting on Mr. Pitt the expression he used against France, and say, that the English System of Finance “IS ON THE VERGE,—NAY—EVEN IN THE GULPH OF BANKRUPTCY.”

THOMAS PAINE.

*Paris, 19th Germinal,  
4th year of the Republic—  
April 8, 1796.*



A  
LETTER  
TO  
GEORGE WASHINGTON,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

**The Late Treaty**

CONCLUDED BETWEEN

*GREAT BRITAIN & THE UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA,*

INCLUDING OTHER MATTERS.

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BY THOMAS PAINE.

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**London :**

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1819.

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## LETTER

TO

# GEORGE WASHINGTON,



*Paris, August 3, 1796.*

As censure is but awkwardly softened by apology, I shall offer you no apology for this letter. The eventful crisis to which your double politics have conducted the affairs of your country, requires an investigation uncramped by ceremony.

There was a time when the fame of America, moral and political, stood fair and high in the world. The lustre of her revolution extended itself to every individual, and to be a citizen of America, gave a title to respect in Europe. Neither meanness nor ingratitude had been mingled in the composition of her character. Her resistance to the attempted tyranny of England left her unsuspected of the one, and her open acknowledgment of the aid she received from France precluded all suspicion of the other. The politics of Washington had not then appeared.

At the time I left America (April 1787) the continental Convention, that formed the federal constitution, was on the point of meeting. Since that time new schemes of politics and new distinctions of parties, have arisen. The term *Anti-federalist* has been applied to all those who combated the defects of that constitution, or opposed the measures of your administration. It was only to the absolute necessity of establishing some federal authority, extending equally over all the States, that an instrument so inconsistent as the present federal constitution is, obtained

a suffrage. I would have voted for it myself, had I been in America, or even for a worse rather than have had none, provided it contained the means of remedying its defects by the same appeal to the people, by which it was to be established. It is always better policy to leave removeable errors to expose themselves, than to hazard too much in contending against them theoretically.

I have introduced these observations, not only to mark the general difference between Anti-federalist and Anti-constitutionalist, but to preclude the effect, and even the application, of the former of these terms to myself. I declare myself opposed to several matters in the constitution, particularly to the manner in which what is called the executive is formed, and to the long duration of the senate ; and if I live to return to America, I will use all my endeavours to have them altered. I also declare myself opposed to almost the whole of your administration ; for I know it to have been deceitful, if not perfidious, as I shall shew in the course of this letter. But as to the point of consolidating the States into a federal Government, it so happens, that the proposition for that purpose came originally from myself. I proposed it in a letter to Chancellor Livingston in the spring of the year 1782, whilst that gentleman was Minister for foreign affairs. The five per cent duty recommended by congress had then fallen through, having been adopted by some of the States, altered by others, rejected by Rhode Island, and repealed by Virginia, after it had been consented to. The proposal in the letter I allude to, was to get over the whole difficulty at once, by annexing a continental legislative body to Congress ; for in order to have any law of the Union uniform, the case could only be, that either Congress, as it then stood, must frame the law, and the States severally adopt it without alteration, or, the States must erect a continental legislature for the purpose. Chancellor Livingston, Robert Morris, Governor Morris, and myself, had a meeting at the house of Robert Morris on the subject of that letter. There was no diversity of opinion on the proposition for a continental legislature : the only difficulty was on the manner of bringing the proposition forward. For my own part, as I considered it as a remedy in reserve, that could be applied at any time *when the States saw themselves wrong enough to be put right*, (which did not appear to be the case at that time) I did not see the propriety of urging it precipitately, and declined being the publisher of it myself. After this ac-

count of a fact, the leaders of your party will scarcely have the hardiness to apply to me the term of Anti-federalist. But I can go to a date and to a fact beyond this, for the proposition for electing a continental convention. To form the Continental Government, is one of the subjects treated of in the pamphlet *Common Sense*.

Having thus cleared away a little of the rubbish that might otherwise have lain in my way, I return to the point of time at which the present federal constitution and your administration began. It was very well said by an anonymous writer in Philadelphia, about a year before that period, that "*thirteen staves and never a hoop will not make a barrel*, and as any kind of hooping the barrel, however defectively executed, would be better than none, it was scarcely possible but that considerable advantages must arise from the federal hooping of the States. It was with pleasure that every sincere friend to America beheld as the natural effect of union, her rising prosperity, and it was with grief they saw that prosperity mixed, even in the blossom, with the germ of corruption. Monopolies of every kind marked your administration almost in the moment of its commencement. The lands obtained by the revolution were lavished upon partizans; the interest of the disbanded soldier was sold to the speculator; injustice was acted under the pretence of faith; and the chief of the army became the patron of the fraud. From such a beginning what else could be expected, than what has happened? A mean and servile submission to the insults of one Nation; treachery and ingratitude to another.

Some vices make their approach with such a splendid appearance, that we scarcely know to what class of moral distinctions they belong. They are rather virtues corrupted than vices originally. But meanness and ingratitude have nothing equivocal in their character. There is not a trait in them that renders them doubtful. They are so originally vice, that they are generated in the dung of other vices, and crawl into existence with the filth upon their backs. The fugitives have found protection in you, and the levee-room is their place of rendezvous.

As the federal constitution is a copy, though not quite so base as the original, of the form of the British Government, an imitation of its vices was naturally to be expected. So intimate is the connection between *form* and *practice*, that to adopt the one is to invite the other. Imitation is na-

turally progressive, and is rapidly so in matters that are vicious.

Soon after the federal constitution arrived in England, I received a letter from a female literary correspondent (a native of New York) very well mixed with friendship, sentiment, and politics. In my answer to that letter, I permitted myself to ramble into the wilderness of imagination, and to anticipate what might hereafter be the condition of America. I had no idea that the picture I then drew was realizing so fast, and still less that Mr. Washington was hurrying it on. As the extract I allude to is congenial with the subject I am upon, I here transcribe it:

“ You touch me on a very tender point, when you say, *that my friends on your side the water cannot be reconciled to the idea of my abandoning America even for my native England.* They are right. I had rather see my horse, Button, eating the grass of Bordentown or Morrissania, than see all the pomp and show of Europe.

“ A thousand years hence, for I must indulge a few thoughts, perhaps in less, America may be what England now is. The innocence of her character, that won the hearts of all Nations in her favour, may sound like a romance, and her inimitable virtue as if it had never been. The ruins of that liberty, which thousands bled to obtain, may just furnish materials for a village tale; or extort a sigh from rustic sensibility; while the fashionable of that day, enveloped in dissipation, shall deride the principle, and deny the fact.

“ When we contemplate the fall of empires, and the extinction of the Nations of the ancient world, we see but little more to excite our regret than the mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent monuments, lofty pyramids, and walls and towers of the most costly workmanship: but when the empire of America shall fall, the subject for contemplative sorrow will be infinitely greater than crumbling brass, or marble can inspire. It will not then be said, Here stood a temple of vast antiquity, here rose a Babel of invisible height, or there a Palace of sumptuous extravagance; but, Here, ah painful thought! the noblest work of human wisdom, the greatest scene of human glory, the fair cause of freedom, rose and fell: Read this, and then ask if I forget America.”

Impressed as I was, with apprehensions of this kind, I

had America constantly in my mind in all the publications I afterwards made. The First, and still more, the Second Part of the *Rights of Man*, bear evident marks of this watchfulness; and the *Dissertation on First Principles of Government* goes more directly to the point than either of the former. I now pass on to other subjects.

It will be supposed by those into whose hands this letter may fall, that I have some personal resentment against you; and I will therefore settle this point before I proceed further.

If I have any resentment, you must acknowledge that I have not been hasty in declaring it, neither would it now be declared (for what are private resentments to the public?) if the cause of it did not unite itself as well with your public as with your private character, and with the motives of your political conduct.

The part I acted in the American revolution is well known. I shall not here repeat it. I know also, that, had it not been for the aid received from France, in men, money, and ships, your cold and unmilitary conduct (as I shall shew in the course of this letter) would in all probability have lost America; at least she would not have been the independent Nation she now is. You slept away your time in the field, till the finances of the country were completely exhausted, and you have but little share in the glory of the final event. It is time, Sir, to speak the undisguised language of historical truth.

Elevated to the chair of the presidency, you assumed the merit of every thing to yourself; and the natural ingratitude of your constitution began to appear. You commenced your presidential career by encouraging and swallowing the grossest adulation; and you travelled America from one end to the other to put yourself in the way of receiving it. You have as many addresses in your chest as James the Second. As to what were your views, for if you are not great enough to have ambition you are little enough to have vanity, they cannot be directly inferred from expressions of your own; but the partizans of your politics have divulged the secret.

John Adams has said, (and John it is known was always a speller after places and offices, and never thought his little services were highly enough paid,)—John has said, that as Mr. Washington had no child, the presidency should be made hereditary in the family of Lund Washington. John might then have counted upon some sinecure for himself,

and a provision for his descendants. He did not go so far as to say also, that the vice presidency should be hereditary in the family of John Adams. He prudently left that to stand on the ground, that one good turn deserves another.\*

John Adams is one of those men who never contemplated the origin of Government, or comprehended any thing of first principles. If he had, he might have seen, that the right to set up and establish hereditary Government, never did, and never can, exist in any generation at any time whatever; that it is of the nature of treason, because it is an attempt to take away the rights of all the minors living at that time, and of all succeeding generations. It is of a degree beyond common treason; it is a sin against nature. The equal rights of every generation is a fixed right in the nature of things; it belongs to the son when of age, as it belonged to the father before him. John Adams would himself deny the right that any former deceased generation could have to decree authoritatively a succession of governors over him or over his children, and yet he assumes a pretended right, treasonable as it is, of acting it himself. His ignorance is his best excuse.

John Jay has said, (and this John was always the sycophant of every thing in power, from Mr. Girard in America, to Grenville in England)—John Jay has said, that the senate should have been appointed for life. He would then have been sure of never wanting a lucrative appointment for himself, and have had no fears about impeachment. These are the disguised traitors that call themselves federalists.†

Could I have known to what degree of corruption and perfidy the administrative part of the Government of America had descended, I could have been at no loss to have understood the reservedness of Mr. Washington towards me during my imprisonment in the Luxembourg. There are cases in which silence is a loud language. I will here explain the cause of that imprisonment, and return to Mr. Washington afterwards.

In the course of that rage, terror, and suspicion, which the brutal letter of the Duke of Brunswick first started into existence in France, it happened that almost every man

\* Two persons to whom John Adams said this, told me of it. The secretary of Mr. Jay was present when it was told to me.

† If Mr. John Jay desires to know on what authority I say this, I will give that authority publicly when he chuses to call for it.



who was opposed to violence, or who was not violent himself, became suspected. I had constantly been opposed to every thing which was of the nature, or of the appearance of violence; but as I had always done it in a manner that shewed it to be a principle founded in my heart, and not a political manœuvre, it precluded the pretence of accusing me. I was reached, however, under another pretence.

A decree was passed to imprison all persons born in England; but as I was a member of the Convention, and had been complimented with the honorary style of citizen of France, as Mr. Washington and some other Americans have been, this decree fell short of reaching me. A motion was afterwards made and carried, supported chiefly by Bourdon de l'Oise, for expelling foreigners from the Convention. My expulsion being thus effected, the two committees of public safety and of general surety, of which Robespierre was the dictator, put me in arrestation under the former decree for imprisoning persons born in England. Having thus shewn under what pretence the imprisonment was effected, I come to speak of such parts of the case as apply between me and Mr. Washington, either as a president, or as an individual.

I have always considered that a foreigner, such as I was in fact, with respect to France, might be a member of a convention for framing a constitution, without affecting his right of citizenship, in the country to which he belongs, but not a member of a Government after a constitution is formed; and I have uniformly acted upon this distinction. To be a member of a Government requires a person being in allegiance with that Government and to the country locally. But a constitution, being a thing of principle, and not of action, and which after it is formed, is to be referred to the people for their approbation or rejection, does not require allegiance in the persons forming and proposing it; and besides this, it is only to the thing after it is formed and established, and to the country after its Governmental character is fixed by the adoption of a constitution, that the allegiance can be given. No oath of allegiance or of citizenship was required of the members who composed the Convention: there was nothing existing in form to swear allegiance to. If any such condition had been required, I could not, as a citizen of America, in fact, though citizen of France by compliment, have accepted a seat in the Convention.

As my citizenship in America was not altered or diminished by any thing I had done in Europe (on the contrary, it ought to have been considered as strengthened, for it was the American principle of Government that I was endeavouring to spread in Europe), and as it is the duty of every Government to charge itself with the care of any of its citizens who may happen to fall under an arbitrary persecution abroad, (and this is also one of the reasons for which ambassadors or ministers are appointed,) it was the duty of the executive department in America, to have made, at least some enquiries about me, as soon as it heard of my imprisonment. But if this had not been the case, that Government owed it to me on every ground and principle of honour and gratitude. Mr. Washington owed it to me on every score of private acquaintance, I will not now say friendship; for it has some time been known by those who know him, that he has no friendships, that he is incapable of forming any; he can serve or desert a man, or a cause, with constitutional indifference; and it is this cold hermaphrodite faculty that imposed itself upon the world, and was credited awhile by enemies, as by friends, for prudence, moderation, and impartiality.

Soon after I was put into arrestation, and imprisonment in the Luxembourg, the Americans who were then in Paris, went in a body to the bar of the Convention to reclaim me. They were answered by the then President Vadier, who has since absconded, that *I was born in England*, and it was signified to them, by some of the Committee of General Surety, to whom they were referred (I have been told it was Billaud Varennes), that their reclamation of me was only the act of individuals, without any authority from the American Government.

A few days after this, all communication between persons imprisoned, and any person without the prison, was cut off by an order of the police. I neither saw nor heard from any body for six months; and the only hope that remained to me was, that a new Minister would arrive from America to supersede Morris, and that he would be authorized to inquire into the cause of my imprisonment; but even this hope, in the state to which matters were daily arriving, was too remote to have any consolatory effect, and I contented myself with the thought that I might be remembered when it would be too late. There is, perhaps, no condition from which a man, conscious of his own uprightness,

cannot derive consolation; for it is in itself a consolation for him to find, that he can bear that condition with calmness and fortitude.

From about the middle of March (1794) to the fall of Robespierre, July 29, (9th of Thermidor) the state of things in the prisons was a continued scene of horror. No man could count upon life for twenty-four hours. To such a pitch of rage and suspicion, were Robespierre and his committee arrived, that it seemed as if they feared to leave a man to live. Scarcely a night passed in which ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, or more, were not taken out of the prison, carried before a pretended tribunal in the morning, and guillotined before night. One hundred and sixty-nine were taken out of the Luxembourg one night, in the month of July, and one hundred and sixty of them guillotined. A list of two hundred more, according to the report in the prison, was preparing a few days before Robespierre fell. In this last list I have good reason to believe I was included. A memorandum in the hand-writing of Robespierre was afterwards produced in the Convention, by the committee to whom the papers of Robespierre were referred, in these words:

<p>“ Demander que Thomas          “ Paine soit decreté d’ac-          “ cusation pour l’interet          “ de l’Amerique, autant          “ que de la France.”</p>	<p>“ Demand that Thomas Paine,          “ be decreed of accusa-          “ tion for the interest of          “ America, as well as of          “ France.”</p>
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I had been imprisoned seven months, and the silence of the executive part of the Government of America (Mr. Washington) upon the case, and upon every thing respecting me, was explanation enough to Robespierre that he might proceed to extremities.

A violent fever which had nearly terminated my existence, was, I believe, the circumstance that preserved it. I was not in a condition to be removed, or to know of what was passing, or of what had passed, for more than a month. It makes a blank in my remembrance of life. The first thing I was informed of was the fall of Robespierre.

About a week after this, Mr. Monroe arrived to supersede Governor Morris, and as soon as I was able to write a note legible enough to be read, I found a way to convey one to him by means of the man who lighted the lamps in the prison; and whose unabated friendship to me, from whom

he had never received any service, and with difficulty accepted any recompence, puts the character of Mr. Washington to shame.

In a few days I received a message from Mr. Monroe, conveyed to me in a note from an intermediate person, with assurance of his friendship, and expressing a desire that I would rest the case in his hands. After a fortnight or more had passed, and hearing nothing farther, I wrote to a friend who was then in Paris, a citizen of Philadelphia, requesting him to inform me what was the true situation of things with respect to me. I was sure that something was the matter; I began to have hard thoughts of Mr. Washington, but I was unwilling to encourage them.

In about ten days, I received an answer to my letter, in which the writer says, "Mr. Monroe has told me that he has no order (meaning from the president, Mr. Washington) respecting you, but that he (Mr. Monroe) will do every thing in his power to liberate you; but, from what I learn from the Americans lately arrived in Paris, you are not considered, either by the American Government, or by individuals, as an American citizen."

I was now at no loss to understand Mr. Washington and his new fangled faction, and that their policy was silently to leave me to fall in France. They were rushing as fast as they could venture, without awakening the jealousy of America, into all the vices and corruptions of the British Government; and it was no more consistent with the policy of Mr. Washington, and those who immediately surrounded him, than it was with that of Robespierre or of Pitt, that I should survive. They have, however, missed the mark, and the reaction is upon themselves.

Upon the receipt of the letter just alluded to, I sent a memorial to Mr. Monroe, which the reader will find in the appendix, and I received from him the following answer. It is dated the 18th of September, but did not come to hand till about the 18th of October. I was then falling into a relapse, the weather was becoming damp and cold, fuel was not to be had, and the abscess in my side, the consequence of those things, and of want of air and exercise, was beginning to form, and has continued immoveable ever since. Here follows Mr. Monroe's letter.

"DEAR SIR, *Paris, September 18, 1794.*

"I was favoured, soon after my arrival here, with several letters from you, and more latterly with one in the character

of a memorial upon the subject of your confinement; and should have answered them at the times they were respectively written, had I not concluded, you would have calculated with certainty upon the deep interest I take in your welfare, and the pleasure with which I shall embrace every opportunity in my power to serve you. I should still pursue the same course, and for reasons which must obviously occur, if I did not find that you are disquieted with apprehensions upon interesting points, and which justice to you and our country equally forbid you should entertain. You mention that you have been informed you are not considered as an American citizen by the Americans, and that you have likewise heard that I had no instructions respecting you by the Government. I doubt not the person who gave you the information meant well, but I suspect he did not even convey accurately his own ideas on the first point: for I presume the most he could say is, that you had likewise become a French citizen, and which by no means deprived you of being an American one. Even this, however, may be doubted, I mean the acquisition of citizenship in France, and I confess you have said much to shew that it has not been made. I really suspect that this was all that the gentleman who wrote to you, and those Americans he heard speak upon the subject, meant. It becomes my duty, however to declare to you, that I consider you as an American citizen, and that you are considered universally in that character by the People of America. As such you are entitled to my attention; and so far as it can be given consistently with those obligations which are mutual between every Government and even a transient passenger, you shall receive it.

“ The Congress have never decided upon the subject of citizenship, in a manner to regard the present case. By being with us through the revolution, you are of our country as absolutely as if you had been born there, and you are no more of England, than every native American is. This is the true doctrine in the present case, so far as it becomes complicated with any other consideration. I have mentioned it to make you easy upon the only point which could give you any disquietude.

“ It is necessary for me to tell you how much all your countrymen, I speak of the great mass of the people, are interested in your welfare. They have not forgotten the history of their own revolution, and the difficult scenes through which they passed; nor do they review its several

stages without reviving in their bosoms a due sensibility of the merits of those who served them in that great and arduous conflict. The crime of ingratitude has not yet stained, and I trust never will stain, our national character. You are considered by them, as not only having rendered important services in our own revolution, but as being, on a more extensive scale, the friend of human rights, and a distinguished and able advocate in favour of public liberty. To the welfare of Thomas Paine, the Americans are not, nor can they be, indifferent.

“Of the sense which the President has always entertained of your merits, and of his friendly disposition towards you, you are too well assured, to require any declaration of it from me. That I forward his wishes in seeking your safety is what I well know; and this will form an additional obligation on me to perform what I should otherwise consider as a duty.

“You are, in my opinion, at present menaced by no kind of danger. To liberate you, will be an object of my endeavours, and as soon as possible. But you must, until that event shall be accomplished, bear your situation with patience and fortitude; you will likewise have the justice to recollect, that I am placed here upon a difficult theatre,\* many important objects to attend to, and with few to consult. It becomes me in pursuit of those, to regulate my conduct in respect to each, as to the manner and the time, as will, in my judgment, be best calculated to accomplish the whole.

“With great esteem and respect consider me personally your friend.

“JAMES MONROE.”

The part in Mr. Monroe's letter, in which he speaks of the President, (Mr. Washington) is put in soft language. Mr. Monroe knew what Mr. Washington had said formerly, and he was willing to keep that in view. But the fact is, not only that Mr. Washington had given no orders to Mr. Monroe as the letter stated; but he did not so much as say to him, inquire if Mr. Paine be dead or alive, in prison or out, or see if there be any assistance we can give him.

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\* This I presume alludes to the embarrassments which the strange conduct of Governor Morris had occasioned, and which, I well know had created suspicions of the sincerity of Mr. Washington.

While these matters were passing, the liberations from the prisons were numerous; from twenty to forty in the course of almost every twenty-four hours. The continuance of my imprisonment after a new Minister had arrived immediately from America, which was now more than two months, was a matter so obviously strange, that I found the character of the American Government spoken of in very unqualified terms of reproach; not only by those who still remained in prison, but by those who were liberated, and by persons who had access to the prison from without. Under these circumstances I wrote again to Mr. Monroe, and found occasion to say, among other things, "It will not add to the popularity of Mr. Washington, to have it believed in America, as it is believed here, that he contributes at my imprisonment."

The case, so far as it respected Mr. Monroe, was, that having to get over the difficulties, which the strange conduct of Governor Morris had thrown in the way of a successor, and having no authority from the American Government, to speak officially upon any thing relating to me, he found himself obliged to proceed by unofficial means with individual members; for though Robespierre was overthrown, the Robespierrian members of the Committee of Public Safety, still remained in considerable force, and had they found out that Mr. Monroe had no official authority upon the case, they would have paid little or no regard to his reclamation of me. In the mean time my health was suffering exceedingly, the dreary prospect of winter was coming on; and imprisonment was still a thing of danger. After the Robespierrian members of the Committee were removed, by the expiration of their time of serving, Mr. Monroe reclaimed me, and I was liberated the 4th of November. Mr. Monroe arrived in Paris the beginning of August before. All that period of my imprisonment, at least, I owe not to Robespierre, but to his colleague in projects, George Washington. Immediately upon my liberation, Mr. Monroe invited me to his house, where I remained more than a year and a half; and I speak of his aid and friendship, as an open-hearted man will always do in such a case, with respect and gratitude.

Soon after my liberation, the Convention passed an unanimous vote, to invite me to return to my seat among them. The times were still unsettled and dangerous, as well from without as within, for the coalition was unbroken, and the constitution not settled. I chose, however, to accept the

invitation: for as I undertake nothing but what I believe to be right, I abandon nothing that I undertake; and I was willing also to shew, that, as I was not of a cast of mind, to be deterred by prospects, or retrospects, of danger, so neither were my principles to be weakened by misfortune or perverted by disgust.

Being now once more abroad in the world, I began to find that I was not the only one who had conceived an unfavourable opinion of Mr. Washington; it was evident that his character was on the decline as well among Americans, as among foreigners of different Nations. From being the chief of the Government, he had made himself the chief of a party; and his integrity was questioned, for his politics had a doubtful appearance. The mission of Mr. Jay, to London, notwithstanding there was an American Minister there already, had then taken place, and was beginning to be talked of. It appeared to others, as it did to me, to be enveloped in mystery, which every day served either to increase or to explain into matter of suspicion.

In the year 1790, or about that time, Mr. Washington, as president, had sent Governor Morris to London, as his secret agent, to have some communication with the British Ministry. To cover the agency of Morris it was given out, I know not by whom, that he went as an agent from Robert Morris, to borrow money in Europe, and the report was permitted to pass uncontradicted. The event of Morris's negotiation was, that Mr. Hammond was sent Minister from England to America, Pinkney from America to England, and himself Minister to France. If, while Morris was Minister in France, he was not an emissary of the British Ministry and the coalesced powers, he gave strong reason to suspect him of it. No one who saw his conduct, and heard his conversation, could doubt his being in their interest; and had he not got off at the time he did, after his recal, he would have been in arrestation. Some letters of his had fallen into the hands of the Committee of Public Safety, and enquiry was making after him.

A great bustle has been made by Mr. Washington about the conduct of Genet in America, whilst that of his own Minister, Morris, in France, was infinitely more reproachable. If Genet was imprudent or rash, he was not treacherous; but Morris was all three. He was the enemy of the French revolution, in every stage of it. But notwithstanding this conduct on the part of Morris, and the known



profligacy of his character, Mr. Washington, in a letter he wrote to him at the time of recalling him on the complaint and request of the Committee of Public Safety, assures him, that though he had complied with that request, he still retained the same esteem and friendship for him as before. This letter, Morris was foolish enough to tell of; and, as his own character and conduct were notorious, the telling of it could have but one effect, which was that of implicating the character of the writer. Morris still loiters in Europe, chiefly in England; and Mr. Washington is still in correspondence with him.—Mr. Washington ought, therefore, to expect, especially since his conduct in the affairs of Jay's treaty, that France must consider Morris and Washington as men of the same description. The chief difference, however, between the two is (for in politics there is none) that the one is profligate enough to profess an indifference about moral principles, and the other is prudent enough to conceal the want of them.

About three months after I was at liberty, the official note of Jay to Grenville, on the subject of the capture of American vessels by the British cruisers, appeared in the American papers that arrived at Paris. Every thing was of a piece—every thing was mean. The same kind of character went to all circumstances public or private. Disgusted at this national degradation, as well as at the particular conduct of Mr. Washington to me, I wrote to him (Mr. Washington) on the twenty-second of February, 1795, under cover to the then Secretary of State (Mr. Randolph) and entrusted the letter to Mr. Letombe, who was appointed French consul to Philadelphia, and was on the point of taking his departure. When I supposed Mr. Letombe had sailed, I mentioned the letter to Mr. Monroe, and as I was then in his house, I shewed it to him. He expressed a wish that I would recal it, which he supposed might be done, as he had learned that Mr. Letombe had not then sailed. I agreed to do so, and it was returned by Mr. Letombe under cover to Mr. Monroe. The letter, will, however, now reach Mr. Washington publicly in the course of this work.

About the month of September following, I had a severe relapse, which gave occasion to the report of my death. I had felt it coming on a considerable time before, which occasioned me to hasten the work I had then on hand, *The Second Part of the Age of Reason*. When I had finished

the work, I bestowed another letter on Mr. Washington, which I sent under cover to Mr. Franklin Bache, of Philadelphia. The letter was as follows:

“ TO GEORGE WASHINGTON,

“ PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

“ *Paris, September 20, 1795.*

“ SIR,

“ I HAD written you a letter by Mr. Letombe, French consul, but, at the request of Mr. Monroe, I withdrew it, and the letter is still by me. I was the more easily prevailed upon to do this, as it was then my intention to have returned to America the latter end of the present year (1795;) but the illness I now suffer prevents me. In case I had come, I should have applied to you for such parts of your official letters (and your private ones, if you had chosen to give them) as contained any instructions or directions either to Mr. Monroe, or to Mr. Morris, or to any other person, respecting me; for after you were informed of my imprisonment in France, it was incumbent on you to have made some enquiry into the cause, as you might very well conclude that I had not the opportunity of informing you of it. I cannot understand your silence upon this subject upon any other ground, than as connivance at my imprisonment; and this is the manner it is understood here, and will be understood in America, unless you will give me authority for contradicting it. I therefore write you this letter, to propose to you to send me copies of any letters you have written, that I may remove this suspicion. In the preface to the Second Part of the *Age of Reason*, I have given a memorandum from the hand-writing of Robespierre, in which he proposed a decree of accusation against me, “ *for the interest of America as well as of France.*” He could have no cause for putting America in the case, but by interpreting the silence of the American Government into connivance and consent. I was imprisoned on the ground of being born in England; and your silence in not enquiring the cause of that imprisonment, and reclaiming me against it, was tacitly giving me up. I ought not to have suspected you of treachery; but whether I recover from the illness I now suffer, or not, I shall continue to think you treacherous, till you give me cause to think otherwise. I am sure you would have found yourself more at your ease, had you

acted by me as you ought; for whether your desertion of me was intended to gratify the English Government, or to let me fall into destruction in France, that you might exclaim the louder against the French revolution; or whether you hoped by my extinction to meet with less opposition in mounting up the American Government; either of these will involve you in reproach you will not easily shake off.

“ THOMAS PAINE.”

Here follows the letter above alluded to, which had been withdrawn :

“ TO GEORGE WASHINGTON,

“ PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

“ *Paris, February 22, 1795.*

“ SIR,

“ As it is always painful to reproach those one would wish to respect, it is not without some difficulty that I have taken the resolution to write to you. The danger to which I have been exposed cannot have been unknown to you, and the guarded silence you have observed upon that circumstance, is what I ought not to have expected from you, either as a friend or as President of the United States.

“ You knew enough of my character, to be assured that I could not have deserved imprisonment in France; and, without knowing any thing more than this, you had sufficient ground to have taken some interest for my safety. Every motive arising from recollection ought to have suggested to you the consistency of such a measure. But I cannot find that you have so much as directed any enquiry to be made whether I was in prison or at liberty, dead or alive; what the cause of that imprisonment was, or whether there was any service or assistance you could render. Is this what I ought to have expected from America, after the part I have acted towards her? Or will it redound to her honour or to your's that I tell the story? I do not hesitate to say that you have not served America with more fidelity, or greater zeal, or more disinterestedness, than myself, and perhaps not with better effect. After the revolution of America had been established, you rested at home to partake its advantages, and I ventured into new scenes of difficulty to extend the principles which that revolution had

produced. In the progress of events, you beheld yourself a President in America, and me a prisoner in France; you folded your arms, forgot your friend, and became silent.

“As every thing I have been doing in Europe was connected with my wishes for the prosperity of America, I ought to be the more surprised at this conduct on the part of her Government. It leaves me but one mode of explanation, which is, *that every thing is not as it ought to be amongst you*, and that the presence of a man who might disapprove, and who had credit enough with the country to be heard and believed, was not wished for. This was the operating motive with the despotic faction that imprisoned me in France, (though the pretence was, that I was a foreigner) and those that have been silent and inactive towards me in America; appear to me to have acted from the same motive. It is impossible for me to discover any other.

“After the part I have taken in the revolution of America, it is natural that I feel interested in whatever relates to her character and prosperity. Though I am not on the spot to see what is immediately acting there, I see some part of what she is acting in Europe. For your own sake, as well as for that of America, I was both surprised and concerned at the appointment of Governor Morris, to be Minister to France. His conduct has proved, that the opinion I had formed of that appointment was well founded. I wrote that opinion to Mr. Jefferson at the time, and I was frank enough to say the same thing to Morris, that *it was an unfortunate appointment*. His prating, insignificant pomposity rendered him at once offensive, suspected and ridiculous; and his total neglect of all business had so disgusted the Americans, that they proposed drawing up a protest against him. He carried this neglect to such an extreme, that it was necessary to inform him of it; and I asked him one day, *if he did not feel himself ashamed to take the money of the country, and do nothing for it?* but Morris is so fond of profit and voluptuousness, that he cares nothing about character. Had he not been removed at the time he was, I think his conduct would have precipitated the two countries into a rupture; and in this case, hated *systematically* as America is, and ever will be, by the British Government, and at the same time suspected by France, the commerce of America would have fallen a prey to both.

If the inconsistent conduct of Morris exposed the interest of America to some hazard in France, the pusillanimous conduct of Mr. Jay in England has rendered the American

Government contemptible in Europe. Is it possible that any man, who has contributed to the independence of America, and to free her from the tyranny and injustice of the British Government, can read without shame and indignation the note of Jay to Grenville? It is a satire upon the Declaration of Independence, and an encouragement to the British Government to treat America with contempt. At the time this Minister of petitions was acting this miserable part, he had every means in his hands to enable him to have done his business as he ought. The success or failure of his mission depended upon the success or failure of the French arms. Had France failed, Mr. Jay might have put his humble petition in his pocket, and gone home. The case happened to be otherwise, and he has sacrificed the honour, and perhaps the advantage of it, by turning petitioner. I take it for granted, that he was sent over to demand indemnification for the captured property; and, in this case, if he thought he wanted a preamble to his demand, he might have said, "That, though the Government of England might suppose itself under the necessity of seizing American property bound to France, yet that supposed necessity could not preclude indemnification to the proprietors, who, acting under the authority of their own Government, were not accountable to any other." But Mr. Jay sets out with an implied recognition of the right of the British Government to seize and condemn; for he enters his complaint against the *irregularity* of the seizures, and the condemnation, as if they were reprehensible only by not being conformable to the terms of the proclamation under which they were seized. Instead of being the envoy of a Government, he goes over like a lawyer to demand a new trial. I can hardly help thinking but that Grenville wrote that note himself and Jay signed it; for the style of it is domestic, and not diplomatic. The term, *his Majesty*, used without any descriptive epithet, always signifies the King whom the Minister represents. If this sinking of the demand into a petition was a juggle between Grenville and Jay to cover the indemnification, I think it will end in another juggle, that of never paying the money; and be made use of afterwards to preclude the right of demanding it: for Mr. Jay has virtually disowned the right by appealing to the *magnanimity of his Majesty against the capturers*. He has made this magnanimous Majesty the umpire in the case, and the Government of the United States must abide by the decision. If, Sir, I turn

some part of this business into ridicule, it is to avoid the unpleasant sensation of serious indignation.

“Among other things which I confess I do not understand, is your proclamation of neutrality. This has always appeared to me as an assumption on the part of the executive. But passing this over, as a disputable case, and considering it only as political, the consequence has been that of sustaining the losses of war, without the balance of reprisals. When the profession of neutrality, on the part of America, was answered by hostilities on the part of Britain, the object and intention of that neutrality existed no longer; and to maintain it after this, was not only to encourage farther insults and depredations, but was an informal breach of neutrality towards France, by passively contributing to the aid of her enemy. That the Government of England considered the American Government as pusillanimous, is evident from the increasing insolence of the conduct of the former towards the latter, till the affair of General Wayne. She then saw that it might be possible to kick a Government into some degree of spirit. So far as the proclamation of neutrality was intended to prevent a dissolute spirit of privateering in America under foreign colours, it was undoubtedly laudable; but to continue it as a Government neutrality, after the commerce of America was made war upon, was submission and not neutrality. —I have heard so much about this thing called neutrality, that I know not if the ungenerous and dishonourable silence (for I must call it such) that has been observed by your part of the Government towards me, during my imprisonment, has not in some measure arisen from that policy.

“Though I have written you this letter, you ought not to suppose it has been an agreeable undertaking to me. On the contrary, I assure you, it has caused me some disquietude. I am sorry you have given me cause to do it; for, as I have always remembered your former friendship with pleasure, I suffer a loss by your depriving me of that sentiment.

“THOMAS PAINE.”

That this letter was not written in very good temper, is very evident; but it was just such a letter as his conduct appeared to me to merit, and every thing on his part since has served to confirm that opinion. Had I wanted a commentary on his silence, with respect to my imprisonment in France, some of his faction have furnished me with it.

What I here allude to, is a publication in a Philadelphia paper, copied afterwards into a New York paper, both under the patronage of the Washington faction, in which the writer, still supposing me in prison in France, wonders at my lengthy respite from the scaffold. And he marks his politics still farther, by saying, "It appears, moreover, that the people of England did not relish his (Thomas Paine's) opinions quite so well as he expected; and that for one of his last pieces, as destructive to the peace and happiness of their country, (meaning I suppose, the *Rights of Man*) they threatened our knight-errant with such serious vengeance, that, to avoid a trip to Botany Bay, he fled over to France, as a less dangerous voyage."

I am not refuting or contradicting the falsehood of this publication, for it is sufficiently notorious; neither am I censuring the writer: on the contrary, I thank him for the explanation he has incautiously given of the principles of the Washington faction. Insignificant, however, as the piece is, it was capable of having some ill effects, had it arrived in France during my imprisonment, and in the time of Robespierre; and I am not uncharitable in supposing that this was one of the intentions of the writer.\*

I have now done with Mr. Washington on the score of private affairs. It would have been far more agreeable to me, had his conduct been such as not to have merited these reproaches. Errors, or caprices of the temper, can be pardoned and forgotten; but a cold, deliberate crime of the heart, such as Mr. Washington is capable of acting, is not to be washed away.—I now proceed to other matter.

After Jay's note to Grenville arrived in Paris from America, the character of every thing that was to follow might be easily foreseen; and it was upon this anticipation that my letter of February the twenty-second was founded. The event has proved that I was not mistaken, except that it has been much worse than I expected.

It would naturally occur to Mr. Washington, that the secrecy of Jay's mission to England, where there was already an American Minister, could not but create some suspicion in the French Government, especially as the conduct of

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\* I know not who the writer of the piece is, but some of the Americans say it is Phineas Bond, an American refugee, but now a British consul, and that he writes under the signature of Peter Skunk, or Peter Porcupine, or some such signature.

Morris had been notorious, and the intimacy of Mr. Washington with Morris was known.

The character which Mr. Washington has attempted to act in the world, is a sort of non-describable camelion-coloured thing, called Prudence. It is, in many cases, a substitute for Principle, and is so nearly allied to Hypocrisy, that it easily slides into it. His genius for prudence furnished him, in this instance, with an expedient that served (as is the natural and general character of all expedients) to diminish the embarrassments of the moment, and multiply them afterwards; for he caused it to be announced to the French Government as a confidential matter (Mr. Washington should recollect that I was a member of the Convention, and had the means of knowing what I here state)—he caused it, I say, to be announced, and that for the purpose of preventing any uneasiness to France, on the score of Mr. Jay's mission to England, that the object of that mission, and Mr. Jay's authority, were restricted to the demanding of the surrender of the western posts, and indemnification for the cargoes captured in American vessels.—Mr. Washington knows that this was untrue; and knowing this, he had good reason, to himself, for refusing to furnish the House of Representatives with copies of the instructions given to Jay, as he might suspect, among other things, that he should also be called upon for copies of instructions given to other Ministers, and that in the contradiction of instructions, his want of integrity would be detected. Mr. Washington may now perhaps learn, when it is too late to be of any use to him, that a man will pass better through the world with a thousand open errors upon his back, than in being detected in *one* sly falsehood. When one is detected, a thousand are suspected.

The first account that arrived in Paris of a treaty being negotiated by Mr. Jay (for nobody suspected any) came in an English newspaper, which announced that a treaty, *offensive and defensive*, had been concluded between the United States of America and England. This was immediately denied by every American in Paris, as an impossible thing; and though it was disbelieved by the French, it imprinted a suspicion that some underhand business was going forward. At length the treaty itself arrived, and every well-affected American blushed with shame.

It is curious to observe how the appearances of characters will change, whilst the root that produces them remains the same. The Washington faction having waded through the



slough of negociation, and, whilst it amused France with professions of friendship contrived to injure her, immediately throws off the hypocrite, and assumes the air of a swaggering bravado. The party papers of that imbecile administration were on this occasion filled with paragraphs about sovereignty. A poltroon may boast of his sovereign right to let another kick him, and this is the only kind of sovereignty shewn in the treaty with England. But those daring paragraphs, as Timothy Pickering well knows, were intended for France, without whose assistance, in men, money, and ships, Mr. Washington would have cut but a poor figure in the American war. But of his military talents I shall speak hereafter.

I mean not to enter into any discussion of any article of Jay's treaty; I shall speak only of the whole of it. It is attempted to be justified on the ground of its not being a violation of any article or articles of the treaty pre-existing with France. But the sovereign right of explanation does not lie with George Washington and his man Timothy; France, on her part, has, at least, an equal right; and when Nations dispute, it is not so much about words as about things.

A man, such as the world calls a sharper, as versed as Jay must be supposed to be in the quibbles of the law, may find a way to enter into engagements, and make bargains, in such a manner as to cheat some other party, without that party being able, as the phrase is, *to take the law of him*. This often happens in the cabalistical circle of what is called law. But when this is attempted to be acted on the national scale of treaties, it is too despicable to be defended, or to be permitted to exist. Yet this is the trick upon which Jay's treaty is founded, so far as it has relation to the treaty pre-existing with France. It is a counter-treaty to that treaty, and perverts all the great articles of that treaty to the injury of France, and makes them operate as a bounty to England, with whom France is at war. The Washington administration shews great desire that the treaty between France and the United States be preserved. Nobody can doubt its sincerity upon this matter. There is not a British Minister, a British merchant, or a British agent, or factor in America, that does not anxiously wish the same thing. The treaty with France, serves now as a passport to supply England with naval stores, and other articles of American produce; whilst the same articles, when coming to France are made contraband, or seizable, by Jay's treaty

with England. The treaty with France says, that neutral ships make neutral property, and thereby gives protection to English property on board American ships; and Jay's treaty delivers up French property on board American ships to be seized by the English. It is too paltry to talk of faith, of national honour, and of the preservation of treaties, whilst such a barefaced treachery as this stares the world in the face.

The Washington administration may save itself the trouble of proving to the French Government its most *faithful* intentions of preserving the treaty with France; for France has now no desire that it should be preserved; she had nominated an envoy extraordinary to America, to make Mr. Washington and his Government a present of the treaty, and to have no more to do with *that*, or with *him*. It was at the same time officially declared to the American Minister at Paris, *that the French Republic had rather have the American Government for an open enemy than a treacherous friend*. This, Sir, with the internal distractions caused in America, and the loss of character in the world, is the *eventful crisis* alluded to in the beginning of this Letter to which your double politics have brought the affairs of your country. It is time that the eyes of America be opened upon you.

How France would have conducted herself towards America, and American commerce, after all treaty stipulations had ceased, and under the sense of services rendered, and injuries received, I know not. It is, however, an unpleasant reflection, that in all National quarrels, the innocent, and even the friendly part of the community, become involved with the culpable and the unfriendly; and as the accounts that arrived from America, continued to manifest an invariable attachment, in the general mass of the people, to their original ally, in opposition to the new-fangled Washington faction, the resolutions that had been taken in France were suspended. It happened also, fortunately enough, that Governor Morris was not Minister at this time.

There is, however, one point that yet remains in embryo, and which, among other things, serves to shew the ignorance of Washington treaty-makers, and their inattention to pre-existing treaties, when they were employing themselves in framing or ratifying the new treaty with England.

The second article of the treaty of commerce between the United States and France, says, "The Most Christian

“ King and the United States, engage mutually not to grant  
“ any particular favour to other Nations, in respect to  
“ commerce and navigation, that shall not immediately  
“ become common to the other party, who shall enjoy the  
“ same favour freely, if the concession was freely made, or  
“ on allowing the same compensation if the concession was  
“ conditional.”

All the concessions, therefore, made to England by Jay's treaty are, through the medium of this second article in the pre-existing treaty, made to France, and become engrafted into the treaty with France, and can be exercised by her as a matter of right, the same as by England.

Jay's treaty makes a concession to England, and that unconditionally, of seizing naval stores in American ships, and condemning them as contraband. It makes also a concession to England to seize provisions and *other articles* in American ships. *Other articles*, are *all other articles*; and none but an ignoramus, or something worse, would have put such a phrase into a treaty. The condition annexed to this case is, that the provisions and other articles so seized, are to be paid for at a price to be agreed upon. Mr. Washington, as president, ratified this treaty after he knew the British Government had recommenced an indiscriminate seizure of provisions, and of all other articles in American ships: and it is now known that those seizures were made to fit out the expedition going to Quiberon Bay, and it was known beforehand that they would be made. The evidence goes also a good way to prove that Jay and Grenville understood each other upon that subject. Mr. Pinkney, when he passed through France in his way to Spain, spoke of the recommencement of the seizures as a thing that would take place. The French Government had by some means received information from London to the same purpose, with the addition, that the recommencement of the seizures would cause no misunderstanding between the British and American Governments. Grenville, in defending himself against the Opposition in Parliament, on account of the scarcity of corn, said (see his speech at the opening of the parliament that met October 29, 1795) that *the supplies for the Quiberon expedition were furnished out of the American ships*, and all the accounts received at that time from England stated that those seizures were made under the treaty. After the supplies for the Quiberon expedition had been procured, and the expected success had failed, the seizures were counter-

manded ; and had the French seized provision vessels going to England, it is probable that the Quiberon expedition could not have been attempted.

In one point of view, the treaty with England operates as a loan to the English Government. It gives permission to that Government to take American property at sea, to any amount and pay for it when it suits her ; and, besides this, the treaty is in every point of view a surrender of the rights of American commerce and navigation, and a refusal to France of the rights of neutrality. The American flag is not now a neutral flag to France ; Jay's treaty of surrender gives a monopoly of it to England.

On the contrary, the treaty of commerce between America and France was formed on the most liberal principles, and calculated to give the greatest encouragement to the infant commerce of America. France was neither a carrier nor an exporter of naval stores, or of provisions ; those articles belonged wholly to America ; and they had all the protection in that treaty which a treaty can give. But so much has that treaty been perverted, that the liberality of it on the part of France has served to encourage Jay to form a counter-treaty with England ; for he must have supposed the hands of France tied up by her treaty with America, when he was making such large concessions in favour of England. The injury which Mr. Washington's administration has done to the character, as well as to the commerce of America, is too great to be repaired by him. Foreign Nations will be shy of making treaties with a Government that has given the faithless example of perverting the liberality of a former treaty to the injury of the party with whom it was made.

In what a fraudulent light must Mr. Washington's character appear in the world, when his declarations and his conduct are compared together ! Here follows the letter he wrote to the Committee of Public Safety, whilst Jay was negotiating in profound secrecy this treacherous treaty :

“ George Washington, President of the United States  
 “ of America, to the representatives of the French  
 “ People, members of the Committee of Public  
 “ Safety of *the French republic, the great and good*  
 “ *friend and ally of the United States.*

“ On the intimation of the wish of the French republic  
 “ that a new Minister should be sent from the United States,

“ I resolved to manifest my sense of the readiness with  
 “ which *my* request was fulfilled (that of recalling Genet,) *by immediately fulfilling the request of your Government*  
 “ (that of recalling Morris.)

“ It was some time before a character could be obtained  
 “ worthy of the high office of expressing the attachment  
 “ of the United States to the happiness of our allies, *and*  
 “ *drawing closer the bonds of our friendship.* I have now  
 “ made choice of James Monroe, one of our distinguished  
 “ citizens, to reside near the French republic, in quality of  
 “ Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America.  
 “ He is instructed to bear to you our *sincere solicitude for*  
 “ *your welfare, and to cultivate with zeal the cordiality so*  
 “ *happily subsisting between us.* From a knowledge of  
 “ his fidelity, probity, and good conduct, I have entire con-  
 “ fidence that he will render himself acceptable to you, and  
 “ give effect to your desire of preserving and *advancing*  
 “ *on all occasions the interest and connection of the two*  
 “ *nations.* I beseech you, therefore, to give full credence  
 “ to whatever he shall say to you on the part of the United  
 “ States, and most of all, when he shall assure you that your  
 “ prosperity is an object of our affection. And I pray God  
 “ to have the French republic in his holy keeping.

“ G. WASHINGTON.”

Was it by entering into a treaty with England to surrender French property on board American ships to be seized by the English, whilst English property on board American ships was declared by the French treaty not to be seizable, *that the bonds of friendship between America and France were to be drawn closer?* Was it by declaring naval stores contraband when coming to France, whilst by the French treaty they were not contraband when going to England, *that the connection between France and America was to be advanced?* Was it by opening the American ports to the British navy in the present war, from which ports that same navy had been expelled by the aid solicited from France in the American war (and that aid gratuitously given) that the gratitude of America was to be shewn, and the solicitude spoken of in the letter demonstrated?

As the letter was addressed to the Committee of Public Safety, Mr. Washington did not expect it would get abroad in the world, or be seen by any other eye than that of Robespierre, or be heard by any other ear than that of the Committee; that it would pass as a whisper across the

Atlantic from one dark chamber to the other, and there terminate. It was calculated to remove from the mind of the Committee all suspicion upon Jay's mission to England, and in this point of view it was suited to the circumstances of the moment then passing; but as the event of that mission has proved the letter to be hypocritical, it serves no other purpose of the present moment than to shew that the writer is not to be credited. Two circumstances served to make the reading of the letter necessary in the Convention: the one was, that they who succeeded on the fall of Robespierre, found it most proper to act with publicity; the other, to extinguish the suspicions which the strange conduct of Morris had occasioned in France.

When the British treaty and the ratification of it by Mr. Washington were known in France, all further declarations from him of his good disposition, as an ally and a friend, passed for so many cyphers; but still it appeared necessary to him to keep up the farce of declarations. It is stipulated in the British treaty, that commissioners are to report, at the end of two years, on the case of *neutral ships, making neutral property*. In the mean time, neutral ships do *not* make neutral property according to the British treaty, and they *do* according to the French treaty. The preservation, therefore, of the French treaty became of great importance to England, as by that means she can employ American ships as carriers, whilst the same advantage is denied to France. Whether the French treaty could exist as a matter of right after this clandestine perversion of it, could not but give some apprehensions to the partizans of the British treaty, and it became necessary to them to make up by fine words what was wanting in good actions.

An opportunity offered to that purpose. The Convention, on the public reception of Mr. Monroe, ordered the American flag and the French flag to be displayed unitedly in the hall of the Convention. Mr. Monroe made a present of an American flag for the purpose. The Convention returned this compliment, by sending a French flag to America, to be presented by their Minister, Mr. Adet, to the American Government. This resolution passed long before Jay's treaty was known or suspected: it passed in the days of confidence;—but the flag was not presented by Mr. Adet till several months after the treaty had been ratified. Mr. Washington made this the occasion of saying some fine things to the French Minister; and the better to

get himself into tune to do this, he began by saying the finest things of himself.

"Born, Sir," said he, "in a land of liberty; *having* learned its value; *having* engaged in a perilous conflict to defend it; *having*, in a word, devoted the best years of my life to secure its permanent establishment in my own country; *my* anxious recollections, *my* sympathetic feelings, and *my* best wishes, are irresistibly excited, whenever, in any country, I see an oppressed people unfurl the banner of freedom."—Mr. Washington, having expended so many fine phrases upon himself, was obliged to invent a new one for the French, and he calls them "Wonderful people!"—The coalesced powers acknowledge as much.

It is laughable to hear Mr. Washington talk of his *sympathetic feelings*, who has always been remarked, even among his friends, for not having any. He has, however, given no proofs of any to me. As to the pompous encomiums he so liberally pays to himself on the score of the American revolution, the propriety of them may be questioned; and since he has forced them so much into notice, it is fair to examine his pretensions.

A stranger might be led to suppose, from the egotism with which Mr. Washington speaks, that himself, and himself only, had generated, conducted, completed, established, the revolution. In fine, that it was all his own doing.

In the first place, as to the political part, he had no share in it; and therefore the whole of *that* is out of the question with respect to him. There remains, then, only the military part; and it would have been prudent in Mr. Washington not to have awakened inquiry upon that subject. Fame then was cheap; he enjoyed it cheaply; and nobody was disposed to take away the laurels that, whether they were *acquired* or not, had been given.

Mr. Washington's merit consisted in constancy. But constancy was the common virtue of the revolution. Who was there that was inconstant? I know but of one military defection, that of Arnold, and I know of no political defection, among those who made themselves eminent when the revolution was formed by the Declaration of Independence. Even Silas Deane, though he attempted to defraud, did not betray.

But when we speak of military character, something more is to be understood than constancy; and something more *ought* to be understood than the Fabian system of *doing nothing*. The *nothing* part can be done by any body.

Old Mrs. Thompson, the housekeeper of head-quarters (who threatened to make sun and the *wind* shine through Rivington of New York) could have done it as well as Mr. Washington. Deborah would have been as good as Barak.

Mr. Washington had the nominal rank of commander in chief, but he was not so in fact. He had, in reality, only a separate command. He had no controul over, or direction of the army to the northward under Gates, that captured Burgoyne; or of that to the south under Greene, that recovered the southern states.\*—The nominal rank, however, of commander in chief, served to throw upon him the lustre of those actions, and to make him appear as the soul and centre of all military operations in America.

He commenced his command June 1775, during the time the Massachuset army lay before Boston, and after the affair of Bunker's Hill. The commencement of his command was the commencement of inactivity. Nothing was afterwards done, or attempted to be done, during the nine months he remained before Boston. If we may judge from the resistance made at Concord, and afterwards at Bunker's Hill, there was a spirit of enterprise at that time, which the presence of Mr. Washington chilled into cold defence. By the advantage of a good exterior he attracts respect, which his habitual silence tends to preserve; but he has not the talent of inspiring ardour in an army. The enemy removed from Boston to Halifax, in March, 1776, to wait for reinforcements from Europe, and to take a more advantageous position at New York.

The inactivity of the campaign of 1775, on the part of General Washington, when the enemy had a less force than in any other future period of the war, and the injudicious choice of positions taken by him in the campaign of 1776, when the enemy had its greatest force, necessarily produced the losses and misfortunes that marked that gloomy campaign. The positions taken were either islands, or necks of land. In the former, the enemy, by the aid of their ships, could bring their whole force against a part of General Washington's, as in the affair of Long Island; and in the latter, he might be shut up as in the bottom of a bag. This had nearly been the case at New York, and it was so in

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\* See Mr. Winterbotham's valuable History of America, lately published.



part: it was actually the case at Fort Washington; and it would have been the case at Fort Lee, if General Greene had not moved precipitately off, leaving every thing behind, and, by gaining Hackinsuch-bridge, got out of the bag of Berkin-neck.—How far Mr. Washington, as General, is blameable for these matters, I am not undertaking to determine; but they are evidently defects in military geography. The successful skirmishes at the close of that campaign (matters that would scarcely be noticed in a better state of things) make the brilliant exploits of General Washington's seven campaigns.—No wonder we see so much pusillanimity in the *President*, when we see so little enterprise in the *General*!

The campaign of 1777 became famous, not by any thing on the part of General Washington, but by the capture of General Burgoyne and the army under his command, by the northern army at Saratoga, under General Gates. So totally distinct and unconnected were the two armies of Washington and Gates, and so independent was the latter of the authority of the nominal commander in chief, that the two generals did not so much as correspond, and it was only by a letter of General (since Governor) Clinton, that General Washington was informed of that event. The British took possession of Philadelphia this year, which they evacuated the next, just time enough to save their heavy baggage and fleet of transports from capture by the French Admiral D'Estaing, who arrived at the mouth of the Delaware soon after.

The capture of Burgoyne gave an eclat in Europe to the American arms, and facilitated the alliance with France. The eclat, however, was not kept up by any thing on the part of General Washington. The same unfortunate languor that marked his entrance into the field, continued always. Discontent began to prevail strongly against him, and a party was formed in Congress, whilst sitting at York Town, in Pennsylvania, for removing him from the command of the army. The hope, however, of better times, the news of the alliance with France, and the unwillingness of shewing discontent, dissipated the matter.

Nothing was done in the campaign of 1778, 1779, 1780, in the part where General Washington commanded, except the taking Stony-Point by General Wayne. The southern States in the meantime were overrun by the enemy. They were afterwards recovered by General Greene, who had in a very great measure created the army that accomplished that

recovery. In all this General Washington had no share. The Fabian system of war, followed by him, began now to unfold itself with all its evils ; for what is Fabian war without Fabian means to support it? The finances of Congress depending wholly on emissions of paper-money, were exhausted. Its credit was gone. The continental treasury was not able to pay the expence of a brigade of waggons to transport the necessary stores to the army, and yet the sole object, the establishment of the revolution, was a thing of remote distance. The time I am now speaking of is in the latter end of the year 1780.

In this situation of things it was found not only expedient, but absolutely necessary, for Congress to state the whole case to its ally. I know more of this matter (before it came into Congress, or was known to General Washington), of its progress, and its issue, than I choose to state in this letter. Colonel John Laurens was sent to France, as an envoy extraordinary on this occasion, and by a private agreement between him and me, I accompanied him. We sailed from Boston in the Alliance frigate, February eleventh, 1781. France had already done much in accepting and paying bills drawn by Congress; she was now called upon to do more. The event of Colonel Laurens's mission, with the aid of the venerable minister, Franklin, was, that France gave in money, as a present, six millions of livres, and ten millions more as a loan, and agreed to send a fleet of not less than thirty sail of the line, at her own expence, as an aid to America. Colonel Laurens and myself returned from Brest the first of June following, taking with us two millions and a half of livres (upwards of one hundred thousand pounds sterling) of the money given, and convoying two ships with stores.

We arrived at Boston the twenty-fifth of August following. De Grasse arrived with the French fleet in the Chesapeake at the same time, and was afterwards joined by that of Barras, making thirty-one sail of the line. The money was transported in waggons from Boston to the bank of Philadelphia, of which Mr. Thomas Willing, who has since put himself at the head of the list of petitioners in favour of the British treaty, was then president. And it was by the aid of this money, and this fleet, and of Rochambeau's army, that Cornwallis was taken; the laurels of which have been unjustly given to Mr. Washington. His merit in that affair was no more than that of any other American officer.

I have had, and still have, as much pride in the American revolution as any man, or as Mr. Washington has a right to have; but that pride has never made me forgetful whence the great aid came that completed the business. Foreign aid (that of France) was calculated upon at the commencement of the revolution. It is one of the subjects treated of in the pamphlet *Common Sense*, but as a matter that could not be hoped for, unless independence was declared. The aid, however, was greater than could have been expected.

It is as well the ingratitude as the pusillanimity of Mr. Washington, and the Washington faction, that has brought upon America the loss of character she now suffers in the world, and the numerous evils her commerce has undergone, and to which it is still exposed. The British Ministry soon found out what sort of men they had to deal with, and they dealt with them accordingly; and if further explanation was wanting, it has been fully given since, in the snivelling address of the New York chamber of commerce to the President, and in that of sundry merchants of Philadelphia, which was not much better.

When the revolution of America was finally established by the termination of the war, the world gave her credit for great character; and she had nothing to do but to stand firm upon that ground. The British Ministry had their hands too full of trouble to have provoked a rupture with her, had she shewn a proper resolution to defend her rights: but encouraged as they were, by the submissive character of the American administration, they proceeded from insult to insult, till none more were left to be offered. The proposals made by Sweden and Denmark to the American Government were disregarded. I know not if so much as an answer has been returned to them. The Minister *penitentiary*, (as some of the British prints called him) Mr. Jay, was sent on a pilgrimage to London, to make all up by penance and petition. In the mean time, the lengthy and drowsy writer of the pieces signed *Camillus* held himself in reserve to vindicate *every thing*; and to sound in America the tocsin of terror upon the *inexhaustible* resources of England. Her resources, says he, are greater than those of all the other powers. This man is so intoxicated with fear and finance, that he knows not the difference between *plus* and *minus*—between a hundred pounds in hand, and a hundred pounds worse than nothing.

The commerce of America, so far as it had been established, by all the treaties that had been formed prior to that

by Jay, was free, and the principles upon which it was established were good. That ground ought never to have been departed from. It was the justifiable ground of right; and no temporary difficulties ought to have induced an abandonment of it. The case is now otherwise. The ground, the scene, the pretensions, the every thing is changed. The commerce of America is by Jay's treaty put under foreign dominion. The sea is not free for her. Her right to navigate it is reduced to the right of escaping; that is, until some ship of England or France stops her vessels, and carries them into port. Every article of American produce, whether from the sea or the land, fish, flesh, vegetable, or manufacture, is by Jay's treaty made either contraband, or seizeable. Nothing is exempt. In all other treaties of commerce, the article which enumerates the contraband articles, such as fire-arms, gunpowder, &c. is followed by another which enumerates the articles not contraband; but it is not so in Jay's treaty. There is no exempting article. Its place is supplied by the article for seizing and carrying into port: and the sweeping phrase of provisions and other *articles* includes every thing. There never was such a base and servile treaty of surrender, since treaties began to exist.

This is the ground upon which America now stands. All her rights of commerce and navigation are to begin anew, and that with loss of character to begin with. If there is sense enough left in the heart, to call a blush into the cheek, the Washington administration must be ashamed to appear. And as to you, Sir, treacherous in private friendship (for so you have been to me, and that in the day of danger) and a hypocrite in public life, the world will be puzzled to decide, whether you are an APOSTATE, or an IMPOSTOR?—Whether you have abandoned good principles, or whether you ever had any?

THOMAS PAINE.

# APPENDIX.



## MEMORIAL

OF

**Thomas Paine to Mr. Monroe,**

ALLUDED TO IN THE FOREGOING LETTER.

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*Luxembourg, September 10, 1794.*

I ADDRESS this memorial to you, in consequence of a letter I received from a friend 18th Fructidor, (Sept. 14th) in which he says,—“ Mr. Monroe has told me, that he has no “ orders (meaning from the Congress) respecting you ; but “ I am sure he will leave nothing undone to liberate you. “ But, from what I learn from all the late Americans, you “ are not considered either by the Government, or by the “ individuals, as an American citizen. You have been “ made a French citizen, which you have accepted, and “ you have further made yourself a servant of the French “ republic ; and therefore it would be out of character for “ an American Minister to interfere in their internal concerns.—You must therefore either be liberated out of compliance to America, or stand your trial, which you have a “ right to demand.”

This information was so unexpected by me, that I am at a loss how to answer it. I know not on what principle it originates ; whether from an idea, that I had voluntarily abandoned my citizenship of America for that of France, or from any article of the American Constitution applied to me.—The first is untrue with respect to any intention on my part ; and the second is without foundation, as I shall shew in the course of this memorial.

The idea of conferring honour of citizenship upon foreigners, who had distinguished themselves in propagating the principles of liberty and humanity, in opposition to despotism, war, and bloodshed, was first proposed by me to La Fayette, at the commencement of the French revolution, when his heart appeared to be warmed with those principles. My motive in making this proposal was to render the people of different Nations more fraternal than they had been, or then were. I observed that almost every branch of science had possessed itself of the exercise of this right, so far as it regarded its institution. Most of the academies and societies in Europe, and also those of America, conferred the rank of honorary member, upon foreigners eminent in knowledge, and made them, in fact, citizens of their literary or scientific republic; without affecting or anywise diminishing, their rights of citizenship in their own country, or in other societies: and why the science of Government should not have the same advantage, or why the people in one Nation should not, by their representatives, exercise the right of conferring the honour of citizenship upon individuals eminent in another Nation, without affecting *their* rights of citizenship, is a problem yet to be solved.

I now proceed to remark on that part of the letter, in which the writer says—that, “*from all he can learn from the late Americans, I am not considered in America, either by the government or by the individuals, as an American citizen.*”

In the first place I wish to ask, what is here meant by the Government of America? The members who compose the Government, are only individuals when in conversation, and who, most probably, hold very different opinions upon the subject.—Have Congress as a body made any declaration respecting me, that they now no longer consider me as a citizen? If they have not, any thing they otherwise say, is no more than the opinion of individuals, and consequently is not legal authority, or anywise sufficient authority to deprive any man of his citizenship. Besides, whether a man has forfeited his rights of citizenship, is a question not determinable by Congress, but by a court of judicature, and a jury; and must depend upon evidence, and the application of some law or article of the Constitution to the case. No such proceeding has yet been had, and consequently I remain a citizen until it be had, be that decision what it may; for there can be no such thing as a suspension of rights in the interim.

I am very well aware, and always was, of the article of the Constitution which says, as nearly as I can recollect the words, that "any citizen of the United States, who shall accept any title, place, or office, from any foreign King, Prince, or State, shall forfeit and lose his right of citizenship of the United States."

Had the article said, that *any citizen of the United States, who shall be a member of any foreign Convention, for the purpose of forming a free constitution, shall forfeit and lose the right of citizenship of the United States*, the article had been directly applicable to me; but the idea of such an article never could have entered the mind of the American Convention, and the present article is altogether foreign to the case with respect to me. It supposes a Government in active existence, and not a Government dissolved; and it supposes a citizen of America, accepting titles and offices under that Government, and not a citizen of America who gives his assistance in a Convention chosen by the people, for the purpose of forming a Government *de novo*, founded on their authority.

The late Constitution and Government of France was dissolved the 10th of August 1792. The national legislative assembly then in being, supposed itself without sufficient authority to continue its sittings, and it proposed to the departments to elect, not another legislative assembly, but a Convention for the express purpose of forming a new constitution. When the assembly were discoursing on this matter, some of the members said, that they wished to gain all the assistance possible upon the subject of free constitutions; and expressed a wish to elect and invite foreigners of any Nation to the Convention, who had distinguished themselves in defending, explaining, and propagating, the principles of liberty. It was on this occasion that my name was mentioned in the assembly. After this, a deputation from a body of the French people, in order to remove any objection that might be made against my assisting at the proposed Convention, requested the assembly, as their representatives, to give me the title of French Citizen; after which, I was elected a member of the French Convention, in four different departments, as is already known.

The case therefore is, that I accepted nothing from any King, Prince, or State; or from any Government: for France was without any Government, except what arose from common consent, and the necessity of the case. Neither did "*I make myself a servant of the French Republic*," as the

letter alluded to expresses; for at that time France was no republic not even in name. She was altogether a people in a state of revolution.

It was not until the Convention met that France was declared a republic, and monarchy abolished; soon after which a committee was elected, of which I was a member, to form a constitution, which was presented to the Convention, the fifteenth and sixteenth of February following, but was not to be taken into consideration till after the expiration of two months, and if approved of by the Convention, was then to be referred to the people for their acceptance, with such additions or amendments as the Convention should make.

In thus employing myself upon the formation of a constitution, I certainly did nothing inconsistent with the American constitution. I took no oath of allegiance to France, or any other oath whatever. I considered the citizenship they had presented me, as an honorary mark of respect paid to me not only as a friend to liberty, but as an American citizen. My acceptance of that, or the deputyship, not conferred on me by any King, Prince, or State, but by a people in a state of revolution, and contending for liberty, required no transfer of my allegiance, or of my citizenship from America to France. There I was a real citizen, paying taxes; here I was a voluntary friend, employing myself on a temporary service. Every American in Paris knew, that it was my constant intention to return to America, as soon as a constitution should be established, and that I anxiously waited for that event.

I ever must deny, that the article of the American constitution already mentioned, can be applied either verbally, intentionally, or constructively, to me. It undoubtedly was the intention of the Convention that framed it, to preserve the purity of the American republic, from being debased by foreign and foppish customs; but it never could be its intention to act against the principles of liberty, by forbidding its citizens to assist in promoting those principles in foreign countries; neither could it be its intention to act against the principles of gratitude. France had aided America in the establishment of her revolution, when invaded and oppressed by England and her auxiliaries. France in her turn was invaded and oppressed by a combination of foreign despots. In this situation I conceived it an act of gratitude in me, as a citizen of America, to render her in return the best services I could perform. I came to



France (for I was in England when I received the invitation) not to enjoy ease, emoluments, and foppish honours, as the article supposes; but to encounter difficulties and dangers in defence of liberty; and I much question whether those who now malignantly seek (for some I believe do) to turn this to my injury, would have had courage to have done the same. I am sure Governor Morris would not. He told me the second day after my arrival (in Paris,) that the Austrians and Prussians, who were then at Verdun, would be in Paris in a fortnight. I have no idea, said he, that seventy thousand disciplined troops can be stopped in their march by any power in France.

Besides the reasons I have already given for accepting the invitation to the Convention, I had another that has reference particularly to America, which I mentioned to Mr. Pinckney the night before I left London to come to Paris: "That it was to the interest of America that the system of European Governments should be changed, and placed on the same principle with her own."

It is certain that Governments upon similar systems agree better together, than those that are founded on principles discordant with each other; and the same rule holds good with respect to the people living under them. In the latter case they offend each other by pity, or by reproach; and the discordancy carries itself to matters of commerce. I am not an ambitious man, but perhaps I have been an ambitious American. I have wished to see America the *Mother Church* of Government.

I have now stated sufficient matter, to shew that the article in question is not applicable to me; and that any such application to my injury, as well in circumstances as in rights, is contrary both to the letter and intention of that article, and is illegal and unconstitutional. Neither do I believe that any jury in America, when they are informed of the whole of the case, would give a verdict to deprive me of my rights upon that article. The citizens of America, I believe, are not very fond of permitting forced and indirect explanations to be put upon matters of this kind. I know not what were the merits of the case with respect to the person who was prosecuted for acting as prize-master to a French privateer, but I know that the jury gave a verdict against the prosecution. The rights I have acquired are dear to me. They have been acquired by honourable means, and by dangerous service in the worst of times, and I cannot passively permit them to be wrested from me. I

conceive it my duty to defend them, as the case involves a constitutional and public question, which is, how far the power of the federal Government extends, in depriving any citizen of his rights of citizenship, or of suspending them.

That the explanation of national treaties belongs to Congress, is strictly constitutional; but not the explanation of the constitution itself, any more than the explanation of law in the case of individual citizens. These are altogether judiciary questions. It is, however, worth observing, that Congress, in explaining the article of the treaty with respect to French prizes and French privateers, confined itself strictly to the letter of the article. Let them explain the article of the constitution with respect to me in the same manner, and the decision, did it appertain to them, could not deprive me of my rights of citizenship, or suspend them, for I have accepted nothing from any King, Prince, State, or Government.

You will please to observe, that I speak as if the federal Government had made some declaration upon the subject of my citizenship; whereas the fact is otherwise; and your saying that you have no orders respecting me, is a proof of it. They, therefore, who propagate the report of my not being considered as a citizen of America by Government, do it to the prolongation of my imprisonment, and without authority; for Congress, *as a Government*, has neither decided upon it, nor yet taken the matter into consideration; and I request you to caution such persons against spreading such reports.—But be these matters as they may, I cannot have a doubt that you find and feel the case very different, since you have heard what I have to say, and known what my situation is, than you did before your arrival.

Painful as the want of liberty may be, it is a consolation to me to believe, that my imprisonment proves to the world, that I had no share in the murderous system that then reigned. That I was an enemy to it, both morally and politically, is known to all who had any knowledge of me; and could I have written French as well as I can English, I would publicly have exposed its wickedness, and shewn the ruin with which it was pregnant.—They who have esteemed me on former occasions, whether in America, or in Europe, will, I know, feel no cause to abate that esteem, when they reflect, that *imprisonment with preservation of character, is preferable to liberty with disgrace.*

The letter before quoted in the first page of this memorial, says, "it would be out of character for an American Minister to interfere in the internal affairs of France."—This goes on the idea that I am a citizen of France, and a member of the Convention; which is not the fact. The Convention have declared me to be a foreigner; and consequently the citizenship and the election are null and void. It also has the appearance of a decision, that the article of the constitution respecting grants made to American citizens by foreign Kings, Princes, or States, is applicable to me; which is the very point in question, and against the application of which I contend. I state evidence to the Minister, to shew that I am not within the letter or meaning of that article, that it cannot operate against me; and I apply to him for the protection that, I conceive, I have a right to ask, and to receive. The internal affairs of France are out of the question with respect to my application, or his interference. I ask it not as a citizen of France, for I am not one; I ask it not as a member of the Convention, for I am not one; both these, as before said, have been rendered null and void; I ask it not as a man against whom there is any accusation, for there is none; I ask it not as an exile from America, whose liberties I have honourably and generously contributed to establish; I ask it as a citizen of America, deprived of his liberty in France, under the plea of being a foreigner; and I ask it because I conceive I am entitled to it, upon every principle of constitutional justice and national honour.

THOMAS PAINE.



# LETTERS

TO THE

**Citizens**

OF

**THE UNITED STATES**

OF

***AMERICA,***

AFTER AN ABSENCE OF FIFTEEN YEARS.

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BY THOMAS PAINE.

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**London :**

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1819.

# CHAPTER I

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## LETTER I.

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AFTER an absence of almost fifteen years, I am again returned to the country in whose dangers I bore my share, and to whose greatness I contributed my part.

When I sailed for Europe, in the spring of 1787, it was my intention to return to America the next year, and enjoy in retirement the esteem of my friends, and the repose I was entitled to. I had stood out the storm of one revolution, and had no wish to embark in another. But other scenes and other circumstances than those of contemplated ease were allotted to me. The French Revolution was beginning to germinate when I arrived in France. The principles of it were good, they were copied from America, and the men who conducted it were honest. But the fury of faction soon extinguished the one, and sent the other to the scaffold. Of those who began that Revolution, I am almost the only survivor, and that through a thousand dangers. I owe this not to the prayers of priests, nor to the piety of hypocrites, but to the continued protection of Providence.

But while I beheld with pleasure, the dawn of liberty rising in Europe, I saw, with regret, the lustre of it fading in America. In less than two years from the time of my departure, some distant symptoms painfully suggested the idea that the principles of the Revolution were expiring on the soil that produced them. I received at that time a letter from a female literary correspondent, and in my answer to

her, I expressed my fears on that head, in the following pensive soliloquy.

“ You touch me on a very tender point, when you say that my friends on your side the water, cannot be reconciled to the idea of my abandoning America, even for my native England. They are right ; I had rather see my horse Button eating the grass of Bordentown or Morisania, than see all the pomp and shew of Europe.

“ A thousand years hence, for I must indulge a few thoughts, perhaps in less, America may be what Europe now is.—The innocence of her character that won the hearts of all nations in her favour, may sound like a romance, and her inimitable virtue as if it had never been. The ruins of that liberty for which thousands have bled, may just furnish materials for a village tale, or extort a sigh from rustic sensibility ; whilst the fashionable of that day, enveloped in dissipation, shall deride the principles and deny the fact.

“ When we contemplate the fall of empires, and the extinction of the nations of the ancient world, we see but little more to excite our regret, than the mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent monuments, lofty pyramids, and walls and towers of the most costly workmanship : but when the empire of America shall fall, the subject for contemplative sorrow will be infinitely greater than crumbling brass or marble can inspire. It will not then be said, here stood a temple of vast antiquity, here rose a Babel of invisible height, or there a palace of sumptuous extravagance ; but here ! a painful thought ! the noblest work of human wisdom—the grandest scene of human glory, the fair cause of freedom ROSE and FELL. Read this, and then ask if I forget America.”

I now know from the information I obtain upon the spot, that the impressions that then distressed me, for I was proud of America, were but too well founded.—She was turning her back on her own glory, and making hasty strides in the retrograde path of oblivion. But a spark from the altar of *Seventy-six*, unextinguished and unextinguishable through that long night of error, is again lighting up in every part of the union, the genuine flame of rational liberty.

As the French Revolution advanced, it fixed the attention of the world, and drew from the pensioned pen of Edmund Burke a furious attack. This brought me once more on the public theatre of politics, and occasioned the pamphlet *Rights of Man*. It had the greatest run of any work ever published in the English language. The number of copies



circulated in England, Scotland and Ireland, besides translations into foreign languages, was between four and five hundred thousand. The principles of that work were the same as those in *Common Sense*, and the effects would have been the same in England as that had produced in America, could the vote of the nation have been quietly taken, or had equal opportunities of consulting or acting existed. The only difference between the two works was, that the one was adapted to the local circumstances of England, and the other to those of America. As to myself, I acted in both cases alike: I relinquished to the people of England, as I had done to those of America, all profits from the work. My reward existed in the ambition to do good, and the independent happiness of my own mind.

But a faction, acting in disguise, was rising in America; they had lost sight of first principles. They were beginning to contemplate government as a profitable monopoly, and the people as hereditary property. It is, therefore, no wonder that the *Rights of Man* was attacked by that faction, and its author continually abused. But let them go on, give them rope enough, and they will put an end to their own insignificance. There is too much common sense and independence in America to be long the dupe of any faction, foreign or domestic.

But, in the midst of the freedom we enjoy, the licentiousness of the papers called federal (and I know not why they are called so, for they are in their principles anti-federal and despotic,) is a dishonour to the character of the country, and an injury to its reputation and importance abroad. They represent the whole people of America as destitute of public principle and private manners. As to any injury they can do at home to those whom they abuse, or service they can render to those who employ them, it is to be set down to the account of noisy nothingness. It is on themselves the disgrace recoils, for the reflection easily presents itself to every thinking mind, that *those who abuse liberty when they possess it would abuse power could they obtain it*; and therefore, they may as well take as a general motto, for all such papers, *We and our patrons are not fit to be trusted with power*.

There is in America, more than in any other country, a large body of people who attend quietly to their farms, or follow their several occupations, who pay no regard to the clamours of anonymous scribblers, who think for themselves, and judge of government, not by the fury of news-

paper writers, but by the prudent frugality of its measures, and the encouragement it gives to the improvement and prosperity of the country, and who, acting on their own judgment, never come forward in an election but on some important occasion.

When this body moves, all the little barkings of scribbling and witless curs pass for nothing. To say to this independent description of men, You must turn out such and such persons at the next election, for they have taken off a great many taxes, and lessened the expences of Government, they have dismissed my son, or my brother, or myself, from a lucrative office, in which there was nothing to do—is to shew the cloven foot of faction, and preach the language of ill disguised mortification. In every part of the union, this faction is in the agonies of death, and in proportion as its fate approaches, gnashes its teeth and struggles. My arrival has struck it, as with an hydrophobia, it is like the sight of water to canine madness.

As this letter is intended to announce my arrival to my friends, and to my enemies, if I have any, for I ought to have none in America, and as introductory to others that will occasionally follow, I shall close it by detailing the line of conduct I shall pursue.

I have no occasion to ask, and do not intend to accept any place or office in the Government. There is none it could give me, that would be any ways equal to the profits I could make as an author, for I have an established fame in the literary world, could I reconcile it to my principles to make money by my politics or religion; I must be in every thing what I have ever been, a disinterested volunteer; my proper sphere of action is on the common floor of citizenship, and to honest men I give my hand and my heart freely.

I have some manuscript works to publish, of which I shall give proper notice, and some mechanical affairs to bring forward, that will employ all my leisure time. I shall continue these letters as I see occasion, and as to the low party prints that choose to abuse me, they are welcome, I shall not descend to answer them. I have been too much used to such common stuff to take any notice of it. The Government of England honoured me with a thousand martyrdoms, by burning me in effigy in every town in that country, and their hirelings in America may do the same.

THOMAS PAINE.

City of Washington.

## LETTER II.

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As the affairs of the country to which I am returned are of more importance to the world, and to me, than of that I have lately left (for it is through the new world the old must be regenerated, if regenerated at all) I shall not take up the time of the reader with an account of scenes that have passed in France, many of which are painful to remember and horrid to relate, but come at once to the circumstances in which I find America on my arrival.

Fourteen years, and something more, have produced a change, at least among a part of the people, and I ask myself what it is? I meet or hear of thousands of my former connexions who are men of the same principles and friendships as when I left them. But a non-descript race, and of equivocal generation, assuming the name of *federalist*, a name that describes no character of principle good or bad, and may equally be applied to either, has since started up with the rapidity of a mushroom, and like a mushroom is withering on its rootless stalk. Are those men *federalized* to support the liberties of their country or to overturn them? To add to its fair fame, or riot on its spoils? The name contains no defined idea. It is like John Adams's definition of a republic in his letter to Mr. Wythe of Virginia. *It is, says he, an empire of laws, and not of men.* But as laws may be bad as well as good, an empire of laws may be the best of all governments or the worst of all tyrannies. But John Adams is a man of paradoxical heresies, and consequently of a bewildered mind. He wrote a book entitled, "*A defence of the American Constitutions,*" and the principles of it are an attack upon them. But the book is descended to the tomb of forgetfulness, and the best fortune that can attend its author is quietly to follow its fate. John was not born for immortality. But to return to federalism.

In the history of parties and the names they assume, it often happens, that they finish by the direct contrary prin-

ciples with which they profess to begin, and thus it has happened with federalism.

During the time of the old Congress, and prior to the establishment of the federal government, the continental belt was too loosely buckled. The several states were united in name but not in fact, and that nominal union had neither centre nor circle. The laws of one state frequently interfered with, and sometimes opposed, those of another. Commerce between state and state was without protection, and confidence without a point to rest on. The condition the country was then in was aptly described by Pelatiah Webster, when he said, "*Thirteen slaves and ne'er a hoop will not make a barrel.*"

If then by *federalist* is to be understood one who was for cementing the union by a general government operating equally over all the states, in all matters that embraced the common interest, and to which the authority of the states severally was not adequate, for no one state can make laws to bind another, if I say, by a *federalist* is meant a person of this description, (and this is the origin of the name) *I ought to stand first on the list of federalists*, for the proposition for establishing a general government over the union, came originally from me in 1783, in a written memorial to Chancellor Livingston, then secretary for foreign affairs to Congress. Robert Morris, minister of finance, and his associate Governor Morris, all of whom are now living, and we had a dinner and conference at Robert Morris's on the subject.—The occasion was as follows.

Congress had proposed a duty of five per cent. on imported articles, the money to be applied as a fund towards paying the interest of loans to be borrowed in Holland. The resolve was sent to the several states to be enacted into a law. Rhode-Island absolutely refused. I was at the trouble of a journey to Rhode Island to reason with them on the subject. Some other of the states enacted it with alterations, each one as it pleased. Virginia adopted it, and afterwards repealed it, and the affair came to nothing.

It was then visible, at least to me, that either Congress must frame the laws necessary for the union, and send them to the several states to be enregistered without any alteration, which would in itself appear like usurpation on one part, and passive obedience on the other, or some method must be devised to accomplish the same end by constitutional principles, and the proposition I made in the memorial, was, to *add a continental legislature to congress, to be elected by*

*the several states.* The proposition met the full approbation of the gentlemen to whom it was addressed, and the conversation turned on the manner of bringing it forward. Governor Morris, in walking with me after dinner, wished me to throw out the idea in the newspapers, I replied, that I did not like to be always the proposer of new things, that it would have too assuming an appearance; and besides, that *I did not think the country was quite wrong enough to be put right.* I remember giving the same reason to Dr. Rush, at Philadelphia, and to General Gates, at whose quarters I spent a day on my return from Rhode Island, and I suppose they will remember it, because the observation seemed to strike them.

But the embarrassments increasing, as they necessarily must from the want of a better cemented union, the state of Virginia proposed holding a commercial convention, and that convention, which was not sufficiently numerous, proposed that another convention, with more extensive and better defined powers, should be held at Philadelphia, May 10, 1787.

When the plan of the federal Government, formed by this convention, was proposed and submitted to the consideration of the several states, it was strongly objected to in each of them. But the objections were not on anti-federal grounds but on constitutional points. Many were shocked at the idea of placing, what is called, executive power, in the hands of a single individual. To them it had too much the form and appearance of a military Government, or a despotic one. Others objected that the powers given to a president were too great, and that in the hands of an ambitious and designing man, it might grow into tyranny, as it did in England under Oliver Cromwell, and as it has since done in France. A republic must not only be so in its principles, but in its forms. The executive part of the federal Government was made for a man, and those who consented, against their judgment, to place executive power in the hands of a single individual, reposed more on the supposed moderation of the person they had in view, than on the wisdom of the measure itself.

Two considerations, however, overcame all objections. The one was, the absolute necessity of a federal Government. The other, the rational reflection that as government in America is founded on the representative system, any error in the first essay could be reformed by the same quiet and rational process by which the constitution was formed; and

that, either by the generation then living, or by those who were to succeed. If ever America lose sight of this principle, she will no longer be the *land of liberty*. The father will become the assassin of the rights of the son, and his descendants be a race of slaves.

As many thousands who were minors are grown up to manhood since the name of *federalist* began it became necessary, for their information, to go back and shew the origin of the name, which is now no longer what it originally was; but it is the more necessary to do this, in order to bring forward, in the open face of day, the apostacy of those who first called themselves federalists.

To them it served as a cloak for treason, a mask for tyranny. Scarcely were they placed in the seat of power and office, than federalism was to be destroyed, and the representative system of Government, the pride and glory of America, and the palladium of her liberties, was to be overthrown and abolished. The next generation was not to be free. The son was to bend his neck beneath the father's foot, and live, deprived of his rights, under hereditary controul. Among the men of this apostate description, is to be ranked the ex-president *John Adams*. It has been the political career of this man to begin with hypocrisy, proceed with arrogance, and finish in contempt. May such be the fate of all such characters.

I have had doubts of John Adams ever since the year 1776. In a conversation with me at that time, concerning the pamphlet *Common Sense*, he censured it because it attacked the English form of Government. John was for independence because he expected to be made great by it; but it was not difficult to perceive, for the surliness of his temper makes him an awkward hypocrite, that his head was as full of kings, queens and knaves, as a pack of cards. But John has lost deal.

When a man has a concealed project in his brain that he wants to bring forward and fears will not succeed, he begins with it as physicians do by suspected poison, try it first on an animal; if it agree with the stomach of the animal he makes further experiments, and this was the way John took. His brain was teeming with projects to overturn the liberties of America, and the representative system of Government, and he began by hinting it in little companies. The secretary of John Jay, an excellent painter and a poor politician told me, in presence of another American, Daniel Parker that in a company where himself was present, John Adam,

talked of making the Government hereditary and that as Mr. Washington had no children, it should be made hereditary in the family of Lund Washington. John had not impudence enough to propose himself in the first instance, as the old French Normandy Baron did, who offered to come over to be King of America, and if Congress did not accept his offer, that they would give him thirty thousand pounds for the generosity of it; but John, like a mole, was grubbing his way to it under ground. He knew that Lund Washington was, unknown, for no body had heard of him, and that as the president had no children to succeed him the vice-president had, and if the treason had succeeded, and the hint with it, the goldsmith might be sent for to take measure of the head of John or of his son for a golden wig. In this case the good people of Boston might have for a king the man they have rejected as a delegate. The representative system is fatal to ambition.

Knowing, as I do, the consummate vanity of John Adams, and the shallowness of his judgment, I can easily picture to myself that when he arrived at the Federal City, he was strutting in the pomp of his imagination before the Presidential House, or in the Audience Hall, and exulting in the language of Nebuchadnezzar—"Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the honour of my Majesty!" But in that unfortunate hour, or soon after, John, like Nebuchadnezzar, was driven from among men and fled with the speed of a post horse.

Some of John Adams's loyal subjects, I see, have been to present him with an address on his birth-day; but the language they use is too tame for the occasion. Birth-day addresses, like birth-day odes, should not creep along like dew-drops down a cabbage-leaf, but roll in a torrent of poetical metaphor. I will give them a specimen for the next year. Here it is—

When an Ant, in travelling over the globe, lift up its foot, and put it again on the ground, it shakes the earth to its centre: But when YOU, the mighty Ant of the East, was born, &c. &c. &c. the centre jumped upon the surface.

This, gentlemen, is the proper stile of addresses from *well-bred* Ants to the Monarch of the Ant-hills; and as I never take pay for preaching, praying, politics or poetry, I make you a present of it. Some people talk of impeaching John Adams; but I am for softer measures. I would keep him to make fun of. He will then answer one of the ends for which he was born, and he ought to be thankful that I am

arrived to take his part. I voted in earnest to save the life of one unfortunate king, and I now vote in jest to save another. It is my fate to be always plagued with fools.— But to return to federalism and apostacy.

The plan of the leaders of the faction was to overthrow the liberties of the new world and place Government on the corrupt system of the old. They wanted to hold their power by a more lasting tenure than the choice of their constituents. It is impossible to account for their conduct, and the measures they adopted, on any other ground. But to accomplish that object a standing army and a prodigal revenue must be raised ; and to obtain these, pretences must be invented to deceive. Alarms of dangers that did not exist even in imagination, but in the direct spirit of lying, were spread abroad. Apostacy stalked through the land in the garb of patriotism, and the torch of treason blinded for a while the flame of liberty.

For what purpose could an army of twenty-five thousand men be wanted ? A single reflection might have taught the most credulous that while the war raged between France and England, neither could spare a man to invade America. For what purpose then could it be wanted ? The case carries its own explanation. It was wanted for the purpose of destroying the representative system, for it could be employed for no other. Are these men federalists ? If they are they are federalized to deceive and to destroy.

The rage against Dr. Logan's patriotic and voluntary mission to France was excited by the shame they felt at the detection of the false alarms they had circulated.—As to the opposition given by the remnant of the faction to the repeal of the taxes laid on during the former administration it is easily accounted for. The repeal of those taxes was a sentence of condemnation on those who laid them on, and in the opposition they gave in that repeal they are to be considered in the light of criminals standing on their defence, and the country has passed judgment upon them.

THOMAS PAINE.

City of Washington, Lovett's Hotel,  
Nov. 19, 1802.



### LETTER III.

---

TO ELECT, and to REJECT, is the prerogative of a free people.

Since the establishment of independence no period has arrived that so decidedly proves the excellence of the representative system of government, and its superiority over every other, as the time we now live in. Had America been cursed with John Adams's *hereditary monarchy*, or Alexander Hamilton's *senate for life*, she must have sought in the doubtful contest of civil war, what she now obtains by the expression of public will. An appeal to elections decides better than an appeal to the sword.

The reign of terror that raged in America during the latter end of the Washington administration, and the whole of that of Adams, is enveloped in mystery to me. That there were men in the Government hostile to the representative system, though it is now their overthrow, was once their boast, and therefore the fact is established against them. But that so large a mass of the people should become the dupes of those who were loading them with taxes, in order to load them with chains and deprive them of the right of election, can be ascribed only to that species of wild-fire rage, lighted up by falsehood, that not only acts without reflection, but is too impetuous to make any.

There is a general and striking difference between the genuine effects of truth itself, and the effects of falsehoods believed to be truth. Truth is naturally benign; but falsehood believed to be truth is always furious. The former delights in serenity, is mild and persuasive, and seeks not the auxiliary aid of invention. The latter sticks at nothing. It has naturally no morals. Every lie is welcome that suits its purpose. It is the innate character of the thing to act in this manner, and the criterion by which it may be known whether in politics or religion. When any thing is attempted to be supported by lying, it is presumptive evidence that the

thing so supported is a lie also. The stock on which a lie can be engrafted must be of the same species of the graft.

What is become of the mighty clamour of French invasions, and the cry that our country is in danger and taxes and armies must be raised to defend it? The danger is fled with the faction that created it, and what is worst of all, the money is fled too. It is I only that have committed the hostility of invasion, and all the artillery of pop-guns are prepared for action. *Poor fellows*, how they foam! They set half their own partisans in laughter; for among ridiculous things nothing is more ridiculous than ridiculous rage. But I hope they will not leave off. I shall lose half my greatness when they cease to lie.

So far as respects myself I have reason to believe, and a right to say, that the leaders of the reign of terror in America and the leaders of the reign of terror in France, during the time of Robespierre, were in character the same sort of men, or how is it to be accounted for, that I was persecuted by both at the same time? When I was voted out of the French Convention, the reason assigned for it was, that I was a foreigner. When Robespierre had me seized in the night and imprisoned in the Luxemburgh (where I remained eleven months) he assigned no reason for it. But when he proposed bringing me to the tribunal, which was like sending me at once to the scaffold, he then assigned a reason, and the reason was *for the interest of America as well as of France.*—" *Pour l'interet de l'Amerique autant que de la France.*" The words are in his own hand-writing and reported to the Convention by the committee appointed to examine his papers, and are printed in their report, with this reflection added to them, "*Why Thomas Paine more than another? Because he contributed to the liberty of both worlds.*"

There must have been a coalition in sentiment, if not in fact, between the terrorists of America and the terrorists of France, and Robespierre must have known it, or he could not have had the idea of putting America into the bill of accusation against me. Yet these men, these terrorists of the new world, who were waiting in the devotion of their hearts for the joyful news of my destruction, are the same banditti who are now bellowing, in all the hacknied language of hacknied hypocrisy, about humanity, and piety, and often about something they call infidelity, and they finish with the

chorus of *Crucify him, crucify him*. I am become so famous among them, they cannot eat or drink without me. I serve them as a standing-dish, and they cannot make up a bill of fare if I am not in it.

But there is one dish, and that the choicest of all, they have not yet presented on the table, and it is time they should. They have not yet *accused Providence of infidelity*. Yet, according to their outrageous piety, she must be as bad as Thomas Paine; she has protected him in all his dangers, patronised him in all his undertakings, encouraged him in all his ways, and rewarded him at last by bringing him in safety and in health to the promised land. This is more than she did by the Jews, the chosen people, that they tell us she brought out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage; for they all died in the wilderness, and Moses too.

I was one of the nine members that composed the first Committee of Constitution. Six of them have been destroyed. Syeyes and myself have survived—he by bending with the times, and I by not bending. The other survivor joined Robespierre, he was seized and imprisoned in his turn and sentenced to transportation. He has since apologized to me for having signed the warrant, by saying, he felt himself in danger and was obliged to do it.

Herault Sechelles, an acquaintance of Mr. Jefferson, and a good patriot, was my *suppliant* as member of the Committee of Constitution, that is, he was to supply my place, if I had not accepted or resigned, being next in number of votes to me. He was imprisoned in the Luxemburg with me, was taken to the tribunal and the guillotine, and I, his principal, was left.

There were two foreigners in the Convention, Anarcharsis Cloots and myself. We were both put out of the Convention by the same vote, arrested by the same order, and carried to prison together the same night. He was taken to the guillotine, and I was again left. Joel Barlow was with us when we went to prison.

Joseph Lebon, one of the vilest characters that ever existed, and who made the streets of Arras run with blood, was my *suppliant* as member of the Convention for the department of the Pas de Calais. When I was put out of the Convention he came and took my place. When I was liberated from prison and voted again into the Convention, he was sent to the same prison and took my place there, and he was

sent to the guillotine instead of me. He supplied my place all the way through.

One hundred and sixty-eight persons were taken out of the Luxemburg in one night, and a hundred and sixty of them guillotined next day, of which I now know I was to have been one; and the manner I escaped that fate is curious, and has all the appearance of accident.

The room in which I was lodged was on the ground-floor, and one of a long range of rooms under a gallery, and the door of it opened outward and flat against the wall; so that when it was open the inside of the door appeared outward, and the contrary when it was shut. I had three comrades, fellow-prisoners with me, Joseph Vanhuile, of Bruges, since president of the municipality of that town, Michael, and Robbins Bastini, of Louvain.

When persons by scores and by hundreds were to be taken out of the prison for the guillotine it was always done in the night, and those who performed that office had a private mark or signal by which they knew what rooms to go to and what number to take. We, as I have said, were four, and the door of our room was marked, unobserved by us, with that number in chalk; but it happened, if happening is a proper word, that the mark was put on when the door was open and flat against the wall, and thereby came on the inside when we shut it at night, and the destroying angel passed by it. A few days after this Robespierre fell, and Mr. Munroe arrived and reclaimed me, and invited me to his house.

During the whole of my imprisonment, prior to the fall of Robespierre, there was no time when I could think my life worth twenty-four hours, and my mind was made up to meet its fate. The Americans in Paris went in a body to the Convention to reclaim me, but without success. There was no party among them with respect to me. My only hope then rested on the Government of America that it would *remember me*. But the icy heart of ingratitude, in whatever man it be placed, has neither feeling nor sense of honour. The letter of Mr. Jefferson has served to wipe away the reproach, and done justice to the mass of the people of America.

When a party was forming, in the latter end of seventy-seven and beginning of seventy-eight, of which John Adams was one, to remove Mr. Washington from the command of the army on the complaint that *he did nothing*, I wrote the

fifth number of the Crisis, and published it at Lancaster (Congress then being at York Town, in Pennsylvania) to ward off that meditated blow: for though I well knew that the black times of seventy-six was the natural consequence of his want of military judgment in the choice of positions into which the army was put about New York and Jersey, I could see no possible advantage, and nothing but mischief, that could arise by distracting the army into parties, which would have been the case had the intended motion gone on.

General Lee, who with a sarcastic genius joined a great fund of military knowledge, was perfectly right when he said, *We have no business on islands, and in the bottom of bogs, where the enemy, by the aid of its ships, can bring its whole force against a part of ours and shut it up.* This had like to have been the case at New York, and it was the case at Fort Washington, and would have been the case at Fort Lee if General Greene had not moved instantly off on the first news of the enemy's approach. I was with Greene through the whole of that affair, and know it perfectly.

But though I came forward in defence of Mr. Washington when he was attacked, and made the best that could be made of a series of blunders that had nearly ruined the country, he left me to perish when I was in prison. But as I told him of it in his life-time, I should not now bring it up, if the ignorant impertinence of some of the federal papers, who are pushing Mr. Washington forward as their stalking-horse, did not make it necessary.

That gentleman did not perform his part in the Revolution better, nor with more honour than I did mine, and the one part was as necessary as the other. He accepted as a present (though he was already rich) a hundred thousand acres of land in America, and left me to occupy six foot of earth in France. I wish, for his own reputation, he had acted with more justice. But it was always known of Mr. Washington, by those who best knew him, that he was of such an icy and death-like constitution, that he neither loved his friends, nor hated his enemies. But, be this as it may, I see no reason that a difference between Mr. Washington and me should be made a theme of discord with other people. There are those who may see merit in both, without making themselves partisans of either, and with this reflection I close the subject.

As to the hypocritical abuse thrown out by the federalists on other subjects, I recommend to them the observ-

ance of a commandment that existed before either Christian or Jew existed.

“ Thou shalt make a covenant with thy senses,

“ With thine eye, that it behold no evil.

“ With thine ear, that it hear no evil.

“ With thy tongue, that it speak no evil.

“ With thy hands that they commit no evils.

If the Federalists will follow this commandment, they will leave off lying.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City, Lovett's Hotel,

Nov. 26, 1802.

## LETTER IV.

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As Congress is on the point of meeting, the public papers will necessarily be occupied with the debates of the ensuing session, and as in consequence of my long absence from America, my private affairs require my attendance (for it is necessary I do this, or I could not preserve, as I do, my independence,) I shall close my address to the public with this letter.

I congratulate them on the success of the late elections, and *that* with the additional confidence, that while honest men are chosen and wise measures pursued, neither the treason of apostacy, masked under the name of federalism, of which I have spoken in my second letter, nor the intrigues of foreign emissaries, acting in concert with that mask, can prevail.

As to the licentiousness of the papers calling themselves *federal*, a name that apostacy has taken, it can hurt nobody but the party or the persons who support such papers. There is naturally a wholesome pride in the public mind that revolts at open vulgarity. It feels itself dishonoured even by hearing it, as a chaste woman feels dishonour by hearing obscenity she cannot avoid. It can smile at wit, or be diverted with strokes of satirical humour, but it detests the *blackguard*. The same sense of propriety that governs in private companies, governs in public life. If a man in company runs his wit upon another, it may draw a smile from some persons present, but as soon as he turns a blackguard in his language, the company give him up; and it is the same in public life. The event of the late election shews this to be true; for in proportion as those papers have become more and more vulgar and abusive, the elections have gone more and more against the party they support, or that supports them. Their predecessor, *Porcupine*, had wit—these scribblers have none. But as soon as his *blackguardism* (for it is the proper name of it) outrun his wit,

he was abandoned by every body but the English minister that protected him.

The Spanish proverb says, "*there never was a cover large enough to hide itself*;" and the proverb applies to the case of those papers and the shattered remnant of the faction that supports them. The falsehoods they fabricate, and the abuse they circulate, is a cover to hide something from being seen, but is not large enough to hide itself. It is as a tub thrown out to the whale to prevent its attacking and sinking the vessel. They want to draw the attention of the public from thinking about, or inquiring into, the measures of the late administration, and the reason why so much public money was raised and expended; and so far as a lie to-day, and a new one to-morrow, will answer this purpose, it answers theirs. It is nothing to them whether they be believed or not, for if the negative purpose be answered the main point is answered to them.

He that picks your pocket always tries to make you look another way. "Look," says he, "at yon man t'other side the street—what a nose he has got!—Lord, yonder is a chimney on fire!—Do you see yon man going along in the salamander great coat? That is the very man that stole one of Jupiter's satellites, and sold it to a countryman for a gold watch, and it set his breeches on fire!" Now the man that has his hand in your pocket, does not care a farthing whether you believe what he says or not. All his aim is to prevent your looking at *him*; and this is the case with the remnant of the federal faction. The leaders of it have imposed upon the country, and they want to turn the attention of it from the subject.

In taking up any public matter, I have never made it a consideration, and never will, whether it be popular or unpopular—but whether it be *right or wrong*. The right will always become the popular, if it has courage to shew itself, and the shortest way is always a straight line. I despise expedients, they are the gutter-hole of politics, and the sink where reputation dies. In the present case, as in every other, I cannot be accused of using any; and I have no doubt but thousands will hereafter be ready to say, as *Governor Morris* said to me, after having abused me pretty handsomely in Congress, for the opposition I gave the fraudulent demand of *Silas Deane* of two thousand pounds sterling—"Well!—*we were all duped, and I among the rest.*"

Were the late administration to be called upon to give



reasons for the expence it put the country to, it can give none. The danger of an invasion was a bubble that served as a cover to raise taxes and armies to be employed on some other purpose. But if the people of America believed it true, the cheerfulness with which they supported those measures and paid those taxes, is an evidence of their patriotism; and if they supposed me their enemy, though in that supposition they did me injustice, it was not injustice in them. He that acts, as he believes, though he may act wrong, is not conscious of wrong.

But though there was no danger, no thanks are due to the late administration for it. They sought to blow up a flame between the two countries; and so intent were they upon this, that they went out of their way to accomplish it. In a letter which the Secretary of State, Timothy Pickering, wrote to Mr. Skipwith, the American Consul at Paris, he broke off from the official subject of his letter, to *thank God*, in very exulting language, *that the Russians had cut the French army to pieces*. Mr. Skipwith, after shewing me the letter, very prudently concealed it.

It was the injudicious and wicked acrimony of this letter and some other like conduct of the then Secretary of State, that occasioned me, in a letter to a friend in the Government, to say, that if there was any official business to be done in France, till a regular minister could be appointed, it could not be trusted to a more proper person than Mr. Skipwith.

"*He is,*" said I, "*an honest man, and will do business, and that with good manners to the Government he is commissioned to act with. A faculty which that BEAR, Timothy Pickering, wanted, and which the BEAR of that BEAR, John Adams, never possessed.*"

In another letter to the same friend in 1797, and which was put unsealed under cover to Colonel Burr, I expressed a satisfaction that Mr. Jefferson, since he was not President, had accepted the Vice-Presidency, "*for,*" said I, "*John Adams has such a talent for blundering and offending, it will be necessary to keep an eye over him.*" He has now sufficiently proved, that though I have not the spirit of prophecy, I have the gift of *judging right*. And all the world knows, for it cannot help knowing, that to judge *rightly*, and to write *clearly*, and that upon all sorts of subjects; to be able to command thought, and, as it were, to play with it at pleasure, and be always master of one's temper in writing, is the faculty only of a serene mind, and the attribute of

a happy and philosophical temperance. 'The scribblers, who know me not, and who fill their papers with paragraphs about me, besides their want of talents, drink too many slings and drams in a morning, to have any chance with me. But, poor fellows! they must do something for the little pittance they get from their employers. This is my apology for them.

My anxiety to get back to America, was great for many years. It is the country of my heart, and the place of my political and literary birth. It was the American Revolution that made me an author, and forced into action the mind that had been dormant, and had no wish for public life, nor has it now. By the accounts I received, she appeared to me to be going wrong, and that some meditated treason against her liberties lurked at the bottom of her Government. I heard that my friends were oppressed, and I longed to take my standing among them, and if "*other times to try mens' souls*" were to arrive, that I might bear my share. But my efforts to return were ineffectual.

As soon as Mr. Monroe had made a good standing with the French Government, for the conduct of his predecessor had made his reception as minister difficult, he wanted to send dispatches to his own Government by a person to whom he could confide a verbal communication, and he fixed his choice on me. He then applied to the Committee of Public Safety for a passport; but as I had been voted again into the Convention, it was only the Convention that could give the passport; and as an application to them for that purpose would have made my going publicly known, I was obliged to sustain the disappointment, and Mr. Monroe to lose the opportunity.

When that gentleman left France to return to America, I was to have gone with him. It was fortunate I did not. The vessel he sailed in was visited by a British frigate, that searched every part of it, and down to the hold, for Thomas Paine. I then went, the same year, to embark at Havre. But several British frigates were cruising in sight of the port who knew I was there, and I had to return again to Paris. Seeing myself thus cut off from every opportunity that was in my power to command, I wrote to Mr. Jefferson, that, if the fate of the election should put him in the chair of the presidency, and he should have occasion to send a frigate to France, he would give me the opportunity of returning by it, which he did. But I declined coming by the Maryland, the vessel that was offered me, and waited for

the frigate that was to bring the new minister, Mr. Chancellor Livingston, to France; but that frigate was ordered round to the Mediterranean; and as at that time the war was over, and the British cruisers called in, I could come any way. I then agreed to come with Commodore Barney in a vessel he had engaged. It was again fortunate I did not, for the vessel sunk at sea, and the people were preserved in the boat.

Had half the number of evils befallen me that the number of dangers amount to through which I have been preserved, there are those who would ascribe it to the wrath of heaven; why then do they not ascribe my preservation to the protecting favour of heaven. Even in my worldly concerns I have been blessed. The little property I left in America, and which I cared nothing about, not even to receive the rent of it, has been increasing in the value of its capital more than eight hundred dollars every year, for the fourteen years and more that I have been absent from it. I am now in my circumstances independent; and my economy makes me rich. As to my health, it is perfectly good, and I leave the world to judge of the stature of my mind. I am in every instance a living contradiction to the mortified Federalists.

In my publications, I follow the rule I began with in *Common Sense*, that is, to consult nobody, nor let any body see what I write till it appears publicly. Were I to do otherwise, the case would be, that between the timidity of some, who are so afraid of doing wrong that they never do right, the puny judgment of others, and the despicable craft of preferring *expedient to right*, as if the world was a world of babies in leading-strings, I should get forward with nothing. My path is a right line, as strait and clear to me as a ray of light. The boldness (if they will have it to be so) with which I speak on any subject is a compliment to the judgment of the reader. It is like saying to him, *I treat you as a man and not as a child*. With respect to any worldly object, as it is impossible to discover any in me, therefore what I do, and my manner of doing it, ought to be ascribed to a good motive.

In a great affair, where the happiness of man is at stake, I love to work for nothing; and so fully am I under the influence of this principle, that I should lose the spirit, the pleasure, and the pride of it, were I conscious that I looked for reward; and with this declaration I take my leave for the present.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City, Lovett's Hotel,

Dec. 3, 1802.

## LETTER V.

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It is always the interest of a far greater part of the nation to have a thing right than to have it wrong ; and, therefore, in a country whose Government is founded on the system of election and representation, the fate of every party is decided by its principles.

As this system is the only form and principle of Government by which liberty can be preserved, and the only one that can embrace all the varieties of a great extent of country, it necessarily follows, that to have the representation real, the election must be real : and that where the election is a fiction, the representation is a fiction also. *Like will always produce like.*

A great deal has been said and written concerning the conduct of Mr. Burr during the late contest in the Federal Legislature, whether Mr. Jefferson or Mr. Burr should be declared President of the United States. Mr. Burr has been accused of intriguing to obtain the Presidency. Whether this charge be substantiated or not makes little or no part of the purport of this letter. There is a point of much higher importance to attend to than any thing that relates to the individual, Mr. Burr ; for the great point is not whether Mr. Burr has intrigued, but whether the Legislature has intrigued with *him*.

Mr. Ogden, a relation of one of the Senators of New Jersey of the same name, and of the party assuming the style of Federalists, has written a letter published in the New York papers, signed with his name, the purport of which is, to exculpate Mr. Burr from the charges brought against him. In this letter he says,

“ When about to return from Washington, two or three *members of Congress* of the Federal party spoke to me of *their views*, as to the election of a President, desiring me to converse with Col. Burr on the subject, and to ascertain *whether he would enter into terms.* On my return to New

York I called on Col. Burr, and communicated the above to him. He explicitly declined the explanation, and did neither propose nor agree to any terms."

How nearly is human cunning allied to folly! The animals to whom nature has given the faculty we call *cunning*, know always when to use it, and use it wisely; but when man descends to cunning he blunders and betrays.

Mr. Ogden's letter is intended to exculpate Mr. Burr from the charge of intriguing to obtain the Presidency; and the letter that he (Ogden) writes for this purpose is direct evidence against his party in Congress, that they intrigued with Burr to obtain him for President, and employed him (Ogden) for the purpose. To save *Aaron*, he betrays *Moses*, and turns informer against the *Golden Calf*.

It is but of little importance to the world to know if Mr. Burr *listened* to an intriguing proposal, but it is of great importance to the constituents to know if their representatives in Congress made one. The ear can commit no crime, but the tongue may; and therefore, the right policy is to drop Mr. Burr as being only the hearer, and direct the whole charge against the Federal faction in Congress as the active original culprit, or, if the priests will have scripture for it, as the serpent that beguiled Eve.

The plot of the intrigue was to make Mr. Burr, President, on the private condition of his agreeing to, and entering into terms with them, that is, with the proposers. Had then this election been made, the country, knowing nothing of this private and illegal transaction, would have supposed, for who could have supposed otherwise, that it had a President according to the forms, principles, and intention of the constitution. No such thing. Every form, principle and intention of the constitution would have been violated; and instead of a President, it would have had a mute, a sort of image, hand-bound and tongue-tied, the dupe and slave of a party, placed on the theatre of the United States, and acting the farce of President.

It is of little importance, in a constitutional sense, to know what the terms to be proposed might be, because any terms other than those which the constitution prescribes to a President is criminal. Neither do I see how Mr. Burr, or any other person put in the same condition, could have taken the oath prescribed by the constitution to a President, which is, "*I do solemnly swear, (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.*"

How, I ask, could such a person have taken such an oath, knowing at the same time that he had entered into the Presidency on terms unknown in the constitution, and private, and which would deprive him of the freedom and power of acting as President of the United States, agreeably to his constitutional oath ?

Mr. Burr, by not agreeing to terms, has escaped the danger to which they exposed him, and the perjury that would have followed, and also the punishment annexed thereto. Had he accepted the Presidency on terms unknown in the constitution, and private, and had the transaction afterwards transpired (which it most probably would, for roguery is a thing difficult to conceal) it would have produced a sensation in the country too violent to be quieted, and too just to be resisted ; and in any case the election must have been void.

But what are we to think of those members of Congress, who having taken an oath of the same constitutional import as the oath of the President, violate that oath by tampering to obtain a President on private conditions. If this is not sedition against the constitution and the country, it is difficult to define what sedition in a representative can be.

Say not that this statement of the case is the effect of personal or party resentment. No. It is the effect of *sincere concern* that such corruption, of which this is but a sample, should, in the short space of a few years, have crept into a country, that had the fairest opportunity that Providence ever gave, within the knowledge of history, of making itself an illustrious example to the world.

What the terms were, or were to be, it is probable we shall never know ; or what is more probable, that feigned ones, if any, will be given. But from the conduct of the party since that time, we may conclude, that no taxes would have been taken off, that the clamour for war would have been kept up, new expences incurred, and taxes and offices increased in consequence ; and among the articles of a private nature, that the leaders in this seditious traffic were to stipulate with the mock President for lucrative appointments for themselves.

But if these plotters against the constitution understood their business, and they had been plotting long enough to be masters of it, a single article would have comprehended every thing, which is,

*That the President (thus made) should be governed in all cases whatsoever by a private junto appointed by themselves.*

They could then, through the medium of a mock President have negatived all bills which the party in Congress could not have opposed with success, and reduced representation to a nullity.

The country has been imposed upon, and the real culprits are but few; and as it is necessary for the peace, harmony, and honour, of the union, to separate the deceiver from the deceived, the betrayer from the betrayed, that men who once were friends, and that in the worst of times, should be friends again, it is necessary, as a beginning, that this dark business be brought to a full investigation. Ogden's letter is direct evidence of the fact of tampering to obtain a conditional President. He knows the two or three members of Congress that commissioned him, and they know who commissioned them.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City, Lovett's Hotel,  
Jan. 29th, 1803.

## LETTER VI.

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THE malignant mind, like the jaundiced eye, sees every thing through a false medium of its own creating. The light of Heaven appears stained with yellow to the distempered sight of the one ; and the fairest actions have the form of crimes in the venomed imagination of the other.

For several months, both before and after my return to America, in October last, the apostate papers, styling themselves federal, were filled with paragraphs and essays respecting a letter from Mr. Jefferson to me at Paris, and though none of them knew the contents of the letter, nor the occasion of writing it, malignity taught them to suppose it, and the lying tongue of injustice lent them its aid.

That the public may be no longer imposed upon by federal apostacy, I will now publish the letter, and the occasion of its being written.

The treaty negociated in England by John Jay, and ratified by the Washington administration, had so disgracefully surrendered the right and freedom of the American flag, that all the commerce of the United States on the ocean became exposed to capture, and suffered in consequence of it. The duration of the treaty was limited to two years after the war ; and consequently, America could not, during that period, relieve herself from the chains which that treaty had fixed upon her.

This being the case, the only relief that could come must arise out of something originating in Europe, that would, in its consequences extend to America. It had long been my opinion that commerce contained within itself the means of its own protection ; but as the time for bringing forward any new system is not always happening, it is necessary to watch its approach, and lay hold of it before it passes away.

As soon as the late Emperor Paul of Russia abandoned his coalition with England, and became a neutral power, this crisis of time, and also of circumstance, was then arriving ;



and I employed it in arranging a plan for the protection of the commerce of neutral nations during war, that might, in its operation and consequences, relieve the commerce of America. The plan, with the pieces accompanying it, consisted of about forty pages. The Citizen Bonneville, with whom I lived in Paris, translated it into French. Mr. Skipwith, the American consul, Joel Barlow, and myself, had the translation printed and distributed as a present to the foreign ministers of all the neutral nations then resident in Paris. This was in the summer of 1800.

It was intitled Maritime Compact (in French *Pacte Maritime*). The plan, exclusive of the pieces that accompanied it, consisted of the following preamble and articles.

### MARITIME COMPACT

Being an Unarmed Association of Nations for the protection of the rights and commerce of Nations that shall be neutral in time of war.

Whereas, the vexations and injuries to which the rights and commerce of neutral nations have been, and continue to be, exposed during the time of maritime war, render it necessary to establish a law of nations for the purpose of putting an end to such vexations and injuries, and to guarantee to the neutral nations the exercise of their just rights.

We, therefore, the undersigned powers, form ourselves into an association, and establish the following as a law of nations on the seas.

### ARTICLE I.

Definition of the rights of neutral nations.

The rights of nations, such as are exercised by them in their intercourse with each other in time of peace, are, and of right ought to be, the rights of neutral nations at all times; because,

First, Those rights not having been abandoned by them, remain with them.

Secondly, Because, those rights cannot become forfeited, or void, in consequence of war breaking out between two or more other nations.

A war of nation against nation being exclusively the act of the nations that make the war, and not the act of the neutral nations, cannot, whether considered in itself or in its consequences, destroy or diminish the rights of the nations remaining in peace.

## ARTICLE II.

The ships and vessels of nations that rest neuter and at peace with the world during a war with other nations, have a right to navigate freely on the seas as they navigated before that war broke out, and to proceed to and enter the port or ports of any of the belligerent powers, *with the consent of that power*, without being seized, searched, visited, or any ways interrupted, by the nation or nations with which that nation is at war.

## ARTICLE III.

For the conservation of the aforesaid rights, *we*, the undersigned powers, engaging to each other our sacred faith and honour, declare,

That if any belligerent power shall seize, search, visit, or any ways interrupt any ship or vessel belonging to the citizens or subjects of any of the powers composing this association, then each and all of the said undersigned powers will cease to import, and will not permit to be imported into the ports or dominions of any of the said undersigned powers, in any ship or vessel whatever, any goods, wares, or merchandize, produced or manufactured in, or exported from, the dominions of the power so offending against the association hereby established and proclaimed.

## ARTICLE IV.

That all the ports appertaining to any and all of the powers composing this association shall be shut against the flag of the offending nation.

## ARTICLE V.

That no remittance or payment in money, merchandize, or bills of exchange, shall be made by any of the citizens, or subjects, of any of the powers composing this association, to the citizens or subjects of the offending nation, for the term of one year, or until reparation be made. The reparation to be times the amount of the damages sustained.

## ARTICLE VI.

If any ship or vessel appertaining to any of the citizens or subjects of any of the powers composing this association shall be seized, searched, visited, or interrupted, by any bel-

ligerent nation, or be forcibly prevented entering the port of her destination, or be seized, searched, visited or interrupted, in coming out of such port, or be forcibly prevented from proceeding to any new destination, or be insulted or visited by any agent from on board any vessel of any belligerent power, the Government or executive power of the nation to which the ship or vessel so seized, searched, visited or interrupted belongs, shall, on evidence of the fact, make public proclamation of the same, and send a copy thereof to the Government, or executive, of each of the powers composing this association, who shall publish the same in all the extent of his dominions, together with a declaration, that at the expiration of                      days after the publication, the final articles of this association shall be put in execution against the offending nation.

#### ARTICLE VII.

If reparation be not made within the space of one year, the said proclamation shall be renewed for one year more, and so on.

#### ARTICLE VIII.

The association chooses for itself a flag to be carried at the mast-head conjointly with the national flag of each nation composing this association.

The flag of the association shall be composed of the same colours as compose the rainbow, and arranged in the same order as they appear in that phenomenon.

#### ARTICLE IX.

And whereas it may happen that one or more of the nations composing this association may be, at the time of forming it engaged in war, or become so in future, in that case, the ships and vessels of such nation shall carry the flag of the association bound round the mast, to denote that the nation to which she belongs is a member of the association and a respecter of the laws.

N. B. This distinction in the manner of carrying the flag is merely for the purpose, that neutral vessels having the flag at the mast-head, may be known at first sight.

#### ARTICLE X.

And whereas it is contrary to the moral principles of neutrality and peace, that any neutral nation should furnish to the belligerent powers, or any of them, the means of carry-

ing on war against each other; we, therefore, the powers, composing this association, declare that we will, each one for itself, prohibit in our dominions the exportation or transportation of military stores, comprehending gun-powder, cannon, and cannon-balls, fire-arms of all kinds, and all kinds of iron and steel weapons used in war, excluding therefrom all kinds of utensils and instruments used in civil or domestic life, and every other article that cannot, in its immediate state, be employed in war.

Having thus declared the moral motives of the foregoing article, we declare also the civil and political intentions thereof, to wit.

That as belligerent nations have no right to visit or search any ship or vessel belonging to a nation at peace, and under the protection of the laws and government thereof, and as all such visit or search is an insult to the nation to which such ship or vessel belongs, and to the government of the same, we, therefore, the powers composing this association, will take the right of prohibition on ourselves, to whom it properly belongs, and by whom only it can be legally exercised, and not permit foreign nations, in a state of war, to usurp the right of legislating, by proclamation, for any of the citizens or subjects of the powers composing this association.

It is, therefore, in order to take away all pretence of search or visit, which, by being offensive, might become a new cause of war, that we will provide laws, and publish them by proclamation, each in his own dominion, to prohibit the supplying, or carrying to, the belligerent powers, or either of them, the military stores, or articles before mentioned, annexing thereto a penalty to be levied or inflicted upon any persons within our several dominions, transgressing the same. And we invite all persons, as well of the belligerent nations as of our own, or any other, to give information of any knowledge they may have of any transgression against the said law, that the offenders may be prosecuted.

By this conduct we restore the word *contraband* [*contra* and *ban*] to its true and original signification, which means against law, edict, or proclamation; and none but the government of a nation can have, or can exercise, the right of making laws, edicts, or proclamations, for the conduct of its citizens or subjects.

Now we, the undersigned powers, declare the aforesaid articles to be a law of nations, at all times, or until a congress of nations shall meet to form some law more effectual.

And we do recommend that immediately on the breaking out of war between any two or more nations, that deputies be appointed by all the neutral nations, whether members of this association or not, to meet in congress, in some central place, to take cognizance of any violations of the rights of neutral nations.

Signed, &c.

For the purpose of giving operation to the aforesaid plan of an unarmed association, the following paragraph was subjoined :

It may be judged proper for the order of business, that the association of nations have a President for a term of years, and the Presidency to pass by rotation, to each of the parties composing the association.

In that case, and for the sake of regularity, the first President to be the executive power of the most northerly nation composing the association, and his deputy or minister at the congress to be President of the congress, and the next most northerly to be Vice-President, who shall succeed to the Presidency, and so on. The line determining the geographical situation of each to be the latitude of the capital of each nation.

If this method be adopted, it will be proper that the first President be nominally constituted in order to give rotation to the rest. In that case the following article might be added to the foregoing, viz. The constitution of the association nominates the Emperor Paul to be first President of the association of nations for the protection of neutral commerce, and the securing the freedom of the seas."

The foregoing plan, as I have before mentioned, was presented to the ministers of all neutral nations then in Paris, in the summer of 1800. Six copies were given to the Russian general Springporten; and a Russian gentleman who was going to St. Petersburg took two, expressly for the purpose of putting them into the hands of Paul. I sent the original manuscript, in my own hand-writing, to Mr. Jefferson, and also wrote him four letters, dated the 1st, 4th, 6th, and 16th of October, 1800, giving him an account of what was then going on in Europe, respecting neutral commerce.

The case was, that in order to compel the English Government to acknowledge the rights of neutral commerce, and that free ships make free goods, the Emperor Paul, in the month of September following the publication of the plan, shut all the ports of Russia against England. Sweden

and Denmark did the same by their ports, and Denmark shut up Hamburgh. Prussia shut up the Elbe and the Weser. The ports of Spain, Portugal, and Naples were shut up, and in general, all the ports of Italy, except Venice, which the Emperor of Germany held, and had it not been for the untimely death of Paul, a law of nations, founded on the authority of nations, for establishing the rights of neutral commerce and the freedom of the seas, would have been proclaimed, and the Government of England must have consented to that law, or the nation must have lost its commerce: and the consequence to America would have been, that such a law would in a great measure, if not entirely, have released her from the injuries of Jay's treaty.

Of all these matters I informed Mr. Jefferson. This was before he was President, and the letter he wrote me after he was President was in answer to those I had written to him, and the manuscript copy of the plan I had sent him. Here follows the letter.

Washington, March 18th, 1801.

Dear Sir,

Your letters of Oct. 1st, 4th, 6th, and 16th came duly to hand, and the papers which they covered were, according to your permission, published in the newspapers, and in a pamphlet, and under your own name.\* These papers contain precisely our principles, and I hope they will be generally recognized here. Determined as we are to avoid, if possible, wasting the energies of our people, in war and destruction, we shall avoid implicating ourselves with the powers of Europe, even in support of principles which we mean to pursue. They have so many other interests different from ours, that we must avoid being entangled in them. We believe we can enforce those principles as to ourselves by peaceable means, now that we are likely to have our public councils detached from foreign views. The return of our citizens from the phrenzy into which they had been wrought partly by ill conduct in France, partly by artifices practiced upon them, is almost entire, and will, I believe, become quite so. But these details, too minute and long for a letter, will be better developed by Mr. Dawson, the bearer of this, a member of the late Congress, to whom I refer you for them.

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\* The plan, with the papers accompanying it, were published by S. H. Smith, of the Federal City.

He goes in the Maryland sloop of war, which will wait a few days at Havre to receive his letters to be written on his arrival at Paris. You expressed a wish to get a passage to this country in a public vessel. Mr. Dawson is charged with orders to the Captain of the Maryland to receive, and accommodate you back if you can be ready to depart at such a short warning. Rob. R. Livingston is appointed minister plenipotentiary to the republic of France, but will not leave this, till we receive the ratification of the convention by Mr. Dawson. I am in hopes you will find us returned generally to sentiments worthy of former times. In these it will be your glory to have steadily laboured and with as much effect as any man living. That you may long live to continue your useful labours and to reap the reward in the thankfulness of nations is my sincere prayer. Accept assurances of my high esteem and affectionate attachments.

TH. JEFFERSON.

This, citizens of the United States, is the letter about which the leaders and tools of the federal faction, without knowing its contents or the occasion of writing it, have wasted so many malignant falsehoods. It is a letter which on account of its wise economy, and peaceable principles, and its forbearance to reproach, will be read by every good man and every good citizen with pleasure, and the faction, mortified at its appearance, will have to regret that they forced it into publication. The least atonement they can now offer is to make the letter as public as they have made their own infamy, and learn to lie no more.

The same injustice they shewed to Mr. Jefferson they shewed to me. I had employed myself in Europe, and at my own expence, in forming and promoting a plan that would, in its operation, have benefited the commerce of America; and the federal faction here invented and circulated an account in the papers they employ, that I had given a plan to the French for burning all the towns on the coast from Savannah to Baltimore. Were I to prosecute them for this, and I do not promise that I will not, for the liberty of the press is not the liberty of lying) there is not a federal judge, not even one of midnight appointment, but must, from the nature of the case, be obliged to condemn them. The faction, however, cannot complain, they have not been restrained in any thing. They have had their full swing of lying uncontradicted; they have availed themselves, unopposed, of all the arts hypocrisy could devise;

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and the event has been, what, in all such cases it ever will, and ought to be, *the ruin of themselves*.

The characters of the late and present administrations are now sufficiently marked, and the adherents of each keep up the distinction. The former administration rendered itself notorious by outrage, coxcombical parade, false alarms, a continued increase of taxes, and an unceasing clamour for war; and as every vice has a virtue opposed to it, the present administration moves on the direct contrary line. The question, therefore, at elections, is not properly a question upon persons, but upon principles. Those who are for peace, moderate taxes, and mild government, will vote for the administration that conducts itself by those principles, in whatever hands that administration may be.

There are in the United States, and particularly in the middle states, several religious sects, whose leading moral principle is PEACE. It is, therefore, impossible that such persons, consistently with the dictates of that principle, can vote for an administration that is clamorous for war. When moral principles, rather than persons, are candidates for power, to vote is to perform a moral duty, and not to vote is to neglect a duty.

That persons who were hunting after places, offices, and contracts, should be advocates for war, taxes and extravagance, is not to be wondered at; but that so large a portion of the people who had nothing to depend upon but their industry, and no other public prospect but that of paying taxes, and bearing the burden, should be advocates for the same measures is a thoughtlessness not easily accounted for. But reason is recovering her empire, and the fog of delusion is clearing away.

THOMAS PAINE.

Bordentown, on the Delaware,  
New Jersey, April 21, 1803.



## LETTER VII.

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RELIGION and war is the cry of the federalists; morality and peace the voice of republicans. The union of morality and peace is congenial; but that of religion and war is a paradox, and the solution of it is hypocrisy.

The leaders of the federalists have no judgement; their plans no consistency of parts; and want of consistency is the natural consequence of want of principle.

They exhibit to the world the curious spectacle of an *opposition* without a *cause*, and conduct without system. Were they, as doctors, to prescribe medicine as they practise politics, they would poison their patients with destructive compounds.

There are not two things more opposed to each other than war and religion; and yet, in the double game those leaders have to play, the one is necessarily the theme of their politics, and the other the text of their sermons. The week-day orator of Mars, and the Sunday preacher of Federal Grace, play, like gamblers, into each other's hands, and this they call religion.

Though hypocrisy can counterfeit every virtue, and become the associate of every vice, it requires a great dexterity of craft to give it the power of deceiving. A painted sun may glisten but it cannot warm. For hypocrisy to personate virtue successfully it must know and feel what virtue is, and as it cannot long do this it cannot long deceive. When an orator foaming for war, breathes forth in another sentence a *plaintive piety of words*, he may as well write HYPOCRISY on his front.

The late attempt of the federal leaders in Congress (for they acted without the knowledge of their constituents) to plunge the country into war, merits not only reproach, but

indignation. It was madness, conceived in ignorance and acted in wickedness. The head and the heart went partners in the crime.

A neglect of punctuality in the performance of a treaty is made a *cause* of war by the *Barbary Powers*, and of remonstrance and explanation by *civilized powers*. The Mahometans of Barbary negotiate by the sword—they seize first, and expostulate afterwards; and the federal leaders have been labouring to *barbarise* the United States by adopting the practice of the Barbary states, and this they call honour. Let their honour and their hypocrisy go weep together, for both are defeated. The present administration is too moral for hypocrites, and too economical for public spendthrifts.

A man, the least acquainted with diplomatic affairs, must know that a neglect in punctuality is not one of the legal causes of war, unless that neglect be confirmed by a refusal to perform; and even then it depends upon circumstances connected with it. The world would be in continual quarrels and war, and commerce be annihilated, if Algerine policy was the law of nations. And were America instead of becoming an example to the Old World of good and moral government and civil manners, or, if they like it better, of gentlemanly conduct towards other nations, to set up the character of ruffian, that of *word and a blow, and the blow first*, and thereby give the example of pulling down the little that civilization has gained upon barbarism, her independence, instead of being an honour and a blessing would become a curse upon the world and upon herself.

The conduct of the Barbary powers, though unjust in principle, is suited to their prejudices, situation, and circumstances. The crusades of the church to exterminate them, fixed in their minds the unobliterated belief that every Christian power was their mortal enemy. Their religious prejudices, therefore, suggest the policy, which their situation and circumstances protect them in. As a people, they are neither commercial nor agricultural, they neither import nor export; have no property floating on the seas, nor ships and cargoes in the ports of foreign nations. No retaliation, therefore, can be acted upon them, and they sin secure from punishment.

But this is not the case with the United States. If she sins as a Barbary power she must answer for it as a civilized one. Her commerce is continually passing on the seas exposed to capture, and her ships and cargoes in foreign ports

to detention and reprisal. An act of war committed by her in the Mississippi would produce a war against the commerce of the Atlantic States, and the latter would have to curse the policy that provoked the former. In every point, therefore, in which the character and interest of the United States be considered, it would ill become her to set an example contrary to the policy and custom of civilized powers, and practised only by the Barbary powers, that of striking before she expostulates.

But can any man, calling himself a legislator, and supposed by his constituents to know something of his duty, be so ignorant as to imagine that seizing on New Orleans would finish the affair or even contribute towards it. On the contrary it would have made it worse. The treaty right of deposit at New Orleans, and the right of the navigation of the Mississippi in the Gulf of Mexico are distant things. New Orleans is more than an hundred miles in the country from the mouth of the river, and, as a place of deposit, is of no value if the mouth of the river be shut, which either France or Spain could do, and which our possession of New Orleans could neither prevent or remove. New Orleans in our possession, by an act of hostility, would have become a blockaded port, and consequently of no value to the Western people as a place of deposit. Since, therefore, an interruption had arisen to the commerce of the Western States, and until the matter could be brought to a fair explanation, it was of less injury to have the port shut and the river open, than to have the river shut, and the port in our possession.

That New Orleans could be taken, required no stretch of policy to plan, nor spirit of enterprize to affect. It was like marching behind a man to knock him down; and the dastardly slyness of such an attack would have stained the fame of the United States. Where there is no danger, cowards are bold, and Captain Bobadil's are to be found in the senate as well as on the stage. Even *Gouverneur* on such a march, dare have shewn deg.

The people of the Western country to whom the Mississippi serves as an inland sea to their commerce, must be supposed to understand the circumstances of that commerce better than a man who is stranger to it; and as they have shewn no approbation of the war-whoop measures of the federal senators, it becomes presumptive evidence they disprove them. This is a new mortification to those war-whoop

politicians; for the case is, that finding themselves losing ground and withering away in the Atlantic States, they laid hold of the affair of New Orleans, in the vain hope of rooting and reinforcing themselves in the Western States; and they did this without perceiving that it was one of those ill judged hypocritical expedients in politics, that whether it succeeded or failed the event would be the same. Had their motion succeeded, it would have endangered the commerce of the Atlantic States and ruined their reputation there; and on the other hand the attempt to make a tool of the Western people was so badly concealed as to extinguish all credit with them.

But hypocrisy is a vice of a sanguine constitution. It flatters and promises itself every thing; and it has yet to learn, with respect to moral and political reputation it is less dangerous to offend than to deceive.

To the measures of administration, supported by the firmness and integrity of the majority in Congress, the United States owe, as far as human means are concerned, the preservation of peace and of national honour. The confidence which the Western people reposed in the government and their representatives is rewarded with success. They are reinstated in their rights with the least possible loss of time; and their harmony with the people of New-Orleans, so necessary to the prosperity of the United States, which would have been broken, and the seeds of discord sown in its place, had hostilities been preferred to accommodation, remains unimpaired. Have the federal ministers of the church meditated on these matters? and laying aside as they ought to do, their electioneering and vindictive prayers and sermons, returned thanks that peace is preserved and commerce without the stain of blood.

In the pleasing contemplation of this state of things the mind, by comparison, carries itself back to those days of uproar and extravagance that marked the career of the former administration, and decides, by the unstudied impulse of its own feelings, that something must then have been wrong. Why was it, that America, formed for happiness, and remote by situation and circumstances from the troubles and tumults of the European world, became plunged into its vortex and contaminated with its crimes? the answer is easy. Those who were then at the head of affairs were apostates from the principles of the revolution. Raised to an elevation they had not a right to expect, nor judgment to

conduct, they became like feathers in the air, and blown about by every puff of passion or conceit.

Candour would find some apology for their conduct if want of judgment was their only defect. But error and crime, though often alike in their features, are distant in their characters and in their origin. The one has its source in the weakness of the head, the other in the badness of the heart, and the coalition of the two describes the former administration.

Had no injurious consequences arisen from the conduct of that administration it might have passed for error or imbecility, and been permitted to die and be forgotten. The grave is kind to innocent offence. But even innocence when it is a cause of injury ought to undergo an enquiry.

The country, during the time of the former administration, was kept in continual agitation and alarm; and that no investigation might be made into its conduct it entrenched itself within a magic circle of terror, and called it a SEDITION LAW. Violent and mysterious in its measures and arrogant in its manners, it affected to disdain information and insulted the principles that raised it from obscurity. John Adams and Timothy Pickering were men whom nothing but the accidents of the times rendered visible on the political horizon. Elevation turned their heads, and public indignation hath cast them to the ground. But an enquiry into the conduct and measures of that administration is nevertheless necessary.

The country was put to great expence. Loans, taxes, and standing armies became the standing order of the day. The militia, said Secretary Pickering, are not to be depended upon, and fifty thousand men must be raised. For what? no cause to justify such measures has yet appeared. No discovery of such a cause has yet been made. The pretended sedition law shut up the sources of investigation, and the precipitate flight of John Adams closed the scene. But the matter ought not to sleep here.

It is not to gratify resentment, or encourage it in others, that I enter upon this subject. It is not in the power of man to accuse me of a persecuting spirit. But some explanation ought to be had. The motives and objects respecting the extraordinary and expensive measures of the former administration ought to be known. The sedition law, that shield of the moment, prevented it then, and justice demands it now. If the public have been imposed upon, it is proper

they should know it, for where judgement is to act, or a choice to be made, knowledge is first necessary. The conciliation of parties, if it does not grow out of explanation, partakes of the character of collusion or indifference.

There has been guilt somewhere; and it is better to fix it where it belongs, and separate the deceiver from the deceived, than that suspicion, the bane of society, should range at large, and sour the public mind. The military measures that were proposed and carrying on during the former administration could not have for their object the defence of the country against invasion. This is a case that decides itself; for it is self-evident that while the war raged in Europe, neither France nor England could spare a man to send to America. The object therefore must be something at home, and that something was the overthrow of the representative system of government, for it could be nothing else. But the plotters got into confusion and became enemies to each other. Adams hated and was jealous of Hamilton, and Hamilton hated and despised both Adams and Washington. Surly Timothy stood aloof, as he did at the affair of Lexington, and the part that fell to the public was to pay the expence.

But ought a people who but a few years ago were fighting the battles of the world, for liberty had no home but here, ought such a people to stand quietly by and see that liberty undermined by apostacy and overthrown by intrigue? Let the tombs of the slain recal their recollection, and the forethought of what their children are to be revive and fix in their hearts the love of liberty.

If the former administration can justify its conduct give it the opportunity. The manner in which John Adams disappeared from the government renders an inquiry the more necessary. He gave some account of himself, lame and confused as it was, to certain *eastern wise men* who came to pay homage to him on his birth-day. But if he thought it necessary to do this ought he not to have rendered an account to the public. They had a right to expect it of him. In that *tete a tete* account, he says, "Some measures were the effect of imperious necessity, much against my inclination." What measures does Mr. Adams mean, and what is the imperious necessity to which he alludes. "Others (says he) were measures of the legislature, which although approved when passed were never previously proposed or recommended by me." What measures, it may be asked, were those, for the public have a right to know the

conduct of their representatives? "Some (says he) left to my discretion were never executed because no necessity for them in my judgement, ever occurred."

What does this dark apology mixed with accusation, amount to, but to increase and confirm the suspicion that something was wrong. Administration only was possessed of foreign official information, and it was only upon that information communicated by him publicly or privately, or to Congress, that Congress could act, and it is not in the power of Mr. Adams to shew, from the condition of the belligerent powers, that any imperious necessity called for the warlike and expensive measures of his administration.

What the correspondence between administration and Rufus King in London, or Quincy Adams in Holland, or Berlin, might be, is but little known. The public papers have told us that the former became cup-bearer from the London Underwriters to Captain Truxton, for which as minister from a neutral nation, he ought to have been censured. It is, however, a feature that marks the politics of the minister, and hints at the character of the correspondence.

I know it is the opinion of several members of both houses of Congress that an enquiry, with respect to the conduct of the late administration ought to be gone into. The convulsed state into which the country has been thrown will be best settled by a full and fair exposition of the conduct of that administration, and the causes and object of that conduct. To be deceived, or to remain deceived, can be the interest of no man who seeks the public good; and it is the deceiver only, or one interested in the deception, that can wish to preclude enquiry.

The suspicion against the late administration, is, that it was plotting to overturn the representative system of Government, and that it spread alarms of invasions that had no foundation, as a pretence for raising and establishing a military force as the means of accomplishing that object.

The law, called the sedition law, enacted, that "If any person should write or publish, or cause to be written or published any libel (without defining what a libel is) against the government of the United States, or either houses of Congress, or against the President, he should be punished by a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars, and by imprisonment not exceeding two years."

But it is a much greater crime for a President to plot against a constitution and the liberties of the people than for

an individual to plot against a President: and consequently John Adams is accountable to the public for his conduct, as the individuals under his administration were to the sedition law.

The object, however, of an inquiry in this case is not to punish, but to satisfy; and to shew by example to future administrations that by an abuse of power and trust, however disguised by appearances, or rendered plausible by pretence, is one time or other to be accounted for.

THOMAS PAINE.

Bordentown, on the Delaware,  
New Jersey, March 12, 1803.



**MISCELLANEOUS**

**LETTERS & ESSAYS,**

**On various Subjects.**

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**BY**

**THOMAS PAINE.**

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**London :**

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**1819.**

RECOMMENDATION

BY NAME & INITIALS

PLEASE SIGN TO

DATE

PETITION TO THE BOARD OF EXCISE.

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HONOURABLE SIRS,

IN humble obedience to your Honours' letter of discharge, bearing date August 29, 1765, I delivered up my commission, and since that time have given you no trouble.

I confess the justice of your Honours' displeasure, and humbly beg leave to add my thanks for the candour and lenity which you at that unfortunate time indulged me with.

And though the nature of the report and my own confession cut off all expectations of enjoying your Honours' favour then, yet I humbly hope it has not finally excluded me therefrom; upon which hope I humbly presume to intreat your Honours' to restore me.

The time I enjoyed my former commission was short and unfortunate—an officer only a single year. No complaint of the least dishonesty, or intemperance, ever appeared against me; and if I am so happy as to succeed in this my humble petition, I will endeavour that my future conduct shall as much engage your Honours' approbation, as my former has merited your displeasure.

“ I am your Honours' most dutiful

“ humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

London, July 3, 1766.

LETTER TO DR. GOLDSMITH.

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HONOURED SIR,

HEREWITH I present you with the Case of the Officers of Excise. A compliment of this kind from an entire stranger may appear somewhat singular; but the following reasons and information will, I presume, sufficiently apologize. I act myself in the humble station of an officer of excise, though somewhat differently circumstanced to what many of them are, and have been the principal promoter of a plan for applying to Parliament this session for an increase of salary. A petition for this purpose has been circulated through every part of the kingdom, and signed by all the officers therein. A subscription of three shillings per officer is raised, amounting to upwards of £500, for supporting the expenses. The excise officers, in all cities and corporate towns, have obtained letters of recommendation from the electors to the members in their behalf, many or most of whom have promised their support. The enclosed case we have presented to most of the members, and shall to all, before the petition appear in the House. The memorial before you, met with so much approbation while in manuscript, that I was advised to print 4000 copies: 3000 of which were subscribed for the officers in general, and the remaining 1000 reserved for presents. Since the delivering them I have received so many letters of thanks and approbation for the performance, that were I not rather singularly modest, I should insensibly become a little vain. The literary fame of Dr. Goldsmith has induced me to present one to him, such as it is. It is my first and only attempt, and even now I should not have undertaken it, had I not been particularly applied to by some of my superiors in office. I have some few questions to trouble Dr. Goldsmith with, and should esteem his company for an hour or two, to partake of a bottle of wine, or any thing else, and apologize for this trouble, as a singular favour conferred on

His unknown

Humble servant and admirer,

THOMAS PAINE.

Excise Coffee House,  
Broad Street, Dec. 21, 1772.

P. S. Shall take the liberty of waiting on you in a day or two.

CASE OF THE OFFICERS OF EXCISE; WITH REMARKS ON  
THE QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS, AND ON THE NU-  
MEROUS EVILS ARISING TO THE REVENUE, FROM THE  
INSUFFICIENCY OF THE PRESENT SALARY: HUMBLY  
ADDRESSED TO THE MEMBERS OF BOTH HOUSES OF  
PARLIAMENT.

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*Introduction.*

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As a design among the Excise officers throughout the kingdom is on foot, for an humble application to Parliament next session, to have the state of their salaries taken into consideration; it has been judged not only expedient, but highly necessary, to present a state of their case, previous to the presentation of their petition.

There are some cases so singularly reasonable, that the more they are considered, the more weight they obtain. It is a strong evidence both of simplicity and honest confidence, when petitioners in any case ground their hopes of relief on having their case fully and perfectly known and understood.

Simple as this subject may appear at first, it is a matter, in my humble opinion, not unworthy a parliamentary attention. It is a subject interwoven with a variety of reasons from different causes. New matter will arise on every thought. *If the poverty of the officers of Excise, if the temptations arising from their poverty, if the qualifications of persons to be admitted into employment, if the security of the revenue itself,* are matters of any weight, then I am conscious that my voluntary services in this business, will produce some good effect or other, either to the better security of the revenue, the relief of the officers, or both.

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WHEN a year's salary is mentioned in the gross, it acquires a degree of consequence from its sound, which it would not if separated into daily payments, and if the charges attending the receiving, and other unavoidable

expences were considered with it. Fifty pounds a-year, and one shilling and nine pence farthing a-day, carry as different degrees of significancy with them, as my Lord's steward, and the steward's labourer; and yet an out-ride officer in the excise, under the name of fifty pounds a year, receives for himself no more than one shilling and ninepence farthing a day.

After tax, charity, and sitting expences are deducted, there remains very little more than forty-six pounds; and the expences of horse-keeping, in many places, cannot be brought under fourteen pounds a year, besides the purchase at first, and the hazard of life, which reduces it to thirty-two pounds per annum, or one shilling and ninepence farthing per day.

I have spoken more particularly of the outrides, as they are by far the most numerous, being in proportion to the foot-walk as eight is to five throughout the kingdom. Yet in the latter, the same misfortunes exist; the channel of them only is altered. The excessive dearthness of house-rent, the great burthen of rates and taxes, and the excessive price of all necessaries of life, in cities and large trading towns, nearly counterbalance the expences of horse-keeping. Every office has its stages of promotions, but the pecuniary advantages arising from a foot-walk are so inconsiderable, and the loss of disposing of effects, or the charges of removing them to any considerable distance, so great, that many out-ride officers with a family remain as they are, from an inability to bear the loss, or support the expence.

The officers resident in the cities of London and Westminster, are exempt from the particular disadvantages of removals. This seems to be the only circumstance which they enjoy superior to their country brethren. In every other respect they lie under the same hardships, and suffer the same distresses.

There are no perquisites or advantages in the least annexed to the employment. A few officers who are stationed along the coast, may sometimes have the good fortune to fall in with a seizure of contraband goods, and that frequently at the hazard of their lives: but the inland officers can have no such opportunities. Besides, the surveying duty in the excise is so continual, that without remissness from the real business itself, there is no time to seek after them. With the officers of the customs it is quite otherwise, their whole time and care being appropriated to that service, and their profits are in proportion to their vigilance.

If the increase of money in the kingdom is one cause of the high price of provisions, the case of the Excise officers is peculiarly pitiable. No increase comes to them—they are shut out from the general blessing—they behold it like a map of Peru. The answer of Abraham to Dives is somewhat applicable to them, “*There is a great gulf fixed.*”

To the wealthy and humane, it is a matter worthy of concern, that their affluence should become the misfortune of others. Were the money in the kingdom to be increased double, the salary would in value be reduced one half. Every step upwards, is a step downwards with them. Not to be partakers of the increase would be a little hard, but to be sufferers by it exceedingly so. The mechanic and the labourer may in a great measure ward off the distress, by raising the price of their manufactures or their work, but the situation of the officers admits no such relief.

Another consideration in their behalf (and which is peculiar to the Excise) is, that as the law of their office removes them far from their natural friends and relations, it consequently prevents those occasional assistances from them, which are serviceably felt in a family, and which even the poorest, among the poor, enjoys. Most poor mechanics, or even common labourers, have some relations or friends, who, either out of benevolence or pride, keep their children from nakedness, supply them occasionally with perhaps half a hog, a load of wood, a chaldron of coals, or something or other, which abates the severity of their distress; and yet those men, thus relieved, will frequently earn more than the daily pay of an Excise officer.

Perhaps an officer will appear more reputable with the same pay, than a mechanic or labourer. The difference arises from sentiment, not circumstances. A something like reputable pride makes all the distinction, and the thinking part of mankind well knows, that none suffer so much as they who endeavour to conceal their necessities.

The frequent removals which unavoidably happen in the Excise, are attended with such an expence, especially where there is a family, as few officers are able to support. About two years ago, an officer with a family, under orders for removing, and rather embarrassed in circumstances, made his application to me, and from a conviction of his distress, I advanced a small sum to enable him to proceed. He ingenuously declared, that without the assistance of some friend, he should be driven to do injustice to his creditors, and

compelled to desert the duty of his office. He has since honestly paid me, and does as well as the narrowness of such circumstances can admit of.

There is one general allowed truth, which will always operate in their favour; which is, that no set of men, under his Majesty, earn their salary with any comparison of labour and fatigue, with that of the officers of Excise. The station may rather be called a seat of constant work, than either a place or an employment. Even in the different departments of the general revenue, they are unequalled in the burthen of business; a riding-officer's place in the customs, whose salary is sixty pounds a year, is ease to theirs; and the work in the window-light duty, compared with the Excise, is lightness itself; yet their salary is subject to no tax, they receive forty-nine pounds twelve shillings and sixpence, without deduction.

The inconveniencies which affect an Excise-officer, are almost endless; even the land-tax assessment upon their salaries, which, though the Government pays, falls often with hardship upon them. The place of their residence, on account of the land-tax, has, in many instances, created frequent contentions between parishes, in which the officer, though the innocent and unconcerned cause of the quarrel, has been the greater sufferer.

To point out particularly the impossibility of an Excise-officer supporting himself and family, with any proper degree of credit and reputation, on so scanty a pittance, is altogether unnecessary. The times, the voice of general want, are proofs themselves. Where facts are sufficient, arguments are useless; and the hints which I have produced, are such as affect the officers of Excise differently to any other set of men. A single man may barely live; but as it is not the design of the legislature, or the Hon. Board of Excise, to impose a state of celibacy on them, the condition of much the greater part is truly wretched and pitiable.

Perhaps it may be said, why do the Excise officers complain? they are not pressed into the service, and may relinquish it when they please; if they can mend themselves, why don't they? Alas! what a mockery of pity would it be, to give such an answer to an honest, faithful, old officer in the Excise, who had spent the prime of his life in the service, and was become unfit for any thing else! The time limited for an admission into an Excise employment, is between twenty-one and thirty years of age, the very flower



of life. Every other hope and consideration are then given up, and the chance of establishing themselves in any other business, becomes in a few years not only lost to them, but they become lost to it.

*“There is a tide in the affairs of men, which if embraced, leads on to fortune—that neglected, all beyond is misery or want.”*

When we consider how few in the Excise arrive at any comfortable eminence, and the date of life when such promotions only can happen, the great hazard there is of ill, rather than good fortune in the attempt, and that all the years antecedent to that is a state of mere existence, wherein they are shut out from the common chance of success in any other way; a reply like that can be only a derision of their wants. It is almost impossible, after any long continuance in the Excise, that they can live any other way. Such as are of trades, would have their trades to learn over again; and people would have but little opinion of their abilities in any calling, who had been ten, fifteen, or twenty years absent from it. Every year's experience gained in the Excise, is a year's experience lost in trade; and by the time they become wise officers, they become foolish workmen.

Were the reasons for augmenting the salary grounded only on the charitableness of so doing, they would have great weight with the compassionate. But there are auxiliaries of such a powerful cast, that in the opinion of policy, they obtain the rank of originals. The first is truly the case of the officers, but this is rather the case of the revenue.

The distresses in the Excise are so generally known, that numbers of gentlemen, and other inhabitants in places where officers are resident, have generously and humanely recommended their case to the members of the Hon. House of Commons: and numbers of traders of opulence and reputation, well knowing that the poverty of an officer may subject him to the fraudulent designs of some selfish persons under his survey, to the great injury of the fair trader, and trade in general, have, from principles both of generosity and justice, joined in the same recommendation.

*Thoughts on the Corruption of Principles, and on the numerous evils arising to the Revenue, from the too great Poverty of the Officers of Excise.*

It has always been the wisdom of government, to consider the situation and circumstances of persons in trust. Why are large salaries given in many instances, but to proportion it to the trust, to set men above temptation, and to make it even literally worth their while to be honest? The salaries of the judges have been augmented, and their places made independent even of the crown itself, for the above wise purposes.

Certainly there can be nothing unreasonable in supposing there is such an instinct as frailty among the officers of Excise, in common with the rest of mankind; and that the most effectual method to keep men honest, is to enable them to live so. The tenderness of conscience is too often overmatched by the sharpness of want; and principle, like charity, yields with just reluctance enough to excuse itself. There is a powerful rhetoric in necessity, which exceeds even a Dunning or a Wedderburne. No argument can satisfy the feelings of hunger, or abate the edge of appetite. Nothing tends to a greater corruption of manners and principles, than a too great distress of circumstances; and the corruption is of that kind, that it spreads a plaster for itself: like a viper, it carries a cure, though a false one, for its own poison. Agur, without any alternative, has made dishonesty the immediate consequence of poverty, "Lest I be poor and steal." A very little degree of that dangerous kind of philosophy, which is the almost certain effect of involuntary poverty, will teach men to believe, that to starve is more criminal than to steal, by as much as every species of self-murder exceeds every other crime; that true honesty is sentimental, and the practice of it dependent upon circumstances. If the gay find it difficult to resist the allurements of pleasure, the great the temptations of ambition, or the miser the acquisition of wealth, how much stronger are the provocations of want and poverty! The excitements to pleasure, grandeur, or riches, are mere

“ shadows of a shade,” compared to the irresistible necessities of nature. “ Not to be led into temptation,” is the prayer of divinity itself; and to guard against, or rather to prevent, such insnaring situations, is one of the greatest heights of human prudence: in private life it is partly religious; and in a Revenue sense, it is truly political.

The rich, in ease and affluence, may think I have drawn an unnatural portrait; but could they descend to the cold regions of want, the circle of polar poverty, they would find their opinions changing with the climate. There are habits of thinking peculiar to different conditions, and to find them out is truly to study mankind.

That the situation of an Excise officer is of this dangerous kind, must be allowed by every one who will consider the trust unavoidably reposed in him, and compare the narrowness of his circumstances with the hardship of the times. If the salary was judged competent an hundred years ago, it cannot be so now. Should it be advanced, that if the present set of officers are dissatisfied with the salary, that enow may be procured not only for the present salary, but for less; the answer is extremely easy. The question needs only to be put; it destroys itself. Were two or three thousand men to offer to execute the office without any salary, would the government accept them? No. Were the same number to offer the same service for a salary less than can possibly support them, would the government accept them? Certainly not; for while nature, in spite of law or religion, makes it a ruling principle not to starve, the event would be this, that as they could not live on the salary, they would discretionally live out of the duty. Quere, whether poverty has not too great an influence now? Were the employment a place of direct labour, and not of trust, then frugality in the salary would be sound policy: but when it is considered that the greatest single branch of the Revenue, a duty amounting to near five millions sterling, is annually charged by a set of men, most of whom are wanting even the common necessities of life, the thought must, to every friend to honesty, to every person concerned in the management of the public money, be strong and striking. Poor and in power, are powerful temptations; I call it power, because they have it in their power to defraud. The trust unavoidably reposed in an Excise-officer is so great, that it would be an act of wisdom, and perhaps of interest, to secure him from the temptations of downright poverty. To relieve their wants

would be charity, but to secure the Revenue by so doing, would be prudence. Scarcely a week passes at the office but some detections are made of fraudulent and collusive proceedings. The poverty of the officers is the fairest bait for a designing trader that can possibly be; such introduce themselves to the officer under the common plea of the insufficiency of the salary. Every considerate mind must allow, that poverty and opportunity corrupt many an honest man. I am not at all surprised that so many opulent and reputable traders have recommended the case of the officers to the good favour of their representatives. They are sensible of the pinching circumstances of the officers, and of the injury to trade in general, from the advantages which are taken of them. The welfare of the fair trader, and the security of the Revenue, are so inseparably one, that their interest or injuries are alike. It is the opinion of such whose situation gives them a perfect knowledge in the matter, that the Revenue suffers more by the corruption of a few officers in a county, than would make a handsome addition to the salary of the whole number in the same place.

I very lately knew an instance where it is evident, on comparison of the duty charged since, that the Revenue suffered by one trader (and he not a very considerable one) upwards of one hundred and sixty pounds per ann. for several years; and yet the benefit to the officer was a mere trifle, in consideration of the trader's. Without doubt the officer would have thought himself much happier to have received the same addition another way. The bread of deceit is a bread of bitterness; but alas! how few in times of want and hardship are capable of thinking so: objects appear under new colours, and in shapes not naturally their own; hunger sucks in the deception, and necessity reconciles it to conscience.

The commissioners of Excise strongly enjoin, that no officer accept any treat, gratuity, or, in short, lay himself under any kind of obligation to the traders under their survey: the wisdom of such an injunction is evident; but the practice of it, surrounded with children and poverty, is scarcely possible; and such obligations, wherever they exist, must operate, directly or indirectly, to the injury of the Revenue. Favours will naturally beget their likenesses, especially where the return is not at our own expense.

I have heard it remarked, by a gentleman whose know-

ledge in Excise business is indisputable, that there are numbers of officers who are even afraid to look into an unentered room, lest they should give offence. Poverty and obligation tie up the hands of office, and give a prejudicial bias to the mind.

There is another kind of evil, which, though it may never amount to what may be deemed criminality in law, yet it may amount to what is much worse in effect, and that is, a constant and perpetual leakage in the Revenue: a sort of gratitude in the dark, a distant requital for such civilities as only the lowest poverty would accept, and which are a thousand per cent. above the value of the civility received. Yet there is no immediate collusion; the trader and officer are both safe; the design, if discovered, passes for error.

These, with numberless other evils, have all their origin in the poverty of the officers. Poverty, in defiance of principle, begets a degree of meanness that will stoop to almost any thing. A thousand refinements of argument may be brought to prove, that the practice of honesty will be still the same, in the most trying and necessitous circumstances. He who never was an hungered man may argue finely on the subjection of his appetite; and he who never was distressed, may harangue as beautifully on the power of principle. But poverty, like grief, has an incurable deafness, which never hears; the oration loses all its edge; and "*To be, or not to be,*" becomes the only question.

There is a striking difference between dishonesty arising from want of food, and want of principle. The first is worthy of compassion, the other of punishment. Nature never produced a man who would starve in a well-stored larder, because the provisions were not his own: but he who robs it from luxury of appetite, deserves a gibbet.

There is another evil which the poverty of the salary produces, and which nothing but an augmentation can remove; and that is, negligence and indifference. These may not appear of such dark complexion as fraud and collusion, but their injuries to the Revenue are the same. It is impossible that any office or business can be regarded as it ought, where this ruinous disposition exists. It requires no sort of argument to prove, that the value set upon any place or employment, will be in proportion to the value of it; and that diligence or negligence will arise from the same cause. The continual number of relinquishments and dis-

charges always happening in the Excise, are evident proofs of it.

Persons first coming into the Excise, form very different notions of it, to what they have afterwards. The gay ideas of promotion soon expire ; continuance of work, the strictness of the duty, and the poverty of the salary, soon beget negligence and indifference : the course continues for a while, the Revenue suffers, and the officer is discharged : the vacancy is soon filled up, new ones arise to produce the same mischief, and share the same fate.

What adds still more to the weight of this grievance is, that this destructive disposition reigns most among such as are otherwise the most proper and qualified for the employment ; such as are neither fit for the Excise, or any thing else, are glad to hold in by any means : but the Revenue lies at as much hazard from their want of judgment, as from the other's want of diligence.

In private life, no man would trust the execution of any important concern, to a servant who was careless whether he did it or not, and the same rule must hold good in a Revenue sense. The commissioners may continue discharging every day, and the example will have no weight while the salary is an object so inconsiderable, and this disposition has such a general existence. Should it be advanced, that if men will be careless of such bread as is in their possession, they will still be the same were it better ; I answer that, as the disposition I am speaking of, is not the effect of natural idleness, but of dissatisfaction in point of profit, they would not continue the same. A good servant will be careful of a good place, though very indifferent about a bad one. Besides, this spirit of indifference, should it procure a discharge, is no way affecting to their circumstances. The easy transition of a qualified officer to a compting-house, or at least a school-master, at any time, as it naturally supports and backs his indifference about the Excise, so it takes off all punishment from the order whenever it happens.

I have known numbers discharged from the Excise, who would have been a credit to their patrons and the employment, could they have found it worth their while to have attended to it. No man enters into the Excise with any higher expectations than a competent maintenance ; but not to find even that, can produce nothing but *corruption*, *collusion*, and *neglect*.

*Remarks on the Qualification of Officers.*

IN employments where direct labour only is wanting, and trust quite out of the question, the service is merely animal or mechanical. In cutting a river, or forming a road, as there is no possibility of fraud, the merit of honesty is but of little weight. Health, strength, and hardiness, are the labourer's virtues. But where property depends on the trust, and lies at the discretion of the servant, the judgment of the master takes a different channel, both in the choice and the wages. The honest and the dissolute have here no comparison of merit. A known thief may be trusted to gather stones; but a steward ought to be proof against the temptations of uncounted gold.

The Excise is so far from being of the nature of the first, that it is all, and more than can commonly be put together in the last: it is a place of poverty, of trust, of opportunity, and temptation. A compound of discords, where the more they harmonize, the more they offend.

To be properly qualified for the employment, it is not only necessary that the person should be honest, but that he be sober, diligent, and skilful; sober, that he may be always capable of business; diligent, that he may be always in his business; and skilful, that he may be able to prevent or detect frauds against the Revenue. The want of any of these qualifications is a capital offence in the Excise. A complaint of drunkenness, negligence, or ignorance, is certain death by the laws of the board. It cannot then be all sorts of persons who are proper for the office. The very notion of procuring a sufficient number for even less than the present salary, is so destitute of every degree of sound reason, that it needs no reply. The employment, from the insufficiency of the salary, is already become so inconsiderable in the general opinion, that persons of any capacity or reputation will keep out of it; for where is the mechanic, or even the labourer, who cannot earn at least 1s. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per day? It certainly cannot be proper to take the dregs of every calling, and to make the Excise the common receptacle for the indigent, the ignorant, and the calamitous.

A truly worthy commissioner, lately dead, made a public offer, a few years ago, of putting any of his neighbours' sons into the Excise; but though the offer amounted almost to an invitation, one only, whom seven years apprenticeship could not make a tailor, accepted it; who, after a twelve-month's instruction, was ordered off, but in a few days finding the employment beyond his abilities, he prudently deserted it, and returned home, where he now remains in the character of an husbandman.

There are very few instances of rejection even of persons who can scarce write their own names legibly; for as there is neither law to compel, nor encouragement to excite, no other can be had than such as offer, and none will offer who can see any other prospect of living. Every one knows that the Excise is a place of labour, not of ease; of hazard, not of certainty; and that downright poverty finishes the character.

It must strike every considerate mind, to hear a man with a large family, faithful enough to declare, that he cannot support himself on the salary with that honest independency he could wish. There is a great degree of affecting honesty in an ingenuous confession. Eloquence may strike the ear, but the language of poverty strikes the heart; the first may charm like music, but the second alarms like a knell.

Of late years there has been such an admission of improper and unqualified persons in the Excise, that the office is not only become contemptible, but the Revenue insecure. Collectors, whose long services and qualifications have advanced them to that station, are disgraced by the wretchedness of new supers continually. Certainly some regard ought to be had to decency, as well as merit.

These are some of the capital evils which arise from the wretched poverty of the salary. Evils they certainly are; for what can be more destructive in a Revenue office, than corruption, collusion, neglect, and ill qualifications.

Should it be questioned whether an augmentation of salary would remove them, I answer, there is scarce a doubt to be made of it. Human wisdom may possibly be deceived in its wisest designs; but here, every thought and circumstance establishes the hope. They are evils of such a ruinous tendency, that they must, by some means or other, be removed. Rigour and severity have been tried in vain; for punishment loses all its force where men expect and disregard it.

Of late years, the board of Excise has shewn an extraor-



dinary tenderness in such instances as might otherwise have affected the circumstances of their officers. Their compassion has greatly tended to lessen the distresses of the employment; but as it cannot amount to a total removal of them, the officers of Excise throughout the kingdom have (as the voice of one man) prepared petitions to be laid before the Honourable House of Commons on the ensuing Parliament.

An augmentation of salary, sufficient to enable them to live honestly and competently, would produce more good effect than all the laws of the land can enforce. The generality of such frauds as the officers have been detected in, have appeared of a nature as remote from inherent dishonesty, as a temporary illness is from an incurable disease. Surrounded with want, children, and despair, what can the husband or the father do? No laws compel like nature—no connections bind like blood.

With an addition of salary, the Excise would wear a new aspect, and recover its former constitution. Languor and neglect would give place to care and cheerfulness. Men of reputation and abilities would seek after it, and finding a comfortable maintenance would stick to it. The unworthy and incapable would be rejected, the power of superiors be re-established, and laws and instructions receive new force. The officers would be secured from the temptations of poverty, and the Revenue from the evils of it; the cure would be as extensive as the complaint, and new health out-root the present corruptions.

THOMAS PAINE.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST NUMBER OF THE  
PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE.

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*To the Public.*

THE design of this work has been so fully expressed in the printed proposals, that it is unnecessary to trouble the reader *now* with a formal preface; and instead of that vain parade with which publications of this kind are introduced to the public, we shall content ourselves with soliciting their candour, till our more qualified labours shall entitle us to their praise.

The generous and considerate will recollect, that imperfection is natural to infancy; and that nothing claims their patronage with a better grace than those undertakings which, beside their infant state, have many formidable disadvantages to oppress them.

We presume it is unnecessary to inform our friends that we encounter all the inconveniencies which a magazine can possibly start with. Unassisted by imported materials, we are destined to create, what our predecessors, in this walk, had only to compile.—And the present perplexities of affairs have rendered it somewhat difficult for us to procure the necessary aids.

Thus encompassed with difficulties, the first number of THE PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE entreats a favourable reception; of which we shall only say, like the *snow-drop*, it comes forth in a barren season, and contents itself with foretelling, that CHOICER FLOWERS are preparing to appear.

*Philadelphia, January 21, 1775.*

## THE UTILITY OF MAGAZINES EVINCED.

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IN a country whose reigning character is the love of science, it is somewhat strange that the channels of communication should be so narrow and limited. The weekly papers are at present the only vehicle of public information. Convenience and necessity prove that the opportunities of acquiring and communicating knowledge ought always to enlarge with the circle of population. America has now outgrown the state of infancy; her strength and commerce make large advances to manhood; and science, in all its branches, has not only blossomed, but even ripened on the soil. The cottages, as it were, of yesterday, have grown to villages, and the villages to cities; and while proud antiquity, like a skeleton in rags, parades the streets of other nations, their genius, as if sickened and disgusted with the phantom, comes hither for recovery.

The present enlarged and improved state of things gives every encouragement which the editor of a new Magazine can reasonably hope for. The failure of former ones cannot be drawn as a parallel now. Change of times adds propriety to new measures. In the early days of colonization, when a whisper was almost sufficient to have negotiated all our internal concerns, the publishing even of a newspaper would have been premature. Those times are past, and population has established both their use and their credit. But their plan being almost wholly devoted to news and commerce, affords but a scanty residence to the Muses. Their path lies wide of the field of science, and has left a rich and unexplored region for new adventures.

It has always been the opinion of the learned and the curious, that a Magazine, when properly conducted, is a nursery of genius; and by constantly accumulating new matter, becomes a kind of market for wit and utility. The opportunity which it affords to men of abilities to communicate their studies, kindles up a spirit of invention and emulation. An unexercised genius soon contracts a kind of mossiness, which not only checks its growth, but abates its natural vigour. Like an untenanted house, it falls into decay, and frequently ruins the possessor.

The British Magazines, at the commencement, were the repositories of ingenuity; they are now the retailers of tale

and nonsense. From elegance they sunk into simplicity, from simplicity to folly, and from folly to voluptuousness. The Gentleman's, the London, and the Universal Magazines, bear yet some marks of their originality: but the Town and Country, the Covent Garden, and Westminster, are no better than incentives to profligacy and dissipation. They have added to the dissolution of manners, and supported Venus against the Muses.

America yet inherits a large portion of her first imported virtue. Degeneracy is here almost a useless word. They who are conversant with Europe would be tempted to believe, that even the air of the Atlantic disagrees with foreign vices; if they survive the voyage they either expire on their arrival, or linger away in an incurable consumption. There is a happy something in the climate of America which disarms them of all their power both of infection and attraction.

But while we give no encouragement to the importation of foreign vices, we ought to be equally as careful not to create any. A vice begotten might be worse than a vice imported. The latter depending on favour, would be a sycophant; the other by pride of birth would be a tyrant. To the one we should be dupes; to the other slaves.

There is nothing which obtains so general an influence over the manners and morals of a people, as the press; from *that*, as from a fountain, the streams of vice or virtue are poured forth over a country: and of all publications none are more calculated to improve or infect than a periodical one. All others have their rise, and their exit; but *this* renews the pursuit. If it has no evil tendency, it debauches by the power of repetition; if a good one, it obtains favour by the gracefulness of soliciting it. Like a lover it woos its mistress with unabated ardour, nor gives up the pursuit without a conquest.

The two capital supports of a Magazine are utility and entertainment. The first is a boundless path, the other an endless spring. To suppose that arts and sciences are an exhausted subject, is doing them a kind of dishonour. The divine mechanism of the creation reproves such folly and shews us by comparison, the imperfection of our most refined inventions. I cannot believe that this species of vanity, is peculiar to the present age only. I have no doubt but it existed before the flood and even in the wildest ages of antiquity. It is a folly we have inherited, not created; and the discoveries which every day produces, have greatly

contributed to dispossess us of it. Improvement and the world will expire together; and till that period arrives we may plunder the mine but can never exhaust it. That "*we have found out every thing*" has been the motto of every age.

Let out ideas travel a little into antiquity, and we shall find larger portions of it than now; and so unwilling were our ancestors to descend from the mountain of perfection, that when any new discovery exceeded the common standard, the discoverer was believed to be in alliance with the devil. It was not the ignorance of the age only, but the vanity of it, which rendered it dangerous to be ingenious.

The man who first planned and erected a tenable hut, with a hole for the smoke to pass, and the light to enter, was, perhaps, called an able architect; but he who first improved it with a chimney, could be no less than a prodigy; yet, had the same man been so unfortunate as to have embellished it with glass windows, he might, probably, have been burnt for a magician. Our fancies would be highly diverted could we look back, and behold a circle of original Indians haranguing on the sublime perfection of the age: yet, it is not impossible but future time may exceed us almost as much as we have exceeded them.

I would wish to extirpate the least remains of this impolitic vanity. It has a direct tendency to unbrace the nerves of invention, and is peculiarly hurtful to young colonies. A Magazine can never want matter in America, if the inhabitants will do justice to their own abilities. Agriculture and manufactures owe much of their improvement in England, to hints first thrown out in some of their Magazines. Gentlemen whose abilities enabled them to make experiments, frequently choose that method of communication, on account of its convenience. And why should not the same spirit operate in America? I have no doubt of seeing, in a little time, an American Magazine full of more useful matter than ever I saw an English one: because we are not exceeded in abilities, have a more extensive field for inquiry, and, whatever may be our political state, *our happiness will always depend upon ourselves.*

Something useful will always arise from exercising the invention, though, perhaps, like the witch of Endor, we shall raise up a being we did not expect. We owe many of our noblest discoveries more to accident than wisdom. In quest of a pebble, we have found a diamond, and returned enriched with the treasure. Such happy accidents

give additional encouragement to the making experiments; and the convenience which a Magazine affords of collecting and conveying them to the public, enhances their utility. Where this opportunity is wanting, in any little inventions, the forerunners of improvement are suffered to expire on the spot that produced them; and as an elegant writer beautifully expresses on another occasion,

“ They waste their sweetness on the desert air.”

GRAY.

In matters of humour and entertainment there can be no reason to apprehend a deficiency. Wit is naturally a volunteer, delights in action, and under proper discipline is capable of great execution. It is a perfect master in the art of bush-fighting; and though it attacks with more subtlety than science, has often defeated a whole regiment of heavy artillery. Though I have rather exceeded the line of gravity in this description of wit, I am unwilling to dismiss it without being a little more serious. It is a qualification, which, like the passions, has a natural wildness that requires governing. Left to itself, it soon overflows its banks, mixes with common filth, and brings disrepute on the fountain. We have many valuable springs of it in America, which at present run in purer streams, than the generality of it in other countries. In France and Italy, it is froth highly fomented. In England it has much of the same spirit, but rather a browner complexion. European wit is one of the worst articles we can import. It has an intoxicating power with it, which debauches the very vitals of chastity, and gives a false colouring to every thing it censures or defends. We soon grow fatigued with the excess, and withdraw like gluttons sickened with intemperance. On the contrary, how happily are the follies of innocent humour calculated to amuse and sweeten the vacancy of business! We enjoy the harmless luxury without surfeiting, and strengthen the spirits by relaxing them.

The press has not only a great influence over our manners and morals, but contributes largely to our pleasures; and a Magazine, when properly enriched, is very conveniently calculated for this purpose. Voluminous works weary the patience, but here we are invited by conciseness and variety. As I have formerly received much pleasure from perusing these kind of publications, I wish the present success, and have no doubt of seeing a proper diversity blended so

agreeably together, as to furnish out an olio worthy of the company for whom it is designed.

I consider a Magazine as a kind of bee-hive, which both allures the swarm, and provides room to store their sweets. Its divisions into cells gives every bee a province of its own; though they differ in their taste for flowers, and extract with greater dexterity from one than from another. *Thus* we are not all PHILOSOPHERS, all ARTISTS, nor all POETS.

## A MATHEMATICAL QUESTION PROPOSED.

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MR. AITKEN,

WHEREVER the arts and sciences have been cultivated, a particular regard has been deservedly paid to the study of Mathematics. A practice has indeed long prevailed among mathematicians of real disservice to the science. When they have propounded questions in periodical publications of this kind, they have generally made choice of such as had nothing to recommend them, but their difficulty of solution, and in which they seem rather to have aimed at victory over their cotemporary rivals, than the advancement of knowledge. It were to be wished, indeed, that all questions might be suppressed, but such as may be applicable to some useful purpose in life. The following question, I hope, is of that class. If you should be of the same opinion, your sticking it in a niche in your new Magazine, will oblige

Your humble Servant,

P.

In surveying a piece of land I found the dimensions as follows:

1	side	N. 25° 30' E.	100	pers.
2	...	S. 84° 30' E.	60	
3	...	S. 36° 0' E.	96	
4	...	S. 26° 15' W.	85	
5	...	N. 59° 30' W.	140	to the place of be-

ginning.

But upon calculating the contents from a table of difference of latitude and departure, I found I had made some error in the field; for my Northings and Southings, Eastings and Westings, were not exactly equal. Now supposing this error to have been equally contracted in every part of the survey both from the inaccuracy of taking the bearings and lengths of the boundary lines (which is the most probable supposition), it is required to correct this error, and tell the contents of this piece of land without making a re-survey.



## FOR THE PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE

SEE THE PLATE.

*Description of a New Electrical Machine with Remarks.*

THERE is no place where the *study* of electricity has received more improvement than in Philadelphia: but in the *construction* of the machines the European philosophers have rather excelled. The opportunity of getting glasses blown or made in what form they please, and the easiness of finding artists to execute any new or improved invention, are perhaps the reasons of the difference.

I look on a globe to be the worst form for a glass that can be used, because when in motion you cannot touch any great part of its surface, without having the cushion concave, which, if it is, will be very apt to press unequally; a circumstance which ought to be guarded against.

The cylinder is an improvement on the globe, because nearly all the surface may be touched, and that equally, by a plain cushion; yet both these forms exclude us from the the inside, and only one or two cushions can be applied to outside.

Those machines whose glasses are planes, and revolve vertically, excite stronger than any other I have yet seen; as there are not, I believe, any in this part of the world, and as the construction is a late one I have added a description thereof, that if the glass can be procured, any gentleman inclined to have them, may easily get the other parts executed.

Let A B represent a board of convenient length and breadth, into which I insert the upright pillar, B C, which must be cut down the middle, or two single ones must be joined, so as to receive the glass plate, D E F G, and also a thin cushion on each side, between the glass plate and the insides of the pillar. In the centre of the pillar, and on each side thereof, insert the arms, D E H I F G, so that the plate may go down between the whole. The cushions are

thin pieces of board or brass, covered loosely with red leather, and stuffed, and slipped in on each side between the plate and the arms, so that the plate may turn between the eight cushions on each side of it.\* The arms are generally thinned away as far as the cushions go, to receive them the more conveniently; and in the back of each cushion is a brass pin at each end, and which lodge in a notch in the pillar, and prevent their being displaced by the motion of the glass; for the cushions should be made to take out, to be cleaned, &c.

K L is a phial, and in order to have it steady, a circle is cut in the board, A B, to receive it. In the top of the phial is a wood stopper, M N, round the edge of which is glued a piece of woollen cloth to make it fix tight. Into the wood stopper, insert the brass stem, O P, to the end of which is fixed a chain, P Q. The conductor, R S, is a brass tube, which screws on the stem, O P, to which is fixed eight branches, though four are only represented in the plate, to avoid confusion, the branches terminate in points, directed in the spaces in the glass plate between the cushions, and collecting the fire from thence, convey it by means of the conductor and chain to the receiver, K L. The glass plate is turned by a winch made fast to an axis, which goes through the plate and pillars (I presume that a square hole struck through the centre of the plate while it is hot, at the time of making it) and the better to fasten the plate on the axis, a piece of wood, the size of a small saucer, is cemented to each side of the plate at the centre, and the axis passes through the whole.

If the coating comes to the bottom of the receiver, there needs no chain round it, to carry off the fire that will unavoidably steal down the outside, that being supplied by the phial being in contact with the board, the board with the table it stands on, &c.; but this communication must by some means be cut off, in order to charge the phial on the outside, which the machine that I saw was not supplied with. Any non-conducting body interposed between the phial and board will supply that defect.

This is an exact description, as far as my memory can recollect of that which I saw. I think the plate was about eighteen inches diameter, and about two-tenths of an inch in

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\* The cushions are represented as fixed between the plate and the arms, by the figures 1, 2, 3, 4.

thickness, and had a greenish cast.\* A less plate requires fewer arms.

I am inclined to think, but I offer it only as a conjecture, that if additional branches were fixed to those represented in the figure, and brought over the edge of the glass, and pointed to the other side, in the same manner as the first set does, a greater, if not a double quantity of fire would be collected. My reasons are,

1. That the friction being on both sides equal, the quantity of matter excited on each side, may be supposed to be equal likewise.

2. That as glass is not pervadeable by electrical matter, the union of the two quantities cannot be effected that way.

3. That as glass will not conduct on its surface, the edge of the plate will act as a barrier between the two quantities.

Perhaps endeavouring to charge two phials from the different sides of the plate at one time, will best demonstrate this point.

ATLANTICUS.

Philadelphia, Jan. 10.

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\* I think if a cylinder was cut open while hot, and flexible in making, and spread on a plane surface, it would be sufficient for the purpose. Glass excites the stronger by not being too smooth.

## USEFUL AND ENTERTAINING HINTS.

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The real value of a thing,  
Is as much money as 'twill bring.

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IN the possession of the Philadelphia Library Company is a cabinet of fossils,\* with several specimens of earth, clay, sand, &c. with some account of each, and where brought from.

I have always considered these kind of researches as productive of many advantages, and in a new country they are particularly so. As subjects for speculation, they afford entertainment to the curious; but as objects of utility, they merit a closer attention. The same materials which delight the fossilist, enrich the manufacturer and the merchant. While the one is scientifically examining their structure and composition, the others, by industry and commerce, are transmuting them to gold. Possessed of the power of pleasing, they gratify on both sides; the one contemplates their natural beauties in the cabinet, the other, their *re-created* ones in the coffer.

It is by the researches of the virtuoso that the hidden parts of the earth are brought to light, and from his discoveries of its qualities, the potter, the glass-maker, and numerous other artists, are enabled to furnish us with their productions. Artists, considered merely as such, would have made but a slender progress, had they not been led on by the enterprising spirit of the curious. I am unwilling to dismiss this remark without entering my protest against that unkind, ungrateful, and impolitic custom of ridiculing unsuccessful experiments; and informing those unwise or

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\* In the catalogue it is called a collection of American fossils, &c. but a considerable part of them are foreign ones. I presume that the collector, in order to judge the better of such as he might discover here, made first a collection of such foreign ones whose value were known, in order to compare by; as his design seems rather bent towards discovering the treasures of America, than merely to make a collection.

overwise pasquinades, that half the felicities they enjoy sprung originally from generous curiosity. Were a man to propose, or set out to bore his lands, as a carpenter does a board, he might, probably, bring on himself a shower of witticisms; and though he could not be jested at for building castles in the air, yet many magnanimous laughs might break forth at his expence, and vociferously predict the explosion of a mine in his subterraneous pursuits.

I am led to this reflection by the present domestic state of America, because it will unavoidably happen, that before we can arrive at that perfection of things which other nations have acquired, many hopes will fail, many whimsical attempts will become fortunate, and many reasonable ones end in air and expence. The degree of improvement which America is already arrived at, is unparalleled and astonishing, but it is miniature to what she will one day boast of, if heaven continue her happiness. We have nearly one whole region yet unexplored; I mean the internal region of the earth. By industry and tillage we have acquired a considerable knowledge of what America will produce, but very little of what it contains. The bowels of the earth have been only slightly inquired into: we seem to content ourselves with such parts of it as are absolutely necessary, and cannot well be imported, as brick, stone, &c. but have gone very little further, except in the article of iron. The glass and the pottery manufactures are yet very imperfect, and will continue so, till some curious researcher finds out the proper material.

Copper, lead,\* and tin articles valuable both in their

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\* I am quite at a loss to know what is meant by white lead ore mentioned in the catalogue; there being no such thing. White lead does not exist in a mineral state, but is prepared from common lead by the following process:—A large wood trough, thirty or forty feet square, is divided by wood partitions into squares of about one foot each. These squares are filled with vinegar, which is kept moderately hot, by means of large beds of new horse dung under the troughs: common sheet lead is cut into square pieces and put into the vinegar, which acts upon it as a menstruum, and changes it into white lead. When the pieces of lead appear white and flakey, they are taken out and thrown under a stone roller, which goes over them (as a tanner grinds bark) and beats off such parts of the lead as are already changed into white lead, the remainder is again thrown into the vinegar. Fire will restore white lead to common lead again.

simple state, and as being the component parts of other metals, (viz. brass and pewter) are at present but little known throughout the Continent in their mineral form: yet I doubt not but very valuable mines of them are daily travelled over in the western parts of America. Perhaps a few feet of surface conceal a treasure sufficient to enrich a kingdom.

The value of the interior part of the earth, like ourselves, cannot be judged certainly of by the surface; neither do the corresponding strata lie with the unvariable order of the colours of the rainbow;\* and if they ever did, which I do not believe, age and misfortune have now broken in upon their union; earthquakes, deluges, and volcanoes have so disunited and reunited them, that in their present state they appear like a world in ruins—yet the ruins are beautiful; the caverns, museums of antiquity.

Though Nature is gay, polite, and generous abroad, she is sullen, rude, and niggardly at home. Return the visit, and she admits you with all the suspicion of a miser, and all the reluctance of an antiquated beauty retired to replenish her charms. Bred up in antediluvian notions, she has not yet acquired the European taste of receiving visitants in her dressing-room: she locks and bolts up her private recesses with extraordinary care, as if not only resolved to preserve her hoards, but to conceal her age, and hide the remains of a face that was young and lovely in the days of Adam. He that would view nature in her undress, and partake of her internal treasures, must proceed with the resolution of a robber, if not a ravisher. She gives no invitation to follow her to the cavern. The external earth makes no proclamation of the interior stores, but leaves to chance and industry the discovery of the whole. In such gifts as nature can annually recreate, she is noble and profuse, and entertains the whole world with the interest of her fortunes; but watches over the capital with the care of a miser. Her gold and jewels lie concealed in the earth, in caves of utter darkness; and hoards of wealth, heaps upon heaps, mould in the chests, like the riches of a necromancer's cell. It must be very pleasant to an adventurous speculist to make excursions into these Gothic regions; and in his travels he may possibly come to a cabinet locked up in some rocky vault,

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\* 1. Red. 2. Orange. 3. Yellow. 4. Green. 5. Blue. 6. Indigo. 7. Violet.

whose treasures shall reward his toil, and enable him to shine on his return as splendidly as Nature herself. By a small degree of attention to the order and origin of such things, we shall perceive, that though the surface of the earth produce us the necessaries of life, yet it is from the mine we extract the conveniences thereof. Our houses would diminish to wigwams furnished in the Indian style, and ourselves resemble the building, were it not for the ores of the earth. Agriculture and manufactures would wither away for want of tools and implements, and commerce stand still for want of materials. The beasts of the field would elude our power, and the birds of the air get beyond our reach. Our dominion would shrink to a narrow circle; and our mind itself, partaking of the change, would contract its prospects, and lessen into almost animal instinct. Take away but the single article of iron, and half the felicities of life falls with it. Little as we may prize this common ore, the loss of it would cut deeper than the use of it: and by the way of laughing off misfortunes it is easy to prove, by this method of investigation, that *an iron age is better than a golden one.*

Since so great a portion of our enjoyments is drawn from the mine, it is certainly an evidence of our prudence to inquire and know what our professions are. Every man's landed property extends to the surface of the earth. Why then should he sit down contented with a part, and practise upon his estate those fashionable follies in life which prefer the superfluous to the solid? Curiosity alone, should the thought occur conveniently, would move an active mind to examine, though not to the bottom, at least to a considerable depth.

The propriety and reasonableness of these internal inquiries are continually pointed out to us by numberless occurrences. Accident is almost every day turning out some new secret from the earth. How often has the ploughshare or the spade broken open a treasure, which for ages, perhaps for ever, had lain but just beneath the surface: and though every state have not mines of gold or silver, yet they may contain some strata of valuable earth, proper for manufactures; and if they have not these, there is a great probability of their having chalk, marl, or some rich soil proper for manure, which only requires to be removed to the surface.

I have been informed of some land in England being raised to four times its former value by the discovery of a

chalk or marl pit, in digging a hole to fix a post in ; and in embanking a meadow in the Jerseys, the labourers threw out with the soil a fine blue powdery earth, resembling indigo, which, when mixed with oil, was used for paint. I imagine the vein is now exhausted.

Those who are inclined to make researches of this kind, will find their endeavours greatly facilitated by the use of the following instrument.

*Description of a set of Borers, used in boring land, in order to find its internal composition.*

A set of borers consists of any number of pieces, according to the depth intended to be bored to. Those which I saw, and have here described, had twenty pieces of about two feet long each, and about an inch and a half diameter. The first piece has a bite like a wood borer, and grooved like a gimblet, on which is to be fixed an iron cross bar, to turn it by. When the first piece has descended to its depth, the cross bar is taken off, and the second piece, grooved like the first, is joined to it, much in the same manner as a soldier's bayonet is fixed to his musket, but so that the groove of the second lie in a line with the first. The cross bar is then put on the top of the second piece; and when that has descended, the third is fixed on in the same manner as the second, with the groove in the same line, and so far for all the rest. It is evident that if the whole twenty pieces were to descend, and not be drawn up till the last, that the different soils through which the borer had passed, would lie in the grooves in the same order, and at the same distance from the surface, and from each other, that they laid in the earth ; and that by repeating the operation in different parts of the land, the direction, extent, length, and thickness of any, or all the strata would be known. But as it will require an extraordinary force both to bore it down and draw up the whole number of pieces, it will be necessary to loosen them by frequently drawing them up, and likewise to have an additional fore-piece something bigger than the rest, to enlarge the hole by. A few trials will explain the whole. The two chief things to observe are, not to lay the borers fast, as they cannot be released like a wedge, nor to wrench them the contrary way, lest you separate them by so doing, for the lower parts will be irrecoverably lost.

Experiments of this kind are not attended with any considerable expence, and they give us much knowledge of the



internal structure of the earth, as will be obtained by fifty times the same expence in digging to any considerable depth; and much more expeditiously. Many valuable ores, clays, &c. appear in such rude forms in their natural state, as not even to excite curiosity, much less attention. A true knowledge of their different value can only be obtained by experiment: as soil proper for manure they may be judged of by the planter; but as matter, they come under the enquiry of the philosopher. This leads me to reflect with inexpressible pleasure, on the numberless benefits arising to a community, by the institution of societies for promoting useful knowledge.

The American Philosophical Society, like the Royal Society in England, by having public spirit for its support, and public good for its object, is become a treasure we ought to glory in. Here the defective knowledge of the individual is supplied by the common stock. Societies, without endangering private fortunes, are enabled to proceed in their enquiries by analysis and experiment; but individuals are seldom furnished with conveniences for so doing, generally rest their opinion on reasonable conjecture.

I presume, that were samples of different soils from different parts of America presented to the society for their inspection and examination, it would greatly facilitate our knowledge of the internal earth, and give a new spring both to agriculture and manufactures. These hints are not intended to lament any loss of time, or remissness in the pursuit of useful knowledge, but to furnish matter for future studies; that while we glory in what we are, we may not neglect what we are to be.

Of the present state we may justly say, that no nation under heaven ever struck out in so short a time, and with so much spirit and reputation, into the labyrinth of art and science; and that not in the acquisition of knowledge only, but in the happy advantages flowing from it. The world does not at this day exhibit a parallel, neither can history produce its equal.

ATLANTICUS.

Philadelphia, February 10.

NEW ANECDOTES OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

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IN one of those calm and gloomy days, which have a strange effect in disposing the mind to pensiveness, I quitted the busy town and withdrew into the country. As I passed towards the Schuylkill, my ideas enlarged with the prospect, and sprung from place to place with an agility for which nature bath not a simile. Even the eye is a loiterer, when compared with the rapidity of the thoughts. Before I could reach the ferry I had made the tour of the creation, and paid a regular visit to almost every country under the sun; and while I was crossing the river, I passed the Styx and made large excursions into the shadowy regions; but my ideas relanded with my person, and taking a new flight inspected the state of things unborn; this happy wildness of imagination makes a man a lord of the world, and discovers to him the value and the vanity of all its passions. Having discharged the two terrestrial Charons, who ferried me over the Schuylkill, I took up my staff and walked into the woods. Every thing conspired to hush me into a pleasing kind of melancholy, the trees seemed to sleep—and the air hung round me with such unbreathing silence, as if listening to my very thoughts. Perfectly at rest from care or business, I suffered my ideas to pursue their own unfettered fancies; and in less time than what is required to express it in, they had again passed the Styx and toured round many miles into the new country.

As the servants of great men always imitate their masters abroad, so my ideas, habiting themselves in my likeness, figured away with all the consequence of the person they belong to; and calling themselves, when united *I* and *me* wherever they went, brought me, on their return, the following anecdotes of Alexander; viz.

Having a mind to see in what manner Alexander lived in the Plutonian world, I crossed the Styx (without the help of Charon, for the dead only are his fare,) and enquired of a melancholy looking shade who was sitting on the banks of the river, if he could give me any account of him; yonder he comes, replied the shade, get out of the way or you'll be run over. Turning myself round I saw a grand equipage rolling towards me which filled the whole avenue. Bless me! thought I, the gods still continue this man in his insolence and pomp! The chariot was drawn by eight horses in golden harness, and the whole represented his triumphal return, after he had conquered the world. It passed me

with a splendour I had not seen before, and shined so luminously up into the country, that I discovered innumerable shades sitting under the trees, which before were invisible. As there were two persons in the chariot equally splendid, I could not distinguish which was Alexander, and on requiring that information of the shade who still stood by, he replied, *Alexander is not there*. Did you not, continued I, tell me that Alexander was coming, and bid me get out of the way? Yes, answered the shade, *because he was the fore horse on the side next to us*. Horse! I mean Alexander the Emperor, *I mean the same*, replied the shade, *for whatever he was on the other side of the water is nothing now, he is a horse here; and not always that for when he is apprehensive that a good licking is intended for him, he watches his opportunity to roll out of the stable in the shape of a piece of dung or in any other disguise he can escape*. On this information I turned instantly away, not being able to bear the thoughts of such astonishing degradation, notwithstanding the aversion I have to his character. But curiosity got the better of my compassion, and having a mind to see what sort of a figure the conqueror of the world cut in the stable, I directed my flight thither. He was just returned with the rest of the horses from the journey, and the groom was rubbing him down with a large furze bush, but turning himself round to get a still larger and more prickly one that was newly brought in, Alexander caught the opportunity, and instantly disappeared, on which I quitted the place, lest I should be suspected of stealing him. When I had reached the banks of the river, and was preparing to take my flight over, I perceived that I had picked up a *bug* among the Plutonian gentry, and thinking it was needless to increase the breed on this side the water, was going to dispatch it, when the *little* wretch screamed out, *Spare Alexander the GREAT*. On which I withdrew the violence I was offering to his person, and holding up the emperor between my finger and thumb, he exhibited a most contemptible figure of the downfall of tyrant greatness. Affected with a mixture of concern and compassion (*which he was always a stranger to*) I suffered him to nibble on a pimple that was newly risen on my hand, in order to refresh him; after which I placed him on a tree to hide him, but a tom-tit coming by, chopped him up with as little ceremony as he put whole kingdoms to the sword. On which I took my flight, reflecting with pleasure that I was not *Alexander the GREAT*.

ÆSOP.

## REFLECTIONS ON THE LIFE AND DEATH OF LORD CLIVE.

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AH! The tale is told—the scene is ended—and the curtain falls. As an emblem of the vanity of all earthly pomp, let his monument be a globe, but be that globe a bubble; let his effigy be a man walking round it in his sleep; and let Fame in the character of a shadow, inscribe his honours on the air.

I view him but as yesterday on the burning plains of Plassey\*, doubtful of life, health, or victory. I see him in the instant when "*To be or not to be*," were equal chances to a human eye. To be a lord or a slave, to return loaded with the spoils, or remain mingled with the dust of India. Did necessity always justify the severity of a conqueror, the rude tongue of censure would be silent, and however painfully he might look back on scenes of horror, the pensive reflection would not alarm him. Though his feelings suffered, his conscience would be acquitted. The sad remembrance would move serenely, and leave the mind without a wound. But oh, India! thou loud proclaimer of European cruelties! thou bloody monument of unnecessary deaths! be tender in the day of inquiry, and shew a Christian world thou canst suffer and forgive.

Departed from India, and loaded with plunder, I see him doubling the Cape and looking wistfully to Europe. I see him contemplating on years of pleasure, and gratifying his ambition with expected honours. I see his arrival pompously announced in every newspaper, his eager eye rambling through the crowd in quest of homage, and his ear listening lest an applause should escape him. Happily for him he arrived before his *fame*, and the short interval was a time of rest. From the crowd I follow him to the court, I see him enveloped in the sunshine of sovereign favour, rivalling

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\* Battle of Plassey in the East Indies, where Lord Clive, at that time Colonel Clive, acquired an immense fortune, and from which place his title is taken.

the great in honours, the proud in splendour, and the rich in wealth. From the court I trace him to the country, his equipage moves like a camp; every village bell proclaims his coming; the wondering peasants admire his pomp, and his heart runs over with joy.

But, alas! (not satisfied with uncountable thousands) I accompany him again to India. I mark the variety of countenances which appear at his landing—Confusion spreads the news—Every passion seems alarmed—The wailing widow, the crying orphan, and the childless parent remember and lament; the rival Nabobs court his favour; the rich dread his power—and the poor his severity. Fear and terror march like pioneers before his camp—murder and rapine accompany it—famine and wretchedness follow it in the rear.

Resolved on accumulating an unbounded fortune, he enters into all the schemes of war, treaty and intrigue. The British sword is set up for sale; the heads of contending Nabobs are offered at a price, and the bribe taken from both sides. Thousands of men or money are trifles in an Indian bargain. The field is an empire, and the treasure almost without end. The wretched inhabitants are glad to compound for offences never committed, and to purchase at any rate the privilege to breathe; while he, the sole lord of their lives and fortunes, disposes of either as he pleases, and prepares for Europe.\*

Uncommon fortunes require an uncommon date of life to

\* In April 1773, a Committee of the House of Commons, under the name of the Select Committee, were appointed by the House to enquire into the state of the East India affairs, and the conduct of the several Governors of Bengal. The Committee having gone through the examination, General Burgoyne, the chairman, pre-faced their report to the House, informing them, "That the reports contained accounts of crimes shocking to human nature, that the most infamous designs had been carried into execution by perfidy and murder. He recapitulated the wretched situation of the East-Indian princes, who held their dignities on the precarious condition of being the highest bribers. No claim, however just on their part, he said, could be admitted without being introduced by enormous sums of rupees, nor any prince suffered to reign long, who did not quadrate with this idea; and that Lord Clive, over and above the enormous sums he might with some appearance of justice lay claim to, had obtained others to which he could have no title.

enjoy them in. The usual period is spent in preparing to live : and unless nature prolongs the time, fortune bestows her excess of favours in vain.

The Conqueror of the East having nothing more to expect from the one, has all his court to make to the other. Anxiety for wealth gives place to anxiety for life ; and wisely recollecting that the sea is no respecter of persons, resolves on taking his route to Europe by land. Little beings move unseen, or unobserved, but he engrosses whole kingdoms in his march, and is gazed at like a comet. The burning desert, the pathless mountains, and the fertile valleys, are in their turns explored and passed over. No material accident distresses his progress, and England once more receives the spoiler.

How sweet is rest to the weary traveller ; the retrospect heightens the enjoyment ; and if the future prospect be serene, the days of ease and happiness are arrived. An uninquiring observer might have been inclined to consider Lord Clive, under all these agreeable circumstances : One, whose every care was over ; and who had nothing to do but sit down and say, *Soul take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up in store for many years.*

The reception which he met with on his second arrival, was in every instance equal, and in many, it exceeded, the honours of the first. It is the peculiar temper of the English to applaud before they think. Generous of their praise, they frequently bestow it unworthily : but when once the truth arrives, the torrent stops, and rushes back again with the same violence.\* Scarcely had the echo of applause

He, (General Burgoyne) therefore moved. " That it appears to this House, that Robert Lord Clive, baron of Plassey, about the time of deposing Surajah Dowla, Nabob of Bengal, and establishing Meer Jaffier in his room, did, through the influence of the power with which he was intrusted, as member of the Select Committee in India, and Commander in Chief of the British forces there, obtain and possess himself of two lacks and 80,000 rupees, as member of the Select Committee ; a further sum of two lacks of rupees, as Commander in Chief ; a further sum of 16 lacks of rupees, or more, under the denomination of *private donations* ; which sums, amounting together to 20 lacks and 80,000 rupees, were of the value, in English money, of £234,000, and that in so doing, the said Robert Lord Clive abused the powers with which he was entrusted, to the evil example of the servants of the public."

\* Lord Clive, in the defence which he made in the House of Com-

ceased upon the ear, than the rude tongue of censure took up the tale. The newspapers, fatal enemies to ill-gotten wealth, began to buz a general suspicion of his conduct, and the inquisitive public soon refined it into particulars. Every post gave a stab to fame—a wound to his peace,—and a nail to his coffin. Like spectres from the grave they haunted him in every company, and whispered murder in his ear. A life chequered with uncommon varieties is seldom a long one. Action and care will in time wear down the strongest frame, but guilt and melancholy are poisons of quick despatch.

Say, cool deliberate reflection, was the prize, though abstracted from the guilt, worthy of the pains? Ah! no. Fatigued with victory he sat down to rest, and while he was recovering breath, he lost it. A conqueror more fatal than himself beset him, and revenged the injuries done to India.

As a cure for avarice and ambition let us take a view of him in his latter years.—Ha! what gloomy being wanders yonder? How visibly is the melancholy heart delineated on his countenance. He mourns no common care—his very steps are timed to sorrow—he trembles with a kind of mental palsy. Perhaps it is some broken-hearted parent, some

mons, against the charges mentioned in the preceding note, very positively insists on his innocence, and very pathetically laments his situation; and after informing the House of the thanks which he had some years before received, for the same actions which they are now endeavouring to censure him for, he says,

“After such certificates as these, Sir, am I to be brought here like a criminal, and the very best parts of my conduct construed into crimes against the state? Is this the reward that is now held out to persons who have performed such important services to their country? If it is, Sir, the future consequences that will attend the execution of any important trust, committed to the persons who have the care of it, will be fatal indeed; and I am sure the noble Lord upon the treasury bench, whose great humanity and abilities I revere, would never have consented to the resolutions that passed the other night, if he had thought on the dreadful consequences that would attend them. Sir, I cannot say that I either sit or rest easy, when I find that all I have in the world is likely to be confiscated, and that no one will take my security for a shilling. These, Sir, are dreadful apprehensions to remain under, and I cannot look upon myself but as a bankrupt. I have not any thing left which I can call my own, except my paternal fortune, of £500 per annum, and which has been in the family for ages past. But upon this I am content to live, and perhaps I shall find more real content of mind and happiness than in the trembling affluence of an unsettled fortune. But, Sir, I must make one more observation, that, if the

David mourning for his Absalom, or some Heraclitus weeping for the world. I hear him mutter something about wealth—Perhaps he is poor, and hath not where withal to hide his head. Some debtor started from his sleepless pillow, to ruminate on poverty, and ponder on the horrors of a jail. Poor man! I'll to him and relieve him. Ha! 'tis Lord Clive himself! Bless me what a change! He makes I see for yonder cypress shade, a fit scene for melancholy hearts! I'll watch him there and listen to his story.

LORD CLIVE. "Can I but suffer when a beggar pities me. Ere while I heard a ragged wretch, who every mark of poverty had on, say to a sooty sweep, Ah, poor Lord Clive! while he the negro-coloured vagrant, more mercifully cruel, curst me in my hearing.

"There was a time when fortune, like a yielding mistress, courted me with smiles—She never waited to be told my wishes, but studied to discover them, and seemed not happy to herself, but when she had some favour to bestow. Ah! little did I think the fair enchantress would desert me thus; and after lavishing her smiles upon me, turn my reproacher, and publish me in folio to the world. Volumes of morality are dull and spiritless compared to me. Lord Clive is himself a treatise upon vanity, printed on a golden type. The most unlettered clown writes explanatory notes thereon, and reads them to his children. Yet I could bear these insults could I but bear myself. A strange unwelcome something hangs about me. In company I seem no company at all.—The festive board appears to me a stage, the crimson coloured port resembles blood—each glass is strangely metamorphosed to a man in armour, and every bowl appears a

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definition of the Hon. Gentleman (General Burgoyne,) and of this House, is that the *state*, as expressed in these resolutions, is, *quo ad hoc*, the Company, then, Sir, every farthing that I enjoy is granted to me. But to be called, after sixteen years have elapsed, to account for my conduct in this manner, and after an uninterrupted enjoyment of my property, to be questioned and considered as obtaining it unwarrantably, is hard indeed! and a treatment I should not think the British Senate capable of. But if it should be the case, I have a conscious innocence within me, that tells me my conduct is irreproachable. *Frangas, non flectes*. They may take from me what I have; they may, as they think, make me poor, *but I will be happy!* I mean not this as my defence. My defence will be made at the bar; and, before I sit down, I have one request to make to the House *that when they come to decide upon my honour they will not forget THEIR OWN*.



Nabob. The joyous toast is like the sound of murder, and the loud laugh are groans of dying men. The scenes of India are all rehearsed, and no one sees the tragedy but myself. Ah! I discover things which are not, and hear unuttered sounds.

“O peace, thou sweet companion of the calm and innocent! Whither art thou fled? here take my gold, and all the world calls mine, and come thou in exchange. O thou, thou noisy sweep, who mixeth thy food with soot and relish it, who canst descend from lofty heights and walk the humble earth again, without repining at the change, come teach that mystery to me. Or thou, thou ragged wandering beggar, who, when thou canst not beg successfully, will pilfer from the hound, and eat the dirty morsel sweetly; be thou Lord Clive, and I will beg, so I may laugh like thee.

“Could I unlearn what I’ve already learned—unact what I’ve already acted—or would some sacred power convey me back to youth and innocence, I’d act another part—I’d keep within the vale of humble life, nor wish for what the world calls pomp.”

But since this cannot be  
And only a few days and sad remain for me,  
I’ll haste to quit the scene; for what is life\*  
When every passion of the soul’s at strife.

ATLANTICUS.

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\* Sometime before his death, he became very melancholy—subject to strange imaginations—and was found dead at last.

## FOR THE PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE.

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*Cupid and Hymen. An Original.*

As the little amorous deity was one day winging his way over a village in Arcadia, he was drawn by the sweet sound of the pipe and tabor, to descend and see what was the matter. The gods themselves are sometimes ravished with the simplicity of mortals. The groves of Arcadia were once the country seats of the celestials, where they relaxed from the business of the skies, and partook of the diversions of the villagers. Cupid being descended, was charmed with the lovely appearance of the place. Every thing he saw had an air of pleasantness. Every shepherd was in his holyday dress, and every shepherdess was decorated with a profusion of flowers. The sound of labour was not heard among them. The little cottages had a peaceable look, and were almost hidden with arbours of jessamine and myrtle. The way to the temple was strewed with flowers, and enclosed with a number of garlands and green arches. "Surely," quoth Cupid, "here is a festival to day. I'll hasten and inquire the matter."

So saying, he concealed his bow and quiver, and took a turn through the village: As he approached a building distinguished from all the rest by the elegance of its appearance, he heard a sweet confusion of voices mingled with instruments of music. "What is the matter," said Cupid to a swain who was sitting under a sycamore by the way-side, and humming a very melancholy tune, "why are you not at the feast, and why are you so sad?" "I sit here, answered the swain, to see a sight, and a sad sight 'twill be." "What is it?" said Cupid, "come tell me, for perhaps I can help you." "I was once happier than a king," replied the swain, "and was envied by all the shepherds of the place, but now every thing is dark and gloomy because"—"Because what?" said Cupid—"Because I am robbed of my Ruralinda; Gothic, the lord of the manor, hath stolen her from me, and this is to be the nuptial day." "A wedding," quoth Cupid, "and I know nothing of it, you must be mistaken shepherd, "I keep a register of marriages, and no such thing hath come to my knowledge; 'tis no wedding, I assure you, if I am not consulted about it." "The lord of the manor," continued the shepherd,

"consulted nobody but Ruralinda's mother, and she longed to see her fair daughter the lady of the manor: He hath spent a deal of money to make all this appearance, for money will do any thing; I only wait here to see her come by, and then farewell to the hills and dales." Cupid bade him not be rash, and left him. "This is another of Hymen's tricks," quoth Cupid to himself, "he hath frequently served me thus, but I'll hasten to him and have it out with him." So saying, he repaired to the mansion. Every thing there had an air of grandeur rather than of joy, sumptuous but not serene. The company were preparing to walk in procession to the temple. The lord of the manor looked like the father of the village, and the business he was upon gave a foolish awkwardness, to his age and dignity. Ruralinda smiled, because she *would* smile, but in that smile was sorrow. Hymen with a torch faintly burning on one side only stood ready to accompany them. The gods when they please can converse in silence, and in that language Cupid began on Hymen.

"Know Hymen," said he, "that I am your master. Indulgent Jove gave you to me as a clerk, not as a rival, much less a superior. 'Tis my province to form the union, and your's to witness it. But of late you have treacherously assumed to set up for yourself. 'Tis true you may chain couples together like criminals, but you cannot yoke them like lovers; besides you are such a dull fellow when I am not with you, that you poison the felicities of life. You have not a grace but what is borrowed from me. As well may the moon attempt to enlighten the earth without the sun, as you to bestow happiness when I am absent. At best you are but a temporal and a temporary god, whom Jove has appointed not to bestow, but to secure happiness, and restrain the infidelity of mankind. But assure yourself that I'll complain of you to the synod."

"This is very high indeed," replied Hymen, "to be called to an account by such a boy of a god as you are. You are not of such importance in the world as your vanity thinks; for my own part I have enlisted myself with another master, and can very well do without you. Plutus\* and I are greater than Cupid; you may complain and welcome, for Jove himself descended in a silver shower and conquered: and by the same power the lord of the manor hath won a damsel, in spite of all the arrows in your quiver."

Cupid incensed at this reply, resolved to support his

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\* God of riches.

authority, and expose the folly of Hymen's pretensions to independance. As the quarrel was carried on in silence the company were not interrupted by it. The procession began to set forward to the temple, where the ceremony was to be performed. The lord of the manor led the beautiful Ruralinda like a lamb devoted to sacrifice. Cupid immediately dispatched a petition for assistance to his mother on one of the sun-beams, and the same messenger returning in an instant, informed him that whatever he wished should be done. He immediately cast the old Lord and Ruralinda into one of the most extraordinary sleeps ever known. They continued walking in the procession, talking to each other, and observing every ceremony with as much order as if they had been awake; their souls had in a manner crept from their bodies, as snakes creep from their skin, and leave the perfect appearance of themselves behind. And so rapidly does imagination change the landscape of life, that in the same space of time which passed over while they were walking to the temple, they both run through, in a strange variety of dreams, seven years of wretched matrimony. In which imaginary time, Gothic experienced all the mortification which age wedded to youth must expect; and she all the infelicity which such a sale and sacrifice of her person justly deserves.

In this state of reciprocal discontent they arrived at the temple: Cupid still continued them in their slumber, and in order to expose the consequences of such marriages, he wrought so magically on the imaginations of them both, that he drove Gothic distracted at the supposed infidelity of his wife, and she mad with joy at the supposed death of her husband; and just as the ceremony was about to be performed, each of them broke out into such passionate soliloquies, as threw the whole company into confusion. He exclaiming, she rejoicing; he imploring death to relieve him, and she preparing to bury him; gold, quoth Ruralinda, may be bought too dear, but the grave has befriended.—The company believing them mad, conveyed them away, Gothic to his mansion, and Ruralinda to her cottage. The next day they awoke, and being grown wise without loss of time, or the pain of real experience, they mutually declined proceeding any farther.—The old Lord continued as he was, and generously bestowed a handsome dowry on Ruralinda, who was soon after wedded to the young shepherd, that had so piteously bewailed the loss of her. The authority of Cupid was re-established, and Hymen ordered never more to appear in the village, unless Cupid introduced him.

ESOP.

## TO A FRIEND IN PHILADELPHIA.

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Paris, March 16, 1789.

I LEAVE this place to-morrow for London: I go expressly for the purpose of erecting an iron bridge, which Messrs. Walkers, of Rotheram, Yorkshire, and I have constructed, and is now ready for putting together. It is an arch of one hundred and ten feet span, and five feet high, from the chord line. It is as portable as common bars of iron, and can be put up and taken down at pleasure, and is, in fact, rendering bridges a portable manufacture.

With respect to the French revolution, be assured that every thing is going on right. Little inconveniencies, the necessary consequences of pulling down and building up, may arise; but even these are much less than ought to have been expected. Our friend, the Marquis, is like his patron and master, General Washington, acting a great part. I take over with me to London the key of the Bastile, which the Marquis intrusts to my care as his present to General Washington, and which I shall send by the first American vessel to New York. It will be yet some months before the new Constitution will be completed, at which time there is to be a procession, and I am engaged to return to Paris to carry the American flag.

In England the ministerial party oppose every iota of reformation: the high beneficed clergy and bishops cry out that the church is in danger; and all those who were interested in the remains of the feudal system join in the clamour. I see very clearly that the conduct of the British government, by opposing reformation, will detach great numbers from the political interests of that country; and that France, though the influence of principles and the divine right of men to freedom, will have a stronger party in England than she ever had through the Jacobite bugbear of the divine right of kings in the Stuart line.

I wish most anxiously to see my much loved America. It is the country from whence all reformation must originally spring. I despair of seeing an abolition of the infernal traffic in negroes. We must push that matter further on your side of the water. I wish that a few well instructed could be sent among their brethren in bondage; for until they are enabled to take their own part, nothing will be done.

I am,

With many wishes for your happiness,

Your affectionate friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO SIR GEORGE STAUNTON, BART.

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SIR,

As I know you interest yourself in the success of the useful arts, and are a member of the society for the promotion thereof, I do myself the pleasure to send you an account of a small experiment I have been making at Messrs. Walkers' iron works at this place. You have already seen the model I constructed for a bridge of a single arch to be made of iron, and erected over the river Schuylkill, at Philadelphia; but as the dimensions may have escaped your recollections, I will begin with stating those particulars.

The vast quantities of ice and melted snow at the breaking up of the frost in that part of America, render it impracticable to erect a bridge on piers. The river can conveniently be contracted to four hundred feet, the model, therefore, is for an arch of four hundred feet span; the height of the arch in the centre, from the chord thereof, is to be about twenty feet, and to be brought off on the top, so as to make the ascent about one foot in eighteen or twenty.

The judgment of the Academy of Sciences at Paris has been given on the principles and practicability of the construction. The original, signed by the Academy, is in my possession; and in which they fully approve and support the design. They introduce their opinion by saying,

“ Il est sur que lors qu'on pense au projet d'une arche en fer de 400 pieds d'ouverture, et aux effets qui peuvent resulter d'une arche d'une si vaste étendue, il est difficile de ne pas élever des doutes sur le succès d'une pareille entreprise, par les difficultés qu'elle presente au premier apperçu. Mais si telle est la disposition des parties, et la manière dont elles sont reunis qu'il resulte de cet assemblage *un tout* très ferme et très solide, alors on n'aura plus les memes doutes sur la reussite de ce projet.”\*

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\* It is certain that when such a project as that of making an iron arch of four hundred feet span is thought of, and when we consider the effects resulting from an arch of such vast magnitude, it would be strange if doubts were not raised as to the success of

The Academy then proceed to state the reasons on which their judgment is founded, and conclude with saying,

“ Nous conciuons de tout ce que nous venons d'exposer que la pont de fer de M. Paine est ingenieusement imaginé, que la construction en est simple, solide, et propre à lui donner la force necessaire pour résister aux effets resultans de sa charge, et qu'il merite qu'on en tente l'exécution. Enfin, qu'il pourra fournira un nouvel exemple de l'application d'un métal dont on n'a pas jusqu' ici fait assez d'usage en grand, quoique dans nombre d'occasions il est peut être employé avec plus grand succès.”\*

As it was my design to pass some time in England before I returned to America, I employed part of it in making the small essay I am now to inform you of.

My intention, when I came to the iron works, was to raise an arch of at least two hundred feet span, but as it was late in the fall of last year, the season was too far advanced to work out of doors, and an arch of that extent too great to be worked within doors, and as I was unwilling to lose time, I moderated my ambition with a little *common sense*, and began with such an arch as could be compassed within some of the buildings belonging to the works. As the construction of the American arch admits, in practice, of any species of curve with equal facility, I set off in preference to all others, a catenarian arch of ninety feet span, and five feet high. Were this arch converted into an arch of a circle, the diameter of its circle would be four hundred and ten feet. From the ordinates of the arch taken from the wall where the arch was struck, I produced a similar arch on the floor whereon the work was to be fitted and framed, and there was something so apparently just when the work was set out, that the looking at it promised success.

such an enterprize, from the difficulties which at first sight present themselves. But if such be the disposition of the various parts, and the method of uniting them, that the collective body should present a *whole* both firm and solid, we should then no longer have the same doubts of the success of the plan.

\* We conclude from what we have just remarked that Mr. Paine's Plan of an Iron Bridge is ingeniously imagined, that the construction of it is simple, solid, and proper to give it the necessary strength for resisting the effects resulting from its burden, and that it is deserving of a trial. In short, it may furnish a new example of the application of a metal which has not hitherto been used in any works on an extensive scale, although on many occasions it is employed with the greatest success.

You will recollect that the model is composed of four parallel arched ribs, and as the number of ribs may be increased at pleasure to any breadth an arch sufficient for a road-way may require, and the arches to any number the breadth of a river may require, the constructing of one rib would determine for the whole; because if one rib succeeded, all the rest of the work, to any extent, is a repetition.

In less time than I expected, and before the winter set in, I had fitted and framed the arch, or properly the rib, completely together on the floor; it was then taken in pieces and stowed away during the winter, in a corner of a workshop, used in the mean time by the carpenters, where it occupied so small a compass as to be hid among the shavings, and though the extent of it is ninety feet, the depth of the arch at the centre two feet nine inches, and the depth at the branches six feet, the whole of it might, when in pieces, be put in an ordinary stage waggon, and sent to any part of England.

I returned to the works in April, and began to prepare for erecting; we chose a situation between a steel furnace and a workshop, which served for butments. The distance between those buildings was about four feet more than the span of the arch, which we filled up with chumps of wood at each end. I mention this as I shall have occasion to refer to it hereafter.

We soon ran up a centre to turn the arch upon, and began our erections. Every part fitted to a mathematical exactness; the raising an arch of this construction is different to the method of raising a stone arch. In a stone arch they begin at the bottom, on the extremities of the arch, and work upwards, meeting at the crown. In this we began at the crown, by a line perpendicular thereto, and worked downward each way. It differs likewise in another respect. A stone arch is raised by sections of the curve, each stone being so, and this by concentric curves. The effect likewise of the arch upon the centre is different, for as stone arches sometimes break down the centre by their weight, this, on the contrary, grew lighter on the centre as the arch increased in thickness, so much so, that before the arch was completely finished, it rose itself off the centre the full thickness of the blade of a knife from one butment to the other, and is, I suppose, the first arch of ninety feet span that ever struck itself.

I have already mentioned that the spaces between the ends of the arches and the butments were filled up with



chumps of wood, and those rather in a damp state; and though we rammed them as close as we could, we could not ram them so close as their drying, and the weight of the arch, or rib, especially when loaded, would be capable of doing; and we had now to observe the effects which the yielding and pressing up of the wood, and which corresponds to the giving way of the butments, so generally fatal to stone arches, would have upon this.

We loaded the rib with six tons of pig iron, beginning at the centre, and proceeding both ways, which is twice the weight of the iron in the rib, as I shall hereafter more particularly mention. This had not the least visible effect on the strength of the arch, but it pressed the wood home, so as to gain in three or four days, together with the drying and shrinking of the wood, above a quarter of an inch at each end, and consequently the chord or span of the arch was lengthened above half an inch. As this lengthening was more than double the feather of the key-stone in a stone arch of these dimensions, such an alteration at the butment would have endangered the safety of a stone arch, while it produced on this no other than the proper mathematical effect. To evidence this, I had recourse to the cord still swinging on the wall from which the curve of the arch was taken. I set the cord to ninety feet span, and five feet for the height of the arch, and marked the curve on the wall. I then removed the ends of the cords horizontally something more than a quarter of an inch at each end. The cord should then describe the exact catenarian curve which the rib had assumed by the same lengthening at the butments; that is, the rising of the cord should exactly correspond to the lowering of the arch, which it did through all their corresponding ordinates. The cord had risen something more than two inches at the centre, diminishing to nothing each way, and the arch had descended the same quantity, and in the same proportion. I much doubt whether a stone arch, could it be constructed as flat as this, could sustain such an alteration; and, on the contrary, I see no reason to doubt but an arch on this construction and dimensions, or corresponding thereto, might be let down to half its height, or as far as it would descend, with safety. I say, "as far as it would descend," because the construction renders it exceedingly probable that there is a point beyond which it would not descend, but retain itself independent of butments; but this cannot be explained but by a sight of the arch itself.

In four or five days, the arch having gained nearly all it could gain on the wood, except what the wood would lose by a summer's drying, the lowering of the arch began to be scarcely visible. The weight still continues on it, to which I intend to add more; and there is not the least visible effect on the perfect curvature or strength of the arch. The arch having thus gained nearly a solid bearing on the wood and the butments, and the days beginning to be warm, and the nights continuing to be cool, I had now to observe the effects of the contraction and expansion of the iron.

The Academy of Sciences at Paris, in their report on the principles and construction of this arch, state these effects as a matter of perfect indifference to the arch, or to the butments, and the experience establishes the truth of their opinion. It is probable the Academy may have taken, in part, the observations of M. Peronnet, architect to the King of France, and a member of the Academy, as some ground for that opinion. From the observations of M. Peronnet, all arches, whether of stone or brick, are constantly ascending or descending by the changes of the weather, so as to render the difference perceptible by taking a level, and that all stone and brick buildings do the same. In short, that matter is never stationary, with respect to its dimensions, but when the atmosphere is so; but that as arches, like the tops of houses, are open to the air, and at freedom to rise, and all their weight in all changes of heat and cold is the same, their pressure is very little or nothing affected by it.

I hung a thermometer to the arch where it has continued several days, and by what I can observe it equals, if not exceeds, the thermometer in exactness.

In twenty-four hours it ascends and descends between two and three-tenths of an inch at the centre, diminishing in exact mathematical proportion each way; and no sooner does an ascent or descent of half a hair's breadth appear at the centre, but it may be proportionally discovered through the whole span of ninety feet. I have affixed an index which multiplies ten times, and it can as easily be multiplied an hundred times: could I make a line of fire on each side the arch so as to heat it in the same equal manner through all its parts, as the natural air does, I would try it up to blood heat. I will not attempt a description of the construction; first, because you have already seen the model; and, secondly, that I have often observed that a thing may be so very simple as to baffle description. On this head I shall only say, that I took the idea of constructing it from a spider's web, of which

it resembles a section, and I naturally supposed, that when Nature enabled that insect to make a web, she taught it the best method of putting it together.

Another idea I have taken from Nature is, that of increasing the strength of matter by causing it to act over a larger space than it would occupy in a solid state, as is evidenced in the bones of animals, quills of birds, reeds, canes, &c. which, were they solid with the same quantity of matter, would have the same weight with a much less degree of strength.

I have already mentioned that the quantity of iron in this rib is three tons; that an arch of sufficient width for a bridge is to be composed of as many ribs as that width requires; and that the number of arches, if the breadth of a river requires more than one, may be multiplied at discretion.

As the intention of this experiment was to ascertain, first, the practicability of the construction, and, secondly, what degree of strength any given quantity of iron would have when thus formed into an arch, I employed in it no more than three tons, which is as small a quantity as could well be used in the experiment. It has already a weight of six tons constantly lying on it, without any effect on the strength or perfect curvature of the arch. What greater weight it will bear cannot be judged of; but taking even these as data, an arch of any strength, or capable of bearing a greater weight than can ever possibly come upon any bridge, may be easily calculated.

The river Schuylkill, at Philadelphia, as I have already mentioned, requires a single arch of four hundred feet span. The vast quantities of ice render it impossible to erect a bridge on piers, and is the reason why no bridge has been attempted. But great scenes inspire great ideas. The natural mightiness of America expands the mind, and it partakes of the greatness it contemplates. Even the war, with all its evils, had some advantages. It energized invention and lessened the catalogue of impossibilities. At the conclusion of it every man returned to his home to repair the ravages it had occasioned, and *to think of war no more*. As one amongst thousands who had borne a share in that memorable revolution, I returned with them to the re-enjoyment of quiet life, and, that I might not be idle, undertook to construct a bridge of a single arch for this river. Our beloved General had engaged in rendering another river, the Patowmac, navigable. The quantity of iron I had allowed in my plan for this arch was five hundred and twenty tons,

to be distributed into thirteen ribs, in commemoration of the Thirteen United States, each rib to contain forty tons; but although strength is the first object in works of this kind, I shall, from the success of this experiment, very considerably lessen the quantity of iron I had proposed.

The Academy of Sciences, in their report upon this construction, say, "there is one advantage in the construction of M. Paine's bridge that is singular and important, which is, that the success of an arch to any span can be determined before the work be undertaken on the river, and with a small part of the expence of the whole, by erecting part on the ground."

As to its appearance, I shall give you an extract of a letter from a gentleman in the neighbourhood, member in the former parliament for this county, who, in speaking of the arch says, "In point of elegance and beauty, it far exceeds my expectations, and it is certainly beyond any thing I ever saw." I shall likewise mention, that it is much visited and exceedingly admired by the ladies, who, though they may not be much acquainted with mathematical principles, are certainly judges of taste.

I shall close my letter with a few other observations, naturally and necessarily connected with the subject.

That, contrary to the general opinion, the most preservative situation in which iron can be placed is within the atmosphere of water, whether it be that the air is less saline and nitrous than that which arises from the filth of streets and the fermentation of the earth, I am not undertaking to prove; I speak only of fact, which any body may observe by the rings and bolts in wharfs and other watery situations. I never yet saw the iron chain affixed to a well-bucket consumed or injured by rust; and I believe it is impossible to find iron exposed to the open air in the same preserved condition as that which is exposed over water.

A method for extending the span and lessening the height of arches has always been the *desideratum* of bridge architecture. But it has other advantages. It renders bridges capable of becoming a portable manufacture, as they may, on this construction, be made and sent to any part of the world ready to be erected; and at the same time that it greatly increases the magnificence, elegance, and beauty of bridges, it considerably lessens their expence, and their appearance by re-painting will be ever new; and as they may be erected in all situations where stone bridges can be erected, they

may, moreover, be erected in certain situations, where, on account of ice, infirm foundations in the beds of rivers, low shores, and various other causes, stone bridges cannot be erected. The last convenience, and which is not inconsiderable, that I shall mention is, that after they are erected, they may very easily be taken down without any injury to the materials of the construction, and be re-erected elsewhere.

I am, Sir,

Your much obliged,

And obedient humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE AUTHORS OF THE REPUBLICAN.

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GENTLEMEN,

M. DUCHASTELET has mentioned to me the intention of some persons to commence a work under the title of *The Republican*.

As I am a citizen of a country, which knows no other Majesty than that of the People—no other Government than that of the Representative Body—no other Sovereignty than that of the Laws, and which is attached to *France* both by alliance and by gratitude, I voluntarily offer you my services in support of principles as honourable to a nation, as they are adapted to promote the happiness of mankind. I offer them to you with the more zeal, as I know the moral, literary, and political character of those who are engaged in the undertaking, and find myself honoured in their good opinion.

But I must, at the same time, observe, that from my ignorance of the French language, my works must necessarily undergo a translation; they can, of course, be but of little utility, and my offering must consist more of wishes than services. I must add, that I am obliged to pass part of this summer in England and Ireland.

As the Public has done me the unmerited favour of recognizing me under the appellation of “Common Sense,” which is my usual signature, I shall continue it in this publication to avoid mistakes, and to prevent my being supposed the author of works not my own. As to my political principles, I shall endeavour, in this letter, to trace their general features in such a manner as that they cannot be misunderstood.

It is desirable in most instances to avoid that which may give even the least suspicion with respect to the part meant to be adopted, and particularly on the present occasion, where a perfect clearness of expression is necessary to the avoidance of any possible misinterpretation. I am happy, therefore, to find, that the work in question is entitled “*The Republican*.” This word expresses perfectly the idea which we ought to have of Government in general—*Res Publica*—the public affairs of a nation.

As to the word *Monarchy*, though the address and intrigue

of courts have rendered it familiar, it does not contain the less of reproach or of insult to a nation. The word, in its immediate and original sense, signifies the *absolute power of a single individual*, who may prove a fool, an hypocrite, or a tyrant. The appellation admits of no other interpretation than that which is here given. *France* is, therefore, not a *Monarchy*; it is insulted when called by that name. The servile spirit which characterizes this species of Government is banished from *FRANCE*, and this country, like *AMERICA*, can now afford to Monarchy no more than a glance of disdain.

Of the errors which monarchic ignorance or knavery has spread through the world, the one which bears the marks of the most dexterous invention is the opinion that the system of *Republicanism* is only adapted to a small country, and that a *Monarchy* is suited, on the contrary, to those of greater extent. Such is the language of courts, and such the sentiments which they have caused to be adopted in monarchic countries; but the opinion is contrary, at the same time, to principle, and to experience.

The *GOVERNMENT*, to be of real use, should possess a complete knowledge of all the parties—all the circumstances, and all the interests of a nation. The monarchic system, in consequence, instead of being suited to a country of great extent, would be more admissible in a small territory, where an individual may be supposed to know the affairs and interests of the whole. But when it is attempted to extend this individual knowledge to the affairs of a great country, the capacity of knowing bears no longer any proportion to the extent or multiplicity of the objects which ought to be known, and the Government inevitably falls from ignorance into tyranny. For the proof of this position we need only look to Spain, Russia, Germany, Turkey, and the whole of the Eastern Continent—Countries, for the deliverance of which I offer my sincere wishes.

On the contrary, the true *Republican* system, by Election and Representation, offers the only means which are known, and, in my opinion, the only means which are possible, of proportioning the wisdom and the information of a Government to the extent of a country.

The system of *Representation* is the strongest and most powerful centre that can be devised for a nation. Its attraction acts so powerfully, that men give it their approbation even without reasoning on the cause; and *FRANCE*, however distant its several parts, finds itself at this moment

*an whole* in its *central* Representation. The citizen is assured that his rights are protected, and the soldier feels that he is no longer the slave of a despot, but that he is become one of the nation, and interested of course in its defence.

The States at present styled *Republican*, as Holland, Genoa, Venice, Berne, &c. are not only unworthy of the name, but are actually in opposition to every principle of a *Republican* Government, and the countries submitted to their power are, truly speaking, subjected to an *Aristocratic* slavery.

It is, perhaps, impossible in the first steps which are made in a Revolution, to avoid all kind of error, in principle or in practice, or in some instances, to prevent the combination of both. Before the sense of a nation is sufficiently enlightened, and before men have entered into the habits of a free communication with each other of their natural thoughts, a certain reserve—a timid prudence seizes on the human mind, and prevents it from attaining its level, with that vigour and promptitude which belong to *right*.—An example of this influence discovers itself in the commencement of the present Revolution; but happily, this discovery has been made before the Constitution was completed, and in time to provide a remedy.

The *hereditary succession* can never exist as a matter of *right*; it is a *nullity*—a *nothing*. To admit the idea is to regard men as a species of property belonging to some individuals, either born or to be born! It is to consider our descendants and all posterity as mere animals, without a right or a will! It is, in fine, the most base and humiliating idea that ever degraded the human species, and which, for the honour of humanity, should be destroyed for ever.

The idea of hereditary succession is so contrary to the Rights of Man, that if we were ourselves to be recalled to existence, instead of being replaced by our posterity, we should not have the right of depriving ourselves beforehand of those *rights* which would then properly belong to us. On what ground, then, or by what authority, do we dare to deprive of their rights those children who will soon be men? Why are we not struck with the injustice which we perpetrate on our descendants, by endeavouring to transmit them as a vile herd, to masters whose vices are all that can be foreseen?

Whenever the *French* Constitution shall be rendered conformable to its *Declaration of Rights*, we shall then be



enabled to give to France, and with justice, the appellation of a *civic Empire*; for its Government will be the empire of laws founded on the great republican principles of *Elective Representation*, and the *Rights of Man*.—But Monarchy and Hereditary Succession are incompatible with the basis of its constitution.

I hope that I have at present sufficiently proved to you that I am a good republican; and I have such a confidence in the truth of these principles, that I doubt not they will soon be as universal in *France* as in *America*. The pride of human nature will assist their evidence, will contribute to their establishment, and men will be ashamed of Monarchy.

I am, with respect, Gentlemen,

Your friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE ABBE SYEYES.

SIR,

Paris, July 8, 1791.

At the moment of my departure for England, I read in the *Moniteur* of Tuesday last, your letter, in which you give the challenge on the subject of Government, and offer to defend what is called the Monarchical system against the Republican system.

I accept of your challenge with pleasure; and I place such a confidence in the superiority of the Republican system over the nullity of system, called Monarchy, that I engage not to exceed the extent of fifty pages, and to leave you the liberty of taking as much latitude as you may think proper.

The respect which I bear your moral and literary reputation, will be your security for my candour in the course of this discussion; but, notwithstanding that I shall treat the subject seriously and sincerely, let me premise, that I consider myself at liberty to ridicule as they deserve, Monarchical absurdities, whensoever the occasion shall present itself.

By Republicanism, I do not understand what the name signifies in Holland, and in some parts of Italy. I understand simply a government by representation—a government founded upon the principles of the Declaration of Rights; principles to which several parts of the French Constitution arise in contradiction. The Declaration of the Rights of France and America are but one and the same thing in principles, and almost in expressions; and this is the Republicanism which I undertake to defend against what is called Monarchy and Aristocracy.

I see with pleasure, that in respect to one point we are already agreed; and *that is, the extreme danger of a civil list of thirty millions.* I can discover no reason why one of the parts of the Government should be supported with so extravagant a profusion, whilst the other scarcely receives what is sufficient for its common wants.

This dangerous and dishonourable disproportion, at once supplies the one with the means of corrupting, and throws the other into the predicament of being corrupted. In America there is but little difference, with regard to this

point, between the legislative and the executive part of our government; but the first is much better attended to than it is in France.\*

In whatsoever manner, Sir, I may treat the subject of which you have proposed the investigation, I hope that you will not doubt of my entertaining for you the highest esteem. I must also add, that I am not the personal enemy of kings. Quite the contrary. No man more heartily wishes than myself to see them all in the happy and honourable state of private individuals; but I am the avowed, open, and intrepid enemy of what is called Monarchy; and I am such by principles which nothing can alter or corrupt—by my attachment to humanity; by the anxiety which I feel within myself for the dignity and the honour of the human race; by the disgust which I experience, when I observe men directed by children, and governed by brutes; by the horror which all the evils that Monarchy has spread over the earth excite within my breast; and by those sentiments which make me shudder at the calamities, the exactions, the wars, and the massacres with which Monarchy has crushed mankind: in short, it is against all the hell of Monarchy that I have declared war.

THOMAS PAINE.

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\* A Deputy to the Congress receives about a guinea and a half daily; and provisions are cheaper in America than in France.

## ADDRESS AND DECLARATION.

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*At a select Meeting of the Friends of Universal Peace and Liberty, held at the Thatched House Tavern, St. James's Street, August 20, 1791, the following Address and Declaration to our Fellow Citizens was agreed on and ordered to be published.*

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FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS,

AT a moment like the present, when wilful misrepresentations are industriously spread by the partizans of arbitrary power, and the advocates of passive obedience and court government, we think it incumbent on us to declare to the world our principles, and the motives of our conduct.

We rejoice at the glorious event of the *French Revolution*.

If it be asked—What is the French Revolution to us?

We answer (as it has been already answered in another place\*), *It is much to us as men: much to us as Englishmen.*

As men we rejoice in the freedom of twenty-five millions of our fellow men. We rejoice in the prospect which such a magnificent example opens to the world. We congratulate the French nation for having laid the axe to the root of tyranny, and for erecting government on the sacred HEREDITARY RIGHTS OF MAN—Rights which appertain to ALL, and not to any one more than to another. We know of no human authority superior to that of a whole nation; and we profess and proclaim it as our principle, that every nation has at all times an inherent indefeasible right to constitute and establish such government for itself as best accords with its disposition, interest, and happiness.

As Englishmen we also rejoice, because we are *immediately* interested in the French Revolution.

Without enquiring into the justice on either side of the reproachful charges of intrigue and ambition, which the English and French Courts have constantly made on each other, we confine ourselves to this observation:—That if the court of France only was in fault, and the numerous wars

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\* Declaration of the volunteers of Belfast.

which have distressed both countries are chargeable to her alone, that court now exists no longer; and the cause and the consequence must cease together. The French, therefore, by the Revolution they have made, have conquered for us as well as for themselves; if it be true that their court only was in fault, and ours never.

On this state of the case, the French Revolution concerns us *immediately*. We are oppressed with a heavy national debt, a burthen of taxes, and an expensive administration of government, beyond those of any people in the world. We have also a very numerous poor; and we hold that the moral obligations of providing for old age, helpless infancy, and poverty, is far superior to that of supplying the invented wants of courtly extravagance, ambition, and intrigue.

We believe there is no instance to be produced but in England, of *seven* millions of inhabitants, which make but little more than *one* millions of families, paying yearly SEVENTEEN MILLIONS of taxes.

As it has always been held out by all administrations that the restless ambition of the court of France rendered this expence necessary to us for our own defence, we consequently rejoice as men deeply interested in the French Revolution, for that court, as we have already said, exists no longer; and consequently the same enormous expences need not continue to us.

Thus rejoicing, as we sincerely do, both as men and Englishmen, as lovers of universal peace and freedom, and as friends to our own national prosperity and a reduction of our public expences, we cannot but express our astonishment that any part, or any members of our own government, should reprobate the extinction of that very power in France, or wish to see it restored, to whose influence they formerly attributed (whilst they appeared to lament) the enormous increase of our own burthens and taxes. What, then, are they sorry that the pretence for new oppressive taxes and the occasion for continuing many old taxes will be at an end? If so, and if it is the policy of courts and court governments, to prefer enemies to friends, and a system of war to that of peace, as affording more pretences for places, offices, pensions, revenue, and taxation, it is high time for the people of every nation to look with circumspection to their own interests.

Those who *pay* the expence, and *not* those who *participate* in the emoluments arising from it, are the persons immediately interested in inquiries of this kind. We are a part

of that national body on whom this annual expence of seventeen millions falls; and we consider the present opportunity of the French Revolution as a most happy one for lessening the enormous load under which this nation groans. If this be not done, we shall then have reason to conclude, that the cry of intrigue and ambition against *other* courts is no more than the common cant of *all* courts.

We think it also necessary to express our astonishment that a government, desirous of being called FREE, should prefer connections with the most despotic and arbitrary powers in Europe. We know of none more deserving this description than those of Turkey and Prussia, and the whole combination of German despots. Separated as we happily are by nature from the tumults of the Continent, we reprobate all systems and intrigues which sacrifice (and that too at a great expence) the blessings of our natural situation.—Such systems cannot have a national origin.

If we are asked, what government is?—We hold it to be nothing more than a NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, and we hold that to be the best which secures to every man his rights, and promotes the greatest quantity of happiness with the *least expence*.

We live to improve, or we live in vain; and therefore we admit of no maxims of government or policy on the mere score of antiquity, or other men's authority, the *old* whigs or the *new*.

We will exercise the reason with which we are endued, or we possess it unworthily. As reason is given at all times, it is for the purpose of being used at all times.

Among the blessings which the French Revolution has produced to that nation, we enumerate the abolition of the feudal system of injustice and tyranny on the 4th of August, 1789. Beneath the feudal system all Europe has long groaned, and from it England is not yet free. Game laws, borough tenures, and tyrannical monopolies of numerous kinds, still remain amongst us; but rejoicing as we sincerely do in the freedom of others, till we shall happily accomplish our own, we intended to commemorate this prelude to the universal extirpation of the feudal system, by meeting on the anniversary of that day (the 4th of August) at the Crown and Anchor. From this meeting we were prevented by the interference of certain *un-named* and *skulking* persons with the master of the Tavern, who informed us, that on *their* representations he could not receive us.—Let those who live by or countenance feudal oppressions, take the reproach

of this ineffectual meanness and cowardice to themselves. They cannot stifle the public declaration of our honest, open, and avowed opinions.

These are our principles, and these our sentiments. They embrace the interest and happiness of the great body of the nation of which we are a part. As to riots and tumults let those answer for them who, by wilful misrepresentations, endeavour to excite and promote them; or who seek to *stun* the sense of the nation, and to lose the great cause of public good in the outrages of a misinformed mob. We take our ground on principles that require no such riotous aid. We have nothing to apprehend from the poor; for we are pleading their cause. And we fear not proud oppression, for we have truth on our side. We say, and we repeat it, that the French Revolution opens to the world an opportunity in which all good citizens must rejoice—that of promoting the general happiness of man. And that it moreover offers to this country in particular an opportunity of reducing our enormous taxes.

These are our objects and we will pursue them.

J. HORNE TOOKE,  
Chairman.

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TO MR. JORDAN.

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SIR, Feb. 16, 1792.  
SHOULD any person, under the sanction of any kind of authority, inquire of you respecting the author and publisher of the *Rights of Man*, you will please to mention me as the author and publisher of that work, and shew to such person this letter. I will as soon as I am made acquainted with it, appear and answer for the work personally.

Your humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

Mr. Jordan,  
No. 166, Fleet-street.

PREFACE TO GENERAL LEE'S MEMOIRS.

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THE following Memoirs and Letters of the late Major-General Lee have been in the possession of the Editor since the year 1786. They were transmitted from America to England by the gentleman whose name is subscribed to the Memoirs, and who was a member of Congress for the state of Georgia, for the purpose of publication. In their manuscript state they have been seen by several persons in England, who expressed a strong desire of putting them to the press, which the avocations of the person to whom they were entrusted, and his not being acquainted with such undertakings, had caused him to neglect.

As the subject of Revolutions is again renewed by what has occurred in France, it is presumed, that whatever relates to the Mother-Revolution, that of America, will, at least, afford entertainment to the curious, and contribute to increase the general stock of historical knowledge.

The reader may expect to find, in almost every thing that relates to General Lee, a great deal of the strong republican character. His attachment to principles of liberty, without regard to place, made him the citizen of the world rather than of any country; and from his earliest youth to the end of his career, this general trait in his character may be traced.

So little of the courtier had he about him, that he never descended to intimate any thing. Whatever he spoke or wrote was in the fullest style of expression, or strong figure. He used to say of Mr. Paine, the author of *Common Sense*, in America, and since of *Rights of Man*, in England, (of whose writings he was a great admirer,) that "*he burst forth upon the world like Jove in thunder*;" and this strength of conception, so natural to General Lee, had it not been mixed with a turn equally as strong for satire, and too much eccentricity of temper, would have rendered his conversation perpetually entertaining.

Though the Memoirs and every letter in this publication are most faithfully printed from the copy transmitted from



America, the Editor has omitted many whole letters, and also his trial before the court-martial, as not sufficiently interesting to balance the expence to which they would have extended the work. But if any of the particular friends or relations of General Lee should be desirous of seeing them, they may be indulged with the opportunity, by leaving a line at the publishers, directed to the

EDITOR.

London, Feb. 1792.

TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS.

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*Letter the First.*

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SIR,

London, June 6, 1792.

As you opened the debate in the House of Commons, May 25th, on the Proclamation for suppressing publications, which that proclamation (without naming any) calls wicked and seditious, and as you applied those opprobrious epithets to the works entitled "RIGHTS OF MAN," I think it unnecessary to offer any other reason for addressing this letter to you.

I begin, then, at once, by declaring that I do not believe there are to be found in the writings of any author, ancient or modern, on the subject of Government, a spirit of greater benignity, and a stronger inculcation of moral principles, than in those which I have published. They come, Sir, from a man, who, by having lived in different countries, and under different systems of Government, and who, being intimate in the construction of them, is a better judge of the subject than it is possible that you, from the want of those opportunities, can be ;—and, besides this, they come from an heart that knows not how to beguile.

I will farther say, that when that moment arrives in which the best consolation that shall be left will be that of looking back on some past actions, more virtuous, more meritorious, than the rest, I shall then with happiness remember, among other things, I have written the RIGHTS OF MAN.—As to what proclamations, or prosecutions, or placements, or place-expectants—those who possess, or those who are gaping for office may say of them, it will not alter their character, either with the world or with me.

Having, Sir, made this declaration, I shall proceed to remark, not particularly upon your own speech on that occasion, but on any other speech to which your motion on that day gave rise ; and I shall begin with that of Mr. ADAM.

This Gentlemen accuses me of *not* having done the very thing that *I have done*, and which, he says, if I *had* done he should not have accused me.

Mr. ADAM, in his speech, (see the Morning Chronicle of May 26,) says, " That he had well considered the subject of

Constitutional Publications, and was by no means ready to say (but the contrary) that books of science upon government, though recommending a doctrine of system different from the form of our constitution, (meaning that of England) were fit objects of prosecution; that if he did, he must condemn (which he meant not to do) HARRINGTON for his *Oceana*, Sir THOMAS MORE for his *Utopia*, and HUME for his *Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth*. But, (continued Mr. Adam,) the publication of Mr. PAINE was very different; for it reviled what was *most sacred* in the constitution, destroyed every principle of subordination, and *established nothing in their room*.<sup>29</sup>

I readily perceive that Mr. Adam had not read the *Second Part of Rights of Man*, and I am put under the necessity, either of submitting to an erroneous charge, or of justifying myself against it; and I certainly shall prefer the latter.— If, then, I shall prove to Mr. ADAM, that, in my reasoning upon systems of Government in the *Second Part of Rights of Man*, I have shewn as clearly, I think, as words can convey ideas, a certain system of Government, and that not existing in theory only, but already in full and established practice, and systematically and practically free from all the vices and defects of English Government, and capable of producing more happiness to the people, and that also with an eightieth part of the taxes, which the present system of English Government consumes; I hope he will do me the justice, when he next goes to the House, to get up and confess he had been mistaken in saying, that I had *established nothing, and that I had destroyed every principle of subordination*. Having thus opened the case, I now come to the point.

In the *Second Part of RIGHTS OF MAN*, I have distinguished Government into two classes or systems; the one the hereditary system, the other the representative system.

In the *First Part of Rights of Man*, I have endeavoured to shew, and I challenge any man to refute it, that there does not exist a right to establish hereditary Government; or, in other words, hereditary governors; because hereditary Government always means a Government yet to come, and the case always is, that the People who are to live afterwards, have always the same right to choose a Government for themselves, as the People had who lived before them.

In the *Second Part of Rights of Man*, I have not repeated those arguments, because they are irrefutable; but have confined myself to shew the defects of what is called here-

ditary Government or hereditary succession, that it must, from the nature of it, throw Government into the hands of men totally unworthy of it, from want of principle, or unfitted for it from want of capacity.—James II. is recorded as an instance of the first of these cases; and instances are to be found almost all over Europe to prove the truth of the latter.

To shew the absurdity of the hereditary system still more strongly, I will now put the following case:—Take any fifty men promiscuously, and it will be very extraordinary, if out of that number, one man should be found, whose principles and talents taken together (for some might have principles, and others might have talents) would render him a person truly fitted to fill any very extraordinary office of national trust. If, then, such a fitness of character could not be expected to be found in more than one person out of fifty, it would happen but once in a thousand years to the eldest son of any one family, admitting each, on an average, to hold the office twenty years. Mr Adam talks of something in the constitution which he calls *most sacred*; but I hope he does not mean hereditary succession, a thing which appears to me a violation of every order of nature, and of common sense.

When I look into history, and see the multitudes of men, otherwise virtuous, who have died, and their families been ruined, in the defence of knaves and fools, and which they would not have done, had they reasoned at all upon the system; I do not know a greater good that an individual can render to mankind, than to endeavour to break the chains of political superstition. Those chains are now dissolving fast, and proclamations and prosecutions will serve but to hasten that dissolution.

Having thus spoken of the hereditary system as a bad system and subject to every possible defect, I now come to the representative system, and this Mr. Adam will find stated in the Second Part of Rights of Man, not only as the best, but as the only *theory* of Government under which the liberties of the people can be permanently secure.

But it is needless now to talk of mere theory, since there is already a Government in full practice, established upon that theory; or, in other words, upon the Rights of Man, and has been so for almost twenty years. Mr. Pitt, in a speech of his, some short time since, said, “that there never did, and never could exist a Government established upon those Rights, and that if it began at noon, it would end

at night." Mr. Pitt is not yet arrived at the degree of a school-boy in this species of knowledge; his practice has been confined to the means of *extorting revenue*, and his boast has been—*how much*? Whereas, the boast of the system of Government that I am speaking of, is not how much, but how little.

The system of Government purely representative, un-mixed with any thing of hereditary nonsense, began in America. I will now compare the effects of that system of Government with the system of Government in England, both during, and since the close of the war.

So powerful is the representative system, first, by combining and consolidating all the parts of a country together, however great the extent; and secondly, by admitting of none but men properly qualified into the Government, or dismissing them if they prove to be otherwise, that America was enabled thereby totally to defeat and overthrow all the schemes and projects of the hereditary Government of England against her. As the establishment of the Revolution and Independence of America is a proof of this fact, it is needless to enlarge upon it.

I now come to the comparative effect of the two systems *since* the close of the war, and I request Mr. Adam to attend to it.

America had internally sustained the ravage of upwards of seven years of war, which England had not. England sustained only the expence of the war; whereas America sustained, not only the expence, but the destruction of property committed by *both* armies. Not a house was built during that period, and many thousands were destroyed. The farms and plantations along the coast of the country, for more than a thousand miles, were laid waste. Her commerce was annihilated. Her ships were either taken, or had rotted within her own harbours. The credit of her funds had fallen upwards of ninety per cent. that is, an original hundred pounds would not sell for ten pounds. In fine, she was apparently put back an hundred years when the war closed, which was not the case with England.

But such was the event, that the same representative system of Government, though since better organized, which enabled her to conquer, enabled her also to recover, and she now presents a more flourishing condition, and a more happy and harmonized society, under that system of Government, than any country in the world can boast under any other. Her towns are rebuilt, much better than before; her farms

and plantations are in higher improvement than ever; her commerce is spread over the world, and her funds have risen from less than ten pounds the hundred to upwards of one hundred and twenty. Mr. Pitt, and his colleagues, talk of the things that have happened in his boyish administration, without knowing what greater things have happened elsewhere, and under other systems of Government.

I next come to state the expence of the two systems, as they now stand in each of the countries; but it may first be proper to observe, that Government in America is what it ought to be, a matter of honour and trust, and not made a trade for the purpose of lucre.

The whole amount of the nett taxes in England (exclusive of the expence of collection, of drawbacks, of seizures and condemnation, of fines and penalties, of fees of office, of litigations and informers, which are some of the blessed means of enforcing them) is, seventeen millions. Of this sum, about nine millions go for the payment of the interest of the national debt, and the remainder being about eight millions, is for the current annual expences. Thus much for one side of the case. I now come to the other.

The expence of all the several departments of the general Representative Government of the United States of America, extending over a space of country nearly ten times larger than England, is two hundred and ninety-four thousand, five hundred and fifty-eight dollars, which at 4s. 6d. per dollar, is £.66,275 11s. sterling, and is thus apportioned.

#### *Expence of the Executive Department.*

The office of the Presidency, at which the President receives nothing for himself.....	£.	s.
Vice President .....	5,625	0
Chief Justice .....	1,125	0
Five associate Justices .....	900	0
Nineteen Judges of Districts and Attorney General.....	3,937	10
	6,873	15

#### *Legislative Department.*

Members of Congress, at six dollars (£1. 7s.) per day, their Secretaries, Clerks, Chaplains, Messengers, Door-keepers, &c. ....	25,515	0
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Carried forward..... £.43,976 5

Brought forward ..... £.43,976 5

*Treasury Department.*

Secretary Assistant, Comptroller, Auditor, Treasurer, Register, and Loan-office-keeper, in each State, together with all necessary Clerks, Office-keeper, &c. .... 12,825 0

*Department of State, including Foreign Affairs.*

Secretary, Clerks, &c. &c. .... 1,406 5

*Department of War.*

Secretary, Clerks, Paymasters, Commissioners, &c. &c. .... 1,462 10

*Commissioners for settling old Accounts.*

The whole Board, Clerks, &c..... 2,598 15

*Incidental and Contingent Expenses.*

For Fire-wood, Stationary, Printing, &c. .... 4,006 16

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Total ..... £.66,275 11

On account of the incursions of the Indians on the back settlements, Congress is, at this time, obliged to keep six thousand militia in pay, in addition to a regiment of foot, and a battalion of artillery, which it always keeps; and this increases the expence of the War Department to 390,000 dollars, which is, £.87,795 sterling; but when peace shall be concluded with the Indians, the greatest part of this expence will cease, and the total amount of the expence of Government, including that of the army, will not amount to one hundred thousand pounds sterling, which, as has been already stated, is but an eightieth part of the expences of the English Government.

I request Mr. Adam and Mr. Dundas, and all those who are talking of Constitutions, and blessings, and Kings, and Lords, and the Lord knows what, to look at this statement. Here is a form and system of Government, that is better organized and better administered than any Government in the world, and that for less than one hundred thousand pounds per annum, and every member of Congress receives, as a

compensation for his time and attendance on public business, one pound seven shillings a day, which is at the rate of nearly five hundred pounds a year.

This is a Government that has nothing to fear. It needs no proclamations to deter people from writing and reading. It needs no political superstition to support it; it was by encouraging discussion, and rendering the press free upon all subjects of Government, that the principles of Government became understood in America, and the people are now enjoying the present blessings under it. You hear of no riots, tumults, and disorders in that country; because there exists no cause to produce them. Those things are never the effect of freedom, but of restraint, oppression and excessive taxation.

In America there is not that class of poor and wretched people that are so numerously dispersed all over England, and who are to be told by a proclamation that they are happy; and this is in a great measure to be accounted for, not by the difference of proclamations, but by the difference of Governments and the difference of taxes between that country and this. What the labouring people of that country earn they apply to their own use, and to the education of their children, and do not pay it away in taxes as fast as they earn it, to support court extravagance, and a long enormous list of place-men and pensioners; and besides this, they have learnt the manly doctrine of reverencing themselves, and consequently of respecting each other; and they laugh at those imaginary beings called Kings and Lords, and all the fraudulent trumpery of Courts.

When place-men, pensioners, or those who expect to be such, are lavish in praise of a Government, it is not a sign of its being a good one. The pension list, alone in England, (see Sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue, page 6, of the Appendix) is one hundred and seven thousand four hundred and four pounds, *which is more than the expences of the whole Government of America amount to.* And I am now more convinced than before, that the offer that was made to me of a thousand pounds, for the copy-right of the Second Part of *Rights of Man*, together with the remaining copyright of the first part, was to have effected, by a quick suppression, what is now attempted to be done by a prosecution. The connection which the person, who made that offer, has with the King's Printing-Office, may furnish part of the means of enquiring into this affair, when



the Ministry shall please to bring their prosecution to an issue. But to return to my subject—

I have said in the Second Part of *Rights of Man*, and I repeat it here, that the service of any man, whether called King, President, Senator, Legislator, or any thing else, cannot be worth more to any country, in the regular routine of office, than ten thousand pounds per annum. We have a better man in America, and more of a gentleman, than any king I ever knew of, who does not occasion even half the expence; for, though the salary is fixed at five thousand two hundred and sixty-five pounds, he does not accept it, and it is only the incidental expences that are paid out of it. The name by which a man is called is, of itself, but an empty thing. It is worth and character which can render him valuable, for without these, Kings and Lords, and Presidents, are but jingling names.

But without troubling myself about Constitutions of Government, I have shewn in the Second Part of *Rights of Man*, that an alliance may be formed between England, France and America, and that the expences of Government in England may be put back to one million and a half, viz.

	£.
Civil expence of Government.....	500,000
Army.....	500,000
Navy.....	500,000
	<hr/>
	1,500,000

And even this sum is fifteen times greater than the expences of Government are in America; and it is also greater than the whole peace establishment of England amounted to about an hundred years ago. So much has the weight and oppression of taxes increased since the Revolution, and especially since the year 1714.

To shew that the sum of £500,000 is sufficient to defray all the civil expences of Government, I have, in that work, annexed the following estimate for any country of the same extent as England.—

In the first place, three hundred representatives, fairly elected, are sufficient for all the purposes to which legislation can apply, and preferable to a larger number.

If, then, an allowance, at the rate of five hundred pounds per annum be made to every representative, deducting for non-attendance, the expence, if the whole number attended six months each year, would be £75,000.

The Official Departments could not possibly exceed the following number, with the salaries annexed, viz.

Three offices, at .....	10,000	...	30,000
Ten ditto .....	5,000	...	50,000
Twenty ditto.....	2,000	...	40,000
Forty ditto.....	1,000	...	40,000
Two hundred ditto.....	500	...	100,000
Three hundred ditto.....	200	...	60,000
Five hundred ditto .....	100	...	50,000
Seven hundred ditto.....	75	...	52,000

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£.497,500

If a nation chose, it might deduct four per cent. from all the offices, and make one of twenty thousand pounds per annum, and style the person who should fill it, King, or Majesty, (or Madjesty) or give him any other title.

Taking, however, this sum of one million and a half, as an abundant supply for all the expences of Government under any form whatever, there will remain a surplus of nearly six millions and a half out of the present taxes, after paying the interest of the national debt; and I have shewn, in the Second Part of the *Rights of Man*, what appears to me the best mode of applying the surplus money; for I am now speaking of expences and savings, and not of systems of Government.

I have, in the first place, estimated the poor-rates at two millions annually, and shewn that the first effectual step would be to abolish the poor-rates entirely, (which would be a saving of two millions to the housekeepers) and to remit four millions out of the surplus taxes to the poor, to be paid them in money, in proportion to the number of children in each family, and the number of aged persons.

I have estimated the number of persons of both sexes in England, of fifty years of age and upwards, at 420,000, and have taken one third of this number, viz. 140,000 to be poor people.

To save long calculations, I have taken 70,000 of them to be upwards of fifty years of age and under sixty, and the other to be sixty years and upwards; and to allow six pounds per annum to the former class, and ten pounds per annum to the latter. The expence of which will be

Seventy thousand persons at £.6 per ann.....	420,000
Seventy thousand persons at £.10 per ditto...	700,000

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£.1,120,000

There will then remain of the four millions, £2,380,000. I have stated two different methods of appropriating this money. The one is to pay it in proportion to the number of children in each family, at the rate of three or four pounds per annum for each child; the other is to apportion it according to the expence of living in different countries; but in either of these cases it would, together with the allowance to be made to the aged, completely take off taxes from one-third of all the families in England, besides relieving all the other families from the burthen of poor-rates.

The whole number of families in England, allotting five souls to each family, is one million four hundred thousand, of which I take one third, viz. 466,666 to be poor families, who now pay four millions of taxes, and that the poorest pays at least four guineas a year; and that the other thirteen millions are paid by the other two-thirds. The plan, therefore, as stated in the work is, first, to remit or repay, as is already stated, this sum of four millions, to the poor, because it is impossible to separate them from the others in the present mode of collecting taxes on articles of consumption; and, secondly, to abolish the poor-rates, the house and window-light tax, and to change the commutation tax into a progressive tax on large estates, the particulars of all which are set forth in the work, and to which I desire Mr. Adam to refer for particulars. I shall here content myself with saying, that to a town of the population of Manchester, it will make a difference in its favour, compared with the present state of things, of upwards of fifty thousand pounds annually, and so in proportion to all other places throughout the nation. This certainly is of more consequence, than that the same sums should be collected to be afterwards spent by riotous and profligate courtiers, and in nightly revels at the Star and Garter Tavern, Pall-Mall.

I will conclude this part of my letter with an extract from the Second Part of *Rights of Man*, which Mr. Dundas (a man rolling in luxury at the expence of the nation) has branded with the epithet of "wicked."

"By the operation of this plan, the poor-laws, those instruments of civil torture, will be superseded, and the wasteful expence of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be shocked by ragged and hungry children, and persons of seventy and eighty years of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their last, as a reprisal of

parish upon parish. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their husbands, like culprits and criminals; and children will no longer be considered as increasing the distresses of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, because it will be to their advantage, and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of poverty and distress, will be lessened. The poor, as well as the rich, will then be interested in the support of Government, and the cause and apprehensions of riots and tumults will cease. Ye who sit in ease, and solace yourselves in plenty, and such there are in Turkey, and Russia, as well as in England, and who say to yourselves, *are we not well off?* Have ye thought of these things? When ye do, ye will cease to speak and feel for yourselves alone.”—Rights of Man, Part II. p. 98.

After this remission of four millions be made, and the poor-rates and house and window-light tax be abolished, and the commutation tax changed, there will still remain nearly one million and a half of surplus taxes; and as by an alliance between England, France, and America, armies and navies will, in a great measure, be rendered unnecessary; and as men who have either been brought up in, or long habited to, those lines of life, are still citizens of a nation in common with the rest, and have a right to participate in all plans of national benefit, it is stated in that work (Rights of Man, Part II.) to apply annually £ 507,000 out of the surplus taxes to this purpose, in the following manner:—

To fifteen thousand disbanded soldiers, 3s. per week clear (of deduction) during life.....	£ 117,000
Additional pay to the remaining soldiers, <i>per annum</i> .....	19,500
To the officers of the disbanded corps, during life, the same sum of.....	117,000
To fifteen thousand disbanded sailors, 3s. per week during life.....	117,000
Additional pay to the remaining sailors.....	19,500
To the officers of the disbanded part of the navy, during life.....	117,000
	<hr/> £. 507,000

The limits to which it is proper to confine this letter,

will not admit of my entering into further particulars. I address it to Mr. Dundas, because he took the lead in the debate, and he wishes, I suppose, to appear conspicuous; put the purport of it is to justify myself from the charge which Mr. Adam has made.

This gentlemen, as has been observed in the beginning of this letter, considers the writers of Harrington, Moore, and Hume, as justifiable and legal publications, because they reasoned by comparison, though in so doing, they shewed plans and systems of Government, not only different from, but preferable to, that of England; and he accuses me of endeavouring to confuse, instead of producing a system in the room of that which I had reasoned against; whereas, the fact is, that I have not only reasoned by comparison of the representative system against the hereditary system, but I have gone farther, for I have produced an instance of a Government established entirely on the representative system, under which much greater happiness is enjoyed, much fewer taxes required, and much higher credit is established, than under the system of Government in England. The funds in England have risen since the war only from £.54 to £.97, and they have been down since the proclamation, to £.87, whereas the funds in America rose in the mean time from £.10 to £.120. His charge against me "of destroying every principle of subordination," is equally as groundless, which even a single paragraph of the work will prove, and which I shall here quote—

"Formerly, when divisions arose respecting Governments, recourse was had to the sword, and a civil war ensued. That savage custom is exploded by the new system, and *recourse is had to a national convention*. Discussion, and the general will, arbitrates the question, and to this private opinion yields with a good grace, and *order is preserved uninterrupted*."—Rights of Man, Part II. p. 120.

That two different charges should be brought at the same time by a member of the Legislative, for *not* doing a certain thing, and the other by the Attorney-General, for *doing* it, is a strange jumble of contradiction. I have now justified myself, or the work rather, against the first, by stating the case in this letter, and the justification of the other will be undertaken in its proper place. But in any case the work will go on.

I shall now conclude this letter with saying, that the only objection I found against the plan and principles contained

in the Second Part of *Rights of Man*, when I had written the book, was, that they would beneficially interest at least ninety-nine persons out of every hundred throughout the nation, and therefore would not leave sufficient room for men to act from the direct and disinterested principle of honour; but the prosecution commenced has fortunately removed that objection, and the approvers and protectors of that work now feel the immediate impulse of honour added to that of national interest.

I am, Mr. Dundas,  
Not your obedient humble Servant,  
But the contrary,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO ONSLOW CRANLEY, COMMONLY CALLED LORD  
ONSLow.

SIR,

London, June 17, 1792.

I HAVE seen in the public newspapers, the following advertisement, to wit—

“To the Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, Freeholders, and other inhabitants of the county of Surrey.

“At the requisition and desire of several of the freeholders of the county, I am, in the absence of the Sheriff, to desire the favour of your attendance, at a meeting to be held at Epsom, on Monday, the 18th inst. at twelve o'clock, to consider of an humble address to his Majesty, to express our grateful approbation of his Majesty's paternal and well-timed attention to the public welfare, in his late most gracious Proclamation against the enemies of our happy Constitution.”

*(Signed)*

“ ONSLOW CRANLEY.

Taking it for granted, that the aforesaid advertisement, equally as obscure as the proclamation to which it refers, has nevertheless some meaning, and is intended to effect some purpose; and as prosecution, (whether wisely or unwisely, justly or unjustly) is already commenced against a work, intitled, RIGHTS OF MAN, of which I have the honour and happiness to be the author; I feel it necessary to address this letter to you, and to request that it may be read publicly to the gentlemen who shall meet at Epsom in consequence of the advertisement.

The work now under prosecution, is, I conceive, the same work which is intended to be suppressed by the aforesaid proclamation. Admitting this to be the case, the gentlemen of the county of Surrey are called upon by somebody to condemn a work, and they are at the same time forbidden by the proclamation to know what that work is: and they are farther called upon to give their aid and assistance to prevent other people knowing it also. It is therefore necessary that the author, for his own justification, as well as to prevent the gentlemen who shall meet from being imposed upon by misrepresentation, should give

some outlines of the principles and plans which that work contains.

The work, Sir, in question, contains, first, an investigation of general principles of Government.

It also distinguishes Government into two classes, or systems; the one the hereditary system—the other the representative system; and it compares these two systems with each other.

It shews, that what is called hereditary Government cannot exist as a matter of right; because hereditary Government always means a Government yet to come; and the case always is, that those who are to live afterwards have the same right to establish a Government for themselves, as the people who had lived before them.

It also shews the defect to which hereditary Government is unavoidably subject; that it must, from the nature of it, throw Government into the hands of men totally unworthy of it from the want of principle, or unfitted for it from want of capacity. James II. and many others, are recorded in the English history, as proofs of the former of those cases, and instances are to be found almost all over Europe, to prove the truth of the latter.

It then shews, that the representative system is the only true system of Government; that it is the only system under which the liberties of any people can be permanently secure; and farther, that it is the only one that can continue the same equal probability at all times of admitting of none but men properly qualified, both by principles and abilities, into Government, and of excluding such as are otherwise.

The work shews also, by plans and calculations not hitherto denied nor controverted, not even by the prosecution that is commenced, that the taxes now existing may be reduced at least six millions, that taxes may be entirely taken off from the poor, who are computed at one-third of the nation; and that taxes on the other two-thirds may be considerably reduced—that the aged poor may be comfortably provided for, and the children of poor families properly educated—that fifteen thousand soldiers, and the same number of sailors, may be disbanded, and allowed three shillings per week during life, out of the surplus taxes; and also that a proportionate allowance may be made to the officers, and the pay of the remaining soldiers and sailors be increased; and that it is better to apply the surplus taxes to those purposes than to consume them upon lazy and profligate place-



men and pensioners ; and that the revenue, said to be twenty thousand pounds per annum, raised by a tax upon coals, and given to the Duke of Richmond, is a gross imposition upon all the people of London, and ought to be instantly abolished.

This, Sir, is a concise abstract of the principles and plans contained in the work that is now prosecuted, and for the suppression of which the proclamation appears to be intended ; but as it is impossible that I can, in the compass of a letter, bring into view all the matters contained in the work ; and as it is proper that the gentlemen who may compose that meeting should know what the merits or demerits of it are, before they come to any resolutions, either directly or indirectly, relating thereto, I request the honour of presenting them with one hundred copies of the Second Part of the Rights of Man, and also one thousand copies of my letter to Mr. Dundas, which I have directed to be sent to Epsom for that purpose ; and I beg the favour of the Chairman to take the trouble of presenting them to the gentlemen who shall meet on that occasion, with my sincere wishes for their happiness, and for that of the nation in general.

Having now closed thus much of the subject of my letter, I next come to speak of what has relation to me personally. I am well aware of the delicacy that attends it, but the purpose of calling the meeting appears to me so inconsistent with that justice which is always due between man and man, that it is proper I should (as well on account of the gentlemen who may meet, as on my own account) explain myself fully and candidly thereon.

I have already informed the gentlemen, that a prosecution is commenced against a work, of which I have the honour and happiness to be the author ; and I gave good reasons for believing that the proclamation which the gentlemen are called to consider, and to present an address upon, is purposely calculated to give an impression to the Jury before whom that matter is to come. In short, that it is dictating a verdict by proclamation ; and I consider the instigators of the meeting to be held at Epsom, as aiding and abetting the same improper, and in my opinion, illegal purpose, and that in a manner very artfully contrived, as I shall now shew.

Had a meeting been called of the Freeholders of the county of Middlesex, the gentlemen who had composed

that meeting would have rendered themselves objectionable as persons to serve on a Jury before whom the judicial case was afterwards to come. But by calling a meeting out of the county of Middlesex, that matter is artfully avoided, and the gentlemen of Surrey are summoned, as if it were intended thereby to give a tone to the sort of verdict which the instigators of the meeting, no doubt, wish would be brought in, and to give countenance to the Jury in so doing.

I am, Sir, with much respect to

The Gentlemen who shall meet,

Their and your obedient humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO LORD ONSLOW, OR THE CHAIRMAN WHO SHALL PRESIDE AT THE MEETING TO BE HELD AT EPSOM, JULY 18.

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*Letter the Second.*

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SIR,

London, June 21, 1792.

WHEN I wrote you the letter which Mr. Horne Tooke did me the favour to present to you, as Chairman of the meeting held at Epsom, Monday, June 18th, it was not with much expectation that you would do me the justice of permitting, or recommending it to be publicly read. I am well aware that the signature of Thomas Paine has something in it dreadful to sinecure placemen and pensioners; and when you, on seeing the letter opened, informed the meeting it was signed Thomas Paine, and added, in a note of exclamation, "the common enemy to us all!" you spoke one of the greatest truths you ever uttered, if you confine the expression to men of the same description with yourself; men living in indolence and luxury, on the spoil and labours of the public.

The letter has since appeared in the *Argus*, and probably in other papers. It will justify itself; but if any thing on that account had been wanting, your own conduct at the meeting would have supplied the omission. You there sufficiently proved that I was not mistaken in supposing that the meeting was called to give an indirect aid to the prosecution commenced against a work, the reputation of which will long outlive the memory of the pensioner I am writing to.

When meetings, Sir, are called by the partisans of the Court, to preclude the nation the right of investigating systems and principles of Government, and of exposing errors and defects, under the pretence of prosecuting an individual—it furnishes an additional motive for maintaining sacred that violated right.

The principles and arguments contained in the work in question, RIGHTS OF MAN, have stood, and they now stand, and I believe ever will stand, unrefuted. They are stated in a fair and open manner to the world, and they have already received the public approbation of a greater number of men, of the best of characters, of every deno-

mination of religion, and of every rank in life, (placemen and pensioners excepted) than all the juries that shall meet in England, for ten years to come, will amount to; and I have, moreover, good reasons for believing, that the approvers of that work, as well private as public, are already more numerous than all the present electors throughout the nation.

Not less than forty pamphlets, intended as answers thereto, have appeared, and as suddenly disappeared: scarcely are the titles of any of them remembered, notwithstanding their endeavours have been aided by all the daily abuse which the court and ministerial newspapers, for almost a year and a half, could bestow, both upon the work and the author; and now that every attempt to refute, and every abuse has failed, the invention of calling the work a libel has been hit upon, and the discomfited party has pusillanimously retreated to prosecution and a jury, and obscure addresses.

As I well know that a long letter from me will not be agreeable to you, I will relieve your uneasiness by making it as short as I conveniently can; and will conclude it with taking up the subject at that part where Mr. HORNE TOOKE was interrupted from going on when at the meeting.

That gentleman was stating, that the situation which you stood in rendered it improper for you to appear *actively* in a scene in which your private interest was too visible: that you were a Bed-chamber Lord at a thousand a year, and a pensioner at three thousand pounds a year more—and here he was stopped by the little, but noisy circle you had collected round. Permit me, then, Sir, to add an explanation to his words, for the benefit of your neighbours, and with which, and a few observations, I shall close my letter.

When it was reported in the English newspapers, some short time since, that the Empress of RUSSIA had given to one of her minions a large tract of country, and several thousands of peasants as property, it very justly provoked indignation and abhorrence in those who heard it. But if we compare the mode practised in England, with that which appears to us so abhorrent in Russia, it will be found to amount to very near the same thing;—for example—

As the whole of the revenue in England is drawn by taxes from the pockets of the people, those things called gifts and grants, (of which kind are all pensions and sinecure places) are paid out of that stock. The difference, therefore, between the two modes is, that in England the

money is collected by the Government, and then given to the pensioner, and in Russia he is left to collect it for himself. The smallest sum which the poorest family in a county so near London as Surrey, can be supposed to pay annually of rates, is not less than five pounds; and as your sinecure of one thousand, and pension of three thousand per annum, are made up of taxes paid by eight hundred such poor families, it comes to the same thing as if the eight hundred families had been given to you, as in Russia, and you had collected the money on your account. Were you to say that you are not quartered particularly on the people of Surrey, but on the nation at large, the objection would amount to nothing; for as there are more pensioners than counties, every one may be considered as quartered on that in which he lives.

What honour or happiness you can derive from being the PRINCIPAL PAUPER of the neighbourhood, and occasioning a greater expence than the poor, the aged, and the infirm, for ten miles round you, I leave you to enjoy. At the same time, I can see that it is no wonder you should be strenuous in suppressing a book which strikes at the root of those abuses. No wonder that you should be against reforms, against the freedom of the press, and the right of investigation. To you, and to others of your description, these are dreadful things; but you should also consider, that the motives which prompt you to *act*, ought, by reflection, to compel you to be *silent*.

Having now returned your compliment, and sufficiently tired your patience, I take my leave of you, with mentioning, that if you had not prevented my former letter from being read at the meeting, you would not have had the trouble of reading this; and also with requesting, that the next time you call me "*a common enemy*," you would add, "*of us sinecure placemen and pensioners*."

I am, Sir, &c. &c. &c.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX, OR THE  
GENTLEMAN WHO SHALL PRESIDE AT THE MEETING  
TO BE HELD AT LEWES, JULY 4.

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SIR,

London, June 30, 1792.

I HAVE seen in the Lewes newspapers of June 25, an advertisement, signed by sundry persons, and also, by the Sheriff, for holding a meeting at the Town-hall of Lewes, for the purpose as the advertisement states, of presenting an address on the late proclamation for suppressing writings, books, &c. And as I conceive that a certain publication of mine, entitled "*Rights of Man*," in which, among other things, the enormous increase of taxes, placemen and pensioners is shewn to be unnecessary and oppressive, *is the particular writing alluded to in the said proclamation*; I request the Sheriff, or in his absence, whoever shall preside at the meeting, or any other person, to read this letter publicly to the company who shall assemble in consequence of that advertisement.

*Gentlemen*, It is now upwards of eighteen years since I was a resident inhabitant of the town of Lewes. My situation among you as an officer of the revenue, for more than six years enabled me to see into the numerous and various distresses which the weight of taxes even at that time of day occasioned; and, feeling as I then did, and as it is natural for me to do, for the hard condition of others, it is with pleasure I can declare, and every person then under my survey, and now living, can witness the exceeding candour, and even tenderness, with which that part of the duty that fell to my share was executed. The name of *Thomas Paine* is not to be found in the records of the Lewes Justices in any one act of contention with, or severity of any kind whatever towards the persons whom he surveyed, either in the town, or in the country; of this, *Mr. Fuller* and *Mr. Shelley*, who will probably attend the meeting, can, if they please, give full testimony. It is, however, not in their power to contradict it.

Having thus indulged myself in recollecting a place where I formerly had, and even now have, many friends, rich and poor, and most probably some enemies, I proceed to the more important purport of my letter.

Since my departure from Lewes, fortune or providence, has thrown me into a line of action which my first setting out into life, could not possibly have suggested to me.

I have seen the fine and fertile country of America ravaged and deluged in blood, and the taxes of England enormously increased and multiplied in consequence thereof; and this, in a great measure, by the instigation of the same class of placemen, pensioners, and court dependants, who are now promoting addresses throughout England, on the present *unintelligible* proclamation.

I have also seen a system of Government rise up in that country, free from corruption, and now administered over an extent of territory ten times as large as England, *for less expence than the pensions alone in England amount to*; and under which more freedom is enjoyed, and a more happy state of society is preserved, and a more general prosperity is promoted, than under any other system of government now existing in the world. Knowing, as I do, the things I now declare, I should reproach myself with want of duty and affection to mankind, were I not in the most undismayed manner to publish them, as it were on the house-tops, for the good of others.

Having thus glanced at what has passed within my knowledge, since my leaving Lewes, I come to the subject more immediately before the meeting now present.

Mr. Edmund Burke, who, as I shall shew, in a future publication, has lived a concealed pensioner at the expence of the public, of fifteen hundred pounds per annum, for about ten years last past, published a book the winter before last, in open violation of the principles of liberty, and for which he was applauded by that class of men *who are now promoting addresses*. Soon after his book appeared, I published the first part of the work, entitled "Rights of Man" as an answer thereto, and had the happiness of receiving the public thanks of several bodies of men, and of numerous individuals of the best character, of every denomination in religion, and of every rank of life—placemen and pensioners excepted.

In February last, I published the Second Part of "Rights of Man," and as it met with still greater approbation from the true friends of national freedom, and went deeper into the system of government, and exposed the abuses of it, more than had been done in the first part, it consequently excited an alarm among all those, who, insensible of the burthen of taxes, which the general mass of the people

sustain, are living in luxury and indolence, and hunting after court preferments, sinecure places and pensions, either for themselves, or for their family connections.

I have shewn in that work, that the taxes may be reduced at least *six millions*, and even then, the expences of Government in England would be twenty times greater than they are in the country I have already spoken of. That taxes may be entirely taken off from the poor, by remitting to them in money at the rate of between *three and four pounds* per head per annum, for the education and bringing up of the children of the poor families, who are computed at one third of the whole nation, and *six pounds* per annum to all poor persons, decayed tradesmen, or others, from the age of fifty until sixty, and *ten pounds* per annum from after sixty. And that in consequence of this allowance, to be paid out of the surplus taxes, the poor rates would become unnecessary, and that it is better to apply the surplus taxes to these beneficent purposes *than to waste them on idle and profligate courtiers, placemen and pensioners.*

These, Gentlemen, are a part of the plans and principles contained in the work, which this meeting is now called upon, in an indirect manner, to vote an address against, and brand with the name of *wicked* and *seditionous*. But that the work may speak for itself, I request leave to close this part of my letter with an extract therefrom, in the following words:

“By the operation of this plan, the poor-laws, those instruments of civil torture, will be superseded, and the wasteful expence of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be shocked by ragged and hungry children, and persons of seventy and eighty years of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their last, as a reprisal of parish upon parish. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their husbands, like culprits and criminals; and children will no longer be considered as increasing the distresses of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, because it will be to their advantage, and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of poverty and distress, will be lessened. The poor, as well as the rich, will then be interested in the support of Government, and the cause and apprehensions of riots and tumults will cease. Ye who sit in ease, and solace yourselves in plenty, and such there are in Turkey, and Russia, as well as in England, and who say to yourselves, *are we not well off?* Have ye thought of these things? When



ye do, ye will cease to speak and feel for yourselves alone.”—*Rights of Man*, Part II. p. 98.

Gentlemen, I have now stated to you such matters as appear necessary to me to offer to the consideration of the meeting. I have no other interest in what I am doing, nor in writing you this letter, than the interest of the *heart*. I consider the proposed address as calculated to give countenance to placemen, pensioners, enormous taxation and corruption. Many of you will recollect, that whilst I resided among you, there was not a man more firm and open in supporting the principles of liberty than myself, and I still pursue, and ever will, the same path.

I have, Gentlemen, only one request to make, which is—that those who have called the meeting will speak *out*, and say, whether in the address they are going to present against publications, which the proclamation calls wicked, “they mean the work intitled *Rights of Man*, or whether they do not?”

I am, Gentlemen,

With sincere wishes for your happiness,

Your friend and servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO SIR ARCHIBALD MACDONALD, ATTORNEY GENERAL.

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*Letter the First.*

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SIR,

THOUGH I have some reason for believing that you were not the original promoter or encourager of the prosecution commenced against the work entitled '*Rights of Man*,' either as that prosecution is intended to effect the author, the publisher, or the public; yet as you appear the official person therein, I address this letter to you, not as Sir Archibald Macdonald, but as Attorney-General.

You began by a prosecution against the publisher, Jordan, and the reason assigned by Mr. Secretary Dundas, in the House of Commons, in the debate on the proclamation, May 25, for taking that measure, was, he said, because Mr. Paine could not be found, or words to that effect. Mr. Paine, Sir, so far from secreting himself, never went a step out of his way, nor in the least instance varied from his usual conduct, to avoid any measure you might choose to adopt with respect to him. It is on the purity of his heart, and the universal utility of the principles and plans which his writings contain, that he rests the issue; and he will not dishonour it by any kind of subterfuge. The apartments which he occupied at the time of writing the work last winter, he has continued to occupy to the present hour, and the solicitors of the prosecution knew where to find him; of which there is a proof in their own office, as far back as the 21st of May, and also in the office of my own attorney.

But admitting, for the sake of the case, that the reason for proceeding against the publisher was, as Mr. Dundas stated, that Mr. Paine could not be found, that reason can now exist no longer.

The instant that I was informed that an information was preparing to be filed against me, as the author of, I believe, one of the most useful and benevolent books ever offered to mankind, I directed my attorney to put in an appearance; and as I shall meet the prosecution fully and fairly, and with a good and upright conscience, I have a right to expect that no act of littleness will be made use of on the part of the

prosecution towards influencing the future issue with respect to the author. This expression may, perhaps, appear obscure to you, but I am in the possession of some matters which serve to shew that the action against the publisher is not intended to be a *real* action. If, therefore, any persons concerned in the prosecution have found their cause so weak as to make it appear convenient to them to enter into a negociation with the publisher, whether for the purpose of his submitting to a verdict, and to make use of the verdict so obtained as a circumstance, by way of precedent, on a future trial against myself; or for any other purpose not fully made known to me; if, I say, I have cause to suspect this to be the case, I shall most certainly withdraw the defence I should otherwise have made, or promoted, on his (the publisher's) behalf, and leave the negociators to themselves, and shall reserve the whole of the defence for the *real* trial.

But, Sir, for the purpose of conducting this matter with at least the appearance of fairness and openness that shall justify itself before the public, whose cause it really is (for it is the right of public discussion and investigation that is questioned), I have to propose to you to cease the prosecution against the publisher; and as the reason or pretext can no longer exist for continuing it against him because Mr. Paine could not be found, that you would direct the whole process against me, with whom the prosecuting party will not find it possible to enter into any private negotiation.

I will do the cause full justice, as well for the sake of the nation, as for my own reputation.

Another reason for discontinuing the process against the publisher is, because it can amount to nothing. First, because a jury in London cannot decide upon the fact of publishing beyond the limits of the jurisdiction of London, and therefore the work may be republished over and over again in every county in the nation, and every case must have a separate process; and by the time that three or four hundred prosecutions have been had, the eyes of the nation will then be fully open to see that the work in question contains a plan the best calculated to root out all the abuses of government, and to lessen the taxes of the nation upwards of *six millions annually*.

Secondly, Because though the gentlemen of London may be very expert in understanding their particular professions and occupations, and how to make business contracts with government beneficial to themselves as individuals, the rest

of the nation may not be disposed to consider them sufficiently qualified nor authorised to determine for the whole nation on plans of reform, and on systems and principles of government. This would be in effect to erect a jury into a national convention, instead of electing a convention, and to lay a precedent for the probable tyranny of juries, under the pretence of supporting their rights.

That the possibility always exists of packing juries will not be denied; and, therefore, in all cases, where government is the prosecutor, more especially in those where the right of public discussion and investigation of principles and systems of government is attempted to be suppressed by a verdict, or in those where the object of the work that is prosecuted is the reform of abuse and the abolition of sinecure places and pensions, in all these cases the verdict of a jury will itself become a subject of discussion; and, therefore, it furnishes an additional reason for discontinuing the prosecution against the publisher, more especially as it is not a secret that there has been a negotiation with him for secret purposes, and for proceeding against me only. I shall make a much stronger defence than what I believe the Treasury Solicitor's agreement with him will permit him to do.

I believe that Mr. Burke, finding himself defeated, and not being able to make any answer to the *Rights of Man*, has been one of the promoters of this prosecution; and I shall return the compliment to him by shewing, in a future publication, that he has been a masked pensioner at £1500 per annum for about ten years.

Thus it is that the public money is wasted, and the dread of public investigation is produced.

I am, SIR,

Your obedient humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS.

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*Letter the Second.*

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SIR,

Calais, Sept. 15, 1792.

I CONCEIVE it necessary to make you acquainted with the following circumstance:—The department of Calais having elected me a member of the National Convention of France, I set off from London the 13th instant, in company with Mr. Frost, of Spring Gardens, and Mr. Audibert, one of the municipal officers of Calais, who brought me the certificate of my being elected. We had not arrived more, I believe, than five minutes at the York Hotel, at Dover, when the train of circumstances began that I am going to relate. We had taken our baggage out of the carriage and put it into a room, into which we went. Mr. Frost having occasion to go out, was stopped in the passage by a gentleman, who told him he must return into the room, which he did, and the gentleman came in with him, and shut the door; I had remained in the room. Mr. Audibert was gone to inquire when the packet was to sail. The gentleman then said, that he was Collector of the Customs, and had an information against us, and must examine our baggage for prohibited articles. He produced his commission as Collector. Mr. Frost demanded to see the information, which the Collector refused to shew, and continued to refuse on every demand that we made. The Collector then called in several other officers, and began first to search our pockets. He took from Mr. Audibert, who was then returned into the room, every thing he found in his pocket, and laid it on the table. He then searched Mr. Frost in the same manner, (who, among other things, had the keys of the trunks in his pocket) and then did the same by me. Mr. Frost wanting to go out, mentioned it, and was going towards the door; on which the Collector placed himself against the door, and said nobody should depart the room. After the keys had been taken from Mr. Frost (for I had given him the keys of my trunks beforehand, for the purpose of his attending the baggage to the Customs, if it should be necessary) the Collector asked us to open the trunks, presenting us the keys for that purpose; this we declined to do, unless he would produce his information,

which he again refused. The Collector then opened the trunks himself, and took out every paper and letter, sealed or unsealed. On our remonstrating with him on the bad policy, as well as the illegality of Custom-house Officers seizing papers and letters, which were things that did not come under their cognizance, he replied, that the *Proclamation* gave him the authority.

Among the letters which he took out of my trunk were two sealed letters, given into my charge by the American Minister in London, one of which was directed to the American Minister at Paris, the other to a private gentleman; a letter from the President of the United States, and a letter from the Secretary of State in America, both directed to me, and which I had received from the American Minister now in London, and were private letters of friendship; a letter from the Electoral Body of the department of Calais containing the notification of my being elected to the National Convention; and a letter from the President of the National Assembly, informing me of my being also elected for the department of Oise.

As we found that all remonstrances with the Collector, on the bad policy and illegality of seizing papers and letters, and retaining our persons by force, under the pretence of searching for prohibited articles, were vain, (for he justified himself on the Proclamation, and on the information which he refused to shew) we contented ourselves with assuring him, that what he was then doing, he would afterwards have to answer for, and left it to himself to do as he pleased.

It appeared to us that the Collector was acting under the direction of some other person or persons then in the Hotel, but whom he did not choose we should see, or who did not choose to be seen by us; for the Collector went several times out of the room for a few minutes, and was also called out several times.

When the Collector had taken what papers and letters he pleased out of the trunks, he proceeded to read them. The first letter he took up for this purpose was that from the President of the United States to me. While he was doing this, I said, that it was very extraordinary that General Washington could not write a letter of private friendship to me without its being subject to be read by a Custom-house Officer. Upon this Mr. Frost laid his hand over the face of the letter, and told the Collector that he should not read it, and took it from him. Mr. Frost then casting his eyes on the concluding paragraph of the letter, said, I

will read this part to you, which he did; of which the following is an exact transcript—"And as no one can see a greater interest in the happiness of mankind than I do, it is the first wish of my heart, that the enlightened policy of the present age may diffuse to all men those blessings to which they are entitled, and lay the foundation of happiness to future generations."

As all the other letters and papers lay then on the table, the Collector took them up, and was going out of the room with them. During the transactions already stated, I contented myself with observing what passed, and spoke but little; but on seeing the Collector going out of the room with the letters, I told him that the papers and letters then in his hand, were either belonging to me, or entrusted to my charge, and that as I could not permit them to be out of my sight, I must insist on going with him.

The Collector then made a list of the letters and papers, and went out of the room, giving the letters and papers into the charge of one of the officers. He returned in a short time, and, after some trifling conversation, chiefly about the Proclamation, told us, that he saw *the Proclamation was ill-founded*, and asked if we chose to put the letters and papers into the trunks ourselves, which, as we had not taken them out, we declined doing, and he did it himself, and returned us the keys.

In stating to you these matters, I make no complaint against the personal conduct of the Collector, or of any of the officers. Their manner was as civil as such an extraordinary piece of business could admit of.

My chief motive in writing to you on this subject is, that you may take the measures for preventing the like in future, not only as it concerns private individuals, but in order to prevent a renewal of those unpleasant consequences that have heretofore arisen between nations from circumstances equally as insignificant. I mention this only for myself; but as the interruption extended to two other gentlemen, it is probable that they, as individuals, will take some more effectual mode for redress.

I am, Sir, your's, &c.

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. Among the papers seized was a copy of the Attorney-General's information against me for publishing the *Rights of Man*, and a printed proof copy of my Letter to the Addressers, which will soon be published.

## TO THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE.

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**FELLOW CITIZENS!**

I RECEIVE, with affectionate gratitude, the honour which the late National Assembly has conferred upon me, by adopting me a citizen of France; and the additional honour of being elected by my fellow citizens a Member of the National Convention. Happily impressed, as I am, by those testimonies of respect shewn towards me as an individual, I feel my felicity increased by seeing the barrier broken down that divided patriotism by spots of earth, and limited citizenship to the soil, like vegetation.

Had those honours been conferred in an hour of national tranquillity, they would have afforded no other means of shewing my affection, than to have accepted and enjoyed them; but they come accompanied with circumstances that give me the honourable opportunity of commencing my citizenship in the stormy hour of difficulties. I come not to enjoy repose. Convinced that the cause of France is the cause of all mankind, and that as liberty cannot be purchased by a wish, I gladly share with you the dangers and honours necessary to success.

I am well aware that the moment of any great change, such as that accomplished on the 10th of August, is unavoidably the moment of terror and confusion. The mind, highly agitated by hope, suspicion and apprehension, continues without rest till the change be accomplished. But let us now look calmly and confidentially forward, and success is certain. It is no longer the paltry cause of kings, or of this, or of that individual, that calls France and her armies into action. It is the great cause of ALL. It is the establishment of a new æra, that shall blot despotism from the earth, and fix, on the lasting principles of peace and citizenship, the great Republic of Man.

It has been my fate to have borne a share in the commencement and complete establishment of one Revolution—I mean the Revolution of America. The success and events of that Revolution are encouraging to us. The prosperity and happiness that have since flowed to that country, have amply rewarded her for all the hardships she endured, and for all the dangers she encountered.



The principles on which that Revolution began, have extended themselves to Europe; and an over-ruling Providence is regenerating the Old World by the principles of the New. The distance of America from all other parts of the globe did not admit of her carrying those principles beyond her own situation. It is to the peculiar honour of France, that she now raises the standard of liberty for all nations; and in fighting her own battles contends for the rights of all mankind.

The same spirit of fortitude that insured success to America, will insure it to France, for it is impossible to conquer a nation determined to be free! The military circumstances that now unite themselves to France, are such as the despots of the earth know nothing of, and can form no calculation upon. They know not what it is to fight against a nation; they have only been accustomed to make war upon each other, and they know from system and practice, how to calculate the probable success of despot against despot; and here their knowledge and their experience end.

But in a contest like the present, a new and boundless variety of circumstances arise, that deranges all such customary calculations. When a whole nation acts as an army, the despot knows not the extent of the power against which he contends. New armies rise against him with the necessity of the moment. It is then that the difficulties of an invading enemy multiply, as in the former case they diminished; and he finds them at their height when he expected them to end.

The only war that has any similarity of circumstances with the present, is the late revolutionary war in America. On her part, as it now is in France, it was a war of the whole nation:—there it was that the enemy, by beginning to conquer, put himself in a condition of being conquered. His first victories prepared him for defeat. He advanced till he could not retreat, and found himself in the midst of a nation of armies.

Were it now to be proposed to the Austrians and Prussians to escort them into the middle of France, and there leave them to make the most of such a situation, they would see much into the dangers of it to accept the offer, and the same dangers would attend them, could they arrive there by any other means. Where, then, is the military policy of their attempting to obtain, by force, that which they would refuse by choice? But to reason with despots is throwing

reason away. The best of argument is a vigorous preparation.

Man is ever a stranger to the ways by which Providence regulates the order of things. The interference of foreign despots may serve to introduce into their own enslaved countries the principles they come to oppose. Liberty and equality are blessings too great to be the inheritance of France alone. It is honour to her to be their first champion; and she may now say to her enemies, with a mighty voice, "O, ye Austrians, ye Prussians! ye who now turn your bayonets against us, it is for you, it is for all Europe, it is for all mankind, and not for France alone, that she raises the standard of Liberty and Equality."

The public cause has hitherto suffered from the contradictions contained in the Constitution of the former Constituent Assembly. Those contradictions have served to divide the opinions of individuals at home, and to obscure the great principles of the Revolution in other countries. But when those contradictions shall be removed, and the Constitution be made conformable to the Declaration of Rights; when the bagatelles of monarchy, royalty, regency, and hereditary succession, shall be exposed, with all their absurdities, a new ray of light will be thrown over the world, and the Revolution will derive new strength by being universally understood.

The scene that now opens itself to France, extends far beyond the boundaries of her own dominions. Every nation is becoming her colleague, and every court is become her enemy. It is now the cause of all nations against the cause of all courts. The terrors that despotism felt, clandestinely begot a confederation of despots; and their attack upon France is produced by their fears at home.

In entering on this great scene, greater than any nation has yet been called to act in, let us say to the agitated mind, be calm. Let us punish by instructing, rather than by revenge. Let us begin the new era by a greatness of friendship, and hail the approach of union and success.

Your Fellow-Citizen,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ON THE PROSECUTION  
AGAINST THE SECOND PART OF RIGHTS OF MAN.

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*Letter the Second.*

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SIR,

Paris, Nov. 11th, 1st year of the Republic.

As there can be no personal resentment between two strangers, I write this letter to you, as a man against whom I have no animosity.

You have, as Attorney-General, commenced a prosecution against me, as the author of *Rights of Man*. Had not my duty, in consequence of my being elected a member of the National Convention of France, called me from England, I should have staid to have contested the injustice of that prosecution; not upon my own account, for I cared not about the prosecution, but to have defended the principles I had advanced in the work.

The duty I am now engaged in is of too much importance to permit me to trouble myself about your prosecution: when I have leisure, I shall have no objection to meet you on that ground; but as I now stand, whether you go on with the prosecution, or whether you do not, or whether you obtain a verdict, or not, is a matter of the most perfect indifference to me as an individual. If you obtain one (which you are welcome to, if you can get it) it cannot affect me either in person, property, or reputation, otherwise than to increase the latter; and with respect to yourself, it is as consistent that you obtain a verdict against the man in the moon as against me: neither do I see how you can continue the prosecution against me as you would have done against one of *your own people* who had absented himself because he was prosecuted: what passed at Dover proves that my departure from England was no secret.

My necessary absence from your country now, in consequence of my duty here, affords the opportunity of knowing whether the prosecution was intended against Thomas Paine, or against the rights of the people of England to investigate systems and principles of Government; for as I cannot now be the object of the prosecution, the going on with the prosecution will shew that something else was the

object, and that something else can be no other than the people of England, for it is against *their rights*, and not against me, that a verdict or sentence can operate, if it can operate at all. Be then so candid as to tell the jury (if you choose to continue the process) whom it is you are prosecuting, and on whom it is that the verdict is to fall.

But I have other reasons than those I have mentioned for writing you this letter ; and, however you may choose to interpret them, they proceed from a good heart. The time, Sir, is becoming too serious to play with Court prosecutions, and sport with National Rights. The terrible examples that have taken place here, upon men who less than a year ago thought themselves as secure as any prosecuting Judge, Jury, or Attorney-General, can now do in England, ought to have some weight with men in your situation. That the Government of England is as great, if not the greatest, perfection of fraud and corruption that ever took place since Governments began, is what you cannot be a stranger to, unless the constant habit of seeing it has blinded your senses ; but though you may not choose to see it, the people are seeing it very fast, and the progress is beyond what you may choose to believe. Is it possible that you, or I, can believe, or that reason can make any other man believe, that the capacity of such a man as Mr. Guelph, or any of his profligate sons, is necessary to the Government of a nation. I speak to you as one man ought to speak to another ; and I know also, that I speak what other people are beginning to think.

That you cannot obtain a verdict (and if you do, it will signify nothing) without packing a jury, (and we both know that such tricks are practised) is what I have very good reason to believe. I have gone into coffee-houses, and places where I was unknown, on purpose to learn the currency of opinion, and I never yet saw any company of twelve men that condemned the book ; but I have often found a greater number than twelve approving it, and this I think is a fair way of collecting the natural currency of opinion. Do not then, Sir, be the instrument of drawing twelve men into a situation that may be injurious to them afterwards. I do not speak this from policy, but from benevolence ; but if you choose to go on with the process, I make it my request to you that you will read this letter in Court, after which the Judge and the Jury may do as they please. As I do not consider myself the object of the prosecution, neither can I be affected by the issue, one way or

the other, I shall, though a foreigner in your country, subscribe as much money as any other man towards supporting the right of the nation against the prosecution ; and it is for this purpose only that I shall do it.

THOMAS PAINE.

As I have not time to copy letters, you will excuse the corrections.

P. S. I intended, had I staid in England, to have published the information, with my remarks upon it, before the trial came on ; but as I am otherwise engaged, I reserve myself till the trial is over, when I shall reply fully to every thing you shall advance.

## ON THE PROPRIETY OF BRINGING LOUIS XVI. TO TRIAL.

CITIZEN PRESIDENT,

Paris, Nov. 20, 1792.

As I do not know precisely what day the Convention will resume the discussion on the trial of Louis XVI. and, on account of my inability to express myself in French, I cannot speak at the tribune, I request permission to deposit in your hands the inclosed paper which contains my opinion on that subject. I adopt this step with so much more eagerness, because circumstances will prove to what a degree it interests France, that Louis XVI. should continue to enjoy good health. I should be happy if the Convention would have the goodness to hear this paper read this morning, as I purpose sending a copy of it to London, to be printed in the English Journals.

*A Secretary read the opinion of Thomas Paine.*

I THINK that Louis XVI. ought to be tried; not that this advice is suggested by a spirit of vengeance, but because this measure appears to me just, lawful, and conformable to sound policy. If Louis XVI. is innocent, let us put him to prove his innocence; if he is guilty, let the national will determine if he should be pardoned or punished; but besides the motives which personally interest Louis XVI. there are others which make his trial necessary. I am about to develop these motives, in the language which suits them, and no other. I forbid myself the use of equivocal expression or of mere ceremony. There was formed among the crowned ruffians of Europe a conspiracy, which threatened not only French liberty, but likewise that of all nations. Every thing tends to make it be believed, that Louis XVI. was the partner of that horde of conspirators. You have this man in your power, and he is at present the only one of the band of whom we can make sure. I consider Louis XVI. in the same point of view as the two first robbers taken up in the affair of the jewel office, their trial enabled you to discover the gang to which they belonged. We have seen the unhappy soldiers of Austria and Prussia, and the other powers which declared themselves our enemies, torn

from their fire-sides, and drawn to carnage as the vilest of animals, to sustain, at the price of their blood, the common cause of crowned robbers. They loaded the inhabitants of those regions with taxes to support the expences of the war. All this was not done solely for Louis XVI. Some of the conspirators have acted openly: but there is reason to presume, that this conspiracy is composed of two classes of robbers; those who have taken up arms, and those who have lent to their cause secret encouragement and clandestine assistance; and it is indispensable to let France and all Europe know all these accomplices.

A little time after the National Convention was constituted, the Minister for Foreign Affairs presented the picture of all the Governments of Europe, as well of those whose hostilities were public, as of those who acted with a mysterious circumspection. We have already penetrated into some part of the conduct of Mr. Guelph, Elector of Hanover, and violent presumptions affect the same man, his court and ministers, in quality of King of England.

Mr. Calonne has constantly been favoured with a friendly reception at that court. The arrival of Mr. Smith, secretary to Mr. Pitt, at Coblenz, when the emigrants were assembling there; the recal of the English ambassador; the extravagant joy manifested by the court of St. James's at the false report of the defeat of Dumourier, when it caused it to be communicated by Lord Elgin, then minister of Great Britain at Brussels—all these circumstances render him extremely suspicious; the trial of Louis XVI. will probably furnish more decisive proofs.

The long subsisting fear of a revolution in England, could, I believe, singly, prevent that court from manifesting as much publicity in its operations as Austria and Prussia. Another reason could be added to this; the consequential decrease of credit, by means of which alone all the ancient Governments could obtain fresh loans; for in proportion as the probability of a revolution increased, whoever should furnish towards the new loans must expect to lose his stock.

Every body knows that the Landgrave of Hesse fights only as far as he is paid: he has been for several years in the pay of the court of London. If the trial of Louis XVI. could bring it to light, that this detestable dealer in human flesh has been paid out of the produce of the taxes levied on the people of England, it would be but doing justice to that nation, to inform them of that fact; it would at the same time give to France an exact knowledge of the cha-

racter of that court, which has not ceased to be the most intriguing, ever since its connection with Germany.

Louis XVI. considered as an individual, is an object beneath the notice of the republic; but when he is looked upon as a part of that band of conspirators, as a criminal whose trial may lead all the nations in the world to a knowledge and detestation of the disastrous system of monarchy, and the plots and intrigues of their own courts, he ought to be, and must be tried.

If the crimes for which Louis XVI. is arraigned, were absolutely personal to him, without reference to general conspiracies, and confined to the affairs of France, the motives of inviolability, that folly of the moment, might have been urged in his behalf with some appearance of reason; but as he is arraigned not only on the part of France, but for having conspired against all Europe, we ought to use every means in our power to discover the whole extent of that conspiracy. France is now a republic: she has completed her revolution; but she cannot earn all the advantages arising from it, as long as she is environed with despotical Governments; their armies and marine oblige her likewise to keep troops and ships in readiness. It is, therefore, her immediate interest, that all nations be as free as herself; that revolutions be universal; and since Louis XVI. can serve to prove, by the flagitiousness of Government in general, the necessity of revolutions, she ought not to let slip so precious an opportunity.

The despots of Europe have formed alliances to preserve their respective authority, and to perpetuate the oppression of nations; this is the end which they proposed to themselves, in making an invasion on the French territory. They dread the effect of the French Revolution in the bosom of their own countries; and in hopes of preventing it, they are come to try to destroy that Revolution, before it should have attained its perfect maturity. Their attempt has not been attended with success: France has already vanquished their armies; but it is left to her to sound the particulars of the conspiracy, to discover, to expose to the eyes of the universe those despots who had the infamy to take part in it; and the universe expects of her that act of justice.

These are my motives for demanding that Louis XVI. be judged; and it is in this sole point of view, that his trial appears to me of sufficient importance to attract the attention of the republic.

As to what regards inviolability, I would not have such a



motive to be mentioned. Seeing no longer in Louis XVI. but a weak-minded and narrow-spirited individual, ill-bred, like all his colleagues, given, as it is said, to frequent excesses of drunkenness, and whom the National Assembly raised again imprudently on a throne which was not made for him, if we shew him hereafter some pity, it shall not be the result of the burlesque idea of a pretended inviolability.

THOMAS PAINE.

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SPEECH IN THE NATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE QUESTION, "SHALL, OR SHALL NOT, A RESPITE OF THE SENTENCE OF LOUIS XVI. TAKE PLACE?"

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I HAVE voted for the detention of Louis, and his banishment after the war, but I am much afraid that the speedy execution of the sentence of Louis will rather pass for a deed of vengeance than a measure of justice. I wish the Convention had voted as the nation would; I mean for imprisonment.

The United States of America have the utmost veneration for Louis, who gave them liberty. And I can pledge myself to you, that the sentence of Louis will overwhelm all the Americans with consternation. And remember, that it is they who will alone supply you with all the timber and naval stores you shall want in the maritime war you are about to declare. The north of Europe is ready to bring its forces against you. You mean to send an ambassador to Philadelphia; my sincere wish is, that he may announce to the Americans, that the National Convention of France, from pure friendship to America, has consented to respite the sentence of Louis.

Citizens, let not a neighbouring despot enjoy the satisfaction of seeing that man mount the scaffold who has broke the irons of the Americans.

REASONS FOR PRESERVING THE LIFE OF LOUIS CAPET, AS  
DELIVERED TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

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CITIZEN PRESIDENT,

Paris, Jan. 23, 1793.

MY hatred and abhorrence of monarchy are sufficiently known, they originate in principles of reason and conviction, nor except with life, can they ever be extirpated ; but my compassion for the unfortunate, whether friend or enemy, is equally lively and sincere. I voted that Louis should be tried, because it was necessary to afford proofs to the world of the perfidy, corruption and abomination of the monarchical system. The infinity of evidence that has been produced, exposes them in the most glaring and hideous colours—thence it results, that monarchy, whatever form it may assume, arbitrary or otherwise, becomes necessarily a centre, round which is united every species of corruption, and the kingly trade is no less destructive of all morality in the human breast, than the trade of an executioner is destructive of its sensibility.

I remember during my residence in another country that I was exceedingly struck with a sentence of M. Autheine, at the Jacobins, which corresponds exactly with my own idea,—" Make me a king to-day," said he, " and I shall be a robber to-morrow."

Nevertheless, I am inclined to believe, that if Louis Capet had been born in an obscure condition, had he lived within the circle of an amiable and respectable neighbourhood, at liberty to practise the duties of domestic life, had he been thus situated, I cannot believe that he would have shewn himself destitute of social virtues: we are in a moment of fermentation like this, naturally little indulgent to his vices, or rather to those of monarchical governments ; we regard them with additional horror and indignation, not that they are more heinous than his predecessors, but because our eyes are now open and the veil of delusion at length withdrawn ; yet the lamentably degraded state to which he is actually reduced, is surely far less imputable to him, than to the Constituent Assembly, which of its own authority, without consent or advice of the people, restored him to the throne.

I was in Paris at the time of the flight or abdication of Louis XVI. and when he was taken and brought back. The proposal of restoring to him the supreme power struck me with amazement; and although at that time, I was not a French citizen, yet as a citizen of the world, I employed all the efforts that depended on me to prevent it.

A small society, composed only of five persons, two of whom are now members of the Convention, took at that time, the name of the Republican Club (*Societe Republicaine.*)

This society opposed the restoration of Louis, not so much on account of his personal offences, as in order to overthrow the monarchy, and to erect on its ruins the republican system and an equal representation.

With this design, I traced out in the English language certain propositions, which were translated with some trifling alterations, and signed by Achilles Duchatlet, actually lieutenant-general in the army of the French republic, and at that time one of the five members which composed our little party: the law requiring the signature of a citizen at the bottom of each printed paper.

The paper was indignantly torn by Malouet; and brought forth in this very room as an article of accusation against the person who had signed it, the author and their adherents; but such is the revolution of events, that this paper is now received and brought forth for a very opposite purpose:—to remind the nation of the errors of that unfortunate day, that fatal error of having not then banished Louis XVI. from its bosom, and not to plead this day in favour of his exile, preferably to his death.

*The Paper in question was conceived in the following terms:*

“ Brethren and Fellow Citizens,

“ The serene tranquility, the mutual confidence which prevailed amongst us, during the time of the late king’s escape, the indifference with which we beheld him return, are unequivocal proofs that the absence of a king is more desirable than his presence, and that he is not only a political superfluity, but a grievous burden pressing hard on the whole nation.

“ Let us not be imposed on by sophisms; all that concerns this, is reduced to four points.

“ He has abdicated the throne in having fled from his post. Abdication and desertion are not characterized by the

length of absence, but by the single act of flight; in this instance, the act is every thing, and the time nothing. The nation can never give back its confidence to a man who, false to his trust, perjured to his oath, conspires a clandestine flight, obtains a fraudulent passport, conceals a King of France under the disguise of a valet, directs his course towards a frontier covered with traitors and deserters, and evidently meditates a return into our country, with a force capable of imposing his own despotic laws.

“Whether ought his flight to be considered as his own act, or the act of those who fled with him? Was it a spontaneous resolution of his own, or was it inspired into him by others? The alternative is immaterial: whether fool or hypocrite, idiot or traitor, he has proved himself equally unworthy of the vast important functions that had been delegated to him

“In every sense that the question can be considered, the reciprocal obligation which subsisted between us is dissolved. He holds no longer authority. We owe him no longer obedience. We see in him no more than an indifferent person; we can regard him only as Louis Capet.

“The history of France presents little else than a long series of public calamity, which takes its source from the vices of the king: we have been the wretched victims that have never ceased to suffer, either for them or by them. The catalogue of their oppressions was complete, but to complete the sum of their crimes, treason yet was wanting. Now the only vacancy is filled up, the dreadful list is full: the system is exhausted; there are no remaining errors for them to commit, their reign is consequently at an end.

What kind of office must that be in a Government which requires neither experience nor ability to execute?—that may be abandoned to the desperate chance of birth, that may be filled with an idiot, a madman, a tyrant, with equal effect, as by the good, the virtuous, and the wise. An office of this nature is a mere non-entity; it is a place of show, not of use. Let France, then, arrived at the age of reason, no longer be deluded by the sound of words, and let her deliberately examine, if a king, however insignificant and contemptible in himself, may not at the same time be extremely dangerous.

The thirty millions which it costs to support a king in the *eclat* of stupid, brutal luxury, present us with an easy method of reducing taxes, which reduction would at once release the people, and stop the progress of political cor-

ruption. The grandeur of nations consists not, as kings pretend, in the splendour of thrones, but in a conspicuous sense of their own dignity, and in a just disdain of those barbarous follies and crimes, which under the sanction of royalty, have hitherto desolated Europe.

“As to the personal safety of M. Louis Capet, it is so much the more confirmed, as France will not stoop to degrade herself by a spirit of revenge, against a wretch who has dishonoured himself.

“In defending a just and glorious cause it is not possible to degrade it, and the universal tranquility which prevails, is an undeniable proof that a free people know how to respect themselves.”

Having thus explained the principles and the exertions of the republicans, at that fatal period when Louis was re-instated in full possession of the executive power, which by his flight had been suspended, I return to the subject, and to the deplorable situation in which the man is now actually involved.

What was neglected at the time of which I have been speaking, has been since brought about by the force of necessity; the wilful treacherous defects in the former constitution have been brought to light, the continual alarm of treason and conspiracy roused the nation, and produced eventually a second revolution. The people have beat down royalty, never, never to rise again; they have brought Louis Capet to the bar, and demonstrated, in the face of the whole world, the intrigues, the cabals, the falsehood, corruption, and rooted depravity, the inevitable effects of monarchical governments. There remains, then, only one question to be considered, what is to be done with this man.

For myself, I seriously confess, that when I reflect on the unaccountable folly that restored the executive power to his hands, all covered as he was with perjury and treason, I am far more ready to condemn the Constituent Assembly than the unfortunate prisoner Louis Capet.

But abstracted from every other consideration, there is one circumstance in his life which ought to cover, or at least to palliate, a great number of his transgressions; and this very circumstance affords the French nation a blessed occasion of extricating itself from the yoke of kings, without defiling itself in the impurities of their blood.

It is to France alone, I know, that the United States of America owe that support which enabled them to shake off

the unjust and tyrannical yoke of Britain. The ardour and zeal which she displayed to provide both men and money, were the natural consequences of a thirst for liberty. But as the nation at that time, restrained by the shackles of her own government, could only act by the means of a monarchical organ—this organ—whatever in other respects the object might be, certainly performed a good, a great action.

Let, then, these United States be the safeguard and asylum of Louis Capet. There, hereafter, far removed from the miseries and crimes of royalty, he may learn from the constant aspect of public prosperity, that the true system of government consists not in kings, but in a fair, equal, and honourable representation.

In relating this circumstance, and in submitting this proposition, I consider myself as a citizen of both countries. I submit it as a citizen of America, who feels the debt of gratitude which he owes to every Frenchman. I submit it also as a man, who, although the enemy of kings, cannot forget that they are subject to human frailties. I support my proposition as a citizen of the French Republic, because it appears to me the best, the most politic measure that can be adopted.

As far as my experience in public life extends, I have ever observed, that the great mass of the people are invariably just, both in their attentions and in their object: but the true method of accomplishing that effect, does not always shew itself in the first instance.

For example, the English nation had groaned under the despotism of the Stuarts. Hence Charles the First lost his life; yet Charles the Second was restored to all the plenitude of power which his father had lost.

Forty years had not expired, when the same family strove to re-establish their ancient oppressions; so the nation then banished from its territories the whole race. The remedy was effectual. The Stuart family sunk into obscurity, crowded itself with the multitude, and is at length extinct.

The French nation, more enlightened than England was at that time, has carried her measures of government to a greater length. France is not satisfied with exposing the guilt of the monarch, she has penetrated into the views and horrors of the monarchy. She has shewn them clear as day-light, and for ever crushed that infernal system; and he, whoever he may be, that should ever dare to reclaim those rights, would be regarded not as a pretender, but punished as a traitor.

Two brothers of Louis Capet have banished themselves from the country, but they are obliged to bear with the spirit and etiquette of the courts where they reside. They can advance no pretensions on their own account, so long as Louis Capet shall live,

The history of monarchy in France, was a system pregnant with crimes and murders, cancelling all natural ties, even those by which brothers are united. We know how often they have assassinated each other to pave a way to power. As those hopes which the emigrants had reposed in Louis XVI. are fled, the last which remains rests upon his death and their situation inclines them to desire this catastrophe, that they may once again rally round a more active chief, and try one further effort under the fortune of the *ci-devant* Monsieur and Count d'Artois.

That such an enterprize would precipitate them into a new abyss of calamity and disgrace, it is not difficult to foresee; but yet it might be attended with mutual loss, and it is our duty, as legislators, not to spill a drop of blood, when our purpose may be effectually accomplished without it.

It has already been proposed to abolish the punishment of death; and it is with infinite satisfaction, that I recollect the humane and excellent oration pronounced by Robespierre, on that subject in the Constituent Assembly. This cause must find its advocates in every corner where enlightened politicians and lovers of humanity exist; and it ought above all to find them in this assembly.

Monarchical Governments have trained the human race, and inured it to the sanguinary arts and refinements of punishment; and it is exactly the same punishment which has so long shocked the sight and tormented the patience of the people, that now, in their turn, they practise in revenge on their oppressors. But it becomes us to be strictly on our guard against the abomination and perversity of monarchical examples: as France has been the first of European nations to abolish royalty, let her also be the first to abolish the punishment of death, and to find out a milder and more effectual substitute.

In the particular case now under consideration, I submit the following propositions:—1st. That the National Convention shall pronounce sentence of banishment on Louis and his family. 2d. That Louis Capet shall be detained in prison till the end of the war; and at that epoch the sentence of banishment to be executed.

## SPEECH ON THE CONSTITUTION.

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*The Translation of which was read by Citizen LANTHERA,  
in the Convention, July 7th, 1795.*

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ON the motion of LAUTHENAS, "that permission be granted to THOMAS PAINE, to deliver his sentiments on the Declaration of Rights, and the Constitution."

THOMAS PAINE ascended the tribune, and no opposition being made to the motion, one of the Secretaries who stood by Mr. Paine read his speech, of which the following is a literal translation from "*La Gazette Nationale, ou Moniteur Universel*."

Citizens, the effects of a malignant fever with which I was afflicted during a rigorous confinement in the *Luxembourg*, have thus long prevented me from attending at my post in the bosom of the Convention; and the magnitude of the subject under discussion, and no other consideration on earth, could induce me now to repair to my station.

A recurrence to the vicissitudes I have experienced, and the critical situations in which I have been placed in consequence of the French Revolution, will throw upon what I now propose to submit to the Convention, the most unequivocal proofs of my integrity, and the rectitude of those principles which have uniformly influenced my conduct.

In England I was proscribed for having vindicated the French Revolution, and I have suffered a rigorous imprisonment in France for having pursued a similar mode of conduct. During the reign of terrorism, I was a close prisoner for eight long months, and remained so above three months after the æra of the 10th Thermidor. I ought, however, to state, that I was not persecuted by the People, either of England or of France. The proceedings in both countries were the effects of the despotism existing in their respective Governments. But even if my persecution had originated in the people at large, my principles and conduct would still have remained the same. Principles which are influenced and subject to the controul of tyranny, have not their foundation in the heart.



A few days ago I transmitted to you, in the ordinary mode of distribution, a short treatise, entitled, "*A Dissertation, on the First Principles of Government.*" This little work I did intend to have dedicated to the people of Holland, (who, about the time I began to write it, were determined to accomplish a revolution in their Government,) rather than to the people of France, who had long before effected that glorious object. But there are, in the Constitution, which is about to be ratified by the Convention, certain articles, and in the report which preceded it, certain points, so repugnant to reason, and incompatible with the true principles of liberty, as to render this treatise, drawn up for another purpose, applicable to the present occasion, and under this impression I presume to submit it to your consideration.

If there be faults in the Constitution, it were better to expunge them now, than to abide the event of their mischievous tendency; for certain it is, that the plan of Constitution which has been presented to you, is not consistent with the grand object of the revolution, nor congenial to the sentiments of the individuals who accomplished it.

To deprive half the people in a nation of their rights as citizens, is an easy matter in theory or on paper; but it is a most dangerous experiment, and rarely practicable in the execution.

I shall now proceed to the observations I have to offer on this important subject, and pledge myself that they shall neither be numerous nor diffusive.

In my apprehension, a Constitution embraces two distinct parts or objects, the *principle* and the *practice*; and it is not only an essential, but an indispensable provision that the practice should emanate from, and accord with the principle. Now, I maintain, that the converse of this proposition is the case in the plan of Constitution under discussion. The first article, for instance, of the POLITICAL STATE of Citizens, (v. TITLE II. OF THE CONSTITUTION) says,

"Every man born and resident in France, who being twenty-one years of age, has inscribed his name on the civic register of his canton, and who has lived afterwards one year on the territory of the republic, and who pays any direct contribution whatsoever, real or personal, is a French citizen."

I might here ask, if those only who come under the above description are to be considered as citizens, what designation do you mean to give the rest of the people? I allude to

that portion of the people on whom the principal part of the labour falls, and on whom the weight of indirect taxation will, in the event, chiefly press. In the structure of the social fabric, this class of people are infinitely superior to that privileged order, whose only qualification is their wealth or territorial possessions. For what is trade without merchants? What is land without cultivation? And what is the produce of the land without manufactures? But to return to the subject.

In the first place, this article is incompatible with the three first articles of the Declaration of Rights, which precedes the Constitutional Act.

The first article of the Declaration of Rights, says :

The end of society is the public good, and the institution of Government is to secure to every individual the enjoyment of his rights.

But the article of the Constitution to which I have just adverted, proposes as the object of society, not the public good, or, in other words, the good of all, but a partial good, or the good only of a few ; and the Constitution provides solely for the rights of this few to the exclusion of the many.

The second article of the Declaration of Rights, says :

“ The rights of man in society are liberty, equality, security of his person and property.”

But the article alluded to in the Constitution, has a direct tendency to establish the converse of this position, inasmuch as the persons excluded by this *inequality*, can neither be said to possess liberty, nor security against oppression. They are consigned totally, to the caprice and tyranny of the rest.

The third article of the Declaration of Rights, says :

“ Liberty consists in acts of volition as are not injurious to others.”

But the article of the Constitution on which I have observed, breaks down this barrier. It enables the liberty of one part of society to destroy the freedom of the other.

Having thus pointed out the inconsistency of this article to the Declaration of Rights, I shall proceed to comment on that part of the same article, which makes a direct contribution a necessary qualification to the right of citizenship.

A modern refinement on the object of public revenue, has divided the taxes, or contributions, into two classes, the *direct* and the *indirect*, without being able to define precisely or distinctly the difference between them, because the effect of both is the same.

Those are designated indirect taxes which fall upon the consumers of certain articles on which the tax is imposed, because the tax being included in the price, the customer pays it without taking notice of it.

The same observation is applicable to the territorial tax. The land proprietors, in order to reimburse themselves, will rack-rent their tenants. The farmer, of course, will transfer the obligation to the miller, by enhancing the price of grain; the miller to the baker, by increasing the price of flour; and the baker to the consumer, by raising the price of bread. The territorial tax, therefore, though called *direct*, is in its consequences *indirect*.

To this tax the land proprietor contributes only in proportion to the quantity of bread and other provisions that are consumed in his own family. The deficit is furnished by the great mass of the community which comprehends every individual of a nation.

From the logical distinction between direct and indirect taxation, some emolument may result, I allow, to auditors of public accounts, &c. &c. but to the people at large I deny, that such a distinction (which by the bye is without a difference) can be productive of any practical benefit. It ought not, therefore, to be admitted as a principle in the Constitution.

Besides this objection, the provision in question does not affect to define, secure, or establish the right of citizenship. It consigns to the caprice or discretion of the legislature the power of pronouncing, who shall, or shall not exercise the functions of a citizen; and this may be done effectually, either by the imposition of a *direct* or *indirect* tax, according to the selfish views of the legislators, or by the mode of collecting the taxes so imposed. Neither a tenant who occupies an extensive farm, nor a merchant or manufacturer, who may have embarked a large capital in their respective pursuits can ever, according to this system, attain the pre-emption of a citizen. On the other hand, any upstart, who has, by succession or management, got possession of a few acres of land, or a miserable tenement, may exultingly exercise the functions of a citizen, although perhaps he neither possesses a hundredth part of the worth or property of a simple mechanic, nor contributes in any proportion to the exigencies of the state.

The contempt in which the old Government held mercantile pursuits, and the obloquy that attached on merchants and manufacturers, contributed not a little to its embarrass-

ments, and its eventual subversion : and, strange to tell, though the mischiefs arising from this mode of conduct are so obvious, yet an article is proposed for your adoption, which has a manifest tendency to restore a defect, inherent in the monarchy.

I shall now proceed to the second article of the same title, with which I shall conclude my remarks.

The second article says, " every French soldier who shall have served one or more campaigns in the cause of liberty, is deemed a citizen of the Republic, without any respect or reference to other qualifications."

It should seem that in this article, the committee were desirous of extricating themselves from a dilemma into which they had been plunged by the preceding article. When men depart from an established principle, they are compelled to resort to trick and subterfuge, always shifting their means to preserve the unity of their objects ; and as it rarely happens that the first expedients make amends for the prostitution of principle, they must call in aid a second of a more flagrant nature to supply the deficiency of the former. In this manner, legislators go on, accumulating error upon error, and artifice upon artifice, until the mass becomes so bulky and incongruous, and their embarrassment so desperate, that they are compelled, as their last expedient, to resort to the very principle they had violated. The committee were precisely in this predicament, when they framed this article, and to me, I must confess, their conduct appears specious rather than efficacious.

It was not for himself alone, but for his family, that the French citizen, at the dawn of the Revolution, (for then, indeed, every man was considered a citizen) marched soldier-like to the frontiers, and repelled a foreign invasion. He had it not in his contemplation, that he should enjoy liberty for the residue of his earthly career, and by his own act preclude his offspring from that inestimable blessing. No, —he wished to leave it as an inheritance to his children, and that they might hand it down to their latest posterity. If a Frenchman, who united in his person the character of a soldier and a citizen was now to return from the army to his peaceful habitation, he must address his small family in this manner: " Sorry I am that I cannot leave to you a small portion of what I have acquired by exposing my person to the ferocity of our enemies, and defeating their machinations. I have established the Republic, and, painful the reflection, all the laurels I have won in the field are blasted,

and all the privileges to which my exertions have entitled me, extend not beyond the period of my own existence!" Thus the measure that has been adopted by way of subterfuge, falls short of what the framers of it speculated upon; for in conciliating the affections of the *Soldier*, they have subjected the *Father* to the most pungent sensations, by obliging him to adopt a generation of slaves.

Citizens, a great deal has been urged respecting insurrections. I am confident no man has a greater abhorrence of them than myself, and I am sorry that any insinuations should have been thrown out upon me as a promoter of violence of any kind. The whole tenour of my life and conversation gives the lie to those calumnies, and proves me to be a friend to order, truth and justice.

I hope you will attribute this effusion of my sentiments, to my anxiety for the honour and success of the Revolution. I have no interest distinct from that which has a tendency to meliorate the situation of mankind. The Revolution, as far as it respects myself, has been productive of more loss and persecution than is possible for me to describe, or for you to indemnify. But with respect to the subject under consideration, I could not refrain from declaring my sentiments. In my opinion, if you subvert the basis of the Revolution, if you dispense with principles and substitute expedients, you will extinguish that enthusiasm and energy which have hitherto been the life and soul of the Revolution; and you will substitute in its place nothing but a cold indifference and self-interest, which will again degenerate into intrigue, cunning, and effeminacy.

But to discard all considerations of a personal and subordinate nature, it is essential to the well-being of the Republic, that the practical or organic part of the Constitution should correspond with its principles; and as this does not appear to be the case in the plan that has been presented to you, it is absolutely necessary that it should be submitted to the revision of a committee, who should be instructed to compare it with the declaration of rights, in order to ascertain the difference between the two, and to make such alterations as shall render them perfectly consistent and compatible with each other.

TO THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE AND THE FRENCH ARMIES ON  
THE EVENT OF THE 18TH FRUCTIDOR, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

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[*The Publisher regrets that he has not been able to obtain a perfect copy of this Letter; the following is taken from the Courier of November 30, 1797, the Editor of which observes, "Whilst some of the hireling English Journals were informing us of Mr. Paine's arrival in America, and giving an account of the reception he met with from the inhabitants of that country, which we were told by these propagators of falsehood was a very cool one—it appears that this 'too long calumniated'\* character was employing himself at Paris in writing a pamphlet under the above title. The following extract will afford our readers a good specimen of the manner in which this very interesting work is written."*]

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ALMOST as suddenly as the morning light dissipates darkness, did the establishment of the Constitution change the face of affairs in France. Security succeeded to terror, prosperity to distress, plenty to famine; and confidence increased as the days multiplied, until the coming of the *New Third*. A series of victories unequalled in the world, followed each other, almost too rapidly to be counted, and too numerous to be remembered. The coalition every where defeated and confounded, crumbled away like a ball of dust in the hand of a giant. Every thing during that period was acted on such a mighty scale, that reality appeared a dream, and truth outstripped romance. It may figuratively be said, that the Rhine and the Rubicon (Germany and Italy) replied in triumphs to each other, and the echoing Alps prolonged the shout. I will not here dishonour a great description by noticing too much the English Ministry. It is

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\* See Sir Francis Burdett's speech at the Shakspeare Tavern.

sufficient paradoxically to say, that in the magnitude of its littleness, it cringed, it intrigued, and sought protection in corruption.

Though the achievements of these days might give trophies to a nation, and laurels to its heroes, they derive their full radiance of glory from the principle they inspired and the object they accomplished. Desolation, chains, and slavery, had marked the progress of former wars; but to conquer for liberty had never been thought of. To receive the degrading submission of a distressed and subjugated people, and insultingly permit them to live, made the chief triumph of former conquerors; but to receive them with fraternity, to break their chains, to tell them they are free, and teach them to be so, make a new volume in the history of man.

Amidst those national honours, and when only two enemies remain, both of whom had solicited peace, and one of them had signed preliminaries, the election of the New Third commenced. Every thing was made easy to them. All the difficulties had been conquered before they arrived at the Government. They came in the olive days of the Revolution, and all they had to do was not to do mischief.

It was, however, not difficult to foresee that the elections would not be generally good. The horrid days of Robespierre were still remembered; and the gratitude due to those who had put an end to them was forgotten. Thousands who, by passive approbation during that tremendous scene, had experienced no suffering, assumed the merits of being the loudest against it. Their cowardice in not opposing it, became courage when it was over. They exclaimed against terrorism as if they had been the heroes that overthrew it, and rendered themselves ridiculous by fantastically over-acting moderation. The most noisy of this class that I have met with are those who suffered nothing. They became all things, at all times, to all men, till at last they laughed at principle. It was the real Republicans who suffered most during the time of Robespierre. The persecution began upon them on the 31st of May, and ceased only by the exertions of the remnant that survived.

In such a confused state of things as preceded the late elections, the public mind was put into a condition of being easily deceived, and it was almost natural that the hypocrite would stand the best chance of being elected into the New Third. Had those who since their election have thrown the public affairs into confusion by counter-revolu-

tionary measures, declared themselves beforehand, they would have been denounced instead of being chosen. Deception was necessary to their success. The Constitution had obtained a full establishment; the Revolution was considered as complete; and the war on the eve of termination. In such a situation, the mass of the people, fatigued by a long revolution, sought repose; and in their elections they looked out for quiet men. They unfortunately found hypocrites. Would any of the primary assemblies have voted for a civil war? Certainly they would not. But the electoral assemblies of some departments have chosen men, whose measures, since their election, tended to no other end but to provoke it. Either those electors have deceived their constituents of the primary assemblies, or have been themselves deceived in the choice they have made of deputies.

That there were some direct but secret conspirators in the New Third, can scarcely admit of a doubt; but it is most reasonable to suppose a great part was seduced by the vanity of thinking they could do better than those had done whom they succeeded. Instead of trusting to experience, they attempted experiments. This counter-disposition prepared them to fall in with any measures contrary to former measures, and that without seeing, and probably without suspecting, the end to which they led.

No sooner were the members of the New Third arrived at the seat of Government, than expectation was excited to see how they would act. Their motions were watched by all parties; and it was impossible for them to steal a march unobserved. They had it in their power to do great good, or great mischief. A firm and manly conduct on their part, uniting with that of the Directory and their colleagues, would have terminated the war. But the moment before them was not the moment of hesitation. He that hesitated in such a situation is lost.

The first public act of the Council of Five Hundred was the election of PICHEGRU to the Presidency of that Council. He arrived at it by a very large majority, and the public voice was in its favour. I, among the rest, was one who rejoiced at it. But if the defection of PICHEGRU was at that time known to CONDE and consequently to PITT, it unveils the cause that retarded all negotiations for peace. They interpreted that election into a signal of a counter-revolution and were waiting for it; and they mistook the respect shewn to PICHEGRU, founded on the supposition of his integrity, as a symptom of national revolt. Judging of things



by their own foolish ideas of Government, they ascribed appearances to causes, between which there was no connection. Every thing on their part has been a comedy of errors, and the actors have been chased from the stage.

Two or three decades of the new sessions passed away without any thing very material taking place; but matters soon began to explain themselves. The first thing that struck the public mind was, that no more was heard of negotiations for peace, and that public business stood still. It was not the object of the conspirators that there should be peace; but as it was necessary to conceal that object, the constitution was ransacked to find pretences for delays. In vain did the Directory expose to them the state of the finances and the wants of the army. The committee charged with that business, trifled away its time by a series of unproductive reports, and continued to sit only to produce more. Every thing necessary to be done was neglected, and every thing improper was attempted. PICHEGRU occupied himself about forming a national guard for the councils—the suspicious signal of war. Camille Jordan, about priests and bells, and the emigrants with whom he had associated during the two years he was in England. WILLOTT and DELARUE attacked the Directory: their object was to displace some one of the Directors, to get in another of their own. Their motions with respect to the age of BARRAS (who is as old as he wishes to be, and has been a little too old for them) was too obvious not to be seen through.

In this suspensive state of things, the public mind, filled with apprehensions, became agitated, and without knowing what it might be, looked for some extraordinary event. It saw, for it could not avoid seeing, that things could not remain long in the state they were in; but it dreaded a convulsion. That spirit of triflingness which it had indulged too freely when in a state of security, and which it is probable the new agents had interpreted into indifference about the success of the Republic, assumed a serious aspect that afforded to conspiracy no hope of aid; but still it went on. It plunged itself into new measures with the same ill success; and the further it went, the further the public mind retired. The conspiracy saw nothing around it to give it encouragement.

The obstinacy, however, with which it persevered in its repeated attacks upon the Directory, in framing laws in favour of emigrants and refractory priests, and in every thing

inconsistent with the immediate safety of the Republic, and which served to encourage the enemy to prolong the war, admitted of no other direct interpretation, than that something was rotten in the Council of Five Hundred. The evidence of circumstances became every day too visible not to be seen, and too strong to be explained away. Even as errors (to say no worse of them) they are not entitled to apology; for where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime.

The more serious Republicans, who had better opportunities than the generality had of knowing the state of politics, began to take the alarm, and formed themselves into a society by the name of the Constitutional Circle. It is the only society of which I have been a member in France; and I went to this because it was become necessary that the friends of the Republic should rally round the standard of the Constitution. I met there several of the original patriots of the Revolution; I do not mean of the last order of Jacobins, but of the first of that name. The faction in the Council of Five Hundred, who, finding no countenance from the public, began to be frightened at appearances, fortified itself against the dread of this society, by passing a law to dissolve it. The constitutionality of the law was at least doubtful; but the society, that it might not give the example of exasperating matters already too much inflamed, suspended its meetings.

A matter, however, of much greater moment, soon after presented itself. It was the march of four regiments; some of whom, in the line of their route, had to pass within about twelve leagues of Paris, which is the boundary the Constitution had fixed as the distance of the armed force from the Legislative Body. In another state of things, such a circumstance would not have been noticed; but conspiracy is quick of suspicion; and the fear which the faction in the Council of Five Hundred manifested upon this occasion, could not have suggested itself to innocent men; neither would innocent men have expostulated with the Directory upon the case, in the manner these men did. The questions they urged went to extort from the Directory, and to make known to the enemy, what the destination of the troops was. The leaders of the faction conceived that the troops were marching against them, and the conduct they adopted in consequence of it, was sufficient to justify the measure, even if it had been so. From what other motive than the consciousness of their own designs could they have

fear? The troops, in every instance, had been the gallant defenders of the Republic, and the openly declared friends of the Constitution; the Directory had been the same; and if the faction were not of a different description, neither fear nor suspicion could have had place among them.

All those manœuvres in the Council were acted under the most professional attachment to the Constitution, and this as necessarily served to enfeeble their projects. It is exceedingly difficult, and next to impossible, to conduct a conspiracy, and still more to give it success, in a popular government. The disguised and feigned pretences which men in such cases are obliged to act in the face of the public, suppress the action of the faculties, and give even to natural courage the features of timidity. They are not half the men they would be where no disguise is necessary. It is impossible to be a hypocrite and to be brave at the same instant.

The faction, by the imprudence of its measures upon the march of the troops, and upon the declarations of the officers and soldiers to support the Republic and Constitution against all open or concealed attempts to overturn them, had gotten itself involved with the army, and, in effect, declared itself a party against it. On the one hand, laws were proposed to admit emigrants and refractory priests as free citizens; and on the other hand, to exclude the military from Paris, and punish the soldiers who had declared to support the Republic. In the mean time all negociation for peace went backward; and the enemy, still recruiting its forces, rested to take advantage of circumstances. Excepting the cessation of hostilities, it was a state worse than war.

If all this was not a conspiracy, it had at least the features of one, and was pregnant with the same mischiefs. The eyes of the faction could not avoid being open to the dangers to which it obstinately exposed the Republic, yet still it persisted. During this scene, the Journals devoted to the faction were repeatedly announcing the near approach of peace with Austria and with England, and often asserting it was concluded. This falsehood could be intended for no other purpose than to keep the eyes of the people shut against the dangers to which they were exposed.

Taking all circumstances together, it was impossible that such a state of things could continue long; and at length it was resolved to bring it to an issue. There is good reason to believe that the affair of the 18th Fructidor (Sept. 4th) was intended to have had place two days before; but on recollecting it was the 2d of September, a day mournful in

the annals of the Revolution, it was postponed. When the issue arrived, the faction found to its cost it had no party among the public. It had sought its own disasters, and was left to suffer the consequences. Foreign enemies, as well as those of the interior, if any such there be, ought to see, in the event of this day, that all expectation of aid from any part of the public, in support of a counter-revolution, is delusion. In a state of security, the thoughtless, who trembled at terror, may laugh at principles of liberty (for they have laughed); but it is one thing to indulge a foolish laugh, it is quite another thing to surrender liberty.

Considering the event of the 18th Fructidor in a political light, it is one of those that is justifiable only on the supreme law of absolute necessity, and it is the necessity abstracted from the event, that is to be deplored. The event itself is a matter of joy. Whether the manœuvres in the Council of Five Hundred were the conspiracy of a few, aided by the perverseness of many, or whether it had a deeper root, the dangers were the same. It was impossible to go on. Every thing was at stake, and all national business was at a stand. The case reduced itself to a simple alternative:—Shall the Republic be destroyed by the darksome manœuvres of a faction, or shall it be preserved by an extraneous act?

During the American Revolution, and that after the State Constitutions were established, particular cases arose that rendered it necessary to act in a manner that would have been treasonable in a state of peace. At one time Congress invested General WASHINGTON with dictatorial power. At another time, the Government of Pennsylvania suspended itself, and declared martial law. It was the necessity of the times only that made the apology of those extraneous measures. But who was it that produced the necessity of an extraneous measure in France? A faction, and that in the face of prosperity and success. Its conduct is without apology, and it is on the faction only that the extraneous measure has fallen. The public has suffered no inconvenience. If there are some men more disposed than others not to act severely, I have a right to place myself in that class; the whole of my political life invariably proves it; yet I cannot see, taking all parts of the case together, what else, or what better, could have been done, than has been done. It was a great stroke, applied in a great crisis, that crushed in an instant, and without the loss of a life, all the hopes of the enemy, and restored tranquillity to the interior.

The event was ushered in by the discharge of two cannon

at four in the morning, and was the only noise that was heard throughout the day. It naturally excited a movement among the Parisians to inquire the cause. They soon learned it; and the countenance they carried was easy to be interpreted. It was that of a people who, for some time past, had been oppressed with apprehensions of some direful event, and who felt themselves suddenly relieved by finding what it was. Every one went about his business, or followed his curiosity in quietude. It resembled the cheerful tranquility of the day when Louis XVI. absconded in 1791; and, like that day, it served to open the eyes of the nation."

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TO THE COUNCIL OF FIVE HUNDRED.

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CITIZENS REPRESENTATIVES,

THOUGH it is not convenient to me, in the present situation of my affairs, to subscribe to the loan towards the descent upon England, my economy permits me to make a small patriotic donation. I send an hundred livres, and with it all the wishes of my heart for the success of the descent, and a voluntary offer of any service I can render to promote it.

There will be no lasting peace for France, nor for the world, until the tyranny and corruption of the English Government be abolished, and England, like Italy, become a sister Republic. As to those men, whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland, who, like Robespierre in France, are covered with crimes, they, like him, have no other resource than in committing more; but the mass of the people are friends to liberty; tyranny and taxation oppress them, but they merit to be free.

Accept, Citizens Representatives, the congratulations of an ancient colleague in the dangers we have passed, and on the happy prospect before us.

Safety and respect,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO FORGETFULNESS.

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FROM 'THE CASTLE IN THE AIR,' TO 'THE LITTLE CORNER  
OF THE WORLD.'

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MEMORY, like a beauty that is always present to hear herself flattered, is flattered by every one. But the absent and silent goddess, Forgetfulness, has no votaries, and is never thought of: yet we owe her much. She is the goddess of ease, though not of pleasure.

When the mind is like a room hung with black, and every corner of it crowded with the most horrid images imagination can create, this kind speechless goddess of a maid, Forgetfulness, is following us night and day with her opium wand, and gently touching first one, and then another, benumbs them into rest, and at last glides them away with the silence of a departing shadow. It is thus the tortured mind is restored to the calm condition of ease and fitted for happiness.

How dismal must the picture of life appear to the mind in that dreadful moment, when it resolves on darkness, and to die! One can scarcely believe such a choice was possible. Yet how many of the young and beautiful, timid in every thing else, and formed for delight, have shut their eyes upon the world, and made the waters their sepulchral bed! Ah! would they in that crisis, when life and death are both before them, and each within their reach, would they but think, or try to think, that Forgetfulness will come to their relief, and lull them into ease, they could stay their hand, and lay hold of life. But there is a necromancy in wretchedness that entombs the mind, and increases the misery, by shutting out every ray of light and hope. It makes the wretched falsely believe they will be wretched ever. It is the most fatal of all dangerous delusions; and it is only when this necromantic night-mare of the mind begins to vanish, by being resisted, that it is discovered to be but a tyrannic spectre. All grief, like all things else, will yield to the obliterating power of time. While despair is preying on the mind, time and its effects are preying on despair; and certain it is, the dismal vision will fade away, and Forget-

fulness, with her sister Ease, will change the scene. Then let not the wretched be rash, but wait, painful as the struggle may be, the arrival of Forgetfulness; for it will certainly arrive.

I have twice been present at the scene of attempted suicide. The one a love-distracted girl in England, the other of a patriotic friend in France; and as the circumstances of each are strongly pictured in my memory, I will relate them to you. They will in some measure corroborate what I have said of Forgetfulness.

About the year 1766, I was in Lincolnshire, in England, and on a visit at the house of a widow lady, Mrs. E——, at a small village in the fens of that county. It was in summer; and one evening after supper, Mrs E—— and myself went to take a turn in the garden. It was about eleven o'clock, and to avoid the night air of the fens, we were walking in a bower, shaded over with hazel-bushes. On a sudden, she screamed out, and cried "Lord! look, look!" I cast my eyes through the openings of the hazel-bushes, in the direction she was looking, and saw a white shapeless figure, without head or arms, moving along one of the walks at some distance from us. I quitted Mrs. E——, and went after it. When I got into the walk where the figure was, and was following it, it took up another walk. There was a holly bush in the corner of the two walks, which, it being night, I did not observe; and as I continued to step forward, the holly-bush came in a straight line between me and the figure, and I lost sight of it; and as I passed along one walk, and the figure the other, the holly bush still continued to intercept the view, so as to give the appearance that the figure had vanished. When I came to the corner of the two walks, I caught sight of it again, and coming up with it, I reached out my hand to touch it; and in the act of doing this the idea struck me, will my hand pass through the air, or shall I feel any thing? Less than a moment would decide this, and my hand rested on the shoulder of a human figure. I spoke, but do not recollect what I said. It answered in a low voice, "Pray let me alone." I then knew who it was. It was a young lady who was on a visit to Mrs. E——, and who, when we sat down to supper, said she found herself extremely ill, and would go to bed. I called to Mrs. E——, who came, and I said to her, "It is Miss N——." Mrs. E—— said, "My God! I hope you are not going to do yourself any hurt;" for Mrs. E—— suspected something. She replied with pathetic melancholy, "Life

has not one pleasure for me." We got her into the house, and Mrs. E—— took her to sleep with her.

The case was, the man whom she expected to be married to, had forsaken her, and when she heard he was to be married to another, the shock appeared to her to be too great to be borne. She had retired, as I have said, to her room, and when she supposed all the family were gone to bed, (which would have been the case, if Mrs. E—— and I had not walked into the garden) she undressed herself, and tied her apron over her head ; which descending below her waist gave her the shapeless figure I have spoken of.

Aided by the obscurity of almost midnight, and with this and a white under-petticoat and slippers, for she had taken out her buckles, and put them at the servant-maid's door, I suppose as a keep-sake, she came down stairs, and was going to drown herself in a pond at the bottom of the garden, towards which she was going when Mrs. E—— screamed out. We found afterwards, that she had heard the scream, and that was the cause of her changing her walk.

By gentle usage, and leading her into subjects that might, without doing violence to her feelings, and without letting her see the direct intention of it, steal her as it were from the horror she was in, (and I felt a compassionate, earnest disposition to do it, for she was a good girl) she recovered her former cheerfulness, and was afterwards the happy wife, and the mother of a family.

The other case and the conclusion in my next.

In Paris, in 1793, I had lodgings in the Rue Fauxbourg, St. Denis, No. 63. They were the most agreeable for situation of any I ever had in Paris, except that they were too remote from the Convention, of which I was then a member. But this was recompensed by their being also remote from the alarms and confusion into which the interior of Paris was then often thrown. The news of those things used to arrive to us, as if we were in a state of tranquillity in the country. The house, which was enclosed by a wall and gateway from the street, was a good deal like an old mansion farm-house, and the court-yard was like a farm-yard stocked with fowls, ducks, turkies, and geese ; which for amusement we used to feed out of the parlour window on the ground floor. There were some hutches for rabbits, and a sty with two pigs. Beyond, was a garden of more than an acre of ground, well laid out, and stocked with excellent fruit trees. The orange, apricot, and green-gage plum, were the best I ever tasted ;



and it is the only place where I saw the wild cucumber. The place had formerly been occupied by some curious person.

My apartments consisted of three rooms; the first, for wood, water, &c. with an old fashioned closet chest, high enough to hang up clothes in; the next was the bed-room; and beyond it the sitting room, which looked into the garden through a glass door; and on the outside there was a small landing place railed in, and a flight of narrow stairs almost hidden by the vines that grew over it, by which I could descend into the garden, without going down stairs through the house. I am trying by description to make you see the place in your mind, because it will assist the story I have to tell; and which I think you can do, because you once called upon me there on account of Sir ———, who was then, as I was soon afterwards, in arrestation. But it was winter when you came, and it is a summer scene I am describing.

\* \* \* \*

I went into my chamber to write and sign a certificate for them,\* which I intended to take to the guard-house to obtain their release. Just as I had finished it a man came into my room dressed in the Parisian uniform of a captain, and spoke to me in good English, and with a good address. He told me that two young men, Englishmen, were arrested and detained in the guard-house, and that the section, (meaning those who represented and acted for the section) had sent him to ask me if I knew them, in which case they would be liberated. This matter being soon settled between us, he talked to me about the Revolution, and something about the 'Rights of Man' which he had read in English; and at parting offered me in a polite and civil manner his services. And who do you think the man was that offered me his services? It was no other than the public executioner Samson, who guillotined the king and all who were guillotined in Paris; and who lived in the same section and in the same street with me.

\* \* \* \*

As to myself, I used to find some relief by walking alone in the garden after dark, and cursing with hearty good-will the authors of that terrible system that had turned the character of the Revolution I had been proud to defend.

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\* Mr. Paine here alludes to two friends who were under arrest. ED.

I went but little to the Convention, and then only to make my appearance; because I found it impossible to join in their tremendous decrees, and useless and dangerous to oppose them. My having voted and spoken extensively, more so than any other member, against the execution of the king, had already fixed a mark upon me: neither dared any of my associates in the Convention to translate and speak in French for me any thing I might have dared to have written.

\* \* \* \*

Pen and ink were then of no use to me: no good could be done by writing, and no printer dared to print; and whatever I might have written for my private amusement, as anecdotes of the times, would have been continually exposed to be examined, and tortured into any meaning that the rage of party might fix upon it; and as to softer subjects, my heart was in distress at the fate of my friends, and my harp was hung upon the weeping willows.

As it was summer we spent most of our time in the garden, and passed it away in those childish amusements that serve to keep reflection from the mind, such as marbles, scotch-hops, battledores, &c. at which we were all pretty expert.

In this retired manner we remained about six or seven weeks, and our landlord went every evening into the city to bring us the news of the day, and the evening journal.

I have now, my 'Little Corner of the World,' led you on, step by step, to the scene that makes the sequel of this narrative, and I will put that scene before your eyes. You shall see it in description as I saw it in fact.\*

\* \* \* \*

He recovered, and being anxious to get out of France, a passport was obtained for him and Mr. Choppin: they received it late in the evening, and set off next morning for Basle before four, from which place I had a letter from them, highly pleased with their escape from France, into which they had entered with an enthusiasm of patriotic devotion. Ah, France! thou hast ruined the character of a Revolution virtuously begun, and destroyed those who produced it. I might almost say like Job's servant, 'and I only am escaped.'

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\* The second instance of attempted suicide is omitted from motives of personal delicacy. Mr. Paine's letter is continued, as it contains an account of his mode of life before he was sent to prison, &c.—ED.

Two days after they were gone I heard a rapping at the gate, and looking out of the window of the bed-room I saw the landlord going with the candle to the gate, which he opened, and a guard with musquets and fixed bayonets entered. I went to bed again, and made up my mind for prison, for I was then the only lodger. It was a guard to take up ———, but, I thank God, they were out of their reach.

The guard came about a month after in the night, and took away the landlord, Georgeit; and the scene in the house finished with the arrestation of myself. This was soon after you called on me, and sorry I was it was not in my power to render to ——— the service that you asked.

I have now fulfilled my engagement, and I hope your expectation, in relating the case of ———, landed back on the shore of life, by the mistake of the pilot, who was conducting him out; and preserved afterwards from prison, perhaps a worse fate, without knowing it himself.

You say a story cannot be too melancholy for you. This is interesting and affecting, but not melancholy. It may raise in your mind a sympathetic sentiment in reading it; and though it may start a tear of pity, you will not have a tear of sorrow to drop on the page.

\* \* \* \*

Here, my contemplative correspondent, let us stop and look back upon the scene. The matters here related being all facts, are strongly pictured in my mind, and in this sense, Forgetfulness does not apply. But facts and feelings are distinct things, and it is against feelings that the opium wand of Forgetfulness draws us into ease. Look back on any scene or subject that once gave you distress, for all of us have felt some, and you will find, that though the remembrance of the fact is not extinct in your memory, the feeling is extinct in your mind. You can remember when you had felt distress, but you cannot feel that distress again, and perhaps will wonder you felt it then. It is like a shadow that loses itself by light.

It is often difficult to know what is a misfortune: that which we feel as a great one to-day, may be the means of turning aside our steps into some new path that leads to happiness yet unknown. In tracing the scenes of my own life, I can discover that the condition I now enjoy, which is sweet to me, and will be more so when I get to America, except by the loss of your society, has been produced, in the first instance, in my being disappointed in former pro-

jects. Under that impenetrable veil, Futurity, we know not what is concealed, and the day to arrive is hidden from us. Turning then our thoughts to those cases of despair that lead to suicide, when, 'the mind' as you say, 'neither sees nor hears, and holds council only with itself; when the very idea of consolation would add to the torture, and self-destruction is its only aim,' what it may be asked, is the best advice, what the best relief? I answer, seek it not in reason; for the mind is at war with reason, and to reason against feelings is as vain as to reason against fire: it serves only to torture the torture, by adding reproach to horror. All reasoning with ourselves in such cases acts upon us like the reason of another person, which, however kindly done, serves but to insult the misery we suffer. If Reason could remove the pain, Reason would have prevented it. If she could not do the one, how is she to perform the other? In all such cases we must look upon Reason as dispossessed of her empire, by a revolt of the mind. She retires herself to a distance to weep, and the ebony sceptre of Despair rules alone. All that Reason can do is to suggest, to hint a thought, to signify a wish, to cast now and then a kind of bewailing look, to hold up, when she can catch the eye, the miniature shaded portrait of Hope; and though dethroned, and can dictate no more, to wait upon us in the humble station of a hand-maid.

TO THOMAS CLIO RICKMAN.

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MY DEAR FRIEND,

New York, March 8, 1803.

MR. MONROE, who is appointed Minister Extraordinary to France, takes charge of this, to be delivered to Mr. Este, banker, in Paris, to be forwarded to you.

I arrived at Baltimore on the 30th October, and you can have no idea of the agitation which my arrival occasioned. From New Hampshire, to Georgia, (an extent of 1500 miles) every newspaper was filled with applause, or abuse.

My property in this country has been taken care of by my friends, and is now worth six thousand pounds sterling, which put in the funds will bring me four hundred pounds sterling a year.

Remember me in friendship and affection to your wife and family, and in the circle of our friends.

I am but just arrived here, and the minister sails in a few hours, so that I have but just time to write you this. If he should not sail this tide, I will write to my good friend Colonel Bosville, but in any case, I request you to wait on him for me.

Yours, in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

## OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF IRON BRIDGES.

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As bridges, and the method of constructing them, are becoming objects of great importance throughout the United States, and as there are at this time proposals for a bridge over the Delaware, and also a bridge beginning to be erected over the Schuylkill at Philadelphia, I present the public with some account of the construction of iron bridges.

The following memoir on that subject, written last winter at the Federal City, was intended to be presented to Congress. But as the session would necessarily be short, and as several of its members would be replaced by new elections on the ensuing session, it was judged better to let it lie over. In the mean time, on account of the bridges now in contemplation, or began, I give the memoir the opportunity of appearing before the public and the persons concerned in those works.

THOMAS PAINE.

Bordentown on the Delaware,  
New-Jersey, June 13, 1803.

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*To the Congress of the United States.*

I HAVE deposited in the office of the Secretary of State, and under the care of the patent office, two models of iron bridges; the one in pasteboard, the other cast in metal. As they will shew by inspection the manner of constructing iron bridges, I shall not take up the time of Congress with a description by words.

My intention in presenting this memoir to Congress is to put the country in possession of the means and of the right of making use of the construction freely; as I do not intend to take any patent right for it.

As America abounds in rivers that interrupt the land communication, and as by the violence of floods, and the breaking up of the ice in the spring, the bridges, depending for support from the bottom of the river, are frequently carried away, I turned my attention, after the revolutionary war was over, to find a method of constructing an arch, that might, without rendering the height inconvenient, or the ascent diffi-

cult, extend at once from shore to shore, over rivers of three, four, or five hundred feet, and probably more.

The principle I took to begin with, and work upon, was that the small segment of a large circle was preferable to the great segment of a small circle. The appearance of such arches, and the manner of forming and putting the parts together admit of many varieties; but the principle will be the same in all. The architects I conversed with in England denied the principle, but it was generally supported by mathematicians, and experiment has now established the fact.

In 1786 I made three models, partly at Philadelphia, but mostly at Bordentown in the State of Jersey. One model was in wood, one in cast iron, and one in wrought iron connected with blocks of wood, representing cast iron blocks, but on the same principle as that of the small segment of a large circle.

I took the last mentioned one with me to France in 1787, and presented it to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, for their opinion of it. The Academy appointed a committee of three of their own body—Mons. Le Roy, the Abbe Bossou, and Mons. Borde. The first was an acquaintance of Dr. Franklin, and of Mr. Jefferson, then minister at Paris. The two others were celebrated as mathematicians. I presented it as a model for a bridge of a single arch of four hundred feet span over the river Schuylkill at Philadelphia. The committee brought in a report which the Academy adopted—that an arch on the principle and construction of the model, might, in their opinion, be extended four hundred feet, the extent proposed.

In September of the same year, I sent the model to Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society in England, and soon after went there myself.

In order to ascertain the truth of the principle on a larger scale than could be shewn by a portable model of five or six feet in length, I went to the iron foundry of Messrs. Walkers', at Rotherham in the county of Yorkshire, in England, and had a complete rib of ninety feet span, and five feet of height from the cord line to the centre of the arch, manufactured and erected. It was a segment of a circle of four hundred and ten feet diameter; and until this was done, no experiment on a circle of such extensive diameter had ever been made in architecture, or the practicability of it supposed.

The Rib was erected between a wall of a furnace belonging to the iron works, and the gable end of a brick building,

which served as butments. The weight of iron in the rib was three tons, and we loaded it with double its weight in pig iron. I wrote to Mr. Jefferson, who was then at Paris, an account of this experiment; and also to Sir Joseph Banks in London, who in his answer to me says—"I look for many other bold improvements from your countrymen, the Americans, who think with vigour, and are not fettered with the trammels of science before they are capable of exerting their mental faculties to advantage."

On the success of this experiment, I entered into an agreement with the iron founders at Rotherham to cast and manufacture a complete bridge, to be composed of five ribs of one hundred and ten feet span, and five feet of height from the cord-line, being a segment of a circle of six hundred and ten feet diameter, and to send it to London to be erected as a specimen for establishing a manufactory of iron bridges to be sent to any part of the world.

The bridge was erected at the village of Paddington near London, but being on a plain field where no advantage could be taken of butments without the expence of building them, as in the former case, it served only as a specimen of the practicability of a manufactory of iron bridges. It was brought by sea, packed in the hold of a vessel, from the place where it was made; and after standing a year was taken down without injury to any of its parts, and might be erected any where else.

At this time my bridge operations became suspended. Mr. Edmund Burke published his attack on the French revolution and the system of representative government and in defence of government by hereditary succession, a thing which is in its nature an absurdity because it is impossible to make wisdom hereditary; and therefore, so far as wisdom is necessary in government, it must be looked for where it can be found. Sometimes in one family; sometimes in another. History informs us that the son of Solomon was a fool. He lost ten tribes out of twelve.\* There are those in later times who lost thirteen.

The publication of this work of Mr. Burke, abused in its principles and outrageous in its manner, drew me, as I have said, from my bridge operations, and my time because employed in defending a system then established and operating in America and which I wished to see peaceably adopted in Europe—I therefore ceased my work on the bridge to em-

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\* 2 Chron. chap. 10.



ploy myself on the more necessary work, *Rights of Man*, in answer to Mr. Burke.

In 1792, a Convention was elected in France, for the express purpose of forming a constitution on the authority of the people, as had been done in America, of which Convention I was elected a member. I was at that time in England, and new nothing of my being elected till the arrival of the person who was sent officially to inform me of it.

During my residence in France, which was from 1792, to 1802, an iron bridge of two hundred and thirty-six feet span, and thirty-four of height from the cord line, was erected over the river Wear, at the town of Sunderland, in the county of Durham in England. It was done chiefly at the expence of the two members of Parliament for that county, Milbanke and Burdon.

It happened that a very intimate friend of mine, Sir Robert Smyth (who was also an acquaintance of Mr. Monroe, the American minister, and since of Mr. Livingston) was then at Paris. He had been colleague in Parliament with Milbanke, and supposing that the persons who constructed the iron bridge at Sunderland had made free with my model, which was at the iron works where the Sunderland bridge was cast, he wrote to Milbanke on the subject, and the following is that gentleman's answer:—

“With respect to the bridge over the river Wear at Sunderland, it certainly is a work well deserving admiration both for its structure and utility, and I have good grounds for saying, that the first idea was suggested by Mr. Paine's bridge exhibited at Paddington. What difference there may be in some part of the structure, or in the proportion of wrought and cast iron, I cannot pretend to say, Burdon having undertaken to build the bridge, in consequence of his having taken upon himself whatever the expence might be beyond between three and four thousand pounds (sterling) subscribed by myself and some other gentlemen. But whatever the mechanism might be it did not supersede the necessity of a center.\* [The writer has here confounded a center with a scaffolding.] Which center (continues the writer) was esteemed a very ingenious piece of workman-

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\* It is the technical term, meaning the boards and timbers which form the arch upon which the permanent materials are laid: when a bridge is finished, the workmen they say are ready to strike the centre, that is to take down the scaffolding.

ship, and taken from a plan sketched out by Mr. Nash, an architect of great merit, who had been consulted in the outset of the business when a bridge of stone was in contemplation.

“With respect, therefore, to any gratuity to Mr. Paine, though ever so desirous of rewarding the labour of an ingenious man, I do not feel, how, under the circumstances already described, I have it in my power, having had nothing to do with the bridge after the payment of my subscription, Mr. Burdon then becoming accountable for the whole. But if you can point out any mode, according to which it should be in my power to be instrumental in procuring him any compensation for the advantage the public may have derived from his ingenious model, from which certainly the outline of the bridge at Sunderland was taken, be assured it will afford me very great satisfaction \*

“RA. MILBANKE.”

The year before I left France, the Government of that country had it in contemplation to erect an iron bridge over the river Seine at Paris. As all edifices of public construction came under the cognizance of the Minister of the Interior—(and as their plan was to erect a bridge of five iron arches of one hundred feet span each, instead of passing the river with a single arch, and which was going backward in practice, instead of forward, as there was already an iron arch of two hundred and thirty-six feet in existence) I wrote the Minister of the Interior, the Citizen Chaptal, a memoir on the construction of iron bridges. The following is his answer:—

*The Minister of the Interior to the Citizen Thomas Paine.*

I have received, Citizen, the observations that you have been so good as to address to me upon the construction of iron bridges. They will be of the greatest utility to us in a moment when this new kind of construction goes to be executed for the first time. I see with pleasure, Citizen, that you have rights of more than of one kind to the thankfulness of nations, and I give you, cordially, the particular expression of my esteem.†

CHAPTAL.

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\* The original is in my possession.

† The original in French is in my possession.

A short time before I left France a person came to me from London with plans and drawings for an iron bridge of one arch over the river Thames at London, of six hundred feet span, and sixty feet of height from the cord line. The subject was then before a committee of the House of Commons, but I know not the proceedings thereon.

As this new construction of an arch for bridges, and the principles on which it is founded, originated in America, as the documents I have produced sufficiently prove, and is becoming an object of importance to the world, and to no part of it more than our own, on account of its numerous rivers, and as no experiment has been made in America to bring it into practice, further than on the models I have executed myself, and at my own expence, I beg leave to submit a proposal to Congress on the subject, which is,

To erect an experiment rib of about four hundred feet span, to be the segment of a circle of at least one thousand feet diameter, and to let it remain exposed to public view, that the method of constructing such arches may be generally known.

It is an advantage peculiar to the construction of iron bridges, that the success of an arch of given extent and height, can be ascertained without being at the expence of building the bridge: which is, by the method I propose, that of erecting an experiment rib on the ground where advantage can be taken of two hills for buttments.

I began in this manner with the rib of ninety feet span, and five feet of height, being a segment of a circle of four hundred and ten feet diameter. The undertakers of the Sunderland bridge began in the same manner. They contracted with the iron-founders for a single rib, and finding it to answer, had five more manufactured like it, and erected it into a bridge consisting of six ribs, the experiment rib being one. But the Sunderland bridge does not carry the principle much further into practice than had been done by the rib of ninety feet span and five feet in height, being as before said, a segment of a circle of four hundred and ten feet diameter. The Sunderland bridge being three hundred and six feet span and thirty-four feet of height, gives the diameter of the circle of which it is a segment, to be four hundred and forty-four feet, within a few inches, which is but a larger segment of a circle of thirty-four feet more diameter.

The construction of those bridges does not come within the line of any established practice of business. The stone architect can derive but little from the theory or practice of

his art that enters into the construction of an iron bridge; and the iron-founder, though he may be expert in moulding and casting the parts, when the models are given him, would be at a loss to proportion them unless he was acquainted with all the lines and properties belonging to a circle.

If it should appear to Congress that the construction of iron bridges will be of utility to the country, and they should direct that an experiment rib be made for that purpose, I will furnish the proportions for the several parts of the work, and give my attendance to superintend the erection of it freely.

But, in any case, I have to request that this memoir may be put on the journals of Congress as an evidence hereafter, that this new construction of bridges originated in America.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City, Jan. 3, 1803.

N. B. The two models mentioned in the memoir, will, I expect, arrive at Philadelphia by the next packet from the Federal city, and will remain for some time in Mr. Peale's Museum.

## ADDRESS FROM BORDENTOWN.

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*At an adjourned Meeting of the Republicans of Bordentown, and its neighbourhood, held at the house of Thomas Lawrence, Colonel Joseph Kirkbride in the chair,*

*Resolved, That the following Address, signed by the Chairman, be published in the True American, printed by Wilson and Blackwell, of Trenton, and that the patriotic Printers in other parts be requested to republish it:—*

## TO OUR FELLOW-CITIZENS.

FEDERALISM and *falsehood*, like *cursing* and *swearing*, are become so united, that to think of one is to remember both.

The following electioneering hand-bill, drawn up by a Federal committee of the county of Rensselaer, State of New York, was sent by post from thence to this place, but by whom, or for what purpose, is not known, as it was enclosed in a blank cover.

The aforesaid meeting of the Federal committee was held for the purpose of nominating and recommending candidates for the election then ensuing; but when the election came on, it unfortunately happened, for lying, like a stumbling horse, will lay his rider in the dust, that none of the candidates recommended by the meeting were elected. The Republican ticket overrun the Federal ticket more than two to one.

The introductory paragraphs in the hand-bill (as will be seen by the reading) are hypocritical, inserted to deceive at first sight, and make the unwary believe it is a Republican hand-bill recommending Republican candidates. Those paragraphs speak the pure language of democracy and Republican Government. The right of the people to elect their law-givers is spoken of as the boast of Americans. It is thus the apostate leaders of the faction counterfeit the principles of democracy to work its overthrow. The language of their pen in the former part, but their hand-bill address is not the language of their hearts; nor is it the language of their lips on any other occasion than to deceive at an election.

They have long tried the foul language of abuse without success, and they are now trying what hypocrisy will do. But let the hand-bill speak for itself.

*To the Independent Electors of the county of Rensselaer.*

“ Fellow-Citizens!

“ The following candidates for senators from the eastern district, and for Members of Assembly for the county of Rensselaer, are recommended to your confidence and support at the ensuing election, by the united voice of your committees collected from each of the towns in the county, viz.

#### FOR SENATORS.

Moses Vail, of the county of Rensselaer,  
Stephen Lush, of the city and county of Albany,  
Ebenezer Clark, of the county of Washington,  
Daniel Paris, of the county of Montgomery,  
William Baily, of the county of Clinton.

#### FOR MEMBERS OF ASSEMBLY.

John D. Dickinson, of the town of Troy,  
Arent Van Dyck, of Schodack,  
Hezekiah Hull, of Stephentown,  
Randal Spencer, of Petersburg,  
Jeremiah Scuyler, of Hoosick.

“ Among the privileges, fellow-citizens, which belong to freemen, perhaps there is no one more dear to them, than that of selecting from among themselves the persons who shall make the laws by which they are to be governed. From this source arises a consolation, which is the boast of Americans, that in elective Governments like ours, the people are their own law-givers. To the exercise of this privilege, equally interesting to ourselves and important to society, we shall in a few days be called.

“ It becomes us, then, fellow-citizens, when about to enter upon a duty so essential to the welfare of the community, to divest ourselves of all unwarrantable prejudices; and while with one hand we offer the names of our candidates, to be able, with the other on our hearts, to appeal to Him who knows our secret intentions, to witness the rectitude of our conduct.

“ Under the full weight of these impressions, the candidates whose names we here take the liberty of offering for your

support, have been selected ; and without wishing to draw any invidious comparisons between them and those of our political opponents, we feel justified in saying, that they are men whose patriotism and fidelity entitle them to the confidence of their countrymen. Their principles are truly *Republican*. Not of that kind of *modern* Republicanism which consists in a heterogeneous mass of *Jacobinism* and *democracy* ; but that which the constitution of our country recognizes ; that which the immortal WASHINGTON in his life practised, and by his invaluable legacy transmitted to the world.

In these our candidates, we do not promise advocates of unrestrained liberty ; neither can we engage that the people shall be entirely released from the burthen of supporting the Government which protects them. These are promises incompatible with rational liberty. They are empty sounds, calculated to ensnare and deceive : therefore we leave the full and exclusive use of them with our adversaries, to whom they of right belong. To the syren sound of delusive and false promises are they in a great measure indebted for the power they now hold.

We have been told that the administration of the Federal Government, by *Washington* and *Adams*, was tyrannical and corrupt ; that a system of profusion and extravagance was pursuing, which must ruin the nation. We have been called upon by all that was dear to us, to look to *Jefferson* for relief, and have been promised every thing which could allure the credulous, or delude the unwary. But what have we realised ? What, alas ! but disappointment ? Pause and reflect. Instead of a system of equal taxation for the support of Government, we now see the lordly *Virginian* rolling over his plantation in his gilded coach, in the free use of all the luxuries of life, but exempt from taxes ; while we are obliged to pay a duty on the necessaries of life, amounting to nearly one-third part of their value. Instead of an *American*, whose integrity has stood the test of the severest scrutiny, we behold, with the keys of our treasury in his hand, a *foreigner*, famous only for having instigated an insurrection in Pennsylvania. Instead of a navy sufficient to protect our commerce against the lawless depredations of pirates and marauders, we have seen our vessels sacrificed under the hammer of the auctioneer for less than half their value ; and our commerce unprotected, and a prey to the pusillanimous and detestable Spaniards.

But startle not at these things, fellow-citizens—We could

a tale unfold, which would arouse the just indignation of every friend to his country. We could tell you of *millions* of our money applied to *secret purposes*! Of immense sums sacrificed in the sale of the bank shares of the United States, amounting to nearly *two hundred thousand dollars*! We could tell you of another enormous sum of *one hundred and fourteen thousand dollars*, totally unaccounted for by the commissioners of the sinking fund. We could tell you, that instead of the salaries of the officers of Government being diminished, they have increased about *thirty thousand dollars*!—But we forbear.—While the administration of the Government is in their hands, it is our duty to submit, though we should be buried in its ruins.

“ But fortunately we are not without a corrective for the evil. To the good sense of an enlightened public, and the freedom of our elections, we can with confidence appeal. Let us arouse, then, and rally round the Constitution of our country, which though mangled by the assassinating hand of democracy, is yet dear to us. Let us no longer be lulled to inactivity by these canting hypocrites, who draw near to us with their lips, while their hearts are far from us: but like *freemen*, indignant at the injuries heaped upon our country, come forward to the support of those principles which have heretofore actuated us; and say to the work of destruction, hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy mad career be stayed.

“ By order of the meeting,

“ DERICK LANE, Chairman.”

JOHN E. VAN ALLEN, Secretary.

Greenbush, April 7. 1803.

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Here ends the hand-bill. We know not if it was publicly circulated at the election, or given privately among a few as a *cue* for the language they were to hold; but as it is come into our hands we give it the publicity which the framers of it were probably ashamed to do; and we subjoin to it our own observations, as a guard against similar impositions at the elections in our own state, in October next.

Of the former part of the hand-bill we have already spoken—we now come to the latter part.

“ We could a tale unfold,” say the framers of this bill,



“that would arouse the just indignation of every friend to his country.”

The phraseology of unfolding a tale is borrowed from Shakspeare's plays. It suits very well on the stage where every thing is fiction, but sounds fantastical in real life; and when used in an electioneering address it suggests the idea of a comedian politician spouting a speech.

It is principles and facts, and not tales, that we concern ourselves about. But if they have a tale to tell, why have they not told it? Insinuation is the language of cowardice and detraction; and though the manly sense of free men despise it, the justice of the country ought to punish it.

“We could tell you (say they) of millions of our money applied to secret purposes—Of immense sums sacrificed in the sale of the bank shares of the United States amounting to nearly two hundred thousand dollars. We could tell you of another enormous sum of one hundred and fourteen thousand dollars totally unaccounted for by the commissioners of the sinking fund. We could tell you that instead of the salaries of the officers of Government being diminished, they have been increased about thirty thousand dollars. But” (here one would suppose they were going to tell. No. They are going not to tell, for they bring themselves off by saying) BUT WE FORBEAR; and then in true cant of hypocrisy, they add—*While the administration of the Government is in their hands* (meaning in the hands of the present administration) *it is our duty to submit, though we should be buried in its ruins.*—Alas, poor Feds!!!

But from this state of sackcloth and despair they “arouse” and shake themselves into new life, as a drowning cur shakes himself when he reaches the shore; and they say in the next paragraph—“But fortunately we are not without a corrective for the evil. To the good sense of an enlightened public and the freedom of our elections we can with confidence appeal.”

They have now made their appeal. The election is over; and the public to whom they have appealed have passed sentence of contempt and condemnation upon them; and said to them, not in the fancied importance of words, but in the loud language of fact, “Here shall thy mad career be stayed.” Go home and rave no more.

In bringing before the public this piece of Federal trumpery, the work of some fantastical phrase-maker, who to a jingle of words adds a jumble of ideas, and contradicts in one paragraph what he says in another, we feel that sincerity of

concern which a desire for peace and the love of our country inspire.

We possess a land highly favoured by nature, and protected by Providence. We have nothing to do but to be happy. The men who now assail with abuse the administration of our choice, and disturb the public tranquility with their clamours, were once entrusted with power.—They dishonoured by violence, and betrayed by injustice, the trust reposed in them, and the public has dismissed them as unworthy of their confidence. They are now endeavouring to regain, by deceit and falsehood, what they lost by arrogance and apostasy. *As a faction*, unjust and turbulent, they feel what they ought to feel, the pain of disappointment and disgrace. The prosperous condition of the country and of its public affairs, under the present wise and mild administration is, to minds like theirs, an agonizing scene. Every thing that goes right brings sorrow to them; and they mistake their own malignant feelings for a public sentiment.

*As citizens*, they live under the same laws with every other citizen. No party oppression is acted upon them. They have the same rights, the same privileges, the same civil and religious freedom, that other citizens enjoy; but the cankered heart of faction is a stranger to repose.

When power was in their hands they used it oppressively and ignorantly. They encouraged mobs, and insulted in the streets, the supporters and friends of the Revolution, and taught their children to do the same. They enacted unjust laws, calling them alien and sedition laws; and though their forefathers were all aliens, and many of themselves but one remove from it, they persecuted the aliens of the present day, who, flying from oppression, as their own forefathers had done, came to live among us, and prohibited others from arriving.

They established in America, as Robespierre had done in France, a system of terror, and appointed judges disposed to execute it. Destitute of economy as they were of principle, they filled the country with unnecessary officers and loaded it with taxes; and had their power continued another election, supported as their plan was by a standing army, the taxes, instead of being reduced as they are now, must have been doubled. Is it any wonder, then, that with all these iniquities on their heads, the public has dismissed them?

That men should differ in opinion is natural, and sometimes advantageous. It serves as a check on the extremes of each other. But the leaders of the present faction ad-

vance no opinion and declare no principle. They say not what their conduct in government would be were they restored to power. They deal altogether in abuse and slander.

The country knows what the character and conduct of the present administration is—that it cultivates peace abroad and prosperity at home, and manages the revenue with honourable economy. Every citizen is protected in his rights, and every profession of religion in its independence. These are the blessings we enjoy under the present administration; and what more can a people expect, or a government perform?

By order of the meeting,

J. KIRKBRIDE, Chairman.

THOMAS PAINE, Secretary.

*Ordered.*—That five hundred copies in hand bills be printed for the use of the meeting.

TO THE ENGLISH PEOPLE ON THE INVASION OF  
ENGLAND.

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IN casting my eye over England and America, and comparing them together, the difference is very striking. The two countries were created by the same power, and peopled from the same stock. What then has caused the difference? Have those who emigrated to America improved, or those whom they left behind degenerated? There are as many degrees of difference in the political morality of the two people, as there are of longitude between the two countries.

In the science of cause and effect, every thing that enters into the composition of either must be allowed its proportion of influence. In investigating, therefore, into the cause of this difference, we must take into the calculation the difference of the two systems of Government, the *hereditary* and the *representative*. Under the hereditary system, it is the Government that forms and fashions the political character of the people. In the representative system, it is the people that form the character of the Government. Their own happiness as citizens forms the basis of their conduct, and the guide of their choice. Now, is it more probable, that an hereditary Government should become corrupt, and corrupt the people by its example, or that a whole people should become corrupt, and produce a corrupt Government; for the point where the corruption begins, becomes the source from whence it afterwards spreads.

While men remained in Europe as subjects of some hereditary potentate, they had ideas conformable to that condition; but when they arrived in America, they found themselves in possession of a new character, the character of sovereignty; and, like converts to a new religion, they became inspired with new principles. Elevated above their former rank, they considered Government and public affairs as part of their own concern, for they were to pay the expense, and they watched them with circumspection. They soon found that Government was not that complicated thing, enshrined in mystery, which Church and State, to play into each other's hands, had represented it; and that to conduct it with proper effect, was to conduct it justly. Common sense, common honesty, and civil manners, qualify a man

for Government; and besides this, put man in a situation that requires new thinking, and the mind will grow up to it, for, like the body, it improves by exercise. Man is but a learner all his life-time.

But whatever be the cause of the difference of character between the Government and people of England, and those of America, the effect arising from that difference is as distinguishable as the sun from the moon. We see America flourishing in peace, cultivating friendship with all nations, and reducing her public debt and taxes, incurred by the Revolution. On the contrary, we see England almost perpetually in war, or warlike disputes, and her debt and taxes continually increasing. Could we suppose a stranger, who knew nothing of the origin of the two countries, he would, from observation, conclude, that America was the *old* country, experienced and sage, and England the *new*, eccentric and wild.

Scarcely had England drawn home her troops from America, after the revolutionary war, than she was on the point of plunging herself into a war with Holland, on account of the Stadtholder; then with Russia; then with Spain, on the account of Nootka *cat-skins*; and actually with France to prevent her Revolution. Scarcely had she made peace with France, and before she had fulfilled her own part of the treaty, then she declared war again to avoid fulfilling the treaty. In her treaty of peace with America, she engaged to evacuate the western ports within six months, but having obtained peace she refused to fulfil the conditions, and kept possession of the posts and embroiled herself in an Indian war. In her treaty of peace with France, she engaged to evacuate Malta within three months, but having obtained peace, she refused to evacuate Malta, and began a new war.

All these matters pass before the eyes of the world, who form their own opinion thereon, regardless of what English newspapers may say of France, or French papers say of England. The non-fulfilment of a treaty is a case that every body can understand. They reason upon it as they would on a contract between two individuals, and in so doing they reason from a right foundation. The affected pomp and mystification of Courts make no alteration in the principle. Had France declared war to compel England to fulfil the treaty, as a man would commence a civil action to compel a delinquent party to fulfil a contract, she would have stood acquitted in the opinion of nations. But that England still holding Malta, should go to war for Malta, is a paradox

not easily solved, unless it be supposed that the peace was insidious from the beginning, that it was concluded with the expectation that the military ardour of France would cool, or a new order of things arise, or a national discontent prevail, that would favour a non-execution of the treaty, and leave England arbiter of the fate of Malta.

Something like this, which was like a vision in the clouds, must have been the calculation of the British Ministry; for certainly they did not expect the war would take the turn it has. Could they have foreseen, and they ought to have foreseen, that the declaration of war was the same as sending a challenge to Buonaparte to invade England, and make it the seat of war, they hardly would have done it unless they were mad; for in any event, such a war might produce, in a military view, it is England would be the sufferer unless it terminated in a wise revolution. One of the causes assigned for this declaration of war by the British Ministry, was that Buonaparte had cramped their commerce. If by cramping their commerce is to be understood that of encouraging and extending the commerce of France, he had a right, and it was his duty to do it. The prerogative of monopoly belongs to no nation. But to make this one of the causes of war, considering their commerce in consequence of that declaration is now cramped ten times more, is like the case of a foolish man, who, after losing an eye in fight, renews the combat to revenge the injury, and loses the other eye.

Those who never experienced an invasion, by suffering it, which the English people have not, can have but little idea of it. Between the two armies the country will be desolated wherever the armies are, and that as much by their own army as by the enemy. The farmers on the coast will be the first sufferers; for, whether their stock of cattle, corn, &c. be seized by the invading army, or driven off, or burnt, by orders of their own Government, the effect will be the same to them. As to the revenue, which has been collected altogether in paper, since the Bank stopped payment, it will go to destruction the instant an invading army lands; and, as to the effective Government, there can be but little where two armies are contending for victory in a country small as England is.

With respect to the general politics of Europe, the British Ministry could not have committed a greater error than to make Malta the ostensible cause of the war; for though Malta is an unproductive rock, and will be an expence to any nation that possesses it, there is not a power in Europe

will consent that England should have it. It is a situation capable of annoying and controuling the commerce of other nations in the Mediterranean; and the conduct of England on the seas and in the Baltic, has shewn the danger of her possessing Malta. Buonaparte, by opposing her claim has all Europe with him: England, by asserting it, loses all. Had the English Ministry studied for an object that would put them at variance with all nations from the North of Europe to the South, they could not have done it more effectually.

But what is Malta to the people of England, compared with the evils and dangers they already suffer in consequence of it? It is their own Government that has brought this upon them. Were Burke now living, he would be deprived of his exclamation, that "*the age of chivalry is gone*;" for this declaration of war is like a challenge sent from one knight of the sword to another knight of the sword to fight him on the challenger's ground, and England is staked as the prize.

But though the British Ministry began this war for the sake of Malta, they are now artful enough to keep Malta out of sight. Not a word is now said about Malta in any of their parliamentary speeches and messages. The King's Speech is silent upon the subject, and the invasion is put in its place, as if the invasion was the cause of the war, and not the consequences of it. This policy is easily seen through. The case is, they went to war *without counting the cost*, or calculating upon events, and they are now obliged to shift the scenes to conceal the disgrace.

If they were disposed to try experiments upon France, they chose for it the worst possible time, as well as the worst possible object. France has now for its chief the most enterprising and fortunate man, either for deep project or daring execution, the world has known for many ages. Compared with him, there is not a man in the British Government, or under its authority, has any chance with him. That he is ambitious, the world knows, and he always was so; but he knew where to stop. He had reached the highest point of probable expectation, and having reduced all his enemies to peace, had set himself down to the improvement of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce at home, and his conversation with the English Ambassador, Whitworth shewed he wished to continue so. In this view of his situation, could any thing be worse policy than to give to satisfied ambition a new object, and provoke it into action. Yet this the British Ministry have done.

The plan of a descent upon England by gun-boats, began after the first peace with Austria, and the acquisition of Belgium by France. Before that acquisition, France had no territory on the North Sea, and it is there the descent will be carried on. Dunkirk was then her northern limit. The English coast opposite to France, on the Channel, from the straits between Dover and Calais to the Land's End, about three hundred miles, is high, bold, and rocky, to the height, in many places, perpendicular, of three, four, or five hundred feet, and it is only where there are breaks in the rocks, as at Portsmouth, Plymouth, &c., that a landing can be made; and as those places could be easily protected, because England was mistress of the Channel, France had no opportunity of making an invasion, unless she could first defeat the English fleet. But the union of Belgium to France makes a new order of things.

The English coast on the North Sea, including the counties of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Lincolnshire, is as level as a bowling green, and approachable in every part for more than two hundred miles. The shore is a clean firm sand, where a flat-bottomed boat may row dry a-ground. The country people use it as a race-ground and for other sports when the tide is out. It is the weak and defenceless part of England, and it is impossible to make it otherwise: and besides this, there is not a port or harbour in it where ships of the line or large frigates can rendezvous for its protection. The Belgic coast, and that of Holland, which joins it, are directly opposite this defenceless part, and opens a new passage for invasion. The Dutch fishermen know this coast better than the English themselves, except those who live upon it; and the Dutch smugglers know every creek and corner in it.

The original plan, formed in the time of the Directory (but now much more extensive), was to build one thousand boats, each sixty feet long, sixteen feet broad, to draw about two feet water, to carry a twenty-four or thirty-six pounder in the head, and a field-piece in the stern, to be run out as soon as they touched ground. Each boat was to carry an hundred men, making in the whole one hundred thousand, and to row with twenty or twenty-five oars on a side. Buonaparte was appointed to the command, and by an agreement between him and me, I was to accompany him, as the intention of the expedition was to give the people of England an opportunity of forming a Government for themselves, and thereby bring about peace. I have no reason to



suppose this part of the plan is altered, because there is nothing better Buonaparte can do. As to the clamour spread by some of the English newspapers, that he comes for plunder, it is absurd. Buonaparte is too good a general to undiscipline and dissolute his army by plundering, and too good a politician, as well as too much accustomed to great achievements, to make plunder his object. He goes against the Government that has declared war against him.

As the expedition could choose its time of setting off, either after a storm, when the English would be blown off, or in a calm, or in a fog; and as thirty-six hours rowing would be able to carry it over, the probability is, it would arrive, and when arrived, no ship of the line or large frigate could approach it, on account of the shoalness of the coast; and besides this, the boats would form a floating battery, close in with the shore, of a thousand pieces of heavy artillery; and the attempt of Nelson against the gun-boats at Boulogne shews the insufficiency of ships in such situations. About two hundred and fifty gun-boats were built, when the expedition was abandoned for that of Egypt, to which the preparations had served as a feint.

The present impolitic war by the English Government has now renewed the plan, and that with much greater energy than before, and with national unanimity. All France is alive to chastise the English Government for recommencing the war, and all Europe stands still to behold it. The preparations for the invasion have already demonstrated to France what England ought never to have suffered her to know, which is, that she can hold the English Government in terror, and the whole country in alarm, whenever she pleases, and as long as she pleases, and that without employing a single ship of the line, and more effectually than if she had an hundred sail. The boasted navy of England is outdone by gun-boats! It is a revolution in naval tactics; but we live in an age of revolutions.

The preparations in England for defence are also great, but they are marked with an ominous trait of affairs in England. Not an address has been presented to the King by any county, city, town, or corporation, since the declaration of war. The people unite for the protection of themselves and property against whatever events may happen, but they are *not pleased*, and their silence is the expression of their discontent.

Another circumstance, curious and awkward, was the conduct of the House of Commons with respect to their

address to the King in consequence of the King's Speech at the opening of the Parliament. The address, which is always an echo of the speech, was voted without opposition, and this equivocal silence passed for unanimity. The next thing was to present it, and it was made the order for the next day that the House should go up in a body to the King, with the Speaker at their head, for that purpose. The time fixed was half after three, and it was expected the procession would be numerous, three or four hundred at least, in order to shew their zeal and their loyalty and their thanks to the King for his intention of taking the field. But when half after three arrived, only thirty members were present, and without forty (the number that makes a House) the address could not be presented. The serjeant was then sent out, with the authority of a press-warrant, to search for members, and by four o'clock he returned with just enough to make up forty, and the procession set off with the slowness of a funeral; for it was remarked it went slower than usual.

Such a circumstance in such a critical juncture of affairs, and on such an occasion, shews, at least, a great indifference towards the Government. It was like saying, you have brought us into a great deal of trouble, and we have no *personal* thanks to make to you. We have voted the address, as a customary matter of form, and we leave it to find its way to you as well as it can.

If the invasion succeed, I hope Buonaparte will remember that this war has not been provoked by the people. It is altogether the act of the Government, without their consent or knowledge; and though the late peace appears to have been insidious from the first, on the part of Government, it was received by the people with a sincerity of joy.

There is yet, perhaps, one way, if it be not too late, to put an end to this burthensome state of things, and which threatens to be worse, which is, for the people, now they are embodied for their own protection, to instruct their representatives in Parliament to move for the fulfilment of the treaty of Amiens, for a treaty ought to be fulfilled. The present is an uncommon case, accompanied with uncommon circumstances, and it must be got over by means suited to the occasion. What is Malta to them? The possession of it might serve to extend the patronage and influence of the Crown, on the appointment to new offices, and the part that would fall to the people would be to pay the expence. The more acquisitions the Government makes abroad, the more

taxes the people have to pay at home. This has always been the case in England.

The non-fulfilment of a treaty ruins the honour of a Government and spreads a reproach over the character of a nation. But when a treaty of peace is made with the concealed design of not fulfilling it, and war is declared for the avowed purpose of avoiding it, the case is still worse. The representative system does not put it in the power of an individual to declare war of his own will. It must be the act of the body of the representatives, for it is their constituents who are to pay the expence. The state which the people of England are now in, shews the extreme danger of trusting this power to the caprice of an individual, whatever title he may bear. In that country this power is assumed by what is called the Crown, for it is not constituted by any legal authority. It is a branch from the trunk of monarchical despotism.

By this impolitic declaration of war the Government of England have put every thing to issue; and no wise general would commence an action he might avoid, where nothing is to be gained by gaining the battle, and every thing is to be lost by losing it. An invasion and a revolution, which consequently includes that of Ireland, stand now on the same ground. What part the people may finally take in a contest pregnant with such an issue is yet to be known. By the experiment of raising the country *in mass*, the Government have put arms into the hands of men whom they would have sent to Botany Bay but a few months before, had they found a pike in their possession. The honour of this project, which is copied from France, is claimed by Mr. Pitt; and no project of his has yet succeeded, in the end, except that of raising the taxes, and ruining the Bank. All his schemes in the revolutionary war of France failed of success, and finished in discredit. If Buonaparte is remarkable for an unexampled series of good fortune, Mr. Pitt is remarkable for a contrary fate, and his want of popularity with the people, whom he deserted and betrayed on the question of a reform of parliament, sheds no beams of glory round his projects.

If the present eventful crisis, for an eventful one it is, should end in a revolution, the people of England have, within their glance, the benefit of experience both in theory and fact. This was not the case at first. The American Revolution began on untried ground. The representative system of Government was then unknown in practice, and but little thought of in theory. The idea that man must be

governed by effigy and show, and that superstitious reverence was necessary to establish authority, had so benumbed the reasoning faculties of men, that some bold exertion was necessary to shock them into reflection. But the experiment has now been made. The practice of almost thirty years, the last twenty of which have been of peace, notwithstanding the wrong-headed tumultuous administration of John Adams, has proved the excellence of the representative system, and the NEW WORLD is now the preceptor of the OLD. The children are become the fathers of their progenitors.

With respect to the French Revolution, it was begun by good men and on good principles, and I have always believed it would have gone on so, had not the provocative interference of foreign powers, of which Pitt was the principal and vindictive agent, distracted it into madness, and sown jealousies among the leaders.

The people of England have now two revolutions before them. The one as an example; the other as a warning. Their own wisdom will direct them what to choose and what to avoid, and in every thing which regards their happiness, combined with the common good of mankind, I wish them honour and success.

New York, May, 1804.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO A FRIEND.

FELLOW-CITIZEN,

New Rochelle, July 9, 1804.

As the weather is now getting hot in New York, and the people begin to get out of town, you may as well come up here and help me to settle my accounts with the man who lives on the place. You will be able to do this better than I shall, and in the mean time I can go on with my literary works, without having my mind taken off by affairs of a different kind. I have received a packet from Governor Clinton enclosing what I wrote for. If you come up by the stage you will stop at the post-office, and they will direct you the way to the farm. It is only a pleasant walk. I send a piece for the Prospect; if the plan mentioned in it is pursued, it will open a way to enlarge and give establishment to the Deistical Church; but of this and some other things we will talk when you come up, and the sooner the better. Your's, in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

I have not received any newspapers nor any numbers of the Prospect since I have been here.

TO THE FRENCH INHABITANTS OF LOUISIANA.

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A PUBLICATION having the appearance of a memorial and remonstrance, to be presented to Congress at the ensuing session, has appeared in several papers. It is therefore open to examination, and I offer you my remarks upon it. The title and introductory paragraph are as follows:

*“To the Congress of the United States, in Senate and the House of Representatives convened.*

“We the subscribers, planters, merchants, and other inhabitants of Louisiana, respectfully approach the legislature of the United States with a memorial of *our rights*, a remonstrance against certain laws which contravene them, and a petition for that redress to which the laws of nature, sanctioned by positive stipulations have entitled us.”

It often happens that when one party, or one that thinks itself a party, talks much about its rights, it puts those of the other party upon examining into their own, and such is the effect produced by your memorial.

A single reading of that memorial will shew it is the work of some person who is not of your people. His acquaintance with the cause, commencement, progress and termination of the American revolution decides this point; and his making *our* merits in that revolution the ground of *your* claims, as if *our* merits could become *yours*, shews he does not understand *your* situation.

We obtained our rights by calmly understanding principles, and by the successful event of a long, obstinate, and expensive war. But it is not incumbent on us to fight the battles of the world for the world's profit. You are already participating, without any merit or expence in obtaining it, the blessings of freedom acquired by ourselves; and in proportion as you become initiated into the principles and practice of the representative system of government, of which you have yet had no experience, you will participate more, and finally be partakers of the whole. You see what mischief ensued in France by the possession of power before they understood principles. They earned liberty in words, but not in fact. The writer of this was in France through

the whole of the revolution and knows the truth of what he speaks; for after endeavouring to give it principle he had nearly fallen a victim to its rage.

There is a great want of judgment in the person who drew up your memorial. He has mistaken *your* case and forgotten his *own*; and by trying to court your applause has injured your pretensions. He has written like a lawyer, straining every point that would please his client, without studying his advantage. I find no fault with the composition of the memorial, for it is well written; nor with the principles of liberty it contains considered in the abstract. The error lies in the misapplication of them, and in assuming a ground they have not a right to stand upon. Instead of their serving you as a ground of reclamation against us, they change into a satire on yourselves. Why did you not speak thus when you ought to have spoken it. We fought for liberty when you stood quiet in slavery.

The author of the memorial injudiciously confounding two distinct cases together, has spoken as if he was the memorialist of a body of Americans, who after sharing equally with us in all the dangers and hardships of the revolutionary war had retired to a distance and made a settlement for themselves. If in such a situation, Congress had established a temporary government over them in which they were not personally consulted, they would have had a right to speak as the memorial speaks. But your situation is different from what the situation of such persons would be, and therefore *their* ground of reclamation cannot of *right* become yours. You are arriving at freedom by the easiest means that any people ever enjoyed it; without contest, without expence, and even without any contrivance of your own. And you already so far mistake principles that under the name of *rights* you ask for *powers*; *power to import and enslave Africans*; and *to govern a territory that we have purchased*.

To give colour to your memorial you refer to the Treaty of Cession (in which *you were not* one of the contracting parties) concluded at Paris between the governments of the United States and France.

“The third article (you say) of the treaty lately concluded at Paris declares, that the inhabitants of the ceded territory shall be incorporated in the union of the United States, and admitted, *as soon as possible, according to the principles* of the Federal Constitution, to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages, and immunities of citizens of the United States; and, *in the mean time*, they shall be protected

in the enjoyment of their liberty, property, and the exercise of the religion they profess."

As from your former condition, you cannot be much acquainted with diplomatic policy, and I am convinced that even the gentleman who drew up the memorial is not, I will explain to you the grounds of this article. It may prevent your running into further errors.

The territory of Louisiana had been so often ceded to different European powers, that it became a necessary article on the part of France, and for the security of Spain, the ally of France, and which accorded perfectly with our own principles and intentions, that it should be *ceded no more*; and this article, stipulating for the incorporation of Louisiana into the union of the United States stands as a bar against all future cession, and at the same time, as well as "*in the mean time*," secures to you a civil and political permanency, personal security and liberty which you never enjoyed before.

France and Spain might suspect, (and the suspicion would not have been ill-founded had the cession been treated for in the administration of John Adams, or when Washington was president, and Alexander Hamilton president over him) that we *bought* Louisiana for the British Government, or with a view of selling it to her; and though such suspicion had no just ground to stand upon with respect to our present President, Thomas Jefferson, who is not only not a man of intrigue, but who possesses that honest pride of principle that cannot be intrigued with, and which keep intriguers at a distance, the article was nevertheless necessary as a precaution against future contingencies. But you, from not knowing the political ground of the article, apply to yourselves *personally* and *exclusively* what had reference to the *territory* to prevent its falling into the hands of any foreign power that might endanger the *Spanish* dominion in America, or those of the *French* in the West India Islands.

You claim, (you say,) to be incorporated into the union of the United States, and your remonstrances on this subject are unjust and without cause.

You are already *incorporated* into it as fully and effectually as the Americans themselves are, who are settled in Louisiana. You enjoy the same rights, privileges, advantages and immunities which they enjoy, and when Louisiana, or some part of it, shall be erected into a Constitutional State, you also will be citizens equally with them.

You speak in your memorial, as if you were the *only*

people who were to live in Louisiana, and as if the territory was purchased that *you* exclusively might govern it. In both these cases *you* are greatly mistaken. The emigrations from the United States into the purchased territory, and the population arising therefrom, will, in a few years, exceed *you* in numbers. It is but twenty-six years since Kentucky began to be settled, and it already contains more than *double* your population.

In a candid view of the case, you ask for what would be injurious to yourselves to receive, and unjust in us to grant. *Injurious*, because the settlement of Louisiana will go on much faster under the government and guardianship of Congress, than if the government of it were committed to *your* hands; and consequently, the landed property you possessed as individuals when the treaty was concluded, or have purchased since, will increase so much faster in value.—*Unjust to ourselves*, because as the reimbursement of the purchase money must come out of the sale of the lands to new settlers, the government of it cannot suddenly go out of the hands of Congress. They are guardians of that property for *all the people of the United States*. And besides this, as the new settlers will be chiefly from the United States, it would be unjust and ill policy to put them and their property under the jurisdiction of a people whose freedom they had contributed to purchase. You ought also to recollect that the French Revolution has not exhibited to the world that grand display of principles and rights that would induce settlers from other countries to put themselves under a French jurisdiction in Louisiana. Beware of intriguers who may push you on from private motives of their own.

You complain of two cases, one of which you have *no right*, no concern with; and the other is founded in direct injustice.

You complain that Congress has passed a law to divide the country into two territories. It is not improper to inform you, that after the revolutionary war ended, Congress divided the territory acquired by that war into ten territories; each of which were to be erected into a Constitutional State, when it arrived at a certain population mentioned in the act; and, in the mean time, an officer appointed by the President, as the Governor of Louisiana now is, presided, as Governor of the Western Territory, over all such parts as have not arrived at the maturity of *statehood*. Louisiana will require to be divided into twelve states or more; but this is a matter that belongs to the *purchaser* of the territory of Louisiana, and with which the inhabitants of the town of New Orleans



have no right to interfere; and beside this, it is probable that the inhabitants of the other territory would choose to be independent of New Orleans. They might apprehend, that on some speculating pretence, their produce might be put in requisition, and a maximum price put on it; a thing not uncommon in a French Government; as a general rule, without refining upon sentiment, one may put confidence in the justice of those who have no inducement to do us injustice; and this is the case Congress stands in with respect to both territories, and to all other divisions that may be laid out, and to all inhabitants and settlers of whatever nation they may be.

There can be no such thing as what the memorial speaks of, that is, of *a Governor appointed by the President, who may have no interest in the welfare of Louisiana*. He must, from the nature of the case, have more interest in it than any other person can have. He is entrusted with the care of an extensive tract of country, now the property of the United States by purchase. The value of those lands will depend on the increasing prosperity of Louisiana, its agriculture, commerce, and population. You have only a local and partial interest in the town of New Orleans, or its vicinity; and if, in consequence of exploring the country, new seats of commerce should offer, his general interest would lead him to open them, and your partial interest to shut them up.

There is probably some justice in your remark, as it applies to the Governments under which you *formerly* lived. Such Governments always look with jealousy, and an apprehension of revolt, on colonies increasing in prosperity and population, and they send Governors to *keep them down*. But when you argue from the conduct of Governments *distant* and *despotic*, to that of *domestic* and *free* Government, it shews you do not understand the principles and interest of a Republic, and to put you right is friendship; we have had experience and you have not.

The other case to which I alluded, as being founded in direct injustice, is that in which you petition for *power*, under the name of *rights*, to import and enslave Africans!

*Dare you put up a petition to Heaven for such a power, without fearing to be struck from the earth by its justice?*

*Why, then, do you ask it of man against man?*

*Do you want to renew in Louisiana the horrors of Domingo?*

COMMON SENSE.

Sept. 22, 1804.

TO A FRIEND.

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ESTEEMED FRIEND,

New Rochelle, Jan. 16, 1805.

I HAVE received two letters from you, one giving an account of your taking Thomas to Mr. Fowler, the other dated Jan. 12; I did not answer the first, because I hoped to see you the next Saturday or the Saturday after. What you heard of a gun being fired into the room is true; Robert and Rachel were both gone out to keep Christmas Eve, and about eight o'clock at night the gun was fired; I run immediately out, one of Mr. Dean's boys with me, but the person that had done it was gone; I directly suspected who it was, and hallooed to him by name, that he was discovered. I did this that the party who fired might know I was on the watch. I cannot find any ball, but whatever the gun was charged with passed through about three or four inches below the window, making a hole large enough for a finger to go through; the muzzle must have been very near, as the place is black with the powder, and the glass of the window is shattered to pieces. Mr. Shule after examining the place, and getting what information could be had, issued a warrant to take up Derrick, and after examination committed him. He is now on bail (five hundred dollars) to take his trial at the Supreme Court in May next. Derrick owes me forty-eight dollars for which I have his note, and he was to work it out in making stone-fence which he has not even begun, and besides this I have to pay forty-two pounds eleven shillings for which I had passed my word for him at Mr. Pelton's store. Derrick borrowed the gun under pretence of giving Mrs. Bayeaux a Christmas gun. He was with Purdy about two hours before the attack on the house was made, and he came from thence to Dean's half drunk, and brought with him a bottle of rum, and Purdy was with him when he was taken up.

Yours, in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE CITIZENS OF PENNSYLVANIA, ON THE PROPOSAL  
FOR CALLING A CONVENTION.

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As I resided in the capital of your State (Philadelphia) in the *time that tried men's souls*, and all my political writings, during the revolutionary war, were written in that city, it seems natural for me to look back to the place of my political and literary birth, and feel an interest for its happiness. Removed as I now am from the place, and detached from every thing of personal party, I address this token to you on the ground of principle, and in remembrance of former times and friendships.

The subject now before you is the call of a Convention, to examine, and if necessary, to reform the Constitution of the State; or to speak in the correct language of constitutional order, to propose written articles of reform to be accepted or rejected by the people, by vote, in the room of those now existing, that shall be judged improper or defective. There cannot be, on the ground of reason, any objection to this; because if no reform or alteration is necessary, the sense of the country will permit none to be made; and, *if necessary*, it *will* be made because it *ought* to be made. Until, therefore, the sense of the country can be collected, and made known by a Convention elected for that purpose, all opposition to the call of a Convention, not only passes for nothing, but serves to create a suspicion that the opposers are conscious that the Constitution will not bear an examination.

The Constitution formed by the Convention of 1776, of which Benjamin Franklin (the greatest and most useful man America has yet produced) was President, had many good points in it, which were overthrown by the Convention of 1790, under the pretence of making the Constitution conformable to that of the United States; as if the forms and periods of election for a territory, extensive as that of the United States is, could become a rule for a single state.

The principal defect in the Constitution of 1776, was, that it was subject, in practice, to too much precipitancy, but the ground work of that Constitution was good. The present Constitution appears to me to be clogged with inconsistencies of a hazardous tendency, as a supposed remedy against a precipitancy that might not happen. Investing any indivi-

dual, by whatever name or official title he may be called, with a negative over the formation of the laws, is copied from the English Government, without ever perceiving the inconsistency and absurdity of it, when applied to the representative system, or understanding the origin of it in England.

The present form of Government in England, and all those things called prerogatives of the Crown, of which this negative power is one, was established by conquest, not by compact. Their origin was the conquest of England by the Normans, under William of Normandy, surnamed the Conqueror, in 1066, and the genealogy of its kings takes its date from him. He is the first of the list. There is no historical certainty of the time when Parliaments began; but be the time when it may, they began by what are called grants or charters from the Norman Conqueror, or his successors, to certain towns, and to counties, to elect members to meet and serve in Parliament\* subject to his controul; and the custom still continues with a king of England calling the Parliament *my Parliament*; that is, a Parliament originating from his authority, and over which he holds controul in right of himself, derived from that conquest. It is from this assumed right, derived from conquest, and not from any constitutional right by compact, that kings of England hold a negative over the formation of the laws; and they hold this for the purpose of preventing any being enacted that might abridge, invade, or in any way affect or diminish what they claim to be their hereditary or family rights and prerogatives, derived originally from the conquest of the country.† This is the origin of the King of England's negative. It is a badge of disgrace which *his* Parliaments are obliged to wear, and to which they are abject enough to submit.

But what has this case to do with a Legislature chosen by freemen, on their own authority, in right of themselves? Or in what manner does a person styled Governor or Chief Magistrate resemble a conqueror subjugating a country, as

\* *Parliament* is a French word brought into England by the Normans. It comes from the French verb *parler*—to speak.

† When a king of England (for they are not an English race of kings) negatives an act passed by the Parliament, he does it in the Norman or French language, which was the language of the conquest, the literal translation of which is, *the king will advise himself of it*. It is the only instance of a king of England speaking French in Parliament; and shews the origin of the negative.

William of Normandy subjugated England, and saying to it, *you shall have no laws but what I please?* The negating power in a country like America, is of that kind, that a wise man would not choose to be embarrassed with it, and a man fond of using it will be overthrown by it. It is not difficult to see that when Mr. M'Kean negated the Arbitration Act, he was induced to it as a *lawyer*, for the benefit of the profession, and not as a *magistrate*, for the benefit of the people; for it is the office of a chief magistrate to compose differences and *prevent* law-suits. If the people choose to have arbitration instead of law-suits, why should they not have them? It is a matter that concerns them as individuals, and not as a state or community, and is not a proper case for a Governor to interfere in, for it is not a state or government concern; nor does it concern the peace thereof, otherwise than to make it more peaceable by making it less contentious.

This negating power in the hands of an individual ought to be constitutionally abolished. It is a dangerous power. There is no prescribing rules for the use of it. It is discretionary and arbitrary; and the will and temper of the person at any time possessing it, is its only rule.

There must have been great want of reflection in the Convention that admitted it into the Constitution. Would that Convention have put the Constitution it had formed (whether good or bad) in the power of any individual to negate? It would not. It would have treated such a proposal with disdain. Why then did it put the Legislatures thereafter to be chosen and all the laws in that predicament? Had that Convention, or the law members thereof, known the origin of the negating power used by kings of England, from whence they copied it, they must have seen the inconsistency of introducing it into an American Constitution. We are not a conquered people; we know no conqueror; and the negating power used by kings in England is for the defence of the personal and family prerogatives of the successors of the Conqueror against the Parliament and the people. What is all this to us? We know no prerogatives but what belong to the sovereignty of ourselves.

At the time this Constitution was formed, there was a great departure from the principles of the Revolution, among those who then assumed the lead, and the country was grossly imposed upon. This accounts for some inconsistencies that are to be found in the present Constitution, among which is the negating power inconsistently copied

from England. While the exercise of the power over the State remained dormant it remained unnoticed ; but the instant it began to be active it began to alarm ; and the exercise of it against the rights of the people to settle their private pecuniary differences by the peaceable mode of arbitration, without the interference of lawyers, and the expence and tediousness of courts of law, has brought its existence to a crisis.

Arbitration is of more importance to society than courts of law, and ought to have precedence of them in all cases of pecuniary concerns between individuals or parties of them. Who are better qualified than merchants to settle disputes between merchants, or who better than farmers to settle disputes between farmers ? And the same for every other description of men. What do lawyers or courts of law know of these matters ? They devote themselves to forms rather than to principles, and the merits of the case become obscure and lost in a labyrinth of verbal perplexities. We do not hear of lawyers going to law with each other, though they could do it cheaper than other people, which shews they have no opinion of it for themselves.

The principle and rule of arbitration ought to be constitutionally established. The honest sense of a country collected in Convention will find out how to do this without the interference of lawyers, who may be hired to advocate any side of any cause ; for the case is, the practice of the bar is become a species of prostitution that ought to be controuled. It lives by encouraging the injustice it pretends to redress.

Courts in which law is practised are of two kinds. The one for criminal cases, the other for civil cases, or cases between individuals respecting property of any kind, or the value thereof. I know not what may be the numerical proportion of these two classes of cases to each other ; but that the civil cases are far more numerous than the criminal cases I make no doubt of. Whether they be ten, twenty, thirty, or forty to one, or more, I leave to those who live in the State, or in the several counties thereof to determine.

But be the proportion what it may, the expence to the public of supporting a judiciary for both will be, in some relative degree, according to the number of cases the one bears to the other ; yet it is only one of them that the public, as a public, have any concern with.

The criminal cases, being breaches of the peace, are consequently under the cognizance of the government of the State, and the expence of supporting the courts thereof be-

long to the public, because the preservation of the peace is a public concern.

But civil cases, that is, cases of private property between individuals, belong wholly to the individuals themselves; and all that government has consistently to do in the matter is to establish the process by which the parties concerned shall proceed and bring the matter to decision themselves, by referring it to impartial and judicious men of the neighbourhood, of their own choosing. This is by far the most convenient, as to time and place, and the cheapest method to them; for it is bringing *justice home to their own doors* without the chicanery of law and lawyers. Every case ought to be determined on its own merits, without the farce of what are called precedents, or reports of cases; because, in the first place, it often happens that the decision upon the case brought as a precedent is bad, and ought to be shunned instead of imitated; and, in the second place, because there are no two cases perfectly alike in all their circumstances, and therefore the one cannot become a rule of decision for the other. It is justice and good judgement that preside by right in a court of arbitration. It is forms, quoted precedents, and contrivances for delay and expence to the parties, that govern the proceedings of a court of law.

By establishing arbitrations in the room of courts of law for the adjustment of private cases, the public will be eased of a great part of the expence of the present judiciary establishment: for certainly such a host of judges, associate judges, presidents of circuits, clerks and criers of courts, as are at present supported at the public expence will not then be necessary. There are, perhaps, more of them than there are criminals to try in the space of a year. Arbitration will lessen the sphere of patronage, and it is not improbable that this was one of the private reasons for negating the Arbitration Act; but public economy, and the convenience and ease of the individuals, ought to have outweighed all such considerations. The present administration of the United States has struck off a long list of useless offices and economised the public expenditure, and it is better to make a precedent of this than to imitate its forms and long periods of election which require reform themselves.

A great part of the people of Pennsylvania make a principle of not going to law, and others avoid it from prudential reasons; yet all those people are taxed to support a judiciary to which they never resort, which is as inconsistent and unjust as it is in England to make the Quakers pay

tythes to support the Episcopal church. Arbitration will put an end to this imposition.

Another complaint against the present Constitution of Pennsylvania is the great quantity of patronage annexed to the office of Governor.

Patronage has a natural tendency to increase the public expence by the temptation it leads to (useless in the hands of a wise man like Franklin) multiply offices within the gift or appointment of that patronage. John Adams, in his administration, went upon the plan of increasing offices and officers. He expected by thus increasing his patronage, and making numerous appointments, that he should attach a numerous train of adherents to him who would support his measures and his future election. He copied this from the corrupt system of England; and he closed his midnight labours by appointing sixteen new unnecessary judges, at an expence to the public of thirty-two thousand dollars annually. John counted only on one side of the case. He forgot that where there was *one* man to be benefited by an appointment, that all the rest had to pay the cost of it; and that by attaching *the one* to him by patronage, he run the risk of losing *the many* by disgust, and such was the consequence; and such will ever be the consequence in a free country where men reason *for* themselves and *from* themselves, and not from the dictates of others.

The less quantity of patronage a man is *incumbered* with, the safer he stands. He cannot please every body by the use of it; and he will have to refuse, and consequently to displease, a greater number than he can please. Mr. Jefferson gained more friends by dismissing a long train of officers, than John Adams did by appointing them. Like a wise man Mr. Jefferson dismantled himself of patronage.

The Constitution of New-York, though like all the rest it has its defects, arising from want of experience in the representative system of government at the time it was formed, has provided much better, in this case, than the Constitution of Pennsylvania has done. The appointments in New-York are made by a *council of appointment* composed of the Governor and a certain number of members of the Senate taken from different parts of the State. By this means they have among them a personal knowledge of whoever they appoint. The governor has one vote but no negative. I do not hear complaints of the abuse of this kind of patronage.

The Constitution of Pennsylvania, instead of being an improvement in the representative system of government, is a



departure from the principles of it. It is a copy in miniature of the government of England, established at the conquest of that country by William of Normandy. I have shewn this in part in the case of the king's negative, and I shall shew it more fully as I go on. This brings me to speak of the Senate.

The complaint respecting the Senate is the length of its duration, being four years. The sage Franklin has said, "Where annual election ends, tyranny begins;" and no man was a better judge of human nature than Franklin, nor has any man in our time exceeded him in the principles of honour and honesty.

When a man ceases to be accountable to those who elected him, and with whose public affairs he is entrusted, he ceases to be their representative, and is put in a condition of being their despot. He becomes the representative of nobody but himself. *I am elected*, says he, *for four years; you cannot turn me out, neither am I responsible to you in the meantime. All that you have to do with me is to pay me.*

The conduct of the Pennsylvania Senate, in 1800, respecting the choice of electors for the Presidency of the United States, shews the impropriety and danger of such an establishment. The manner of choosing electors ought to be fixed in the Constitution, and not be left to the caprice of contention. It is a matter equally as important, and concerns the rights and interests of the people as much as the election of members for the State Legislature, and in some instances much more. By the conduct of the Senate at that time the people were deprived of their right of suffrage, and the State lost its consequence in the Union. It had but one vote. The other fourteen were paired off by compromise. Seven and seven. If the people had chosen the electors, which they had a right to do, for the electors were to represent *them* and not to represent the Senate; the State would have had fifteen votes which would have counted.

The Senate is an imitation of what is called the House of Lords in England, and which Chesterfield, who was a member of it, and therefore knew it, calls "*the hospital of incurables.*" The Senate in Pennsylvania is not quite an hospital of incurables, but it took almost four years to bring it to a *state of convalescence.*

Before we imitate any thing, we ought to examine whether it be worth imitating, and had this been done by the Convention at that time, they would have seen that the model from which their mimic imitation was made, was no better than unprofitable and disgraceful lumber.

There was no such thing in England as what is called the House of Lords, until the conquest of that country by the Normans, under William the Conqueror, and like the King's negative over the laws, it is a badge of disgrace upon the country; for it is the effect and evidence of its having been reduced to unconditional submission.

William having made the conquest dispossessed the owners of their lands, and divided those lands among the chiefs of the plundering army he brought with him, and from hence arose what is called the *House of Lords*. Daniel de Foe, in his historical satire, intitled, "*The True-born Englishman*," has very concisely given the origin and character of this house as follows:

The great invading Norman let them know  
 What conquerors, in after times, might do ;  
 To every musqueteer he brought to town,  
 He gave the lands that never were his own—  
 He cantoned out the country to his men,  
 And every soldier was a denizen;  
 No Parliament his army could disband,  
 He raised no money, for he paid in land,  
 The rascals, thus enriched, he called them *Lords*,  
 To please their upstart pride with new made words,  
 And Domesday Book his tyranny records;  
 Some show the sword, the bow, and some the spear,  
 Which their great ancestor, forsooth, did wear;  
 But who the hero was, no man can tell,  
 Whether a colonel or a corporal;  
 The silent record blushes to reveal  
 Their undescended dark original;  
 Great ancestors of yesterday, they shew,  
 And Lords, whose fathers were—the *Lord knows who*!

This is the disgraceful origin of what is called the House of Lords in England, and it still retains some tokens of the plundering baseness of its origin. The swindler Dundas was lately made a lord, and is now called *noble lord*! Why do they not give him his proper title and call him *noble swindler*! for he swindled by wholesale. But it is probable he will escape punishment; for Blackstone, in his commentary on the laws, recites an act of parliament passed in 1550, and not since repealed, that extends what is called the benefit of clergy, that is exemption from punishment for all clerical offences to all lords and peers of the realm who could not read, as well as those who could, and also for "the crimes of *house-breaking, highway-robbing, horse-stealing, and robbing of churches*." This is consistent with the original

establishment of the House of Lords, for it was originally composed of robbers. This is aristocracy. This is one of the pillars of John Adams's "stupenduous fabric of human invention." A privilege for house-breaking, highway-robbing, horse-stealing, and robbing of churches! John Adams knew but little of the origin and practice of the government of England. As to Constitution it has none.

The Pennsylvania Convention of 1776, copied nothing from the English Government. It formed a Constitution on the basis of honesty. The defect, as I have already said of that Constitution was the precipitancy to which the legislatures might be subject in enacting laws. All the members of that Legislature established by that Constitution, sat in one chamber and debated in one body, and thus subjected them to precipitancy. But this precipitancy was provided against, but not effectually. The Constitution ordered that the laws, before being finally enacted, should be published for public consideration. But as no given time was fixed for that consideration, nor any means for collecting its effects, nor were there then any public newspapers in the State but what were printed in Philadelphia, the provision did not reach the intention of it, and thus a good and wise intention sunk into mere form, which is generally the case when the means are not adequate to the end.

The ground work, however, of that Constitution was good and deserves to be resorted to. Every thing that Franklin was concerned in producing, merits attention. He was the wise and benevolent friend of man. Riches and honours made no alteration in his principles or his manners.

The Constitution of 1776 was conformable to the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of Rights, which the present Constitution is not; for it makes artificial distinctions among men in the right of suffrage, which the principles of equity know nothing of; neither is it consistent with sound policy. We every day see the rich becoming poor, and those who were poor before becoming rich. Riches, therefore, having no stability, cannot and ought not to be made a criterion of rights. Man is man in every condition of life, and the varieties of fortune and misfortune are open to all.

Had the number of representatives in the legislature, established by that Constitution, been increased, and instead of their sitting together in one chamber, and debating and voting all at one time, to have divided them by lot into two equal parts and to have sat in separate chambers, the advantage would have been, that one half by not being entangled

in the first debate, nor having committed itself by voting, would be silently possessed of the arguments, for and against, of the former part, and be in a calm condition to review the whole. And instead of one chamber, or one house, or by whatever name they may be called, negating the vote of the other, which is now the case, and which admits of inconsistencies even to absurdities, to have added the votes of both chambers together and the majority of the whole to be the final decision. There would be reason in this but there is none in the present mode. The instance that occurred in the Pennsylvania Senate, in the year 1800, on the bill for choosing electors, where a small majority in that house controuled and negated a large majority in the other house, shews the absurdity of such a division of legislative power.

To know if any theory or position be true or rational, in practice, the method is, to carry it to its greatest extent; if it be not true upon the whole, or be absurd, it is so in all its parts however small. For instance,

If one house consists of two hundred members and the other fifty, which is about the proportion they are in some of the States, and if a proposed law be carried on the affirmative in the larger house with only one dissenting voice, and be negated in the smaller house by a majority of one, the event will be, that twenty-seven controul, and govern two hundred and twenty-three, which is too absurd even for argument, and totally inconsistent with the principles of representative government, which know no difference in the value and importance of its members but what arises from their virtues and talents, and not at all from the name of the house, or chamber where they sit in.

As the practice of a smaller number negating a greater is not founded in reason we must look for its origin in some other cause.

The Americans have copied it from England, and it was brought into England by the Norman Conqueror, and is derived from the ancient French practice of voting by *ORDERS*, of which they counted three; the *clergy* (that is, Roman Catholic clergy) the *noblesse*, (those who had titles) and the *tiers etat*, or third estate,\* which included all who

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\* The practice of voting by *orders* in France whenever the States-General met, continued until the late Revolution. It was the present Abbe Syeyes who made the motion, in what was afterwards called the National Assembly, for abolishing the vote by *orders*, and established the rational practice of deciding by a majority of numbers.

were not of the two former orders, and which in England are called the *commons*, or *common people*, and the house in which they are represented is from thence called the *House of Commons*.

The case with the Conqueror was, that in order to complete and secure the conquest he had made, and hold the country in subjection, he cantoned it out among the chiefs of his army, to whom he gave castles, and whom he dubbed with the title of *lords*, as is before shewn. These being dependent on the Conqueror, and having a united interest with him, became the defenders of his measures, and the guardians of his assumed prerogative against the people; and when the House called the *Commons House of Parliament* began by grants and charters from the Conqueror and his successors, these lords claiming to be a distinct ORDER from the Commons, though smaller in number, held a controuling, or negating vote over them, and from hence arose the irrational practice of a smaller number negating a greater.

But what are these things to us, or why should we imitate them? We have but one ORDER in America, and that of the highest degree, the ORDER of SOVEREIGNTY, and of this ORDER every citizen is a member in his own personal right. Why then have we descended to the base imitation of inferior things? By the event of the Revolution we were put in a condition of thinking originally. The history of past ages show scarcely any thing to us but instances of tyranny and antiquated absurdities. We have copied some of them and experienced the folly of them.

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Another subject of complaint in Pennsylvania is the judiciary, and this appears to require a thorough reform. Arbitration will of itself reform a great part, but much will remain to require amendment.

The courts of law still continue to go on, as to practice, in the same manner as when the State was a British colony. They have not yet arrived at the dignity of independence. They hobble along by the stilts and crutches of English and antiquated precedents. Their pleadings are made up of cases and reports from English law books; many of which are tyrannical, and all of them are now foreign to us. Our courts require to be domesticated, for as they are at present

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\* The above address being published in the American journals of the day, this break is occasioned by the Editor, not being able to obtain but three parts of four or five.

conducted, they are a dishonour to the national sovereignty. Every case in America ought to be determined on its own merits, according to American laws, and all reference to foreign adjudications prohibited. The introduction of them into American courts serves only to waste time, embarrass causes, and perplex juries. This reform alone will reduce cases to a narrow compass easily understood.

The terms used in courts of law, in sheriffs' sales, and on several other occasions in writs, and other legal proceedings, require reform. Many of those terms are Latin, and others French. The Latin terms were brought into Britain by the Romans, who spoke Latin, and who continued in Britain between four and five hundred years, from the first invasion of it by Julius Cæsar, fifty-two years before the Christian era. The French terms were brought by the Normans when they conquered England in 1066, as I have before shewn, and whose language was French.

These terms being still used in English law courts, shew the origin of those courts, and are evidence of the country having been under foreign jurisdiction. But they serve to *mystify*, by not being generally understood, and therefore they serve the purpose of what is called law, whose business is to perplex; and the courts in England put up with the disgrace of recording foreign jurisdiction and foreign conquest, for the sake of using terms which the clients and the public do not understand, and from thence to create the false belief that law is a learned science, and lawyers are learned men. The English pleaders, in order to keep up the farce of the profession, always compliment each other, though in contradiction, with the title of *my learned brother*. Two farmers or two merchants will settle cases by arbitration, when lawyers cannot settle by law. Where then is the learning of the law, or what is it good for?

It is here necessary to distinguish between *lawyer's law*, and *legislative law*. Legislative law is the law of the land, enacted by our own legislators, chosen by the people for that purpose. Lawyer's law is a mass of opinions and decisions, many of them contradictory to each other, which courts and lawyers have instituted themselves, and is chiefly made up of law reports of cases taken from English law books. The case of every man ought to be tried by the laws of his own country which he knows, and not by opinions and authorities from other countries, of which he may know nothing. A lawyer in pleading, will talk several hours about law, but it is *lawyer's law*, and not *legislative law*, that he means.

The whole of the judiciary needs reform. It is very loosely appointed in most of the States and also in the general government. The case, I suppose, has been, that the judiciary department in a Constitution has been left to the lawyers, who might be in a Convention, to form, and they have taken care to leave it loose. To say, that a judge shall hold his office during *good behaviour*, is saying nothing; for the term, *good behaviour*, has neither a legal nor a moral definition. In the common acceptance of the term it refers rather to a style of manners, than to principles, and may be applied to signify different and contradictory things. A child of good behaviour, a judge of good behaviour, a soldier of good behaviour in the field, and a dancing-master of good behaviour in his school, cannot be the same good behaviour. What then is the good behaviour of a judge?

Many circumstances in the conduct and character of a man may render him unfit to hold the office of a judge, yet not amount to cause of impeachment, which always supposes the commission of some known crime. Judges ought to be held to their duty by continual responsibility, instead of which the Constitution releases them from all responsibility, except by impeachment, from which, by the loose, undefined establishment of the judiciary, there is always a hole to creep out. In annual elections for legislators, every legislator is responsible every year, and no good reason can be given why those entrusted with the execution of the laws should not be as responsible, at stated periods, as those entrusted with the power of enacting them.

Releasing the judges from responsibility is in imitation of an act of the English Parliament for rendering the judges so far independent of what is called the Crown as not to be removable by it. The case is, that judges in England are appointed by the Crown, and are paid out of the King's civil list, as being his representatives when sitting in court; and in all prosecutions for treason and criminal offences, the King is the prosecutor. It was therefore reasonable that the judge, before whom a man was to be tried, should not be dependent for the tenure of his office on the will of the prosecutor. But this is no reason that in a Government founded on the representative system, a judge should not be responsible, and also removeable by some Constitutional mode, without the tedious and expensive formality of impeachment. We remove or turn out presidents, governors, senators, and representatives without this formality. Why then are judges, who are generally lawyers, privileged with dura-

tion? It is I suppose, because lawyers have had the formation of the judiciary part of the Constitution.

The term, "contempt of court," which has caused some agitation in Pennsylvania, is also copied from England; and in that country it means *contempt of the King's authority or prerogative in court*, because the judges appear there as his representatives, and are styled in their commissions, when they open a court, "his Majesty the King's justices."

This now undefined thing, called *contempt of court*, is derived from the Norman conquest of England, as is shewn by the French words used in England, with which proclamation for silence "on pain of imprisonment," begins, "Oyez, Oyez, Oyez."\* This shews it to be of Norman origin. It is, however, a species of despotism; for contempt of court is now any thing a court imperiously pleases to call so, and then it inflicts punishment as by prerogative without trial, as in Passmore's case, which has a good deal agitated the public mind. This practice requires to be constitutionally regulated, but not by lawyers.

Much yet remains to be done in the improvement of Constitutions. The Pennsylvania Convention, when it meets, will be possessed of advantages which those that preceded it were not. The ensuing Convention will have two Constitutions before them; that of 76, and that of 90, each of which continued about fourteen years. I know no material objection against the Constitution of 76, except, that in practice, it might be subject to precipitancy; but this can be easily and effectually remedied as the annexed essay, respecting "Constitutions, Governments, and Charters," will shew. But there have been many and great objections and complaints against the present Constitution and the practice upon it, arising from the improper and unequal distribution it makes of power.

The circumstance that occurred in the Pennsylvania Senate in the year 1800, on the bill passed by the House of Representatives for choosing electors, justifies Franklin's opinion, which he gave by request of the Convention of 1776, of which he was president, respecting the propriety or impropriety of two houses negating each other. "It appears to me," said he, "like putting one horse before a cart and the other behind it, and whipping them both. If the horses are of equal strength, the wheels of the cart, like the wheels of Government, will stand still; and if the horses are strong

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\* Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye.



enough, the cart will be torn to pieces." It was only the moderation and good sense of the country, which did not engage in the dispute raised by the Senate, that prevented Pennsylvania being then torn to pieces by commotion.

Inequality of rights has been the cause of all the disturbances, insurrections, and civil wars, that ever happened in any country in any age of mankind. It was the cause of the American Revolution, when the English Parliament sat itself up *to bind America in all cases whatsoever*, and to reduce her to unconditional submission. It was the cause of the French Revolution; and also of the civil wars in England in the time of Charles and Cromwell, when the House of Commons voted the House of Lords useless.

The fundamental principle in representative Government, is, that *the majority governs*; and as it will be always happening that a man may be in the minority on one question, and in the majority on another, he obeys by the same principle that he rules. But when there are two Houses of unequal numbers, and the smaller number negating the greater, it is the minority that governs, which is contrary to the principle. This was the case in Pennsylvania in 1800.

America has the high honour and happiness of being the first nation that gave to the world the example of forming written Constitutions, by conventions elected expressly for the purpose, and of improving them by the same procedure, as time and experience shall shew necessary. Government in other nations, vainly calling themselves civilized, has been established by bloodshed. Not a drop of blood has been shed in the United States in consequence of establishing Constitutions and Governments by her own peaceful system. The silent vote, or the simple *yea* or *nay*, is more powerful than the bayonet, and decides the strength of numbers without a blow.

I have now, citizens of Pennsylvania, presented you, in good will, with a collection of thoughts and historical references condensed into a small compass, that they may circulate the more conveniently. They are applicable to the subject before you, that of calling a Convention, in the progress and completion of which I wish you success and happiness, and the honour of shewing a profitable example to the States around you and to the world.

Your's, in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

New Rochelle, New York,  
August, 1805.

## TO A GENTLEMAN AT NEW YORK.

SIR,

New Rochelle, March 20, 1806.

I WILL inform you of what I know respecting General Miranda, with whom I first became acquainted at New York about the year 1783. He is a man of talents and enterprize, a Mexican by birth, and the whole of his life has been a life of adventures.

I went to Europe from New York in April 1787, Mr. Jefferson was then minister from America to France, and Mr. Littlepage a Virginian (whom John Jay knows) was agent for the king of Poland, at Paris.

Mr. Littlepage was a young man of extraordinary talents, and I first met with him at Mr. Jefferson's house at dinner. By his intimacy with the King of Poland, to whom also he was chamberlain, he became well acquainted with the plans and projects of the Northern Powers of Europe. He told me of Miranda's getting himself introduced to the Empress Catherine of Russia, and obtaining a sum of money from her, four thousand pounds sterling; but it did not appear to me what the object was for which the money was given: it appeared as a kind of retaining fee.

After I had published the first part of the 'Rights of Man,' in England, in the year 1791, I met Miranda at the house of Turnbull and Forbes, merchants, Devonshire-square, London. He had been a little time before this in the employ of Mr. Pitt, with respect to the affair of Nootka Sound, but I did not at that time know it; and I will, in the course of this letter, inform you how this connection between Pitt and Miranda ended; for I know it of my own knowledge.

I published the second part of the 'Rights of Man' in London in February 1792, and I continued in London till I was elected a member of the French Convention, in September of that year; and went from London to Paris to take my seat in the Convention, which was to meet the 20th of that month: I arrived at Paris on the 19th.

After the Convention met Miranda came to Paris, and was appointed general of the French army, under General Dumourier; but as the affairs of that army went wrong in the beginning of the year 1793, Miranda was suspected and

A few days after his acquittal he came to see me, and in a few days afterwards I returned his visit. He seemed desirous of satisfying me that he was independent, and that he had money in the hands of Turnbull and Forbes. He did not tell me of his affair with old Catherine of Russia, nor did I tell him that I knew of it. But he entered into conversation with respect to Nootka Sound, and put into my hands several letters of Mr. Pitt's to him on that subject; amongst which was one that I believe he gave me by mistake, for when I had opened it and was beginning to read it, he put forth his hand and said, 'O, that is not the letter I intended;' but as the letter was short I soon got through it, and then returned it to him without making any remarks upon it.

Now if it be true that Miranda brought with him a credit upon certain persons in New York for sixty thousand pounds sterling, it is not difficult to suppose from what quarter the credit came; for the opening of any proposals between Pitt and Miranda was already made by the affair of Nootka Sound.

You are at liberty to make what use you please of this letter, and with my name to it.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO MR. DUANE.

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SIR,

New Rochelle, April 26, 1806.

I SEE, by the English papers, that some conversations have lately taken place in Parliament in England on the subject of repealing the act that incorporated the members elected in Ireland with the Parliament elected in England, so as to form only one Parliament.

As England could not domineer Ireland more despotically than it did through the Irish Parliament, people were generally at a loss, (as well they might be) to discover any motive for that union, more especially as it was pushed with unceasing activity against all opposition. The following anecdote, which was known but to few persons, and to none, I believe in England, except the former minister, will unveil the mystery.

“When Lord Malmsbury arrived in Paris in the time of the Directory Government, to open a negociation for a peace, his credentials ran in the old style of ‘George, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, *France* and Ireland, king’—Malmsbury was informed that although the assumed title of *king of France* in his credentials would not prevent France opening a negociation, yet that no treaty of peace could be concluded until that assumed title was renounced. Pitt then hit on the Union Bill under which the assumed title of king of France was discontinued.”

THOMAS PAINE.

THE CAUSE OF THE YELLOW FEVER, AND THE MEANS  
OF PREVENTING IT, IN PLACES NOT YET INFECTED  
WITH IT, ADDRESSED TO THE BOARD OF HEALTH IN  
AMERICA.

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A GREAT deal has been written respecting the Yellow Fever. First, with respect to its causes, whether domestic or imported. Secondly, on the mode of treating it.

What I am going to suggest in this essay, is to ascertain some point to begin at, in order to arrive at the cause, and for this purpose some preliminary observations are necessary.

The Yellow Fever always begins in the lowest part of a populous mercantile town near the water, and continues there, without affecting the higher parts. The sphere, or circuit it acts in is small, and it rages most where large quantities of new ground have been made by banking out the river, for the purpose of making wharfs. The appearance and prevalence of the Yellow Fever in these places, being those, where vessels arrive from the West Indies, has caused the belief that the Yellow Fever was imported from thence: but here are two cases acting in the same place; the one, the condition of the ground at the wharfs, which being new made on the muddy and filthy bottom of the river, is different from the natural condition of the ground in the higher parts of the city, and consequently subject to produce a different kind of effluvia or vapour: the other case, is the arrival of vessels from the West Indies.

In the State of Jersey, neither of these cases has taken place; no shipping arrive there, and consequently there has been no embankments for the purpose of wharfs, and the Yellow Fever has never broke out in Jersey. This, however, does not decide the point, as to the immediate cause of the fever, but it shews that this species of fever is not common to the country in its natural state; and, I believe the same was the case in the West Indies, before embankments began, for the purpose of making wharfs, which always alter the natural condition of the ground; no old history, that I know of, mentions such a disorder as the Yellow Fever.

A person seized with the Yellow Fever in an affected

part of the town, and brought into the healthy part, or into the country, and among healthy persons, does not communicate it to the neighbourhood, or to those immediately around him: why then are we to suppose it can be brought from the West Indies, a distance of more than a thousand miles, since we see it cannot be carried from one town to another, nor from one part of a town to another, at home? Is it in the air? this question on the case, requires a minute examination. In the first place, the difference between air and wind, is the same as between a stream of water and a standing water. A stream of water, is water in motion, and wind, is air in motion. In a gentle breeze, the whole body of air, as far as the breeze extends, moves at the rate of seven or eight miles an hour; in a high wind, at the rate of seventy, eighty, or an hundred miles an hour: when we see the shadow of a cloud gliding on the surface of the ground, we see the rate at which the air moves, and it must be a good trotting horse that can keep pace with the shadow, even in a gentle breeze; consequently, a body of air, that is in and over any place of the same extent as the affected part of a city may be, will, in the space of an hour even at the moderate rate I speak of, be moved seven or eight miles to leeward, and its place, in and over the city, will be supplied by a new body of air coming from a healthy part seven or eight miles distant the contrary way, and then on in continual succession. The disorder, therefore, is not in the air considered in its natural state, and never stationary. This leads to another consideration of the case.

An impure effluvia, arising from some cause in the ground, in the manner that fermenting liquors produce an effluvia near their surface that is fatal to life, will become mixed with the air contiguous to it, and as fast as that body of air moves off, it will impregnate every succeeding body of air, however pure it may be when it arrives at the place.

The result from this state of the case, is, that the impure air, or vapour, that generates the Yellow Fever issues from the earth, that is, from the new made earth, or ground raised on the muddy and filthy bottom of the river; and which impregnates every fresh body of air that comes over the place, in like manner as air becomes heated when it approaches or passes over fire, or becomes offensive in smell when it approaches or passes over a body of corrupt vegetable or animal matter in a state of putrefaction.

The muddy bottom of rivers contains great quantities of impure, and often inflammable air, (Carburetted Hydrogen

gas) injurious to life; and which remains entangled in the mud till let loose from thence by some accident. This air is produced by the dissolution and decomposition of any combustible matter falling into the water and sinking into the mud, of which the following circumstance will serve to give some explanation.

In the fall of the year that New York was evacuated (1783) General Washington had his head-quarters at Mrs. Berrians, at Rocky-Hill, in Jersey, and I was there:—the Congress then sat at Prince-Town. We had several times been told, that the river or creek, that runs near the bottom of Rocky-Hill, and over which there is a mill, might be set on fire, for that was the term the country people used, and as General Washington had a mind to try the experiment, General Lincoln, who was also there, undertook to make preparation for it against the next evening, November 5th. This was to be done, as we were told, by disturbing the mud at the bottom of the river, and holding something in a blaze, as paper or straw, a little above the surface of the water.

Colonels Humphries and Cob were at that time Aide de Camps of General Washington, and those two gentlemen and myself got into an argument respecting the cause; their opinion was, that on disturbing the bottom of the river, some bituminous matter arose to the surface, which took fire when the light was put to it; I, on the contrary, supposed that a quantity of inflammable air was let loose, which ascended through the water, and took fire above the surface. Each party held to his opinion, and the next evening the experiment was to be made.

A scow had been stationed in the mill-dam, and General Washington, General Lincoln, and myself, and I believe Colonel Cob, (for Humphries was sick) and three or four soldiers with poles, were put on board the scow: General Washington placed himself at one end of the scow, and I at the other; each of us had a roll of cartridge paper, which we lighted and held over the water, about two or three inches from the surface, when the soldiers began disturbing the bottom of the river with the poles.

As General Washington sat at one end of the scow, and I at the other, I could see better any thing that might happen from his light, than I could from my own, over which I was nearly perpendicular. When the mud at the bottom was disturbed by the poles, the air bubbles rose fast, and I saw the fire take from General Washington's

light and descend from thence to the surface of the water, in a similar manner, as when a lighted candle is held so as to touch the smoke of a candle just blown out, the smoke will take fire, and the fire will descend and light up the candle. This was demonstrative evidence, that what was called setting the river on fire, was setting the inflammable air on fire, that arose out of the mud.

I mentioned this experiment to Mr. Rittenhouse of Philadelphia the next time I went to that city, and our opinion on the case was, that the air or vapour that issued from any combustible matter, (vegetable or otherwise) that underwent a dissolution and decomposition of its parts, either by fire or water in a confined place, so as not to blaze, would be inflammable, and would become flame whenever it came in contact with flame.

In order to determine if this was the case, we filled up the breach of a gun barrel about five or six inches with saw-dust, and the upper part with dry sand to the top, and after spiking up the touch hole put the breach into a smith's furnace, and kept it red hot, so as to consume the saw-dust; the sand of consequence would prevent any blaze. We applied a lighted candle to the mouth of the barrel; as the first vapour that flew off would be humid, it extinguished the candle; but after applying the candle three or four times, the vapour that issued out began to flash; we then tied a bladder over the mouth of the barrel, which the vapour soon filled, and then tying a string round the neck of the bladder, above the muzzle, took the bladder off.

As we could not conveniently make experiments upon the vapour, while it was in the bladder, the next operation was, to get it into a phial; for this purpose, we took a phial of about three or four ounces, filled it with water, put a cork slightly into it, and introducing it into the neck of the bladder, worked the cork out, by getting hold of it through the bladder, into which the water then emptied itself, and the air in the bladder ascended into the phial; we then put the cork into the phial, and took it from the bladder. It was now in a convenient condition for experiment.

We put a lighted match into the phial, and the air or vapour in it blazed up in the manner of a chimney on fire: we extinguished it two or three times, by stopping the mouth of the phial, and putting the lighted match to it again; it repeatedly took fire, till the vapour was spent, and the phial became filled with atmospheric air.



These two experiments, that in which some combustible substance (branches and leaves of trees) had been decomposed by water, in the mud; and this, where the decomposition had been produced by fire, without blazing, shews, that a species of air injurious to life, when taken into the lungs, may be generated from substances, which in themselves are harmless.

It is by means similar to these, that charcoal, which is made by fire without blazing, emits a vapour destructive to life. I now come to apply these cases, and the reasoning deduced therefrom, to account for the cause of the Yellow Fever.\*

First:—The Yellow Fever is not a disorder produced by the climate naturally, or it would always have been here in the hot months; the climate is the same now, as it was fifty, or an hundred years ago; there was no Yellow Fever then, and it is only within the last twelve years, that such a disorder has been known to America.

Secondly:—The low grounds on the shores of the rivers, at the cities, where the Yellow Fever is annually generated, and continues about three months without spreading, were not subject to that disorder in their natural state, or the Indians would have forsaken them; whereas, they were the parts most frequented by the Indians in all seasons of the year, on account of fishing. The result from these cases is, that the Yellow Fever is produced by some new circumstance not common to the country in its natural state, and the question is, what is that new circumstance?

It may be said, that every thing done by the white people, since their settlement in the country such as building towns, clearing lands, levelling hills, and filling up vallies, is a new circumstance, but the Yellow Fever does not accompany any of these new circumstances. No alteration made on the dry land produces the Yellow Fever, we must therefore look to some other new circumstance, and we come now to those that have taken place between wet and dry, between land and water.

The shores of the rivers at New York, and also at Philadelphia, have on account of the vast increase of commerce,

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\* The Author does not mean to infer that the inflammable air, or Carburetted Hydrogen gas, is the cause of the Yellow Fever; but that perhaps it enters into some combination with Miasm generated in low grounds, which produces the disease.

and for the sake of making wharfs, undergone great and rapid alterations from their natural state, within a few years; and it is only in such parts of the shores, where those alterations have taken place, that the Yellow Fever has been produced. The parts where little or no alteration has been made, either on the East or North River, and which continue in their natural state, or nearly so, do not produce the Yellow Fever—the fact therefore points to the cause.

Besides several new streets gained from the river by embankment, there are upwards of eighty new wharfs made since the war, and the much greater part within the last ten or twelve years; the consequence of which has been, that great quantities of filth or combustibile matter deposited in the muddy bottom of the river contiguous to the shore, and which produced no ill effect while exposed to the air, and washed twice every twenty-four hours by the tide water, have been covered over several feet deep with new earth, and pent up, and the tide excluded. It is in these places, and in these only, that the Yellow Fever is produced.

Having thus shewn, from the circumstances of the case, that the cause of the Yellow Fever is in the place where it makes its appearance, or rather, in the pernicious vapour issuing therefrom, I go to shew a method of constructing wharfs, where wharfs are yet to be constructed, as on the shore on the East River, at Corlder's Hook, and also on the North River, that will not occasion the Yellow Fever, and which may also point out a method of removing it from places already infected with it. Instead then of embanking out the river and raising solid wharfs of earth on the mud bottom of the shore: the better method would be to construct wharfs on arches, built of stone; the tide will then flow in under the arch, by which means the shore, and the muddy bottom will be washed and kept clean, as if they were in their natural state without wharfs.

When wharfs are constructed on the shore lengthways, that is without cutting the shore up into slips, arches can easily be turned, because, arches joining each other lengthways, serve as buttments to each other, but when the shore is cut up into slips there can be no buttments; in this case wharfs can be formed on stone pillars, or wooden piles planked over on the top. In either of these cases, the space underneath will be commodious shelter or harbour for small boats, which can go in and come out always, except at low water, and be secure from storms and injuries.

This method, besides preventing the cause of the Yellow Fever, which I think it will, will render the wharfs more productive than the present method, because of the space preserved within the wharf.

I offer no calculation of the expence of constructing wharfs on arches or piles; but on a general view, I believe they will not be so expensive as the present method. A very great part of the expence of making solid wharfs of earth, is occasioned by the carriage of materials, which will be greatly reduced by the methods here proposed, and still more so were the arches to be constructed of cast iron blocks. I suppose that one ton of cast iron blocks, would go as far in the construction of an arch, as twenty tons of stone.

If, by constructing wharfs in such a manner, that the tide water can wash the shore and bottom of the river contiguous to the shore, as they are washed in their natural condition, the Yellow Fever, can be prevented from generating in places where wharfs are yet to be constructed, it may point out a method of removing it, at least by degrees from places already infected with it, which will be, by opening the wharfs in two or three places in each, and letting the tide water pass through; the parts opened can be planked over, so as not to prevent the use of the wharf.

In taking up and treating this subject, I have considered it as belonging to natural philosophy, rather than medicinal art: and therefore I say nothing about the treatment of the disease, after it takes place; I leave that part to those whose profession it is to study it.

THOMAS PAINE.

New York, June 27, 1806.

## ON LOUISIANA, AND EMISSARIES.

THE latest news from New Orleans, in a letter from Major Claiborne, dated New Orleans, August 29th, says, "It is now within a few minutes of the time when letters must go to the Post-Office. I have waited to give you some information from Natchitoches, in case any should arrive, but no dispatches are received from Governor Claiborne, *nor do we hear any thing more of (the Spanish) Governor Taxos and his nine hundred men.*

*The city of New Orleans is in perfect tranquillity, and the inhabitants thereof, and of the country (Louisiana) continue to enjoy good health."*

Carpenter's Emissary Paper asserted a few days ago, that terrible discontents existed in Louisiana, and that Buonaparte would avail himself thereof, and seize upon that country. The man who asserts and circulates false reports ought to be prosecuted. The press is free for the discussion of principle but not for lying.

Pierpont Edwards has taken the liars and alarmists of Connecticut in hand, and I hope he will not let those of New York escape.

We have in all our cities and sea-ports, a considerable number of men, chiefly dry good merchants, who are parties or agents of British merchants; these men want to embroil us with France and Spain, and there is no lying they will stick at to promote it; but they had better pack themselves off, for if Buonaparte should come, as they predict, and ought to be afraid of, he will trim their jackets, and make them pay the expence; and as to Carpenter, his nose will go to the grindstone. But the fellow, if caught, will turn informer and impeach his employers. "Here," he will say, "is my list of subscribers, fall on them. I will shew you where they live, and where their property is.

The continual abuse and blackguardism in Carpenter's paper against France and Spain ought not to be permitted. If he must do it, let him go back to his own country and do it. France has always behaved with honour to the United States, and we are perfectly easy on that score. It was by her aid we drove off the British invaders in the revolutionary

war, and if she has a mind to come and drive off the scoundrels and British emissaries that seek to embroil the United States and France with each other, we will not fortify New York to prevent it. Let those pay the expence of fortifying who expose it to danger. The cheapest way to fortify New York, will be to banish the scoundrels that infest it. When we are a peaceable people, and mind our own business, and let other nations and governments alone, we shall not stand in need of fortifications; but when we give protection and encouragement to foreign emissaries we must expect trouble.

It is but a little time since the British Ministry sent several of its emissaries to some of the states of Germany, to carry on conspiracies against France, and when the French Government found it out they sent an armed force and seized those emissaries. Two of the English ministers resident at those German states had to fly the country. The English minister, Drake, who was at Munich, was one of them. It is not because New York is more remote from France than those states were, that conspiracies can be carried on with greater safety, or ought to be permitted. Two or three thousand French troops would soon scour New York, and carry off a cargo of conspirators. The Feds who encourage Carpenter (this emissary's name is Cullen) are cutting their own throats.

This man, Carpenter, for this is the name he goes by at present, is now a professed British emissary. He has been running over the world in quest of adventures, and he has taken up his residence at New York to carry on his treason against the peace of the United States. In the height of his folly, madness, and ignorance, he has proposed in two or three of his late papers (beginning with that of Oct. 6th) that the United States should join England in a war against France and Spain, and enter into an alliance with her. A man never turns a rogue but he turns a fool, and this is always the case with emissaries.

Does not this foolish fellow see that all those powers on the Continent of Europe that formed alliances with England have been ruined? The late coalition against France consisted of five hundred thousand men, exclusive of England, and every one of the powers concerned in that coalition has had to repent it. The Emperor of Germany is dismissed from his rank as Emperor. The Emperor of Russia has been beaten into humiliation and peace. The dominions of the house of Austria have been reduced to a narrow compass, and the remaining part obliged to pay tribute. The

King of Naples has lost his dominions. The Elector of Hanover has lost his Electorate.

These are the fruits of forming alliances with England, yet with all these examples of ruin staring us in the face, this emissary of corruption, Carpenter or Cullen, or whatever his travelling name may be, wants the United States to run their head into the fiery furnace of a war on the part of England. This emissary had better pack himself off, for we have those among us who know him.

THOMAS PAINE.

Oct. 11, 1806.

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#### A CHALLENGE TO THE FEDERALISTS TO DECLARE THEIR PRINCIPLES.

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THE old names of *Whig* and *Tory* have given place to the later names of *Republicans* and *Federalists*; by contraction *Feds*. The word *Republican* contains some meaning though not very positive, except that it is the opposite of monarchy; but the word *Federalist* contains none. It is merely a name without a meaning. It may apply to a gang of thieves federalized to commit robbery, or to any other kind of association. When men form themselves into political parties, it is customary with them to make a declaration of their principles. But the *Feds* do not declare what their principles are; from which we may infer, that either they have no principles, and are mere *snarlers*, or that their principles are too bad to be told. Their object, however, is to get possession of power; and their caution is to conceal the use they will make of it. Such men ought not to be trusted.

The *Republicans*, on the contrary, are open and frank, in declaring their principles, for they are of a nature that requires no concealment. The more they are published and understood the more they are approved.

The principles of the *Republicans* are to support the representative system of government, and to leave it an inheritance to their children, to cultivate peace and civil manners with all nations, as the surest means of avoiding wars, and never to embroil themselves in the wars of other nations, nor in foreign coalitions—to adjust and settle all differences

that might arise with foreign nations by explanation and negotiation in preference to the sword, if it can be done—to have no more taxes than are necessary for the decent support of Government—to pay every man for his service, and to have no more servants than are wanted.

The Republicans hold, as a fixed incontrovertible principle, that sovereignty resides in the great mass of the people, and that the persons they elect are the representatives of that sovereignty itself. They know of no such thing as hereditary Government, or of men born to govern them; for, besides the injustice of it, it never can be known before they are born whether they will be wise men or fools.

The Republicans now challenge the Federalists to declare their principles. But as the Federalists have never yet done this, and most probably never will, we have a right to infer what their principles are from the conduct they have exhibited.

The Federalists opposed the suppression of the internal taxes laid on in the stupid, expensive, and unprincipled administration of John Adams; though it was at that time evident, and experience has since confirmed it for a fact, that those taxes answered no other purpose than to make offices for the maintenance of a number of their dependents at the expence of the public. From this conduct of theirs we infer, that could the Federalists get again into power, they would again load the country with internal taxes.

The Federalists, while in power, proposed and voted for a standing army, and in order to induce the country to consent to a measure so unpopular in itself, they raised and circulated the fabricated falsehood that France was going to send an army to invade the United States; and to prevent being detected in this lie, and to keep the country in ignorance, they passed a law to prohibit all commerce and intercourse with France. As the pretence for which a standing army was to be raised had no existence, not even in their own brain, for it was a wilful lie, we have a right to infer, that the object of the Federal faction in raising that army, was to overthrow the representative system of Government, and to establish a Government of war and taxes on the corrupt principles of the English Government; and that, could they get again into power, they would again attempt the same thing.

As to the inconsistencies, contradictions, and falsehoods of the Federal faction, they are too numerous to be counted. When Spain shut up the port of New Orleans, so as to ex-

clude from it the citizens of the United States, the Federal faction in Congress bellowed out for war, and the Federal papers echoed the cry. The faction, both in and out of Congress, declared New Orleans to be of such vast importance, that without it the Western States would be ruined. But mark the change! No sooner was the cession of New Orleans and the territory of Louisiana obtained by peaceable negociation, and for many times less expence than a war, with all its uncertainties of success, would have cost, than this self-same faction gave itself the lie, and represented the place as of no value. According to them, it was worth fighting for at a great expence, but not worth having quietly at a comparatively small expence. It has been said of a thief that he had rather steal a purse than find one, and the conduct of the Federalists on this occasion corresponds with that saying. But all these inconsistencies become understood, when we recollect that the leaders of the Federal faction are an English faction, and that they follow, like a satellite, the variations of their principal. Their continual aim has been and still is, to involve the United States in a war with France and Spain. This is an English scheme, and the papers of the faction give every provocation that words can give, to provoke France to hostilities. The bugbear held up by them is, that Buonaparte will attack Louisiana. This is an invention of the British emissary, Cullen, alias Carpenter, and the association of the Federalists, at least some of them, with this miserable emissary, involves their own characters in suspicion.

The Republicans, as before said, are open, bold, and candid in declaring their principles. They are no skulkers. Let, then, the Federalists declare theirs.

COMMON SENSE.

Oct. 17, 1806.



LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

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*The Author of the following Paper never writes on principle without communicating to the Public something which, if not new, is told in a new way. The Liberty of the Press is a subject of the first importance. He would gratify me, and I have no doubt render an essential service to the community, by publishing at large his thoughts upon it.* Cheetham, of Oct. 20, 1806.

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*Of the term Liberty of the Press.*

THE writer of this remembers a remark made to him by Mr. Jefferson concerning the English newspapers which at that time 1787, while Mr. Jefferson was Minister at Paris, were most vulgarly abusive. The remark applies with equal force to the Federal papers of America. The remark was, that "the licentiousness of the press produces the same effect as the restraint of the press was intended to do. If the restraint, said he, was to prevent things being told, and the licentiousness of the press prevents things being believed when they are told." We have in this state an evidence of the truth of this remark. The number of Federal papers in the city and State of New-York are more than five to one to the number of Republican papers, yet the majority of the elections, go always against the Federal papers, which is demonstrative evidence that the licentiousness of those papers are destitute of credit.

Whoever has made observations on the characters of nations will find it generally true, that the manners of a nation, or of a party, can be better ascertained from the character of its press than from any other public circumstance. If its press is licentious, its manners are not good. Nobody believes a common liar, or a common defamer.

Nothing is more common with printers, especially of Newspapers, than the continual cry of the *Liberty of the Press*, as if because they are printers they are to have more privileges than other people. As the term "*Liberty of the Press*" is adopted in this country without being understood I will

state the origin of it, and show what it means. The term comes from England and the case was as follows :

Prior to what is in England called *the revolution*, which was in 1688, no work could be published in that country without first obtaining the permission of an officer appointed by the government for inspecting works intended for publication. The same was the case in France, except that in France there were forty who were called *censors*, and in England there was but one called *Impremateur*.

At the revolution the office of *Impremateur* was abolished and as works could then be published without first obtaining the permission of the government officer, the press was, in consequence of that abolition, said to be free, and it was from this circumstance that the term *Liberty of the Press* arose. The press, which is a tongue to the eye, was then put exactly in the case of the human tongue. A man does not ask liberty before hand to say something he has a mind to say, but he becomes answerable afterwards for the atrocities he may utter. In like manner, if a man makes the press utter atrocious things he becomes as answerable for them as if he had uttered them by word of mouth. Mr. Jefferson has said in his inaugural speech, that "*error of opinion might be tolerated when reason was left free to combat it.*" This is sound philosophy in cases of error. But there is a difference between error and licentiousness.

Some lawyers in defending their clients, for the generality of lawyers like Swiss soldiers will fight on either side, have often given their opinion of what they defined the liberty of the press to be. One said it was this; another said it was that, and so on, according to the case they were pleading. Now these men ought to have known that the term, *liberty of the press*, arose from a FACT, the abolition of the office of *Imprimateur*, and that opinion has nothing to do in the case. The term refers to the fact of printing *free from prior restraint*, and not at all to the matter printed whether good or bad. The public at large, or in case of prosecution, a jury of the country will be the judges of the matter.

COMMON SENSE.

Oct. 19, 1806.

## THE EMISSARY CULLEN, OTHERWISE CARPENTER.

IN Cullen's emissary paper clandestinely entitled "The People's Friend," of October, is a piece signed *Hamilton*, in which several notorious falsifications are made from a publication of mine, entitled *Communication*, in the (New York) *American Citizen*, of October 11, and the falsifications thus made are imposed upon the public as literal extracts from that communication.

On Saturday, October 18, I made a written copy of those falsifications, and desired a friend\* of mine to call on Cullen, or Carpenter, or whatever his travelling name may be, and read the said falsifications to him, and also a note written by myself in my own name, asking him if he was the writer of those falsifications, and of the piece signed *Hamilton*, from which I had copied them, or to declare who the writer of them was.

The gentleman who undertook to see Carpenter upon this business called at his (Carpenter's) printing-office the next day, but could get no intelligence of him. He then left word with the person in the office that he would call again the next day, Monday, and that he had something to communicate to Mr. Carpenter. The gentleman called accordingly, but Carpenter was not to be found. He left the same message for the next day, Tuesday, and called the third time, but Carpenter was not to be found. He then inquired of the persons in the office who appeared to belong to it, where Carpenter lived or lodged. They said they did not know, but they believed it was a good way off. They also told him he might leave his message with them; but as the gentleman's business was to see Carpenter, and to read a message to him from me, and as he found after calling three times that Carpenter kept himself obscured, he came away, and I desired him to call no more.

An emissary is always a skulking character. His business is lying and deceiving. He shuns the public, and is afraid that every inquiry about him is for the purpose of apprehending him.

The publication of mine, entitled *Communication*, in the *American Citizen* of October 11, which Cullen, or Car-

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\* Mr. Walter Morton.

penter, in his paper of October 23, has falsified, what was written to impress on the mind of the people of New York, some apprehension of the danger to which they might expose themselves and the city by giving protection and encouragement to the emissary of one belligerent nation to the injury of another belligerent nation.

The United States profess to be a neutral nation, and as such she cannot harbour an emissary of either of the belligerent nations. If that emissary be demanded by the party injured, the nation harbouring him must give him up, or take the consequence. Nations do not settle their disputes by law-suits; for there is no court to try such disputes in. They complain first of some real or supposed injury, and if it is not explained or redressed by the Government they complain to, they redress themselves; for nations, with respect to each other, are like individuals in a state of nature. We have no laws respecting emissaries, and therefore emissaries are a sort of *outlaws*, that must take just what fare or fate they meet with. They are not entitled to protection. They violate, like spies, the laws of hospitality, and expose to danger the place that harbours them.

In the piece entitled Communication, before spoken of, I stated that the British Ministry sent emissaries to some of the States of Germany to carry on conspiracies against France, and that when the French Government found it out, they sent an armed force and seized those emissaries, and that two of the English Ministers resident at those German States had to fly the country. Drake, the English Minister at Munich, was one of them. "It is not," said I, "because New York is more remote from France than those States were that conspiracies can be carried on with greater safety, or ought to be permitted. Two or three thousand French troops would soon scour New York and *carry off a cargo of conspirators.*" Carpenter, among other falsifications, has falsified this passage, which was a caution against the danger of harbouring him, and *made it into an invitation for two or three thousand French troops to come over and plunder the "merchants."* If Carpenter should be prosecuted and convicted of *lying*, he cannot complain his sentence is hard. But *lying* is so naturally the mother tongue of an emissary, that *truth* is to him like a foreign language. The cases I stated with respect to emissaries sent by the British Ministry to Germany ought to have put the Federalists of New York on their guard, for their own safety sake, not to countenance or encourage Carpenter. This

was the more necessary for the men calling themselves Federalists to do, because their own political character is very doubtful. They have never declared what their principles are, or for what purpose they are federalized. Their language is abuse instead of argument; and as far as their conduct discovers their motives, for as to principle they have none, their leaders are an English faction disaffected to the peace of the United States.

Carpenter came to the United States about the same time that Pitt, whose meanness was equal to his ignorance, sent his emissaries into Germany. Carpenter is the successor of Porcupine, he is his equal in blackguardism but not in wit. The one had talents, the other is a fool that has not talents enough to be a knave. I am not entering into a contest with this emissary. I am exposing him, and putting the Federalists, or rather those who have been deceived by that faction, on their guard against him, and having done so *I leave them*. The Republicans have nothing to fear. They are not the abettors of conspiracies against a friendly power.

THOMAS PAINE.

Oct. 28, 1806.

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#### COMMUNICATION ON CULLEN.

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As it happens that Duane, the Editor of the Philadelphia Aurora, knows the emissary Cullen, who goes by the name of Carpenter, and is the Editor of a paper in New York, which, emissary like, he calls the *People's Friend*, I send you some extracts from the Aurora of October 28, respecting this emissary. The extracts are as follows:—

“Two of the Anglo-Federal Editors of New York have fallen upon their new associate, Cullen, (who calls himself Carpenter.) Cullen has *let out* his English agency too openly, and Coleman tells him so—he does not blame Cullen for wishing or endeavouring to promote an alliance, offensive and defensive, with England, but for letting the thing out so openly, and thereby opposing the feelings and interests of the country, the worst effect of which he considers to be the ruin of the Anglo-Federal party. The New York Commercial Advertiser is also very hard on Cullen's English devotion, and fairly takes the ground in opposition to this English emissary. Cullen feels it, and comes forth in

an inflated palaver. He says, that his departure from England was owing to a *miscarriage*, but what kind of a miscarriage he has not said.

“ Cullen roars out lustily about his personal deportment, of which he knows the Editor of this paper (the *Aurora*) could give a very humorous account if he were disposed to indulge in private anecdote.

“ Perhaps the city of Calcutta never exhibited so dirty and debauched a character as this now delicate Mr. Cullen, alias Carpenter. This Cullen, with whom the writer of this article (Duane) never held intercourse in India, but whom he frequently saw and pitied in the condition hinted at, addressed himself to the editor of this paper (the *Aurora*) in the gallery of the English House of Commons, in the winter of 1795, the editor of this paper (the *Aurora*) being then a reporter for a spirited paper called the *Telegraph*. A gentleman who also reported for one of the public prints, seeing this Cullen in conversation with the present editor of this paper (the *Aurora*) gave the following friendly hint. ‘ Do you know that man Cullen?’ I never had any personal acquaintance with him, I have seen him and heard much about him in Calcutta. ‘ Let me tell you (replied the gentleman) that if you cultivate that man’s acquaintance you must relinquish your present acquaintance, for none of the respectable writers for the public papers will associate with him!’ The hint was not at all necessary; and the whole of the discourse (meaning the discourse with Cullen) consisted in telling the editor of this paper (the *Aurora*) his name, and that he was the same person who had been formerly at Calcutta. This (says the editor of the *Aurora*) is the modest character (meaning Cullen, now Carpenter) who talks of delicacy and veracity, like Mother Cole of religion and chastity. [N. B. Mother Cole is the hypocritical old bawd spoken of in Foote’s comedy of the *Minor*.]

“ There is not (continues the *Aurora*) more than a slight shade of difference between Cullen and Coleman—they both hold the same maxims in politics, for principles they have none, and the true foundation of their bickering is, that the New York portion of the *million* which Cobbett (that is, Porcupine) says is expended by England in America will not be sufficient to compensate so many competitors.”

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That the Federal faction associated with the emissary *Cullen* is proved by their advertising their nomination of

charter officers in his paper. They now begin to cast him off. Two of the Federal editors, Coleman and Lewis, have each of them published against him. How is this change to be accounted for? For every change must have a motive.

A writer in the *American Citizen*, of October 28, under the signature of "A Republican," supposes the cause to be jealousy of Cullen as their literary rival; but there could be no occasion for this, for Cullen is but a poor creature. The *Philadelphia Aurora*, of the 28th, concludes it to be a quarrel about the division of the spoil, that is, about the division of the million pounds sterling, which Cobbett (Porcupine) says, the English Government expends in America. The more fool they for doing so—for though the generality of newspaper printers may be bought or hired to print any thing, the farmers, who are the main stay of the country, care nothing about the clamour of printers, nor about the ravings of anonymous scribblers. These things serve them to laugh at. The press is become too common to be credited, unless the writer be known.

But without supposing any other cause why the Federalists have thrown off Cullen, the case is, that the project which this emissary went upon, that of an alliance offensive and defensive with Britain, would have been the ruin of the merchants, the greater part of whom are of the Federal faction. These men, though ignorant in politics, have, from habit, some talent for speculation; and they could not but see, unless they were stone-blind, that if such an alliance was formed, the whole of the carrying trade would be lost at once, for the United States after that alliance, would no longer be a neutral nation, nor be considered or treated as such. And as men when they begin to think do not stop at the first thought, for thought begets thought, they would soon see that the trade to Bourdeaux, which is greater than the trade to London would be lost also; and by thinking a little farther, they would discover that Amsterdam and all the ports of the Continent of Europe would be shut against American vessels as they are now shut against the English. Allies must share the same fate.

Whether Coleman and Lewis saw this before the faction to which they belong discovered it, I leave to be settled among themselves. They might also apprehend that the continual abuse and blackguardism in Cullen's infamous paper against the French nation, the French government, and the French minister at Washington, could not long, and would not always pass unnoticed.

Nov. 5, 1806.

COMMON SENSE.

## FEDERALISTS BEGINNING TO REFORM.

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THERE is some hope that the Federalists are beginning to reform, they have already descended from the high vice of *direct lying*, and have taken up with the humble vice of only asking *lying questions*. That this reformation is already began, the New York Evening Post, and some other Federal papers, and a quid Federal paper in Philadelphia have shewn, by their putting the following *lying* questions to Thomas Paine.

“Do you know any thing of a certain memorial transmitted to the Executive Directory of the then French Republic, by an American citizen, then in France, inviting them to send over a powerful army to revolutionize America. The memorial, stating among other inducements, that there was a French party and an English party in the United States, and that the army would be joined by the French party here, immediately on its arrival?”

“Do you know that his memorial made a deep impression on the minds of the Directory, and that it was referred to Citizen Pichon, late Charge des Affaires in the United States?”

“Do you know that it was with great difficulty that the Directory were induced to give up the idea of revolutionizing America, nor did they relinquish it till they were well *assured* [pray who assured them] that the citizens of all parties would unite and oppose an [any] invading army whatever?”

“Do you know [here follows a long space filled up with stars, thus \*\*\*] but how should you be acquainted with any of these things; besides, three queries at a time may be as many as you can well answer?”

*Asking* a lying question is a symptom of reformation in the Federalists, because it is not so bad as *telling* a lie, but the danger is, they will fall into a relapse. As their recovery from the dreadful state they have been in is interesting to the public, it will be proper to publish now and then a bulletin of their state of health.

As a lying question may sometimes be put to shame by a true question about something that is true, I ask those quidnuncs, if Johu Adams, when he and the Fed. Congress of



that day passed the law for annulling the treaty with France, paid the six millions of livres to France, which Colonel John Laurens and Thomas Paine brought from France to Boston, in August, 1781, two millions and a half of which was in silver money, and lodged in the Bank at Philadelphia, of which Thomas Willing was then President; the rest was in clothing and military stores sufficient to load a ship and brig, besides the French frigate that brought the money.

The case is there has been a race of self-conceited Federal ingrates, started up since "*the times that tried men's souls*," that knows nothing about those times. The writer of this, whom every body knows, could tell many more things if he was not restrained by prudence; but the foolish Federalists have no prudence. They blunder on, and force out explanations that prudence requires to be concealed.

C———N S———.

Nov. 10, 1806.

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#### TO A FRIEND TO PEACE.

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*The American Citizen of Nov. 5, says, "There appeared in The People's Friend (the paper of the emissary Cullen, alias Carpenter) of yesterday, in the Commercial Advertiser, and the Evening Post, a two column essay signed A Friend to Peace, which from first to last of it is a bitter invective against the National Administration for not fortifying the port of New York. "This Essay, written by some Federal hand, most probably by Mr. King, made its appearance the same Morning, in his Excellency's quid paper, the Morning Chronicle. See the People's Friend and Morning Chronicle of yesterday.*

THE first remark that offers itself upon this subject is the choice which the writer or writers of the fore-mentioned two column essay made of the newspaper in which their piece appeared. They chose for that purpose the paper of the emissary Cullen, alias Carpenter, whose paper is continually filled in the first place with abuse and blackguardism against the national administration, to which the proposed address of the Federal faction for fortifying the port of New York is to be addressed, which shews that this proposed

address is a mere trick for the purpose of amusing the people. In the second place, the paper of this emissary, whom the Anglo-Federal faction protects, for it is they who protect them and not the people, is crammed with the most vulgar and outrageous abuse against the French nation, the French government, the French minister at Washington; and now this emissary, and those who associate with him are crying out to the citizens of all other States to be at the expence of fortifying New York against the apprehended consequences of their own abuse, for that is the only danger to which the place is exposed.

The people of Boston, of Philadelphia, of Baltimore, of Charleston, and other commercial places, all which are approachable by ships of war, do not call on New York to be at the expence of fortifying their town; why then does a faction in New York call on them? The answer is, that those places though they have their local disputes, do not harbour an emissary of one belligerent nation against another belligerent nation, and a Federal faction in New York does.

The faction says, in their fore-mentioned address, that "among the most important duties of Government is the application of the public funds to the means of security against foreign invasion and *insult*." But it is the faction itself that gives the *insult* by their continually insulting the French nation and government, and now they want to be protected against the apprehended consequences of that insult. It is an insult to France to harbour the emissary Cullen, alias Mac Cullen, alias Carpenter, for he has passed by all these names, and it would be an insult to England to harbour a French emissary. A neutral nation violates its neutrality when it harbours the emissary of any belligerent nation. It was the doing of this that was the cause of the overthrow of Switzerland. Basle, in Switzerland, was the harbour of British emissaries.

If Rufus King is the writer of the forementioned foolish piece, for it is tediously and foolishly written, he must know, for he has been (God knows!) a foreign minister himself, that it is an injunction on every foreign minister to transmit a weekly account to his government, if the opportunity offers, of every thing that passes in the nation to which he is sent, that has reference to the interest of the nation he represents. The movements, therefore, of the Anglo-Federal faction in New York, will of consequence be known to the French government, but, at the same time, that government will see,

by the opposition made to those movements, that they are the work of a vulgar and despicable faction, and not of the people. And so far as the writer of this (who is the same person who wrote the pamphlet *Common Sense*, the beginning of January, 1776, and the several numbers of the *Crisis* during that war) has made an opposition to those movements, and distinguished between the faction and the people, he has been the friend of the people. As to the faction itself, *Thomas Paine* cares nothing about it; but he has been civil enough to warn it of its danger. If Rufus King, in case he is the writer of the piece in Cullen's paper of November 4, and in the *Morning Chronicle* of the same day, will say in direct terms what he there insinuates indirectly, that *Thomas Paine invited two or three thousand French troops to plunder the city*, Thomas Paine will honour Rufus King with a prosecution for LYING. A faction must be in a lamentable condition indeed, when it is obliged to seek refuge in lying. It ought to recollect that nothing is more easy than to tell a lie, and nothing more difficult than to support the lie after it is told.

But all this affectation about fortifying New York is a mere electioneering Federal bubble. Why did they not think of it in the administration of John Adams, or in that of Washington? Why is it made a subject at *this* time, and was not at *that* time? New York is in no more danger *now* than it was *then*, nor than any other commercial town or city of the Union is in, except it be the danger the faction brings upon it by harbouring and encouraging an emissary of one belligerent nation against another.

But supposing for the sake of supposition, that the other States would agree to be at the expence of fortifying New York, which is next to certain they will not, for all the Atlantic States have commercial towns of their own, how, I ask is New York to be fortified, for I deny the practicability of fortifying it? It is nature more than art that renders places defensible, and the situation of New York does not admit of defence. Where any foreign power disposed to attack it, they would not attack it in front by ships of war. They would pass the city either on the East river, or the North river, or both, and land their troops some miles above the city, and march down upon it, or they would come down the East river for that purpose, or they would land on the East shore of Long Island, and march across the island and pass the East river in boats they would bring with them. If the Federal faction will exhibit their plan of

defence, if they have any, the writer of this will shew them the absurdity of it, for he believes that he knows more, because he has seen more of fortified places than they have.

The case is, that New York is the worst situation for defence that could be chosen. The original plan for building the city was at Harlaem, which is a better situation both for commerce and defence than the point of the island is where the city now stands. The waters of the North river and the East river, by means of the river at Kingsbridge, unite at Harlaem, and the market would be seven or eight miles nearer the country than it now is.

COMMON SENSE.

Nov. 13, 1806.

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NOTIFICATIONS RESPECTING THE IMPOSTOR CULLEN,  
ALIAS M'CULLEN, ALIAS CARPENTER, THE ASSOCIATE  
OF THE FEDERALISTS OF NEW YORK.

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IN former communications respecting this impostor, I mentioned that Duane, the editor of the Philadelphia Aurora, knew him both in England and in India. Before I state Duane's further account of him I will relate what I have been told of him in this city, New York.

This man arrived in this city (New York) about four years ago and lodged at a house in which a friend of mine then was. Cullen at that time passed by the name of Mac Cullen, and as it often happens to men of his description that when the liquor is *in* the wit is *out*, he often let himself out very foolishly. He vauntingly said he had been offered great sums of money by the English ministry not to write against them. He went to his room one day when he was in his capers, and dressed himself in an English regimental uniform, and came to shew himself. [N. B. He has been a regimental deputy pay-master, and is the son of Cullen the box keeper of Crow Street Theatre, Dublin.]

In his journey from New York he called on Duane at Philadelphia, to sell him some types, and desired Duane to conceal his name and not to expose him. Duane replied, (see the Aurora of Nov. 1st.) "As to revealing your secret you have no right to impose secrecy on me. At the same time it will depend on yourself to furnish a motive for silence or publicity on the subject; and *that* will depend entirely

upon the object of your coming to this country, and the course you mean to pursue in it."

*Cullen.* "My purpose is to have no concern with party or politics. I wish to purchase a snug farm near Washington if I can, and to occupy my leisure in literary pursuits, totally distant from politics with which I have done for ever."

*Duane.* "In such a case, I can have no motive for interfering with you or your name—but let me observe that from the knowledge which I have of you and your political connections in England I should be very apt to suspect that you came to this country with very different views."

*Cullen.* "By no means. I have done with politics for ever."

*Duane.* "If you have come to this country for the purpose you say, and I shall not dispute it unless good reasons appear to the contrary; if you are not come here as an enemy to civil liberty, as an *emissary of the English minister* (meaning Pitt who sent emissaries into Germany) and do not pursue the same course of politics here that you did in London, your secret shall be kept; but let me tell you, that if you attempt to interfere in the political concerns of this country, or attempt to attack the principles of the government, I shall consider myself not only bound to expose you, but to present you to the world in the most open and unreserved manner."

Duane bought the types and here the conversation ended.

Duane then continues his account of this emissary by saying, that "he (Cullen) was in the pay of the official paper of the British treasury—that Windham, the patron of Porcupine, was his patron—that his name is Cullen and not Carpenter and that he is an Irishman, but an advocate of England (meaning the oppressions of England over Ireland.) A man, continues Duane, so branded with infamy may be worthy if Federal protection and countenance, but the American nation being thus explicitly apprised of the character of this emissary will be able at once to value his writings and the views of his supporters."

Here ends Duane's account of him in the *Aurora* of November 1st.

In the *Aurora* of the 6th, Duane renews the subject, "It is, says he, an act of public justice to pursue this fellow Cullen, alias Carpenter, through all his windings. The countenancing such an impostor is a stigma on society; and the maintenance of him in one of our capital cities (New York) is a libel on the country, its morals, and its justice. While this

man Cullen edited the Charleston Courier we rarely noticed him; but his conduct there became such that it drew forth from some person well informed, a portraiture of the man. His departure soon followed.

“ His course since he has been put in possession of a paper at New York, we have watched, because that city is the chief rendezvous of English influence and the principal asylum of old Toryism.”

Aurora, Nov. 7th.—“ The English emissary Cullen at New York has never stated his transaction as a deputy pay-master under the appointment of Mr. Windham [Porcupine’s patron.] We are to presume his “*miscarriage*” in that situation produced his transit to the United States and the *change of his name* to Carpenter.”

Here ends the extracts from the Aurora.

The conduct and character of this, Cullen, alias Mac Cullen, alias Carpenter are so very suspicious that unless he can give some satisfactory account of himself, and on what recommendation he came to this country, and call on some person of character to attest and answer for him, he ought not to be permitted to stay in the city. His continuance here will bring trouble. He is marked with all the suspicious tokens of an impostor and he exhibits the character of an emissary.

As he is a British subject, and not a citizen of the United States, and is a stranger here, and in disguise, will Mr. Erskine, the British minister, take him under his patronage and answer for him? If not it will be best to send him away. This is giving Cullen a chance he does not deserve.

It is a circumstance not easily accounted for, that at the very instant Mr. Erskine a gentleman of fair fame and respectable connections, is arrived at Washington on a mission to the government of the United States, that an impostor under a borrowed name and furnished with British regimentals, is employing himself in abusing, with the most infamous language of drunken intoxication, the same government, Mr. Erskine is commissioned to treat with. Can Rufus King or any man of mischief explain this?

COMMON SENSE.

Nov. 19, 1806.

REMARKS ON THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS  
OF EUROPE.

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THE battles which decided the fate of the King of Prussia and his Government, began on the 9th of October, and ended on the 14th of that month; but the final event, that of the total overthrow of the Russian army of one hundred and fifty thousand men on the 14th, was not known in England till the 26th or 27th of October. The first public notice of it is in a London paper of the 27th (See the Mercantile Advertiser of Tuesday, Dec. 9th, and American Citizen, Dec. 10th). The article in the London paper of the 27th, which announces this event, begins as follows:

“London, Oct. 27.—*It is with very great concern that we are obliged to check the pleasing expectations that were entertained YESTERDAY of the success of the Prussian army.*”

The manifesto and declaration of the English Government on the failure of the negociation for peace with France, and which throws all the blame of that failure on the French Government, was published in the London Gazette (the official paper of the English Government) on the 21st of October, five or six days before that Government knew of the overthrow of the Prussians. Query.—Would the English Government have published that manifesto had it been kept back till after the overthrow of the Prussians were known? I think not, unless it be true which fanatics have formerly said, that “*those whom God intends to destroy he first renders mad.*”

It is a saying often verified by experience, that *one story is good till another is told*. In a little time we shall have the manifesto of the French Government, and then, by comparing the two with each other, and with *such circumstances as are known*, which is the only true way of interpreting manifestoes, we shall be enabled to form some judgment of the whole.

But as far as circumstances are already known, Buonaparte has done exactly what I would have done myself, with respect I mean to the present war, had I been in his place, which, thank God, I am not. Why are coalitions continu-

ally formed and forming against him, against the French nation, and the French Government? Or why does the Government of England oppress and impoverish the people it governs by loading them with the burdensome expence of paying those coalitions? It is they who pay all, and I pity them sincerely.

The opposers of Buonaparte say, "*he is a usurper.*" The case is, that all the kings in Europe are usurpers, and as to hereditary Government, it is a succession of usurpers. The present hereditary Government of England is derived from the usurper, William of Normandy, who conquered England and usurped the Government. If there is any man amongst them all that is less a usurper than the rest, it is Buonaparte; for he was elected by the French nation to the rank and title he now holds. The others assumed it by the sword, or succeeded in consequence of the first usurpation.

As to the coalitions against France, it is impossible in the nature of things they can succeed while the French Government conducts itself with the energy and activity it now does. The English Government may amuse itself with forming coalitions as long and as often as it pleases, but they will all come to the same fatal end. For, in the first place, there is no single power on the Continent of Europe that is able to stand against France until a coalition army, coming in detachments from different and distant parts of Europe, can be collected and formed. And, in the second place, those distant detachments of an intended coalition army cannot be put in motion for the purpose of assembling somewhere in Germany without its being known by the French Government. The case, therefore, will always be, that as soon as the French Government knows that those distant parts are in motion, the French army, with Buonaparte at its head, will march and attack the first part of the coalition army he can come up with, and overthrow it. Last year that part was Austria. This year it is Prussia. The English Government may *vote* coalition armies in the cabinet, but Buonaparte can always prevent them in the field. This is a matter so very obvious to any man who knows the scene of Europe, and can calculate the probability of events, that a Cabinet must be sunk in total ignorance and stupidity not to see it; and thus it is that the lives of unoffending men are sported away.

As to the late negociation for peace between England and France, I view it as a *trick of war* on both sides, and the contest was which could outwit the other. The British ma-



nifesto says, “ *The negociation originated in an offer made by the French Government of treating for peace on the basis of actual possession.*” Well! be it so; it makes the matter neither better nor worse; for the fact is, though the British manifesto says nothing about it, that the British Cabinet had planned, and was forming this coalition army of Prussians, Russians, and Swedes, several months before that offer was made, and the French Government had knowledge of it, for it is impossible to keep such things a dead secret. The French Government, therefore, having at least, what may be called *suspicious* knowledge of this coalition intrigue, made the offer to find out the whole of that intrigue, that it might be prepared against it. And on the other hand, the British Cabinet closed with the offer, and went into the negociation to give time to the Russians and Swedes to march and join the Prussians, while the comedy of negociation was going on.

But the Corsican usurper, as they call him, has been too quick for them. He has outwitted the coalition intriguers, and outgeneralled the coalition usurpers. The fallen King of Prussia has to deplore his fate, and the British Cabinet to dread the consequence.

In speaking of these circumstances, it ought always to be remembered that the British Government began this war. It had concluded a treaty of peace with France called the Treaty of Amiens, and soon after, declared war again to avoid fulfilling the conditions of that treaty. It will not be able to conclude another treaty so good as the treaty it has broken, and most probably no treaty at all. That Government must now abide by its fate, for it can raise no more coalitions. There does not remain powers on the Continent of Europe to form another. The last that could be raised has been tried and has perished.

THOMAS PAINE.

New York, Dec. 14, 1806.

OF THE ENGLISH NAVY.

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THE boasted navy of England has been the ruin of England. This may appear strange to a set of stupid Feds, who have no more foresight than a mole under ground, or they would not abuse France as they do; but strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless true, and a little reflection on the case will shew it.

The expence of that navy is greater than the nation can bear; and the deficiency is continually supplied by anticipation of revenue under the name of loans, till the national debt, which is the sum total of these anticipations, has amounted, according to the report of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the English Parliament, the 28th of last March, to the enormous sum of £.603,924,000 sterling; and the interest of the debt at that time was £.24,900,000 sterling.

What are called loans, are no other than creating a new quantity of stock and sending it to market to be sold, and then laying on new taxes to pay the interest of that new stock. The persons called loaners, or subscribers for the loan, contract with the minister for large wholesale quantities of this new stock at as low a price as they can get it, and all they can make by retailing it is their profit. This ruinous system, for it is certain ruin in the end, began in the time of William the Third, one hundred and eighteen years ago.

The expence of the English navy this year, as given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, last March, is £.15,281,000 sterling, above sixty-eight million dollars. The enormous expence of this navy, taken on an average of peace and war, has run the nation into debt upwards of five millions sterling every year for the one hundred and eighteen years since the system of what are called loans began. And it is this annual accumulation of more than five millions sterling every year, for one hundred and eighteen years, that has carried the English national debt to this enormous sum of £.603,924,000 sterling, which was the amount of the debt, in March last. If it be asked, what has this mighty navy done to balance this expence? it may be answered, that, comparatively speaking, it has done nothing. It has ob-

tained some victories at sea, where nothing was to be gained but blows and broken bones, and it has plundered the unarmed vessels of neutral nations; and this makes the short history of its services.

That the English Government does not depend upon the navy to prevent Buonaparte making a descent upon England, is demonstrated by the expensive preparations that Government puts itself to by land to repel it. And that the navy contributes nothing to the protection of commerce is proved by the fact, that all the ports on the Continent of Europe are shut by land against the commerce of England. Of what use, then, is the navy that has incurred such an enormous debt, and which costs more than sixty-eight millions of dollars annually to keep it up, which is three times more than all the gold and silver that the mines of Peru and Mexico annually produce. Such a navy will always keep a nation poor. No wonder, then, that every seventh person in England is a pauper, which is the fact. The number of paupers now is 1,200,000.

Another evil to England attending this navy, besides the debt it has incurred, is that it drains the nation of specie. More than half the materials that go into the construction of a navy in England are procured from Russia and Sweden; and as the exports of English manufactures to those places are but small, the balance must be paid in specie. If Buonaparte succeed in all his plans, I hope he will put an end to navies for the good of the world.

COMMON SENSE.

Jan. 7, 1807.

REMARKS ON GOVERNOR LEWIS'S SPEECH TO THE  
LEGISLATURE, AT ALBANY, NEW YORK.

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INVIDIOUS comparisons shew want of judgment. But when such comparisons are made on grounds that are not true, they become the more offensive.

You say in your speech to the Legislature, "In this general dispensation of benefits our State has received an unrivalled portion. In the course of a few years she has outstripped her confederates in those important sources of national greatness, agriculture and commerce, and is not behind the foremost of them in the improvement of the useful and fine arts. The first of these assertions is supported by a comparison of the exports from New York with those of the city of Philadelphia, during the short period of five or six years, which affords an *unerring criterion*, and establishes this important fact, that whilst each has experienced a rapid increase, the former, (New York) which at the commencement of the period was far behind, has previous to its termination overtaken and gone far ahead of the latter. To explain—in the year 1800, the exports from Philadelphia stood in the ratio to those of New York of about seven to six. At the close of the year 1805, those of New York were to those of Philadelphia as twelve to seven nearly. Whence, it is natural to inquire, proceeds those results? Which are the most remarkable, as Philadelphia has preserved her superiority in population, having considerably more than one hundred thousand inhabitants, while New York has little more than seventy [thousand.] The question (continues the Governor) is one that merits the examination of an enlightened mind; and the solution of it, if I mistake not, [it is very well the Governor put this in] will be found in our spirited exertions in the improvement of roads and navigable streams. These have facilitated an intercourse between our sea-ports and interior country. Have *taught* the forests [the forests then are more learned than the forests of Pennsylvania] to bow [that is, to make a *handsome bow*, such as the Quaker trees of Pennsylvania cannot make] beneath the labours of the husbandmen. Have converted the wilderness [this is an age of strange conversions] into fruitful fields, and made the desert places *rejoice* and *blossom* like the rose,"

and sing, I suppose, like the nightingale. Poetical fiction is ridiculous in legislative concerns.

I now come to remark more seriously on the errors and on the invidious comparisons contained in the Governor's speech. I shall remark on another part of his speech after I have done with this.

I take the statements as Governor Lewis has stated them, that is, that the exports of Philadelphia were greater than the exports of New York, in the year 1800; and that, at this time, the exports of New York are greater than those of Philadelphia. But the cause which the Governor assigns for this shews a great want of knowledge and consequently of judgment.

He ascribes it, so far as respects New York, *to improvements in roads and navigable streams—to making the forests bow beneath the labours of the husbandmen—to converting the [unconverted] wilderness into fruitful fields, and making the desert places rejoice*; and he speaks of those improvements as if Pennsylvania had stood still in the mean time, and made none; whereas the fact is not as the Governor states it. Pennsylvania has made more public roads and built more permanent bridges than any other State has done. And as to the improvement of farms, there are no farmer in the United States that excel the German farmers of Pennsylvania. We must then seek some other cause than that which the Governor has assigned.

If Governor Lewis had made himself acquainted, in *some degree*, with mercantile affairs, which he ought to have done, before he undertook to speak of exports or imports, he would have found that the greater part of the exports of New York are not the produce of the State of New York, and, therefore, have a distinct origin from any thing that can arise from internal improvements of any kind. For example, the city of New York exports great quantities of tobacco, rice, cotton, indigo, pitch, tar, turpentine, and rosin, and yet none of those articles are the produce of the State of New York. The case is, that the Southern States, where those articles are produced, do not go much into the carrying trade, and as the port of New York is commodious to the sea, those articles arrive coastways to New York, to be exported from thence to Europe.

New York also exports a great deal of the produce of Connecticut, which comes in shallops through the sound. She also exports considerable quantities of the State of Ver-

mont and also of East Jersey; and in proportion that she exports the produce of other States she also imports for them. Not a third of what she imports is consumed in her own State. It is the commodious situation of the port of New York, soon in, and soon out to sea, and not to any thing in the Governor's catalogue of *pastoral* compliments, that gives New York a superiority in commerce over Philadelphia.

It ought also to be remarked, that the course of commerce has undergone considerable changes within a few years. In the first place, it was the policy of the English Government to keep the several colonies, as they were then called, *separate and unconnected with each other*; and as New York was possessed by the British during the war, the conveniences of New York as a *port of rendezvous* was not known.

After the war, the case was, that the Eastern States were the carriers for the Southern States; and the case now is, that the sea-vessels of the Eastern States make New York their port of rendezvous, where they load with the produce of the Southern States, brought to New York by coasting vessels, and export it to Europe—such as the articles already mentioned, tobacco, rice, cotton, indigo, pitch, tar, turpentine, and rosin. Not less than between forty and fifty sea-vessels that appear as if they belonged to the port of New York, are New England built, and owned by persons in New England, of which several are of New Bedford, and come to New York for freight or charter. Governor Lewis should have informed himself of all these matters before he undertook to commit himself in a speech to the Legislature about exports or imports.

I now come to remark on another passage in the Governor's speech immediately following the passage already quoted.

"Similar causes," says the Governor, "have produced similar effects in *Great Britain, a country unequalled in agriculture, arts, manufactures, and commerce*. It is but little more than fifty years since her attention was earnestly turned to the facilities of internal intercourse. From that period her exports have been progressing and have nearly attained to an increase of four hundred per cent, while that of her population has not exceeded ten [per cent.] A *wise Government* [the Governor means by this his own administration] will not fail to improve such advantages."

If the encomiums the Governor here makes upon England were well-founded, which they are not, they would, nevertheless, be ill-timed.

In the condition Europe is now in, it is best not to make any *speechifying* allusion to one part that may offend some other part; but the encomiums he makes are fallacious. As to the *agriculture* of England, the fact is, *that beside not victualling its own navy, which is victualled by Ireland*, it does not produce grain enough for the support of its own inhabitants, and were it not for the cargoes of wheat and other grain which England procures from the United States and from the Baltic, the people would be in a starving condition. In point of quality the French wheat is superior to the English.

As to Great Britain being unequalled in "ARTS," as the Governor has not said what *arts* he means, the expression is too vague and general to admit of remarks. There are all sorts of arts, even down to the *black art*. The English Government has the *art* of taxing the people till thousands of them cannot buy a *Sunday dinner*; and the church has the *art* of picking their pockets by tythes for the good of their souls. In what are called the *fine arts* the English are inferior to the Southern nations of Europe; and in the invention of *new arts* the French are superior to the English. The *art* of sailing in the air by balloons, by means of which the face of a large extent of country and the position of an enemy can be reconnoitred, and the *art* of communicating information to the distance of two or three hundred miles in two or three hours, by telegraphs, are French inventions. And certainly the Governor does not mean the *military art*. If he does, I leave him to settle that matter with Buonaparte.

As to "manufactures," which makes another item of the Governor's encomiums, the case is, that every nation excels in some, and no nation excels in all. The French excel the English in every article of silk manufacture, and in the manufacture of superfine broad cloth. The broad cloth in France, called cloth of Lovain, is as much beyond an English superfine as an English superfine is beyond a second cloth. The French also excel in every article of glass manufacture, plate-glass, window-glass, and hollow glass ware, and those articles are also cheaper in France than in England. The English excel the French in the cotton manufacture, but as the machinery for it, which was the invention of Richard Arkwright, an *English barber*, is now made in

France, and in other parts of Europe, the monopoly of that manufacture to England will cease.

As to *commerce*, with which the Governor completes his climax of encomiums, it is difficult to say any thing about it. A state of war is not favourable to commerce or to manufactures that depend on exportation. England being an island, can have no foreign commerce but by sea, and she is now *shut out* from all the ports of the European continent. Whereas, France being situated on the continent, has the range of the continent by land. She can trade by land to Portugal, Spain, Italy, all Germany, Austria, Poland, Denmark, and, if she pleases, to Constantinople without going to sea. The expence of this war has shewn that navies are useless with respect to commerce. The English navy, great and expensive as it is, can do nothing to benefit the commerce of England. *That navy is now a dead weight upon the nation.*

If Governor Lewis wanted to fill up a paragraph in his speech about the condition of England, he might have done it much better than he has done.

Instead of far-fetched allusions and ill-founded encomiums, unwisely forced into notice, he might in speaking of England have exhibited the melancholy spectacle of a nation *ruining itself by wars, navies, and national debts, till every seventh person in that unfortunate country is a pauper.\**

He might have expatiated on the dreadful effects of **CORRUPTION**, and produced the conduct of the British Government as a warning of the danger. He might have held up the insolvency of the Bank of England as a memento against the fatal consequences of multiplying banks or increasing the quantity of bank paper. There is something rotten in the condition of England, that ought to operate as a warning and not as an example.

#### AN OLD CITIZEN OF THE UNION.

Feb. 23, 1807.

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\* The population of England consists of eight millions of souls. The number of *paupers*, according to an account given to Parliament two years ago, was *one million two hundred thousand !*



OF GUN-BOATS.

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A GUN-BOAT, carrying heavy metal, is a moveable fortification ; and there is no mode or system of defence the United States can go into for coasts and harbours or ports, that will be so effectual as by gun-boats.

Ships of the line are no ways fitted for the defence of a coast. They are too bulky to act in narrow waters, and cannot act at all in shoal waters. Like a whale, they must be in deep water, and at a distance from land.

Frigates require less room to act in than ships of the line ; but a frigate is a feeble machine compared with a gun-boat. Were a frigate to carry and discharge the same weight of metal and ball that a gun-boat can do, it would shake her to pieces. The timbered strength of every ship of war is in proportion to the weight of metal she is to carry, and the weight of metal she is to be exposed to. The sides of a frigate are not proof against the weight of a ball that a gun-boat can discharge. The difference between two ships of war is not so much in their number of guns as in their weight of metal.

I remember the late Commodore Johnson saying in the British House of Commons, at the commencement of the American war, that “ a single gun, in a retired situation, would drive a ship of the line from her moorings. I mention this, (said he) that too much may not be expected from the navy.”

A gun-boat can carry a gun of the same weight of metal and ball that a ship of an hundred guns can carry ; and she carries it to the greatest possible advantage. The shot from a gun-boat is a horizontal shot. The gun is fixed in a frame that slides in a groove, and when the man at the helm brings the head of the boat to point at the ship, the gun is pointed with it. When a ship fights with her starboard or larboard guns, she presents the whole broadside of the ship to the object she fires at. A gun-boat fights only with her head, that is, with the gun at her head, and when she fires at an object she presents only the breadth of the boat to that object. Suppose, then, a boat to be ten feet broad and two feet out of the water (I speak here of boats intended for the defence

of the coast, and of towns situated near the coast, and to carry a gun of the same weight of metal and ball that a ship of the line carries), such a boat will present a space to be fired at equal to twenty square feet, that is, ten feet horizontal length (being the breadth of the boat) and two feet perpendicular height, being the height of the boat out of the water. Suppose, on the other hand, that a ship be an hundred feet long and ten feet high out of the water, she will present a space to be fired at equal to one thousand square feet, that is, a hundred multiplied by ten. It is probable that a ship, in firing at a gun-boat, would fire one of her bow guns, because in so doing she apparently shortens about one half of her length; but she can fire but one gun at a time in this angular position.

But the gun-boat has other chances in her favour besides what arise from the different dimensions of the two objects. If a shot from the ship, though in a straight line with the boat, passes more than two feet above the water at the place where the boat is, it will pass over the boat without striking it. But a shot from the boat that is too high to strike the ship, may strike the mast and carry it away. It is by this means that masts are carried away. The shot that does it passes clear above the ship, and spends its whole force upon the mast. Again, if a shot from the ship pass an inch or two wide of the boat, it can do her no injury. But a shot from the boat that passes five or six inches wide of the body of the ship at the stern, may unship or carry away her rudder. This, and the carrying away a mast, are the two most fatal accidents that can befall a ship; yet neither of them can happen to a gun-boat.

Of the number of men killed or wounded in a ship, the greater part of them are not by cannon balls, but by splinters from the inside of the ship that fly in all directions; but the sides of a gun-boat not being thick like the sides of a ship, a ball would pass through without splinters; and as an effectual way to prevent splinters, should any happen or be apprehended, the sides of the boat on the inside should be lined with a strong netting made of cord, which the men can make themselves. The cabins of French ships are frequently lined in this manner.

Musketry can be used by ship against ship in close action, but cannot be used against a gun-boat, because a gun-boat drawing but little water, not more than two and a half or three feet, and depending upon oars, can always keep out of the reach of musketry. The proper distance for a gun-

boat to fire at is point blank shot.\* The men should be frequently exercised at firing point blank shot at banks of earth on shore, or against the high perpendicular shores of rivers, like the North River, or against the hulk of old ships that are to be broken up, the man at the helm to point the boat and give the order for firing. A gun-boat should not carry a less weight of ball than twenty-four pounds. A frigate would not choose to expose her sides to such shot.

The first gun-boats built in the United States, were for the defence of the Delaware, in 1775 and 1776. The Roebuck man of war came up the Delaware within a few miles of Philadelphia, and the gun-boats went and attacked her. The ship fired broadsides without striking any of the boats, and as the deep water the ship was in, was but narrow, the re-action of the broadsides forced her into shoal water, and she got aground. The man who commanded the gun-boats, a suspected character of the name of White, gave orders to the boats to cease firing, and when the tide rose the ship floated and made the best of her way to sea. White afterwards joined the British at New York.

When General Howe sailed from New York, in 1777, to get possession of Philadelphia, he avoided coming up the Delaware, where the gun-boats were, and went to the Chesapeake, where there were none, and marched by land from the head of Elk into Pennsylvania. No cause can be assigned for this circuitous route of several hundred miles, but that of not exposing his ships and transports to the gun-boats. There were at that time a fortification on Mud Island, a few miles below Philadelphia, and another at Red Bank, on the Jersey shore opposite; but Howe could have landed below those, and out of the reach of their shot, but he could land no where on the Delaware shore, nor be any where with his ships in the Delaware, out of the reach of the moveable fortifications, the gun-boats. After General Howe got possession of Philadelphia by land, the gun-boats quitted their station below, and came above the city.

The Asia man of war, of 60 guns, Capt. Vandeput, got aground in New York harbour, three or four miles below the city, in the spring of 1776. General Lee commanded at New York at that time, and had there been any gun-boats,

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\* Point blank musket shot is 250 yards, point blank cannon shot varies according to the size of the cannon.

they could have taken her, because they could have raked her fore and aft and obliged her to strike. A man of war aground is like a bird shot in the wing, it can make no effort to save itself. As to the guns on the point now called the Battery, they could do nothing. The ship was out of the reach of their shot.

The gun-boats built in France for the descent upon England are numerous and formidable, being more than two thousand. They were began in the year 1796. Those which I have seen, being both convoy and transport, were about sixty feet long, sixteen broad, drew about two and a half feet water, carried a twenty-four or thirty-six pounder at the head, and a field-piece in the stern, with a flap by which to run the field-piece out as soon as the boat touches ground ashore, as they run a waggon out of a scow. Each boat carried an hundred men, and rowed with twenty-five oars on a side. They have since built a much larger sort called praams. These also are flat-bottomed, draw three or four feet water, and are from four to six hundred tons burthen, and carry several very large cannon, not less, I suppose, than forty-eight-pounders at least.

The British men of war have made several attempts against the French gun-boats at Boulogne, but were always defeated. The last attempt was by fire-arrows, which might be formidable against ships, because of their sails and rigging, but is ridiculous against gun-boats.

A great deal has been said in Congress and in the New York newspapers about fortifying New York. Mr. N. Williams, in a speech in Congress, January 23, said, "The gentleman on my right (meaning Mr. Smilie) meets the proposition for fortifying New York with a most formidable objection. Expend, (says he,) what money you will, it is impossible to erect fortifications that shall prove sufficient to defend the harbour and city of New York. He (Mr. Smilie) calls upon us for a plan, and tells us, that if it can be defended, to produce our plan."—"I do not (continues Mr. Williams) pretend to be *very wise* upon this subject myself, but I have been told that the ablest engineers have examined the position, and have given it as their opinion, that an effectual mode of defence is practicable. But if defence is impossible, I call upon the gentleman (meaning Mr. Smilie) to shew wherein the peculiarity of the situation of that place (New York) consists, to render it so. For surely the pretence of impossibility would not be made use

of here, unless the city and harbour of New York were different from all other places in the world that were ever defended."

I now come to reply to the demand Mr. Williams has made. I shall do this as concisely as the limit to which I confine myself will admit, but what I say will serve to sow *seeds of thought* in the minds of others upon this subject, and may prevent millions of dollars being wasted in vain.

Fortification is founded on geometrical principles, and where the condition of a place is such that those principles cannot be applied, that place cannot be fortified to produce any effect. A place that cannot be enclosed in a polygon, cannot be fortified on any principles of fortification, unless there be a part so strong by nature, as to be inaccessible to a besieging army. The fortified parts are then sections of a polygon. New York cannot be enclosed in a polygon, and therefore cannot be fortified; neither is any part of it strong by nature. It is approachable in every part by land or water, and besides this, it can be bombarded across the East River from Long Island.

It is absolutely necessary in fortifying a town that all parts of it be equally strong, or an enemy will attack only the weakest part. New York cannot be made equally strong in all its parts, and therefore it is money thrown away to attempt to fortify it. Those who wish to know more on this subject may consult any encyclopedia, or any dictionary of arts and sciences under the head of FORTIFICATION. They will there find plans of fortified places by Count Pagan, Blondel, Vauban, Scheiter, &c. But the plans and drawings are all on the same principles. They are all polygons.

Some of our New York papers have talked of fortifying New York with "*impregnable fortifications*." There never yet was an impregnable fortification, nor ever can be. Every fortified place can be taken that can be approached. All that a fortified place can do is to delay the progress of an enemy till an army can arrive to raise the siege. Buonaparte takes every fortified place he goes against, but he fortifies no places himself. He trusts to the open field, for when you are master of the field (and the militia of the States are numerous enough to be master of the field against an enemy) fortifications are of no use. The population of the United States when the revolutionary war began was but two millions and an half. It is now nearly six millions, and surely the people are not grown cowards, whatever the *Fed*

and *Tory* faction may be. It was cowardice that made them *Tories* at first. The British impostor and emissary, *Cullen, alias M'Cullen, alias Carpenter*, said in one of his papers that a single frigate could lay the city of New York under contribution. This shewed the extreme ignorance of the man. Two twelve-pounders, or heavier metal if it can conveniently be had, taken to the water edge would soon oblige the frigate to quit her station. I saw this done in the revolutionary war to two frigates, the Pearl frigate and another with her. It proved Commodore Johnson's opinion to be correct.

The lower a gun is to the surface of the water the more certain the shot is. This is one of the cases that gives a gun-boat an advantage against ships. If a shot from a ship strikes another ship between wind and water, it is always a chance occasioned by the heeling of the ship that is struck. But the direction of a shot from a gun-boat is so nearly between wind and water, that it generally strikes there or thereabouts. As to land batteries that are elevated, they have but little chance of striking a ship, as their fire is always in an oblique or sloping direction ; whereas from a gun-boat it is a horizontal line. Fort Washington was built to prevent British ships going up the North River, and it never struck one of them ; but it killed three men by chance-medley coming down the river in General Washington's barge, and this was the only vessel it ever struck.

When all the plans that can be devised for fortifying the narrows are examined, for there is no fortifying the city, it will be found that half a dozen gun-boats carrying twenty-four pounders, will do it more effectually than can be done by any other method.

COMMON SENSE.

New York, March 11, 1807.

OF THE COMPARATIVE POWERS AND EXPENCE OF SHIPS  
OF WAR, GUN-BOATS, AND FORTIFICATIONS.

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THE natural defence by men is common to all nations; but artificial defence as an auxiliary to human strength must be adapted to the local condition and circumstances of a country. What may be suitable to one country, or in one state of circumstances, may not be so in another.

The United States have a long line of coast of more than two thousand miles, every part of which requires defence, because every part is approachable by water.

The right principle for the United States to go upon as a water defence for the coast is that of combining the greatest practical power with the least possible bulk, that the whole quantity of power may be better distributed through the several parts of such an extensive coast.

The power of a ship of war is altogether in the number and size of the guns she carries, for the ship, of itself has no power. Ships cannot struggle with each other like animals; and besides this, as half her guns are on one side the ship and half on the other, and as she can use only the guns on one side at a time, her real power is only equal to half her number of guns. A seventy-four can use only thirty-seven guns. She must tack about to bring the other half into action, and while she is doing this she is defenceless and exposed.

As this is the case with ships of war, a question naturally arises therefrom, which is, whether seventy-four guns, or any other number, cannot be more effectually employed, and that with much less expence, than by putting them all into one ship of such enormous bulk that it cannot approach a shore either to defend it or attack it; and though the ship can change its place, the whole number of guns can be only in one place at a time, and only half that number can be used at a time.

This is a true statement of the case between ships of war and gun-boats for the defence of a coast and of towns situated near a coast. But the case often is, that men are led away by the GREATNESS of an idea and not by the JUSTNESS of it. This is always the case with those who are advocates for navies and large ships.

A gun-boat carrying as heavy metal as a ship of one hundred guns can carry, is a *one gun ship of the line*; and seventy-four of them which would cost much less than a 74 gun ship would cost, would be able to blow a 74 gun ship out of the water. They have, in the use of their guns, double the power of the ship, that is, they have the use of their whole number of 74 to 37.

Having thus stated the general outlines of the subject I come to particulars.

That I might have correct data to go upon with respect to the expence of ships and gun-boats, I wrote to the head of one of the departments at Washington for information on that subject.

The following is the answer I received :

“ Calculating the cost of a 74 or 100 gun ship, from the *actual* cost of the ship United States of 44 guns, built at Philadelphia, between the years 1795 and 1798, which amounted to 300,000 dollars, it may be presumed that a 74 gun ship would cost 500,000 dollars and a 100 gun ship 700,000 dollars.

“ Gun-boats calculated merely for the defence of harbours and rivers will, on an average, cost about 4000 dollars each when fit to receive the crew and provisions.”

On the data here given I proceed to state comparative calculations respecting ships and gun-boats.

The ship, United States, cost 300,000 dollars. Gun-boats cost 4000 dollars each, consequently the 300,000 expended on the ship for the purpose of getting the use of 44 guns, and those not heavy metal would have built *seventy-five* gun-boats each carrying a cannon of the same weight of metal that a ship of an hundred guns can carry. The difference therefore is, that the gun-boats give the use of 31 guns heavy metal, more than can be obtained by the ship and the expences in both cases equal.

A 74 gun ship cost 500,000 dollars. This same money will build 125 gun-boats. The gain by gun-boats is the use of 51 guns more than can be obtained by expending the money on a ship of 74 guns.

The cost of an 100 gun ship is 700,000 dollars. This money will build 175 gun-boats. The gain, therefore, by the boats is the use of 75 guns more than by the ship.

Though I had a general impression, ever since I had a knowledge of gun-boats, that any given sum of money would go farther in building gun-boats than in building ships of war, and that gun-boats were preferable to ships for home



defence, I did not suppose the difference was so great as the calculations above given prove them to be, for it is almost double in favour of gun-boats. It is as 175 to 100. The cause of this difference is easily explained.

The fact is, that all that part of the expence in building a ship from the deck upward, including mast, yards, sails and rigging is saved by building gun-boats which are moved by oars, or a light sail occasionally.

The difference also in point of repairs between ships of war and gun-boats is not only great but is greater in proportion than in their first cost. The repairs of ships of war is annually from 1-14 to 1-10 of their first cost. The annual expence of the repairs of a ship that cost 300,000 dollars will be above 21,000 dollars; the greatest part of this expence is in her sails and rigging which gun-boats are free from.

The difference also in point of duration is great. Gun-boats, when not in use, can be put under shelter and preserved from the weather, but ships cannot; or the boats can be sunk in the water or the mud. This is the way the nuts of cider mills for grinding apples are preserved. Were they to be exposed to the dry and hot air after coming wet from the mill they would crack and split and be good for nothing. But timber under water will continue sound for several hundred years, provided there be no worms.

Another advantage in favour of gun-boats is the expedition with which a great number of them can be built at once. An hundred may be built as soon as one if there are hands enough to set about them separately. They do not require the preparations for building them that ships require, nor deep water to launch them in. They can be built on the shore of shallow waters, or they might be framed in the woods or forests and the parts brought separately down and put together on the shore. But ships take up a long time building. The ship United States took up two whole years 96 and 97 and part of the years 95 and 98 and all this for the purpose of getting the use of 44 guns and those not heavy metal. This foolish affair was not in the days of the present administration.

Ships and gun-boats are for different services. Ships are for distant expeditions; gun-boats for home defence. The one for the ocean; the other for the shore.

Gun-boats being moved by oars cannot be deprived of motion by calms, for the calmer the weather the better for the boat. But a hostile ship becalmed in any of our waters,

can be taken by gun-boats moved by oars, let the rate of the ship be what it may. A 100 gun man of war becalmed, is like a giant in a dead palsy. Every little fellow can kick him.

The United States ought to have 500 gun-boats stationed in different parts of the coast, each carrying a thirty-two or thirty-six pounder. Hostile ships would not then venture to lye within our waters, were it only for the certainty of being sometimes becalmed. They would then become prizes, and the insulting bullies on the ocean become prisoners in our own waters.

Having thus stated the comparative powers and expence of ships of war and gun-boats, I come to speak of fortifications.

Fortifications may be comprehended under two general heads.

First, fortified towns; that is, towns enclosed within a fortified polygon, of which there are many on the continent of Europe but not any in England.

Secondly, simple forts and batteries. These are not formed on the regular principles of fortification, that is, they are not formed for the purpose of standing a siege as a fortified polygon is. They are for the purpose of obstructing or annoying the progress of an enemy by land or water.

Batteries are formidable in defending narrow passes by land; such as the passage of a bridge, or of a road cut through a rough and craggy mountain that cannot be passed any where else. But they are not formidable in defending water-passes, because a ship with a brisk wind tide and running at the rate of ten miles an hour will be out of the reach of the fire of the battery in fifteen or twenty minutes, and being a swift moving object all the time it would be a mere chance that any shot struck her.

When the object of a ship is that of passing a battery for the purpose of attaining or attacking some other object it is not customary with the ship to fire at the battery lest it should disturb her course. Three or four men are kept on deck to attend the helm, and the rest, having nothing to do, go below. Duckworth in passing the Dardenelles up to Constantinople did not fire at the batteries.

When batteries for the defence of water-passes can be erected without any great expence, and the men not exposed to capture, it may be very proper to have them. They may keep off small piratical vessels but they are not to be trusted to for defence.

Fortifications give, in general, a delusive idea of protection. All our principal losses in the revolutionary war were occasioned by trusting to Fortifications. Fort Washington with a garrison of 2500 men was taken in less than four hours and the men made prisoners of war. The same fate had befallen Fort Lee on the opposite shore, if General Lee had not moved hastily off and gained Hackinsack bridge. General Lincoln fortified Charleston, S. C. and himself and his army were made prisoners of war. General Washington began fortifying New York in 1776, General Howe passed up the East river landed his army at Frog's Point about twenty miles above the city and marched down upon it, and had not General Washington stole silently and suddenly off on the North river side of York Island, himself and his army had also been prisoners. Trust not to Fortifications, otherwise than as batteries that can be abandoned at discretion.

The case however is, that batteries, as a water defence against the passage of ships cannot do much. Were any given number of guns to be put in a battery for that purpose, and an equal number of the same weight of metal put in gun-boats for the same purpose, those in the boats would be more effectual than those in the battery. The reason for this is obvious. A battery is stationary. Its fire is limited to about two miles, and there its power ceases. But every gun-boat moved by oars is a moveable fortification that can follow up its fire and change its place and its position as circumstances may require. And besides this, *gun-boats in calms are the sovereigns of ships.*

As this matter interests the public, and most probably will come before Congress at its next meeting, if the printers in any of the States, after publishing it in their news-papers, have a mind to publish it in a pamphlet form, together with my former piece on gun-boats, they have my consent freely. I take neither copy-right nor profit for any thing I publish.

COMMON SENSE.

New York, July 21, 1807.

REMARKS ON A STRING OF RESOLUTIONS OFFERED BY  
MR. HALE, TO THE NEW YORK HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AT ALBANY.

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THESE resolutions have the appearance of being what is sometimes called an electioneering trick, similar to that about fortifications, practised at New York when the election for charter officers was to come on. They are like baits thrown out to catch gudgeons. I will examine each of the resolutions separately, and shew their defects.

First, "Resolved, if the honourable Senate concur herein, that in the present state of our national concerns, it becomes the duty of the people of this State, represented in Senate and Assembly, to express their sentiments on the important subject of fortifying the port and harbour of New York, and of protecting the valuable and extensive commerce of the United States."

Remarks.—Is Mr. Hale acquainted with the subject he speaks upon? Does he know enough of the principles of fortification to explain to the House what is practicable, and what is impracticable? Did he ever see a fortified town, fortified, I mean, on the established principles of fortification? Does he know, scientifically or practically, what places can be fortified and what cannot? If he does not know these things, he has waded out of his depth in making his resolves.

He speaks of the "port and harbour of New York." But what ideas does he affix to the terms "port and harbour?" If by port, he means the city of New York, it proves he knows nothing of fortification; for the condition of New York, as well by nature as by the irregularity of its outline, renders fortifying it impossible.

Again, if by the term harbour, he means the waters at the wharfs within the range of the Harbour Master, the case is, that to begin a fortification there, the ships must be sent up the East or North River, and the wharfs turned into parapet batteries with embrasures, and planted with cannon. Commerce and fortification cannot be in the same place.

But if by harbour, he means the bay between the city and the narrows, the most effectual defence would be by gun-boats,

each carrying a twenty-pounder. A gun-boat being a moveable fortification has a large sphere to act in, and a battery on land a small one. A ship can always keep out of the reach of a land battery, or with a brisk wind and tide, can be out of the range of its shot in fifteen minutes, and being a moving object all the time, the chance is, that not a shot would strike her.

Before men assume to make motions, and resolve about fortifications, they should endeavour to understand them. The history of fortifications during the revolutionary war, is the history of traps. All our principal losses in that war were occasioned by trusting to fortifications. Fort Washington, with two thousand five hundred men, was taken in less than four hours, and the men made prisoners of war. The same would have befallen the garrison at Fort Lee, on the opposite shore, had not General Greene marched suddenly off and gained Hackensack-bridge. In the spring and summer of 1776, General Washington had possession of New York, and fortified it, General Howe passed up the East River, landed his troops about twenty miles above the city, and after taking possession of King's Bridge, marched down upon the city, and had not General Washington stole off on the North River side of York Island, he and the army with him had been prisoners. General Lincoln undertook to fortify Charleston, and he and the garrison were shut up in it by the enemy and made prisoners of war. It is an imposition on the public to hold up the idea of fortifications as places of safety. The open field is always the best. One of the principal cares of a general is to secure a retreat in case of a defeat, but there is no retreat for men besieged in a fortified town. I pass on to his second resolve.

“Resolved, that when this State in acceding to the Government of the United States, surrendered its valuable and increasing impost revenue for the general benefit of the Union, it was done under a full conviction that it would then become the indispensable duty of the United States in return, to afford the capital, harbour, and commerce of this State, full and competent protection.”

This Resolve is founded in error, and every position it contains is fallacious.

The several States agreed to *consolidate* the impost revenue for the benefit of the whole. There was no surrender in the case. Every State did the same thing, because it was its duty to do it. This consolidation of the impost revenue was for the purpose of sinking the debt, as well foreign as

domestic, incurred by the war, and also to defray the expence of the general Government; and had it not been for the extravagance of former administrations, which increased the debt instead of diminishing it, the debt would have been sunk before this time. The present administration had a dead horse to pull out of the mire.

It is also to be observed, that the prosperity of New York arises from the very circumstance of which this resolve complains. Had New York not agreed to consolidate the impost revenue in common with the other States, she would have been excluded from the commerce and carrying trade of all the other States, and have sunk into solitary insignificance. Her wharfs would not have been crowded with ships as they are now.

It is by consolidating the impost revenue into a *whole*, and thereby leaving every State to choose its port of export or import, either in its own or in another State, that the commerce, or rather the carrying trade, of New York, has of late years increased so much. Were New York confined to the exports of her own State, and to import only for the consumption of her own State, she would not have more than a third of the commerce and of the carrying trade she has now. The consolidation of the impost revenue has operated as a bounty to New York, and this short-sighted legislator complains of it. But though men, as merchants, tied down to the study of their ledgers and cash-books, are in general but dull politicians, it is necessary for them to understand their own affairs, and they ought to have advised Mr. Hale not to have brought in the string of foolish and ill-founded resolves he has done.

C\*\*\*\*\*n S\*\*\*\*\*e.

*Remarks on Mr. Hale's String of Resolves concluded.*

IN my former number I examined Mr. Hale's two first resolves, and shewed the fallacy of them. In this, I shall extract such parts of his remaining resolves as expose themselves most to public notice.

His third Resolve is mere declamation about the old bugbear of *fortifications*.

His fourth Resolve is an indecent invective against Congress, on the same subject.

In his fifth Resolve, he speaks of "the public debt being materially reduced, and of the favourable prospect of its total extinction in a few years, by the happy and successful opera-

tion, (he says) of the funding system." But what funding system does he mean? It certainly is not by the operation of any funding in the administration of Washington or Adams. The public debt increased in both those administrations; and as to John Adams, he left the treasury overflowing with debt and the country overrun with internal taxes. It is by the economy and wise management of the present administration *only* that the happy effects of which Mr. Hale speaks has been produced, but it does not suit him to say so. O Maligancy, thou art a hateful monster!

Mr. Hale concludes this resolve by proposing, in consequence of this flourishing state of the revenue, that Congress should appropriate to each State a sum equal to the impost revenue which each State may produce, to be employed for the purpose of fortifications. This is what in common life is called "a take in." There is something insidious in it, which I shall expose when I come to remark on the resolve which follows, to which this is an introduction.

"Resolved, that under all existing circumstances, this State *is entitled* to ask and *demand* of the Government of the United States the appropriation of a sum equal to the amount of the impost revenue of the *port of New York* to be applied to the purpose of defending the port and harbour of the said city (of New York.)"

I now go to examine the ground of this resolve, and to detect the fallacy of it, by laying down a certain rule whereby to ascertain the quantity of impost revenue arising from the quantity of population in any of the States, and to distinguish that quantity from the gross amount of impost revenue collected in any port of entry.

The total amount of impost revenue arising from the total population of all the States is 12,000,000 dollars, of which sum each State contributes a part in proportion to its quantity of population, whether it imports into its own State, or purchases imported articles in other States with the import duty upon them. For example:—

The State of Jersey does not import any thing. The eastern part of that State purchase imported articles at the port of New York, and the western part at the port of Philadelphia, and these two ports are the collectors of the impost revenue of Jersey, which according to its population is above 400,000 dollars, as I shall shew; and the merchants of whom those purchases are made have the use of that

money without interest till they pay it into the treasury of the United States.

I now come to lay down the rule for ascertaining the quantity of impost revenue paid by each State, which is :—

As the total population of all the States is to the total impost revenue of 12,000,000 dollars, so is the population of any State to the portion it pays of that 12,000,000 dollars.

The total population of all the States, according to the last census, taken in 1801, was, at that time, 5,309,758

The population of New York.....	586,050
Of Pennsylvania.....	602,545
Of Jersey.....	211,149

According to the progressive increase of population in the United States, which doubles itself in every twenty-four or twenty-five years, the population in 1801 will now be increased one-fourth, and therefore the present population of the State of New York is..... 732,560

Ditto of Pennsylvania..... 753,181

Ditto of Jersey..... 264,648

And the total population of all the States is 6,637,197

To find what portion of 12,000,000 is paid by the State of New York, say, as 6,637,197, the total population, is to 12,000,000, so is 732,560, the population of New York, to the portion it pays of that sum, and

The quotient will be..... 1,324,426

That of Pennsylvania..... 1,361,743

That of Jersey..... 478,245

Pennsylvania pays 37,317 more impost revenue than the State of New York pays.

But the case with New York is, that she exports and imports for a large part of the Southern States, and also for a part of the Eastern States, and this increases her collection of impost revenue to more than three times the amount of what she pays herself. It is this that enables her merchants, many of which are British or British agents, to carry on trade. They sell imported articles to other States with the impost duty upon them, and receive that impost duty either in money or in produce time enough to make a second voyage with it before they pay it into the Treasury of the United States. The capitals of those merchants are made up, in a great measure, of the impost revenue that rests in



their hands. It is by the blunders of such men as Mr. Hale, who belongs to the Federal faction of blundering politicians, that matters of this kind are brought to light. The blunders of one man often serve to suggest right ideas to another man.

The impost revenue collected at the port of New York is estimated at more than 4,000,000 dollars, about 3,000,000 dollars of which is drawn from other States, and the remaining 1,324,426 is paid by the population of New York, which, as before said, is 37,317 less than is paid by Pennsylvania.

Mr. Hale's proposal is *to demand of the Government of the United States the appropriation of a sum equal to the impost revenue of the port of New York*; as if all the impost revenue collected there was paid by the State. I have now placed before his eyes the folly as well as the injustice of his proposal, and I have also done it to prevent other people being imposed upon by such absurdities.

Mr. Hale concludes his string of resolutions with the following:—

“Resolved, as the sense of this Legislature, that no nation however enlightened, populous, or enterprising it may be, can maintain a respectable standing as a commercial nation, without the protection and support of a respectable navy.”

In the first place, this resolve is conceived in ignorance and founded on a falsehood. Hamburgh has carried on a greater commerce than any town or city in the European Continent, Amsterdam excepted, and yet Hamburgh has not a single vessel of war; and on the other hand, England, with a navy of nearly one hundred and forty sail of the line, besides frigates almost without number, is shut out by land from all the ports on the Continent of Europe.

Navies do not protect commerce, neither is the protection of commerce their object. They are for the foolish and unprofitable purpose of fighting and sinking each other at sea; and the result is, that every victory at sea is a victory of loss. The conqueror, after sinking and destroying a part of his enemies' fleet, goes home with crippled ships and broken bones. The English fire the Tower guns, and the French sing *Te Deum*.

But Mr. Hale, in order to have completed his work, should have added another resolve, and that should have been about the expence of a navy; for unless the United States have a navy at least equal to the navies of other nations, she had better have none, for it will be taken and turned

against her. The navy of one nation pays *no respect* to the navy of another nation.

The expence of the English navy for 1806, according to the report of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in March of that year, was upwards of 68,000,000 dollars. The portion of the expence which the State of New York would have to pay as *her quota* towards raising what Mr. Hale calls a "*respectable navy*," would be 8,000,000 dollars over and above the impost revenue of 1,324,426, and therefore Mr. Hale should have finished with a resolve to the following purport:—

"Resolved, as the sense of this Legislature, that the farmers and landholders of the city and State of New York ought most cheerfully to pay, and this Legislature has no doubt but they will pay, the sum of 8,000,000 dollars annually, over and above the impost revenue, *as the quota of this State*, towards raising a '*respectable navy*' to fight either the French navy, the Spanish navy, the English navy, or any other navy."

As trees cannot be voted into ships by a resolve of the Legislature; it is first necessary to settle about the expence of a navy, and the manner in which that expence is to be defrayed, before they resolve about building a navy. Count the cost is a good maxim. Mr. Hale has begun his work at the wrong end.

#### COMMON SENSE.

April 3, 1807,

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#### ON THE EMISSARY CULLEN.

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It appears by a paragraph in the *Public Advertiser*, that Cullen, alias *Carpenter*, or whatever his name is, if he has any name, has commenced a prosecution against the printer or publisher of the *Public Advertiser*, but the prosecution does not say what it is for. Some advantages will arise from this and some amusement also. He will now have to identify himself and prove who he is, and upon what recommendation he came to America, and get some persons of respectability if he can to attest for him. We have not established liberty as an asylum for impostors. Mr. Duane of Philadelphia knew him in India and in England, and he can prove that he did not then go by the name he now goes by,

and the man that changes his name is an impostor. The law can know nothing of such persons but for the purpose of punishing them.

Thomas Paine will also know where to find him when the prosecution comes on, for he concealed himself from all the enquiries Mr. Paine made to find him or his place of residence. The case is, that Cullen's paper had falsified a publication written by Mr. Paine and published in the *Citizen*, on the danger to which a neutral nation exposed itself by harbouring an *Emissary*, or a suspected emissary, of one belligerent nation against another belligerent nation. This publication was falsified in Cullen's paper insidiously entitled "The People's Friend." Mr. Paine copied off the falsifications and desired a friend of his, a merchant in John Street, to call on Cullen, and read the falsifications to him, and demand who was the writer of them. The gentleman called at the printing office, but Cullen, alias Carpenter, was not there. The gentleman left word that he would call the next day and that he had something to communicate to Mr. Carpenter. He called accordingly but Carpenter was not there. He then asked the persons in the office where Mr. Carpenter lodged; they said they did not know, but they believed it was a good way off. The gentleman then left word for the third time, that he would call the next day, which he did, but Carpenter was not to be found, nor could any account be given of him. Mr. Paine will now know where to find him.

This man with two or three names has laid his damages at three thousand dollars. One way to get rich is first to be a rascal and then prosecute for exposing the rascality. But why did he not lay the damages at an hundred thousand dollars. There is a precedent for this.

April 8, 1807.

THREE LETTERS TO MORGAN LEWIS, ON HIS PROSECUTION  
OF THOMAS FARMER, FOR ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND  
DOLLARS DAMAGES.

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*Letter the First.*

THE proud integrity of conscious rectitude fears no reproach, and disdains the mercenary idea of damages. It is not the sound, but the ulcerated flesh that flinches from the touch. A man must feel his character exceedingly vulnerable, who can suppose that any thing said about him, or against him, can endamage him a hundred thousand dollars: yet this is the sum Morgan Lewis has laid his damages at, in his prosecution of Mr. Farmer, as chairman of a meeting of republican citizens. This is a case, abstracted from any idea of damages, that ought to be brought before the representatives of the people assembled in Legislature. It is an attempted violation of the rights of citizenship, by the man whose official duty it was to protect them.

Mr. Farmer was in the exercise of a legal and constitutional right. He was chairman of a meeting of citizens, peaceably assembled to consider on a matter that concerned themselves, *the nomination of a proper person to be voted for as governor at the ensuing election.* Had the meeting thought Morgan Lewis a proper person, they would have said so, and would have had a right to say so. But the meeting thought otherwise, and they had a right to say otherwise. But what has Morgan Lewis, as governor, to do with either of these cases. He is not governor *jure divino*, by divine right, nor is he covered with the magical mantle which covers a king of England, that HE can do no wrong; nor is the governorship of the State his property, or the property of his family connexions.

If Morgan Lewis could be so unwise and vain as to suppose he could prosecute for what he calls damages, he should prosecute every man who composed that meeting, *except the chairman*; for in the office of chairman, Mr. Farmer was a silent man on any matter discussed or decided there. He could not even give a vote on any subject, unless it was a tie vote, which was not the case. The utmost use Mr. Lewis could have made of Mr. Farmer would have

been to have subpœnaed him to prove that such resolves were voted by the meeting; for Mr. Farmer's signature to those resolves, as chairman of the meeting, was no other than an attestation that such resolves were then passed.

Morgan Lewis, in this prosecution, has committed the same kind of error that a man would commit who should prosecute a witness for proving a fact done by a third person, instead of prosecuting that third person on whom the fact was proved. Morgan Lewis is, in my estimation of character, a poor lawyer, and a worse politician. He cannot maintain this prosecution; but I think Mr. Farmer might maintain a prosecution against him. False prosecution ought to be punished; and this is a false prosecution, because it is a wilful prosecution of the wrong person. If Morgan Lewis has sustained any damage, or any injury, which I do not believe he has, it is by the members composing the meeting, and not by the chairman. The resolves of a meeting are not the act of the chairman.

But in what manner will Morgan Lewis prove damages? damages must be proved by facts; they cannot be proved by opinion—opinion proves nothing. Damages given by opinion, are not damages in fact, and a jury is tied down to fact, and cannot take cognizance of opinion. Morgan Lewis must prove that between the time those resolves were passed, and the time he commenced his prosecution, he sustained damages to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars, and he must produce facts in proof of it. He must also prove that those damages were *in consequence* of those resolves, and could he prove all this, it would not reach Mr. Farmer, because, as before said, *the resolves of a meeting are not the act of the chairman.*

This is not a case merely before a jury of twelve men. The whole public is a jury in a case like this, for it concerns their public rights as citizens, and it is for the purpose of freeing it from the quibbling chicanery of law, and to place it in a clear intelligible point of view before the people that I have taken it up.

But as people do not read long pieces on the approach of an election, and as it is probable I may give a second piece on the subject of damages, I will stop where I am for the present.

THOMAS PAINE.

April 14, 1807.

*Letter the Second.*

IN my former letter, I shewed that Morgan Lewis could not maintain a prosecution against Mr. Farmer, because the resolves of a public meeting are not the act of the chairman. His signature affixed thereto is not even evidence of his approbation, though I have no doubt myself but he approved them. It is put there for the purpose of certifying that such resolves were passed. In this letter I shall proceed further into the subject.

This prosecution is, upon the face of it, an attempt to intimidate the people in their character as citizens, from exercising their right of opinion on public men and public measures. Had it been a prosecution by one individual against another individual, in which the people had no interest or concern, I should not have taken the subject up. But it is a case that involves a question of public rights, and which shews that Morgan Lewis is not a proper person to be entrusted with the guardianship of those rights. In the second place, it is a bad example, because it is giving as governor of the State, the pernicious example of instituting frivolous prosecutions for the purpose of making money by them. A man of conscious integrity would feel himself above it, and a man of spirit would disdain it.

One of the objections stated against Morgan Lewis in those resolves, is, *that he had formed a coalition with the Federalists*. If Morgan Lewis conceived and felt this to be a disgrace to him, he must necessarily as a cause for that conception, have considered the Federalists an infamous set of men, and it is now incumbent on him to prove them such, as one of the grounds on which he is to prove damages. It is tantamount to his having said, in his own manner of speaking, *they accuse me of being associated with scoundrels*. Morgan Lewis is a weak man. He has not talents for the station he holds. He entraps himself in his own contrivances.

But if the objection contained in the resolves was ill-founded, why did not Morgan Lewis come forward in the spirit of a man and the language of a gentleman, and contradict it. He would have gained credit by this, if he was innocent enough to have done it. The objection against him was publicly stated, and if not true ought to have been publicly refuted; for as Morgan Lewis is a public man, and

the case involves a public question, it is the public of all parties that have a right to know if the objections against him are true or not. This case is not a question of law, but a question of honour and of public rights.

The man who resorts to artifice and cunning, instead of standing on the firm and open ground of principle, can easily be found out. When those resolves first appeared, Morgan Lewis must have felt the necessity of taking some notice of them; but as it did not suit him at that time either to acknowledge them or contradict them, he had recourse to a prosecution, as it would afford a pretence for doing neither. A prosecution viewed in this light would accommodate itself to the situation he was in, by holding the matter in obscurity and indecision till the election should be over. But the artifice is too gauzy not to be seen through, and too apparently trickish not to be despised.

As to damages, Morgan Lewis has sustained none. If those resolves have had any effect, it has been to his benefit. He was a lost man among the Republicans before the resolves appeared, and their public appearance has given him some standing among such of the Federalists who are destitute of honour and insensible of disgrace. These men will vote for him, and also for Rufus King, the persecutor of the unfortunate Irish.

I now come to speak on the subject of damages generally; for it appears to me that certain juries have run into great mistakes on this subject. They have not distinguished between *penalty* and *damages*. Penalty is punishment for crime. Damages is indemnification for losses sustained. When a man is prosecuted criminally, all that is necessary to be proved is, the fact with which he is charged, and all that the jury has to do in this case is to bring in a verdict according to the evidence given. The court then passes sentence conformable to the law under which the crime is punishable. If it is by fine, or imprisonment, or both, the law generally limits the extent of the fine or penalty, and also the period of imprisonment. It does not leave it to any mad-headed, or avaricious individual, or to any jury, to say it shall be an hundred thousand dollars.

But in prosecutions for what are called damages, two things are necessary to be proved. First, the words spoken or published, or actions done. Secondly, damages actually sustained in consequence of those words or actions. The words or actions can often be proved, and Morgan Lewis may prove that certain resolves were passed at a meeting of

the citizens, at which Thomas Farmer was chairman. But unless Morgan Lewis can prove that the meeting exercised illegal authority in passing those resolves, and that he has sustained damage in consequence thereof, a jury can award him no damages: and certain it is, that juries in cases of prosecution for what is called damages, cannot inflict penalties. Penalties go to the State, and not to the individual. If in any of the late prosecutions, juries have awarded damages where damages were not proved, the execution of the verdict ought to be suspended, and the case referred to a new trial.

THOMAS PAINE.

April 21, 1807.

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*Letter the Third.*

IN this letter, I shall continue my observations on damages generally, and take Morgan Lewis in my way. There are two descriptions of men who cannot suffer damages. The one is the man whose character is already so infamous that nothing said of him can make him appear worse than he is. The other is the man whose character is so invulnerable that no reproach against him can reach him. It falls pointless to the ground, or reacts upon the party from whence it came.

The first time Mr. Jefferson was elected President, the majority in his favour was ninety-two to eighty-four. As this majority was small, the faction of the Feds redoubled their abuse, and multiplied falsehood upon falsehood to throw him out at the next election. Their malignity and their lies were permitted to pass uncontradicted, and the event was, that at the next election Mr. Jefferson had a majority of one hundred and sixty-two to fourteen.

As this is an instance that invulnerable character cannot suffer damage, I leave it to Coleman, Cullen, and Rufus King, to identify the persons of the contrary description; and they may, if they please, draw lots among themselves to decide which of them shall stand foremost on the list of *infamous security* from damage.

When Morgan Lewis, in conversation with William Livingston, said that "De Witt Clinton, Judge Comstock, and Judge Johnson were three of the damnedest rascals that ever disgraced the counsels of a state," the venom and vulgarity of the expression were too visible to do injury, and the character of the man who said it too equivocal to obtain credit.



It was not worth the trouble of contradicting. Calumny is a vice of a curious constitution. Trying to kill it keeps it alive; leave it to itself and it will die a natural death.

Chancellor Lansing's ill judged and ill written address to the public, comes precisely under the head of calumny. He insinuated in that address a charge against Governor Clinton when he (Governor Clinton) was almost three hundred miles distant from New York, and when called upon by George Clinton, jun. to explain himself, that the public might know what he meant, refused to do it. Mr. Lansing holds the office of Chancellor *during good behaviour*, and this is the reverse of good behaviour. The words *good behaviour*, which are the words of the Constitution, must have some meaning, or why are they put there? They certainly apply to the whole of a man's moral and civil character, and not merely to official character. A man may be punctual in his official character because it is his interest to be so, and yet be dishonourable and unjust in every thing else.

Mr. Lansing should have recollected that Governor Clinton's long experience in the office of Governor enabled him to give useful advice to a young beginner, and his well known integrity precludes every idea of his giving any other. If Governor Clinton gave any advice to Mr. Lansing on the subject he speaks of, Mr. Lansing ought to have felt himself obliged to him, instead of which he has turned treacherous and ungrateful.

But though men of conscious integrity, calm and philosophical, will not descend to the low expedient of prosecuting for the sake of what are called damages, there nevertheless ought to be a law for punishing calumny; and this becomes the more necessary because it often happens that the prosecutor for damages is himself the calumniator. Morgan Lewis's prosecution of Thomas Farmer for one hundred thousand dollars damages, is holding Mr. Farmer up to the public as an unjust man. Maturin Livingston is playing the same game towards Mr. Jackson, one of the editors of the Independent Republican; and the Anglo-Irish impostor, Cullen, who is secured from damage by the infamy of his character, is trying to make three thousand dollars out of Mr. Frank. one of the editors of the Public Advertiser. As the matter stands at present, a rogue has a better chance than an honest man.

There is not a man in the United States, Thomas Jefferson excepted, that has been more abused by this mean and unprincipled faction than myself; yet I have never prosecuted any of them. I have left them to welter in their own

lies. But had there been a law to punish calumny and lying by penalty, and the money to be given to the poor, I would have done it. But as to damages, as I do not believe they have character enough of their own to endamage mine, I could claim none.

THOMAS PAINE.

April 23, 1807.

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#### ANECDOTE OF JAMES MONROE AND RUFUS KING.

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THE names of Monroe and King ought not to be mentioned in the same breath, but for the purpose of shewing the different characters of the two ministers.

When Hamilton Rowan effected his escape from an Irish prison and came to Paris, he met Thomas Paine in the street, and they agreed to spend the day together in the country. Mr. Paine called on Mr. Monroe to inform him of it, and that he should not dine with him on that day. On Mr. Paine mentioning the name of Hamilton Rowan, Mr. Monroe desired Mr. Paine to introduce him, which he did. Mr. Monroe received him with great cordiality and respect. Mr. Rowan then took his leave, and when they were descending the stairs to go their country walk, Mr. Monroe called Mr. Paine back, and said to him, "As Mr. Rowan has met with a great many difficulties it is most probable he may be in difficulty with respect to money; please to tell him from me that I will supply him."

Compare this nobleness of heart with the base conduct of Rufus King towards the comrades of Hamilton Rowan, and every man of honour and of feeling must despise and detest him.

## ON THE QUESTION, WILL THERE BE WAR?

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EVERY one asks, Will there be war? The answer to this is easy, which is, That so long as the English Government be permitted, at her own discretion, to search, capture, and condemn our vessels, controul our commerce, impress our seamen, and fire upon and plunder our national ships, as she has done, she will *Not Declare War*, because she will not give us the acknowledged right of making reprisals. Her plan is a monopoly of war, and she thinks to succeed by the manœuvre of not declaring war.

The case then is altogether a question among ourselves. Shall we make war on the English Government, as the English Government has made upon us; or shall we submit, as we have done, and that with long forbearance, to the evil of having war made upon us without reprisals? This is a right statement of the case between the United States and England.

For several years past it has been the scheme of that Government to terrify us, by acts of violence, into submission to her measures, and in the insane stupidity of attempting this, she has incensed us into war. We neither fear nor care about England, otherwise than pitying the people who live under such a wretched system of government. As to navies, they have lost their terrifying powers. They can do nothing against us at land, and if they come within our waters, they will be taken the first calm that comes. They can rob us on the ocean, as robbers can do, and we can find a way to indemnify ourselves by reprisals, in more ways than one.

The British Government is not intitled, even as an enemy, to be treated as civilized enemies are treated. She is a pirate, and should be treated as a pirate. Nations do not declare war against pirates, but attack them as a natural right. All civilities shewn to the British Government, is like pearl thrown before swine. She is insensible of principle and destitute of honour. Her monarch is mad, and her ministers have caught the contagion.

The British Government, and also the nation, deceive themselves with respect to the power of navies. They suppose that ships of war can make conquests at land; that they can

take or destroy towns or cities near the shore and obtain by terror what terms they please. They sent Admiral Duckworth to Constantinople upon this stupid idea, and the event has shewn to the world the imbecility of navies against cannon on shore. Constantinople was not fortified any more than our American towns are now; but the Turks, on the appearance of the British fleet, got five hundred cannon and a hundred mortars down from the arsenals to the shore, and the blustering heroes of the navy seeing this, fled like a hound with a rattle at his tail. The gallant people of Norfolk and its neighbourhood have sent Douglas off in a similar manner. An Indian who studies nature is a better judge of naval power than an English minister.

In March, 1777, soon after taking the Hessians at Trenton, I was at a treaty held with the five northern nations of Indians at East Town, in Pennsylvania, and was often pleased with the sagacious remarks of those original people. The chief of one of the tribes, who went by the name of *King Lastnight*, because his tribe had sold their lands, had seen some English men of war in some of the waters of Canada and was impressed with an idea of the power of those great canoes; but he saw that the English made no progress against us by land. This was enough for an Indian to form an opinion by. He could speak some English, and in conversation with me, alluding to the great canoes, he gave me his idea of the power of a king of England by the following metaphor.

“The king of England,” said he, “is like a fish. When he is in the water he can wag his tail.—When he comes on land he lays down on his side.”—Now, if the English Government had but half the sense this Indian had, they would not have sent Duckworth to Constantinople, and Douglas to Norfolk, to lay down on their side.

Accounts from Halifax state, that Admiral Berkeley has alledged in writing, that “his orders (to Douglas) were not issued until every application to restore the mutineers and deserters (as he calls them) had been made by his Britaunic Majesty’s ministers, consul, and officer, and had been refused by the Government of the United States.”

If this account be true, it shews that Berkeley is an idiot in governmental affairs; for if the matter was in the hands of the British minister, who is the immediate representative of his Government, Berkeley could have no interference in it. That minister would report to his Government the demand he made, if he made any, and the answer he received, if he

received any, and Berkeley could act only in consequence of orders received afterwards. It does not belong to subordinate officers of any Government to commence hostilities at their own discretion.

I now come to speak of the politics of the day as they rise out of the circumstances that have taken place.

The injustice of the British Government, and the insolence of its naval officers, is no longer to be borne. That injustice, and that insolence grows out of a presumption the British Government has set up, which it calls "*the right of search.*" There is not, nor ever was, such a right appertaining to a nation in consequence of its being in war with another nation. Wherever such a right existed it has been by treaty, and where no such treaty exist, no such right can exist, and to assume the exercise of it is an act of hostility which if not abandoned must be repelled until it be abandoned. The United States cannot even cede such a right to England, without ceding the same right to France, Spain, Holland, Naples, Italy, and Turkey, or they will take it, and the United States must take the consequence. It is very difficult matter, and requires great political wisdom for a neutral nation to make a treaty during a time of war with one belligerent nation, that shall not commit her with the other. The best way then, since matters are come to the extremity they are, is to resist this pretended *right of search* in the first instance. The United States are able to do it, and she is the only neutral nation that is able.

We are not the diminutive people now that we were when the revolution began. Our population then was two millions and an half, it is now between six and seven millions, and in less than ten years will exceed the population of England. The United States have increased more in power, ability, and wealth within the last twenty or twenty-two years than she did for almost two hundred years before, while the states were British Colonies.

She owes this to two things, *independence* and the *representative system of Government*. It was always the ill-judged and impracticable system of the British Government to keep the Colonies in a state of continual nonage. They never were to be of full age that she might always controul them.

While the United States have been going forward in this unparalleled manner, England has been going backward. Her Government is a bankrupt, and her people miserable. More than a million of them are paupers. Her king is mad, and her parliament is corrupt. We have yet to see what the

present new elected parliament will be. There is one man in it, whom I proudly call a friend, from whom there will be great expectations; but *what can one honest independent member do*, surrounded by such a mass of ignorance and corruption as have for many years past governed that unfortunate nation.

The great dependance of England has been on her navy, and it is her navy that has been her ruin. The falsely imagined power of that navy (for it was necessary it should be amphibious to perform what was expected from it) has prompted the ignorance of her Government into insolence towards all foreign powers till England has not a friend left among nations. Russia and Sweden will quarter themselves upon her purse till it becomes empty, and then very probably will turn against her.

Depending on her navy she blockaded whole countries by proclamation, and now, Buonaparte, by way of justifiable retaliation, has blockaded her by land from the commerce of the western part of the Continent of Europe. Her insolent and imbecile expedition to Constantinople, has excluded her from the commerce of Turkish Europe and Turkey in Asia, and thrown it into the hands of France—and her outrageous conduct to us will exclude her from the commerce of the United States. By the insolence of the crew of her navy she is in danger of losing her trade to China; and it is easy to see that Buonaparte is paving his way to India by Turkey and Persia. The madness of the British Government has thrown Turkey into the arms of France. Persia lies between Turkey and India, and Buonaparte is forming friendly connections with the Persian Government. There is already an exchange of ambassadors. Buonaparte is sending military officers into Persia, and will, with the consent of its Government, raise an army there and attack the English monopoly in India. If France holds her connections with Turkey and Persia, England cannot hold India.

It is in this wretched chaos of affairs that the mad Government of England has brought on herself a new enemy by commencing hostilities against the United States. She must be ignorant of the geography of America, or she would know that we can dispossess her of all her possessions on the Continent whenever we please, and she cannot, with safety, keep a fleet in the West Indies during the hurricane months. Buonaparte will find employment for every soldier she can raise, and those she may send to the Continent of Europe will become prisoners. There never was an in-

stance of a Government conducting itself with the madness and ignorance the British Government has done! This is John Adams's stupenduous fabric of human wisdom!

That the British Government will disown giving hostile instructions to Berkeley I have no doubt. It is the trick of old governments to do so when they find themselves wrong, and pay some scape-goat to bear the blame. But this will not be sufficient. The pretended *right of search* and the impressment of our seamen must be abandoned. Three thousand of them have been impressed by British ships to fight against France. The French Government has shewn a great deal of patience in not complaining of it, for it is a great injury to her, and must be redressed, or worse consequences will follow.

I have said in the former part of this essay that it is a difficult matter and requires great political wisdom for a neutral nation during a war to form a treaty with one belligerent nation that shall not commit her with the other. I will now give an instance of it.

In 1794, Washington sent Mr. Monroe as minister to France, and John Jay to England, and gave them contradictory instructions. By the treaty that then existed between the United States and France, "*Free ships made free goods.*" So that English property on board American ships was protected from seizure by France. John Jay made a treaty with England which Washington and the stupid Senate of that day ratified, by which free ships DID NOT make free property, and that French property on board American ships could be seized by England. This of consequence vacated the free article in the treaty with France, and she availed herself of it, and the United States lost the carrying trade of both nations. There is a jesuitism in Jay's treaty, which says, that the question whether *free ships make free goods* shall be taken into consideration two years after the war. It is now more than two years since that war, and therefore it forms an item with the matters to be now settled with the English Government.

The British Government have been so long in the habit of insolence that she has not the sense of seeing when the power of being insolent ceases. She ought to see that the power of France by land is far superior to *her* power at sea. France, by land, can blockade the commerce of England out of Europe and India, and the English navy can do nothing to prevent it. Of what use is it to "*rule the waves,*" if you cannot put your foot on shore? If it was a contest

contest for fisheries, the most powerful navy would decide; but as it is a contest for commerce it is land force that decides, and navies are out of the question.

If the British Government were wise, she would cease the pretended *right of search* of her own accord, for it brings her into endless trouble. It makes all nations her enemy. Every nation detests the piratical insolence of England and none more so than the United States. The spirit that is now raised, cannot be appeased until reparation is made for the past, and security be given for the future.

COMMON SENSE.

New York, Aug. 14, 1807.

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ROYAL PEDIGREE.\*

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GEORGE the Third, who was the grandson of George the Second, who was the son of George the First, who was the son of the Princess Sophia, who was the cousin of Anne, who was the sister of William and Mary, who were the daughter and son in law of James the Second, who was the son of Charles the First, who was a traitor to his country and decapitated as such, who was the son of James the First, who was the son of Mary, who was the sister of Edward the Sixth, who was the son of Henry the Eighth, who was the cold-blooded murderer of his wives, and the promoter of the Protestant religion, who was the son of Henry the Seventh, who slew Richard the Third, who smothered his nephew Edward the Fifth, who was the son of Edward the Fourth, who with bloody Richard slew Henry the Sixth, who succeeded Henry the Fifth, who was the son of Henry the Fourth, who was the cousin of Richard the Second, who was the son of Edward the Third, who was the son of Richard the Second, who was the son of Edward the First, who was the son of Henry the Third, who was the son of John, who was the brother of Richard the First, who was the son of Henry the Second, who was the son of Matilda, who was the daughter of Henry the First, who was the brother of William Rufus, who was the son of William the Conqueror, who was the son of a whore.

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\* Supposed to be Mr. Paine's.



## REPLY TO CHEETHAM.

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THE Editor of the New York American Citizen, James Cheetham, has, consistently with his usual mode of abuse, published a long-winded piece in his paper of Thursday last, which, without doubt, he thinks clever because it is spiteful. This piece in the Citizen is an attack on a publication of mine in the New York Public Advertiser of the preceding Tuesday against the project of obstructions in the channel of solid blocks of stone or earth, because such obstructions "would prevent the tide coming up and lay the wharfs at the city dry, and be the ruin of all the towns on the North River that depended for commerce on tide water."

Mr. Cheetham says, "that the entire obstruction recommended in this paper (meaning his own paper) would injure the harbour, is a thought which has occurred to every man in the city, vulgar or refined." Why then could not James Cheetham see it? If he had he certainly would not have proposed such a stupid project.

Mr. Cheetham has said this that I might not have the credit of being the first or only man that discovered the danger, and in the eagerness of his malignancy to do this he has libelled himself; for he has proved that every other man in the city, vulgar or refined, had more sense than James Cheetham. I know not how soon other persons might see the danger of the project, but I wrote my objections against it the same day the piece appeared, which was on Saturday, and gave it to a friend on Sunday, Mr. Walter Morton, for the Public Advertiser. Mr. Morton gave the piece to the printer on Monday morning.

Mr. Cheetham, in his rage for attacking every body, and every thing that is not his own, (for he is an ugly-tempered man, and he carries the evidence of it in the vulgarity and forbiddingness of his countenance—God has set a mark upon Cain) has attacked me on the ground of my political works, and in doing this he has exposed the barrenness of his understanding as fully as in the former case.

He quotes the following paragraph from a short anonymous piece of mine in the Public Advertiser of June 1.

"In 1714, the English nation, for the principles of free government were not understood at that time, sent to

Hanover for a man and his family, George the First, to come and govern them."

Mr. Cheetham, in remarking upon this paragraph, says, "The sending for the idiot, George the First, is true, but the lines underscored, that is, *for the principles of free government were not understood at that time*, are a libel on the venerable dead. In 1714, the principles of a free Government were as well understood in England as they are now in any part of the world."

James Cheetham is such a splenetic John Bull, that he has not discernment enough to see the result of his own statements, for, if the principles of free government were as well understood in England in 1714 as they are now in any part of the world, including America, they certainly would not have sent to Hanover for an idiot to govern them! And as they did send to Hanover for an idiot to govern them, it proves that the principles of free, that is, representative government, were not understood in England at that time.

After this Mr. Cheetham speaks much about *Locke*, and says, "that all political elementary writers on Government since the days of *Locke*, including Mr. Paine, are but the mere retailers of his ideas and doctrines." This is John Bullism all over.

He also says, that "On hereditary and *elective* Government, Mr. Paine, in his *Common Sense and Rights of Man*, has followed *Locke* idea for idea." It may be so for what I know, for I never read *Locke*, nor ever had the work in my hand, and by what I have heard of it from *Horne Tooke*, I had no inducement to read it. It is a speculative, not a practical work, and the style of it is heavy and tedious, as all *Locke's* writings are.

I suppose *Locke* has spoken of hereditary and *Elective Monarchy*, but the representative as laid down in *Common Sense and Rights of Man*, is an entire different thing to elective monarchy. So far from taking any ideas from *Locke* or from any body else, it was the absurd expression of a mere John Bull in England about the year 1773, that first caused me to turn my mind to systems of Government. In speaking of the then King of Prussia, called the Great Frederick, he said, "He is the right sort of man for a King for he has a deal of the devil in him." This set me to think if a system of Government could not exist that did not require the devil, and I succeeded without any help from any body. It is a great deal may be learned from absurdity, and I

expect to learn something from James Cheetham. When I do, I will let him know it in the Public Advertiser.

In the conclusion of the piece of mine which Mr. Cheetham has vomited his spleen upon, I threw out some reproach against those who instead of practising themselves in arms and artillery, that they might be prepared to defend New York, should it be attacked, were continually employing themselves on imaginary fortifications and skulking behind projects of obstruction. As Mr. Cheetham supposed himself included in this description, (and he thought right) he made, as he imagined, an effectual retort, but in doing this as in every thing else he does, he betrayed his want of knowledge both as to the spirit and circumstances of the times he speaks of.

"I would not," says Mr. Cheetham, "charge with cowardice that gentleman, (meaning me) who in the 'times that tried men's souls,' stuck very correctly to his pen in a *safe retreat*, and never handled a musket offensively."

By this paragraph Mr. Cheetham must have supposed that when Congress retreated from Philadelphia to Baltimore in the "times that tried men's souls," that I retreated with them as Secretary to the Committee of Foreign Affairs.

In the first place, the Committee for Foreign Affairs did not exist at that time.

In the next place. I served in the army the whole of the "time that tried men's souls" from the beginning to the end.

Soon after the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776, Congress recommended that a body of ten thousand men, to be called the flying camp, because it was to act wherever necessary, should be formed from the militia and volunteers of Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. I went with one division from Pennsylvania under General Roberdeau. We were stationed at Perth Amboy, and afterwards at Bergen; and when the time of the flying camp expired, and they went home, I went to Fort Lee and served as aid-de-camp to Greene, who commanded at Fort Lee, and was with him through the whole of the black times of that trying campaign.

I began the first number of the Crisis, beginning with the well-known expression, "These are the times that try men's souls") at Newark upon the retreat from Fort Lee, and continued writing it at every place we stopt at, and had it printed at Philadelphia the 19th of December, six days before the taking the Hessians at Trenton, which, with the affair at Princetown the week after, put an end to the black times.

It therefore is not true that I stuck to my pen in a safe retreat with Congress from Philadelphia to Baltimore in the "times that tried men's souls." But if I had done so I should not have published the cowardice James Cheetham has done. In speaking of the affair of the Driver sloop of war at Charleston, South Carolina, he said in his paper, if the Driver and her comrades should take it in their heads to come here (New York) we must submit. What abominable cowardice, for a man to have such a thought in his mind that a city containing twenty thousand able-bodied men, numbers of them as stout in person as himself, should submit to a sloop of war containing about a hundred and fifty men.

After this Mr. Cheetham will take care how he attacks old revolutionary characters whose undiscouraged intrepidity in the "times that tried men's souls" made a home for him to come to.

THOMAS PAINE.

New York, Aug. 21, 1807.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO DR. MICHELL, SENATOR FOR  
THE STATE OF NEW YORK, WRITTEN IMMEDIATELY  
SUBSEQUENT TO THE DISCHARGE OF AARON BURR.

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WHEREAS time, experience and circumstances, have shewn that the article in the Federal Constitution, which establishes the judiciary, is vague and defective, and requires amendment.

According to that article, the judges hold their offices, during, that is, *on the condition of good behaviour*. Yet the Constitution has not authorised any power to take cognizance of that good behaviour, or the breach of it. Every law, and a Constitution is the supreme law, point out the mode of redress, at the same time that it specifies the offence. But the Federal Constitution is defective in this important particular. This being the case, therefore resolved.

That the following amendment to the article in the Federal Constitution which establishes the judiciary, be proposed to the States severally, for their concurrence therein; that is to say.

That after the words as they now stand in the article, "the judges of the supreme and inferior courts shall hold their offices during good behaviour," to add *but for reasonable cause, which shall not be sufficient ground for impeachment, the president may remove any of them, on the address of a majority of both houses of Congress.*

\* \* \* \* \*

It may be proper to observe, that the people of the United States have no share in the appointment of judges, nor any controul over them afterwards. And if their representatives in Congress have no cognizance of judges as to good behaviour, the judiciary may become domineering or dangerous. They lie open to the intrigues of a foreign enemy, or any corrupt party in the States associated with that enemy, or projecting a separation of the Union. It is fair to suppose, that those who formed the Constitution, never thought of this, when they made the judges independent of our own executive.

Your's,

THOMAS PAINE.

August, 1807.

CHEETHAM AND HIS TORY PAPER.\*

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CHEETHAM is frequently giving symptoms of being the successor of *Cullen*, alias *Carpenter*, as Cullen was the successor of *Cobbet*, alias *Porcupine*. Like him, he is seeking to involve the United States in a quarrel with France for the benefit of England.

In his paper of Tuesday, Sept. 22, he has a long abusive piece against France, under the title of "*Remarks*" on the speech of the Arch Chancellor of France to the French Senate. This is a matter that Cheetham, as an adopted American citizen, has no business with; and as a John Bull it is impertinence in him to come here to spit out his venom against France. But Cheetham cannot live without quarrelling, nor write without abuse. He is a disgrace to the Republicans, whose principle is to live in peace and friendship with all nations, and not to interfere in the domestic concerns of any.

Cheetham seems to regret that peace is made on the Continent of Europe, and he shews his spleen against it by the following roundabout scurrilous paragraph.

"The people of France (says he) now breathe the air of peace, under slavery closer, more systematic, military and universal, (Cheetham knows nothing about it) than that with which they were overwhelmed previous to the beginning of the long continued calamity." This is spoken exactly in the character of a stupid prejudiced John Bull, who, shut up in his island and ignorant of the world, supposes all nations slaves but themselves; whereas those at a distance can see, that of all people enslaved by their own Governments, none are so much so as the people of England. Had Cheetham staid in England till this time he would have had to shoulder a musket, and this would have been dreadful to him, for as all bullies are cowards, the smell of gunpowder would be as horrid to Cheetham as the scent of a skunk to other animals.

The danger to which the city of New York was exposed,

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\* This piece was the cause of a duel between Cheetham and Franks.

by the continual abuse of France in such papers as Cullen's, was, that the French Government might be induced to consider the city of New York as a British colony, such as it was during the revolutionary war, and exclude her from the commerce of the Continent of Europe, as she has excluded Britain. Cheetham is following the footsteps of Cullen.

The French nation, under all its changes of Government, has always behaved in a civil and friendly manner to the United States. We have no cause of dispute with France. It was by the aid of France in men, money, and ships,\* that the revolution and independence of the United States were so completely established, and it is scarcely sufferable that a prejudiced and surly-tempered John Bull should fix himself among us to abuse a friendly power.

Sept. 25, 1807.

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#### NOTE TO CHEETHAM.

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MR. CHEETHAM,

Oct. 27, 1807.

UNLESS you make a public apology for the abuse and falsehood in your paper of Tuesday, Oct. 27, respecting me, I will prosecute you for lying.

It is by your talent for abuse and falsehood, that you have brought so many prosecutions on your back. You cannot even state truth without running it to falsehood. There was matter enough against Morgan Lewis without going a syllable beyond the truth.

THOMAS PAINE.

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\* Six thousand French troops under General Rochambeau, and thirty-one sail of the line under Admiral De Grass, assisted at the capture of Cornwallis at York Town, Virginia, which put an end to the war.

## THE EMISSARY CHEETHAM.

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CHEETHAM can now be considered in no other light than a British emissary or successor to the impostor Cullen, alias Carpenter, whom Cheetham handed out in his newspaper, as a gentlemanly sort of a man. Cheetham finding the Republicans are casting him off, is holding out signs to be employed as a British partizan.

Cheetham, in his papers of Dec. 29 and 30, has two long pieces about the embargo, which he labours to prove is not laid in consequence of any dispute with England, but in consequence of some imperious demands on the part of France. This John Bull is an idiot in diplomatic affairs.

Cheetham says, "Mr. Monroe's dispatches, which were laid before Congress, and which Congress *concluded did not authorise an embargo*, are dated London, Oct. 10th. In the opinion of Congress, (continues Cheetham) and I venture to say of Mr. Monroe, an immediate war with England was therefore by no means probable."

Cheetham has been so long in the habit of giving false information, that truth is to him like a foreign language.

The President laid the dispatches of Mr. Monroe, of Oct. 10th, before Congress; but as they were in daily expectation of later information by the arrival of the Revenge schooner, and also of the personal arrival of Mr. Monroe, Congress received it as preparatory information, but came to no conclusion on their contents.

Cheetham says, that the Leopard, which brought Mr. Monroe's dispatches, of Oct. 10th, sailed from London on the 16th of October, and that the Revenge sailed from London for Cherburgh, on the same day, at which time, says Cheetham, there was no probability of an immediate war with England.

In a letter I received from London, dated Oct. 15th, and which I published in the Philadelphia Aurora, and in the York Public Advertiser, the writer, in speaking of the British Ministry, says, "Their cup of iniquity is nearly full, they only want to go to war with America to fill it up; and it is the opinion here (London) that that measure is resolved on. They will make no concessions unless it be to deceive."



The letter is dated one day before the *Revenge* sailed from London, and I suppose came by the *Revenge*: yet Cheetham tells his readers there was then no probability of a war with America. Cheetham's information is never entitled to credit.

When the *Revenge* sailed with the President's proclamation, and the instructions to Mr. Monroe, the writer of this knows she was ordered to come from London to France. It was expected she would be detained in the two countries about a month, and be back here about the 16th of November.

Her coming from London to France would give Mr. Monroe the opportunity (for foreign ministers do not correspond by post but by express) of communicating to Mr. Armstrong, at Paris, the plans and projects of the British Ministry.

Soon after the arrival of the *Revenge* at Cherburgh, a French port on the Channel, General Armstrong sent circular letters to the American Consuls in France, to hasten the departure of the American vessels as fast as possible. Several paragraphs in the English newspapers, and which have been copied into the American papers, stated, that the British Ministry intended to seize American vessels coming to, or going from, any port in France. As Mr. Monroe would get knowledge of this, as well as the writer of the letter to Thomas Paine, of Oct. 15th, he would communicate it to General Armstrong, at Paris; and this accounts for General Armstrong's circular letter, after the arrival of the *Revenge* schooner from London.

If Britain put her threat in force, that of taking American vessels going to or coming from France, it is probable the French Government will retaliate, and take American vessels going to or coming from England; and this resolution on the part of France, has a natural tendency to prevent American vessels being taken, because Britain, by setting the example, will suffer more by it than France.

The British blockading decree, that of seizing neutral vessels going to or from France, was to have been published on the 14th of November, but the news from London of the 14th, by the *Jane*, is silent on the subject. The apprehension of retaliation has, most probably, stopped the British Ministry in their career.

JAN. 7, 1808.

*(To be continued in a future paper.)*

## MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS.

*To the Honourable House of Representatives.*

New York, January 21, 1808.

THE purport of this address is to state a claim I feel myself entitled to make on the United States, leaving it to their representatives in Congress to decide on its worth and its merits. The case is as follows:—

Towards the latter end of the year 1780, the Continental money had become so depreciated, a paper dollar not being more than a cent, that it seemed next to impossible to continue the war.

As the United States were then in alliance with France, it became necessary to make France acquainted with our real situation. I therefore drew up a letter to Count Vergennes, stating undisguisedly the true case, concluding with the request whether France could not either as a subsidy or a loan supply the United States with a million sterling, and continue that supply annually during the war.

I shewed the letter to M. Marbois, secretary to the French minister. His remark upon it was, that a million sent out of the nation exhausted it more than ten millions spent in it. I then shewed it to Ralph Isard, member of Congress for South Carolina. He borrowed the letter of me and said, we will endeavour to do something about it in Congress.

Accordingly, Congress appointed Colonel John Laurens, then aid to General Washington, to go to France and make representation of our situation for the purpose of obtaining assistance. Colonel Laurens wished to decline the mission, and that Congress would appoint Colonel Hamilton, which Congress did not choose to do.

Colonel Laurens then came to state the case to me. He said he was enough acquainted with the military difficulties of the army, but that he was not enough acquainted with political affairs, nor with the resources of the country; but, said he, if you will go with me, I will accept, which I agreed to do, and did do.

We sailed from Boston in the Alliance frigate, Captain Barry, the beginning of February, 1781, and arrived at

L'Orient the beginning of March. The aid obtained from France was six million livres as a present, and ten millions as a loan borrowed in Holland on the security of France. We sailed from Brest in the French Resolve frigate the first of June, and arrived at Boston the 25th of August, bringing with us two millions and a half in silver, and convoying a ship and a brig laden with clothing and military stores. The money was transported in sixteen ox-teams to the national bank at Philadelphia, which enabled the army to move to York Town to attack, in conjunction with the French army under Rochambeau, the British army under Cornwallis. As I never had a cent for this service, I feel myself entitled, as the country is now in a state of prosperity, to state the case to Congress.

As to my political works, beginning with the pamphlet *Common Sense*, published the beginning of January, 1776, which awakened America to a declaration of independence, as the president and vice-president both know, as they were works done from principle I cannot dishonour that principle by asking any reward for them. The country has been benefited by them, and I make myself happy in the knowledge of it. It is, however, proper to me to add, that the mere independence of America, were it to have been followed by a system of government modelled after the corrupt system of the English government, it would not have interested me with the unabated ardour it did. It was to bring forward and establish the representative system of government, as the work itself will shew, that was the leading principle with me in writing that work and all my other works during the progress of the revolution: And I followed the same principle in writing the Rights of Man in England.

There is a resolve of the old Congress, while they sat at New York, of a grant to me of three thousand dollars—the resolve is put in handsome language, but it has relation to a matter which it does not express. Elbridge Gerry was chairman of the committee who brought in the resolve. If Congress should judge proper to refer this memorial to a committee, I will inform that committee of the particulars of it.

I have also to state to Congress, that the authority of the old Congress was become so reduced towards the latter end of the war, as to be unable to hold the States together. Congress could do no more than recommend, of which the States frequently took no notice, and when they did, it was never uniformly.

After the failure of the five per cent. duty, recommended by Congress to pay the interest of a loan to be borrowed in Holland, I wrote to Chancellor Livingston, then minister for foreign affairs, and Robert Morris, minister of finance, and proposed a method for getting over the whole difficulty at once, which was by adding a continental legislature to Congress, who should be empowered to make laws for the Union, instead of recommending them. As the method proposed met with their full approbation, I held myself in reserve to take the subject up whenever a direct occasion occurred.

In a conversation afterwards with governor Clinton, of New York, now vice-president, it was judged, that for the purpose of my going fully into the subject, and to prevent any misconstruction of my motive or object, it would be best that I received nothing from Congress, but leave it to the States, individually, to make me what acknowledgment they pleased.

The State of New York made me a present of a farm, which, since my return to America, I have found it necessary to sell;\* and the State of Pennsylvania voted me five hundred pounds, their currency. But none of the States to the eastward of New York, nor to the south of Philadelphia ever made me the least acknowledgment. They had received benefits from me, which they accepted, and there the matter ended. This story will not tell in history. All the civilized world knows I have been of great service to the United States, and have generously given away talents that would have made me a fortune.

I much question if an instance is to be found in ancient or modern times of a man who had no personal interest in the cause he took up, that of independence and the establishment of the representative system of government, and who sought neither place nor office after it was established, that persevered in the same undeviating principles as I have done for more than thirty years, and that in spite of difficulties, dangers and inconveniences, of which I have had my share.

THOMAS PAINE.

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\* To Mr. Shute, in 1806, but as Mr. Shute died shortly after, and his widow found it to be an inconvenience, Paine, at her solicitation, took it back.

## TO CONGRESS.

CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVES, New York, Feb. 14, 1808.

IN my memorial to Congress of the 21st of January, I spoke of a resolve of the old Congress of three thousand dollars to me, and said that the resolve had relation to a matter it did not express; that Eldridge Gerry was chairman of the committee that brought in that resolve, and that if Congress referred the memorial to a committee, I would write to that committee and inform them of the particulars of it. It has relation to my conduct in the affair of Silas Deane and Beaumarchais. The case is as follows:

When I was appointed secretary to the committee for foreign affairs, all the papers of the secret committee, none of which had been seen by Congress, came into my hands. I saw by the correspondence of that committee with persons in Europe, particularly with Arthur Lee, that the stores which Silas Deane and Beaumarchais pretended they had purchased, were a present from the court of France, and came out of the king's arsenals. But as this was prior to the alliance, and while the English ambassador (Stormont) was at Paris, the court of France wished it not to be known, and therefore proposed that "a small quantity of tobacco or some other produce should be sent to the Cape (Cape Francaise) to give it the air of a mercantile transaction, repeating over and over again that it was for a cover only, and not for payment, as the whole remittance was gratuitous." See Arthur Lee's letters to the secret committee. See also B. Franklin's.

Knowing these things, and seeing that the public were deceived and imposed upon by the pretensions of Deane, I took the subject up, and published three pieces in Dunlap's Philadelphia paper, headed with the title of "Common Sense to the Public on Mr. Deane's affairs." John Jay was then President of Congress, Mr. Laurens having resigned in disgust.

After the third piece appeared, I received an order, dated Congress, and signed John Jay, that "Thomas Paine do attend at the bar of this house immediately," which I did.

Mr. Jay took up a newspaper and said, "Here is Mr. Dunlap's paper of December 29. In it is a piece entitled Common Sense to the Public on Mr. Deane's affairs, I am direct-

ed by Congress to ask you if you are the author." "Yes, sir, I am the author of that piece." Mr. Jay put the same question on the other two pieces and received the same answer. He then said, you may withdraw.

As soon as I was gone, John Pen, of North Carolina, moved that "Thomas Paine be discharged from the office of secretary to the committee for foreign affairs," and prating Governor Morris seconded the motion, but it was lost when put to the vote, the States being equally divided. I then wrote to Congress requesting a hearing, and Mr. Laurens made a motion for that purpose which was negatived. The next day I sent in my resignation, saying, that "as I cannot consistently with my character as a freeman submit to be censured unheard, therefore, to preserve that character and maintain that right, I think it my duty to resign the office of secretary to the committee for foreign affairs, and I do hereby resign the same."

After this I lived as well as I could, hiring myself as a clerk to Owen Biddle of Philadelphia, till the legislature of Pennsylvania appointed me clerk of the general assembly. But I still went on with my publications on Deane's affairs, till the fraud became so obvious that Congress were ashamed of supporting him, and he absconded. He went from Philadelphia to Virginia and took shipping for France, and got over to England where he died. Doctor Cutting told me he took poison. Governor Morris by way of making apology for his conduct in that affair, said to me after my return from France with Colonel Laurens, "Well! we were all duped, and I among the rest."

As the salary I had as secretary to the committee of foreign affairs was but small, being only 800 dollars a year, and as that had been fretted down by the depreciation to less than a fifth of its nominal value, I wrote to Congress, then sitting at New York, (it was after the war) to make up the depreciation of my salary, and also for some incidental expences I had been at. This letter was referred to a committee of which Elbridge Gerry was chairman.

Mr. Gerry then came to me and said that the committee had consulted on the subject, and they intended to bring in a handsome report, but that they thought it best not to take any notice of your letter or make any reference to Deane's affair or your salary. They will indemnify you, said he without it. The case is, there are some motions on the journals of Congress, for censuring you with respect to Deane's affair, which cannot now be recalled, because they have been

printed. Therefore, will bring in a report that will supersede them without mentioning the purport of your letter.

This, Citizen Representatives, is an explanation of the resolve of the old Congress. It was an indemnity to me for some injustice done me, for Congress had acted dishonourably to me. However, I prevented Deane's fraudulent demand being paid, and so far the country is obliged to me, but I became the victim of my integrity.

I preferred stating this explanation to the committee rather than to make it public in my memorial to Congress.

THOMAS PAINE.

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TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

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SIR,

New York, March 7, 1808.

I KNOW not who the Committee of Claims are, but if they are men of younger standing than "*the times that tried men's souls*," and consequently too young to know what the condition of the country was at that time I published *Common Sense*, for I do not believe independence would have been declared had it not been for the effect of that work, they are not capable of judging of the whole of the services of Thomas Paine. The president and vice-president can give you information on those subjects, so also can Mr. Smilie, who was a member of the Pennsylvania legislature at the times I am speaking of. He knows the inconveniences I was often put to, for the old Congress treated me with ingratitude. They seemed to be disgusted at my popularity, and acted towards me as a rival instead of a friend.

The explanation I sent to the committee respecting a resolve of the old Congress while they sat at New York should be known to Congress, but it seems to me that the committee keep every thing to themselves and do nothing. If my memorial was referred to the Committee of Claims, for the purpose of losing it, it is unmanly policy. After so many years of service my heart grows cold towards America.

Yours, in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. I repeat my request that you would call on the Committee of Claims to bring in their report, and that Congress would decide upon it.





THE

**Theological Works**

OF

**THOMAS PAINE.**

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# Epitaphical Epitaphs

THOMAS BAIN

1870

PRINTED BY J. B. LEECH, 15, N. B. ST. LONDON.

AND BY THE AUTHOR, 15, N. B. ST. LONDON.

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THE  
**AGE OF REASON,**

**Part the First,**

BEING

**AN INVESTIGATION**

OF

**TRUE AND FABULOUS THEOLOGY.**

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**By THOMAS PAINE.**

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**London.**

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**1819.**

# AGE OF REASON,

THE

OF

INVESTIGATION

THEORY AND PRACTICE

OF THE

OF THE

# THE AGE OF REASON.

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## *PART THE FIRST.*

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IT has been my intention, for several years past, to publish my thoughts upon religion; I am well aware of the difficulties that attend the subject, and from that consideration, had reserved it to a more advanced period of life. I intended it to be the last offering I should make to my fellow citizens of all nations, and that at a time when the purity of the motive that induced me to it, could not admit of a question, even by those who might disapprove the work.

The circumstance that has now taken place in France of the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood, and of every thing appertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary, lest, in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true.

As several of my colleagues, and others of my fellow-citizens of France, have given me the example of making their voluntary and individual profession of faith, I also will make mine; and I do this with all that sincerity and frankness with which the mind of man communicates with itself.

I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life.

I believe the equality of man; and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavouring to make our fellow creatures happy.

But, lest it should be supposed that I believe many other things in addition to these, I shall, in the progress of this work, declare the things I do not believe, and my reasons for not believing them.

I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church.

All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions, set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit.

I do not mean by this declaration to condemn those who believe otherwise; they have the same right to their belief as I have to mine. But it is necessary to the happiness of man, that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing, or in disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what he does not believe.

It is impossible to calculate the moral mischief, if I may so express it, that mental lying has produced in society. When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind, as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime. He takes up the trade of a priest for the sake of gain, and in order to qualify himself for that trade, he begins with a perjury. Can we conceive any thing more destructive to morality than this?

Soon after I had published the pamphlet, "COMMON SENSE," in America, I saw the exceeding probability that a revolution in the system of government would be followed by a revolution in the system of religion. The adulterous connection of church and state, wherever it had taken place, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, had so effectually prohibited by pains and penalties every discussion upon established creeds, and upon first principles of religion, that until the system of government should be changed, those subjects could not be brought fairly and openly before the world; but that whenever this should be done, a revolution in the system of religion would follow. Human inventions and priestcraft would be detected; and man would return to the pure, unmixed, and unadulterated belief of one God, and no more.

Every national church or religion has established itself by pretending some special mission from God, communicated to certain individuals. The Jews have their Moses; the Christians their Jesus Christ, their apostles, and saints; and the Turks their Mahomet, as if the way to God was not open to every man alike.

Each of those churches shew certain books, which they call *revelation*, or the word of God. The Jews say, that



their word of God was given by God to Moses, face to face ; the Christians say, that their word of God came by divine inspiration ; and the Turks say, that their word of God (the Koran) was brought by an angel from Heaven. Each of those churches accuse the other of unbelief ; and, for my own part, I disbelieve them all.

As it is necessary to affix right ideas to words, I will, before I proceed further into the subject, offer some other observations on the word *revelation*. Revelation, when applied to religion, means something communicated *immediately* from God to man.

No one will deny or dispute the power of the Almighty to make such a communication, if he pleases. But admitting, for the sake of a case, that something has been revealed to a certain person, and not revealed to any other person, it is revelation to that person only. When he tells it to a second person, a second to a third, a third to a fourth, and so on, it ceases to be a revelation to all those persons. It is revelation to the first person only, and *hearsay* to every other, and, consequently, they are not obliged to believe it.

It is a contradiction in terms and ideas, to call any thing a revelation that comes to us at second-hand, either verbally or in writing. Revelation is necessarily limited to the first communication—after this, it is only an account of something which that person says was a revelation made to him ; and though he may find himself obliged to believe it, it cannot be incumbent on me to believe it in the same manner ; for it was not a revelation made to *me*, and I have only his word for it that it was made to him.

When Moses told the children of Israel that he received the two tables of the commandments from the hands of God, they were not obliged to believe him, because they had no other authority for it than his telling them so ; and I have no other authority for it than some historian telling me so. The commandments carry no internal evidence of divinity with them ; they contain some good moral precepts, such as any man qualified to be a lawgiver, or a legislator, could produce himself, without having recourse to supernatural intervention\*.

When I am told that the Koran was written in Heaven and brought to Mahomet by an angel, the account comes too

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\* It is, however, necessary to except the declaration which says that God *visits the sins of the fathers upon the children* ; it is contrary to every principle of moral justice.

near the same kind of hearsay evidence and second-hand authority as the former. I did not see the angel myself, and, therefore, I have a right not to believe it.

When also I am told that a woman, called the Virgin Mary, said, or gave out, that she was with child without any cohabitation with a man, and that her betrothed husband, Joseph, said, that an angel told him so, I have a right to believe them or not; such a circumstance required a much stronger evidence than their bare word for it; but we have not even this—for neither Joseph nor Mary wrote any such matter themselves; it is only reported by others that *they said so*—it is hearsay upon hearsay, and I do not choose to rest my belief upon such evidence.

It is, however, not difficult to account for the credit that was given to the story of Jesus Christ being the son of God. He was born when the heathen mythology had still some fashion and repute in the world, and that mythology had prepared the people for the belief of such a story. Almost all the extraordinary men that lived under the heathen mythology were reputed to be the sons of some of their gods. It was not a new thing, at that time, to believe a man to have been celestially begotten; the intercourse of gods with women was then a matter of familiar opinion. Their Jupiter, according to their accounts, had cohabited with hundreds; the story, therefore, had nothing in it either new, wonderful, or obscene; it was conformable to the opinions that then prevailed among the people called Gentiles, or Mythologists, and it was those people only that believed it. The Jews, who had kept strictly to the belief of one God, and no more, and who had always rejected the heathen mythology, never credited the story.

It is curious to observe how the theory of what is called the Christian church, sprung out of the tail of the heathen mythology. A direct incorporation took place in the first instance, by making the reputed founder to be celestially begotten. The trinity of gods that then followed was no other than a reduction of the former plurality, which was about twenty or thirty thousand; the statue of Mary succeeded the statue of Diana of Ephesus; the deification of heroes changed into the canonization of saints; the Mythologists had gods for every thing; the Christian Mythologists had saints for every thing; the church became as crowded with the one, as the pantheon had been with the other; and Rome was the place of both. The Christian theory is little else than the idolatry of the ancient Mythologists, accommodated to the purposes of power and revenue; and it yet

remains to reason and philosophy to abolish the amphibious fraud.

Nothing that is here said can apply, even with the most distant disrespect, to the *real* character of Jesus Christ. He was a virtuous and an amiable man. The morality that he preached and practised was of the most benevolent kind; and though similar systems of morality had been preached by Confucius, and by some of the Greek philosophers, many years before; by the Quakers since; and by many good men in all ages, it has not been exceeded by any.

Jesus Christ wrote no account of himself, of his birth, parentage, or any thing else; not a line of what is called the New Testament is of his own writing. The history of him is altogether the work of other people; and as to the account given of his resurrection and ascension, it was the necessary counterpart to the story of his birth. His historians, having brought him into the world in a supernatural manner, were obliged to take him out again in the same manner, or the first part of the story must have fallen to the ground.

The wretched contrivance with which this latter part is told, exceeds every thing that went before it. The first part, that of the miraculous conception, was not a thing that admitted of publicity; and therefore the tellers of this part of the story had this advantage, that though they might not be credited, they could not be detected. They could not be expected to prove it, because it was not one of those things that admitted of proof, and it was impossible that the person of whom it was told could prove it himself.

But the resurrection of a dead person from the grave, and his ascension through the air, is a thing very different as to the evidence it admits of, to the invisible conception of a child in the womb. The resurrection and ascension, supposing them to have taken place, admitted of public and ocular demonstration, like that of the ascension of a balloon, or the sun at noon day, to all Jerusalem at least. A thing which every body is required to believe, requires that the proof and evidence of it should be equal to all, and universal; and as the public visibility of this last related act was the only evidence that could give sanction to the former part, the whole of it falls to the ground, because that evidence never was given. Instead of this, a small number of persons, not more than eight or nine, are introduced as proxies for the whole world, to say they saw it, and all the rest of the world are called upon to believe it. But it appears that Thomas did not believe the resurrection; and,

as they say would not believe without having ocular and manual demonstration himself. *So neither will I*, and the reason is equally as good for me, and for every other person, as for Thomas.

It is in vain to attempt to palliate or disguise this matter. The story, so far as relates to the supernatural part, has every mark of fraud and imposition stamped upon the face of it. Who were the authors of it is as impossible for us now to know, as it is for us to be assured, that the books in which the account is related, were written by the persons whose names they bear; the best surviving evidence we now have respecting this affair is the Jews. They are regularly descended from the people who lived in the times this resurrection and ascension is said to have happened, and they say, *it is not true*. It has long appeared to me a strange inconsistency to cite the Jews as a proof of the truth of the story. It is just the same as if a man were to say, I will prove the truth of what I have told you, by producing the people who say it is false.

That such a person as Jesus Christ existed, and that he was crucified, which was the mode of execution at that day, are historical relations strictly within the limits of probability. He preached most excellent morality, and the equality of man; but he preached also against the corruptions and avarice of the Jewish priests, and this brought upon him the hatred and vengeance of the whole order of priesthood. The accusation which those priests brought against him, was that of sedition and conspiracy against the Roman government, to which the Jews were then subject and tributary; and it is not improbable that the Roman government might have some secret apprehension of the effects of his doctrine as well as the Jewish priests; neither is it improbable that Jesus Christ had in contemplation the delivery of the Jewish nation from the bondage of the Romans. Between the two, however, this virtuous reformer and revolutionist lost his life.

It is upon this plain narrative of facts, together with another case I am going to mention, that the Christian Mythologists, calling themselves the Christian Church, have erected their fable, which for absurdity and extravagance is not exceeded by any thing that is to be found in the mythology of the ancients.

The ancient Mythologists tell us that the race of Giants made war against Jupiter, and that one of them threw an hundred rocks against him at one throw; that Jupiter defeated him with thunder, and confined him afterwards under

Mount Etna, and that every time the Giant turns himself, Mount Etna belches fire. It is here easy to see that the circumstance of the mountain, that of its being a volcano, suggested the idea of the fable; and that the fable is made to fit and wind itself up with that circumstance.

The Christian Mythologists tell us, that their Satan made war against the Almighty, who defeated him, and confined him afterwards, not under a mountain, but in a pit. It is here easy to see that the first fable suggested the idea of the second; for the fable of Jupiter and the Giants was told many hundred years before that of Satan.

Thus far the ancient and the Christian Mythologists differ very little from each other. But the latter have contrived to carry the matter much farther. They have contrived to connect the fabulous part of the story of Jesus Christ with the fable originating from Mount Etna; and, in order to make all the parts of the story tie together, they have taken to their aid the traditions of the Jews; for the Christian mythology is made up partly from the ancient mythology, and partly from the Jewish traditions.

The Christian Mythologists, after having confined Satan in a pit, were obliged to let him out again, to bring on the sequel of the fable. He is then introduced into the Garden of Eden in the shape of a snake or a serpent, and in that shape he enters into familiar conversation with Eve, who is no way surprised to hear a snake talk; and the issue of this tête-à-tête is, that he persuades her to eat an apple, and the eating of that apple damns all mankind.

After giving Satan this triumph over the whole creation, one would have supposed that the church Mythologists would have been kind enough to send him back again to the pit; or, if they had not done this, that they would have put a mountain upon him (for they say that their faith can remove a mountain) or have put him *under* a mountain, as the former Mythologists had done, to prevent his getting again among the women, and doing more mischief. But instead of this, they leave him at large, without even obliging him to give his parole—the secret of which is, that they could not do without him; and after being at the trouble of making him, they bribed him to stay. They promised him ALL the Jews, ALL the Turks by anticipation, nine-tenths of the world beside, and Mahomet into the bargain. After this, who can doubt the bountifulness of the Christian mythology?

Having thus made an insurrection and a battle in Hea-

ven, in which none of the combatants could be either killed or wounded—put Satan into the pit—let him out again—given him a triumph over the whole creation—damned all mankind by the eating of an apple, these Christian Mythologists bring the two ends of their fable together. They represent this virtuous and amiable man, Jesus Christ, to be at once both God and Man, and also the Son of God, celestially begotten, on purpose to be sacrificed, because they say that Eve in her longing had eaten an apple.

Putting aside every thing that might excite laughter by its absurdity, or detestation by its prophaneness, and confining ourselves merely to an examination of the parts, it is impossible to conceive a story more derogatory to the Almighty, more inconsistent with his wisdom, more contradictory to his power, than this story is.

In order to make for it a foundation to rise upon, the inventors were under the necessity of giving to the being, whom they call Satan, a power equally as great, if not greater than they attribute to the Almighty. They have not only given him the power of liberating himself from the pit, after what they call his fall, but they have made that power increase afterwards to infinity. Before this fall they represent him only as an angel of limited existence, as they represent the rest. After his fall, he becomes, by their account, omnipresent. He exists everywhere, and at the same time. He occupies the whole immensity of space.

Not content with this deification of Satan, they represent him as defeating, by stratagem, in the shape of an animal of the creation, all the power and wisdom of the Almighty. They represent him as having compelled the Almighty to the *direct necessity* either of surrendering the whole of the creation to the government and sovereignty of this Satan, or of capitulating for its redemption by coming down upon earth, and exhibiting himself upon a cross in the shape of a man.

Had the inventors of this story told it the contrary way, that is, had they represented the Almighty as compelling Satan to exhibit *himself* on a cross, in the shape of a snake, as a punishment for his new transgression, the story would have been less absurd—less contradictory. But instead of this they make the transgressor triumph, and the Almighty fall.

That many good men have believed this strange fable, and lived very good lives under that belief (for credulity is not a crime) is what I have no doubt of. In the first place,

they were educated to believe it, and they would have believed any thing else in the same manner. There are also many who have been so enthusiastically enraptured by what they conceived to be the infinite love of God to man, in making a sacrifice of himself, that the vehemence of the idea has forbidden and deterred them from examining into the absurdity and profaneness of the story. The more unnatural any thing is, the more is it capable of becoming the object of dismal admiration.

But if objects for gratitude and admiration are our desire, do they not present themselves every hour to our eyes? Do we not see a fair creation prepared to receive us the instant we are born—a world furnished to our hands, that cost us nothing? Is it we that light up the sun, that pour down the rain, and fill the earth with abundance? Whether we sleep or wake, the vast machinery of the universe still goes on. Are these things, and the blessings they indicate in future, nothing to us? Can our gross feelings be excited by no other subjects than tragedy and suicide? Or is the gloomy pride of man become so intolerable, that nothing can flatter it but a sacrifice of the Creator?

I know that this bold investigation will alarm many, but it would be paying too great a compliment to their credulity to forbear it upon that account; the times and the subject demand it to be done. The suspicion that the theory of what is called the Christian church is fabulous, is becoming very extensive in all countries; and it will be a consolation to men staggering under that suspicion, and doubting what to believe and what to disbelieve, to see the subject freely investigated. I therefore pass on to an examination of the books called the Old and New Testament.

These books, beginning with Genesis and ending with Revelation (which by the bye is a book of riddles that requires a revelation to explain it) are, we are told, the word of God. It is, therefore, proper for us to know who told us so, that we may know what credit to give to the report. The answer to this question is, that nobody can tell, except that we tell one another so. The case, however, historically appears to be as follows:—

When the church Mythologists established their system, they collected all the writings they could find, and managed them as they pleased. It is a matter altogether of uncertainty to us whether such of the writings as now appear under the name of the Old and New Testament, are in the same state in which those collectors say they found them, or whether they added, altered, abridged, or dressed them up.

Be this as it may, they decided by *vote* which of the books out of the collection they had made, should be the word of God, and which should not. They rejected several; they voted others to be doubtful, such as the books called the Apocrypha; and those books which had a majority of votes, were voted to be the word of God. Had they voted otherwise, all the people, since calling themselves Christians, had believed otherwise—for the belief of the one comes from the vote of the other. Who the people were that did all this, we know nothing of, they called themselves by the general name of the Church; and this is all we know of the matter.

As we have no other external evidence or authority for believing those books to be the word of God, than what I have mentioned, which is no evidence or authority at all, I come, in the next place, to examine the internal evidence contained in the books themselves.

In the former part of this Essay, I have spoken of revelation. I now proceed further with that subject, for the purpose of applying it to the books in question.

Revelation is a communication of something, which the person, to whom that thing is revealed, did not know before. For if I have done a thing, or seen it done, it needs no revelation to tell me I have done it, or seen it, nor to enable me to tell it, or to write it.

Revelation, therefore, cannot be applied to any thing done upon earth, of which man is himself the actor or the witness; and consequently all the historical and anecdotal part of the Bible, which is almost the whole of it, is not within the meaning and compass of the word revelation, and therefore is not the word of God.

When Sampson ran off with the gate-posts of Gaza, if he ever did so (and whether he did or not is nothing to us) or when he visited his Delilah, or caught his foxes, or did any thing else, what has revelation to do with these things? If they were facts, he could tell them himself; or his secretary, if he kept one, could write them, if they were worth either telling or writing; and if they were fictitious, revelation could not make them true; and whether true or not, we are neither the better nor the wiser for knowing them.—When we contemplate the immensity of that Being, who directs and governs the incomprehensible WHOLE, of which the utmost ken of human sight can discover but a part, we ought to feel shame at calling such paltry stories the word of God.

As to the account of the Creation, with which the book of



Genesis opens, it has all the appearance of being a tradition which the Israelites had among them before they came into Egypt; and after their departure from that country, they put it at the head of their history, without telling (as it is most probable) that they did not know how they came by it. The manner in which the account opens, shews it be be traditionary. It begins abruptly: it is nobody that speaks; it is nobody that hears; it is addressed to nobody; it has neither first, second, or third person; it has every criterion of being a tradition; it has no voucher. Moses does not take it upon himself by introducing it with the formality that he uses on other occasions, such as that of saying, "*The Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*"

Why it has been called the Mosaic account of the Creation, I am at a loss to conceive. Moses, I believe, was too good a judge of such subjects to put his name to that account. He had been educated among the Egyptians, who were a people as well skilled in science, and particularly in astronomy, as any people of their day; and the silence and caution that Moses observes, in not authenticating the account, is a good negative evidence that he neither told it nor believed it.—The case is, that every nation of people has been world-makers, and the Israelites had as much right to set up the trade of world-making as any of the rest; and as Moses was not an Israelite, he might not choose to contradict the tradition. The account, however, is harmless; and this is more than can be said for many other parts of the Bible.

Whenever we read the obscene stories, the voluptuous debaucheries, the cruel and torturous executions, the unrelenting vindictiveness, with which more than half the Bible is filled, it would be more consistent that we called it the word of a Demon, than the word of God. It is a history of wickedness, that has served to corrupt and brutalize mankind; and, for my own part, I sincerely detest it as I detest every thing that is cruel.

We scarcely meet with any thing, a few phrases excepted, but what deserves either our abhorrence or our contempt, till we come to the miscellaneous parts of the Bible. In the anonymous publications, the Psalms, and the Book of Job, more particularly in the latter, we find a great deal of elevated sentiment reverentially expressed of the power and benignity of the Almighty; but they stand on no higher rank than many other compositions on similar subjects, as well before that time as since.

The Proverbs which are said to be Solomon's, though most

probably a collection (because they discover a knowledge of life, which his situation excluded him from knowing) are an instructive table of ethics. They are inferior in keenness to the proverbs of the Spaniards, and not more wise and economical than those of the American Franklin.

All the remaining parts of the Bible, generally known by the name of the Prophets, are the works of the Jewish poets and itinerant preachers, who mixed poetry, anecdote, and devotion together; and those works still retain the air and style of poetry, though in translation\*.

There is not, throughout the whole book called the Bible, any word that describes to us what we call a poet, nor any word that describes what we call poetry. The case is, that the word *prophet*, to which latter times have affixed a new idea, was the Bible word for poet, and the word *prophesying* meant the art of making poetry. It also meant the art of playing poetry to a tune upon any instrument of music.

We read of prophesying with pipes, tabrets, and horns—of prophesying with harps, with psalteries, with cymbals, and with every other instrument of music then in fashion. Were we now to speak of prophesying with a fiddle, or with a pipe and tabor, the expression would have no meaning, or would appear ridiculous, and to some people contemptuous, because we have changed the meaning of the word.

We are told of Saul being among the *prophets*, and also that he prophesied; but we are not told what *they prophesied* nor what *he prophesied*. The case is, there was nothing to tell; for these prophets were a company of musicians and poets, and Saul joined in the concert, and this was called *prophesying*.

The account given of this affair, in the book called Samuel,

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\* As there are many readers who do not see that a composition is poetry, unless it be in rhyme, it is for their information that I add this note.

Poetry consists principally in two things—imagery and composition. The composition of poetry differs from that of prose in the manner of mixing long and short syllables together. Take a long syllable out of a line of poetry, and put a short one in the room of it, or put a long syllable where a short one should be, and that line will lose its poetical harmony. It will have an effect upon the line like that of misplacing a note in a song.

is, that Saul met a *company* of prophets; a whole company of them! coming down with a psaltery, a tabret, a pipe, and a harp, and that they prophesied, and that he prophesied with them. But it appears afterwards, that Saul prophesied badly, that is, he performed his part badly; for it is said, that an "*evil spirit from God*"\* came upon Saul, and he prophesied.

Now, were there no other passage in the book, called the Bible, than this, to demonstrate to us that we have lost the original meaning of the word *prophesy*, and substituted another meaning in its place, this alone would be sufficient; for it is impossible to use and apply the word *prophesy*, in the place it is here used and applied, if we give to it the sense which latter times have affixed to it. The manner in which it is here used strips it of all religious meaning, and shews that a man might then be a prophet, or might *prophesy*, as he may now be a poet or a musician, without any regard to the morality or the immorality of his character. The word was originally a term of science, promiscuously ap-

The imagery in those books, called the prophets, appertains altogether to poetry. It is fictitious, and often extravagant, and not admissible in any other kind of writing than poetry.

To shew that these writings are composed in poetical numbers, I will take ten syllables, as they stand in the book, and make a line of the same number of syllables (heroic measure) that shall rhyme with the last word. It will then be seen, that the composition of those books is poetical measure. The instance I shall produce is from Isaiah:—

"*Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth!*"

'Tis God himself that calls attention forth.

Another instance I shall quote is from the mournful Jeremiah, to which I shall add two other lines, for the purpose of carrying out the figure, and shewing the intention of the poet.

"*O ! that mine head were waters and mine eyes*"

Were fountains, flowing like the liquid skies;

Then would I give the mighty flood release,

And weep a deluge for the human race.

\* As those men, who call themselves divines and commentators, are very fond of puzzling one another, I leave them to contest the meaning of the first part of the phrase, that of *an evil spirit of God*. I keep to my text—I keep to the meaning of the word *prophesy*.

plied to poetry and to music, and not restricted to any subject upon which poetry and music might be exercised.

Deborah and Barak are called prophets, not because they predicted any thing, but because they composed the poem or song that bears their name, in celebration of an act already done. David is ranked among the prophets, for he was a musician, and was also reputed to be (though perhaps very erroneously) the author of the Psalms. But Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not called prophets; it does not appear from any accounts we have that they could either sing, play music, or make poetry.

We are told of the greater and the lesser prophets. They might as well tell us of the greater and the lesser God; for there cannot be degrees in prophesying, consistently with its modern sense. But there are degrees in poetry, and therefore the phrase is reconcileable to the case, when we understand by it the greater and the lesser poets.

It is altogether unnecessary, after this, to offer any observations upon what those men, styled prophets, have written. The axe goes at once to the root, by shewing that the original meaning of the word has been mistaken, and consequently all the inferences that have been drawn from those books, the devotional respect that has been paid to them, and the laboured commentaries that have been written upon them, under that mistaken meaning, are not worth disputing about.—In many things, however, the writings of the Jewish poets deserve a better fate than that of being bound up, as they now are, with the trash that accompanies them, under the abused name of the word of God.

If we permit ourselves to conceive right ideas of things, we must necessarily affix the idea, not only of unchangeableness, but of the utter impossibility of any change taking place, by any means or accident whatever, in that which we would honour with the name of the word of God; and therefore the word of God cannot exist in any written or human language.

The continually progressive change to which the meaning of words is subject, the want of an universal language which renders translation necessary, the errors to which translations are again subject, the mistakes of copyists and printers, together with the possibility of wilful alteration, are of themselves evidences that human language, whether in speech or in print, cannot be the vehicle of the word of God.—The word of God exists in something else.

Did the book, called the Bible, excel in purity of ideas

and expression all the books that are now extant in the world, I would not take it for my rule of faith, as being the word of God, because the possibility would nevertheless exist of my being imposed upon. But when I see, throughout the greatest part of this book, scarcely any thing but a history of the grossest vices, and a collection of the most paltry and contemptible tales, I cannot dishonour my Creator by calling it by his name.

Thus much for the Bible; I now go on to the book called the New Testament. The *New Testament*! that is, the *new will*, as if there could be two wills of the Creator.

Had it been the object or the intention of Jesus Christ to establish a new religion, he would undoubtedly have written the system himself, or *procured it to be written* in his life time. But there is no publication extant authenticated with his name. All the books called the New Testament were written after his death. He was a Jew by birth and by profession; and he was the son of God in like manner that every other person is—for the Creator is the Father of All.

The first four books, called Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, do not give a history of the life of Jesus Christ, but only detached anecdotes of him. It appears from these books, that the whole time of his being a preacher was not more than eighteen months; and it was only during this short time that those men became acquainted with him. They make mention of him at the age of twelve years, sitting, they say, among the Jewish doctors, asking and answering them questions. As this was several years before their acquaintance with him began, it is most probable they had this anecdote from his parents. From this time there is no account of him for about sixteen years. Where he lived, or how he employed himself during this interval, is not known. Most probably he was working at his father's trade, which was that of a carpenter. It does not appear that he had any school education, and the probability is, that he could not write, for his parents were extremely poor, as appears from their not being able to pay for a bed when he was born.

It is somewhat curious that the three persons whose names are the most universally recorded, were of very obscure parentage. Moses was a foundling; Jesus Christ was born in a stable; and Mahomet was a mule driver. The first and the last of these men, were founders of different systems of religion; but Jesus Christ founded no new system. He called men to the practice of moral virtues,

and the belief of one God. The great trait in his character is philanthropy.

The manner in which he was apprehended, shews that he was not much known at that time; and it shews also, that the meetings he then held with his followers were in secret; and that he had given over or suspended preaching publicly. Judas could no otherwise betray him than by giving information where he was, and pointing him out to the officers that went to arrest him; and the reason for employing and paying Judas to do this could arise only from the causes already mentioned, that of his not being much known, and living concealed.

The idea of his concealment, not only agrees very ill with his reputed divinity, but associates with it something of pusillanimity; and his being betrayed, or in other words, his being apprehended, on the information of one of his followers, shews that he did not intend to be apprehended, and consequently that he did not intend to be crucified.

The Christian Mythologists tell us, that Christ died for the sins of the world, and that he came on *purpose to die*. Would it not then have been the same if he had died of a fever or of the small-pox, of old age, or of any thing else?

The declaratory sentence which, they say, was passed upon Adam, in case he eat of the apple, was not, that *thou shalt surely be crucified, but thou shalt surely die*—the sentence of death, and not the manner of dying. Crucifixion, therefore, or any other particular manner of dying, made no part of the sentence that Adam was to suffer, and consequently, even upon their own tactics, it could make no part of the sentence that Christ was to suffer in the room of Adam. A fever would have done as well as a cross, if there was any occasion for either.

This sentence of death, which they tell us, was thus passed upon Adam, must either have meant dying naturally, that is, ceasing to live, or have meant what these Mythologists call damnation; and, consequently, the act of dying on the part of Jesus Christ, must according to their system, apply as a prevention to one or other of these two *things* happening to Adam and to us.

That it does not prevent our dying is evident, because we all die; and if their accounts of longevity be true, men die faster since the crucifixion than before; and with respect to the second explanation, (including with it the *natural death* of Jesus Christ as a substitute for the *eternal death or damnation* of all mankind) it is impertinently re-

presenting the Creator as coming off, or revoking the sentence, by a pun or a quibble upon the word *death*. That manufacturer of quibbles, St. Paul, if he wrote the books that bear his name, has helped this quibble on by making another quibble upon the word *Adam*. He makes there to be two Adams; the one who sins in fact, and suffers by proxy; the other who sins by proxy, and suffers in fact. A religion thus interlarded with quibble, subterfuge, and pun, has a tendency to instruct its professors in the practice of these arts. They acquire the habit without being aware of the cause.

If Jesus Christ was the being which those Mythologists tell us he was, and that he came into this world to *suffer*, which is a word they sometimes use instead of *to die*, the only real suffering he could have endured, would have been *to live*. His existence here was a state of exilement or transportation from Heaven, and the way back to his original country was to die.—In fine, every thing in this strange system is the reverse of what it pretends to be. It is the reverse of truth, and I become so tired with examining into its inconsistencies and absurdities, that I hasten to the conclusion of it, in order to proceed to something better.

How much, or what parts of the books called the New Testament, were written by the persons whose names they bear, is what we can know nothing of, neither are we certain in what language they were originally written. The matters they now contain may be classed under two heads—*anecdote and epistolary correspondence*.

The four books already mentioned, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, are altogether anecdotal. They relate events after they had taken place. They tell what Jesus Christ did and said, and what others did and said to him; and in several instances they relate the same event differently. Revelation is necessarily out of the question with respect to those books; not only because of the disagreement of the writers, but because revelation cannot be applied to the relating of facts by the persons who saw them done, nor to the relating or recording of any discourse or conversation by those who heard it. The book called the Acts of the Apostles (an anonymous work) belongs also to the anecdotal part.

All the other parts of the New Testament, except the book of enigmas, called the Revelations, are a collection of letters under the name of epistles; and the forgery of letters

has been such a common practice in the world, that the probability is at least equal, whether they are genuine or forged. One thing, however, is much less equivocal, which is, that out of the matters contained in those books, together with the assistance of some old stories, the church has set up a system of religion very contradictory to the character of the person whose name it bears. It has set up a religion of pomp and of revenue, in pretended imitation of a person whose life was humility and poverty.

The invention of purgatory, and of the releasing of souls therefrom, by prayers, bought of the church with money; the selling of pardons, dispensations, and indulgencies, are revenue laws, without bearing that name or carrying that appearance. But the case nevertheless is, that those things derive their origin from the paroxysm of the crucifixion and the theory deduced therefrom, which was, that one person could stand in the place of another, and could perform meritorious services for him. The probability, therefore, is, that the whole theory or doctrine of what is called the redemption (which is said to have been accomplished by the act of one person in the room of another) was originally fabricated on purpose to bring forward and build all those secondary and pecuniary redemptions upon; and that the passages in the books upon which the idea of theory of redemption is built, have been manufactured and fabricated for that purpose. Why are we to give this church credit, when she tells us that those books are genuine in every part, any more than we give her credit for every thing else she has told us; or for the miracles she says she has performed? That she *could* fabricate writings is certain, because she could write; and the composition of the writings in question, is of that kind that any body might do it; and that she *did* fabricate them is not more inconsistent with probability, than that she should tell us, as she has done, that she could and did work miracles.

Since then no external evidence can, at this long distance of time, be produced to prove whether the church fabricated the doctrines called redemption or not, (for such evidence, whether for or against, would be subject to the same suspicion of being fabricated) the case can only be referred to the internal evidence which the thing carries of itself; and this affords a very strong presumption of its being a fabrication. For the internal evidence is, that the theory or doctrine of redemption has for its basis an idea of pecuniary justice, and not that of moral justice.



If I owe a person money, and cannot pay him, and he threatens to put me in prison, another person can take the debt upon himself, and pay it for me ; but if I have committed a crime, every circumstance of the case is changed, moral justice cannot take the innocent for the guilty, even if the innocent would offer itself. To suppose justice to do this, is to destroy the principle of its existence, which is the thing itself; it is then no longer justice; it is indiscriminate revenge.

This single reflection will shew that the doctrine of redemption is founded on a mere pecuniary idea, corresponding to that of a debt, which another person might pay; and as this pecuniary idea corresponds again with the system of second redemptions, obtained through the means of money given to the church for pardons, the probability is, that the same persons fabricated both the one and the other of those theories; and that, in truth, there is no such thing as redemption; that it is fabulous, and that man stands in the same relative condition with his Maker he ever did stand, since man existed, and that it is his greatest consolation to think so.

Let him believe this, and he will live more consistently and morally than by any other system; it is by his being taught to contemplate himself as an out-law, as an out-cast, as a beggar, as a mumper, as one thrown, as it were, on a dunghill, at an immense distance from his Creator, and who must make his approaches by creeping and cringing to intermediate beings, that he conceives either a contemptuous disregard for every thing under the name of religion, or becomes indifferent, or turns, what he calls, devout. In the latter case, he consumes his life in grief, or the affectation of it; his prayers are reproaches; his humility is ingratitude; he calls himself a worm, and the fertile earth a dunghill; and all the blessings of life, by the thankless name of vanities; he despises the choicest gift of God to man, the GIFT OF REASON; and having endeavoured to force upon himself the belief of a system against which reason revolts, he ungratefully calls it *human reason*, as if man could give reason to himself.

Yet, with all this strange appearance of humility, and this contempt for human reason, he ventures into the boldest presumptions; he finds fault with every thing; his selfishness is never satisfied; his ingratitude is never at an end. He takes on himself to direct the Almighty what to do, even in the government of the universe; he prays dicta-

torially ; when it is sun-shine, he prays for rain, and when it is rain, he prays for sun-shine ; he follows the same idea in every thing that he prays for ; for what is the amount of all his prayers, but an attempt to make the Almighty change his mind, and act otherwise than he does ? It is as if he were to say—thou knowest not so well as I.

But some perhaps will say, Are we to have no word of God—No revelation ? I answer, Yes : there is a word of God ; there is a revelation.

THE WORD OF GOD, IS THE CREATION WE BEHOLD : And it is in *this word*, which no human invention can counterfeit or alter, that God speaketh universally to man.

Human language is local and changeable, and is therefore incapable of being used as the means of unchangeable and universal information. The idea that God sent Jesus Christ to publish, as they say, the glad tidings to all nations, from one end of the earth to the other, is consistent only with the ignorance of those who knew nothing of the extent of the world, and who believed, as those world-saviours believed, and continued to believe, for several centuries, (and that in contradiction to the discoveries of philosophers, and the experience of navigators) that the earth was flat like a trencher ; and that a man might walk to the end of it.

But how was Jesus Christ to make any thing known to all nations ? He could speak but one language, which was Hebrew ; and there are in the world several hundred languages. Scarcely any two nations speak the same language, or understand each other ; and as to translations, every man who knows any thing of languages, knows that it is impossible to translate from one language to another, not only without losing a great part of the original, but frequently of mistaking the sense ; and besides all this, the art of printing was wholly unknown at the time Christ lived.

It is always necessary that the means that are to accomplish any end, be equal to the accomplishment of that end, or the end cannot be accomplished. It is in this, that the difference between finite and infinite power and wisdom discovers itself. Man frequently fails in accomplishing his ends, from a natural inability of the power to the purpose ; and frequently from the want of wisdom to apply power properly. But it is impossible for infinite power and wisdom to fail as man faileth. The means it useth are always equal to the end ; but human language, more especially as there is not an universal language, is incapable of being used as an universal means of unchangeable and uniform information,

and therefore it is not the means that God useth in manifesting himself universally to man.

It is only in the CREATION that all our ideas and conceptions of a *word of God* can unite. The Creation speaketh an universal language, independently of human speech or human language, multiplied and various as they be. It is an ever-existing original, which every man can read. It cannot be forged; it cannot be counterfeited; it cannot be lost; it cannot be altered; it cannot be suppressed. It does not depend upon the will of man whether it shall be published or not; it publishes itself from one end of the earth to the other. It preaches to all nations and to all worlds; and this *word of God* reveals to man all that is necessary for man to know of God.

Do we want to contemplate his power? We see it in the immensity of the Creation. Do we want to contemplate his wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed. Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful. In fine, do we want to know what God is? Search not the book called the Scripture, which any human hand might make, but the Scripture called the Creation.

The only idea man can affix to the name of God, is that of a *first cause*, the cause of all things. And incomprehensible and difficult as it is for a man to conceive what a first cause is, he arrives at the belief of it, from the tenfold greater difficulty of disbelieving it. It is difficult beyond description to conceive that space can have no end; but it is more difficult to conceive an end. It is difficult beyond the power of man to conceive an eternal duration of what we call time; but it is more impossible to conceive a time when there shall be no time. In like manner of reasoning, every thing we behold carries in itself the internal evidence that it did not make itself. Every man is an evidence to himself, that he did not make himself; neither could his father make himself, nor his grandfather, nor any of his race; neither could any tree, plant, or animal make itself; and it is the conviction arising from this evidence, that carries us on, as it were, by necessity, to the belief of a first cause eternally existing, of a nature totally different to any material existence we know of, and by the power of which all things exist; and this first cause man calls God.

It is only by the exercise of reason, that man can dis-

cover God. Take away that reason, and he would be incapable of understanding any thing; and, in this case, it would be just as consistent to read even the book called the Bible to a horse as to a man. How then is it that those people pretend to reject reason?

Almost the only parts in the book called the Bible, that convey us to any idea of God, are some chapters in Job, and the 19th Psalm; I recollect no other. Those parts are true *deistical* compositions; for they treat of the *Deity* through his works. They take the book of Creation as the word of God, they refer to no other book, and all the inferences they make are drawn from that volume.

I insert, in this place, the 19th Psalm, as paraphrased into English verse by Addison. I recollect not the prose, and where I write this I have not the opportunity of seeing it.

The spacious firmament on high,  
With all the blue ethereal sky,  
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,  
Their great original proclaim.  
The unwearied sun, from day to day,  
Does his Creator's power display,  
And publishes to every land,  
The work of an Almighty hand.  
Soon as the evening shades prevail,  
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,  
And nightly to the list'ning earth  
Repeats the story of her birth;  
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,  
And all the planets, in their turn,  
Confirm the tidings as they roll,  
And spread the truth from pole to pole.  
What though in solemn silence all  
Move round this dark terrestrial ball;  
What though no real voice, nor sound,  
Amidst their radiant orbs be found,  
In reason's ear they all rejoice,  
And utter forth a glorious voice,  
For ever singing as they shine,  
THE HAND THAT MADE US IS DIVINE.

What more does man want to know than that the hand, or power, that made these things is divine, is omnipotent? Let him believe this with the force it is impossible to repel, if he permits his reason to act, and his rule of moral life will follow of course.

The allusions in Job have all of them the same tendency

with this Psalm : that of deducing or proving a truth, that would be otherwise unknown, from truths already known.

I recollect not enough of the passages in Job, to insert them correctly : but there is one occurs to me that is applicable to the subject I am speaking upon. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?"

I know not how the printers have pointed this passage, for I keep no Bible ; but it contains two distinct questions, that admit of distinct answers.

First—Canst thou by searching find out God? Yes ; because in the first place, I know I did not make myself, and yet I have existence ; and by *searching* into the nature of other things, I find that no other thing could make itself ; and yet millions of other things exist ; therefore it is, that I know, by positive conclusion resulting from this search, that there is a power superior to all those things, and that power is God.

Secondly—Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? No ; not only because the power and wisdom He has manifested in the structure of the Creation that I behold, is to me incomprehensible, but because even this manifestation, great as it is, is probably but a small display of that immensity of power and wisdom, by which millions of other worlds, to me invisible by their distance, were created and continue to exist.

It is evident, that both these questions were put to the reason of the person to whom they are supposed to have been addressed ; and it is only by admitting the first question to be answered affirmatively, that the second could follow. It would have been unnecessary, and even absurd, to have put a second question, more difficult than the first, if the first question had been answered negatively. The two questions have different objects ; the first refers to the existence of God, the second to his attributes ; reason can discover the one, but it falls infinitely short in discovering the whole of the other. I recollect not a single passage in all the writings ascribed to the men called apostles, that convey any idea of what God is. Those writings are chiefly controversial ; and the subject they dwell upon, that of a man dying in agony on a cross, is better suited to the gloomy genius of a monk in a cell, by whom it is not impossible they were written, than to any man breathing the open air of the Creation. The only passage that occurs to me, that has any reference to the works of God, by which only his power and wis-

dom can be known, is related to have been spoken by Jesus Christ, as a remedy against distrustful care. "Behold the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin." This, however, is far inferior to the allusions in Job, and in the 19th Psalm; but it is similar in idea, and the modesty of the imagery is correspondent to the modesty of the man.

As to the Christian system of faith, it appears to me as a species of atheism—a sort of religious denial of God. It professes to believe in a man rather than in God. It is a compound made up chiefly of manism with but little deism, and is as near to atheism as twilight is to darkness. It introduces between man and his Maker an opaque body, which it calls a Redeemer, as the moon introduces her opaque self between the earth and the sun, and it produces by this means a religious or an irreligious eclipse of light. It has put the whole orbit of reason into shade.

The effect of this obscurity has been that of turning every thing upside down, and representing it in reverse; and among the revolutions it has thus magically produced, it has made a revolution in Theology.

That which is now called natural philosophy, embracing the whole circle of science, of which Astronomy occupies the chief place, is the study of the works of God, and of the power and wisdom of God in his works, and is the true theology.

As to the theology that is now studied in its place, it is the study of human opinions, and of human fancies concerning God. It is not the study of God himself in the works that he has made, but in the works or writings that man has made; and it is not among the least of the mischiefs that the Christian system has done to the world, that it has abandoned the original and beautiful system of theology, like a beautiful innocent, to distress and reproach, to make room for the hag of superstition.

The book of Job, and the 19th Psalm, which even the church admits to be more ancient than the chronological order in which they stand in the book called the Bible, are theological orations conformable to the original system of theology. The internal evidence of those orations proves to a demonstration that the study and contemplation of the works of Creation, and of the power and wisdom of God, revealed and manifested in those works, made a great part of the religious devotion of the times in which they were written; and it was this devotional study and contemplation

that led to the discovery of the principles upon which, what are now called Sciences, are established; and it is to the discovery of these principles that almost all the Arts that contribute to the convenience of human life, owe their existence. Every principal art has some science for its parent, though the person who mechanically performs the work does not always, and but very seldom, perceive the connexion.

It is a fraud of the Christian system to call the sciences *human invention*; it is only the application of them that is human. Every science has for its basis a system of principles as fixed and unalterable as those by which the universe is regulated and governed. Man cannot make principles; he can only discover them:

For example—Every person who looks at an Almanack sees an account when an eclipse will take place, and he sees also that it never fails to take place according to the account there given. This shews that man is acquainted with the laws by which the heavenly bodies move. But it would be something worse than ignorance, were any church on earth to say, that those laws are an human invention. It would also be ignorance, or something worse, to say that the scientific principles, by the aid of which man is enabled to calculate and foreknow when an eclipse will take place, are an human invention. Man cannot invent any thing that is eternal and immutable; and the scientific principles he employs for this purpose must, and are, of necessity, as eternal and immutable as the laws by which the heavenly bodies move, or they could not be used as they are to ascertain the time when, and the manner how, an eclipse will take place.

The scientific principles that man employs to obtain the fore-knowledge of an eclipse, or of any thing else, relating to the motion of the heavenly bodies, are contained chiefly in that part of science which is called Trigonometry, or the properties of a triangle, which when applied to the study of the heavenly bodies, is called Astronomy; when applied to direct the course of a ship on the ocean, it is called Navigation; when applied to the construction of figures drawn by rule and compass, it is called Geometry; when applied to the construction of plans of edifices, it is called Architecture; when applied to the measurement of any portion of the surface of the earth, it is called Land-surveying. In fine, it is the soul of science; it is an eternal truth; it contains the *mathematical demonstration* of which man speaks, and the extent of its uses is unknown.

It may be said, that man can make or draw a triangle, and therefore a triangle is an human invention.

But the triangle, when drawn, is no other than the image of the principle; it is a delineation to the eye, and from thence to the mind, of a principle that would otherwise be imperceptible. The triangle does not make the principle, any more than a candle taken into a room that was dark, makes the chairs and tables that before were invisible. All the properties of a triangle exist independently of the figure, and existed before any triangle was drawn or thought of by man. Man had no more to do in the formation of those properties or principles, than he had to do in making the laws by which the heavenly bodies move; and therefore the one must have the same divine origin as the other.

In the same manner as it may be said, that man can make a triangle, so also may it be said, he can make the mechanical instrument called a lever; but the principle, by which the lever acts, is a thing distinct from the instrument, and would exist if the instrument did not: it attaches itself to the instrument after it is made; the instrument, therefore, can act no otherwise than it does act; neither can all the efforts of human invention make it act otherwise. That which, in all such cases, man calls the *effect*, is no other than the principle itself rendered perceptible to the senses.

Since then man cannot make principles, from whence did he gain a knowledge of them, so as to be able to apply them, not only to things on earth, but to ascertain the motion of bodies so immensely distant from him as all the heavenly bodies are? From whence, I ask, *could* he gain that knowledge, but from the study of the true theology?

It is the structure of the universe that has taught this knowledge to man. That structure is an ever-existing exhibition of every principle upon which every part of mathematical science is founded. The offspring of this science is mechanics; for mechanics is no other than the principles of science applied practically. The man who proportions the several parts of a mill, uses the same scientific principles, as if he had the power of constructing an universe; but as he cannot give to matter that invisible agency, by which all the component parts of the immense machine of the universe have influence upon each other, and act in motional unison together, without any apparent contact, and to which man has given the name of attraction, gravitation, and repulsion, he supplies the place of that agency by the humble imitation of teeth and cogs. All the parts of man's microcosm



must visibly touch; but could he gain a knowledge of that agency, so as to be able to apply it in practice, we might then say, that another *canonical book* of the word of God had been discovered.

If man could alter the properties of the lever, so also could he alter the properties of the triangle; for a lever (taking that sort of lever which is called a steel-yard, for the sake of explanation) forms, when in motion, a triangle. The line it descends from, (one point of that line being in the fulcrum) the line it descends to, and the cord of the arc, which the end of the lever describes in the air, are the three sides of a triangle. The other arm of the lever describes also a triangle; and the corresponding sides of those two triangles, calculated scientifically, or measured geometrically; and also the sines, tangents, and secants generated from the angles, and geometrically measured, have the same proportions to each other, as the different weights have that will balance each other on the lever, leaving the weight of the lever out of the case.

It may also be said, that man can make a wheel and axis; that he can put wheels of different magnitudes together, and produce a mill. Still the case comes back to the same point, which is, that he did not make the principle that gives the wheels those powers. That principle is as unalterable as in the former cases, or rather it is the same principle under a different appearance to the eye.

The power that two wheels, of different magnitudes, have upon each other, is in the same proportion as if the semi-diameter of the two wheels were joined together and made into that kind of lever I have described, suspended at the part where the semi-diameters join; for the two wheels, scientifically considered, are no other than the two circles generated by the motion of the compound lever.

It is from the study of the true theology that all our knowledge of science is derived, and it is from that knowledge that all the arts have originated.

The Almighty lecturer, by displaying the principles of science in the structure of the universe, has invited man to study and to imitation. It is as if he had said to the inhabitants of this globe, that we call ours, "I have made an earth for man to dwell upon, and I have rendered the starry heavens visible, to teach him science and the arts. He can now provide for his own comfort, AND LEARN FROM MY MUNIFICENCE TO ALL, TO BE KIND TO EACH OTHER."

Of what use is it, unless it be to teach man something, that his eye is endowed with the power of beholding, to an incomprehensible distance, an immensity of worlds revolving in the ocean of space? Or of what use is it that this immensity of worlds is visible to man? What has man to do with the Pleiades, with Orion, with Sirius, with the star he calls the north star, with the moving orbs he has named Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury, if no uses are to follow from their being visible? A less power of vision would have been sufficient for man, if the immensity he now possesses were given only to waste itself, as it were, on an immense desert of space glittering with shows.

It is only by contemplating what he calls the starry heavens, as the book and school of science, that he discovers any use in their being visible to him, or any advantage resulting from his immensity of vision. But when he contemplates the subject in this light, he sees an additional motive for saying, that *nothing was made in vain*; for in vain would be this power of vision if it taught man nothing.

As the Christian system of faith has made a revolution in theology, so also has it made a revolution in the state of learning. That which is now called learning was not learning originally. Learning does not consist, as the schools now make it consist, in the knowledge of languages, but in the knowledge of things to which language gives names.

The Greeks were a learned people, but learning with them did not consist in speaking Greek, any more than in a Roman's speaking Latin, or a Frenchman's speaking French, or an Englishman's speaking English. From what we know of the Greeks, it does not appear that they knew or studied any language but their own, and this was one cause of their becoming so learned; it afforded them more time to apply themselves to better studies. The schools of the Greeks were schools of science and philosophy, and not of languages; and it is in the knowledge of the things that science and philosophy teach, that learning consists.

Almost all the scientific learning that now exists, came to us from the Greeks, or the people who spoke the Greek language. It, therefore, became necessary for the people of other nations, who spoke a different language, that some among them should learn the Greek language, in order that the learning the Greeks had, might be made known in those nations, by translating the Greek books of science and philosophy into the mother tongue of each nation.

The study therefore of the Greek language (and in the

same manner for the Latin) was no other than the drudgery business of a linguist; and the language thus obtained, was no other than the means, as it were the tools, employed to obtain the learning the Greeks had. It made no part of the learning itself; and was so distinct from it, as to make it exceedingly probable that the persons who had studied Greek sufficiently to translate those works, such, for instance, as Euclid's Elements, did not understand any of the learning the works contained.

As there is now nothing new to be learned from the dead languages, all the useful books being already translated, the languages are become useless, and the time expended in teaching and in learning them is wasted. So far as the study of languages may contribute to the progress and communication of knowledge, (for it has nothing to do with the *creation* of knowledge) it is only in the living languages that new knowledge is to be found; and certain it is, that, in general, a youth will learn more of a living language in one year, than of a dead language in seven; and it is but seldom that the teacher knows much of it himself. The difficulty of learning the dead languages does not arise from any superior abstruseness in the languages themselves, but in their *being dead*, and the pronunciation entirely lost. It would be the same thing with any other language when it becomes dead. The best Greek linguist that now exists, does not understand Greek so well as a Grecian ploughman did, or a Grecian milkmaid; and the same for the Latin, compared with a ploughman or milkmaid of the Romans; and with respect to the pronunciation and idiom, not so well as the cows that she milked. It would therefore be advantageous to the state of learning to abolish the study of the dead languages, and to make learning consist, as it originally did, in scientific knowledge.

The apology that is sometimes made for continuing to teach the dead languages is, that they are taught at a time when a child is not capable of exerting any other mental faculty than that of memory; but that is altogether erroneous. The human mind has a natural disposition to scientific knowledge, and to the things connected with it. The first and favourite amusement of a child, even before it begins to play, is that of imitating the works of man. It builds houses with cards or sticks; it navigates the little ocean of a bowl of water with a paper boat, or dams the stream of a gutter, and contrives something which it calls a mill; and it interests itself in the fate of its works with a care that re-

sensibles affection. It afterwards goes to school, where its genius is killed by the barren study of a dead language, and the philosopher is lost in the linguist.

But the apology that is now made for continuing to teach the dead languages, could not be the cause, at first, of cutting down learning to the narrow and humble sphere of linguistry; the cause, therefore, must be sought for elsewhere. In all researches of this kind, the best evidence that can be produced, is the internal evidence the thing carries with itself, and the evidence of circumstances that unites with it; both of which, in this case, are not difficult to be discovered.

Putting then aside, as a matter of distinct consideration, the outrage offered to the moral justice of God, by supposing him to make the innocent suffer for the guilty, and also the loose morality and low contrivance of supposing him to change himself into the shape of a man, in order to make an excuse to himself for not executing his supposed sentence upon Adam; putting, I say, those things aside, as matter of distinct consideration, it is certain that what is called the Christian system of faith, including in it the whimsical account of the Creation—the strange story of Eve—the snake and the Apple—the ambiguous idea of a man-god—the corporeal idea of the death of a god—the mythological idea of a family of gods, and the Christian system of arithmetic, that three are one, and one is three, are all irreconcilable, not only to the divine gift of reason, that God hath given to Man, but to the knowledge that Man gains of the power and wisdom of God, by the aid of the sciences, and by studying the structure of the universe that God has made.

The setter-up, therefore, and the advocates of the Christian system of faith, could not but foresee that the continually progressive knowledge that man would gain, by the aid of science, of the power and wisdom of God, manifested in the structure of the universe, and in all the works of Creation, would militate against, and call into question, the truth of their system of faith; and therefore it became necessary to their purpose to cut learning down to a size less dangerous to their project, and this they effected by restricting the idea of learning to the dead study of dead languages.

They not only rejected the study of science out of the Christian schools, but they persecuted it; and it is only within about the last two centuries that the study has been revived. So late as 1610, Galileo, a Florentine, discovered and introduced the use of telescopes, and by applying them to observe the motions and appearances of the heavenly bodies

afforded additional means for ascertaining the true structure of the universe. Instead of being esteemed for those discoveries, he was sentenced to renounce them, or the opinions resulting from them, as a damnable heresy. And prior to that time Vigilus was condemned to be burned for asserting the antipodes, or in other words, that the earth was a globe, and habitable in every part where there was land ; yet the truth of this is now too well known even to be told.

If the belief of errors not morally bad did no mischief, it would make no part of the moral duty of man to oppose and remove them. There was no moral ill in believing the earth was flat like a trencher, any more than there was moral virtue in believing it was round like a globe ; neither was there any moral ill in believing that the Creator made no other world than this, any more than there was moral virtue in believing that he made millions, and that the infinity of space is filled with worlds. But when a system of religion is made to grow out of a supposed system of creation that is not true, and to unite itself therewith in a manner almost inseparable therefrom, the case assumes an entirely different ground. It is then that errors, not morally bad, become fraught with the same mischiefs as if they were. It is then that the truth, though otherwise indifferent itself, becomes an essential, by becoming the criterion, that either confirms by corresponding evidence, or denies by contradictory evidence, the reality of the religion itself. In this view of the case, it is the moral duty of man to obtain every possible evidence that the structure of the heavens, or any other part of creation affords, with respect to systems of religion. But this, the supporters or partizans of the Christian system, as if dreading the result, incessantly opposed, and not only rejected the sciences, but persecuted the professors. Had Newton or Descartes lived three or four hundred years ago, and pursued their studies as they did, it is most probable they would not have lived to finish them ; and had Franklin drawn lightning from the clouds at the same time, it would have been at the hazard of expiring for it in flames.

Latter times have laid all the blame upon the Goths and Vandals ; but, however unwilling the partizans of the Christian system may be to believe or to acknowledge it, it is nevertheless true, that the age of ignorance commenced with the Christian system. There was more knowledge in the world before that period, than for many centuries afterwards ; and as to religious knowledge, the Christian sys-

tem, as already said, was only another species of mythology; and the mythology to which it succeeded, was a corruption of an ancient system of theism\*.

It is owing to this long interregnum of science, *and to no other cause*, that we have now to look through a vast chasm of many hundred years to the respectable characters we call the ancients. Had the progression of knowledge gone on proportionably with the stock that before existed, that chasm would have been filled up with characters rising superior in knowledge to each other; and those ancients we now so much admire, would have appeared respectably in the back ground of the scene. But the Christian system laid all waste; and if we take our stand about the beginning of the sixteenth century, we look back through that long chasm, to the times of the ancients, as over a vast sandy desert, in which not a shrub appears to intercept the vision to the fertile hills beyond.

\* It is impossible for us now to know at what time the heathen mythology began; but it is certain, from the internal evidence that it carries, that it did not begin in the same state or condition in which it ended. All the gods of that mythology, except Saturn, were of modern invention. The supposed reign of Saturn was prior to that which is called the heathen mythology, and was so far a species of theism, that it admitted the belief of only one God. Saturn is supposed to have abdicated the government in favour of his three sons and one daughter, Jupiter, Pluto, Neptune, and Juno; after this, thousands of ether gods and demi-gods were imaginarily created, and the calendar of gods increased as fast as the calendar of saints, and the calendars of courts have increased since.

All the corruptions that have taken place in theology and in religion, have been produced by admitting of what man calls *revealed religion*. The Mythologists pretended to more revealed religion than the Christians do. They had their oracles and their priests, who were supposed to receive and deliver the word of God verbally, on almost all occasions.

Since then all corruptions drawn from Moloch to modern predestinarianism, and the human sacrifices of the heathens to the Christian sacrifice of the Creator, have been produced by admitting of what is called *revealed religion*, the most effectual means to prevent all such evils and impositions is, not to admit of any other revelation than that which is manifested in the book of creation, and to contemplate the creation as the only true and real word of God that ever did, or ever will exist; and that every thing else, called the word of God, is fable and imposition.

It is an inconsistency scarcely possible to be credited, that any thing should exist, under the name of a religion, that held it to be *irreligious* to study and contemplate the structure of the universe that God had made. But the fact is too well established to be denied. The event that served more than any other to break the first link in this long chain of despotic ignorance, is that known by the name of the Reformation by Luther. From that time, though it does not appear to have made any part of the intention of Luther, or of those who are called reformers, the sciences began to revive, and liberality, their natural associate, began to appear. This was the only public good the reformation did; for, with respect to religious good, it might as well not have taken place. The mythology still continued the same; and a multiplicity of National Popes grew out of the downfall of the Pope of Christendom.

Having thus shewn from the internal evidence of things, the cause that produced a change in the state of learning, and the motive for substituting the study of the dead languages in the place of the sciences, I proceed, in addition to the several observations already made in the former part of this work, to compare or rather to confront the evidence that the structure of the universe affords, with the Christian system of religion; but, as I cannot begin this part better than by referring to the ideas that occurred to me at an early part of life, and which I doubt not have occurred in some degree to almost every other person at one time or other, I shall state what those ideas were, and add thereto such other matter as shall arise out of the subject, giving to the whole, by way of preface, a short introduction.

My father being of the Quaker profession, it was my good fortune to have an exceeding good moral education, and a tolerable stock of useful learning. Though I went to the grammar school\*, I did not learn Latin, not only because I had no inclination to learn languages, but because of the objection the Quakers have against the books in which the language is taught. But this did not prevent me from being acquainted with the subjects of all the Latin books used in the school.

The natural bent of my mind was to science. I had some turn, and I believe some talent for poetry; but this I

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\* The same school, Thetford in Norfolk, that the present Counsellor Mingay went to, and under the same master.

rather repressed than encouraged, as leading too much into the field of imagination. As soon as I was able, I purchased a pair of globes, and attended the philosophical lectures of Martin and Ferguson, and became afterwards acquainted with Dr. Bevis, of the society, called the Royal Society, then living in the Temple, and an excellent astronomer.

I had no disposition for what is called politics. It presented to my mind no other idea than is contained in the word Jockeyship. When, therefore, I turned my thoughts towards matters of government, I had to form a system for myself, that accorded with the moral and philosophic principles in which I had been educated. I saw, or at least I thought I saw, a vast scene opening itself to the world in the affairs of America; and it appeared to me, that unless the Americans changed the plan they were then pursuing, with respect to the government of England, and declare themselves independent, they would not only involve themselves in a multiplicity of new difficulties, but shut out the prospect that was then offering itself to mankind through their means. It was from these motives that I published the work known by the name of "*Common Sense*," which is the first work I ever did publish; and so far as I can judge of myself, I believe I never should have been known in the world as an author, on any subject whatever, had it not been for the affairs of America. I wrote "*Common Sense*" the latter end of the year 1775, and published it the 1st of January, 1776. Independence was declared the fourth of July following.

Any person, who has made observations on the state and progress of the human mind, by observing his own, cannot but have observed, that there are two distinct classes of what are called Thoughts; those that we produce in ourselves by reflection and the act of thinking, and those that bolt into the mind of their own accord. I have always made it a rule to treat those voluntary visitors with civility, taking care to examine, as well as I was able, if they were worth entertaining; and it is from them I have acquired almost all the knowledge that I have. As to the learning that any person gains from school education, it serves only, like a small capital, to put him in the way of beginning learning for himself afterwards. Every person of learning is finally his own teacher, the reason of which is, that principles, being of a distinct quality to circumstances, cannot be impressed upon the memory; their place of mental residence is the understanding, and they are never so lasting as when



they begin by conception. Thus much for the introductory part.

From the time I was capable of conceiving an idea, and acting upon it by reflection, I either doubted the truth of the Christian system, or thought it to be a strange affair; I scarcely knew which it was: but I well remember, when about seven or eight years of age, hearing a sermon read by a relation of mine, who was a great devotee of the church, upon the subject of what is called *redemption by the death of the Son of God*. After the sermon was ended, I went into the garden, and as I was going down the garden steps (for I perfectly recollect the spot) I revolted at the recollection of what I had heard, and thought to myself that it was making God Almighty act like a passionate man that killed his son, when he could not revenge himself any other way; and as I was sure a man would be hanged that did such a thing, I could not see for what purpose they preached such sermons. This was not one of those kind of thoughts that had any thing in it of childish levity; it was to me a serious reflection, arising from the idea I had, that God was too good to do such an action, and also too almighty to be under any necessity of doing it. I believe in the same manner to this moment; and I moreover believe, that any system of religion, that has any thing in it that shocks the mind of a child, cannot be a true system.

It seems as if parents of the Christian profession were ashamed to tell their children any thing about the principles of their religion. They sometimes instruct them in morals, and talk to them of the goodness of what they call Providence; for the Christian mythology has five deities—there is God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, the God Providence, and the Goddess Nature. But the Christian story of God the Father putting his son to death, or employing people to do it (for that is the plain language of the story) cannot be told by a parent to a child; and to tell him that it was done to make mankind happier and better, is making the story still worse, as if mankind could be improved by the example of murder; and to tell him that all this is a mystery, is only making an excuse for the incredibility of it.

How different is this to the pure and simple profession of Deism! The true Deist has but one Deity; and his religion consists in contemplating the power, wisdom, and benignity of the Deity in his works, and in endeavouring to imitate him in every thing moral, scientific, and mechanical

The religion that approaches the nearest of all others to true Deism, in the moral and benign part thereof, is that professed by the Quakers ; but they have contracted themselves too much, by leaving the works of God out of their system. Though I reverence their philanthropy, I cannot help smiling at the conceit, that if the taste of a Quaker could have been consulted at the creation, what a silent and drab-coloured creation it would have been! Not a flower would have blossomed its gaities, nor a bird been permitted to sing.

Quitting these reflections, I proceed to other matters. After I had made myself master of the use of the globes, and of the orrery\*, and conceived an idea of the infinity of space, and the eternal divisibility of matter, and obtained, at least, a general knowledge of what is called natural philosophy, I began to compare, or, as I have before said, to confront the eternal evidence those things afford with the Christian system of faith.

Though it is not a direct article of the Christian system, that this world that we inhabit, is the whole of the habitable creation, yet it is so worked up therewith, from what is called the Mosaic account of the Creation, the story of Eve and the apple, and the counterpart of that story, the death of the Son of God, that to believe otherwise, that is, to believe that God created a plurality of worlds, at least as numerous as what we call stars, renders the Christian system of faith at once little and ridiculous, and scatters it in the mind like feathers in the air. The two beliefs cannot be held together in the same mind ; and he who thinks that he believes both, has thought but little of either.

Though the belief of a plurality of worlds was familiar to the ancients, it is only within the last three centuries that the extent and dimensions of this globe that we inhabit

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\* As this book may fall into the hands of persons who do not know what an orrery is, it is for their information I add this note, as the name gives no idea of the uses of the thing. The orrery has its name from the person who invented it. It is a machinery of clock-work, representing the universe in miniature, and in which the revolution of the earth round itself and round the sun, the revolution of the moon round the earth, the revolution of the planets round the sun, their relative distances from the sun, as the centre of the whole system, their relative distances from each other, and their different magnitudes, are represented as they really exist in what we call the heavens.

have been ascertained. Several vessels following the tract of the ocean, have sailed entirely round the world, as a man may march in a circle, and come round by the contrary side of the circle to the spot he set out from. The circular dimensions of our world, in the widest part, as a man would measure the widest round of an apple or a ball, is only twenty-five thousand and twenty English miles, reckoning sixty-nine miles and an half to an equatorial degree, and may be sailed round in the space of about three years\*.

A world of this extent may, at first thought, appear to us to be great; but if we compare it with the immensity of space in which it is suspended, like a bubble or balloon in the air, it is infinitely less, in proportion, than the smallest grain of sand is to the size of the world, or the finest particle of dew to the whole ocean, and is therefore but small; and, as will be hereafter shewn, is only one of a system of worlds, of which the universal creation is composed.

It is not difficult to gain some faint idea of the immensity of space in which this and all the other worlds are suspended, if we follow a progression of ideas. When we think of the size or dimensions of a room, our ideas limit themselves to the walls, and there they stop; but when our eye, or our imagination darts into space, that is, when it looks upward into what we call the open air, we cannot conceive any walls or boundaries it can have; and if, for the sake of resting our ideas, we suppose a boundary, the question immediately renews itself, and asks, what is beyond that boundary? and, in the same manner, what is beyond the next boundary? and so on, till the fatigued imagination returns and says, *there is no end*. Certainly, then, the Creator was not pent for room, when he made this world no larger than it is; and we have to seek the reason in something else.

If we take a survey of our own world, or rather of this, of which the Creator has given us the use, as our portion in the immense system of Creation, we find every part of it, the earth, the waters, and the air that surrounds it, filled, and, as it were, crouded with life, down from the largest animals that we know of to the smallest insects the naked

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\* Allowing a ship to sail, on an average, three miles in an hour, she would sail entirely round the world in less than one year, if she could sail in a direct circle; but she is obliged to follow the course of the ocean.

eye can behold, and from thence to others still smaller and totally invisible without the assistance of the microscope. Every tree, every plant, every leaf, serves not only as an habitation, but as a world to some numerous race, till animal existence becomes so exceedingly refined, that the effluvia of a blade of grass would be food for thousands.

Since then no part of our earth is left unoccupied, why is it to be supposed that the immensity of space is a naked void, lying in eternal waste? There is room for millions of worlds as large or larger than ours, and each of them millions of miles apart from each other.

Having now arrived at this point, if we carry our ideas only one thought further, we shall see, perhaps, the true reason, at least a very good reason, for our happiness: why the Creator, instead of making one immense world, extending over an immense quantity of space, has preferred dividing that quantity of matter into several distinct and separate worlds, which we call planets, of which our earth is one. But before I explain my ideas upon this subject, it is necessary (not for the sake of those that already know, but for those who do not) to shew what the system of the universe is.

That part of the universe that is called the solar system (meaning the system of worlds to which our earth belongs, and of which Sol, or in English language, the Sun, is the centre) consists, besides the Sun, of six distinct orbs, or planets, or worlds, besides the secondary bodies, called the satellites or moons, of which our earth has one that attends her in her annual revolution round the sun, in like manner as the other satellites or moons attend the planets or worlds to which they severally belong, as may be seen by the assistance of the telescope.

The Sun is the centre, round which those six worlds or planets revolve at different distances therefrom, and in circles concentrate to each other. Each world keeps constantly in nearly the same track round the Sun, and continues, at the same time, turning round itself, in nearly an upright position, as a top turns round itself when it is spinning on the ground, and leans a little sideways.

It is this leaning of the earth ( $23\frac{1}{2}$  degrees) that occasions summer and winter, and the different length of days and nights. If the earth turned round itself in a position perpendicular to the plane or level of the circle it moves in around the Sun, as a top turns round when it stands erect on the ground, the days and nights would be always of the

same length, twelve hours day and twelve hours night, and the seasons would be uniformly the same throughout the year.

Every time that a planet (our earth for example) turns round itself, it makes what we call day and night; and every time it goes entirely round the Sun, it makes what we call a year, consequently our world turns three hundred and sixty-five times round itself, in going once round the Sun\*.

The names that the ancients gave to those six worlds, and which are still called by the same names, are Mercury, Venus, this world that we call ours, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. They appear larger to the eye than the stars, being many million miles nearer to our earth than any of the stars are. The planet Venus is that which is called the evening star, and sometimes the morning star, as she happens to set after, or rise before the Sun, which, in either case, is never more than three hours.

The Sun, as before said, being the centre, the planet, or world, nearest the Sun, is Mercury; his distance from the Sun is thirty-four million miles, and he moves round in a circle always at that distance from the Sun, as a top may be supposed to spin round in the tract in which a horse goes in a mill. The second world is Venus, she is fifty-seven million miles distant from the Sun, and consequently moves round in a circle much greater than that of Mercury. The third world is this that we inhabit, and which is eighty-eight million miles distant from the Sun, and consequently moves round in a circle greater than that of Venus. The fourth world is Mars, he is distant from the Sun one hundred and thirty-four million miles, and consequently moves round in a circle greater than that of our earth. The fifth is Jupiter, he is distant from the Sun five hundred and fifty-seven million miles, and consequently moves round in a circle greater than that of Mars. The sixth world is Saturn, he is distant from the Sun seven hundred and sixty-three million miles, and consequently moves round in a circle that surrounds the circles, or orbits of all the other worlds or planets.

The space, therefore, in the air, or in the immensity of

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\* Those who supposed that the Sun went round the earth every 24 hours made the same mistake in idea that a cook would do in fact, that should make the fire go round the meat, instead of the meat turning round itself towards the fire.

space, that our solar system takes up for the several worlds to perform their revolutions in round the Sun, is of the extent in a strait line of the whole diameter of the orbit or circle, in which Saturn moves round the Sun, which being double his distance from the Sun, is fifteen hundred and twenty-six million miles: and its circular extent is nearly five thousand million; and its globical content is almost three thousand five hundred million times three thousand five hundred million square miles\*.

But this, immense as it is, is only one system of worlds. Beyond this, at a vast distance into space, far beyond all power of calculation, are the stars called the fixed stars. They are called fixed, because they have no revolutionary motion, as the six worlds or planets have that I have been describing. Those fixed stars continue always at the same distance from each other, and always in the same place, as the Sun does in the centre of our system. The probability, therefore, is, that each of those fixed stars is also a Sun, round which another system of worlds or planets, though too remote for us to discover, performs its revolutions, as our system of worlds does round our central Sun.

By this easy progression of ideas, the immensity of space will appear to us to be filled with systems of worlds; and that no part of space lies at waste, any more than any part of the globe of earth and water is left unoccupied.

Having thus endeavoured to convey, in a familiar and

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\* If it should be asked, how can man know these things? I have one plain answer to give, which is, that man knows how to calculate an eclipse, and also how to calculate to a minute of time when the planet Venus, in making her revolutions round the Sun, will come in a strait line between our earth and the Sun, and will appear to us about the size of a large pea passing across the face of the Sun. This happens but twice in about an hundred years, at the distance of about eight years from each other, and has happened twice in our time, both of which were foreknown by calculation. It can also be known when they will happen again for a thousand years to come, or to any other portion of time. As, therefore, man could not be able to do those things if he did not understand the solar system, and the manner in which the revolutions of the several planets or worlds are performed, the fact of calculating an eclipse, or a transit of Venus, is a proof in point that the knowledge exists; and as to a few thousand, or even a few million miles, more or less, it makes scarcely any sensible difference in such immense distances.

easy manner, some idea of the structure of the universe, I return to explain what I before alluded to, namely, the great benefits arising to man in consequence of the Creator having made a *plurality* of worlds, such as our system is, consisting of a central Sun and six worlds, besides satellites, in preference to that of creating one world only of a vast extent.

It is an idea I have never lost sight of, that all our knowledge of science is derived from the revolutions (exhibited to our eye, and from thence to our understanding) which those several planets or worlds, of which our system is composed, make in their circuit round the Sun.

Had then the quantity of matter which these six worlds contain been blended into one solitary globe, the consequence to us would have been, that either no revolutionary motion would have existed, or not a sufficiency of it to give us the idea and the knowledge of science we now have; and it is from the sciences that all the mechanical arts that contribute so much to our earthly felicity and comfort, are derived.

As, therefore, the Creator made nothing in vain, so also must it be believed that he organized the structure of the universe in the most advantageous manner for the benefit of man; and as we see, and from experience feel, the benefits we derive from the structure of the universe, formed as it is, which benefits we should not have had the opportunity of enjoying, if the structure, so far as relates to our system, had been a solitary globe—we can discover at least one reason why a *plurality* of worlds has been made, and that reason calls forth the devotional gratitude of man, as well as his admiration.

But it is not to us, the inhabitants of this globe, only, that the benefits arising from a plurality of worlds are limited. The inhabitants of each of the worlds of which our system is composed, enjoy the same opportunities of knowledge as we do. They behold the revolutionary motions of our earth, as we behold theirs. All the planets revolve in sight of each other; and, therefore, the same universal school of science presents itself to all.

Neither does the knowledge stop here. The system of worlds next to us exhibits, in its revolutions, the same principles and school of science, to the inhabitants of their system, as our system does to us, and in like manner throughout the immensity of space.

Our ideas, not only of the almightiness of the Creator, but of his wisdom and his beneficence, become enlarged in

proportion as we contemplate the extent and the structure of the universe. The solitary idea of a solitary world, rolling or at rest in the immense ocean of space, gives place to the cheerful idea of a society of worlds, so happily contrived as to administer, even by their motion, instruction to man. We see our own earth filled with abundance; but we forget to consider how much of that abundance is owing to the scientific knowledge the vast machinery of the universe has unfolded.

But, in the midst of those reflections, what are we to think of the Christian system of faith, that forms itself upon the idea of only one world, and that of no greater extent, as is before shewn, than twenty-five thousand miles? An extent which a man, walking at the rate of three miles an hour, for twelve hours in the day, could he keep on in a circular direction, would walk entirely round in less than two years. Alas! what is this to the mighty ocean of space, and the almighty power of the Creator!

From whence then could arise the solitary and strange conceit, that the Almighty, who had millions of worlds equally dependent on his protection, should quit the care of all the rest, and come to die in our world, because, they say, one man and one woman had eaten an apple! And, on the other hand, are we to suppose that every world in the boundless creation, had an Eve, an apple, a serpent, and a redeemer? In this case, the person who is irreverently called the Son of God, and sometimes God himself, would have nothing else to do than to travel from world to world, in an endless succession of death, with scarcely a momentary interval of life.

It has been by rejecting the evidence, that the word or works of God in the creation affords to our senses, and the action of our reason upon that evidence, that so many wild and whimsical systems of faith, and of religion, have been fabricated and set up. There may be many systems of religion, that so far from being morally bad, are in many respects morally good: but there can be but *ONE* that is true; and that one necessarily must, as it ever will, be in all things consistent with the ever-existing word of God that we behold in his works. But such is the strange construction of the Christian system of faith, that every evidence the Heavens afford to man, either directly contradicts it, or renders it absurd.

It is possible to believe, and I always feel pleasure in encouraging myself to believe it, that there have been men in the world who persuade themselves that, what is



called a *pious fraud*, might, at least under particular circumstances, be productive of some good. But the fraud being once established, could not afterwards be explained; for it is with a pious fraud as with a bad action, it begets a calamitous necessity of going on.

The persons who first preached the Christian system of faith, and in some measure combined it with the morality preached by Jesus Christ, might persuade themselves that it was better than the heathen mythology that then prevailed. From the first preachers the fraud went on to the second, and to the third, till the idea of its being a pious fraud became lost in the belief of its being true; and that belief became again encouraged by the interest of those who made a livelihood by preaching it.

But though such a belief might, by such means, be rendered almost general among the laity, it is next to impossible to account for the continual persecution carried on by the church, for several hundred years, against the sciences, and against the professors of sciences, if the church had not some record or some tradition, that it was originally no other than a pious fraud, or did not foresee, that it could not be maintained against the evidence that the structure of the universe afforded.

Having thus shewn the irreconcilable inconsistencies between the real word of God existing in the universe and that which is called *the word of God*, as shewn to us in a printed book that any man might make, I proceed to speak of the three principal means that have been employed in all ages, and perhaps in all countries, to impose upon mankind.

Those three means are Mystery, Miracle, and Prophecy. The two first are incompatible with true religion, and the third ought always to be suspected.

With respect to mystery every thing we behold is, in one sense, a mystery to us. Our own existence is a mystery; the whole vegetable world is a mystery. We cannot account how it is that an acorn, when put into the ground, is made to develope itself, and become an oak. We know not how it is that the seed we sow unfolds and multiplies itself, and returns to us such an abundant interest for so small a capital.

The fact, however, as distinct from the operating cause, is not a mystery, because we see it; and we know also the means we are to use, which is no other than putting the seed in the ground. We know, therefore, as much as

is necessary for us to know ; and that part of the operation that we do not know, and which if we did we could not perform, the Creator takes upon himself and performs it for us. We are, therefore, better off than if we had been let into the secret, and left to do it for ourselves.

But though every created thing is, in this sense, a mystery, the word mystery cannot be applied to *moral truth*, any more than obscurity can be applied to light. The God in whom we believe is a God of moral truth, and not a God of mystery or obscurity. Mystery is the antagonist of truth. It is a fog of human invention, that obscures truth, and represents it in distortion. Truth never envelopes *itself* in mystery ; and the mystery in which it is at any time enveloped is the work of its antagonist, and never of itself.

Religion, therefore, being the belief of a God, and the practice of moral truth, cannot have connection with mystery. The belief of a God, so far from having any thing of mystery in it, is of all beliefs the most easy, because it arises to us, as is before observed, out of necessity. And the practices of moral truth, or, in other words, a practical imitation of the moral goodness of God, is no other than our acting towards each other as he acts benignly towards all. We cannot *serve* God in the manner we serve those who cannot do without such service ; and therefore the only idea we can have of serving God, is that of contributing to the happiness of the living creation that God has made. This cannot be done by retiring ourselves from the society of the world, and spending a recluse life in selfish devotion.

The very nature and design of religion, if I may so express it, prove, even to demonstration, that it must be free from every thing of mystery, and unincumbered with every thing that is mysterious. Religion, considered as a duty, is incumbent upon every living soul alike, and, therefore, must be on a level to the understanding and comprehension of all. Man does not learn religion as he learns the secrets and mysteries of a trade. He learns the theory of religion by reflection. It arises out of the action of his own mind upon the things which he sees, or upon what he may happen to hear or to read, and the practice joins itself thereto.

When men, whether from policy or pious fraud, set up systems of religion incompatible with the word or works of God in the creation, and not only above, but repugnant to human comprehension, they were under the necessity of inventing or adopting a word that should serve as a bar to all questions, inquiries, and speculations. The word *mystery*

answered this purpose; and thus it has happened that religion, which in itself is without mystery, has been corrupted into a fog of mysteries.

As *mystery* answered all general purposes, *miracle* followed as an occasional auxiliary. The former served to bewilder the mind; the latter to puzzle the senses. The one was the lingo, the other the legerdemain.

But before going further into this subject, it will be proper to inquire what is to be understood by a miracle.

In the same sense that every thing may be said to be a mystery, so also may it be said that every thing is a miracle, and that no one thing is a greater miracle than another. The elephant, though larger, is not a greater miracle than a mite; nor a mountain a greater miracle than an atom. To an Almighty power, it is no more difficult to make the one than the other; and no more difficult to make a million of worlds than to make one. Every thing, therefore, is a miracle, in one sense, whilst in the other sense, there is no such thing as a miracle. It is a miracle when compared to our power, and to our comprehension; it is not a miracle compared to the power that performs it; but as nothing in this description conveys the idea that is affixed to the word miracle, it is necessary to carry the inquiry further.

Mankind have conceived to themselves certain laws, by which what they call nature is supposed to act; and that a miracle is something contrary to the operation and effect of those laws; but unless we know the whole extent of those laws, and of what are commonly called the powers of nature, we are not able to judge whether any thing that may appear to us wonderful or miraculous, be within, or be beyond, or be contrary to, her natural power of acting.

The ascension of a man several miles high into the air, would have every thing in it that constitutes the idea of a miracle, if it were not known that a species of air can be generated several times lighter than the common atmospheric air, and yet possess elasticity enough to prevent the balloon, in which that light air is inclosed, from being compressed into as many times less bulk, by the common air that surrounds it. In like manner, extracting flames or sparks of fire from the human body, as visible as from a steel struck with a flint, and causing iron or steel to move without any visible agent, would also give the idea of a miracle, if we were not acquainted with electricity and magnetism; so also would many other experiments in natural philosophy, to those who are not acquainted with the subject. The restor-

ing persons to life, who are to appearance dead, as is practised upon drowned persons, would also be a miracle, if it were not known that animation is capable of being suspended without being extinct.

Besides these, there are performances by slight of hand, and by persons acting in concert, that have a miraculous appearance, which when known, are thought nothing of. And, besides these, there are mechanical and optical deceptions. There is now an exhibition in Paris of ghosts or spectres, which, though it is not imposed upon the spectators, as a fact, has an astonishing appearance. As, therefore, we know not the extent to which either nature or art can go, there is no positive criterion to determine what a miracle is; and mankind, in giving credit to appearances, under the idea of their being miracles, are subject to be continually imposed upon.

Since then appearances are so capable of deceiving, and things not real have a strong resemblance to things that are, nothing can be more inconsistent than to suppose that the Almighty would make use of means, such as are called miracles, that would subject the person who performed them to the suspicion of being an impostor, and the person who related them to be suspected of lying, and the doctrine intended to be supported thereby to be suspected as a fabulous invention.

Of all the modes of evidence that ever were invented to obtain belief to any system or opinion to which the name of religion has been given, that of miracle, however successful the imposition may have been, is the most inconsistent. For, in the first place, whenever recourse is had to show, for the purpose of procuring that belief, (for a miracle, under any idea of the word, is a show) it implies a lameness or weakness in the doctrine that is preached. And, in the second place, it is degrading the Almighty into the character of a show-man, playing tricks to amuse and make the people stare and wonder. It is also the most equivocal sort of evidence that can be set up; for the belief is not to depend upon the thing called a miracle, but upon the credit of the reporter, who says that he saw it; and, therefore, the thing, were it true, would have no better chance of being believed than if it were a lie.

Suppose I were to say, that when I sat down to write this book a hand presented itself in the air, took up the pen and wrote every word that is herein written; would any body believe me? certainly they would not. Would they believe

me a whit the more if the thing had been a fact; certainly they would not. Since then a real miracle, were it to happen, would be subject to the same fate as the falsehood, the inconsistency becomes the greater, of supposing the Almighty would make use of means that would not answer the purpose for which they were intended, even if they were real.

If we are to suppose a miracle to be something so entirely out of the course of what is called nature, that she must go out of that course to accomplish it, and we see an account given of such miracle by the person who said he saw it, it raises a question in the mind very easily decided, which is, (is it more probable that nature should go out of her course, or that a man should tell a lie? We have never seen, in our time, nature go out of her course; but we have good reason to believe that millions of lies have been told in the same time; it is, therefore, at least millions to one, that the reporter of a miracle tells a lie.)

The story of the whale swallowing Jonah, though a whale is large enough to do it, borders greatly on the marvellous; but it would have approached nearer to the idea of miracle, if Jonah had swallowed the whale. In this, which may serve for all cases of miracles, the matter would decide itself, as before stated, namely, is it more probable that a man should have swallowed a whale, or told a lie.

But supposing that Jonah had really swallowed the whale, and gone with it in his belly to Ninevah, and to convince the people that it was true, have cast it up in their sight, of the full length and size of a whale, would they not have believed him to have been the devil, instead of a prophet? or, if the whale had carried Jonah to Ninevah, and cast him up in the same public manner, would they not have believed the whale to have been the devil, and Jonah one of his imps?

The most extraordinary of all the things called miracles, related in the New Testament, is that of the devil flying away with Jesus Christ, and carrying him to the top of a high mountain; and to the top of the highest pinnacle of the temple, and shewing him and promising to him *all the kingdoms of the world*. How happened it that he did not discover America; or is it only with *kingdoms* that his sooty highness has any interest?

I have too much respect for the moral character of Christ, to believe that he told this whale of a miracle himself; neither is it easy to account for what purpose it could have been fabricated, unless it were to impose upon the connois-

seurs of miracles, as is sometimes practised upon the connoisseurs of Queen Anne's farthings, and collectors of relics and antiquities; or to render the belief of miracles ridiculous, by outdoing miracle, as Don Quixote outdid chivalry; or to embarrass the belief of miracles, by making it doubtful by what power, whether of God or of the Devil, any thing called a miracle was performed. It requires, however, a great deal of faith in the devil to believe this miracle.

In every point of view in which those things called miracles can be placed and considered, the reality of them is improbable, and their existence unnecessary. They would not, as before observed, answer any useful purpose, even if they were true; for it is more difficult to obtain belief to a miracle, than to a principle evidently moral, without any miracle. Moral principle speaks universally for itself. Miracle could be but a thing of the moment, and seen but by a few; after this it requires a transfer of faith from God to man, to believe a miracle upon man's report. Instead therefore of admitting the recitals of miracles as evidence of any system of religion being true, they ought to be considered as symptoms of its being fabulous. It is necessary to the full and upright character of truth, that it rejects the crutch; and it is consistent with the character of fable, to seek the aid that truth rejects. Thus much for mystery and miracle.

As mystery and miracle took charge of the past and the present, prophesy took charge of the future, and rounded the tenses of faith. It was not sufficient to know what had been done, but what would be done. The supposed prophet was the supposed historian of times to come; and if he happened, in shooting with a long bow of a thousand years, to strike within a thousand miles of a mark, the ingenuity of posterity could make it point-blank; and if he happened to be directly wrong, it was only to suppose, as in the case of Jonah and Ninevah, that God had repented himself and changed his mind. What a fool do fabulous systems make of man!

It has been shewn, in a former part of this work, that the original meaning of the words *prophet* and *prophesying* has been changed, and that a prophet, in the sense of the word as now used, is a creature of modern invention; and it is owing to this change in the meaning of the words, that the flights and metaphors of the Jewish poets and phrases and expressions now rendered obscure, by our not being acquainted with the local circumstances to which they applied at the

time they were used, have been erected into prophecies, and made to bend to explanations, at the will and whimsical conceits of sectaries, expounders, and commentators. Every thing unintelligible was prophetic, and every thing insignificant was typical. A blunder would have served for a prophecy; and a dish-clout for a type.

If by a prophet we are to suppose a man, to whom the Almighty communicated some event that would take place in future, either there were such men, or there were not. If there were, it is consistent to believe that the event, so communicated, would be told in terms that could be understood; and not related in such a loose and obscure manner as to be out of the comprehension of those that heard it, and so equivocal as to fit almost any circumstance that might happen afterwards. It is conceiving very irreverently of the Almighty, to suppose he would deal in this jesting manner with mankind; yet all the things called prophecies in the book called the Bible, come under this description.

But it is with prophecy as it is with miracle; it could not answer the purpose even if it were real. Those to whom a prophecy should be told, could not tell whether the man prophesied or lied, or whether it had been revealed to him, or whether he conceited it; and if the thing that he prophesied, or intended to prophecy, should happen, or something like it, among the multitude of things that are daily happening, nobody could again know whether he foreknew it, or guessed at it, or whether it was accidental. A prophet, therefore, is a character useless and unnecessary; and the safe side of the case is, to guard against being imposed upon by not giving credit to such relations.

Upon the whole, mystery, miracle, and prophecy, are appendages that belong to fabulous and not to true religion. They are the means by which so many *Lo heres!* and *Lo theres!* have been spread about the world, and religion been made into a trade. The success of one impostor gave encouragement to another, and the quieting salvo of doing some good by keeping up a *pious fraud*, protected them from remorse.

Having now extended the subject to a greater length than I first intended, I shall bring it to a close by abstracting a summary from the whole.

First—That the idea or belief of a word of God existing in print, or in writing, or in speech, is inconsistent in itself for reasons already assigned. These reasons, among many others, are the want of an universal language; the muta-

bility of language; the errors to which translations are subject; the possibility of totally suppressing such a word; the probability of altering it, or of fabricating the whole, and imposing it upon the world.

Secondly—That the Creation we behold is the real and ever existing word of God, in which we cannot be deceived. It proclaims his power, it demonstrates his wisdom, it manifests his goodness and beneficence.

Thirdly—That the moral duty of man consists in imitating the moral goodness and beneficence of God manifested in the Creation towards all his creatures. That seeing as we daily do the goodness of God to all men, it is an example calling upon all men to practise the same towards each other; and consequently that every thing of persecution and revenge between man and man, and every thing of cruelty to animals, is a violation of moral duty.

I trouble not myself about the manner of future existence. I content myself with believing, even to positive conviction, that the power that gave me existence is able to continue it, in any form and manner he pleases, either with or without this body; and it appears more probable to me that I shall continue to exist hereafter, than that I should have had existence, as I now have, before that existence began.

It is certain that, in one point, all nations of the earth and all religions agree; all believe in a God; the things in which they disagree, are the redundancies annexed to that belief; and therefore, if ever an universal religion should prevail, it will not be believing any thing new, but in getting rid of redundancies, and believing as man believed at first. Adam, if ever there was such a man, was created a Deist; but in the mean time, let every man follow, as he has a right to do, the religion and the worship he prefers.

END OF THE FIRST PART.



THE  
**AGE OF REASON,**

**Part the Second.**

BEING

**AN INVESTIGATION**

OF

**TRUE AND FABULOUS THEOLOGY.**

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**By THOMAS PAINE.**

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

PHILOSOPHY 101

LECTURE 1: INTRODUCTION

LECTURE 2: THE PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

LECTURE 3: THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

LECTURE 4: THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

LECTURE 5: THE PHILOSOPHY OF ETHICS

LECTURE 6: THE PHILOSOPHY OF POLITICS

LECTURE 7: THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

LECTURE 8: THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

## PREFACE.

I HAVE mentioned in the former part of *The Age of Reason*, that it had long been my intention to publish my thoughts upon religion; but that I had originally reserved it to a later period in life, intending it to be the last work I should undertake. The circumstances, however, which existed in France in the latter end of the year 1793, determined me to delay it no longer. The just and humane principles of the revolution, which philosophy had first diffused, had been departed from. The idea, always dangerous to society as it is derogatory to the Almighty, that priests could forgive sins, though it seemed to exist no longer, had blunted the feelings of humanity, and callously prepared men for the commission of all manner of crimes. The intolerant spirit of church persecutions had transferred itself into politics; the tribunal, styled revolutionary, supplied the place of an inquisition; and the guillotine and the stake out-did the fire and faggot of the church. I saw many of my most intimate friends destroyed; others daily carried to prison; and I had reason to believe, and had also intimations given me, that the same danger was approaching myself.

Under these disadvantages, I began the former part of the *Age of Reason*; I had, besides, neither Bible nor Testament to refer to, though I was writing against both; nor could I procure any; notwithstanding which, I have produced a work that no Bible believer, though writing at his ease, and with a library of church books about him, can refute. Towards the latter end of December of that year, a motion was made and carried, to exclude foreigners from the convention. There were but two in it, Anacharsis Cloots and myself; and I saw, I was particularly pointed at by Bourdon de l'Oise, in his speech on that motion.

Conceiving, after this, that I had but a few days of liberty, I sat down and brought the work to a close as speedily as possible; and I had not finished it more than six hours, in the state it has since appeared, before a guard came there about three in the morning, with an order signed by the two committees of public safety and surety-general, for putting me in arrestation as a foreigner, and conveyed me to the prison of the Luxembourg. I contrived, in my way there, to call on Joel Barlow, and I put the manuscript of the work into his hands, as more safe than in my possession in prison; and not knowing what might be the fate in France, either of the writer or the work, I addressed it to the protection of the citizens of the United States.

It is with justice that I say, that the guard who executed this order, and the interpreter of the Committee of General Surety, who accompanied them to examine my papers, treated me not only with civility, but with respect. The keeper of the Luxembourg, Bennoit, a man of a good heart, showed to me every friendship in his power, as did also all his family, while he continued in that station. He was removed from it, put into arrestation, and carried before the tribunal upon a malignant accusation, but acquitted.

After I had been in the Luxembourg about three weeks, the Americans, then in Paris, went in a body to the convention, to reclaim me as their countryman and friend; but were answered by the President, Vader, who was also President of the Committee of Surety-General, and had signed the order for my arrestation, that I was born in England. I heard no more after this, from any person out of the walls of the prison, till the fall of Robespierre, on the 9th of Thermidor—July 27, 1794.

About two months before this event, I was seized with a fever, that in its progress had every symptom of becoming mortal, and from the effects of which I am not recovered. It was then that I remembered with renewed satisfaction, and congratulated myself most sincerely, on having written the former part of "*The Age of Reason.*" I had then but

little expectation of surviving, and those about me had less. I know, therefore, by experience, the conscientious trial of my own principles.

I was then with three chamber comrades, Joseph Vanhuele, of Bruges, Charles Bastini, and Michael Robyns, of Louvain. The unceasing and anxious attention of these three friends to me, by night and by day, I remember with gratitude, and mention with pleasure. It happened that a physician (Dr. Graham) and a surgeon (Mr. Bond), part of the suite of General O'Hara, were then in the Luxembourg. I ask not myself, whether it be convenient to them, as men under the English Government, that I express to them my thanks; but I should reproach myself if I did not; and also to the physician of the Luxembourg, Dr. Markoski.

I have some reason to believe, because I cannot discover any other cause, that this illness preserved me in existence. Among the papers of Robespierre that were examined and reported upon to the Convention, by a Committee of Deputies, is a note in the hand-writing of Robespierre, in the following words:—

“Demander que Thomas Paine soit decreté d'accusation, pour l'intérêt de l'Amerique autant que de la France.”

Demand that Thomas Paine be decreed of accusation for the interest of America as well as of France.

From what cause it was that the intention was not put in execution, I know not, and cannot inform myself; and therefore I ascribe it to impossibility, on account of that illness.

The Convention, to repair as much as lay in their power the injustice I had sustained, invited me publicly and unanimously to return into the Convention, and which I accepted, to shew I could bear an injury without permitting it to injure my principles, or my disposition. It is not because right principles have been violated, that they are to be abandoned.

I have seen, since I have been at liberty, several publications written, some in America, and some in England, as

answers to the former part of "The Age of Reason." If the authors of these can amuse themselves by so doing, I shall not interrupt them. They may write against the work, and against me, as much as they please; they do me more service than they intend, and I can have no objection that they write on. They will find, however, by this second part, without its being written as an answer to them, that they must return to their work, and spin their cobweb over again. The first is brushed away by accident.

They will now find that I have furnished myself with a Bible and Testament; and I can say also, that I have found them to be much worse books than I had conceived. If I have erred in any thing, in the former part of the Age of Reason, it has been by speaking better of some parts of those books than they deserved.

I observe, that all my opponents resort, more or less, to what they call Scripture Evidence and Bible Authority, to help them out. They are so little masters of the subject, as to confound a dispute about authenticity with a dispute about doctrines; I will, however, put them right, that if they should be disposed to write any more, they may know how to begin.

Oct. 1795.

THOMAS PAINE.

# THE AGE OF REASON.

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## PART THE SECOND.

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IT has often been said, that any thing may be proved from the Bible, but before any thing can be admitted as proved by the Bible, the Bible itself must be proved to be true; for if the Bible be not true, or the truth of it be doubtful, it ceases to have authority, and cannot be admitted as proof of any thing.

It has been the practice of all Christian commentators on the Bible, and of all Christian priests and preachers, to impose the Bible on the world as a mass of truth, and as the word of God; they have disputed and wrangled, and have anathematized each other about the supposable meaning of particular parts and passages therein; one has said and insisted that such a passage meant such a thing; another that it meant directly the contrary; and a third, that it meant neither one nor the other, but something different from both; and this they call *understanding* the Bible.

It has happened, that all the answers which I have seen to the former part of the *Age of Reason* have been written by priests; and these pious men, like their predecessors, contend and wrangle, and pretend to *understand* the Bible; each understands it differently, but each understands it best; and they have agreed in nothing, but in telling their readers that Thomas Paine understands it not.

Now instead of wasting their time, and heating themselves in fractious disputations about doctrinal points drawn from the Bible, these men ought to know, and if they do not, it is civility to inform them, that the first thing to be understood is, whether there is sufficient authority for believing the Bible to be the word of God, or whether there is not?

There are matters in that book, said to be done by the *express command* of God, that are as shocking to humanity, and to every idea we have of moral justice, as any thing done by Robespierre, by Carrier, by Joseph le Bon, in

France, by the English government in the East-Indies, or by any other assassin in modern times. When we read in the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, &c. that they (the Israelites) came by stealth upon whole nations of people, who, as the history itself shows, had given them no offence; *that they put all those nations to the sword; that they spared neither age nor infancy; that they utterly destroyed men, women and children; that they left not a soul to breathe;* expressions that are repeated over and over again in those books, and that too with exulting ferocity; are we sure these things are facts? are we sure that the Creator of man commissioned these things to be done? are we sure that the books that tell us so were written by his authority?

It is not the antiquity of a tale that is any evidence of its truth; on the contrary, it is a symptom of its being fabulous; for the more ancient any history pretends to be, the more it has the resemblance of a fable. The origin of every nation is buried in fabulous tradition, and that of the Jews is as much to be suspected as any other. To charge the commission of acts upon the Almighty, which in their own nature, and by every rule of moral justice, are crimes, as all assassination is, and more especially the assassination of infants, is matter of serious concern. The Bible tells us, that those assassinations were done by the *express command of God*. To believe, therefore, the Bible to be true, we must *unbelieve* all our belief in the moral justice of God; for wherein could crying or smiling infants offend? And to read the Bible without horror, we must undo every thing that is tender, sympathising, and benevolent in the heart of man. Speaking for myself, if I had no other evidence that the Bible is fabulous, than the sacrifice I must make to believe it to be true, that alone would be sufficient to determine my choice.

But, in addition to all the moral evidence against the Bible, I will, in the progress of this work, produce such other evidence, as even a priest cannot deny; and shew from that evidence, that the Bible is not entitled to credit, as being the word of God.

But, before I proceed to this examination, I will shew wherein the Bible differs from all other ancient writings with respect to the nature of the evidence necessary to establish its authenticity; and this is the more proper to be done, because the advocates of the Bible, in their answers to the former part of the *Age of Reason*, undertake to say, and they put some stress thereon, that the authenticity of the Bible is as well established as that of any other ancient



book; as if our belief of the one could become any rule for our belief of the other.

I know, however, but of one ancient book that authoritatively challenges universal consent and belief, and that is *Euclid's Elements of Geometry*\*; and the reason is, because it is a book of self-evident demonstration, entirely independent of its author, and of every thing relating to time, place, and circumstance. The matters contained in that book would have the same authority they now have, had they been written by any other person, or had the work been anonymous, or had the author never been known; for the identical certainty of who was the author, makes no part of our belief of the matters contained in the book. But it is quite otherwise with respect to the books ascribed to Moses, to Joshua, to Samuel, &c.—those are books of *testimony*, and they testify of things naturally incredible; and therefore the whole of our belief, as to the authenticity of those books, rests, in the first place, upon the *certainty* that they were written by Moses, Joshua, and Samuel; secondly, upon the credit we give to their testimony. We may believe the first, that is, we may believe the certainty of the authorship, and yet not the testimony; in the same manner that we may believe that a certain person gave evidence upon a case, and yet not believe the evidence that he gave. But if it should be found, that the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, and Samuel, were not written by Moses, Joshua, and Samuel, every part of the authority and authenticity of those books is gone at once; for there can be no such thing as forged or invented testimony; neither can there be anonymous testimony, more especially as to things naturally incredible; such as that of talking with God face to face, or that of the sun and moon standing still at the command of a man. The greatest part of the other ancient books are works of genius; of which kind are those ascribed to Homer, to Plato, to Aristotle, to Demosthenes, to Cicero, &c. Here again the author is not an essential in the credit we give to any of those works; for, as works of genius, they would have the same merit they have now, were they anonymous. Nobody believes the Trojan story, as related by Homer, to be true; for it is the poet only that is admired: and the merit of the poet will remain, though the story be

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\* Euclid, according to chronological history, lived three hundred years before Christ, and about one hundred before Archimedes; he was of the city of Alexandria, in Egypt.

fabulous. But if we disbelieve the matters related by the Bible authors (Moses, for instance) as we disbelieve the things related by Homer, there remains nothing of Moses in our estimation, but an impostor. As to the ancient historians from Herodotus to Tacitus, we credit them as far as they relate things probable and credible, and no further; for if we do, we must believe the two miracles which Tacitus relates were performed by Vespasian, that of curing a lame man, and a blind man, in just the same manner as the same things are told of Jesus Christ by his historians. We must also believe the miracle cited by Josephus, that of the sea of Pamphilia opening to let Alexander and his army pass, as is related of the Red Sea in Exodus. These miracles are quite as well authenticated as the Bible miracles, and yet we do not believe them; consequently the degree of evidence necessary to establish our belief of things naturally incredible, whether in the Bible or elsewhere, is far greater than that which obtains our belief to natural and probable things; and therefore the advocates for the Bible have no claim to our belief of the Bible, because that we believe things stated in other ancient writings; since we believe the things stated in these writings no further than they are probable and credible, or because they are self-evident, like Euclid; or admire them because they are elegant, like Homer; or approve them because they are sedate, like Plato; or judicious, like Aristotle.

Having premised these things, I proceed to examine the authenticity of the Bible, and I begin with what are called the five books of Moses, *Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers*, and *Deuteronomy*. My intention is to shew that those books are spurious, and that Moses is not the author of them; and still further, that they were not written in the time of Moses, nor till several hundred years afterwards; that they are no other than an attempted history of the life of Moses, and of the times in which he is said to have lived, and also of the times prior thereto, written by some very ignorant and stupid pretenders to authorship, several hundred years after the death of Moses, as men now write histories of things that happened, or are supposed to have happened, several hundred or several thousand years ago.

The evidence that I shall produce in this case is from the books themselves; and I will confine myself to this evidence only. Were I to refer for proofs to any of the ancient authors, whom the advocates of the Bible call prophane authors, they would controvert that authority, as I contro-

vert theirs ; I will therefore meet them on their own ground, and oppose them with their own weapon, the Bible.

In the first place, there is no affirmative evidence that Moses is the author of those books ; and that he is the author, is altogether an unfounded opinion, got abroad nobody knows how. The style and manner in which those books are written, give no room to believe, or even to suppose, they were written by Moses ; for it is altogether the style and manner of another person speaking of Moses. In Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers (for every thing in Genesis is prior to the times of Moses, and not the least allusion is made to him therein) the whole, I say, of these books is in the third person ; it is always, *the Lord said unto Moses*, or *Moses said unto the Lord* ; or *Moses said unto the people*, or *the people said unto Moses* ; and this is the style and manner that historians use, in speaking of the person whose lives and actions they are writing. It may be said that a man may speak of himself in the third person ; and therefore, it may be supposed that Moses did ; but supposition proves nothing ; and if the advocates for the belief that Moses wrote those books himself, have nothing better to advance than supposition, they may as well be silent.

But granting the grammatical right, that Moses might speak of himself in the third person, because any man might speak of himself in that manner, it cannot be admitted as a fact in those books, that it is Moses who speaks, without rendering Moses truly ridiculous and absurd :—for example, Numbers, chap. xii. ver. 3. “*Now, the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were on the face of the earth.*” If Moses said this of himself, instead of being the meekest of men, he was one of the most vain and arrogant of coxcombs ; and the advocates for those books may now take which side they please, for both sides are against them ; if Moses was not the author, the books are without authority ; and if he was the author, the author is without credit, because to boast of *meekness*, is the reverse of meekness, and is *a lie in sentiment*.

In Deuteronomy, the style and manner of writing marks more evidently than in the former books, that Moses is not the writer. The manner here used is dramatical : the writer opens the subject by a short introductory discourse, and then introduces Moses as in the act of speaking, and when he has made Moses finish his harangue, he (the writer) resumes his own part, and speaks till he brings Moses for-

ward again, and at last closes the scene with an account of the death, funeral, and character of Moses.

This interchange of speakers occurs four times in this book: from the first verse of the first chapter, to the end of the fifth verse, it is the writer who speaks; he then introduces Moses as in the act of making his harangue, and this continues to the end of the 40th verse of the fourth chapter; here the writer drops Moses, and speaks historically of what was done in consequence of what Moses, when living, is supposed to have said, and which the writer has dramatically rehearsed.

The writer opens the subject again in the first verse of the fifth chapter, though it is only by saying, that Moses called the people of Israel together; he then introduces Moses as before, and continues him, as in the act of speaking, to the end of the 26th chapter. He does the same thing at the beginning of the 27th chapter; and continues Moses, as in the act of speaking, to the end of the 28th chapter. At the 29th chapter the writer speaks again through the whole of the first verse, and the first line of the second verse, where he introduces Moses for the last time, and continues him, as in the act of speaking, to the end of the 33rd chapter.

The writer having now finished the rehearsal on the part of Moses, comes forward, and speaks through the whole of the last chapter; he begins by telling the reader, that Moses went up to the top of Pisgah; that he saw from thence the land which (the writer says) had been promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that he, Moses, died there, in the land of Moab, but that no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day, that is, unto the time in which the writer lived, who wrote the book of Deuteronomy. The writer then tells us, that Moses was 110 years of age when he died—that his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated; and he concludes by saying, that there arose not a prophet *since* in Israel like unto Moses, whom, says this anonymous writer, the Lord knew face to face.

Having thus shewn, as far as grammatical evidence applies, that Moses was not the writer of those books, I will, after making a few observations on the inconsistencies of the writer of the book of Deuteronomy, proceed to shew, from the historical and chronological evidence contained in those books, that Moses *was not*, because *he could not be*, the writer of them; and, consequently, that there is no authority for believing, that the inhuman and horrid butcheries of

men, women, and children, told of in those books, were done, as those books say they were, at the command of God. It is a duty incumbent on every true Deist, that he vindicates the moral justice of God against the calumnies of the Bible.

The writer of the Book of Deuteronomy, whoever he was, (for it is an anonymous work) is obscure, and also in contradiction with himself, in the account he has given of Moses.

After telling that Moses went to the top of Pisgah (and it does not appear from any account that he ever came down again) he tells us, that Moses died *there* in the land of Moab, and that *he* buried him in a valley in the land of Moab; but as there is no antecedent to the pronoun *he*, there is no knowing who *he* was that did bury him. If the writer meant that *he* (God) buried him, how should *he* (the writer) know it? or why should we (the readers) believe him? since we know not who the writer was that tells us so, for certainly Moses could not himself tell where he was buried.

The writer also tells us, that no man knoweth where the sepulchre of Moses is *unto this day*, meaning the time in which this writer lived; how then should he know that Moses was buried in a valley in the land of Moab? for as the writer lived long after the time of Moses, as is evident from his using the expression of *unto this day*, meaning a great length of time after the death of Moses, he certainly was not at his funeral; and on the other hand, it is impossible that Moses himself could say, that *no man knoweth where the sepulchre is unto this day*. To make Moses the speaker, would be an improvement on the play of a child that hides himself, and cries *nobody can find me*; nobody can find Moses.

This writer has nowhere told us how he came by the speeches which he has put into the mouth of Moses to speak, and therefore we have a right to conclude, that he either composed them himself, or wrote them from oral tradition. One or other of these is the more probable, since he has given, in the fifth chapter, a table of commandments, in which that called the fourth commandment, is different from the fourth commandment in the 20th chapter of Exodus. In that of Exodus, the reason given for keeping the seventh day is, "because (says the commandment) God made the heavens and the earth in six days, and rested on the seventh;" but in that of Deuteronomy, the reason given is, that it was the day on which the children of Israel came

out of Egypt, and *therefore*, says this commandment, *the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath-day*. This makes no mention of the creation, nor *that* of the coming out of Egypt. There are also many things given as laws of Moses in this book, that are not to be found in any of the other books; among which is that inhuman and brutal law, chap. xxi. ver. 18, 19, 20, 21, which authorizes parents, the father and the mother, to bring their own children to have them stoned to death, for what it is pleased to call stubbornness. But priests have always been fond of preaching up Deuteronomy, for Deuteronomy preaches up tythes; and it is from this book, chap. xxv. ver. 4, they have taken the phrase, and applied it to tything, that *thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn*; and that this might not escape observation, they have noted it in the table of contents at the head of the chapter, though it is only a single verse of less than two lines. O priests! priests! ye are willing to be compared to an ox, for the sake of tythes. Though it is impossible for us to know *identically* who the writer of Deuteronomy was, it is not difficult to discover him *professionally*, that he was some Jewish priest, who lived, as I shall shew in the course of this work, at least three hundred and fifty years after the time of Moses.

I come now to speak of the historical and chronological evidence. The chronology that I shall use is the Bible chronology; for I mean not to go out of the Bible for evidence of any thing, but to make the Bible itself prove historically and chronologically that Moses is not the author of the books ascribed to him. It is therefore proper that I inform the reader, (such an one at least as may not have the opportunity of knowing it) that in the larger Bibles, and also in some smaller ones, there is a series of chronology printed in the margin of every page, for the purpose of shewing how long the historical matters stated in each page happened, or are supposed to have happened, before Christ, and consequently the distance of time between one historical circumstance and another.

I begin with the book of Genesis. In the 14th chapter of Genesis, the writer gives an account of Lot being taken prisoner in a battle between the four kings against five, and carried off; and that when the account of Lot being taken, came to Abraham, he armed all his household, and marched to rescue Lot from the captors; and that he pursued them unto Dan, (ver. 14.)

To shew in what manner this expression of *pursuing*

*them unto Dan* applies to the case in question, I will refer to two circumstances, the one in America, the other in France. The city now called New York, in America, was originally New Amsterdam; and the town in France, lately called Havre Marat, was before called Havre de Grace. New Amsterdam was changed to New York in the year 1664; Havre de Grace to Havre Marat in the year 1793. Should, therefore, any writing be found, though without date, in which the name of New York should be mentioned, it would be certain evidence that such a writing could not have been written before, and must have been written after New Amsterdam was changed to New York, and consequently not till after the year 1664, or at least during the course of that year. And, in like manner, any dateless writing, with the name of Havre Marat, would be certain evidence that such a writing must have been written after Havre de Grace became Havre Marat, and consequently not till after the year 1793, or at least during the course of that year.

I now come to the application of those cases, and to shew that there was no such place as *Dan*, till many years after the death of Moses; and, consequently, that Moses could not be the writer of the book of Genesis, where this account of pursuing them unto *Dan* is given.

The place that is called *Dan* in the Bible was originally a town of the Gentiles, called *Laish*; and when the tribe of *Dan* seized upon this town, they changed its name to *Dan*, in commemoration of *Dan*, who was the father of that tribe, and the great grandson of Abraham.

To establish this in proof, it is necessary to refer from Genesis to the 18th chapter of the book called the Book of Judges. It is there said (ver. 27) *that they* (the Danites) *came unto Laish to a people that were quiet and secure, and they smote them with the edge of the sword* (the Bible is filled with murder) *and burned the city with fire; and they built a city*, (ver. 28) *and dwelt therein, and they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan, their father, howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first.*

This account of the Danites taking possession of *Laish* and changing it to *Dan*, is placed in the book of Judges immediately after the death of Sampson. The death of Sampson is said to have happened 1120 years before Christ, and that of Moses 1451 before Christ; and therefore, according to the historical arrangement, the place was not called *Dan* till 331 years after the death of Moses.

There is a striking confusion between the historical and

the chronological arrangement in the Book of Judges. The five last chapters, as they stand in the book, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, are put chronologically before all the preceding chapters; they are made to be 28 years before the 16th chapter, 266 before the 15th, 245 before the 13th, 195 before the 9th, 90 before the 4th, and 15 years before the 1st chapter. This shews the uncertain and fabulous state of the Bible. According to the chronological arrangement, the taking of Laish, and giving it the name of Dan, is made to be 20 years after the death of Joshua, who was the successor of Moses; and by the historical order as it stands in the book, it is made to be 306 years after the death of Joshua, and 331 after that of Moses; but they both exclude Moses from being the writer of Genesis, because, according to either of the statements, no such place as Dan existed in the time of Moses; and therefore the writer of Genesis must have been some person who lived after the town of Laish had the name of Dan; and who that person was, nobody knows; and consequently the book of Genesis is anonymous and without authority.

I proceed now to state another point of historical and chronological evidence, and to shew therefrom, as in the preceding case, that Moses is not the author of the book of Genesis.

In the 36th chapter of Genesis there is given a genealogy of the sons and descendants of Esau, who are called Edomites, and also a list, by name, of the kings of Edom; in enumerating of which, it is said, ver. 31, "*And these are the kings that reigned in Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.*"

Now, were any dateless writings to be found, in which, speaking of any past events, the writer should say, these things happened before there was any Congress in America, or before there was any Convention in France, it would be evidence that such writing could not have been written before, and could only be written after there was a Congress in America, or a Convention in France, as the case might be; and consequently that it could not be written by any person who died before there was a Congress in the one country, or a Convention in the other.

Nothing is more frequent, as well in history as in conversation, than to refer to a fact in the room of a date: it is most natural so to do, first, because a fact fixes itself in the memory better than a date; secondly, because the fact includes the date, and serves to excite two ideas at once;



and this manner of speaking by circumstances implies as positively that the fact alluded to is *past*, as if it was so expressed. When a person, speaking upon any matter, says, it was before I was married, or before my son was born, or before I went to America, or before I went to France, it is absolutely understood, and intended to be understood, that he has been married, that he has had a son, that he has been in America, or been in France. Language does not admit of using this mode of expression in any other sense; and whenever such an expression is found any where, it can only be understood in the sense in which only it could have been used.

The passage, therefore, that I have quoted—"that these are the kings that reigned in Edom, before there reigned *any* king over the children of Israel," could only have been written after the first king began to reign over them; and consequently that the book of Genesis, so far from having been written by Moses, could not have been written till the time of Saul at least. This is the positive sense of the passage; but the expression, *any* king, implies more kings than one, at least it implies two, and this will carry it to the time of David; and, if taken in a general sense, it carries itself through all the times of the Jewish monarchy.

Had we met with this verse in any part of the Bible that *professed* to have been written after kings began to reign in Israel, it would have been impossible not to have seen the application of it. It happens then that this is the case; the two books of Chronicles, which gave a history of all the kings of Israel, are *professedly*, as well as in fact, written after the Jewish monarchy began; and this verse that I have quoted, and all the remaining verses of the 36th chapter of Genesis, are, word for word, in the 1st chapter of Chronicles, beginning at the 43d verse.

It was with consistency that the writer of the Chronicles could say, as he has said, 1st Chron. chap. i. ver. 43, *These are the kings that reigned in Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel*, because he was going to give, and has given, a list of the kings that had reigned in Israel; but as it is impossible that the same expression could have been used before that period, it is as certain as any thing can be proved from historical language, that this part of Genesis is taken from Chronicles, and that Genesis is not so old as Chronicles, and probably not so old as the book of Homer, or as *Æsop's Fables*, admitting Homer to have been, as the tables of Chronology state, contemporary

with David or Solomon, and Æsop to have lived about the end of the Jewish monarchy.

Take away from Genesis the belief that Moses was the author, on which only the strange belief that it is the word of God has stood, and there remains nothing of Genesis but an anonymous book of stories, fables, and traditionary or invented absurdities, or of downright lies. The story of Eve and the serpent, and of Noah and his ark, drops to a level with the Arabian Tales, without the merit of being entertaining; and the account of men living to eight and nine hundred years becomes as fabulous as the immortality of the giants of the Mythology.

Besides, the character of Moses, as stated in the Bible, is the most horrid that can be imagined. If those accounts be true, he was the wretch that first began and carried on wars on the score, or on the pretence of religion; and under that mask, or that infatuation, committed the most unexampled atrocities that are to be found in the history of any nation, of which I will state only one instance.

When the Jewish army returned from one of their plundering and murdering excursions, the account goes on as follows, Numbers, chap. xxxi. ver. 13.

“And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp; and Moses was wrath with the officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle; and Moses said unto them, *Have ye saved all the women alive?* behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the council of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord. Now, therefore, *kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known a man by lying with him; but all the women children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.*”

Among the detestable villains that in any period of the world have disgraced the name of man, it is impossible to find a greater than Moses, if this account be true. Here is an order to butcher the boys, to massacre the mothers, and debauch the daughters.

Let any mother put herself in the situation of those mothers: one child murdered, another destined to violation, and herself in the hands of an executioner: let any daughter put herself in the situation of those daughters, destined as a prey to the murderers of a mother and a brother, and what

will be their feelings? It is in vain that we attempt to impose upon nature, for nature will have her course, and the religion that tortures all her social ties is a false religion.

After this detestable order, follows an account of the plunder taken, and the manner of dividing it; and here it is that the profaneness of priestly hypocrisy increases the catalogue of crimes. Verse 37, "*And the Lord's tribute of the sheep was six hundred and threescore and fifteen; and the beeves was thirty and six thousand, of which the Lord's tribute was threescore and twelve; and the asses were thirty thousand, of which the Lord's tribute was threescore and one; and the persons were thirty thousand, of which the Lord's tribute was thirty and two.*" In short, the matters contained in this chapter, as well as in many other parts of the Bible, are too horrid for humanity to read, or for decency to hear; for it appears, from the 35th verse of this chapter, that the number of women-children consigned to debauchery by the order of Moses was thirty-two thousand.

People in general know not what wickedness there is in this pretended word of God. Brought up in habits of superstition, they take it for granted that the Bible is true, and that it is good; they permit themselves not to doubt of it, and they carry the ideas they form of the benevolence of the Almighty to the book which they have been taught to believe was written by his authority. Good heavens! it is quite another thing; it is a book of lies, wickedness, and blasphemy; for what can be greater blasphemy, than to ascribe the wickedness of man to the orders of the Almighty?

But to return to my subject, that of shewing that Moses is not the author of the books ascribed to him, and that the Bible is spurious. The two instances I have already given would be sufficient, without any additional evidence, to invalidate the authenticity of any book that pretended to be four or five hundred years more ancient than the matters it speaks of or refers to as facts; for in the case of *pursuing them unto Dan*, and of *the kings that reigned over the children of Israel*, not even the flimsy pretence of prophecy can be pleaded. The expressions are in the preter tense, and it would be downright ideotism to say that a man could prophesy in the preter tense.

But there are many other passages scattered throughout those books that unite in the same point of evidence. It is said in Exodus, (another of the books ascribed to Moses) chap. xvi. verse 34, "And the children of Israel did eat

*manna until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.*

Whether the children of Israel are manna or not, or what manna was, or whether it was any thing more than a kind of fungus or small mushroom, or other vegetable substance common to that part of the country, makes nothing to my argument; all that I mean to shew is, that it is not Moses that could write this account, because the account extends itself beyond the life and time of Moses. Moses, according to the Bible (but it is such a book of lies and contradictions there is no knowing which part to believe, or whether any) dies in the wilderness, and never came upon the borders of the land of Canaan; and consequently it could not be he that said what the children of Israel did, or what they ate when they came there. This account of eating manna, which they tell us was written by Moses, extends itself to the time of Joshua, the successor of Moses, as appears by the account given in the book of Joshua, after the children of Israel had passed the river Jordan, and came unto the borders of the land of Canaan. Joshua, chap. v. ver. 12. *"And the manna ceased on the morrow, after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more, but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year."*

But a more remarkable instance than this occurs in Deuteronomy; which, while it shews that Moses could not be the writer of that book, shews also the fabulous notions that prevailed at that time about giants. In the third chapter of Deuteronomy, among the conquests said to be made by Moses, is an account of the taking of Og, king of Bashan, ver. 11. *"For only Og, king of Bashan, remained of the race of giants; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man."* A cubit is 1 foot 9 888-1000ths inches; the length, therefore, of the bed was 16 feet 4 inches, and the breadth 7 feet 4 inches; thus much for this giant's bed. Now for the historical part, which, though the evidence is not so direct and positive, as in the former cases, is nevertheless very presumable and corroborating evidence, and is better than the *best* evidence on the contrary side.

The writer, by way of proving the existence of this giant, refers to his bed, as to an *ancient relick*, and says, is it not in Rabbath (or Rabbah) of the children of Ammon? meaning that it is; for such is frequently the Bible method of

affirming a thing. But it could not be Moses that said this, because Moses could know nothing about Rabbah, nor of what was in it. Rabbah was not a city belonging to this giant king, nor was it one of the cities that Moses took. The knowledge, therefore, that this bed was at Rabbah, and of the particulars of its dimensions, must be referred to the time when Rabbah was taken, and this was not till four hundred years after the death of Moses; for which, see 2 Sam. chap. xii. ver. 26. “And Joab (David’s general) fought against *Rabbah of the children of Ammon*, and took the royal city.”

As I am not undertaking to point out all the contradictions in time, place and circumstance, that abound in the books ascribed to Moses, and which prove to a demonstration that those books could not be written by Moses, nor in the time of Moses; I proceed to the book of Joshua, and to shew that Joshua is not the author of that book, and that it is anonymous and without authority. The evidence I shall produce is contained in the book itself; I will not go out of the Bible for proof against the supposed authenticity of the Bible. False testimony is always good against itself.

Joshua, according to the first chapter of Joshua, was the immediate successor of Moses; he was moreover a military man, which Moses was not, and he continued as chief of the people of Israel 25 years; that is, from the time that Moses died, which, according to the Bible chronology, was 1451 years before Christ, until 1426 years before Christ, when, according to the same chronology, Joshua died. If, therefore, we find in this book, said to have been written by Joshua, reference to *facts done* after the death of Joshua, it is evidence that Joshua could not be the author; and also that the book could not have been written till after the time of the latest fact which it records. As to the character of the book, it is horrid; it is a military history of rapine and murder, as savage and brutal as those recorded of his predecessor in villainy and hypocrisy, Moses; and the blasphemy consists, as in the former books, in ascribing those deeds to the orders of the Almighty.

In the first place, the book of Joshua, as is the case in the preceding books, is written in the third person; it is the historian of Joshua that speaks, for it would have been absurd and vain-glorious that Joshua should say of himself, as is said of him in the last verse of the sixth chapter, that “*his fame was noised throughout all the country.*” I now come more immediately to the proof.

In the 24th chapter, ver. 31, it is said, "that Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and *all the days of the elders that over-lived Joshua.*" Now, in the name of common sense, can it be Joshua that relates what people had done after he was dead? This account must not only have been written by some historian that lived after Joshua, but that lived also after the elders that out-lived Joshua.

There are several passages of a general meaning with respect to time, scattered throughout the book of Joshua, that carries the time in which the book was written to a distance from the time of Joshua, but without marking by exclusion any particular time, as in the passage above quoted. In that passage, the time that intervened between the death of Joshua and the death of the elders is excluded descriptively and absolutely, and the evidence substantiates that the book could not have been written till after the death of the last.

But though the passages to which I allude, and which I am going to quote, do not designate any particular time by exclusion, they imply a time far more distant from the days of Joshua, than is contained between the death of Joshua and the death of the elders. Such is the passage, chap. x. ver. 14; where, after giving an account that the sun stood still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, at the command of Joshua (a tale only fit to amuse children) the passage says, "And there was no day like that, before it, nor after it, that the Lord hearkened to the voice of a man."

This tale of the sun standing still upon mount Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, is one of those fables that detects itself. Such a circumstance could not have happened without being known all over the world. One half would have wondered why the sun did not rise, and the other why it did not set; and the tradition of it would be universal, whereas there is not a nation in the world that knows any thing about it. But why must the moon stand still? What occasion could there be for moon-light in the day-time, and that too whilst the sun shined? As a poetical figure, the whole is well enough; it is akin to that in the song of Deborah and Baruk, *The stars in their courses fought against Sisera*; but it is inferior to the figurative declaration of Mahomet, to the persons who came to expostulate with him on his goings on, *Wert thou, said he, to come to me with the sun in thy right hand and the moon in thy left, it should not alter my career.* For Joshua to have exceeded Mahomet, he should have put the sun and moon one in each pocket, and

carried them as Guy Faux carried his dark lantern, and taken them out to shine as he might happen to want them.

The sublime and the ridiculous are often so nearly related that it is difficult to class them separately. One step above the sublime makes the ridiculous, and one step above the ridiculous makes the sublime again: the account, however, abstracted from the poetical fancy, shews the ignorance of Joshua, for he should have commanded the earth to have stood still.

The time implied by the expression *after it*, that is, after that day, being put in comparison with all the time that passed *before it*, must, in order to give any expressive signification to the passage, mean a *great length of time*:—for example, it would have been ridiculous to have said to the next day, or the next week, or the next month, or the next year; to give, therefore, meaning to the passage, comparative with the wonder it relates, and the prior time it alludes to, it must mean centuries of years; less, however, than one would be trifling, and less than two would be barely admissible.

A distant, but general time, is also expressed in the 8th chapter; where, after giving an account of the taking the city of Ai, it is said, ver. 28th, “And Joshua burned Ai, and made it an heap for ever, a desolation *unto this day* ;” and again, ver. 29, where speaking of the king of Ai, whom Joshua had hanged, and buried at the entering of the gate, it is said, “And he raised thereon a great heap of stones, which remaineth *unto this day*,” that is, unto the day or time in which the writer of the book of Joshua lived. And again, in the 10th chapter, where, after speaking of the five kings whom Joshua had hanged on five trees, and then thrown in a cave, it is said, “And he laid great stones on the cave’s mouth, which remain *unto this very day*.”

In enumerating the several exploits of Joshua, and of the tribes, and of the places which they conquered or attempted, it is said, chap. xv. ver. 63, “As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah *at Jerusalem unto this day*.” The question upon this passage is, at what time did the Jebusites and the children of Judah dwell together at Jerusalem? As this matter occurs again in the first chapter of Judges, I shall reserve my observations till I come to that part.

Having thus shewn from the book of Joshua itself, without any auxiliary evidence whatever, that Joshua is not the

author of that book; and that it is anonymous, and consequently without authority, I proceed, as before-mentioned; to the book of Judges.

The book of Judges is anonymous on the face of it; and therefore even the pretence is wanting to call it the word of God; it has not so much as a nominal voucher; it is altogether fatherless.

This book begins with the same expression as the book of Joshua. That of Joshua begins, chap. i. ver. 1, *Now after the death of Moses, &c.* and this of Judges begins, *Now after the death of Joshua, &c.* This, and the similarity of style between the two books, indicate that they are the work of the same author; but who he was, is altogether unknown: the only point that the book proves is, that the author lived long after the time of Joshua; for though it begins as if it followed immediately after his death, the second chapter is an epitome or abstract of the whole book, which, according to the Bible Chronology, extends its history through a space of 306 years; that is, from the death of Joshua, 1426 years before Christ, to the death of Sampson, 1120 years before Christ, and only 25 years before Saul went to seek his father's asses, and was made king. But there is good reason to believe, that it was not written till the time of David at least, and that the book of Joshua was not written before the same time.

In the first chapter of Judges, the writer, after announcing the death of Joshua, proceeds to tell what happened between the children of Judah and the native inhabitants of the land of Canaan. In this statement, the writer, having abruptly mentioned Jerusalem in the 7th verse, says immediately after, in the 8th verse, by way of explanation, "Now the children of Judah *had* fought against Jerusalem, and taken it;" consequently, this book could not have been written before Jerusalem had been taken. The reader will recollect the quotation I have just before made from the 15th chapter of Joshua, ver. 63, where it is said, that *the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem at this day*; meaning the time when the book of Joshua was written.

The evidence I have already produced, to prove that the books I have hitherto treated of were not written by the persons to whom they are ascribed, nor till many years after their death, if such persons ever lived, is already so abundant, that I can afford to admit this passage with less weight than I am entitled to draw from it. For the case is, that so far as the Bible can be credited as an history, the city of



Jerusalem was not taken till the time of David; and consequently, that the books of Joshua, and of Judges, were not written till after the commencement of the reign of David, which was 370 years after the death of Joshua.

The name of the city, that was afterwards called Jerusalem, was originally Jebus or Jebusi, and was the capital of the Jebusites. The account of David's taking this city is given in 2 Samuel, chap. v. ver. 4, &c.; also in 1 Chron. chap. xiv. ver. 4, &c. There is no mention in any part of the Bible that it was ever taken before, nor any account that favours such an opinion. It is not said, either in Samuel or in Chronicles, that they *utterly destroyed men, women, and children; that they left not a soul to breathe*, as is said of their other conquests; and the silence here observed implies that it was taken by capitulation, and that the Jebusites, the native inhabitants, continued to live in the place after it was taken. The account, therefore, given in Joshua, that *the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah* at Jerusalem at this day, corresponds to no other time than after the taking the city by David.

Having now shewn that every book in the Bible, from Genesis to Judges, is without authenticity, I come to the book of Ruth, an idle, bungling story, foolishly told, nobody knows by whom, about a strolling country girl creeping slyly to bed to her cousin Boaz. Pretty stuff indeed to be called the word of God! It is, however, one of the best books in the Bible, for it is free from murder and rapine.

I come next to the two books of Samuel, and to shew that those books were not written by Samuel, nor till a great length of time after the death of Samuel: and that they are, like all the former books, anonymous, and without authority.

To be convinced that these books have been written much later than the time of Samuel, and consequently not by him, it is only necessary to read the account which the writer gives of Saul going to seek his father's asses, and of his interview with Samuel, of whom Saul went to enquire about those lost asses, as foolish people now-a-days go to a conjurer to enquire after lost things.

The writer, in relating this story of Saul, Samuel, and the asses, does not tell it as a thing that had just then happened, but as an ancient *story in the time this writer lived*; for he tells it in the language or terms used at the time that Samuel lived, which obliges the writer to explain the story in the terms or language used in the time the writer lived.

Samuel, in the account given of him, in the first of those books, chap. ix. is called *the seer*; and it is by this term that Saul inquires after him, ver. 11, "And as they (Saul and his servant) went up the hill to the city, they found young maidens going out to draw water; and they said unto them, *Is the seer here?*" Saul then went according to the direction of these maidens, and met Samuel without knowing him, and said unto him, ver. 18, "Tell me, I pray thee, where the *seer's house is?*" and Samuel answered Saul, and said, *I am the seer.*"

As the writer of the book of Samuel relates these questions and answers, in the language or manner of speaking used in the time they are said to have been spoken; and as that manner of speaking was out of use when this author wrote, he found it necessary, in order to make the story understood, to explain the terms in which these questions and answers are spoken; and he does this in the 9th verse, where he says, "*Before-time*, in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, Come, let us go to the seer; for he that is now called a prophet, was *before-time* called a seer." This proves, as I have before said, that this story of Saul, Samuel, and the asses, was an ancient story at the time the book of Samuel was written, and consequently that Samuel did not write it, and that that book is without authenticity.

But if we go further into those books, the evidence is still more positive that Samuel is not the writer of them; for they relate things that did not happen till several years after the death of Samuel. Samuel died before Saul; for the 1st Samuel, chap. xxviii. tells, that Saul and the witch of Endor conjured Samuel up after he was dead; yet the history of the matters contained in those books is extended through the remaining part of Saul's life, and to the latter end of the life of David, who succeeded Saul. The account of the death and burial of Samuel (a thing which he could not write himself) is related in the 25th chapter of the first book of Samuel; and the chronology affixed to this chapter makes this to be 1060 years before Christ; yet the history of this *first* book is brought down to 1056 years before Christ; that is, to the death of Saul, which was not till four years after the death of Samuel.

The second book of Samuel begins with an account of things that did not happen till four years after Samuel was dead; for it begins with the reign of David, who succeeded Saul, and it goes on to the end of David's reign, which was

forty-three years after the death of Samuel; and therefore the books are in themselves positive evidence that they were not written by Samuel.

I have now gone through all the books in the first part of the Bible, to which the names of persons are affixed, as being the authors of those books, and which the church, styling itself the Christian church, have imposed upon the world as the writings of Moses, Joshua, and Samuel; and I have detected and proved the falsehood of this imposition. And now, ye priests of every description, who have preached and written against the former part of the *Age of Reason*, what have ye to say? Will ye, with all this mass of evidence against you, and staring you in the face, still have the assurance to march into your pulpits, and continue to impose these books on your congregations, as the works of *inspired penmen*, and the word of God, when it is as evident as demonstration can make truth appear, that the persons who, ye say, are the authors, are *not* the authors, and that ye know not who the authors are. What shadow of pretence have ye now to produce, for continuing the blasphemous fraud? What have ye still to offer against the pure and moral religion of Deism, in support of your system of falsehood, idolatry, and pretended revelation? Had the cruel and murderous orders, with which the Bible is filled, and the numberless torturing executions of men, women, and children, in consequence of those orders, been ascribed to some friend, whose memory you revered, you would have glowed with satisfaction at detecting the falsehood of the charge, and gloried in defending his injured fame. It is because ye are sunk in the cruelty of superstition, or feel no interest in the honour of your Creator, that ye listen to the horrid tales of the Bible, or hear them with callous indifference. The evidence I have produced, and shall still produce in the course of this work, to prove that the Bible is without authority, will, whilst it wounds the stubbornness of a priest, relieve and tranquillize the minds of millions; it will free them from all those hard thoughts of the Almighty which priest-craft and the Bible had infused into their minds, and which stood in everlasting opposition to all their ideas of his moral justice and benevolence.

I come now to the two books of Kings, and the two books of Chronicles. Those books are altogether historical, and are chiefly confined to the lives and actions of the Jewish kings, who in general were a parcel of rascals; but these are matters with which we have no more concern,

than we have with the Roman emperors, or Homer's account of the Trojan war. Besides which, as those works are anonymous, and as we know nothing of the writer, or of his character, it is impossible for us to know what degree of credit to give to the matters related therein. Like all other ancient histories, they appear to be a jumble of fable and of fact, and of probable and of improbable things; but which distance of time and place, and change of circumstances in the world, have rendered obsolete and uninteresting.

The chief use I shall make of those books, will be that of comparing them with each other, and with other parts of the Bible, to shew the confusion, contradiction, and cruelty, in this pretended word of God.

The first book of Kings begins with the reign of Solomon, which, according to the Bible Chronology, was 1015 years before Christ; and the second book ends 588 years before Christ, being a little after the reign of Zedekiah, whom Nebuchadnezzar, after taking Jerusalem, and conquering the Jews, carried captive to Babylon. The two books include a space of 427 years.

The two books of Chronicles are an history of the same times, and in general of the same persons, by another author; for it would be absurd to suppose that the same author wrote the history twice over. The first book of Chronicles (after giving the genealogy from Adam to Saul, which takes up the first nine chapters) begins with the reign of David; and the last book ends as in the last book of Kings, soon after the reign of Zedekiah, about 588 years before Christ. The two last verses of the last chapter bring the history 52 years more forward, that is, to 536. But these verses do not belong to the book, as I shall shew when I come to speak of the book of Ezra.

The two books of Kings, besides the history of Saul, David, and Solomon, who reigned over *all* Israel, contain an abstract of the lives of seventeen kings and one queen, who are styled kings of Judah; and of nineteen, who are styled kings of Israel; for the Jewish nation, immediately on the death of Solomon, split into two parties, who chose separate kings, and who carried on most rancorous wars against each other.

Those two books are little more than a history of assassinations, treachery, and wars. The cruelties that the Jews had accustomed themselves to practise on the Canaanites, whose country they had savagely invaded under a pre-

tended gift from God, they afterwards practised as furiously on each other. Scarcely half their kings died a natural death, and in some instances whole families were destroyed to secure possession to the successor, who, after a few years, and sometimes only a few months, or less, shared the same fate. In the tenth chapter of the second book of Kings, an account is given of two baskets full of children's heads, 70 in number, being exposed at the entrance of the city; they were the children of Ahab, and were murdered by the orders of Jehu, whom Elisha, the pretended man of God, had anointed to be king over Israel, on purpose to commit this bloody deed, and assassinate his predecessor. And in the account of the reign of Manaham, one of the kings of Israel who had murdered Shallum, who had reigned but one month, it is said, 2 Kings, chap. xv. ver. 16, that Manaham smote the city of Tiphshah, because they opened not the city to him, *and all the women that were therein that were with child they ripped up.*

Could we permit ourselves to suppose that the Almighty would distinguish any nation of people by the name of *his chosen people*, we must suppose that people to have been an example to all the rest of the world of the purest piety and humanity, and not such a nation of ruffians and cut-throats as the ancient Jews were; a people, who, corrupted by, and copying after, such monsters and imposters as Moses and Aaron, Joshua, Samuel, and David, had distinguished themselves above all others, on the face of the known earth, for barbarity and wickedness. If we will not stubbornly shut our eyes, and steel our hearts, it is impossible not to see, in spite of all that long-established superstition imposes upon the mind, that the flattering appellation of *his chosen people* is no other than a *lie*, which the priests and leaders of the Jews had invented, to cover the baseness of their own characters; and which Christian priests, sometimes as corrupt, and often as cruel, have professed to believe.

The two books of Chronicles are a repetition of the same crimes; but the history is broken in several places, by the author leaving out the reign of some of their kings; and in this, as well as in that of Kings, there is such a frequent transition from kings of Judah to kings of Israel, and from kings of Israel to kings of Judah, that the narrative is obscure in the reading. In the same book the history sometimes contradicts itself; for example, in the second

book of Kings, chap. i. ver. 8, we are told, but in rather ambiguous terms, that after the death of Ahaziah, king of Israel, Jehoram, or Joram (who was of the house of Ahab) reigned in his stead in the *second year of Jehoram*, or Joram, son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; and in chap. viii. ver. 16, of the same book, it is said, and in the *fifth year of Joram*, the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, began to reign; that is, one chapter says Joram of Judah began to reign in the *second year of Joram of Israel*; and the other chapter says, that Joram of Israel began to reign in the *fifth year of Joram of Judah*.

Several of the most extraordinary matters related in one history, as having happened during the reign of such and such of their kings, are not to be found in the other, in relating the reign of the same king; for example, the two first rival kings, after the death of Solomon, were Rehoboam and Jeroboam; and in 1 Kings, chap. xii. and xiii. an account is given of Jeroboam making an offering of burnt incense, and that a man, who is there called a man of God, cried out against the altar, chap. xiii. ver. 2, "O altar! altar! thus saith the Lord; Behold, a child shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places, and burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee."—Ver. 3, "And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, *Lay hold on him*; and his hand which he put out against him *dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.*"

One would think that such an extraordinary case as this, (which is spoken of as a judgment) happening to the chief of one of the parties, and that at the first moment of the separation of the Israelites into two nations, would, if it had been true, been recorded in both histories. But though men in later times have believed *all that the prophets have said unto them*, it does not appear that these prophets or historians believed each other, they knew each other too well.

A long account also is given in Kings about Elijah. It runs through several chapters, and concludes with telling, 2 Kings, chap. ii. ver. 11, "And it came to pass, as they (Elijah and Elisha) still went on, and talked, that behold, there appeared *a chariot of fire and horses of fire*, and parted them both asunder, and *Elijah went up by a whirlwind into*

heaven." Hum! this the author of Chronicles, miraculous as the story is, makes no mention of, though he mentions Elijah by name; neither does he say any thing of the story related in the second chapter of the same book of Kings, of a parcel of children calling Elisha *bald head, bald head*; and that this *man of God*, ver. 24, turned back, and looked upon them, *and cursed them in the name of the Lord*; and there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tore forty and two children of them." He also passes over in silence the story told, 2 Kings, chap. xiii. that when they were burying a man in the sepulchre, where Elisha had been buried, it happened that the dead man, as they were letting him down, (ver. 21,) "touched the bones of Elisha, and he (the dead man) *revived, and stood upon his feet*." The story does not tell us whether they buried the man notwithstanding he revived and stood upon his feet, or drew him up again. Upon all these stories, the writer of Chronicles is as silent as any writer of the present day, who did not chuse to be accused of *lying*, or at least of romancing, would be about stories of the same kind.

But, however these two historians may differ from each other, with respect to the tales related by either, they are silent alike with respect to those men styled prophets, whose writings fill up the latter part of the Bible. Isaiah, who lived in the time of Hezekiah, is mentioned in Kings, and again in Chronicles, when these historians are speaking of that reign; but except in one or two instances at most, and those very slightly, none of the rest are so much as spoken of, or even their existence hinted at; though, according to the Bible chronology, they lived within the time those histories were written; some of them long before. If those prophets, as they are called, were men of such importance in their day, as the compilers of the Bible, and priests, and commentators have since represented them to be, how can it be accounted for, that not one of these histories should say any thing about them?

The history in the books of Kings and of Chronicles is brought forward, as I have already said, to the year 588 before Christ; it will therefore be proper to examine, which of these prophets lived before that period.

Here follows a table of all the prophets, with the times in which they lived before Christ, according to the Chronology affixed to the first chapter of each of the books of the prophets; and also of the number of years they lived before the books of Kings and Chronicles were written.

*Table of the Prophets, with the time in which they lived before Christ, and also before the books of Kings and Chronicles were written.*

Names.	Years before Christ.	Yrs. before Kings and Chronicles.	Observations.
Isaiah - -	760	172	mentioned.
Jeremiah - -	629	41	{ mentioned only in the last c. of Chron.
Ezekiel - -	595	7	not mentioned.
Daniel - -	607	19	not mentioned.
Hosea - -	785	97	not mentioned.
Joel - -	800	212	not mentioned.
Amos - -	789	199	not mentioned.
Obadiah - -	789	199	not mentioned.
Jonah - -	862	274	see the note*.
Micah - -	750	162	not mentioned.
Nahum - -	713	125	not mentioned.
Habakkuk - -	620	38	not mentioned.
Zephaniah - -	630	42	not mentioned.
Haggai } after the			
Zachariah } year			
Malachi } 588			

This table is either not very honourable for the Bible historians, or not very honourable for the Bible prophets; and I leave to priests, and commentators, who are very learned in little things, to settle the point of *etiquette* between the two; and to assign a reason, why the authors of Kings and Chronicles have treated those prophets, whom in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, I have considered as poets, with as much degrading silence as any historian of the present day would treat Peter Pindar.

I have one observation more to make on the book of Chronicles; after which I shall pass on to review the remaining books of the Bible.

In my observations on the book of Genesis, I have quoted a passage from the 36th chapter, verse 31, which evidently refers to a time, *after* that kings began to reign over the

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\* In 2 Kings, chap. xiv. ver. 25, the name of Jonah is mentioned on account of the restoration of a tract of land by Jeroboam; but nothing further is said of him, nor is any allusion made to the book of Jonah, nor to his expedition to Ninevah, nor to his encounter with the whale.



children of Israel ; and I have shewn that as this verse is verbatim the same as in Chronicles, chap. i. ver. 43, where it stands consistently with the order of history, which in Genesis it does not, the verse in Genesis, and a great part of the 36th chapter, have been taken from Chronicles ; and that the book of Genesis, though it is placed first in the Bible, and ascribed to Moses, has been manufactured by some unknown person, after the book of Chronicles was written, which was not until at least eight hundred and sixty years after the time of Moses.

The evidence I proceed by to substantiate this is regular, and has in it but two stages. First, as I have already stated, that the passage in Genesis refers itself for *time* to Chronicles ; secondly, that the book of Chronicles, to which this passage refers itself, was not *begun* to be written until at least eight hundred and sixty years after the time of Moses. To prove this, we have only to look into the thirteenth verse of the third chapter of the first book of Chronicles, where the writer, in giving the genealogy of the descendants of David, mentions Zedekiah ; and it was in the time of Zedekiah, that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem, 588 years before Christ, and consequently more than 860 years after Moses. Those who have superstitiously boasted of the antiquity of the Bible, and particularly of the books ascribed to Moses, have done it without examination, and without any other authority than that of one credulous man telling it to another ; for, so far as historical and chronological evidence applies, the very first book in the Bible is not so ancient as the book of Homer, by more than three hundred years, and is about the same age with Æsop's Fables.

I am not contending for the morality of Homer ; on the contrary, I think it a book of false glory, tending to inspire immoral and mischievous notions of honour : and with respect to Æsop, though the moral is in general just, the fable is often cruel : and the cruelty of the fable does more injury to the heart, especially in a child, than the moral does good to the judgment.

Having now dismissed Kings and Chronicles, I come to the next in course, the book of Ezra.

As one proof, among others, I shall produce, to shew the disorder in which this pretended word of God, the Bible, has been put together, and the uncertainty of who the authors were, we have only to look at the three first verses in Ezra, and the two last in Chronicles ; for by what kind of cutting and shuffling has it been, that the three first verses in

Ezra should be the two last verses in Chronicles, or that the two last in Chronicles should be the three first in Ezra? Either the authors did not know their own works, or the compilers did not know the authors.

*Two last Verses of Chronicles.*

Ver. 22. Now in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the word of the Lord, spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah, might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

23. Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of his people? the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.

*Three first Verses of Ezra.*

Ver. 1. Now in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the word of the Lord, by the mouth of Jeremiah, might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also into writing, saying,

2. Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

3. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (he is the God) which is in Jerusalem.

The last verse in Chronicles is broken abruptly, and ends in the middle of a phrase with the word up, without signifying to what place. This abrupt break, and the appearance of the same verses in different books, shew, as I have already said, the disorder and ignorance in which the Bible has been put together, and that the compilers of it had no authority for what they were doing, nor we any authority for believing what they have done\*.

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\* I observed, as I passed along, several broken and senseless passages in the Bible, without thinking them of consequence enough to be introduced in the body of the work; such as that,

The only thing that has any appearance of certainty in the book of Ezra, is the time in which it was written, which was immediately after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, about 536 years before Christ. Ezra (who, according to the Jewish commentators, is the same person as is called Esdras in the Apocrypha) was one of the persons who returned, and who, it is probable, wrote

1 Samuel, chap. xiii. ver. 1, where it is said, "Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, Saul chose him three thousand men, &c." The first part of the verse, that Saul reigned one year, has no sense, since it does not tell us what Saul did, nor say any thing of what happened at the end of that one year; and it is, besides, mere absurdity to say he reigned one year, when the very next phrase says he had reigned two; for if he had reigned two, it was impossible not to have reigned one.

Another instance occurs in Joshua, chap. v. where the writer tells us a story of an angel (for such the table of contents, at the head of the chapter, calls him) appearing unto Joshua; and the story ends abruptly, and without any conclusion. The story is as follows:—Ver. 13, "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand; and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?" Verse 14, "And he said, Nay; but as captain of the hosts of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant?" Verse 15, "And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Lose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."—And what then? nothing: for here the story ends, and the chapter too.

Either this story is broken off in the middle, or it is a story told by some Jewish humourist, in ridicule of Joshua's pretended mission from God; and the compilers of the Bible, not perceiving the design of the story, have told it as a serious matter. As a story of humour and ridicule, it has a great deal of point; for it pompously introduces an angel in the figure of a man, with a drawn sword in his hand, before whom Joshua falls on his face to the earth, and worships (which is contrary to their second commandment); and then, this most important embassy from heaven ends, in telling Joshua to pull off his shoe. It might as well have told him to pull up his breeches.

It is certain, however, that the Jews did not credit every thing their leaders told them, as appears from the cavalier manner in which they speak of Moses, when he was gone into the mount. "As for this Moses, say they, we wot not what is become of him." *Exod. chap. x. xxii. ver. 1.*

the account of that affair. Nehemiah, whose book follows next to Ezra, was another of the returned persons; and who, it is also probable, wrote the account of the same affair, in the book that bears his name. But those accounts are nothing to us, nor to any other persons, unless it be to the Jews, as a part of the history of their nation; and there is just as much of the word of God in those books as there is in any of the histories of France, or Rapin's History of England, or the history of any other country.

But even in matters of historical record, neither of those writers are to be depended upon. In the second chapter of Ezra, the writer gives a list of the tribes and families, and of the precise number of souls of each that returned from Babylon to Jerusalem; and this enrolment of the persons so returned, appears to have been one of the principal objects for writing the book; but in this there is an error that destroys the intention of the undertaking.

The writer begins his enrolment in the following manner: chap. ii. ver. 3, "The children of Parosh, two thousand one hundred seventy and four." Verse 4, "The children of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two." And in this manner he proceeds through all the families; and in the 64th verse, he makes a total, and says, the whole congregation together was *forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore*.

But whoever will take the trouble of casting up the several particulars, will find that the total is but 29,818; so that the error is 12,542\*. What certainty then can there be in the Bible for any thing?

\* *Particulars of the families from the second chapter of Ezra.*

Chap. ii.	Bt. forw.	11,577	Bt. forw.	15,783	Bt. forw.	19,444	
Ver. 3	2172	Ver. 13	666	Ver. 23	128	Ver. 33	725
4	372	14	2056	24	42	34	345
5	775	15	454	25	743	35	3630
6	2812	16	98	26	621	36	973
7	1254	17	323	27	122	37	1052
8	945	18	112	28	223	38	1247
9	760	19	223	29	52	39	1017
10	642	20	95	30	156	40	74
11	623	21	123	31	1254	41	128
12	1222	22	56	32	320	42	139
						58	392
						60	652
<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>	
11,577		15,783		19,444		Total 29,818	

Nehemiah, in like manner, gives a list of the returned families, and of the number of each family. He begins as in Ezra, by saying, chap. vii. ver. 8, "The children of Parosh, two thousand three hundred and seventy-two;" and so on through all the families. The list differs in several of the particulars from that of Ezra. In the 66th verse, Nehemiah makes a total, and says, as Ezra had said, "The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore." But the particulars of this list make a total but of 31,089, so that the error here is 11,271. These writers may do well enough for Bible-makers, but not for any thing where truth and exactness is necessary. The next book in course is the book of Esther. If Madam Esther thought it any honour to offer herself as a kept mistress to Ahasuerus, or as a rival to Queen Vashty, who had refused to come to a drunken king, in the midst of a drunken company, to be made a show of (for the account says, they had been drinking seven days, and were merry,) let Esther and Mordecai look to that, it is no business of ours; at least, it is none of mine; besides which, the story has a great deal the appearance of being fabulous, and is also anonymous. I pass on to the book of Job.

The book of Job differs in character from all the books we have hitherto passed over. Treachery and murder make no part of this book; it is the meditations of a mind strongly impressed with the vicissitudes of human life, and by turns sinking under, and struggling against the pressure. It is a highly wrought composition, between willing submission and involuntary discontent; and shews man, as he sometimes is, more disposed to be resigned than he is capable of being. Patience has but a small share in the character of the person of whom the book treats; on the contrary, his grief is often impetuous; but he still endeavours to keep a guard upon it, and seems determined, in the midst of accumulating ills, to impose upon himself the hard duty of contentment.

I have spoken in a respectful manner of the book of Job in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, but without knowing at that time what I have learned since; which is, that from all the evidence that can be collected, the book of Job does not belong to the Bible.

I have seen the opinion of two Hebrew commentators, Abenezra and Spinosa, upon this subject; they both say that the book of Job carries no internal evidence of being an Hebrew book; that the genius of the composition, and

the drama of the piece, are not Hebrew; that it has been translated from another language into Hebrew, and that the author of the book was a Gentile; that the character represented under the name of Satan (which is the first and only time this name is mentioned in the Bible) does not correspond to any Hebrew idea; and that the two convocations which the Deity is supposed to have made of those, whom the poem calls sons of God, and the familiarity which this supposed Satan is stated to have with the Deity, are in the same case.

It may also be observed, that the book shews itself to be the production of a mind cultivated in science, which the Jews, so far from being famous for, were very ignorant of. The allusions to objects of natural philosophy are frequent and strong, and are of a different cast to any thing in the books known to be Hebrew. The astronomical names, Pleiades, Orion, and Arcturus, are Greek, and not Hebrew names; and as it does not appear from any thing that is to be found in the Bible, that the Jews knew any thing of astronomy, or that they studied it, they had no translation of those names into their own language, but adopted the names as they found them in the poem.

That the Jews did translate the literary productions of the Gentile nations into the Hebrew language, and mix them with their own, is not a matter of doubt; the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs is an evidence of this; it is there said, ver. 1, *The word of king Lemuel, the prophecy which his mother taught him.* This verse stands as a preface to the proverbs that follow, and which are not the proverbs of Solomon, but of Lemuel; and this Lemuel was not one of the kings of Israel, nor of Judah, but of some other country, and consequently a Gentile. The Jews, however, have adopted his proverbs, and as they cannot give any account who the author of the book of Job was, nor how they came by the book; and as it differs in character from the Hebrew writings, and stands totally unconnected with every other book and chapter in the Bible before it, and after it, it has all the circumstantial evidence of being originally a book of the Gentiles.\*

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\* The prayer known by the name of *Agur's prayer*, in the 30th chapter of Proverbs, immediately preceding the proverbs of Lemuel, and which is the only sensible, well-conceived, and well-expressed prayer in the Bible, has much the appearance of being a

The Bible-makers, and those regulators of time, the Bible chronologists, appear to have been at a loss where to place, and how to dispose of the book of Job; for it contains no one historical circumstance, nor allusion to any, that might serve to determine its place in the Bible. But it would not have answered the purpose of these men to have informed the world of their ignorance; and therefore they have affixed it to the æra of 1520 years before Christ, which is during the time the Israelites were in Egypt, and for which they have just as much authority and no more than I should have for saying it was a thousand years before that period. The probability, however, is, that it is older than any book in the Bible; and it is the only one that can be read without indignation or disgust.

We know nothing of what the ancient Gentile world (as it is called) was before the time of the Jews, whose practice has been to calumniate and blacken the character of all other nations; and it is from the Jewish accounts that we have learned to call them heathens. But as far as we know to the contrary, they were a just and moral people, and not addicted, like the Jews, to cruelty and revenge, but of whose profession of faith we are unacquainted. It appears to have been their custom to personify both virtue and vice by statues and images, as is done now-a-days both by statuary and by painting; but it does not follow from this, that they worshipped them any more than we do. I pass on to the Book of

*Psalms*, of which it is not necessary to make much ob-

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prayer taken from the Gentiles. The name of Agur occurs on no other occasion than this; and he is introduced, together with the prayer ascribed to him, in the same manner, and nearly in the same words, that Lemuel and his proverbs are introduced in the chapter that follows. The first verse of the 30th chapter says, "The words of Agur, the son of Iakeh, even the prophecy;" here the word prophecy is used with the same application it has in the following chapter of Lemuel, unconnected with any thing of prediction. The prayer of Agur is in the 8th and 9th verses, "*Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither riches nor poverty, but feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.*" This has not any of the marks of being a Jewish prayer, for the Jews never prayed but when they were in trouble, and never for any thing but victory, vengeance, and riches.

servation. Some of them are moral, and others are very revengeful; and the greater part relates to certain local circumstances of the Jewish nation at the time they were written, with which we have nothing to do. It is, however, an error or an imposition to call them the Psalms of David: they are a collection, as song-books are now-a-days, from different song-writers, who lived at different times. The 137th Psalm could not have been written till more than 400 years after the time of David, because it is written in commemoration of an event, the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, which did not happen till that distance of time. "*By the rivers of Babylon we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows, in the midst thereof; for there they that carried us away captive, required of us a song, saying, sing us one of the songs of Zion.*" As a man would say to an American, or to a Frenchman, or to an Englishman, sing us one of your American songs, or your French songs, or your English songs. This remark with respect to the time this Psalm was written, is of no other use than to shew (among others already mentioned) the general imposition the world has been under, with respect to the authors of the Bible. No regard has been paid to time, place, and circumstance; and the names of persons have been affixed to the several books, which it was as impossible they should write, as that a man should walk in procession at his own funeral.

*The Book of Proverbs.* These, like the Psalms, are a collection, and that from authors belonging to other nations than those of the Jewish nation, as I have shewn in the observations upon the Book of Job; besides which, some of the proverbs ascribed to Solomon, did not appear till two hundred and fifty years after the death of Solomon; for it is said in the 1st verse of the 25th chapter, "*These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out.*" It was two hundred and fifty years from the time of Solomon to the time of Hezekiah. When a man is famous and his name is abroad, he is made the putative father of things he never said or did; and this, most probably, has been the case with Solomon. It appears to have been the fashion of that day to make proverbs, as it is now to make jest-books, and father them upon those who never saw them.

The Book of *Ecclesiastes*, or the *Preacher*, is also ascribed to Solomon, and that with much reason, if not with truth. It is written as the solitary reflections of a worn-out de-



bauchee, such as Solomon was, who looking back on scenes he can no longer enjoy, cries out, *All is vanity!* A great deal of the metaphor and of the sentiment is obscure, most probably by translation; but enough is left to shew they were strongly pointed in the original\*. From what is transmitted to us of the character of Solomon, he was witty, ostentatious, dissolute, and at last melancholy. He lived fast, and died, tired of the world, at the age of fifty-eight years.

Seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, are worse than none; and however it may carry with it the appearance of heightened enjoyment, it defeats all the felicity of affection, by leaving it no point to fix upon: divided love is never happy. This was the case with Solomon; and if he could not, with all his pretensions to wisdom, discover it beforehand, he merited, unpitied, the mortification he afterwards endured. In this point of view, his preaching is unnecessary, because, to know the consequences, it is only necessary to know the cause. Seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, would have stood in place of the whole book. It was needless after this to say, that all was vanity and vexation of spirit; for it is impossible to derive happiness from the company of those whom we deprive of happiness.

To be happy in old age, it is necessary that we accustom ourselves to objects that can accompany the mind all the way through life, and that we take the rest as good in their day. The mere man of pleasure is miserable in old age; and the mere drudge in business is but little better: whereas, natural philosophy, mathematical and mechanical science, are a continual source of tranquil pleasure; and in spite of the gloomy dogmas of priests, and of superstition, the study of those things is the study of the true theology; it teaches man to know and to admire the Creator, for the principles of science are in the creation, and are unchangeable, and of divine origin.

Those who knew Benjamin Franklin will recollect, that his mind was ever young; his temper ever serene: science, that never grows grey, was always his mistress. He was never without an object, for when we cease to have an object, we become like an invalid in an hospital waiting for death.

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\* *Those that look out of the window shall be darkened*, is an obscure figure translation for loss of sight.

Solomon's Songs are amorous and foolish enough, but which wrinkled fanaticism has called divine. The compilers of the Bible have placed these songs after the book of Ecclesiastes; and the chronologists have affixed to them the æra of 1014 years before Christ, at which time Solomon, according to the same chronology, was nineteen years of age, and was then forming his seraglio of wives and concubines. The Bible-makers and the chronologists should have managed this matter a little better, and either have said nothing about the time, or chosen a time less inconsistent with the supposed divinity of those songs; for Solomon was then in the honey moon of one thousand debaucheries.

It should also have occurred to them, that as he wrote, if he did write, the book of Ecclesiastes, long after these songs, and in which he exclaims, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit; that he included those songs in that description. This is the more probable, because he says, or somebody for him, Ecclesiastes, chap. ii. v. 8, "*I got me men singers, and women singers, (most probably to sing those songs) and musical instruments of all sorts; and behold (ver. 11.) all was vanity and vexation of spirit.*" The compilers, however, have done their work but by halves; for as they have given us the songs, they should have given us the tunes, that we might sing them.

The books, called the books of the Prophets, fill up all the remaining part of the Bible; they are sixteen in number, beginning with Isaiah, and ending with Malachi; of which I have given you a list, in the observations upon Chronicles. Of these sixteen prophets, all of whom, except the three last, lived within the time the books of Kings and Chronicles were written; two only, Isaiah and Jeremiah, are mentioned in the history of those books. I shall begin with those two, reserving what I have to say on the general character of the men called prophets to another part of the work.

Whoever will take the trouble of reading the book ascribed to Isaiah, will find it one of the most wild and disorderly compositions ever put together; it has neither beginning, middle, nor end; and, except a short historical part, and a few sketches of history in two or three of the first chapters, is one continued incoherent, bombastical rant, full of extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning; a school-boy would scarcely have been excusable for writing such stuff; it is (at least in translation) that kind of composition and false taste, that is properly called prose run mad.

The historical part begins at the 36th chapter, and is continued to the end of the 39th chapter. It relates to some matters that are said to have passed during the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, at which time Isaiah lived. This fragment of history begins and ends abruptly; it has not the least connection with the chapter that precedes it, nor with that which follows it, nor with any other in the book. It is probable that Isaiah wrote this fragment himself, because he was an actor in the circumstances it treats of; but, except this part, there are scarcely two chapters that have any connection with each other; one is entitled, at the beginning of the first verse, the burden of Babylon; another, the burden of Moab; another, the burden of Damascus; another the burden of Egypt; another, the burden of the Desart of the Sea; another, the burden of the Valley of Vision; as you would say, the story of the knight of the burning mountain, the story of Cinderella, or the children in the wood, &c. &c.

I have already shewn, in the instance of the two last verses of Chronicles, and the three first in Ezra, that the compilers of the Bible mixed and confounded the writings of different authors with each other, which alone, were there no other cause, is sufficient to destroy the authenticity of any compilation, because it is more than presumptive evidence that the compilers are ignorant who the authors were. A very glaring instance of this occurs in the book ascribed to Isaiah, the latter part of the 44th chapter, and the beginning of the 45th, so far from having been written by Isaiah, could only have been written by some person who lived, at least, an hundred and fifty years after Isaiah was dead.

These chapters are a compliment to *Cyrus*, who permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem from the Babylonian captivity, to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, as is stated in Ezra. The last verse of the 44th chapter, and the beginning of the 45th, are in the following words; "*That saith of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built; and to the temple thy foundations shall be laid: thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him, and I will loose the loins of kings to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, &c.*"

What audacity of church and priestly ignorance it is to impose this book upon the world as the writing of Isaiah,

when Isaiah, according to their own chronology, died soon after the death of Hezekiah, which was 698 years before Christ; and the decree of Cyrus, in favor of the Jews returning to Jerusalem, was, according to the same chronology, 536 years before Christ; which was a distance of time between the two of 162 years. I do not suppose that the compilers of the Bible made these books, but rather that they picked up some loose, anonymous essays, and put them together under the names of such authors as best suited their purpose. They have encouraged the imposition, which is next to inventing it; for it was impossible but they must have observed it.

When we see the studied craft of the scripture-makers, in making every part of this romantic book of school-boy's eloquence, bend to the monstrous idea of a Son of God, begotten by a ghost on the body of a virgin, there is no imposition we are not justified in suspecting them of it. Every phrase and circumstance are marked with the barbarous hand of superstitious torture, and forced into meanings it was impossible they could have. The head of every chapter, and the top of every page, are blazoned with the names of Christ and the church, that the unwary reader might suck in the error before he began to read.

*Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son*, Isaiah, chap. vii. ver. 14, has been interpreted to mean the person called Jesus Christ, and his mother Mary, and has been echoed through christendom for more than a thousand years; and such has been the rage of this opinion, that scarcely a spot in it but has been stained with blood and marked with desolation in consequence of it. Though it is not my intention to enter into controversy on subjects of this kind, but to confine myself to shew that the Bible is spurious; and thus, by taking away the foundation, to overthrow at once the whole structure of superstition raised thereon; I will, however, stop a moment to expose the fallacious application of this passage.

Whether Isaiah was playing a trick with Ahaz, king of Judah, to whom this passage is spoken, is no business of mine; I mean only to shew the misapplication of the passage, and that it has no more reference to Christ and his mother than it has to me and my mother. The story is simply this:

The king of Syria and the king of Israel (I have already mentioned that the Jews were split into two nations, one of which was called Judah, the capital of which was Jerusalem,

and the other Israel) made war jointly against Ahaz, king of Judah, and marched their armies towards Jerusalem. Ahaz and his people became alarmed, and the account says, ver. 2, "*Their hearts were moved as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.*"

In this situation of things, Isaiah addresses himself to Ahaz, and assures him in the *name of the Lord* (the cant phrase of all the prophets) that these two kings should not succeed against him; and to satisfy Ahaz that this should be the case, tells him to ask a sign. This, the account says, Ahaz declined doing; giving as a reason that he would not tempt the Lord; upon which Isaiah, who is the speaker, says, ver. 14, "*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son;*" and the 16th verse says, "*And before this child shall know to refuse the evil, and chuse the good,* the land which thou abhorrest or darest (meaning Syria and the kingdom of Israel) shall be forsaken of both her kings." Here then was the sign, and the time limited for the completion of the assurance or promise: namely, before this child should know to refuse the evil, and chuse the good.

Isaiah having committed himself thus far, it became necessary to him, in order to avoid the imputation of being a false prophet, and the consequence thereof, to take measures to make this sign appear. It certainly was not a difficult thing, in any time of the world, to find a girl with child, or to make her so; and perhaps Isaiah knew of one before-hand; for I do not suppose that the prophets of that day were any more to be trusted than the priests of this: be that however as it may, he says in the next chapter, ver. 2, "*And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah, and I went unto the prophetess, and she conceived and bare a son.*"

Here then is the whole story, foolish as it is, of this child and this virgin; and it is upon the bare-faced perversion of this story, that the book of Matthew, and the impudence and sordid interests of priests in latter times, have founded a theory which they call the gospel; and have applied this story to signify the person they call Jesus Christ; begotten, they say, by a ghost, whom they call holy, on the body of a woman, engaged in marriage, and afterwards married, whom they call a virgin, 700 years after this foolish story was told; a theory which, speaking for myself, I hesitate

not to believe, and to say, is as fabulous and as false as God is true\*.

But to shew the imposition and falsehood of Isaiah, we have only to attend to the sequel of this story; which, though it is passed over in silence in the book of Isaiah, is related in the 28th chapter of the 2d Chronicles; and which is, that instead of these two kings failing in their attempt against Ahaz, king of Judah, as Isaiah had pretended to foretel in the name of the Lord, they succeeded; Ahaz was defeated and destroyed; an hundred and twenty thousand of his people were slaughtered; Jerusalem was plundered, and two hundred thousand women, and sons and daughters, carried into captivity. Thus much for this lying prophet and impostor Isaiah, and the book of falsehoods that bears his name. I pass on to the book of

Jeremiah. This prophet, as he is called, lived in the time that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, in the reign of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah; and the suspicion was strong against him, that he was a traitor in the interest of Nebuchadnezzar. Every thing relating to Jeremiah shews him to have been a man of an equivocal character: in his metaphor of the potter and the clay, chap. xviii. he guards his prognostications in such a crafty manner, as always to leave himself a door to escape by, in case the event should be contrary to what he had predicted.

In the 7th and 8th verses of that chapter, he makes the Almighty to say, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and destroy it: if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent me of the evil that I thought to do unto them." Here was a proviso against one side of the case: now for the other side.

Verses 9 and 10, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice: then I will repent me of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." Here is a proviso against the other side; and, ac-

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\* In the 14th verse of the viiith chapter, it is said, that the child should be called Immanuel; but this name was not given to either of the children, otherwise than as a character, which the word signifies. That of the prophetess was called Maher-shalal-hash baz, and that of Mary was called Jesus.

cording to this plan of prophesying, a prophet could never be wrong, however mistaken the Almighty might be. This sort of absurd subterfuge, and this manner of speaking of the Almighty, as one would speak of a man, is consistent with nothing but the stupidity of the Bible.

As to the authenticity of the book, it is only necessary to read it in order to decide positively, that, though some passages recorded therein may have been spoken by Jeremiah, he is not the author of the book. The historical parts, if they can be called by that name, are in the most confused condition: the same events are several times repeated, and that in a manner different, and sometimes in contradiction to each other; and this disorder runs even to the last chapter, where the history, upon which the greater part of the book has been employed, begins a-new, and ends abruptly. The book has all the appearances of being a medley of unconnected anecdotes, respecting persons and things of that time, collected together in the same rude manner as if the various and contradictory accounts, that are to be found in a bundle of newspapers, respecting persons and things of the present day, were put together without date, order or explanation. I will give two or three examples of this kind.

It appears, from the account of the 37th chapter, that the army of Nebuchadnezzar, which is called the army of the Chaldeans, had besieged Jerusalem some time; and on their hearing that the army of Pharaoh, of Egypt, was marching against them, they raised the siege, and retreated for a time. It may here be proper to mention, in order to understand this confused history, that Nebuchadnezzar had besieged and taken Jerusalem, during the reign of Jehoiakim, the predecessor of Zedekiah; and that it was Nebuchadnezzar who had made Zedekiah king, or rather vice-roy; and that this second siege, of which the book of Jeremiah treats, was in consequence of the revolt of Zedekiah against Nebuchadnezzar. This will, in some measure, account for the suspicion that affixes itself to Jeremiah, of being a traitor, and in the interest of Nebuchadnezzar; whom Jeremiah calls, in the 43rd chap. ver. 10, the servant of God.

The 11th verse of this chapter (the 37th) says, "And it came to pass, that, when the army of the Chaldeans was broken up from Jerusalem, for fear of Pharaoh's army, that Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem, to go (as this account states) into the land of Benjamin, to separate himself thence in the midst of the people; and when he was in the gate of Benjamin a captain of the ward was there, whose name was

Irijah; and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Thou fastest away to the Chaldeans; then Jeremiah said, It is false, I fall not away to the Chaldeans. Jeremiah being thus stopped and accused, was, after being examined, committed to prison, on suspicion of being a traitor, where he remained, as is stated in the last verse of this chapter.

But the next chapter gives an account of the imprisonment of Jeremiah, which has no connection with this account, but ascribes his imprisonment to another circumstance, and for which we must go back to the 21st chapter. It is there stated, ver. 1, that Zedekiah sent Pashur, the son of Malchiah, and Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah the priest, to Jeremiah, to enquire of him concerning Nebuchadnezzar, whose army was then before Jerusalem; and Jeremiah said to them, ver. 8, "Thus saith the Lord, Behold I set before you the way of life, and the way of death; he that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; but he that goeth out and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey."

This interview and conference breaks off abruptly at the end of the 10th verse of the 21st chapter; and such is the disorder of this book, that we have to pass over sixteen chapters, upon various subjects, in order to come at the continuation and event of this conference; and this brings us to the first verse of the 38th chapter, as I have just mentioned.

The 38th chapter opens with saying, "Then Shapatiah, the son of Mattan; Gedaliah, the son of Pashur; and Jucal, the son of Shelemiah; and Pashur, the son of Malchiah; (here are more persons mentioned than in the 21st chapter) heard the words that Jeremiah spoke unto the people, saying, *Thus saith the Lord, He that remaineth in this city, shall die by the sword, the famine, and by the pestilence; but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live; for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live;* (which are the words of the conference) therefore (say they to Zedekiah) We beseech thee, let this man be put to death, *for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people in speaking such words unto them; for this man seeketh not the welfare of the people, but the hurt:*" and at the 6th verse it is said, "Then they took Jeremiah, and put him into a dungeon of Malchiah."

These two accounts are different and contradictory. The one ascribes his imprisonment to his attempt to escape out of the city; the other to his preaching and prophesying in



the city; the one to his being seized by the guard at the gate; the other to his being accused before Zedekiah, by the conferees\*.

In the next chapter (the 39th) we have another instance of the disordered state of this book: for notwithstanding the siege of the city, by Nebuchadnezzar, has been the subject of several of the preceding chapters, particularly the 37th and 38th, the 39th chapter begins as if not a word had been said upon the subject; and as if the reader was to be informed of every particular respecting it; for it

\* I observed two chapters, 16th and 17th, in the first book of Samuel, that contradict each other with respect to David, and the manner he became acquainted with Saul; as the 37th and 38th chapters of the book of Jeremiah contradict each other with respect to the cause of Jeremiah's imprisonment.

In the 16th chapter of Samuel, it is said, that an evil spirit of God troubled Saul, and that his servants advised him (as a remedy) "to seek out a man who was a cunning player upon the harp." And Saul said, ver. 17, "Provide now a man that can play well, and bring him unto me." Then answered one of his servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him; wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, "Send me David, thy son." And [verse 21] David came to Saul, and stood before him, and he loved him greatly, and he became his armour-bearer; and when the evil spirit of God was upon Saul, [verse 23] David took his harp, and played with his hand, and Saul was refreshed, and was well.

But the next chapter [17] gives an account, all different to this, of the manner that Saul and David became acquainted. Here it is ascribed to David's encounter with Goliath, when David was sent by his father to carry provision to his brethren in the camp. In the 55th verse of this chapter it is said, "And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine [Goliath] he said to Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, whose son is this youth? And Abner said, As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell. And the king said, Inquire thou whose son the stripling is. And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand; and Saul said unto him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, "I am the son of thy servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite." These two accounts belie each other, because each of them supposes Saul and David not to have known each other before. This book, the Bible, is too ridiculous even for criticism.

begins with saying, ver. 1, "*In the ninth year of Zedekiah, king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and all his army, against Jerusalem, and besieged it, &c. &c.*"

But the instance in the last chapter (the 52d) is still more glaring; for though the story has been told over and over again, this chapter still supposes the reader not to know any thing of it, for it begins by saying, ver. 1, "*Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem, and his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah, of Libnah, (ver. 4.) and it came to pass, in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, that Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it, &c. &c.*"

It is not possible that any one man, and more particularly Jeremiah, could have been the writer of this book. The errors are such as could not have been committed by any person sitting down to compose a work. Were I, or any other man, to write in such a disordered manner, nobody would read what was written; and every body would suppose that the writer was in a state of insanity. The only way, therefore, to account for this disorder is, that the book is a medley of detached unauthenticated anecdotes, put together by some stupid book-maker, under the name of Jeremiah; because many of them refer to him, and to the circumstances of the times he lived in.

Of the duplicity, and of the false predictions of Jeremiah, I shall mention two instances, and then proceed to review the remainder of the Bible.

It appears from the 38th chapter, that when Jeremiah was in prison, Zedekiah sent for him, and at this interview, which was private, Jeremiah pressed it strongly on Zedekiah to surrender himself to the enemy. "*If, says he, (ver. 17,) thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, &c.*" Zedekiah was apprehensive that what passed at this conference should be known; and he said to Jeremiah (ver. 25,) "*If the princes (meaning those of Judah) hear that I have talked with thee, and they come unto thee and say unto thee, Declare unto us now what thou hast said unto the king; hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death; and also what the king said unto thee; then thou shalt say unto them, I presented my supplication before the king; that he would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house to die there. Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, and asked him; and he told them*

*according to all the words the king had commanded."* Thus, this man of God, as he is called, could tell a lie, or very strongly prevaricate, when he supposed it would answer his purpose: for certainly he did not go to Zedekiah to make his supplication, neither did he make it; he went because he was sent for, and he employed that opportunity to advise Zedekiah to surrender himself to Nebuchadnezzar.

In the 34th chapter, is a prophecy of Jeremiah to Zedekiah, in these words (ver. 2) "*Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will burn it with fire; and thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but that thou shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon. Yet hear the word of the Lord; O Zedekiah, king of Judah, thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not die by the sword, but thou shalt die in peace; and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings that were before thee, so shall they burn odours for thee, and they will lament thee, saying, Ah, Lord; for I have pronounced the word, saith the Lord.*"

Now, instead of Zedekiah beholding the eyes of the king of Babylon, and speaking with him mouth to mouth, and dying in peace, and with the burning of odours, as at the funeral of his fathers (as Jeremiah had declared the Lord himself had pronounced) the reverse, according to the 52d chapter, was the case; it is there said (ver. 10) "*That the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.*" What then can we say of these prophets, but that they are impostors and liars?

As for Jeremiah, he experienced none of those evils. He was taken into favour by Nebuchadnezzar, who gave him in charge to the captain of the guard, (chap. xxxix. ver. 12) "*Take him (said he) and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee.*" Jeremiah joined himself afterwards to Nebuchadnezzar, and went about prophesying for him against the Egyptians, who had marched to the relief of Jerusalem while it was besieged. Thus much for another of the lying prophets, and the book that bears his name.

I have been the more particular in treating of the books ascribed to Isaiah and Jeremiah, because those two are spoken of in the books of Kings and of Chronicles, which

the others are not. The remainder of the books ascribed to the men called prophets, I shall not trouble myself much about; but take them collectively into the observations I shall offer on the character of the men styled prophets.

In the former part of the *Age of Reason*, I have said that the word prophet was the Bible-word for poet, and that the flights and metaphors of the Jewish poets have been foolishly erected into what are now called prophecies. I am sufficiently justified in this opinion, not only because the books called the prophecies are written in poetical language, but because there is no word in the Bible, except it be the word prophet, that describes what we mean by a poet. I have also said, that the word signifies a performer upon musical instruments, of which I have given some instances; such as that of a company of prophets prophesying with psalteries, with tabrets, with pipes, with harps, &c. and that Saul prophesied with them, 1 Sam. chap. x. ver. 5. It appears from this passage, and from other parts in the book of Samuel, that the word prophet was confined to signify poetry and music; for the person who was supposed to have a visionary insight into concealed things, was not a prophet but a *seer* \* (1 Sam. chap. ix. ver. 9); and it was not till after the word *seer* went out of use (which most probably was when Saul banished those he called wizards) that the profession of the seer, or the art of seeing, became incorporated into the word prophet.

According to the *modern* meaning of the word prophet and prophesying, it signifies foretelling events to a great distance of time; and it became necessary to the inventors of the gospel to give it this lassitude of meaning, in order to apply or to stretch what they call the prophecies of the Old Testament, to the times of the New; but according to the Old Testament, the prophesying of the seer, and afterwards of the prophet, so far as the meaning of the word seer was incorporated into that of prophet, had reference only to things of the time then passing, or very closely connected with it; such as the event of a battle they were going to engage in, or of a journey, or of any enterprise they were going to undertake, or of any circumstance then pending,

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\* I know not what is the Hebrew word that corresponds to the word seer in English; but I observe it is translated into French by *La Voyant*, from the verb *voir* to see; and which means the person who sees, or the seer.

or of any difficulty they were then in; all of which had immediate reference to themselves (as in the case already mentioned of Ahaz and Isaiah with respect to the expression, *Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son*), and not to any distant future time. It was that kind of prophesying that corresponds to what we call fortune-telling; such as casting nativities, predicting riches, fortunate or unfortunate marriages, conjuring for lost goods, &c.; and it is the fraud of the Christian church, not that of the Jews; and the ignorance and the superstition of modern, not that of ancient times, that elevated those poetical—musical—conjuring—dreaming—strolling gentry, into the rank they have since had.

But, besides this general character of all the prophets, they had also a particular character. They were in parties, and they prophesied for or against, according to the party they were with; as the poetical and political writers of the present day write in defence of the party they associate with against the other.

After the Jews were divided into two nations, that of Judah and that of Israel, each party had its prophets, who abused and accused each other of being false prophets, lying prophets, impostors, &c.

The prophets of the party of Judah prophesied against the prophets of the party of Israel; and those of the party of Israel against those of Judah. This party prophesying shewed itself immediately on the separation under the first two rival kings Rehoboam and Jeroboam. The prophet that cursed, or prophesied, against the altar that Jeroboam had built in Bethel, was of the party of Judah, where Rehoboam was king; and he was way-laid, on his return home, by a prophet of the party of Israel, who said unto him; (1 Kings, chap. x.) "*Art thou the man of God that came from Judah? and he said I am.*" Then the prophet of the party of Israel said to him, "*I am a prophet also, as thou art (signifying of Judah), and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee unto thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water: but (says the 18th verse), he lied unto him.*" This event, however, according to the story, is, that the prophet of Judah never got back to Judah, for he was found dead on the road, by the contrivance of the prophet of Israel, who, no doubt, was called a true prophet by his own party, and the prophet of Judah a lying prophet.

In the third chapter of the second of Kings, a story is

related of prophesying or conjuring, that shews, in several particulars, the character of a prophet. Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and Joram, king of Israel, had for a while ceased their party animosity, and entered into an alliance; and these two, together with the king of Edom, engaged in a war against the king of Moab. After uniting, and marching their armies, the story says, they were in great distress for water, upon which Jehoshaphat said, "*Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, that we may enquire of the Lord by him?*" and one of the servants of the king of Israel said, *here is Elisha.* (Elisha was of the party of Judah.) *And Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, said, The word of the Lord is with him.*" The story then says, that these three kings went down to Elisha; and when Elisha (who, as I have said, was a Judahmite prophet) saw the king of Israel, he said unto him, "*What have I to do with thee, get thee to the prophets of thy father and the prophets of thy mother. Nay but, said the king of Israel, the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of the king of Moab,*" (meaning because of the distress they were in for water); upon which Elisha said, "*As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, I would not look towards thee, nor see thee.*" Here is all the venom and vulgarity of a party prophet. We have now to see the performance, or manner of prophesying.

Ver. 15. "*Bring me,* said Elisha, *a minstrel: and it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.*" Here is the farce of the conjuror. Now for the prophecy: "*And Elisha said,* (singing most probably to the tune he was playing) *Thus saith the Lord, Make this valley full of ditches;*" which was just telling them what every countryman could have told them, without either fiddle or farce, that the way to get water was to dig for it.

But as every conjuror is not famous alike for the same thing, so neither were those prophets; for though all of them, at least those I have spoken of, were famous for lying, some of them excelled in cursing. Elisha, whom I have just mentioned, was a chief in this branch of prophesying; it was he that cursed the forty-two children in the name of the Lord, whom the two she-bears came and devoured. We are to suppose that those children were of the party of Israel; but as those who will curse will lie, there is just as much credit to be given to this story of Elisha's two she-bears as there is to that of the Dragon of Wantley, of whom it is said:—

Poor children three devoured he,  
That could not with him grapple;  
And at one sup he eat them up,  
As a man would eat an apple.

There was another description of men called prophets, that amused themselves with dreams and visions; but whether by night or by day, we know not. These, if they were not quite harmless, were but little mischievous. Of this class are

Ezekiel and Daniel; and the first question upon those books, as upon all the others, is, Are they genuine? that is, were they written by Ezekiel and Daniel?

Of this there is no proof; but so far as my own opinion goes, I am more inclined to believe they were, than that they were not. My reasons for this opinion are as follow: First, Because those books do not contain internal evidence to prove they were not written by Ezekiel and Daniel, as the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, Samuel, &c. &c. prove they were not written by Moses, Joshua, Samuel, &c.

Secondly, Because they were not written till after the Babylonish captivity began; and there is good reason to believe, that not any book in the Bible was written before that period: at least, it is proveable; from the books themselves, as I have already shewn, that they were not written till after the commencement of the Jewish monarchy.

Thirdly, Because the manner in which the books ascribed to Ezekiel and Daniel are written, agrees with the condition these men were in at the time of writing them.

Had the numerous commentators and priests, who have foolishly employed or wasted their time in pretending to expound and unriddle those books, been carried into captivity, as Ezekiel and Daniel were, it would have greatly improved their intellects, in comprehending the reason for this mode of writing, and have saved them the trouble of racking their invention, as they have done, to no purpose; for they would have found that themselves would be obliged to write whatever they had to write, respecting their own affairs, or those of their friends, or of their country, in a concealed manner, as those men have done.

These two books differ from all the rest; for it is only those that are filled with accounts of dreams and visions; and this difference arose from the situation the writers were in as prisoners of war, or prisoners of state, in a foreign country, which obliged them to convey even the most tri-

fling information to each other, and all their political projects or opinions, in obscure and metaphorical terms. They pretend to have dreamed dreams, and seen visions, because it was unsafe for them to speak facts or plain language. We ought, however, to suppose, that the persons to whom they wrote understood what they meant, and that it was not intended any body else should. But these busy commentators and priests have been puzzling their wits to find out what it was not intended they should know, and with which they have nothing to do.

Ezekiel and Daniel were carried prisoners to Babylon, under the first captivity, in the time of Jehoiakim, nine years before the second captivity in the time of Zedekiah. The Jews were then still numerous, and had considerable force at Jerusalem; and as it is natural to suppose that men, in the situation of Ezekiel and Daniel, would be meditating the recovery of their country, and their own deliverance, it is reasonable to suppose, that the accounts of dreams and visions, with which these books are filled, are no other than a disguised mode of correspondence, to facilitate those objects: it served them as a cypher, or secret alphabet. If they are not this, they are tales, reveries, and nonsense; or at least, a fanciful way of wearing off the wearisomeness of captivity; but the presumption is, they are the former.

Ezekiel begins his books by speaking of a vision of *cherubims*, and of a vision of a *wheel within a wheel*, which he says he saw by the river Chebar, in the land of his captivity. Is it not reasonable to suppose, that by the cherubims he meant the temple at Jerusalem, where they had figures of cherubims? and by a wheel within a wheel (which, as a figure, has always been understood to signify political contrivance) the project or means of recovering Jerusalem? In the latter part of this book, he supposes himself transported to Jerusalem, and into the temple; and he refers back to the vision on the river Chebar, and says (chap. xliii. ver. 3) that this last vision was like the vision on the river Chebar; which indicates, that those pretended dreams and visions had for their object the recovery of Jerusalem, and nothing further.

As to the romantic interpretations and applications, wild as the dreams and visions they undertake to explain, which commentators and priests have made of those books, that of converting them into things which they call prophecies, and making them bend to times and circumstances, as far remote even as the present day, it shews the fraud or the extreme folly to which credulity or priestcraft can go.



Scarcely any thing can be more absurd, than to suppose that men situated as Ezekiel and Daniel were, whose country was over-run, and in the possession of the enemy, all their friends and relations in captivity abroad, or in slavery at home, or massacred, or in continual danger of it; scarcely any thing, I say, can be more absurd, than to suppose that such men should find nothing to do but that of employing their time and their thoughts about what was to happen to other nations a thousand or two thousand years after they were dead; at the same time, nothing is more natural, than that they should meditate the recovery of Jerusalem, and their own deliverance; and that this was the sole object of all the obscure and apparently frantic writings contained in those books.

In this sense, the mode of writing used in those two books being forced by necessity, and not adopted by choice, is not irrational; but if we are to use the books as prophecies, they are false. In the 29th chapter of Ezekiel, speaking of Egypt, it is said, (ver. 11,) "*No foot of man should pass through it, nor foot of beast should pass through it; neither shall it be inhabited for forty years.*" This is what never came to pass, and consequently it is false, as all the books I have already reviewed are. I here close this part of the subject.

In the former part of the *Age of Reason* I have spoken of Jonah, and of the story of him and the whale. A fit story for ridicule, if it was written to be believed; or of laughter, if it was intended to try what credulity could swallow; for if it could swallow Jonah and the whale, it could swallow any thing.

But, as is already shewn in the observations on the book of Job, and of Proverbs, it is not always certain which of the books in the Bible are originally Hebrew, or only translations from books of the Gentiles into Hebrew; and as the book of Jonah, so far from treating of the affairs of the Jews, says nothing upon that subject, but treats altogether of the Gentiles, it is more probable that it is a book of the Gentiles than of the Jews; and that it has been written as a fable, to expose the nonsense and satirize the vicious and malignant character of a Bible prophet, or a predicting priest.

Jonah is represented, first, as a disobedient prophet, running away from his mission, and taking shelter aboard a vessel of the Gentiles, bound from Joppa to Tarshish; as if he ignorantly supposed, by such a paltry contrivance, he

could hide himself where God could not find him. The vessel is overtaken by a storm at sea; and the mariners, all of whom are Gentiles, believing it to be a judgment, on account of some one on board who had committed a crime, agreed to cast lots, to discover the offender; and the lot fell upon Jonah. But, before this, they had cast all their wares and merchandize overboard, to lighten the vessel, while Jonah, like a stupid fellow, was fast asleep in the hold.

After the lot had designated Jonah to be the offender, they questioned him to know who and what he was? and he told them *he was an Hebrew*; and the story implies, that he confessed himself to be guilty. But these Gentiles, instead of sacrificing him at once, without pity or mercy, as a company of Bible prophets or priests would have done by a Gentile in the same case, and as it is related Samuel had done by Agag, and Moses by the women and children; they endeavoured to save him, though at the risk of their own lives; for the account says, "*Nevertheless (that is, though Jonah was a Jew, and a foreigner, and the cause of all their misfortunes, and the loss of their cargo,) the men rowed hard to bring the boat to land, but they could not, for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.*" Still, however, they were unwilling to put the fate of the lot into execution; and they cried (says the account) unto the Lord, saying, "*We beseech thee, O Lord, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood; for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.*" Meaning thereby, that they did not presume to judge Jonah guilty, since that he might be innocent; but that they considered the lot that had fallen upon him as a decree of God, or as it *pleased God*. The address of this prayer shews that the Gentiles worshipped one *Supreme Being*, and that they were not idolators, as the Jews represented them to be. But the storm still continuing, and the danger increasing, they put the fate of the lot into execution, and cast Jonah into the sea; where, according to the story, a great fish swallowed him up whole and alive.

We have now to consider Jonah securely housed from the storm in the fish's belly. Here we are told that he prayed; but the prayer is a made-up prayer, taken from various parts of the Psalms, without any connection or consistency, and adapted to the distress, but not at all to the condition, that Jonah was in. It is such a prayer as a Gentile, who might know something of the Psalms, could copy out for him. This circumstance alone, were there no other, is suffi-

cient to indicate that the whole is a made-up story. The prayer, however, is supposed to have answered the purpose, and the story goes on (taking up at the same time the cant language of a Bible-prophet), saying, "*The Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon dry land.*"

Jonah then received a second mission to Ninevah, with which he sets out; and we have now to consider him as a preacher. The distress he is represented to have suffered, the remembrance of his own disobedience as the cause of it, and the miraculous escape he is supposed to have had, were sufficient, one would conceive, to have impressed him with sympathy and benevolence in the execution of his mission; but, instead of this, he enters the city with denunciation and malediction in his mouth, crying, "*Yet forty days, and Ninevah shall be overthrown.*"

We have now to consider this supposed missionary in the last act of his mission; and here it is that the malevolent spirit of a Bible-prophet, or of a predicting priest, appears in all that blackness of character, that men ascribe to the being they call the devil.

Having published his predictions, he withdrew, says the story, to the east side of the city. But for what? not to contemplate, in retirement, the mercy of his Creator to himself, or to others, but to wait, with malignant impatience, the destruction of Ninevah. It came to pass, however, as the story relates, that the Ninevites reformed, and that God, according to the Bible phrase, repented him of the evil he had said he would do unto them, and did it not. This, saith the first verse of the last chapter, *displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.* His obdurate heart would rather that all Ninevah should be destroyed, and every soul, young and old, perish in its ruins, than that his prediction should not be fulfilled. To expose the character of a prophet still more, a gourd is made to grow up in the night, that promiseth him an agreeable shelter from the heat of the sun, in the place to which he is retired; and the next morning it dies.

Here the rage of the prophet becomes excessive, and he is ready to destroy himself. "*It is better, said he, for me to die than to live.*" This brings on a supposed expostulation between the Almighty and the prophet; in which the former says, "*Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And Jonah said, I do well to be angry even unto death. Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it to grow, which came up in a*

*night, and perished in a night; and should not I spare Ninevah, that great city, in which are more than threescore thousand persons, that cannot discern between their right hand and their left?"*

Here is both the winding up of the satire, and the moral of the fable. As a satire it strikes against the character of all the Bible-prophets, and against all the indiscriminate judgments upon men, women, and children, with which this lying book, the Bible, is crowded; such as Noah's flood, the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the extirpation of the Canaanites, even to sucking infants, and women with child, because the same reflection, *that there are more than threescore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left*, meaning young children, applies to all their cases. It satirizes also the supposed partiality of the Creator for one nation more than for another.

As a moral, it preaches against the malevolent spirit of prediction; for as certainly as a man predicts ill, he becomes inclined to wish it. The pride of having his judgment right, hardens his heart, till at last he beholds with satisfaction, or sees with disappointment, the accomplishment or the failure of his predictions. This book ends with the same kind of strong and well-directed point against prophets, prophecies, and indiscriminate judgments, as the chapter that Benjamin Franklin made for the Bible, about Abraham and the stranger, ends against the intolerant spirit of religious persecution. Thus much for the book of Jonah.

Of the poetical parts of the Bible, that are called prophecies, I have spoken in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, and already in this; where I have said that the word *prophet* is the Bible word for *poet*; and that the flights and metaphors of those poets, many of which are become obscure by the lapse of time and the change of circumstances, have been ridiculously erected into things called prophecies, and applied to purposes the writers never thought of. When a priest quotes any of those passages, he unriddles it agreeably to his own views, and imposes that explanation upon his congregation as the meaning of the writer. The *whore of Babylon* has been the common whore of all the priests, and each has accused the other of keeping the strumpet; so well do they agree in their explanations.

There now remain only a few books, which they call the books of the lesser prophets; and as I have already shewn that the greater are impostors, it would be cowardice to

disturb the repose of the little ones. Let them sleep then, in the arms of their nurses, the priests, and both be forgotten together.

I have now gone through the Bible, as a man would go through a wood with an axe on his shoulder, and fell trees. Here they lie; and the priests, if they can, may replant them. They may, perhaps, stick them in the ground, but they will never make them grow.—I pass on to the books of the New Testament.

## THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The New Testament, they tell us, is founded upon the prophecies of the Old; if so, it must follow the fate of its foundation.

As it is nothing extraordinary that a woman should be with child before she was married, and that the son she might bring forth should be executed, even unjustly; I see no reason for not believing that such a woman as Mary, and such a man as Joseph, and Jesus, existed; their mere existence is a matter of indifference, about which there is no ground, either to believe, or to disbelieve, and which comes under the common head of, *It may be so; and what then?* The probability, however, is, that there were such persons, or at least such as resembled them in part of the circumstances, because almost all romantic stories have been suggested by some actual circumstance; as the adventures of Robinson Crusoe, not a word of which is true, were suggested by the case of Alexander Selkirk.

It is not then the existence, or non-existence, of the persons that I trouble myself about; it is the fable of Jesus Christ, as told in the New Testament, and the wild and visionary doctrine raised thereon, against which I contend. The story, taking it as it is told, is blasphemously obscene. It gives an account of a young woman engaged to be married, and while under this engagement, she is, to speak plain language, debauched by a ghost, under the impious pretence, (Luke, chap. i. ver. 35,) that "*the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.*" Notwithstanding which, Joseph afterwards marries her, cohabits with her as his wife, and in his turn rivals the ghost. This is putting the story into intelligible language

and when told in this manner, there is not a priest but must be ashamed to own it\*.

Obscenity in matters of faith, however wrapped up, is always a token of fable and imposture; for it is necessary to our serious belief in God, that we do not connect it with stories that run, as this does, into ludicrous interpretations. This story is, upon the face of it, the same kind of story as that of Jupiter and Leda, or Jupiter and Europa, or any of the amorous adventures of Jupiter; and shews, as is already stated in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, that the Christian faith is built upon the heathen mythology.

As the historical parts of the New Testament, so far as concerns Jesus Christ, are confined to very short space of time, less than two years, and all within the same country, and nearly to the same spot, the discordance of time, place, and circumstance, which detects the fallacy of the books of the Old Testament, and proves them to be impositions, cannot be expected to be found here in the same abundance. The New Testament, compared with the Old, is like a farce of one act, in which there is not room for very numerous violations of the unities. There are, however, some glaring contradictions, which, exclusive of the fallacy of the pretended prophecies, are sufficient to shew the story of Jesus Christ to be false.

I lay it down as a position which cannot be controverted, first, that the *agreement* of all the parts of a story does not prove that story to be true, because the parts may agree, and the whole may be false; secondly, that the *disagreement* of the parts of a story proves *the whole cannot be true*. The agreement does not prove truth, but the disagreement proves falsehood positively.

The history of Jesus Christ is contained in the four books ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The first chapter of Matthew begins with giving a genealogy of Jesus Christ; and in the third chapter of Luke, there is also given a genealogy of Jesus Christ. Did these two agree, it would not prove the genealogy to be true, because it might, nevertheless, be a fabrication; but as they contradict each other in every particular, it proves falsehood absolutely. If Matthew speaks truth, Luke speaks falsehood; and if Luke speaks truth, Matthew speaks falsehood; and as there is no

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\* Mary, the supposed virgin mother of Jesus, had several other children, sons and daughters. See Mat. chap. xxii. 55, 56.

authority for believing one more than the other, there is no authority for believing either; and if they cannot be believed even in the very first thing they say, and set out to prove, they are not entitled to be believed in any thing they say afterwards. Truth is an uniform thing; and as to inspiration and revelation, were we to admit it, it is impossible to suppose it can be contradictory. Either then the men called apostles were impostors, or the books ascribed to them have been written by other persons, and fathered upon them, as is the case in the Old Testament.

The book of Matthew gives, chap. i. ver. 6, a genealogy by name from David, up through Joseph, the husband of Mary, to Christ; and makes there to be *twenty-eight* generations. The book of Luke gives also a genealogy by name from Christ, through Joseph, the husband of Mary, down to David, and makes there to be *forty-three* generations; besides which, there are only the two names of David and Joseph that are alike in the two lists. I here insert both genealogical lists, and for the sake of perspicuity and comparison have placed them both in the same direction, that is, from Joseph down to David.

Genealogy, according to  
Matthew.

- Christ
- 2 Joseph
- 3 Jacob
- 4 Matthan
- 5 Eleazer
- 6 Eliud
- 7 Achim
- 8 Sadoc
- 9 Azor
- 10 Eliakim
- 11 Abiud
- 12 Zorobabel
- 13 Salathiel
- 14 Jechonias
- 15 Josias
- 16 Amon
- 17 Manasses
- 18 Ezekias
- 19 Achaz
- 20 Joatham

Genealogy, according to  
Luke.

- Christ
- 2 Joseph
- 3 Heli
- 4 Matthat
- 5 Levi
- 6 Melchi
- 7 Janna
- 8 Joseph
- 9 Mattathias
- 10 Amos
- 11 Naum
- 12 Esli
- 13 Nagge
- 14 Maath
- 15 Mattathias
- 16 Semei
- 17 Joseph
- 18 Juda
- 19 Joanna
- 20 Rhesa

Genealogy, according to  
Matthew.

- 21 Ozias
- 22 Joram
- 23 Josaphat
- 24 Asa
- 25 Abia
- 26 Roboam
- 27 Solomon
- 28 David\*

Genealogy, according to  
Luke.

- 21 Zorobabel
- 22 Salathiel
- 23 Neri
- 24 Melchi
- 25 Addi
- 26 Cosam
- 27 Elmodam
- 28 Er
- 29 Jose
- 30 Eliezer
- 31 Jorim
- 32 Matthat
- 33 Levi
- 34 Simeon
- 35 Juda
- 36 Joseph
- 37 Jonan
- 38 Elakim
- 39 Melea
- 40 Menan
- 41 Mattatha
- 42 Nathan
- 43 David

Now, if these men, Matthew and Luke, set out with a falsehood between them (as these two accounts shew they do) in the very commencement of their history of Jesus Christ, and of who, and of what he was, what authority (as I have before asked) is there left for believing the strange

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\* From the birth of David to the birth of Christ is upwards of 1080 years; and as the life-time of Christ is not included, there are but 27 full generations. To find, therefore, the average age of each person mentioned in the list, at the time his first son was born, it is only necessary to divide 1080 by 27, which gives 40 years for each person. As the life-time of man was then but of the same extent it is now, it is an absurdity to suppose, that 27 following generations should all be old batchelors, before they married; and the more so, when we are told, that Solomon, the next in succession to David, had a house full of wives and mistresses before he was twenty-one years of age. So far from this genealogy being a solemn truth, it is not even a reasonable lie. The list of Luke gives about twenty-six years for the average age, and this is too much.



things they tell us afterwards? If they cannot be believed in their account of his natural genealogy, how are we to believe them, when they tell us, he was the son of God, the begotten by a ghost; and that an angel announced this in secret to his mother? If they lied in one genealogy, why are we to believe them in the other? If his natural genealogy be manufactured, which it certainly is, why are not we not to suppose, that his celestial genealogy is manufactured also; and that the whole is fabulous? Can any man of serious reflection hazard his future happiness upon the belief of a story naturally impossible; repugnant to every idea of decency; and related by persons already detected of falsehood? Is it not more safe, that we stop ourselves at the plain, pure, and unmixed belief of one God, which is Deism, than that we commit ourselves on an ocean of improbable, irrational, indecent, and contradictory tales?

The first question, however, upon the books of the New Testament, as upon those of the Old, is, Are they genuine? Were they written by the persons to whom they are ascribed? for it is upon this ground only, that the strange things related therein have been credited. Upon this point, there is no *direct proof for or against*; and all that this state of a case proves, is *doubtfulness*; and doubtfulness is the opposite of belief. The state, therefore, that the books are in, proves against themselves, as far as this kind of proof can go.

But, exclusive of this, the presumption is, that the books called the Evangelists, and ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were not written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; and that they are impositions. The disordered state of the history in these four books, the silence of one book upon matters related in the other, and the disagreement that is to be found among them, implies, that they are the production of some unconnected individuals, many years after the things they pretend to relate, each of whom made his own legend; and not the writings of men living intimately together, as the men called apostles are supposed to have done: in fine, that they have been manufactured, as the books of the Old Testament have been, by other persons than those whose names they bear.

The story of the angel announcing, what the church calls the *immaculate conception*, is not so much as mentioned in the books ascribed to Mark and John; and is differently related in Matthew and Luke. The former says, the angel appeared to Joseph; the latter says, it was to Mary; but either, Joseph or Mary, was the worst evidence that could have been

thought of; for it was others that should have testified *for them*, and not they for themselves. Were any girl that is now with child to say, and even to swear it, that she was gotten with child by a ghost, and that an angel told her so, would she be believed? Certainly she would not. Why then are we to believe the same thing of another girl whom we never saw, told by nobody knows who, nor when, nor where? How strange and inconsistent is it, that the same circumstance that would weaken the belief even of a probable story; should be given as a motive for believing this one, that has upon the face of it every token of absolute impossibility and imposture.

The story of Herod destroying all the children under two years old, belongs altogether to the book of Matthew: not one of the rest mentions any thing about it. Had such a circumstance been true, the universality of it must have made it known to all the writers; and the thing would have been too striking to have been omitted by any. This writer tells us, that Jesus escaped this slaughter, because Joseph and Mary were warned by an angel to flee with him into Egypt; but he forgot to make any provision for John, who was then under two years of age. John, however, who staid behind, fared as well as Jesus who fled; and therefore the story circumstantially belies itself.

Not any two of these writers agree in reciting, *exactly in the same words*, the written inscription, short as it is, which they tell us was put over Christ when he was crucified: and besides this, Mark says, He was crucified at the third hour (nine in the morning); and John says, it was the sixth hour (twelve at noon\*.)

The inscription is thus stated in those books.

Matthew—This is Jesus the king of the Jews.

Mark—The king of the Jews.

Luke—This is the king of the Jews.

John—Jesus of Nazareth king of the Jews.

We may infer from these circumstances, trivial as they are, that those writers, whoever they were, and in whatever time they lived, were not present at the scene. The

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\* According to John, the sentence was not passed till about the sixth hour (noon), and consequently, the execution could not be till the afternoon; but Mark says expressly, that he was crucified at the third hour (nine in the morning), chap. xv. 25; John, chap. xix. ver. 14.

only one of the men, called apostles, who appears to have been near the spot, was Peter; and when he was accused of being one of Jesus's followers, it is said (Matthew, chap. xxvi. v. 74), "*Then Peter began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man:*" yet we are now called upon to believe the same Peter, convicted, by their own account, of perjury. For what reason, or on what authority, shall we do this?

The accounts that are given of the circumstances, that they tell us attended the crucifixion, are differently related in those four books.

The book ascribed to Matthew says, "*There was darkness over all the land from the sixth hour unto the ninth hour—that the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom—that there was an earthquake—that the rocks rent—that the graves opened, that the bodies of many of the saints that slept arose and came out of their graves after the resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.*" Such is the account which this dashing writer of the book of Matthew gives; but in which he is not supported by the writers of the other books.

The writer of the book ascribed to Mark, in detailing the circumstances of the crucifixion, makes no mention of any earthquake, nor of the rocks rending, nor of the graves opening, nor of the dead men walking out. The writer of the book of Luke is silent also upon the same points. And as to the writer of the book of John, though he details all the circumstances of the crucifixion down to the burial of Christ, he says nothing about either the darkness—the veil of the temple—the earthquake—the rocks—the graves—nor the dead men.

Now if it had been true, that those things had happened; and if the writers of these books had lived at the time they did happen, and had been the persons they are said to be, namely, the four men called apostles, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, it was not possible for them, as true historians, even without the aid of inspiration, not to have recorded them. The things, supposing them to have been facts, were of too much notoriety not to have been known, and of too much importance not to have been told. All these supposed apostles must have been witnesses of the earthquake, if there had been any; for it was not possible for them to have been absent from it; the opening of the graves and the resurrection of the dead men, and their walking about the city, is of greater importance than the earthquake. An earthquake is always possible, and natural, and proves nothing; but

this opening of the graves is supernatural, and directly in point to their doctrine, their cause, and their apostleship. Had it been true, it would have filled up whole chapters of those books, and been the chosen theme and general chorus of all the writers; but instead of this, little and trivial things, and mere prattling conversations of, *he said this*, and *she said that*, are often tediously detailed, while this most important of all, had it been true, is passed off in a slovenly manner by a single dash of the pen, and that by one writer only, and not so much as hinted at by the rest.

It is an easy thing to tell a lie, but it is difficult to support the lie after it is told. The writer of the book of Matthew should have told us who the saints were that came to life again, and went into the city, and what became of them afterwards, and who it was that saw them; for he is not hardy enough to say he saw them himself; whether they came out naked, and all in natural buff, he-saints and she-saints; or whether they came full dressed, and where they got their dresses; whether they went to their former habitations, and reclaimed their wives, their husbands, and their property, and how they were received; whether they entered ejectments for the recovery of their possessions, or brought actions of *crim. con.* against the rival interlopers; whether they remained on earth, and followed their former occupation of preaching or working; or whether they died again, or went back to their graves alive, and buried themselves.

Strange indeed, that an army of saints should return to life, and nobody know who they were, nor who it was that saw them, and that not a word more should be said upon the subject, nor these saints have any thing to tell us! Had it been the prophets who (as we are told) had formerly prophesied of these things, *they* must have had a *great deal* to say. They could have told us every thing, and we should have had posthumous prophecies, with notes and commentaries upon the first, a little better at least than we have now. Had it been Moses, and Aaron, and Joshua, and Samuel, and David, not an unconverted Jew had remained in all Jerusalem. Had it been John the Baptist, and the saints of the time then present, every body would have known them, and they would have out-preached and out-famed all the other apostles. But instead of this, these saints are made to pop up, like Jonah's gourd in the night, for no purpose at all but to wither in the morning. Thus much for this part of the story.

The tale of the resurrection follows that of the crucifixion; and in this as well as in that, the writers, whoever they were, disagree so much, as to make it evident that none of them were there.

The book of Matthew states, that when Christ was put in the sepulchre, the Jews applied to Pilate for a watch or a guard to be placed over the sepulchre, to prevent the body being stolen by the disciples; and that in consequence of this request, the sepulchre *was made sure, sealing the stone* that covered the mouth, and setting a watch. But the other books say nothing about this application, nor about the sealing, nor the guard, nor the watch; and according to their accounts, there were none. Matthew, however, follows up this part of the story of the guard or the watch with a second part, that I shall notice in the conclusion, as it serves to detect the fallacy of those books.

The book of Matthew continues its account, and says, (chap. xxviii. ver. 1,) that at the end of the sabbath, as it began to *dawn*, towards the first day of the week, came *Mary Magdalene* and the *other Mary*, to see the sepulchre. Mark says it was sun-rising, and John says it was dark. Luke says it was *Mary Magdalene*, and *Joanna*, and *Mary the mother of James*, and *other women*, that came to the sepulchre; and John states, that *Mary Magdalene* came alone. So well do they agree about their first evidence! they all, however, appear to have known most about *Mary Magdalene*; she was a woman of a large acquaintance, and it was not an ill conjecture that she might be upon the stroll.

The book of Matthew goes on to say, (ver. 2,) “And behold there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, *and sat upon it.*” But the other books say nothing about any earthquake, nor about the angel rolling back the stone, *and sitting upon it*; and according to their account, there was no angel *sitting there*. Mark says the angel *was within the sepulchre, sitting* on the right side. Luke says there were two, and they were both standing up; and John says, they were both sitting down, one at the head and the other at the feet.

Matthew says, that the angel that was sitting upon the stone on the outside of the sepulchre, told the two Marys that Christ was risen, and that the women went *away* quickly. Mark says, that the women, upon seeing the stone rolled away, and wondering at it, went *into* the sepulchre, and that it was the angel that was *sitting* within on the right

side, that told them so. Luke says, it was the two angels that were standing up; and John says, it was Jesus Christ himself that told it to Mary Magdalene; and that she did not go into the sepulchre, but only stooped down and looked in.

Now, if the writers of these four books had gone into a court of justice to prove an *alibi* (for it is of the nature of an *alibi* that is here attempted to be proved, namely, the absence of a dead body by supernatural means), and had they given their evidence in the same contradictory manner as it is here given, they would have been in danger of having their ears cropt for perjury, and would have justly deserved it. Yet this is the evidence, and these are the books, that have been imposed upon the world, as being given by divine inspiration, and as the unchangeable word of God.

The writer of the book of Matthew, after giving this account, relates a story that is not to be found in any of the other books, and which is the same I have just before alluded to.

“Now, says he, (that is, after the conversation the women had had with the angel sitting upon the stone), behold some of the watch (meaning the watch that he had said had been placed over the sepulchre) came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done; and when they were assembled with the elders and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, that his disciples came by night, and stole him away while we *slept*; and if this come to the governor's ear, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught; and this saying (that his disciples stole him away) is commonly reported among the Jews *until this day*.”

The expression, *until this day*, is an evidence that the book ascribed to Matthew was not written by Matthew, and that it has been manufactured long after the times and things of which it pretends to treat; for the expression implies a great length of intervening time. It would be inconsistent in us to speak in this manner of any thing happening in our own time. To give, therefore, intelligible meaning to the expression, we must suppose a lapse of some generations at least, for this manner of speaking carries the mind back to ancient time.

The absurdity also of the story is worth noticing; for it shews the writer of the book of Matthew to have been an exceedingly weak and foolish man. He tells a story, that

contradicts itself in point of possibility; for though the guard, if there were any, might be made to say that the body was taken away while they were *asleep*, and to give that as a reason for their not having presented it, that same sleep must also have prevented their knowing how, and by whom it was done; and yet they are made to say, that it was the disciples who did it. Were a man to tender his evidence of something that he should say was done, and of the manner of doing it, and of the person who did it while he was asleep, and could know nothing of the matter, such evidence could not be received: it will do well enough for Testament evidence, but not for any thing where truth is concerned.

I come now to that part of the evidence in those books, that respects the pretended appearance of Christ after this pretended resurrection.

The writer of the book of Matthew relates, that the angel that was sitting on the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre, said to the two Marys, chap. xxviii. ver. 7, "*Behold Christ is gone before you into Galilee, there ye shall see him; lo, I have told you.*" And the same writer, at the two next verses (8, 9,) makes Christ himself to speak to the same purpose to these women, immediately after the angel had told it to them, and that they ran quickly to tell it to the disciples; and at the 16th verse it is said, "*Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them; and, when they saw him, they worshipped him.*"

But the writer of the book of John tells us a story very different to this; for he says, chap. xx. ver. 19, "*Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week* (that is, the same day that Christ is said to have risen), *when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst of them.*"

According to Matthew the eleven were marching to Galilee, to meet Jesus in a mountain, by his own appointment, at the very time when, according to John, they were assembled in another place, and that not by appointment but in secret, for fear of the Jews.

The writer of the book of Luke contradicts that of Matthew more pointedly than John does; for he says expressly, that the meeting was in *Jerusalem* the evening of the same day that he (Christ) rose, and that the *eleven* were *there*. See Luke, chap. xxiv. ver. 13, 33.

Now, it is not possible, unless we admit these supposed

disciples the right of wilful lying, that the writer of these books could be any of the eleven persons called disciples; for if, according to Matthew, the eleven went into Galilee to meet Jesus in a mountain by his own appointment, on the same day that he is said to have risen, Luke and John must have been two of that eleven; yet the writer of Luke says expressly, and John implies as much, that the meeting was, that same day, in a house in Jerusalem; and, on the other hand, if, according to Luke and John, the *eleven* were assembled in a house in Jerusalem, Matthew must have been one of that eleven; yet Matthew says, the meeting was in a mountain in Galilee, and consequently the evidence given in those books destroys each other.

The writer of the book of Mark says nothing about any meeting in Galilee; but he says, chap. xvi. ver. 12, that Christ, after his resurrection, appeared in another form to two of them, as they walked into the country, and that these two told it to the residue, who would not believe them. Luke also tells a story, in which he keeps Christ employed the whole of the day of this pretended resurrection, until the evening, and which totally invalidates the account of going to the mountain in Galilee. He says, that two of them, without saying which two, went that same day to a village called Emmaus, threescore furlongs (seven miles and a half) from Jerusalem, and that Christ, in disguise, went with them, and staid with them unto the evening, and supped with them, and then vanished out of their sight, and re-appeared that same evening, at the meeting of the eleven in Jerusalem.

This is the contradictory manner in which the evidence of this pretended re-appearance of Christ is stated; the only point in which the writers agree, is the skulking privacy of that re-appearance; for whether it was in the recess of a mountain in Galilee, or in a shut-up house in Jerusalem, it was still skulking. To what cause then are we to assign this skulking? On the one hand, it is directly repugnant to the supposed or pretended end—that of convincing the world that Christ was risen; and, on the other hand, to have asserted the publicity of it, would have exposed the writers of those books to public detection, and therefore they have been under the necessity of making it a private affair.

As to the account of Christ being seen by more than five hundred at once, it is Paul only who says it, and not the five hundred who say it for themselves. It is, therefore, the testimony of but one man, and that too of a man, who did not, according to the same account, believe a word



of the matter himself, at the time it is said to have happened. His evidence, supposing him to have been the writer of the 15th chapter of Corinthians, where this account is given, is like that of a man, who comes into a court of justice to swear, that what he had sworn before is false. A man may often see reason, and he has too always the right of changing his opinion; but this liberty does not extend to matters of fact.

I now come to the last scene, that of the ascension into heaven. Here all fear of the Jews, and of every thing else, must necessarily have been out of the question: it was that which, if true, was to seal the whole; and upon which the reality of the future mission of the disciples was to rest for proof. Words, whether declarations or promises, that passed in private, either in the recess of a mountain in Galilee, or in a shut-up house in Jerusalem, even supposing them to have been spoken, could not be evidence in public; it was therefore necessary that this last scene should preclude the possibility of denial and dispute; and that it should be, as I have stated in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, as public and as visible as the sun at noon day: at least, it ought to have been as public as the crucifixion is reported to have been. But to come to the point.

In the first place the writer of the book of Matthew does not say a syllable about it; neither does the writer of the book of John. This being the case, is it possible to suppose that those writers, who affect to be even minute in other matters, would have been silent upon this, had it been true? The writer of the book of Mark passes it off in a careless, slovenly manner, with a single dash of the pen, as if he was tired of romancing, or ashamed of the story. So also does the writer of Luke. And even between these two, there is not an apparent agreement, as to the place where this final parting is said to have been.

The book of Mark says, that Christ appeared to the eleven as they sat at meat; alluding to the meeting of the eleven at Jerusalem: he then states the conversation that he says passed at that meeting; and immediately after says (as a school-boy would finish a dull story) "*So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.*" But the writer of Luke says, that the ascension was from Bethany; that *he* (Christ) *led them out as far as Bethany, and was parted from them then there, and was carried up into heaven.* So also Mahomet: and as to Moses, the apostle Jude says, ver. 9, *That Michael and the*

*devil disputed about his body.* While we believe such fables as these, or either of them, we believe unworthily of the Almighty.

I have now gone through the examination of the four books ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; and when it is considered that the whole space of time, from the crucifixion to what is called the ascension, is but a few days, apparently not more than three or four, and that all the circumstances are reported to have happened nearly about the same spot, Jerusalem; it is, I believe, impossible to find, in any story upon record, so many and such glaring absurdities, contradictions, and falsehoods, as are in those books. They are more numerous and striking than I had any expectation of finding, when I began this examination, and far more so than I had any idea of, when I wrote the former part of the *Age of Reason*. I had then neither Bible nor Testament to refer to, nor could I procure any. My own situation, even as to existence, was becoming every day more precarious; and as I was willing to leave something behind me upon the subject, I was obliged to be quick and concise. The quotations I then made were from memory only, but they are correct; and the opinions I have advanced in that work are the effect of the most clear and long-established conviction—that the Bible and the Testament are impositions upon the world—that the fall of man—the account of Jesus Christ being the Son of God, and of his dying to appease the wrath of God, and of salvation by that strange means, are all fabulous inventions, dishonourable to the wisdom and power of the Almighty—that the only true religion is Deism, by which I then meant, and now mean, the belief of one God, and an imitation of his moral character, or the practice of what are called moral virtues—and that it was upon this only (so far as religion is concerned) that I rested all my hopes of happiness hereafter. So say I now—and so help me God.

But to return to the subject.—Though it is impossible, at this distance of time, to ascertain as a fact who were the writers of those four books (and this alone is sufficient to hold them in doubt, and where we doubt we do not believe) it is not difficult to ascertain negatively that they were not written by the persons to whom they are ascribed. The contradictions in those books demonstrate two things:

First, that the writers cannot have been eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of the matters they relate; or they would have related them without those contradictions; and conse-

quently that the books have not been written by the persons called apostles, who are supposed to have been witnesses of this kind.

Secondly, that the writers, whoever they were, have not acted in concerted imposition, but each writer, separately and individually for himself, and without the knowledge of the other.

The same evidence that applies to prove the one, applies equally to prove both cases; that is, that the books were not written by the men called apostles, and also that they are not a concerted imposition. As to inspiration, it is altogether out of the question; we may as well attempt to unite truth and falsehood, as inspiration and contradiction.

If four men are eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses to a scene, they will, without any concert between them, agree as to the time and place when and where that scene happened. Their individual knowledge of the *thing*, each one knowing it for himself, renders concert totally unnecessary; the one will not say it was in a mountain in the country, and the other at a house in town: the one will not say it was at sun-rise, and the other that it was dark. For in whatever place it was, at whatever time it was, they know it equally alike.

And, on the other hand, if four men concert a story, they will make their separate relations of that story agree, and corroborate with each other to support the whole. *That* concert supplies the want of fact in the one case, as the knowledge of the fact supercedes, in the other case, the necessity of a concert. The same contradictions, therefore, that prove there has been no concert, prove also that the reporters had no knowledge of the fact (or rather of that which they relate as a fact), and detect also the falsehood of their reports. Those books, therefore, have neither been written by the men called apostles, nor by impostors in concert. How then have they been written?

I am not one of those who are fond of believing there is much of that which is called wilful lying, or lying originally; except in the case of men setting up to be prophets, as in the Old Testament: for prophesying is lying professionally. In almost all other cases, it is not difficult to discover the progress, by which even simple supposition, with the aid of credulity, will, in time, grow into a lie, and at last be told as a fact; and whenever we can find a charitable reason for a thing of this kind, we ought not to indulge a severe one.

The story of Jesus Christ appearing after he was dead, is the story of an apparition, such as timid imaginations can always create in vision, and credulity believe. Stories of this kind had been told of the assassination of Julius Cæsar, not many years before, and they generally have their origin in violent deaths, or in the execution of innocent persons. In cases of this kind, compassion lends its aid, and benevolently stretches the story. It goes on a little and a little farther, till it becomes a *most certain truth*. Once start a ghost, and credulity fills up the history of its life, and assigns the cause of its appearance ! one tells it one way, another another way, till there are as many stories about the ghost and about the proprietor of the ghost, as there are about Jesus Christ in these four books.

The story of the appearance of Jesus Christ is told with that strange mixture of the natural and impossible, that distinguishes legendary tale from fact. He is represented as suddenly coming in and going out when the doors are shut, and of vanishing out of sight, and appearing again, as one would conceive of an unsubstantial vision ; then again he is hungry, sits down to meat, and eats his supper. But as those who tell stories of this kind, never provide for all the cases, so it is here : they have told us, that when he arose he left his grave clothes behind him ; but they have forgotten to provide other clothes for him to appear in afterwards, or to tell us what he did with them when he ascended ; whether he stripped all off, or went up clothes and all. In the case of Elijah, they have been careful enough to make him throw down his mantle ; how it happened not to be burnt in the chariot of fire, they also have not told us. But as imagination supplies all deficiencies of this kind, we may suppose, if we please, that it was made of salamander's wool.

Those who are not much acquainted with ecclesiastical history, may suppose that the book called the New Testament has existed ever since the time of Jesus Christ, as they suppose that the books ascribed to Moses have existed ever since the time of Moses. But the fact is historically otherwise ; there was no such book as the New Testament till more than three hundred years after the time that Christ is said to have lived.

At what time the books ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, began to appear, is altogether a matter of uncertainty. There is not the least shadow of evidence of who the persons were that wrote them, nor at what

time they were written ; and they might as well have been called by the names of any of the other supposed apostles, as by the names they are now called. The originals are not in the possession of any Christian church existing, any more than the two tables of stone written on, they pretend, by the finger of God, upon mount Sinai, and given to Moses, are in the possession of the Jews. And even if they were, there is no possibility of proving the hand writing in either case. At the time those books were written there was no printing, and consequently there could be no publication, otherwise than by written copies, which any man might make or alter at pleasure, and call them originals. Can we suppose it is consistent with the wisdom of the Almighty, to commit himself and his will to man, upon such precarious means as these, or that it is consistent we should pin our faith upon such uncertainties ? We cannot make nor alter, nor even imitate, so much as one blade of grass that he has made, and yet we can make or alter *words of God* as easily as words of man\*.

About three hundred and fifty years after the time that Christ is said to have lived, several writings of the kind I am speaking of, were scattered in the hands of divers individuals ; and as the church had begun to form itself into an hierarchy, or church government, with temporal powers, it set itself about collecting them into a code, as we now see them called *The New Testament*. They decided by vote, as I have before said in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, which of those writings, out of the collection they had made, should be the *word of God*, and which should not. The Rabbins of the Jews had decided, by vote, upon the books of the Bible before.

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\* The former part of the *Age of Reason* has not been published two years, and there is already an expression in it that is not mine. The expression is, *The book of Luke was carried by a majority of one voice only*. It may be true, but it is not I that have said it. Some person, who might know of the circumstance, has added it in a note at the bottom of the page of some of the editions, printed either in England or in America ; and the printers, after that, have erected it into the body of the work, and made me the author of it. If this has happened within such a short space of time, notwithstanding the aid of printing, which prevents the alteration of copies individually ; what may not have happened in a much greater length of time, when there was no printing, and when any man who could write could make a written copy, and call it an original, by Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.

As the object of the church, as is the case in all national establishments of churches, was power and revenue, and terror the means it used; it is consistent to suppose, that the most miraculous and wonderful of the writings they had collected stood the best chance of being voted. And as to the authenticity of the books, the *vote stands in the place of it*; for it can be traced no higher.

Disputes, however, ran high among the people then calling themselves Christians; not only as to points of doctrine, but as to the authenticity of the books. In the contest between the persons called Saint Augustine and Fauste, about the year 400, the latter says, "The books called the Evangelists have been composed long after the times of the apostles, by some obscure men, who, fearing that the world would not give credit to their relation of matters of which they could not be informed, have published them under the names of the apostles; and which are so full of sottishness and discordant relations, that there is neither agreement nor connection between them."

And in another place, addressing himself to the advocates of those books, as being the word of God, he says, "It is thus that your predecessors have inserted, in the scriptures of our Lord, many things, which, though they carry his name, agree not with his doctrines. This is not surprising, *since that we have often proved that these things have not been written by himself, nor by his apostles, but that for the greatest part they are founded upon tales, upon vague reports, and put together by I know not what, half-Jews, with but little agreement between them; and which they have nevertheless published under the names of the apostles of our Lord, and have thus attributed to them their own errors and their lies*."

The reader will see by these extracts, that the authenticity of the books of the New Testament was denied, and the books treated as tales, forgeries, and lies, at the time they were voted to be the word of God. But the interest of the church, with the assistance of the faggot, bore down the opposition, and at last suppressed all investigation. Miracles followed upon miracles, if we will believe them, and men were taught to say they believed whether they believed or not. But (by way of throwing in a thought) the French

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\* I have taken these two extracts from Boulanger's Life of Paul, written in French; Boulanger has quoted them from the writings of Augustine against Fauste, to which he refers.

Revolution has excommunicated the church from the power of working miracles: she has not been able, with the assistance of all her saints, to work *one* miracle since the revolution began; and as she never stood in greater need than now, we may, without the aid of divination, conclude, that all her former miracles were tricks and lies\*.

When we consider the lapse of more than three hundred years intervening between the time that Christ is said to have lived and the time the New Testament was formed into a book, we must see, even without the assistance of historical evidence, the exceeding uncertainty there is of its authenticity. The authenticity of the book of Homer, so far as regards the authorship, is much better established than that of the New Testament, though Homer is a thousand years the most ancient. It was only an exceeding good poet that could have written the book of Homer, and therefore few men only could have attempted it; and a man capable of doing it would not have thrown away his own fame by giving it to another. In like manner, there were but

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\* Boulanger, in his *Life of Paul*, has collected from the ecclesiastical histories, and the writings of the fathers, as they are called, several matters which shew the opinions that prevailed among the different sects of Christians, at the time the Testament, as we now see it, was voted to be the word of God. The following extracts are from the second chapter of that work.

“The Marcionists (a Christian sect), assured that the evangelists were filled with falsities. The Manicheens, who formed a very numerous sect at the commencement of Christianity, *rejected as false, all the New Testament*; and shewed other writings quite different that they gave for authentic. The Corinthians, like the Marcionists, admitted not the Acts of the Apostles. The Encratites, and the Sevenians, adopted neither the acts nor the Epistles of Paul. Chrysostome, in a homily which he made upon the Acts of the Apostles, says, that in his time, about the year 400, many people knew nothing either of the author or of the book. St. Irene, who lived before that time, reports that the Valentinians, like several other sects of the Christians, accused the Scriptures of being filled with imperfections, errors, and contradictions. The Ebionites or Nazareens, who were the first Christians, rejected all the Epistles of Paul, and regarded him as an impostor. They report, among other things, that he was originally a Pagan; that he came to Jerusalem, where he lived some time; and that having a mind to marry the daughter of the high priest, he caused himself to be circumcised; but that not being able to obtain her, he quarrelled with the Jews, and wrote against circumcision, and against the observation of the sabbath, and against all the legal ordinances.”

few that could have composed Euclid's Elements, because none but an exceeding good geometrician could have been the author of that work.

But with respect to the books of the New Testament, particularly such parts as tell us of the resurrection and ascension of Christ, any person who could tell a story of an apparition, or of a *man's walking*, could have made such books; for the story is most wretchedly told. The chance, therefore, of forgery in the Testament, is millions to one greater than in the case of Homer or Euclid. Of the numerous priests or parsons of the present day, bishops and all, every one of them can make a sermon, or translate a scrap of Latin, especially if it has been translated a thousand times before; but is there any amongst them that can write poetry like Homer, or science like Euclid? The sum total of a parson's learning, with very few exceptions, is *a b ab*, and *hic, hæc, hoc*; and their knowledge of science is three times one is three; and this is more than sufficient to have enabled them, had they lived at the time, to have written all the books of the New Testament.

As the opportunities of forgery were greater, so also was the inducement. A man could gain no advantage by writing under the name of Homer or Euclid; if he could write equal to them, it would be better that he wrote under his own name; if inferior, he could not succeed. Pride would prevent the former, and impossibility the latter. But with respect to such books as compose the New Testament, all the inducements were on the side of forgery. The best imagined history that could have been made, at the distance of two or three hundred years after the time, could not have passed for an original under the name of the real writer; the only chance of success lay in forgery, for the church wanted pretence for its new doctrine, and truth and talents were out of the question.

But as it is not uncommon (as before observed) to relate stories of persons *walking* after they are dead, and of ghosts and apparitions of such as have fallen by some violent or extraordinary means; and as the people of that day were in the habit of believing such things, and of the appearance of angels, and also of devils, and of their getting into people's insides, and shaking them like a fit of an ague, and of their being cast out again as if by an emetic—(Mary Magdalene, the book of Mark tells us, had brought up, or been brought to bed of seven devils); it was nothing extraordinary that some story of this kind should get abroad of the person called Jesus Christ, and become afterwards the foundation



of the four books ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each writer told the tale as he heard it, or thereabouts, and gave to his book the name of the saint or the apostle whom tradition had given as the eye-witness. It is only upon this ground that the contradictions in those books can be accounted for; and if this be not the case, they are downright impositions, lies, and forgeries, without even the apology of credulity.

That they have been written by a sort of half Jews, as the foregoing quotations mention, is discernible enough. The frequent references made to that chief assassin and impostor Moses, and to the men called prophets, establishes this point; and, on the other hand, the church has complimented the fraud, by admitting the Bible and the Testament to reply to each other. Between the Christian Jew and the Christian Gentile, the thing called a prophecy, and the thing prophesied; the type, and the thing typified; the sign and the thing signified, have been industriously rummaged up, and fitted together like old locks and pick-lock keys. The story foolishly enough told of Eve and the serpent, and naturally enough as to the enmity between men and serpents (for the serpent always bites about the *heel*, because it cannot reach higher; and the man always knocks the serpent about the *head*, as the most effectual way to prevent its biting\*); this foolish story, I say, has been made into a prophecy, a type, and a promise to begin with; and the lying imposition of Isaiah to Ahaz, *That a virgin shall conceive and bear a son*, as a sign that Ahaz should conquer, when the event was that he was defeated (as already noticed in the observations on the book of Isaiah), has been perverted, and made to serve as a winder-up.

Jonah and the whale are also made into a sign or type. Jonah is Jesus, and the whale is the grave; for it is said, (and they have made Christ to say it of himself) Matt. chap. xvii. ver. 40, "For as Jonah was *three days and three nights* in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be *three days and three nights* in the heart of the earth." But it happens awkwardly enough that Christ, according to their own account, was but one day and two nights in the grave; about 36 hours, instead of 72; that is, the Friday night, the Saturday, and the Saturday night; for they say he was up on the Sunday morning by sun-rise, or before. But as

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\* "It shall bruise thy *head*, and thou shalt bruise his *heel*." Genesis, chap. iii. ver. 15.

this fits quite as well as the *bite* and the *kick* in Genesis, or the *virgin* and her *son* in Isaiah, it will pass in the lump of *orthodox* things. Thus much for the historical part of the Testament and its evidences.

*Epistles of Paul*—The epistles ascribed to Paul, being fourteen in number, almost fill up the remaining part of the Testament. Whether those epistles were written by the person to whom they are ascribed, is a matter of no great importance, since the writer, whoever he was, attempts to prove his doctrine by argument. He does not pretend to have been witness to any of the scenes told of the resurrection and the ascension; and he declares that he had not believed them.

The story of his being struck to the ground as he was journeying to Damascus, has nothing in it miraculous or extraordinary; he escaped with life, and that is more than many others have done, who have been struck with lightning; and that he should lose his sight for three days, and be unable to eat or drink during that time, is nothing more than is common in such conditions. His companions that were with him appear not to have suffered in the same manner, for they were well enough to lead him the remainder of the journey; neither did they pretend to have seen any vision.

The character of the person called Paul, according to the accounts given of him, has in it a great deal of violence and fanaticism; he had persecuted with as much heat as he preached afterwards; the stroke he had received had changed his thinking, without altering his constitution; and, either as a Jew or a Christian, he was the same zealot. Such men are never good moral evidences of any doctrine they preach. They are always in extremes, as well of action as of belief.

The doctrine he sets out to prove by argument, is the resurrection of the same body; and he advances this as an evidence of immortality. But so much will men differ in their manner of thinking, and in the conclusions they draw from the same premises, that this doctrine of the resurrection of the same body, so far from being an evidence of immortality, appears to me to furnish an evidence against it; for if I had already died in this body, and am raised again in the same body in which I have died, it is presumptive evidence that I shall die again. That resurrection no more secures me against the repetition of dying, than an ague fit, when past, secures me against another. To believe, therefore, in immortality, I must have a more

elevated idea than is contained in the gloomy doctrine of the resurrection.

Besides, as a matter of choice, as well as of hope, I had rather have a better body and a more convenient form than the present. Every animal in the creation excels us in something. The winged insects, without mentioning doves or eagles, can pass over more space and with greater ease, in a few minutes, than man can in an hour. The glide of the smallest fish, in proportion to its bulk, exceeds us in motion, almost beyond comparison, and without weariness. Even the sluggish snail can ascend from the bottom of a dungeon, where a man, by the want of that ability, would perish; and a spider can launch itself from the top, as a playful amusement. The personal powers of man are so limited, and his heavy frame so little constructed to extensive enjoyment, that there is nothing to induce us to wish the opinion of Paul to be true. It is too little for the magnitude of the scene—too mean for the sublimity of the subject.

But all other arguments apart, the *consciousness of existence* is the only conceivable idea we can have of another life, and the continuance of that consciousness is immortality. The consciousness of existence, or the knowing that we exist, is not necessarily confined to the same form, nor to the same matter, even in this life.

We have not in all cases the same form, nor in any case the same matter, that composed our bodies twenty or thirty years ago; and yet we are conscious of being the same persons. Even legs and arms, which make up almost half the human frame, are not necessary to the consciousness of existence. These may be lost or taken away, and the full consciousness of existence remain; and were their place supplied by wings or other appendages, we cannot conceive that it could alter our consciousness of existence. In short, we know not how much, or rather how little, of our composition it is, and how exquisitely fine that little is, that creates in us this consciousness of existence; and all beyond that is like the pulp of a peach, distinct and separate from the vegetative speck in the kernel.

Who can say by what exceeding fine action of fine matter it is that a thought is produced in what we call the mind? and yet that thought, when produced, as I now produce the thought I am writing, is capable of becoming immortal, and is the only production of man that has that capacity.

Statues of brass or marble will perish; and statues made in imitation of them are not the same statues, nor the same

workmanship, any more than the copy of a picture is the same picture. But print and reprint a thought a thousand times over, and that with materials of any kind—carve it in wood, or engrave it on stone, the thought is eternally and identically the same thought in every case. It has a capacity of unimpaired existence, unaffected by change of matter, and is essentially distinct, and of a nature different from every thing else that we know or can conceive. If then the thing produced has in itself a capacity of being immortal; it is more than a token that the power that produced it, which is the self-same thing as consciousness of existence, can be immortal also; and that as independently of the matter it was first connected with, as the thought is of the printing or writing it first appeared in. The one idea is not more difficult to believe than the other, and we can see that one is true.

That the consciousness of existence is not dependent on the same form or the same matter, is demonstrated to our senses in the works of the creation, as far as our senses are capable of receiving that demonstration. A very numerous part of the animal creation preaches to us, far better than Paul, the belief of a life hereafter. Their little life resembles an earth and a heaven—a present and a future state: and comprises, if it may be so expressed, immortality in miniature.

The most beautiful parts of the creation to our eye are the winged insects, and they are not so originally. They acquire that form and that inimitable brilliancy by progressive changes. The slow and creeping caterpillar-worm of to-day, passes in a few days to a torpid figure, and a state resembling death; and in the next change comes forth in all the miniature magnificence of life a splendid butterfly. No resemblance of the former creature remains; every thing is changed; all his powers are new, and life is to him another thing. We cannot conceive that the consciousness of existence is not the same in this state of the animal as before: why then must I believe that the resurrection of the same body is necessary to continue to me the consciousness of existence hereafter.

In the former part of the *Age of Reason*, I have called the creation the true and only real word of God; and this instance, or this text, in the book of creation, not only shews to us that this thing may be so, but that it is so; and that the belief of a future state is a rational belief, founded upon facts visible in the creation: for it is not more difficult to believe

that we shall exist hereafter in a better state and form than at present, than that a worm should become a butterfly, and quit the dunghill for the atmosphere, if we did not know it as a fact.

As to the doubtful jargon ascribed to Paul in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, which makes part of the burial service of some Christian sectaries, it is as destitute of meaning as the tolling of the bell at the funeral; it explains nothing to the understanding—it illustrates nothing to the imagination, but leaves the reader to find any meaning if he can. “All flesh (says he) is not the same flesh. There is one flesh of men; another of beasts; another of fishes; and another of birds.” And what then?—nothing. A cook could have said as much. “There are also (says he) bodies celestial and bodies terrestrial; the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.” And what then?—nothing. And what is the difference? nothing that he has told. “There is (says he) one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars.” And what then?—nothing; except that he says that *one star differeth from another star in glory*, instead of distance; and he might as well have told us, that the moon did not shine so bright as the sun. All this is nothing better than the jargon of a conjuror, who picks up phrases he does not understand, to confound the credulous people who come to have their fortunes told. Priests and conjurors are of the same trade.

Sometimes Paul affects to be a naturalist, and to prove his system of resurrection from the principles of vegetation. “Thou fool, (says he) that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.” To which one might reply in his own language, and say, Thou fool, Paul, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die not; for the grain that dies in the ground never does, nor can vegetate. It is only the living grains that produce the next crop. But the metaphor, in point of view, is no simile. It is succession, and not resurrection.

The progress of an animal from one state of being to another, as from a worm to a butterfly, applies to the case; but this of a grain does not, and shews Paul to have been what he says of others, a fool.

Whether the fourteen epistles ascribed to Paul were written by him or not, is a matter of indifference; they are either argumentative or dogmatical; and as the argument is defective, and the dogmatical part is merely presumptive, it signifies not who wrote them. And the same may be said for the remaining parts of the Testament. It is not upon the epistles,

but upon what is called the gospel, contained in the four books ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and upon the pretended prophecies, that the theory of the church, calling itself the Christian church, is founded. The epistles are dependent upon those, and must follow their fate; for if the story of Jesus Christ be fabulous, all reasoning founded upon it as a supposed truth, must fall with it.

We know from history, that one of the principal leaders of this church, Athanasius, lived at the time the New Testament was formed\*; and we know also, from the absurd jargon he has left us under the name of a creed, the character of the men who formed the New Testament; and we know also from the same history, that the authenticity of the books of which it is composed was denied at the time. It was upon the vote of such as Athanasius, that the Testament was decreed to be the word of God; and nothing can present to us a more strange idea than that of decreeing the word of God by vote. Those who rest their faith upon such authority, put man in the place of God, and have no true foundation for future happiness; credulity, however, is not a crime; but it becomes criminal by resisting conviction. It is strangling in the womb of the conscience the efforts it makes to ascertain truth. We should never force belief upon ourselves in any thing.

I here close the subject on the Old Testament and the New. The evidence I have produced to prove them forgeries, is extracted from the books themselves, and acts, like a two-edged sword, either way. If the evidence be denied, the authenticity of the scriptures is denied with it; for it is scripture evidence: and if the evidence be admitted, the authenticity of the books is disproved. The contradictory impossibilities contained in the Old Testament and the New, put them in the case of a man who swears for and against. Either evidence convicts him of perjury, and equally destroys reputation.

Should the Bible and Testament hereafter fall, it is not I that have been the occasion. I have done no more than extracted the evidence from the confused mass of matter with which it is mixed, and arranged that evidence in a point of light to be clearly seen and easily comprehended: and having done this, I leave the reader to judge for himself, as I judged for myself.

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\* Athanasius died, according to the church chronology, in the year 371.

## CONCLUSION.

In the former part of the *Age of Reason*, I have spoken of the three frauds, *mystery*, *miracle*, and *prophecy*; and as I have seen nothing in any of the answers to that work, that in the least affects what I have there said upon those subjects, I shall not encumber this Second Part with additions that are not necessary.

I have spoken also in the same work upon what is called *revelation*, and have shewn the absurd misapplication of that term to the books of the Old Testament and the New; for certainly revelation is out of the question in reciting any thing of which man has been the actor, or the witness. That which a man has done or seen, needs no revelation to tell him he has done it, or seen it; for he knows it already; nor to enable him to tell it, or to write it. It is ignorance, or imposition, to apply the term revelation in such cases; yet the Bible and Testament are classed under this fraudulent description of being all *revelation*.

Revelation then, so far as the term has relation between God and man, can only be applied to something which God reveals of his *will* to man; but though the power of the Almighty to make such a communication, is necessarily admitted, because to that power all things are possible, yet, the thing so revealed (if any thing ever was revealed, and which, by the bye, it is impossible to prove) is revelation to the person *only to whom it is made*. His account of it to another is not revelation; and whoever puts faith in that account, puts it in the man from whom the account comes; and that man may have been deceived, or may have dreamed it; or he may be an impostor, and may lie. There is no possible criterion whereby to judge of the truth of what he tells; for even the morality of it would be no proof of revelation. In all such cases, the proper answer would be, "*When it is revealed to me, I will believe it to be revelation; but it is not, and cannot be incumbent upon me to believe it to be revelation before; neither is it proper that I should take the word of a man as the word of God, and put man in the place of God.*" This is the manner in which I have spoken of revelation in the former part of the *Age of Reason*; and which, while it reverentially admits revelation as a possible thing, because, as before said, to the Almighty all things are possible, it prevents the imposition of one man upon another, and precludes the wicked use of pretended revelation.

But though, speaking for myself, I thus admit the possibility of revelation, I totally disbelieve that the Almighty ever did communicate any thing to man, by any mode of speech, in any language, or by any kind of vision, or appearance, or by any means which our senses are capable of receiving, otherwise than by the universal display of himself in the works of the creation, and by that repugnance we feel in ourselves to bad actions, and disposition to good ones.

The most detestable wickedness, the most horrid cruelties, and the greatest miseries, that have afflicted the human race, have had their origin in this thing called revelation, or revealed religion. It has been the most dishonourable belief against the character of the Divinity, the most destructive to morality, and the peace and happiness of man, that ever was propagated since man began to exist. It is better, far better, that we admitted, if it were possible, a thousand devils to roam at large, and to preach publicly the doctrine of devils, if there were any such, than that we permitted one such impostor and monster as Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and the Bible prophets, to come with the pretended word of God in his mouth, and have credit among us.

Whence arose all the horrid assassinations of whole nations of men, women, and infants, with which the Bible is filled; and the bloody persecutions, and tortures unto death, and religious wars, that since that time have laid Europe in blood and ashes; whence arose they, but from this impious thing called revealed religion, and this monstrous belief, that God has spoken to man? The lies of the Bible have been the cause of the one, and the lies of the Testament of the other.

Some Christians pretend, that Christianity was not established by the sword; but of what period of time do they speak? It was impossible that twelve men could begin with the sword; they had not the power; but no sooner were the professors of Christianity sufficiently powerful to employ the sword, than they did so, and the stake and the faggot too; and Mahomet could not do it sooner. By the same spirit that Peter cut off the ear of the high priest's servant (if the story be true) he would have cut off his head, and the head of his master, had he been able. Besides this, Christianity grounds itself originally upon the Bible, and the Bible was established altogether by the sword, and that in the worst use of it; not to terrify, but to extirpate. The Jews made no converts; they butchered all. The Bible is the sire of the Testament, and both are called the *word of God*. The Christians read both books; the ministers



preach from both books; and this thing called Christianity is made up of both. It is then false to say that Christianity was not established by the sword.

The only sect that has not persecuted are the Quakers; and the only reason that can be given for it is, that they are rather Deists than Christians. They do not believe much about Jesus Christ, and they call the Scriptures a dead letter. Had they called them by a worse name, they had been nearer the truth.

It is incumbent on every man who reverences the character of the Creator, and who wishes to lessen the catalogue of artificial miseries, and remove the cause that has sown persecutions thick among mankind, to expel all ideas of revealed religion as a dangerous heresy, and an impious fraud. What is it that we have learned from this pretended thing called revealed religion?—nothing that is useful to man, and every thing that is dishonourable to his Maker. What is it the Bible teaches us?—rapine, cruelty, and murder. What is it the Testament teaches us?—to believe that the Almighty committed debauchery with a woman, engaged to be married! and the belief of this debauchery is called faith.

As to the fragments of morality that are irregularly and thinly scattered in those books, they make no part of this pretended thing, revealed religion. They are the natural dictates of conscience, and the bonds by which society is held together, and without which, it cannot exist; and are nearly the same in all religions, and in all societies. The Testament teaches nothing new upon this subject; and where it attempts to exceed, it becomes mean and ridiculous. The doctrine of not retaliating injuries is much better expressed in Proverbs, which is a collection as well from the Gentiles as the Jews, than it is in the Testament. It is there said, Proverbs xxv. ver. 21, "*If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink.\**" but when it is said, as in the Testament, "*If a man smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also;*"

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\* According to what is called Christ's sermon on the mount in the book of Matthew, where, among some other good things, a great deal of this feigned morality is introduced, it is there expressly said, that the doctrine of forbearance, or of not retaliating injuries, *was not any part of the doctrine of the Jews*; but as this doctrine is founded in Proverbs, it must, according to that statement, have been copied from the Gentiles, from whom Christ had learned it. Those men, whom Jewish and Christian idolaters have abu-

it is assassinating the dignity of forbearance, and sinking man into a spaniel.

*Loving enemies*, is another dogma of feigned morality, and has besides no meaning. It is incumbent on man, as a moralist, that he does not revenge an injury; and it is equally as good in a political sense, for there is no end to retaliation, each retaliates on the other, and calls it justice; but to love in proportion to the injury, if it could be done, would be to offer a premium for a crime. Besides, the word *enemies* is too vague and general to be used in a moral maxim, which ought always to be clear and defined, like a proverb. If a man be the enemy of another from mistake and prejudice, as in the case of religious opinions, and sometimes in politics, that man is different to an enemy at heart with a criminal intention; and it is incumbent upon us, and it contributes also to our own tranquillity, that we put the best construction upon a thing that it will bear. But even this erroneous motive in him makes no motive for love on the other part; and to say that we can love voluntarily, and without a motive, is morally and physically impossible.

Morality is injured by prescribing to it duties, that, in the first place, are impossible to be performed; and, if they could be, would be productive of evil; or, as before said, be premiums for crime. The maxim of *doing as we would be done unto*, does not include this strange doctrine of loving enemies; for no man expects to be loved himself for his crime or for his enmity.

Those who preach this doctrine of loving their enemies, are in general the greatest persecutors, and they act consistently by so doing; for the doctrine is hypocritical, and it is natural that hypocrisy should act the reverse of what it preaches. For my own part, I disown the doctrine, and consider it as a feigned or fabulous morality; yet the man does not exist that can say I have persecuted him, or any man, or any set of men, either in the American Revolution, or in the French Revolution; or that I have, in any case, returned

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sively called heathens, had much better and clearer ideas of justice and morality than are to be found in the Old Testament, so far as it is Jewish; or in the New. The answer of Solon on the question, "Which is the most perfect popular government," has never been exceeded by any man since his time, as containing a maxim of political morality. "That," says he, "*where the least injury done to the meanest individual, is considered as an insult on the whole constitution.*" Solon lived about 500 years before Christ.

evil for evil. But it is not incumbent on man to reward a bad action with a good one, or to return good for evil; and wherever it is done, it is a voluntary act, and not a duty. It is also absurd to suppose that such doctrine can make any part of a revealed religion. We imitate the moral character of the Creator by forbearing with each other, for he forbears with all; but this doctrine would imply that he loved man, not in proportion as he was good, but as he was bad.

If we consider the nature of our condition here, we must see there is no occasion for such a thing as *revealed religion*. What is it we want to know? Does not the creation, the universe we behold, preach to us the existence of an Almighty power that governs and regulates the whole? And is not the evidence that this creation holds out to our senses infinitely stronger than any thing we can read in a book, that any impostor might make and call the word of God? As for morality, the knowledge of it exists in every man's conscience.

Here we are. The existence of an Almighty power is sufficiently demonstrated to us, though we cannot conceive, as it is impossible we should, the nature and manner of its existence. We cannot conceive how we came here ourselves, and yet we know for a fact that we are here. We must know also, that the power that called us into being, can, if he please, and when he pleases, call us to account for the manner in which we have lived here; and, therefore, without seeking any other motive for the belief, it is rational to believe that he will, for we know before-hand that he can. The probability, or even possibility of the thing is all that we ought to know; for if we knew it as a fact, we should be the mere slaves of terror; our belief would have no merit; and our best actions no virtue.

Deism then teaches us, without the possibility of being deceived, all that is necessary or proper to be known. The creation is the Bible of the Deist. He there reads, in the hand-writing of the Creator himself, the certainty of his existence, and the immutability of his power, and all other Bibles and Testaments are to him forgeries. The probability that we may be called to account hereafter, will, to a reflecting mind, have the influence of belief; for it is not our belief or disbelief that can make or unmake the fact. As this is the state we are in, and which it is proper we should be in, as free agents, it is the fool only, and not the philosopher, or even the prudent man, that would live as if there were no God.

But the belief of a God is so weakened by being mixed with the strange fable of the Christian creed, and with the wild adventures related in the Bible, and of the obscurity and obscene nonsense of the Testament, that the mind of man is bewildered as in a fog. Viewing all these things in a confused mass, he confounds fact with fable; and as he cannot believe all, he feels a disposition to reject all. But the belief of a God is a belief distinct from all the things, and ought not to be confounded with any. The notion of a Trinity of Gods has enfeebled the belief of one God. A multiplication of beliefs acts as a division of belief; and in proportion as any thing is divided it is weakened.

Religion, by such means, becomes a thing of form, instead of fact; of notion instead of principles; morality is banished to make room for an imaginary thing, called faith, and this faith has its origin in a supposed debauchery; a man is preached instead of God; an execution is an object for gratitude; the preachers daub themselves with the blood, like a troop of assassins, and pretend to admire the brilliancy it gives them; they preach a humdrum sermon on the merits of the execution; then praise Jesus Christ for being executed, and condemn the Jews for doing it.

A man, by hearing all this nonsense lumped and preached together, confounds the God of the creation with the imagined God of the Christians, and lives as if there were none.

Of all the systems of religion that ever were invented, there is none more derogatory to the Almighty, more unedifying to man, more repugnant to reason, and more contradictory in itself, than this thing called Christianity. Too absurd for belief, too impossible to convince, and too inconsistent for practice, it renders the heart torpid, or produces only atheists and fanatics. As an engine of power, it serves the purpose of despotism; and as a means of wealth, the avarice of priests; but so far as respects the good of man in general, it leads to nothing here or hereafter.

The only religion that has not been invented, and that has in it every evidence of divine originality, is pure and simple Deism. It must have been the first, and will probably be the last that man believes. But pure and simple Deism does not answer the purpose of despotic governments. They cannot lay hold of religion as an engine, but by mixing it with human inventions, and making their own authority a part; neither does it answer the avarice of priests, but by incorporating themselves and their functions with it, and becoming, like the government, a party in the system. It is this that forms the otherwise mysterious

connection of church and state; the church humane, and the state tyrannic.

Were a man impressed as fully and as strongly as he ought to be, with the belief of a God, his moral life would be regulated by the force of that belief; he would stand in awe of God, and of himself, and would not do the thing that could not be concealed from either. To give this belief the full opportunity of force, it is necessary that it acts alone. This is Deism.

But when, according to the Christian Trinitarian scheme, one part of God is represented by a dying man, and another part called the Holy Ghost, by a flying pigeon, it is impossible that belief can attach itself to such wild conceits\*.

It has been the scheme of the Christian church, and of all the other invented systems of religion, to hold man in ignorance of the Creator, as it is of government to hold man in ignorance of his rights. The systems of the one are as false as those of the other, and are calculated for mutual support. The study of theology, as it stands in Christian churches, is the study of nothing; it is founded on nothing; it rests on no principles; it proceeds by no authorities; it has no data; it can demonstrate nothing; and it admits of no conclusion. Not any thing can be studied as a science, without our being in possession of the principles upon which it is founded; and as this is not the case with Christian theology, it is therefore the study of nothing.

Instead then of studying theology, as is now done, out of the Bible and Testament, the meanings of which books are always controverted, and the authenticity of which is disproved, it is necessary that we refer to the Bible of the creation. The principles we discover there are eternal, and of divine origin: they are the foundation of all the science that exists in the world, and must be the foundation of theology.

We can know God only through his works. We cannot have a conception of any one attribute, but by following some principle that leads to it. We have only a confused idea of his power, if we have not the means of comprehend-

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\* The book called the book of Matthew, says, chap. iii. ver. 16, that *the Holy Ghost descended in the shape of a dove*. It might as well have said a goose; the creatures are equally harmless, and the one is as much a nonsensical lie as the other. The second of Acts, ver. 2, 3, says, that it descended in a mighty *rushing wind*, in the shape of *cloven tongues*: perhaps it was cloven feet. Such absurd stuff is only fit for tales of witches and wizards.

ing something of its immensity. We can have no idea of his wisdom, but by knowing the order and manner in which it acts. The principles of science lead to this knowledge; for the Creator of man is the Creator of science, and it is through that medium that man can see God, as it were, face to face.

Could a man be placed in a situation, and endowed with power of vision, to behold at one view, and to contemplate deliberately, the structure of the universe; to mark the movements of the several planets, the cause of their varying appearances, the unerring order in which they revolve, even to the remotest comet; their connections and dependance on each other, and to know the system of laws established by the Creator, that governs and regulates the whole; he would then conceive, far beyond what any church theology can teach him, the power, the wisdom, the vastness, the munificence of the Creator; he would then see, that all the knowledge man has of science, and that all the mechanical arts by which he renders his situation comfortable here, are derived from that source: his mind, exalted by the scene, and convinced by the fact, would increase in gratitude as it increased in knowledge; his religion or his worship would become united with his improvement as a man; any employment he followed, that had connection with the principles of the creation, as every thing of agriculture, of science, and of the mechanical arts, has, would teach him more of God, and of the gratitude he owes to him, than any theological Christian sermon he now hears. Great objects inspire great thoughts; great munificence excites great gratitude; but the groveling tales and doctrines of the Bible and the Testament are fit only to excite contempt.

Though man cannot arrive, at least in this life, at the actual scene I have described, he can demonstrate it; because he has a knowledge of the principles upon which the creation is constructed. We know that the greatest works can be represented in model, and that the universe can be represented by the same means. The same principles by which we measure an inch, or an acre of ground, will measure to millions in extent. A circle of an inch diameter has the same geometrical properties as a circle that would circumscribe the universe. The same properties of a triangle that will demonstrate upon paper the course of a ship, will do it on the ocean; and when applied to what are called the heavenly bodies, will ascertain to a minute the time of an eclipse, though these bodies are millions of miles distant from us. This knowledge is of divine origin; and it

is from the Bible of the creation that man has learned it, and not from the stupid Bible of the church, that teacheth man nothing\*.

All the knowledge man has of science and of machinery, by the aid of which his existence is rendered comfortable upon earth, and without which he would be scarcely distinguishable in appearance and condition from a common animal, comes from the great machine and structure of the universe. The constant and unwearied observations of our ancestors upon the movements and revolutions of the heavenly bodies, in what are supposed to have been the early ages of the world, have brought this knowledge upon earth. It is not Moses and the prophets, nor Jesus Christ, nor his apostles, that have done it. The Almighty is the great mechanic of the creation; the first philosopher and original teacher of all science:—Let us then learn to reverence our master, and not let us forget the labours of our ancestors.

Had we at this day no knowledge of machinery, and were it possible that man could have a view, as I have before described, of the structure and machinery of the universe, he would soon conceive the idea of constructing some at least of the mechanical works we now have; and the idea so conceived would progressively advance in practice. Or could a model of the universe, such as is called an orrery, be presented before him and put in motion, his mind would arrive

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\* The Bible-makers have undertaken to give us, in the first chapter of Genesis, an account of the creation; and in doing this, they have demonstrated nothing but their ignorance. They make there to have been three days and three nights, evenings and mornings, before there was a sun; when it is the presence or absence of the sun that is the cause of day and night—and what is called his rising and setting, that of morning and evening. Besides, it is a puerile and pitiful idea, to suppose the Almighty to say, "Let there be light." It is the imperative manner of speaking that a conjuror uses, when he says to his cups and balls, Presto, be gone—and most probably has been taken from it, as Moses and his rod are a conjuror and his wand. Longinus calls this expression the sublime; and by the same rule the conjuror is sublime too; for the manner of speaking is expressively and grammatically the same. When authors and critics talk of the sublime, they see not how nearly it borders on the ridiculous. The sublime of the critics, like some parts of Edmund Burke's sublime and beautiful, is like a wind-mill just visible in a fog, which imagination might distort into a flying mountain, or an archangel, or a flock of wild geese.

at the same idea. Such an object and such a subject would, whilst it improved him in knowledge useful to himself as a man and a member of society, as well as entertaining, afford far better matter for impressing him with a knowledge of, and a belief in the Creator, and of the reverence and gratitude that man owes to him, than the stupid texts of the Bible and the Testament, from which, be the talents of the preacher what they may, only stupid sermons can be preached. If man must preach, let him preach something that is edifying, and from texts that are known to be true.

The Bible of the creation is inexhaustible in texts. Every part of science, whether connected with the geometry of the universe, with the systems of animal and vegetable life, or with the properties of inanimate matter, is a text as well for devotion as for philosophy—for gratitude as for human improvement. It will perhaps be said, that if such a revolution in the system of religion takes place, every preacher ought to be a philosopher.—*Most certainly*; and every house of devotion a school of science.

It has been by wandering from the immutable laws of science, and the right use of reason, and setting up an invented thing called revealed religion, that so many wild and blasphemous conceits have been formed of the Almighty. The Jews have made him the assassin of the human species, to make room for the religion of the Jews. The Christians have made him the murderer of himself, and the founder of a new religion, to supercede and expel the Jewish religion. And to find pretence and admission for these things, they must have supposed his power or his wisdom imperfect, or his will changeable; and the changeableness of the will is the imperfection of the judgment. The philosopher knows that the laws of the Creator have never changed with respect either to the principles of science, or the properties of matter. Why then is it to be supposed they have changed with respect to man?

I here close the subject. I have shewn in all the foregoing parts of this work that the Bible and Testament are impositions and forgeries; and I leave the evidence I have produced in proof of it to be refuted, if any one can do it: and I leave the ideas that are suggested in the conclusion of the work to rest on the mind of the reader; certain as I am, that when opinions are free, either in matters of government or religion, truth will finally and powerfully prevail.

END OF THE SECOND PART.



THE  
**AGE OF REASON,**

**Part the Third ;**

BEING

**AN EXAMINATION**

OF THE

PASSAGES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT QUOTED FROM THE  
OLD, AND CALLED PROPHECIES,

CONCERNING

**JESUS CHRIST.**



TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

**AN ESSAY ON DREAMS.**

ALSO,

**An Appendix,**

CONTAINING

**THE CONTRADICTION DOCTRINES**

BETWEEN

**MATTHEW AND MARK ;**

AND

*MY PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON A FUTURE STATE.*

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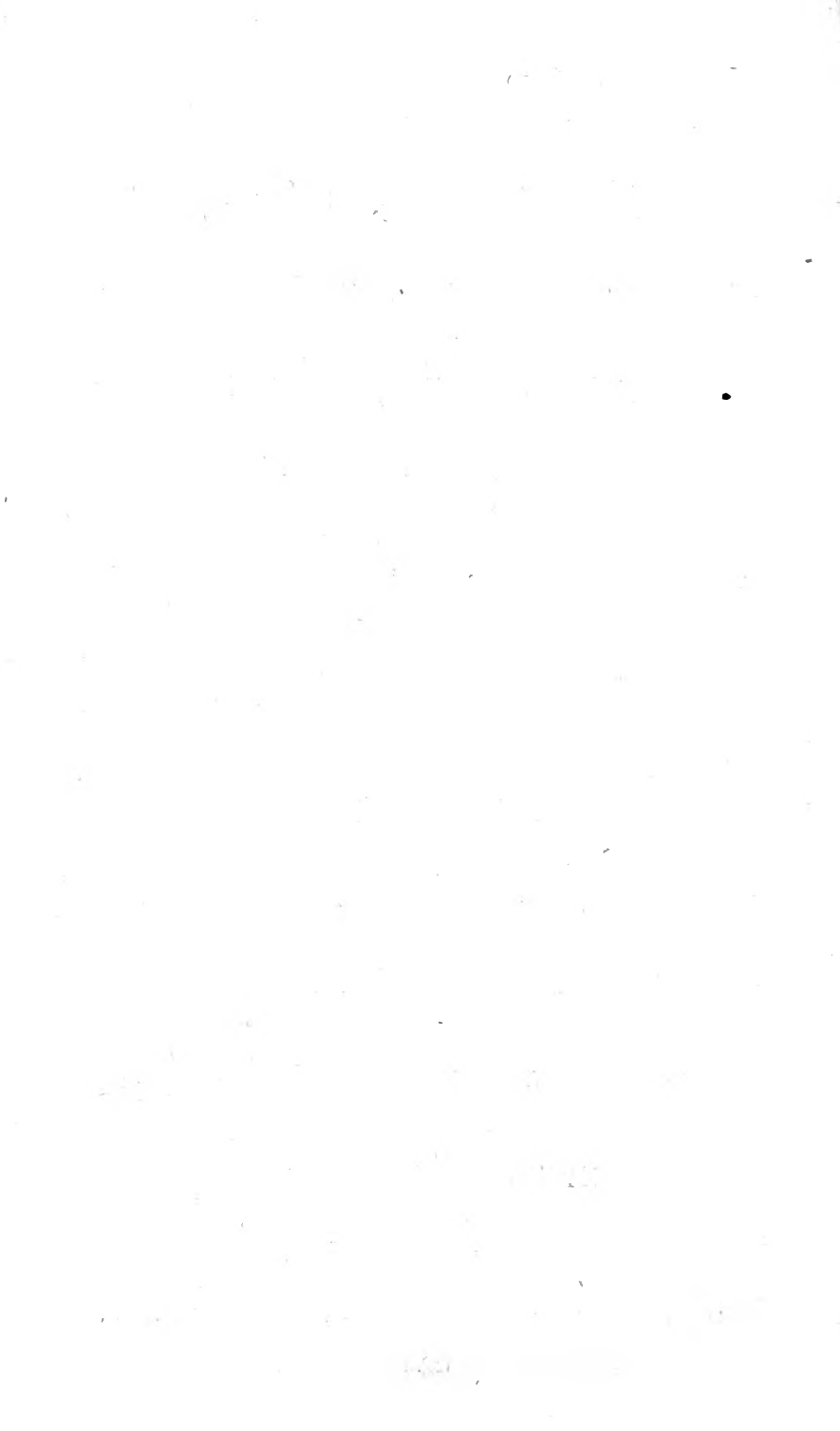
**By THOMAS PAINE.**

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## PREFACE.

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*To the Ministers and Preachers of all Denominations of Religion.*

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IT is the duty of every man, as far as his ability extends, to detect and expose delusion and error. But nature has not given to every one a talent for the purpose; and among those to whom such a talent is given, there is often a want of disposition or of courage to do it.

The world, or more properly speaking, that small part of it called Christendom, or the Christian World, has been amused for more than a thousand years with accounts of Prophecies in the Old Testament, about the coming of the person called Jesus Christ, and thousands of sermons have been preached, and volumes written, to make man believe it.

In the following treatise I have examined all the passages in the New Testament, quoted from the Old, and called prophecies concerning Jesus Christ, and I find no such thing as a prophecy of any such person, and I deny there are any. The passages all relate to circumstances the Jewish nation was in at the time they were written or spoken, and not to any thing that was or was not to happen in the world several hundred years afterwards; and I have shewn what the circumstances were, to which the passages apply or refer. I have given chapter and verse for every thing I have said, and have not gone out of the books of the Old and New Testament for evidence, that the passages are not prophecies of the person called Jesus Christ.

The prejudice of unfounded belief often degenerates into the prejudice of custom, and becomes, at last, rank hypocrisy. When men, from custom or fashion, or any worldly motive, profess or pretend to believe what they do not believe, nor can give any reason for believing, they unship the helm of their morality, and being no longer honest to their own minds, they feel no moral difficulty in being unjust to others. It is from the influence of this vice, hypocrisy, that we see so many Church and Meeting-going professors and pretenders to religion, so full of trick and deceit in their dealings, and so loose in the performance of their engagements, that they are not to be trusted further than the laws of the country will bind them. Morality has no hold on their minds, no restraint on their actions.

One set of preachers make salvation to consist in believing. They tell their congregations, that if they believe in Christ, their sins shall be forgiven. This, in the first place, is an encouragement to sin, in a similar manner as when a prodigal young fellow is told his father will pay all his debts, he runs into debt the faster, and becomes the more extravagant : Daddy, says he, pays all, and on he goes. Just so in the other case, *Christ pays all*, and on goes the sinner.

In the next place, the doctrine these men preach is not true. The New Testament rests itself for credibility and testimony on what are called prophecies in the Old Testament, of the person called Jesus Christ ; and if there are no such thing as prophecies of any such person in the Old Testament, the New Testament is a forgery of the councils of Nice and Laodocia, and the faith founded thereon, delusion and falsehood\*.

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\* The councils of Nice and Laodocia were held about 350 years after the time Christ is said to have lived ; and the books that now compose the New Testament, were then voted for by YEAS and NAYS, as we now vote a law. A great many that were offered had a majority of *nays*, and were rejected. This is the way the New Testament came into being.

Another set of preachers tell their congregations that God predestinated and selected from all eternity, a certain number to be saved and a certain number to be damned eternally. If this were true *the day of Judgment is PAST* : *their preaching* is in vain, and they had better work at some useful calling for their livelihood.

This doctrine, also like the former, hath a direct tendency to demoralize mankind. Can a bad man be reformed by telling him, that if he is one of those who was decreed to be damned before he was born, his reformation will do him no good ; and if he was decreed to be saved, whether he believes it or not ; for this is the result of the doctrine. Such preaching and such preachers do injury to the moral world. They had better be at the plough.

As in my political works my motive and object have been to give man an elevated sense of his own character, and free him from the slavish and superstitious absurdity of monarchy and hereditary government, so in my publications on religious subjects my endeavours have been directed to bring man to a right use of the reason that God has given him ; to impress on him the great principles of divine morality, justice, mercy, and a benevolent disposition to all men, and to all creatures, and to inspire in him a spirit of trust, confidence and consolation in his Creator, unshackled by the fables of books pretending to be *the word of God*.

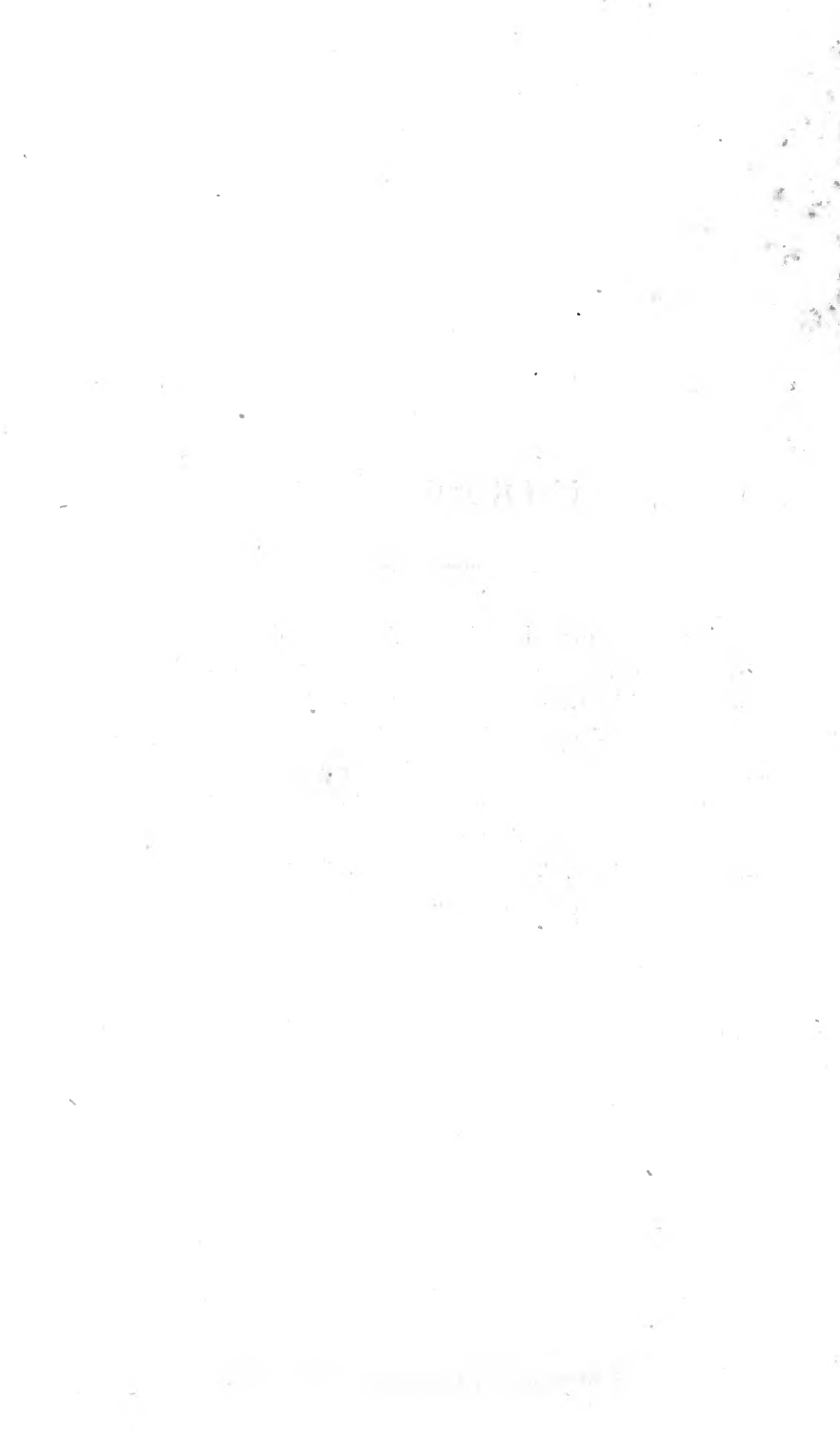
THOMAS PAINE.



## INTRODUCTION.

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AS a great deal is said in the New Testament about Dreams, it is first necessary to explain the nature of dream, and to shew by what operation of the mind a dream is produced during sleep. When this is understood we shall be the better enabled to judge whether any reliance can be placed upon them ; and consequently, whether the several matters in the New Testament related of dreams deserve the credit which the writers of that book and priests and commentators ascribe to them.





# THE AGE OF REASON.

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## PART THE THIRD.

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### AN ESSAY ON DREAMS.

IN order to understand the nature of dreams, or of that which passes in ideal vision during a state of sleep, it is first necessary to understand the composition and decomposition of the human mind.

The three great faculties of the mind are IMAGINATION, JUDGMENT, and MEMORY. Every action of the mind comes under one or other of these faculties. In a state of wakefulness, as in the day-time, these three faculties are all active; but that is seldom the case in sleep, and never perfectly; and this is the cause that our dreams are not so regular and rational as our waking thoughts.

The seat of that collection of powers or faculties, that constitute what is called the mind, is in the brain. There is not, and cannot be, any visible demonstration of this anatomically, but accidents happening to living persons, shew it to be so. An injury done to the brain by a fracture of the skull will sometimes change a wise man into a childish idiot; a being without mind. But so careful has nature been of that *sanctum sanctorum* of man, the brain, that of all the external accidents to which humanity is subject, this happens the most seldom. But we often see it happening by long and habitual intemperance.

Whether those three faculties occupy distinct apartments of the brain, is known only to that Almighty power that formed and organised it. We can see the external effects of muscular motion in all the members of the body, though its *primum mobile*, or first moving cause, is unknown to man. Our external motions are sometimes the effect of intention, and sometimes not. If we are sitting and intend to rise, or standing and intend to sit, or to walk, the limbs obey that intention as they heard the order given. But we make a thousand motions every day, and that as well waking as sleeping, that have no prior intention to direct them. Each member acts as if it had a will or mind of its own. Man

governs the whole when he pleases to govern, but in the interims the several parts, like little suburbs, govern themselves without consulting the sovereign.

But all these motions, whatever be the generating cause, are external and visible. But with respect to the brain, no ocular observation can be made upon it. All is mystery ; all is darkness in that womb of thought.

Whether the brain is a mass of matter in continual rest ; whether it has a vibrating pulsative motion, or a heaving and falling motion, like matter in fermentation ; whether different parts of the brain have different motions according to the faculty that is employed, be it the imagination, the judgment, or the memory, man knows nothing of. He knows not the cause of his own wit. His own brain conceals it from him.

Comparing invisible by visible things, as metaphysical can sometimes be compared to physical things, the operations of these distinct and several faculties have some resemblance to the mechanism of a watch. The main spring which puts all in motion, corresponds to the imagination ; the pendulum or balance, which corrects and regulates that motion, corresponds to the judgment ; and the hand and dial, like the memory, record the operations.

Now in proportion as these several faculties sleep, slumber, or keep awake, during the continuance of a dream, in that proportion the dream will be reasonable or frantic, remembered or forgotten.

If there is any faculty in mental man that never sleeps, it is that volatile thing the imagination: the case is different with the judgment and memory. The sedate and sober constitution of the judgment easily disposes it to rest ; and as to the memory, it records in silence, and is active only when it is called upon.

That the judgment soon goes to sleep may be perceived by our sometimes beginning to dream before we are fully asleep ourselves. Some random thought runs in the mind, and we start, as it were into recollection that we are dreaming between sleeping and waking.

If the judgment sleeps whilst the imagination keeps awake, the dream will be a riotous assemblage of mis-shapen images and ranting ideas, and the more active the imagination is, the wilder the dream will be. The most inconsistent and the most impossible things will appear right ; because that faculty, whose province it is to keep order, is in a state of absence. The master of the school is gone out, and the boys are in an uproar.

If the memory sleeps, we shall have no other knowledge of the dream than that we have dreamt, without knowing what it was about. In this case it is sensation, rather than recollection, that acts. The dream has given us some sense of pain or trouble, and we feel it as a hurt, rather than remember it as a vision.

If memory only slumbers, we shall have a faint remembrance of the dream, and after a few minutes it will sometimes happen that the principal passages of the dream will occur to us more fully. The cause of this is, that the memory will sometimes continue slumbering or sleeping after we are awake ourselves, and that so fully, that it may, and sometimes does happen, that we do not immediately recollect where we are, nor what we have been about, or have to do. But when the memory starts into wakefulness, it brings the knowledge of these things back upon us, like a flood of light, and sometimes the dream with it.

But the most curious circumstance of the mind in a state of dream, is the power it has to become the agent of every person, character and thing, of which it dreams. It carries on conversation with several, asks questions, hears answers, gives and receives information, and it acts all these parts itself.

But however various and eccentric the imagination may be in the creation of images and ideas, it cannot supply the place of memory, with respect to things that are forgotten when we are awake. For example, if we have forgotten the name of a person, and dream of seeing him, and asking him his name, he cannot tell it; for it is ourselves asking ourselves the question.

But though the imagination cannot supply the place of real memory, it has the wild faculty of counterfeiting memory. It dreams of persons it never knew, and talks with them as if it remembered them as old acquaintances. It relates circumstances that never happened, and tells them as if they had happened. It goes to places that never existed, and knows where all the streets and houses are as if it had been there before. The scenes it creates often appear as scenes remembered. It will sometimes act a dream within a dream, and in the delusion of dreaming tell a dream it never dreamed, and tell it as if it was from memory. It may also be remarked, that the imagination in a dream, has no idea of time, *as time*. It counts only by circumstances; and if a succession of circumstances pass in a dream that would require a great length of time to accomplish them,

it will appear to the dreamer that a length of time equal thereto has passed also.

As this is the state of the mind in dream, it may rationally be said that every person is mad once in twenty-four hours, for were he to act in the day as he dreams in the night, he would be confined for a lunatic. In a state of wakefulness, those three faculties being all active, and acting in union, constitute the rational man. In dreams it is otherwise, and therefore that state which is called insanity appears to be no other than a disunion of those faculties and a cessation of the judgment, during wakefulness, that we so often experience during sleep; and idiocy, into which some persons have fallen, is that cessation of all the faculties of which we can be sensible when we happen to wake before our memory.

In this view of the mind, how absurd is it to place reliance upon dreams, and how much more absurd to make them a foundation for religion; yet the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, begotten by the Holy Ghost, a being never heard of before, stands on the story of an old man's dream. "*And behold the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not thou to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.*"—Matt. ch. i. v. 20.

After this we have the childish stories of three or four other dreams; about Joseph going into Egypt; about his coming back again; about this, and about that, and this story of dreams has thrown Europe into a dream for more than a thousand years. All the efforts that nature, reason, and conscience have made to awaken man from it, have been ascribed by priestcraft and superstition to the workings of the devil, and had it not been for the American revolution, which by establishing the *universal right of conscience* first opened the way to free discussion, and for the French revolution which followed, this religion of dreams had continued to be preached, and that after it had ceased to be believed. Those who preached it and did not believe it, still believed the delusion necessary. They were not bold enough to be honest, nor honest enough to be bold.

Every new religion, like a new play, requires a new apparatus of dresses and machinery, to fit the new characters it creates. The story of Christ in the New Testament brings a new being upon the stage, which it calls the Holy Ghost; and the story of Abraham, the father of the Jews, in the Old Testament, gives existence to a new order of beings it calls Angels—There was no Holy Ghost before the time of Christ,

nor Angels before the time of Abraham.—We hear nothing of these winged gentlemen, till more than two thousand years, according to the Bible chronology, from the time they say the heavens, the earth, and all therein were made:—After this, they hop about as thick as birds in a grove:—The first we hear of, pays his addresses to Hagar in the wilderness; then three of them visit Sarah; another wrestles a fall with Jacob; and these birds of passage having found their way to earth and back, are continually coming and going.—They eat and drink, and up again to heaven.—What they do with the food they carry away in their bellies, the Bible does not tell us.—Perhaps they do as the birds do, discharge it as they fly, for neither the scripture nor the church hath told us there are necessary houses for them in heaven.

One would think that a system loaded with such gross and vulgar absurdities as scripture religion is, could never have obtained credit; yet we have seen what priestcraft and fanaticism could do, and credulity believe.

From angels in the Old Testament we get to prophets, to witches, to seers of visions, and dreamers of dreams, and sometimes we are told, as in 2 Sam. chap. ix. ver. 15, that God whispers in the ear—At other times we are not told how the impulse was given, or whether sleeping or waking—In 2 Sam. chap. xxiv. ver. 1, it is said, “*And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say go number Israel and Judah.*”—And in 1 Chro. chap. xxi. ver. 1, when the same story is again related, it is said, “*and Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel.*”

Whether this was done sleeping or waking, we are not told, but it seems that David, whom they call “a man after God’s own heart,” did not know by what spirit he was moved; and as to the men called inspired penmen, they agree so well about the matter, that in one book they say that it was God, and in the other that it was the Devil.

Yet this is the trash that the church imposes upon the world as the word of God; this is the collection of lies and contradictions, called the Holy Bible! this is this rubbish called revealed religion!

The idea that writers of the Old Testament had of a God was boisterous, contemptible and vulgar.—They make him the Mars of the Jews, the fighting God of Israel, the conjuring God of their Priests and Prophets.—They tell as many fables of him as the Greeks told of Hercules.

They pit him against Pharoah, as it were to box with him, and Moses carries the challenge: they make their God to

say, insultingly, "*I will get me honour upon Pharoah, and upon his Host, upon his Chariots and upon his Horsemen.*"—And that he may keep his word, they make him set a trap in the Red Sea, in the dead of the night, for Pharoah, his host, and his horses, and drown them as a rat-catcher would do so many rats—Great honour indeed! the story of Jack the Giant-killer is better told!

They march him against the Egyptian magicians to conjure with him, and after bad conjuring on both sides, (for where there is no great contest, there is no great honour) they bring him off victorious; the three first essays are a dead match—Each party turns his rod into a serpent, the rivers into blood, and creates frogs; but upon the fourth, the God of the Israelites obtains the laurel, he covers them all over with lice!—The Egyptian magicians cannot do the same, and this lousy triumph proclaims the victory!

They make their God to rain fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and belch fire and smoke upon mount Sinai; as if he was the Pluto of the lower regions.—They make him salt up Lot's wife like pickled pork; they make him pass like Shakspeare's Queen Mab into the brain of their priests, prophets, and prophetesses, and tickle them into dreams; and after making him play all kind of tricks they confound him with Satan, and leave us at a loss to know what God they meant!

This is the descriptive God of the Old Testament; and as to the New, though the authors of it have varied the scene, they have continued the vulgarity.

Is man ever to be the dupe of priestcraft, the slave of superstition? Is he never to have just ideas of his Creator? It is better not to believe there is a God, than to believe of him falsely. When we behold the mighty universe that surrounds us, and dart our contemplation into the eternity of space, filled with innumerable orbs, revolving in eternal harmony, how paltry must the tales of the Old and New Testaments, prophanelly called the word of God, appear to thoughtful man! The stupendous wisdom, and unerring order, that reign and govern throughout this wonderful whole, and call us to reflection, *put to shame the Bible!*—The God of eternity and of all that is real, is not the God of passing dreams, and shadows of man's imagination! The God of truth is not the God of fable; the belief of a God begotten and a God crucified, is a God blasphemed.—It is making a profane use of reason.

I shall conclude this Essay on Dreams with the two first

verses of the 34th chapter of Ecclesiasticus, one of the books of the Apocrypha.

V. 1. "*The hopes of a man void of understanding are vain and false; and dreams lift up fools—Whoso regardeth dreams is like him that catcheth at a shadow, and followeth after the wind.*"

I now proceed to an examination of the passages in the Bible, called prophecies of the coming of Christ, and to shew there are no prophecies of any such person. That the passages clandestinely styled prophecies are not prophecies, and that they refer to circumstances the Jewish nation was in at the time they were written or spoken, and not to any distance of future time or person.

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## AN EXAMINATION

OF THE

### PASSAGES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT,

Quoted from the Old, and called Prophecies of the coming of Jesus Christ.

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THE passages called Prophecies of or concerning Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, may be classed under the two following heads:—

First, those referred to in the four books of the New Testament, called the four Evangelists, *Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*.

Secondly, those which translators and commentators have, of their own imagination, erected into prophecies, and dubbed with that title at the head of the several chapters of the Old Testament. Of these it is scarcely worth while to waste time, ink, and paper upon; I shall therefore confine myself chiefly to those referred to in the aforesaid four books of the New Testament. If I shew that these are not prophecies of the person called Jesus Christ, nor have reference to any such person, it will be perfectly needless to combat those which translators or the Church have invented, and for which they had no other authority than their own imagination.

I begin with the book called the Gospel according to St. Matthew.

In the first chap. ver. 18, it is said, "*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was in this wise; when his mother Mary was es-*

*poused to Joseph, before they came together SHE WAS FOUND WITH CHILD BY THE HOLY GHOST.*"—This is going a little too fast; because to make this verse agree with the next, it should have said no more than that *she was found with child*: for the next verse says, "*Then Joseph her husband being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.*"—Consequently Joseph had found out no more than that she was with child, and he knew it was not by himself.

V. 20. "*And while he thought of these things (that is, whether he should put her away privily, or make a public example of her) behold the Angel of the Lord appeared to him IN A DREAM (that is, Joseph dreamed that an angel appeared unto him) saying, Joseph thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son and call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.*"

Now, without entering into any discussion upon the merits or demerits of the account here given, it is proper to observe, that it has no higher authority than that of a dream; for it is impossible for a man to behold any thing in a dream but that which he dreams of. I ask not, therefore, whether Joseph (if there was such a man) had such a dream or not; because, admitting he had, it proves nothing. So wonderful and irrational is the faculty of the mind in dreams, that it acts the part of all the characters its imagination creates, and what it thinks it hears from any of them, is no other than what the roving rapidity of its own imagination invents. It is therefore nothing to me what Joseph dreamed of; whether of the fidelity or infidelity of his wife.—I pay no regard to my own dreams, and I should be weak indeed to put faith in the dreams of another.

The verses that follow those I have quoted, are the words of the writer of the book of Matthew. "*Now (says he) all this (that is, all this dreaming and this pregnancy) was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying,*

*"Behold a Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."*

This passage is in Isaiah, chap. vii. ver. 14, and the writer of the book of Matthew endeavours to make his readers believe that this passage is a prophecy of the person called Jesus Christ. It is no such thing—and I go to shew it is not. But it is first necessary that I explain the occasion of these



words being spoken by Isaiah : the reader will then easily perceive, that so far from their being a prophecy of Jesus Christ, they have not the least reference to such a person, or to any thing that could happen in the time that Christ is said to have lived—which was about seven hundred years after the time of Isaiah. The case is this :

On the death of Solomon the Jewish nation split into two monarchies ; one called the kingdom of Judah, the capital of which was Jerusalem ; the other the kingdom of Israel, the capital of which was Samaria. The kingdom of Judah followed the line of David, and the kingdom of Israel that of Saul ; and these two rival monarchies frequently carried on fierce wars against each other.

At the time Ahaz was king of Judah, which was in the time of Isaiah, Pekah was king of Israel : and Pekah joined himself to Rezin, king of Syria, to make war against Ahaz, king of Judah ; and these two kings marched a confederated and powerful army against Jerusalem. Ahaz and his people became alarmed at the danger, and “ *their hearts were moved as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.*” Isaiah, chap. vii. ver. 3.

In this perilous situation of things, Isaiah addresses himself to Ahaz, and assures him, in the name of the Lord (the cant phrase of all the prophets) that these two kings should not succeed against him ; and to assure him that this should be the case (the case was however directly contrary \*), tells Ahaz to ask a sign of the Lord. This Ahaz declined doing, giving as a reason, that he would not tempt the Lord : upon which Isaiah, who pretends to be sent from God, says, v. 14, “ *Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign, behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son—Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and chuse the*

\* Chron. chap. xxviii. ver. 1st. *Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, but he did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord.—v. 5. Wherefore the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria, and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captive and brought them to Damascus : and he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.*

Ver. 6. *And Pekah (king of Israel) slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day.—v. 8. And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand women, sons, and daughters.*

good—For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and chuse the good, the land which thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings,”—meaning the king of Israel and the king of Syria, who were marching against him.

Here then is the sign, which was to be the birth of a child, and that child a son : and here also is the time limited for the accomplishment of the sign, namely, before the child should know to refuse the evil and chuse the good.

The thing, therefore, to be a sign of success to Ahaz must be something that would take place before the event of the battle then pending between him and the two kings could be known. A thing to be a sign must precede the thing signified. The sign of rain must be before the rain.

It would have been mockery and insulting nonsense for Isaiah to have assured Ahaz as a sign, that these two kings should not prevail against him ; that a child should be born seven hundred years after he was dead ; and that before the child so born should know to refuse the evil and chuse the good, he, Ahaz, should be delivered from the danger he was then immediately threatened with.

But the case is, that the child of which Isaiah speaks was *his own child*, with which his wife or his mistress was then pregnant ; for he says in the next chapter, v. 2, “ *And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah ; and I went unto the prophetess, and she conceived and bear a son ;*” and he says at v. 18 of the same chapter, “ *Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel.*”

It may not be improper here to observe, that the word translated *a virgin* in Isaiah, does not signify a virgin in Hebrew, but merely a *young woman*. The tense also is falsified in the translation. Levi gives the Hebrew text of the 14th ver. of the 7th chap. of Isaiah, and the translation in English with it—“ *Behold a young woman is with child and beareth a son.*” The expression, says he, is in the present tense. This translation agrees with the other circumstances related of the birth of this child, which was to be a sign to Ahaz. But as the true translation could not have been imposed upon the world as a prophecy of a child to be born seven hundred years afterwards, the Christian translators have falsified the original ; and instead of making Isaiah to say, behold a *young woman* is with child and *beareth* a son—they make him to say, behold a *virgin shall* conceive and *bear* a son. It is however only necessary for a person to read the 7th and 8th chapters of Isaiah, and he will be convinced

that the passage in question is no prophecy of the person called Jesus Christ. I pass on to the second passage quoted from the Old Testament by the New, as a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. ii. ver. 1. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judah, in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem—saying, where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod, the king, heard these things he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him—and when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born—and they said unto him, in Bethlehem, in the land of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet—and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, art not the least among the Princes of Judea, for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel." This passage is in Micah, chap. v. ver. 2.

I pass over the absurdity of seeing and following a star in the day-time, as a man would a *Will with the whisp*, or a candle and lanthorn at night; and also that of seeing it in the east, when themselves came from the east; for could such a thing be seen at all to serve them for a guide, it must be in the west to them. I confine myself solely to the passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

The book of Micah, in the passage above quoted, chap. v. ver. 2, is speaking of some person, without mentioning his name, from whom some great achievements were expected; but the description he gives of this person at the 5th ver. proves evidently that it is not Jesus Christ, for he says at the 5th verse, "And *this man* shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise up against him (that is, against the Assyrian) seven shepherds and eight principal men.—v. 6. And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod on the entrance thereof; thus shall *He* (the person spoken of at the head of the second verse) deliver us from the Assyrian when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders."

This is so evidently descriptive of a military chief, that it cannot be applied to Christ without outraging the character they pretend to give us of him. Besides which, the circumstances of the times here spoken of, and those of the times in which Christ is said to have lived, are in contradiction to

each other. It was the Romans, and not the Assyrians, that had conquered and *were in the land of Judea*, and *trod in their palaces* when Christ was born, and when he died, and so far from his driving them out, it was they who signed the warrant for his execution, and he suffered under it.

Having thus shewn that this is no prophecy of Jesus Christ, I pass on to the third passage quoted from the Old Testament by the New, as a prophecy of him.

This, like the first I have spoken of, is introduced by a dream. Joseph dreameth another dream, and dreameth that he seeth another angel. The account begins at the 13th v. of 2d chap. of Matthew.

“The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: For Herod will seek the life of the young child to destroy him.—When he arose he took the young child and his mother by night and departed into Egypt—and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, *Out of Egypt have I called my son.*”

This passage is in the book of Hosea, chap. xi. ver. 1. The words are, “When Israel was a child then I loved him and *called my son out of Egypt*—As they called them, so they went from them, they sacrificed unto Baalam and burnt incense to graven images.”

This passage, falsely called a prophecy of Christ, refers to the children of Israel coming out of Egypt in the time of Pharaoh, and to the idolatry they committed afterwards. To make it apply to Jesus Christ, he then must be the person who *sacrificed unto Baalam and burnt incense to graven images*, for the person called out of Egypt by the collective name, Israel, and the persons committing this idolatry, are the same persons, or the descendants of them. This then can be no prophecy of Jesus Christ unless they are willing to make an idolator of him. I pass on to the fourth passage called a prophecy by the writer of the book of Matthew.

This is introduced by a story, told by nobody but himself, and scarcely believed by any body, of the slaughter of all the children under two years old, by the command of Herod. A thing which it is not probable could be done by Herod, as he only held an office under the Roman government, to which appeals could always be had, as we see in the case of Paul.

Matthew, however, having made or told his story, says, chap. ii. ver. 17.—“Then was fulfilled that which was

“spoken by Jeremy, the prophet, saying,—*In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning: Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they were not.*”

This passage is in Jeremiah, chap. xxxi. ver. 15, and this verse, when separated from the verses before and after it, and which explains its application, might with equal propriety be applied to every case of wars, sieges, and other violences, such as the Christians themselves have often done to the Jews, where mothers have lamented the loss of their children. There is nothing in the verse taken singly that designates or points out any particular application of it, otherwise than that it points to some circumstance which, at the time of writing it, had already happened, and not to a thing yet to happen, for the versé is in the preter or past tense.—I go to explain the case, and shew the application of the verse.

Jeremiah lived in the time that Nebuchadnezzar besieged, took, plundered, and destroyed Jerusalem, and led the Jews captive to Babylon. He carried his violence against the Jews to every extreme. He slew the sons of king Zedekiah before his face, he then put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and kept him in prison till the day of his death.

It is of this time of sorrow and suffering to the Jews that Jeremiah is speaking. Their temple was destroyed, their land desolated, their nation and government entirely broken up, and themselves, men, women, and children, carried into captivity. They had too many sorrows of their own, immediately before their eyes, to permit them, or any of their chiefs, to be employing themselves on things that might, or might not, happen in the world seven hundred years afterwards.

It is, as already observed, of this time of sorrow and suffering to the Jews that Jeremiah is speaking in the verse in question. In the two next verses, the 16th and 17th, he endeavours to console the sufferers by giving them hopes, and according to the fashion of speaking in those days, assurances from the Lord, that their sufferings should have an end, and that *their children should return again to their own land*. But I leave the verses to speak for themselves, and the Old Testament to testify against the new.

Jeremiah, chap. xxxi. ver. 15.—“Thus saith the Lord, a voice *was* heard in Ramah (it is in the preter tense) lamentation and bitter weeping: Rachel, weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children because they were not.”

Verse 16.—“ Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears ; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord, and *they shall come again from the land of the enemy.*”

Verse 17.—“ And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that *thy children shall come again to their own border.*”

By what strange ignorance or imposition is it, that the children of which Jeremiah speaks (meaning the people of the Jewish nation, scripturally called *children of Israel*, and not mere infants under two years old), and who were to return again from the land of the enemy, and come again into their own borders, can mean the children that Matthew makes Herod to slaughter? Could those return again from the land of the enemy, or how can the land of the enemy be applied to them? Could they come again to their own borders? Good Heavens! How has the world been imposed upon by Testament-makers, priestcraft, and pretended prophecies. I pass on to the fifth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

This, like two of the former, is introduced by a dream. Joseph dreamed another dream, and dreameth of another Angel. And Matthew is again the historian of the dream and the dreamer. If it were asked how Matthew could know what Joseph dreamed, neither the Bishop nor all the Church could answer the question. Perhaps it was Matthew that dreamed and not Joseph ; that is, Joseph dreamed by proxy, in Matthew's brain, as they tell us Daniel dreamed for Nebuchadnezzar. But be this as it may, I go on with my subject.

The account of this dream is in Matthew, chap. ii. ver. 19. “ But when Herod was dead, behold an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt—Saying, arise and take the young child and its mother and go into the land of Israel, for they are dead which sought the young child's life—and he arose and took the young child and his mother and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither. Notwithstanding being warned of God in a *dream* (here is another dream) he turned aside into the parts of Galilee ; and he came and dwelt in a city called *Nazareth*, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets.—*He shall be called a Nazarine.*”

Here is good circumstantial evidence, that Matthew dreamed, for there is no such passage in all the Old Testament ; and I invite the bishops and all the priests in Christ-

endom, including those of America, to produce it. I pass on to the sixth passage, called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

This, as Swift says on another occasion, is *lugged in head and shoulders*; it needs only to be seen in order to be hooted as a forced and far-fetched piece of imposition.

Matthew, chap. iv. v. 12. "Now when Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee—and leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zebulon and Nephthalim—That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias (Isaiah) the prophet, saying, *The land of Zebulon and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles—the people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is springing upon them.*"

I wonder Matthew has not made the cris-cross-row, or the christ-cross-now (I know not how the priests spell it) into a prophecy. He might as well have done this as cut out these unconnected and undescriptive sentences from the place they stand in, and dubbed them with that title.

The words, however, are in Isaiah, chap. ix. ver. 1, 2, as follows:—

"Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted *the land of Zebulon and the land of Nephthali*, and afterwards did more grievously afflict her *by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations.*"

All this relates to two circumstances that had already happened, at the time these words in Isaiah were written. The one, where the land of Zebulon and Nephthali had been lightly afflicted, and afterwards more grievously by the way of the sea.

But observe, reader, how Matthew has falsified the text. He begins his quotation at a part of the verse where there is not so much as a comma, and thereby cuts off every thing that relates to the first affliction. He then leaves out all that relates to the second affliction, and by this means leaves out every thing that makes the verse intelligible, and reduces it to a senseless skeleton of names of towns.

To bring this imposition of Matthew clearly and immediately before the eye of the reader, I will repeat the verse, and put between crotchets [ ] the words he has left out, and put in *Italics* those he has preserved.

[Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation when at the first he lightly afflicted] *the land of*

*Zebulon and the land of Nephthali, [and did afterwards more grievously afflict her] by the way of the sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations.*

What gross imposition is it to gut, as the phrase is, a verse in this manner, render it perfectly senseless, and then puff it off on a credulous world as a prophecy. I proceed to the next verse.

Ver. 2. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." All this is historical, and not in the least prophetical. The whole is in the preter tense: it speaks of things that *had been accomplished* at the time the words were written, and not of things to be accomplished afterwards.

As then the passage is in no possible sense prophetical, nor intended to be so, and that to attempt to make it so, is not only to falsify the original, but to commit a criminal imposition; it is matter of no concern to us, otherwise than as curiosity, to know who the people were of which the passage speaks, that sat in darkness, and what the light was that had shined in upon them.

If we look into the preceding chapter, the 8th, of which the 9th is only a continuation, we shall find the writer speaking, at the 19th verse, of "*witches and wizards who peep about and mutter,*" and of people who made application to them; and he preaches and exhorts them against this darksome practice. It is of this people, and of this darksome practice, or *walking in darkness*, that he is speaking at the 2d verse of the 9th chapter; and with respect to *the light that had shined in upon them*, it refers entirely to his own ministry, and to the boldness of it, which opposed itself to that of *the witches and wizards who peeped about and muttered*.

Isaiah is, upon the whole, a wild disorderly writer, preserving in general no clear chain of perception in the arrangement of his ideas, and consequently producing no defined conclusions from them. It is the wildness of his style, the confusion of his ideas, and the ranting metaphors he employs, that have afforded so many opportunities to priestcraft in some cases, and to superstition in others, to impose those defects upon the world as prophecies of Jesus Christ. Finding no direct meaning in them, and not knowing what to make of them, and supposing at the same time they were intended to have a meaning, they supplied the defect by inventing a meaning of their own, and called it his. I have, however, in this place done Isaiah the justice to rescue him



from the claws of Matthew, who has torn him unmercifully to pieces; and from the imposition or ignorance of priests and commentators, by letting Isaiah speak for himself.

If the words *walking in darkness*, and *light breaking in*, could in any case be applied prophetically, which they cannot be, they would better apply to the times we now live in than to any other. The world has "*walked in darkness*" for eighteen hundred years, both as to religion and government, and it is only since the American Revolution began that light has broken in. The belief of *one God*, whose attributes are revealed to us in the book or scripture of the creation, which no human hand can counterfeit or falsify, and not in the written or printed book which, as Matthew has shewn, can be altered or falsified by ignorance or design, is now making its way among us: and as to government, *the light is already gone forth*, and whilst men ought to be careful not to be blinded by the excess of it, as at a certain time in France, when every thing was Robespierian violence, they ought to reverence, and even to adore it, with all the firmness and perseverance that true wisdom can inspire.

I pass on to the seventh passage, called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. viii. ver. 16. "When the evening was come, they brought unto him (Jesus) many that were possessed with devils, and he cast out the spirit with his word, and healed all that were sick.—That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias (Isaiah) the prophet, saying, "*himself took our infirmities, and bear our sicknesses.*"

This affair of people being possessed by devils, and of casting them out, was the fable of the day when the books of the New Testament were written. It had not existence at any other time. The books of the Old Testament mention no such thing; the people of the present day know of no such thing; nor does the history of any people or country speak of such a thing. It starts upon us all at once in the book of Matthew, and is altogether an invention of the New Testament-makers and the Christian church. The book of Matthew is the first book where the word *Devil* is mentioned\*. We read in some of the books of the Old Testament of things called familiar spirits, the supposed companions of people called witches and wizards. It was no other than the trick of pretended conjurors to obtain money from credulous and ignorant people, or the fabricated charge

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\* The word *devil* is a personification of the word *evil*.

of superstitious malignancy against unfortunate and decrepid old age.

But the idea of a familiar spirit, if we can affix any idea to the term, is exceedingly different to that of being possessed by a devil. In the one case, the supposed familiar spirit is a dexterous agent, that comes and goes and does as he is bidden: in the other, he is a turbulent roaring monster, that tears and tortures the body into convulsions. Reader, whoever thou art, put thy trust in thy Creator, make use of the reason he endowed thee with, and cast from thee all such fables.

The passage alluded to by Matthew, for as a quotation it is false, is in Isaiah, chap. liii. ver. 4, which is as follows:

“Surely *he* (the person of whom Isaiah is speaking of) *hath borne* our griefs and carried our sorrows.” It is in the preter tense.

Here is nothing about casting out devils, nor curing of sicknesses. The passage, therefore, so far from being a prophecy of Christ, is not even applicable as a circumstance.

Isaiah, or at least the writer of the book that bears his name, employs the whole of this chapter, the 53d, in lamenting the sufferings of some deceased person, of whom he speaks very pathetically. It is a monody on the death of a friend; but he mentions not the name of the person, nor gives any circumstance of him by which he can be personally known; and it is this silence, which is evidence of nothing, that Matthew has laid hold of to put the name of Christ to it; as if the chiefs of the Jews, whose sorrows were then great, and the times they lived in big with danger, were never thinking about their own affairs, nor the fate of their own friends, but were continually running a wild-goose chase into futurity.

To make a monody into a prophecy is an absurdity. The characters and circumstances of men, even in different ages of the world, are so much alike, that what is said of one may with propriety be said of many; but this fitness does not make the passage into a prophecy; and none but an impostor or a bigot would call it so.

Isaiah, in deploring the hard fate and loss of his friend, mentions nothing of him but what the human lot of man is subject to. All the cases he states of him, his persecutions, his imprisonment, his patience in suffering, and his perseverance in principle, are all within the line of nature; they belong exclusively to none, and may with justness be said of many. But if Jesus Christ was the person the church represents him to be, that which would exclusively

apply to him, must be something that could not apply to any other person; something beyond the line of nature; something beyond the lot of mortal man; and there are no such expressions in this chapter, nor any other chapter in the Old Testament.

It is no exclusive description to say of a person, as is said of the person Isaiah is lamenting in this chapter. "*He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.*" This may be said of thousands of persons, who have suffered oppression and unjust death with patience, silence, and perfect resignation.

Grotius, whom the bishop esteems a most learned man, and who certainly was so, supposes that the person of whom Isaiah is speaking, is Jeremiah. Grotius is led into this opinion, from the agreement there is between the description given by Isaiah, and the case of Jeremiah, as stated in the book that bears his name. If Jeremiah was an innocent man, and not a traitor in the interest of Nebuchadnezzar, when Jerusalem was besieged, his case was hard; he was accused by his countrymen, was persecuted, oppressed, and imprisoned, and he says of himself (see Jeremiah, chap. ii. ver. 19), "*But as for me, I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter.*"

I should be inclined to the same opinion with Grotius, had Isaiah lived at the time when Jeremiah underwent the cruelties of which he speaks; but Isaiah died about fifty years before: and it is of a person of his own time, whose case Isaiah is lamenting in the chapter in question, and which imposition and bigotry, more than seven hundred years afterwards, perverted into a prophecy of a person they call Jesus Christ.

I pass on to the eighth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. xii. ver. 14. "Then the Pharisees went out and held a council against him, how they might destroy him—But when Jesus knew it he withdrew himself; and great numbers followed him and he healed them all—and he charged them they should not make him known: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias (Isaiah) the prophet, saying,

"Behold my servant whom I have chosen; my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased, I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles—he shall

not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets—a bruised reed shall he not break, and smocking flax shall he not quench till he sends forth judgment unto victory—and in his name shall the Gentiles trust.”

In the first place, this passage hath not the least relation to the purpose for which it is quoted.

Matthew says, that the Pharisees held a council against Jesus to destroy him—that Jesus withdrew himself—that great numbers followed him—that he healed them—and that he charged them they should not make him known.

But the passage Matthew has quoted as being fulfilled by these circumstances, does not so much as apply to any one of them. It has nothing to do with the Pharisees holding a council to destroy Jesus—with his withdrawing himself—with great numbers following him—with his healing them—nor with his charging them not to make him known.

The purpose for which the passage is quoted, and the passage itself, are as remote from each other, as nothing from something. But the case is, that people have been so long in the habit of reading the books called the Bible and Testament, with their eyes shut, and their senses locked up, that the most stupid inconsistencies have passed on them for truth, and imposition for prophecy. The all-wise Creator hath been dishonoured by being made the author of fable, and the human mind degraded by believing it.

In this passage, as in that last mentioned, the name of the person of whom the passage speaks is not given, and we are left in the dark respecting him. It is this defect in the history, that bigotry and imposition have laid hold of, to call it prophecy.

Had Isaiah lived in the time of Cyrus, the passage would descriptively apply to him. As king of Persia, his authority was great among the Gentiles, and it is of such a character the passage speaks; and his friendship to the Jews whom he liberated from captivity, and who might then be compared to a *bruised reed*, was extensive. But this description does not apply to Jesus Christ, who had no authority among the Gentiles; and as to his own countrymen, figuratively described by the bruised reed, it was they who crucified him. Neither can it be said of him that he did not cry, and that his voice was not heard in the street. As a preacher it was his business to be heard, and we are told that he travelled about the country for that purpose. Matthew has given a long sermon, which (if his authority is good, but which is much to be doubted, since he imposes

so much,) Jesus preached to a multitude upon a mountain, and it would be a quibble to say that a mountain is not a street, since it is a place equally as public.

The last verse in the passage (the 4th), as it stands in Isaiah, and which Matthew has not quoted, says, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgment in the earth and the isles shall wait for his law." This also applies to Cyrus. He was not discouraged, he did not fail, he conquered all Babylon, liberated the Jews, and established laws. But this cannot be said of Jesus Christ, who, in the passage before us, according to Matthew, withdrew himself for fear of the Pharisees, and charged the people that followed him not to make it known where he was; and who, according to other parts of the Testament, was continually moving from place to place to avoid being apprehended\*.

\* In the second part of the *Age of Reason*, I have shewn that the book ascribed to Isaiah is not only miscellaneous as to matter, but as to authorship; that there are parts in it which could not be written by Isaiah, because they speak of things one hundred and fifty years after he was dead. The instance I have given of this, in that work, corresponds with the subject I am upon, *at least a little better than Matthew's introduction and his quotation.*

Isaiah lived, the latter part of his life, in the time of Hezekiah, and it was about one hundred and fifty years from the death of Hezekiah to the first year of the reign of Cyrus, when Cyrus published a proclamation, which is given in the first chapter of the book of Ezra, for the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. It cannot be doubted, at least it ought not to be doubted, that the Jews would feel an affectionate gratitude for this act of benevolent justice, and it is natural they would express that gratitude in the customary style, bombastical and hyperbolical as it was, which they used on extraordinary occasions, and which was, and still is in practice with all the eastern nations.

The instance to which I refer, and which is given in the second part of the *Age of Reason*, is the last verse of the 44th chapter and the beginning of the 45th—in these words: "*That saith of Cyrus he is my shepherd and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem thou shalt be built, and to the Temple, thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut.*"

This complimentary address is in the present tense, which shews that the things of which it speaks were in existence at the time of writing it; and consequently, that the author must have been at

But it is immaterial to us, at this distance of time, to know who the person was: it is sufficient to the purpose I am upon, that of detecting fraud and falsehood, to know who it was not, and to shew it was not the person called Jesus Christ.

I pass on to the ninth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. xxi. v. 1: "And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying unto them, go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her, loose them and bring them unto me—and if any man say aught to you, ye shall say, the Lord hath need of them, and straightway he will send them.

"All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, *Tell ye the daughter of Sion, behold thy king cometh unto thee meek, and setting on an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.*"

Poor ass! let it be some consolation amidst all thy sufferings, that if the heathen world erected a bear into a constellation, the Christian world has elevated thee into a prophecy.

This passage is in Zechariah, chap. ix. ver. 9, and is one of the whims of friend Zechariah to congratulate his countrymen, who were then returning from captivity in Babylon, and himself with them, to Jerusalem. It has no concern with any other subject. It is strange that apostles, priests, and commentators, never permit, or never suppose, the Jews to be speaking of their own affairs. Every thing in the Jewish books is perverted and distorted into meanings never

least one hundred and fifty years later than Isaiah, and that the book which bears his name is a compilation. The Proverbs called Solomon's, and the Psalms called David's, are of the same kind. The two last verses of the second book of Chronicles, and the three first verses of the first chapter of Ezra, are word for word the same; which shew that the compilers of the Bible mixed the writings of different authors together, and put them under some common head.

As we have here an instance in the 44th and 45th chapters of the introduction of the name of Cyrus into a book to which it cannot belong, it affords good ground to conclude, that the passage in the 42d chapter, in which the character of Cyrus is given without his name, has been introduced in like manner, and that the person there spoken of is Cyrus.

intended by the writers. Even the poor ass must not be a Jew-ass but a Christian-ass. I wonder they did not make an apostle of him, or a bishop, or at least make him speak and prophecy. He could have lifted up his voice as loud as any of them.

Zechariah, in the first chapter of his book, indulges himself in several whims on the joy of getting back to Jerusalem. He says at the 8th verse, "I saw by night (Zechariah was a sharp-sighted seer) and beheld a man sitting on a *red horse*, (yes, reader, a *red horse*) and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom, and behind him were *red horses speckled and white*." He says nothing about green horses, nor blue horses, perhaps because it is difficult to distinguish green from blue by night, but a Christian can have no doubt they were there, because "*faith is the evidence of things not seen*."

Zechariah then introduces an angel among his horses, but he does not tell us what colour the angel was of, whether black or white, nor whether he came to buy horses, or only to look at them as curiosities, for certainly they were of that kind. Be this, however, as it may, he enters into conversation with this angel, on the joyful affair of getting back to Jerusalem, and he saith at the 16th verse, "*Therefore, thus saith the Lord, I AM RETURNED to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem*." An expression signifying the rebuilding the city.

All this, whimsical and imaginary as it is, sufficiently proves that it was the entry of the Jews into Jerusalem from captivity, and not the entry of Jesus Christ seven hundred years afterwards, that is the subject upon which Zechariah is always speaking.

As to the expression of riding upon an ass, which commentators represent as a sign of humility in Jesus Christ, the case is, he never was so well mounted before. The asses of those countries are large and well-proportioned, and were anciently the chief of riding animals. Their beasts of burden, and which served also for the conveyance of the poor, were camels and dromedaries. We read in Judges, chap. x. ver. 4, that "Jair (one of the Judges of Israel) had thirty sons that rode on *thirty ass-colts*, and they had thirty cities." But commentators distort every thing.

There is besides very reasonable grounds to conclude that this story of Jesus riding publicly into Jerusalem, accompanied, as it is said at the 8th and 9th verses, by a

great multitude, shouting and rejoicing and spreading their garments by the way, is altogether a story destitute of truth.

In the last passage called a prophecy that I examined, Jesus is represented as withdrawing, that is, running away, and concealing himself for fear of being apprehended, and charging the people that were with him not to make him known. No new circumstances had arisen in the interim to change his condition for the better; yet here he is represented as making his public entry into the same city from which he had fled for safety. The two cases contradict each other so much, that if both are not false, one of them at least can scarcely be true. For my own part, I do not believe there is one word of historical truth in the whole book. I look upon it at best to be a romance; the principal personage of which is an imaginary or allegorical character founded upon some tale, and in which the moral is in many parts good, and the narrative part very badly and blunderingly written.

I pass on to the tenth passage, called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. xxvi. ver. 51. "And behold one of them which was with Jesus (meaning Peter) stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels. But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be. In that same hour Jesus said to the multitudes, are ye come out as against a thief with swords and with staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.

This loose and general manner of speaking, admits neither of detection nor of proof. Here is no quotation given, nor the name of any Bible author mentioned, to which reference can be had.

There are, however, some high improbabilities against the truth of the account.

First—It is not probable that the Jews, who were then a conquered people, and under subjection to the Romans, should be permitted to wear swords.

Secondly—If Peter had attacked the servant of the high



priest and cut off his ear, he would have been immediately taken up by the guard that took up his master, and sent to prison with him.

Thirdly—What sort of disciples and preaching apostles must those of Christ have been that wore swords?

Fourthly—This scene is represented to have taken place the same evening of what is called the Lord's Supper, which makes, according to the ceremony of it, the inconsistency of wearing swords the greater.

I pass on to the eleventh passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. xxvii. ver. 3. "Then Judas which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, what is that to us, see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver, and departed and went and hanged himself—And the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, it is not lawful to put them in the treasury, because it is the price of blood—And they took counsel and bought with them the potters' field to bury strangers in—Wherefore that field is called the field of blood unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potters' field, as the Lord appointed me."

This is a most bare-faced piece of imposition. The passage in Jeremiah which speaks of the purchase of a field, has no more to do with the case to which Matthew applies it, than it has to do with the purchase of lands in America. I will recite the whole passage:

Jeremiah, chap. xxxii. v. 6. "And Jeremiah said, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying—Behold Hananiël, the son of Shallum thine uncle, shall come unto thee, saying, buy thee my field that is in Anathoth, for the right of redemption is thine to buy it—So Hananiël mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison, according to the word of the Lord, and said unto me, buy my field I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin, for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I knew this was the word of the Lord—And I bought the field of Hananiël mine uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver—and I subscribed the evidence and sealed it, and took witnesses and weighed him the mo-

ney in balances. So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open—and I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch, the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiath, in the sight of Hanamiel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison—and I charged Baruch before them, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days—for thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, houses, and fields, and vineyards, shall be possessed again in this land."

I forbear making any remark on this abominable imposition of Matthew. The thing glaringly speaks for itself. It is priests and commentators that I rather ought to censure, for having preached falsehood so long, and kept people in darkness with respect to those impositions. I am not contending with these men upon points of doctrine, for I know that sophistry has always a city of refuge. I am speaking of facts; for wherever the thing called a fact is a falsehood, the faith founded upon it is delusion, and the doctrine raised upon it not true. Ah, reader, put thy trust in thy Creator, and thou wilt be safe! but if thou trustest to the book called the Scriptures, thou trustest to the rotten staff of fable and falsehood. But I return to my subject.

There is among the whims and reveries of Zechariah, mention made of thirty pieces of silver given to a potter. They can hardly have been so stupid as to mistake a potter for a field: and if they had, the passage in Zechariah has no more to do with Jesus, Judas, and the field to bury strangers in, than that already quoted. I will recite the passage.

Zechariah, chap. xi. ver. 7. "And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock; and I took unto me two staves; the one I called *Beauty* and the other I called *Bands*, and I fed the flock—Three shepherds also, I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.—Then said I, I will not feed you; that which dieth, let it die; and that which is to be cut off let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another.—And I took my staff, even *Beauty*, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people.—And it was broken in that day; and so the poor of the flock who waited upon me, knew that it was the word of the Lord.

“And I said unto them, if ye think good give me my price, and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price *thirty pieces of silver*. And the Lord said unto me, cast it unto the *potter*, a goodly price that I was prised at of them; and I took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

“When I cut asunder mine other staff, even *Bands*, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.”\*

There is no making either head or tail of this incoherent gibberish. His two staves, one called *Beauty* and the other *Bands*, is so much like a fairy tale, that I doubt if it had any other origin. There is, however, no part that has the least relation to the case stated in Matthew; on the con-

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\* Whiston, in his Essay on the Old Testament, says, that the passage of Zechariah of which I have spoken, was in the copies of the Bible of the first century, in the book of Jeremiah, from whence, says he, it was taken and inserted without coherence, in that of Zechariah—well, let it be so, it does not make the case a whit the better for the New Testament; but it makes the case a great deal the worse for the Old. Because it shews, as I have mentioned respecting some passages in a book ascribed to Isaiah, that the works of different authors have been so mixed and confounded together they cannot now be discriminated, except where they are historical, chronological, or biographical, as is the interpolation in Isaiah. It is the name of Cyrus inserted where it could not be inserted, as he was not in existence till one hundred and fifty years after the time of Isaiah, that detects the interpolation and the blunder with it.

Whiston was a man of great literary learning, and, what is of much higher degree, of deep scientific learning. He was one of the best and most celebrated mathematicians of his time, for which he was made professor of mathematics of the university of Cambridge. He wrote so much in defence of the Old Testament, and of what he calls prophecies of Jesus Christ, that at last he began to suspect the truth of the scriptures, and wrote against them; for it is only those who examine them, that see the imposition. Those who believe them most are those who know least about them.

Whiston, after writing so much in defence of the scriptures, was at last prosecuted for writing against them. It was this that gave occasion to Swift, in his ludicrous epigram on Ditton and Whiston, each of which set up to find out the longitude, to call the one *good master Ditton*, and the other *wicked Will Whiston*. But as Swift was a great associate with the Freethinkers of those days, such as Bolingbroke, Pope, and others, who did not believe the books called the scriptures, there is no certainty whether he wittily called him *wicked* for defending the scriptures, or for writing against them. The known character of Swift decides for the former.

trary, it is the reverse of it. Here the *thirty pieces* of silver, whatever it was for, is called a *goodly price*, it was as much as the thing was worth, and according to the language of the day, was approved of by the Lord, and the money given to the potter in the house of the Lord. In the case of Jesus and Judas, as stated in Matthew, the thirty pieces of silver were the price of blood; the transaction was condemned by the Lord, and the money, when refunded, was refused admittance into the treasury. Every thing in the two cases is the reverse of each other.

Besides this, a very different and direct contrary account to that of Matthew, is given of the affair of Judas, in the book called the *Acts of the Apostles*: according to that book the case is, that so far from Judas repenting and returning the money, and the high priest buying a field with it to bury strangers in, Judas kept the money and bought a field with it for himself; and instead of hanging himself as Matthew says, that he fell headlong and burst asunder—some commentators endeavour to get over one part of the contradiction by ridiculously supposing that Judas hanged himself first and the rope broke.

Acts, chap. i. ver. 16. "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was a guide to them that took Jesus. (David says not a word about Judas) ver. 17, for he (Judas) was numbered among us and obtained part of our ministry."

Ver. 18. "*Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, and falling headlong he burst asunder in the midst, and his bowels gushed out.*" Is it not a species of blasphemy to call the New Testament *revealed religion*, when we see in it such contradictions and absurdities.

I pass on to the twelfth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. xxvii. ver. 35. "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, *They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.*" This expression is in the 22d Psalm, ver. xviii. The writer of that Psalm, (whoever he was, for the Psalms are a collection and not the work of one man) is speaking of himself and of his own case, and not of that of another. He begins this Psalm with the words which the New Testament writers ascribed to Jesus Christ. "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*"—words which might be uttered by a com-

plaining man without any great impropriety, but very improperly from the mouth of a reputed God.

The picture which the writer draws of his own situation in this Psalm, is gloomy enough. He is not prophesying, but complaining of his own hard case. He represents himself as surrounded by enemies and beset by persecutions of every kind; and by way of shewing the inveteracy of his persecutors, he says at the 18th verse, "*They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*" The expression is in the present tense; and is the same as to say, they pursue me even to the clothes upon my back, and dispute how they shall divide them; besides, the word *vesture* does not always mean cloathing of any kind, but *property*, or rather the admitting a man to, or *investing* him with property; and as it is used in this Psalm distinct from the word garment, it appears to be used in this sense. But Jesus had no property; for they make him say of himself, "*The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath no where to lay his head.*"

But be this as it may, if we permit ourselves to suppose the Almighty would condescend to tell, by what is called the spirit of prophecy, what could come to pass in some future age of the world, it is an injury to our own faculties, and to our ideas of his greatness, to imagine it would be about an old coat, or an old pair of breeches, or about any thing which the common accidents of life, or the quarrels that attend it, exhibit every day.

That which is within the power of man to do, or in his will not to do, is not a subject for prophecy, even if there were such a thing, because it cannot carry with it any evidence of divine power, or divine interposition. The ways of God are not the ways of men. That which an almighty power performs, or wills, is not within the circle of human power to do, or to controul. But any executioner and his assistants might quarrel about dividing the garments of a sufferer, or divide them without quarrelling, and by that means fulfil the thing called a prophecy, or set it aside.

In the passages before examined, I have exposed the falsehood of them. In this I exhibit its degrading meanness, as an insult to the Creator and an injury to human reason.

Here end the passages called prophecies by Matthew.

Matthew concludes his book by saying, that when Christ expired on the cross, the rocks rent, the graves opened, and the bodies of many of the saints arose; and Mark says, there was darkness over the land from the sixth hour until

the ninth. They produce no prophecy for this; but had these things been facts, they would have been a proper subject for prophecy, because none but an almighty power could have inspired a fore-knowledge of them, and afterwards fulfilled them. Since then, there is no such prophecy, but a pretended prophecy of an old coat, the proper deduction is, there were no such things, and that the book of Matthew is fable and falsehood.

I pass on to the book called the Gospel according to St. Mark.

## THE BOOK OF MARK.

THERE are but few passages in Mark called prophecies; and but few in Luke and John. Such as there are I shall examine, and also such other passages as interfere with those cited by Matthew.

Mark begins his book by a passage which he puts in the shape of a prophecy. Mark, chap. i. ver. 1.—“The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God—As it is written in the prophets, *Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before thee.*” Malachi, chap. iii. ver. 1. The passage in the original is in the first person. Mark makes this passage to be a prophecy of John the Baptist, said by the Church to be a forerunner of Jesus Christ. But if we attend to the verses that follow this expression, as it stands in Malachi, and to the first and fifth verses of the next chapter, we shall see that this application of it is erroneous and false.

Malachi having said at the first verse, “Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me,” says at the second verse, “*But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap.*”

This description can have no reference to the birth of Jesus Christ, and consequently none to John the Baptist. It is a scene of fear and terror that is here described, and the birth of Christ is always spoken of as a time of joy and glad tidings.

Malachi, continuing to speak on the same subject, explains in the next chapter what the scene is of which he speaks in the verses above quoted, and who the person is whom he calls the messenger.

“Behold,” says he, chap. iy. ver. 1, “the day cometh that shall burn like an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day cometh that shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.”

Ver. 5. “Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.”

By what right, or by what imposition or ignorance Mark has made Elijah into John the Baptist, and Malachi’s description of the day of judgment into the birth day of Christ, I leave to the Bishop to settle.

Mark, in the second and third verses of his first chapter, confounds two passages together, taken from different books of the Old Testament. The second verse, “*Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before me,*” is taken, as I have said before, from Malachi. The third verse, which says, “*The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his path straight,*” is not in Malachi, but in Isaiah, chap. xl. ver. 3. Whiston says, that both these verses were originally in Isaiah. If so, it is another instance of the disordered state of the Bible, and corroborates what I have said with respect to the name and description of Cyrus being in the book of Isaiah, to which it cannot chronologically belong.

The words in Isaiah, chap. xl. ver. 3. “*The voice of him that cryeth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his path straight,*” are in the present tense, and consequently not predictive. It is one of those rhetorical figures which the Old Testament authors frequently used. That it is merely rhetorical and metaphorical, may be seen at the 6th verse. “And the voice said, cry; and he said, what shall I cry? *All flesh is grass.*” This is evidently nothing but a figure; for flesh is not grass, otherwise than as a figure or metaphor, where one thing is put for another. Besides which, the whole passage is too general and declamatory to be applied exclusively to any particular person or purpose.

I pass on to the eleventh chapter.

In this chapter Mark speaks of Christ riding into Jerusalem upon a colt, but he does not make it the accomplishment of a prophecy, as Matthew has done; for he says nothing about a prophecy. Instead of which, he goes on the other tack, and in order to add new honours to the ass, he makes it to be a miracle; for he says, ver. 2, it was “*a colt whereon never man sat;*” signifying thereby, that as the ass had not been broken, he consequently was inspired *into good manners*, for we do not hear that he kicked Jesus Christ off.

There is not a word about his kicking in all the four Evangelists.

I pass on from these feats of *horsemanship*, performed upon a jack-ass, to the 15th chapter.

At the 24th verse of this chapter, Mark speaks of *parting Christ's garments and casting lots upon them*, but he applies no prophecy to it as Matthew does. He rather speaks of it as a thing then in practice with executioners, as it is at this day.

At the 28th verse of the same chapter, Mark speaks of Christ being crucified between two thieves; that, says he, "*the scriptures might be fulfilled which saith, and he was numbered with the transgressors.*" The same thing might be said of the thieves.

This expression is in Isaiah, chap. liii. ver. 12—Grotius applies it to Jeremiah. But the case has happened so often in the world, where innocent men have been numbered with transgressors, and is still continually happening, that it is absurdity to call it a prophecy of any particular person. All those whom the church calls martyrs were numbered with transgressors. All the honest patriots who fell upon the scaffold in France, in the time of Robespierre, were numbered with transgressors; and if himself had not fallen, the same case, according to a note in his own hand-writing, had befallen me; yet I suppose the Bishop will not allow that Isaiah was prophesying of Thomas Paine.

These are all the passages in Mark which have any reference to prophecies.

Mark concludes his book by making Jesus to say to his disciples, chap. xvi. ver. 15, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned (fine Popish stuff this), and these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover."

Now, the Bishop, in order to know if he has all this saving and wonder-working faith, should try those things upon himself. He should take a good dose of arsenic, and if he please, I will send him a rattle-snake from America! As for myself, as I believe in God and not at all in Jesus Christ, nor in the books called the Scriptures, the experiment does not concern me.

I pass on to the book of Luke.



There are no passages in Luke called prophecies excepting those which relate to the passages I have already examined.

Luke speaks of Mary being espoused to Joseph, but he makes no references to the passage in Isaiah, as Matthew does. He speaks also of Jesus riding into Jerusalem upon a colt, but he says nothing about a prophecy. He speaks of John the Baptist, and refers to the passage in Isaiah of which I have already spoken.

At the 13th chapter, verse 31, he says, "*The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him (Jesus) get thee out and depart hence, for Herod will kill thee—and he said unto them, go ye and tell that Fox, behold I cast out devils and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.*"

Matthew makes Herod to die whilst Christ was a child in Egypt, and makes Joseph to return with the child on the news of Herod's death, who had sought to kill him. Luke makes Herod to be living and to seek the life of Jesus after Jesus was thirty years of age; for he says, chap. iii. v. 23, "And Jesus began to be about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph."

The obscurity in which the historical part of the New Testament is involved with respect to Herod, may afford to priests and commentators a plea, which to some may appear plausible, but to none satisfactory, that the Herod of which Matthew speaks, and the Herod of which Luke speaks, were different persons. Matthew calls Herod a king; and Luke, chap. iii. v. 1, calls Herod, Tetrarch, (that is, Governor) of Galilee. But there could be no such person as *a king Herod*, because the Jews and their country were then under the dominion of the Roman Emperors who governed then by Tetrarchs or Governors.

Luke, chap. ii. makes Jesus to be born when Cyrenius was Governor of Syria, to which government Judea was annexed; and according to this, Jesus was not born in the time of Herod. Luke says nothing about Herod seeking the life of Jesus when he was born; nor of his destroying the children under two years old; nor of Joseph fleeing with Jesus into Egypt; nor of his returning from thence. On the contrary, the book of Luke speaks as if the person it calls Christ had never been out of Judea, and that Herod sought his life after he commenced preaching, as is before stated. I have already shewn that Luke, in the book called the Acts of the Apostles, (which commentators ascribe to Luke) contradicts the account in Matthew, with respect to

Judas and the thirty pieces of silver. Matthew says, that Judas returned the money, and that the high priests bought with it a field to bury strangers in. Luke says, that Judas kept the money and bought a field with it for himself.

As it is impossible the wisdom of God should err, so it is impossible those books could have been written by divine inspiration. Our belief in God, and his unerring wisdom, forbids us to believe it. As for myself, I feel religiously happy in the total disbelief of it.

There are no other passages called prophecies in Luke than those I have spoken of. I pass on to the book of John.

## THE BOOK OF JOHN.

JOHN, like Mark and Luke, is not much of a prophecy-monger. He speaks of the ass, and the casting lots for Jesus's clothes, and some other trifles, of which I have already spoken.

John makes Jesus to say, chap. v. ver. 46, "*For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me.*" The book of the Acts, in speaking of Jesus, says, chap. iii. ver. 22, "*For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.*"

This passage is in Deuteronomy, chap. xviii. ver. 15. They apply it as a prophecy of Jesus. What impositions! The person spoken of in Deuteronomy, and also in Numbers where the same person is spoken of, is in *Joshua*, the minister of Moses, and his immediate successor, and just such another Robespierrean character as Moses is represented to have been. The case, as related in those books, is as follows:—

Moses was grown old and near to his end, and in order to prevent confusion after his death, for the Israelites had no settled system of government; it was thought best to nominate a successor to Moses while he was yet living. This was done, as we are told, in the following manner:

Numbers, chap. xxvii. ver. 12. "And the Lord said unto Moses, get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the

land which I have given unto the children of Israel—and when thou hast seen it, thou also shall be gathered unto thy people as Aaron thy brother is gathered, ver. 15. And Moses spake unto the Lord, saying, Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation—Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep that have no shepherd—And the Lord said unto Moses, take thee *Joshua*, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him—and set him before Eleazar, the priest, and before all the congregation, and give him a charge in their sight—and thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, and that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient—ver. 22, and Moses did as the Lord commanded, and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and he laid hands upon him, and gave him charge as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.”

I have nothing to do, in this place, with the truth, or the conjuration here practised, of raising up a successor to Moses like unto himself. The passage sufficiently proves it is Joshua, and that it is an imposition in John to make the case into a prophecy of Jesus. But the prophecy-mongers were so inspired with falsehood, that they never speak truth\*.

\* Newton, Bishop of Bristol in England, published a work in three volumes, entitled, “*Dissertations on the Prophecies.*” The work is tediously written and tiresome to read. He strains hard to make every passage into a prophecy that suits his purpose.—Among others, he makes this expression of Moses, “the Lord shall raise thee up a prophet like unto me,” into a prophecy of Christ, who was not born, according to the Bible chronologies, till fifteen hundred and fifty-two years after the time of Moses, whereas it was an immediate successor to Moses, who was then near his end, that is spoken of in the passage above quoted.

This Bishop, the better to impose this passage on the world as a prophecy of Christ, has entirely omitted the account in the book of Numbers which I have given at length word for word, and which shews, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that the person spoken of by Moses, is Joshua, and no other person.

Newton is but a superficial writer. He takes up things upon *hear-say*, and inserts them without either examination or reflexion, and the more extraordinary and incredible they are, the better he likes them.

I pass on to the last passage in these fables of the Evangelists, called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

John having spoken of Jesus expiring on the cross between two thieves, says, chap. xix. ver. 32, "Then came

In speaking of the walls of Babylon, (volume the first, page 263,) he makes a quotation from a traveller of the name of *Tavernur*, whom he calls (by way of giving credit to what he says) a *celebrated traveller*, that those walls *were made of burnt brick, ten feet square and three feet thick*.—If Newton had only thought of calculating the weight of such a brick, he would have seen the impossibility of their being used or even made. A brick ten feet square, and three feet thick, contains 300 cubic feet, and allowing a cubic foot of brick to be only one hundred pounds, each of the Bishop's bricks would weigh thirty thousand pounds; and it would take about thirty cart loads of clay (one horse carts) to make one brick.

But his account of the stones used in the building of Solomon's temple (volume 2d, page 211,) far exceeds his bricks of ten feet square in the walls of Babylon; these are but brick-bats compared to them.

The stones (says he) employed in the foundation, were in magnitude forty cubits, that is, above sixty feet, a cubit, says he, being somewhat more than one foot and a half, (a cubit is one foot nine inches) and the superstructure (says this Bishop) was worthy of such foundations. There were some stones, says he, of the whitest marble forty-five cubits long, five cubits high, and six cubits broad. These are the dimensions this Bishop has given, which in measure of twelve inches to a foot, is 78 feet 9 inches long, 10 feet 6 inches broad, and 8 feet three inches thick, and contains 7,234 cubic feet. I now go to demonstrate the imposition of this Bishop.

A cubic foot of water weighs sixty-two pounds and a half—The specific gravity of marble to water is as 2 1-2, is to one. The weight therefore of a cubic foot of marble is 156 pounds, which, multiplied by 7,234, the number of cubic feet in one of those stones, makes the weight of it to be 1,128,504 pounds, which is 503 tons. Allowing then a horse to draw about half a ton, it will require a thousand horses to draw one such stone on the ground; how then were they to be lifted into the building by human hands?

The Bishop may talk of faith removing mountains, but all the faith of all the Bishops that ever lived could not remove one of those stones and their bodily strength given in.

This Bishop also tells of *great guns* used by the Turks at the taking of Constantinople, one of which, he says, was drawn by seventy yoke of oxen, and by two thousand men. Volume 3d, page 117.

The weight of a cannon that carries a ballof 48 pounds, which

the soldiers and brake the legs of the first (meaning one of the thieves) and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs—ver. 36, for these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, “*A bone of him shall not be broken.*”

The passage here referred to is in Exodus, and has no more to do with Jesus than with the ass he rode upon to Jerusalem;—nor yet so much, if a roasted jack-ass, like a roasted he-goat, might be eaten at a Jewish passover. It might be some consolation to an ass to know, that though his bones might be picked, they would not be broken. I go to state the case.

The book of Exodus, in instituting the Jewish passover, in which they were to eat a he-lamb or a he-goat, says, chap. xii. ver. 5, “Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; ye shall take it from the *sheep* or from the *goats.*”

The book, after stating some ceremonies to be used in killing and dressing it (for it was to be roasted, not boiled) says, ver. 43, “And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, this is the ordinance of the passover: there shall no stranger eat thereof; but every man’s servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner shall not eat thereof. In one house shall it be eaten: thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh thereof abroad out of the house; *neither shalt thou break a bone thereof.*”

We here see that the case as it stands in Exodus is a ceremony and not a prophecy, and totally unconnected with Jesus’s bones, or any part of him.

John having thus filled up the measure of apostolic fable, concludes his book with something that beats all fable; for

is the largest cannon that are cast, weighs 8,000 pounds, about three tons and a half, and may be drawn by three yoke of oxen. Any body may now calculate what the weight of the Bishop’s great gun must be, that required seventy yoke of oxen to draw it. This Bishop beats Gulliver.

When men give up the use of the divine gift of reason in writing on any subject, be it religious or any thing else, there are no bounds to their extravagance, no limit to their absurdities.

The three volumes which this Bishop has written on what he calls the prophecies, contain above 1,200 pages, and he says in vol. 3, page 117, “*I have studied brevity.*” This is as marvellous as the Bishop’s great gun.

he says at the last verse, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, *I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.*"

This is what in vulgar life is called a *thumper*; that is, not only a lie, but a lie beyond the line of possibility; besides which it is an absurdity, for if they should be written in the world, the world would contain them.—Here ends the examination of the passages called prophecies.

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I HAVE now, reader, gone through and examined all the passages which the four books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, quote from the Old Testament, and call them prophecies of Jesus Christ. When I first set down to this examination, I expected to find cause for some censure, but little did I expect to find them so utterly destitute of truth, and of all pretensions to it, as I have shewn them to be.

The practice which the writers of those books employ is not more false than it is absurd. They state some trifling case of the person they call Jesus Christ, and then cut out a sentence from some passage of the Old Testament and call it a prophecy of that case. But when the words thus cut out are restored to the place they are taken from, and read with the words before and after them, they give the lie to the New Testament. A short instance or two of this will suffice for the whole.

They make Joseph to dream of an angel, who informs him that Herod is dead, and tells him to come with the child out of Egypt. They then cut out a sentence from the book of Hosea, "*Out of Egypt have I called my Son,*" and apply it as a prophecy in that case.

The words "*And called my Son out of Egypt,*" are in the Bible;—but what of that? They are only part of a passage, and not a whole passage, and stand immediately connected with other words, which shew they refer to the children of Israel coming out of Egypt in the time of Pharaoh, and to the idolatry they committed afterwards.

Again, they tell us that when the soldiers came to break the legs of the crucified persons, they found Jesus was already dead, and therefore did not break his. They then, with some alteration of the original, cut out a sentence from Exodus, "*A bone of him shall not be broken,*" and apply it as a prophecy of that case.

The words "*Neither shall ye break a bone thereof,*" (for they have altered the text) are in the Bible—but what of that? They are, as in the former case, only part of a passage, and not a whole passage, and when read with the words they are immediately joined to, shew it is the bones of a he-lamb or a he-goat of which the passage speaks.

These repeated forgeries and falsifications create a well-founded suspicion, that all the cases spoken of concerning the person called Jesus Christ are *made cases*, on purpose to lug in, and that very clumsily, some broken sentences from the Old Testament, and apply them as prophecies of those cases; and that so far from his being the Son of God, he did not exist even as a man—that he is merely an imaginary or allegorical character, as Apollo, Hercules, Jupiter, and all the deities of antiquity were. There is no history written at the time Jesus Christ is said to have lived that speaks of the existence of such a person, even as a man.

Did we find in any other book pretending to give a system of religion, the falsehoods, falsifications, contradictions, and absurdities, which are to be met with in almost every page of the Old and New Testament, all the priests of the present day, who supposed themselves capable, would triumphantly shew their skill in criticism, and cry it down as a most glaring imposition. But since the books in question belong to their own trade and profession, they, or at least many of them, seek to stifle every enquiry into them, and abuse those who have the honesty and the courage to do it.

When a book, as is the case with the Old and New Testament, is ushered into the world under the title of being the **WORD OF GOD**, it ought to be examined with the utmost strictness, in order to know if it has a well-founded claim to that title or not, and whether we are or are not imposed upon: for as no poison is so dangerous as that which poisons the physic, so no falsehood is so fatal as that which is made an article of faith.

This examination becomes more necessary, because when the New Testament was written, I might say invented, the art of printing was not known, and there were no other copies of the Old Testament than written copies. A written copy of that book would cost about as much as six hundred common printed Bibles now cost. Consequently the book was in the hands but of very few persons, and these chiefly of the church. This gave an opportunity to the writers of the New Testament to make quotations from the Old Testament as they pleased, and call them prophecies, with very

little danger of being detected. Besides which, the terrors and inquisitorial fury of the church, like what they tell us of the flaming sword that turned every way, stood sentry over the New Testament; and time, which brings every thing else to light, has served to thicken the darkness that guards it from detection.

Were the New Testament now to appear for the first time, every priest of the present day would examine it line by line, and compare the detached sentences it calls prophecies with the whole passages in the Old Testament from whence they are taken. Why then do they not make the same examination at this time, as they would make had the New Testament never appeared before? If it be proper and right to make it in one case, it is equally proper and right to do it in the other case. Length of time can make no difference in the right to do it at any time. But instead of doing this, they go on as their predecessors went on before them, to tell the people there are prophecies of Jesus Christ, when the truth is there are none.

They tell us that Jesus rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. It is very easy to say so; a great lie is as easily told as a little one. But if he had done so, those would have been the only circumstances respecting him that would have differed from the common lot of man; and consequently the only case that would apply exclusively to him, as prophecy, would be some passage in the Old Testament that foretold such things of him. But there is not a passage in the Old Testament that speaks of a person who, after being crucified, dead, and buried, should rise from the dead, and ascend into heaven. Our prophecy-mongers supply the silence the Old Testament guards upon such things, by telling us of passages they call prophecies, and that falsely so, about Joseph's dream, old clothes, broken bones, and such like trifling stuff.

In writing upon this as upon every other subject, I speak a language full and intelligible. I deal not in hints and intimations. I have several reasons for this: First, that I may be clearly understood. Secondly, that it may be seen I am in earnest: And Thirdly, because it is an affront to truth to treat falsehood with complaisance.

I will close this treatise with a subject I have already touched upon in the First Part of the *Age of Reason*.

The world has been amused with the term *revealed religion*, and the generality of priests apply this term to the books called the Old and New Testament. The Mahometans ap-



ply the same term to the Koran. There is no man that believes in revealed religion stronger than I do; but it is not the reveries of the Old and New Testament, nor of the Koran, that I dignify with that sacred title. That which is revelation to me, exists in something which no human mind can invent, no human hand can counterfeit or alter.

The *Word of God* is the *Creation* we behold; and this word of God revealeth to man all that is necessary for man to know of his Creator.

Do we want to contemplate his power? We see it in the immensity of his creation.

Do we want to contemplate his wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed.

Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth.

Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his not withholding that abundance, even from the unthankful.

Do we want to contemplate his will, so far as it respects man? The goodness he shews to all, is a lesson for our conduct to each other.

In fine—Do we want to know what God is? Search not the book called the Scripture, which any human hand might make, or any impostor invent; but the scripture called the Creation.

When, in the First Part of the *Age of Reason*, I called the Creation the true revelation of God to man, I did not know that any other person had expressed the same idea. But I lately met with the writings of Doctor Conyers Middleton, published the beginning of last century, in which he expresses himself in the same manner, with respect to the creation, as I have done in the *Age of Reason*.

He was principal librarian of the University of Cambridge, in England, which furnished him with extensive opportunities of reading, and necessarily required he should be well acquainted with the dead as well as the living languages. He was a man of a strong original mind; had the courage to think for himself, and the honesty to speak his thoughts.

He made a journey to Rome, from whence he wrote letters to shew that the forms and ceremonies of the Romish Christian Church were taken from the degenerate state of the heathen mythology, as it stood in the latter times of the Greeks and Romans. He attacked without ceremony the miracles which the church pretended to perform; and in one of his treatises, he calls the *creation a revelation*. The priests of England of that day, in order to defend their cita-

del by first defending its out-works, attacked him for attacking the Roman ceremonies; and one of them censures him for calling the *creation a revelation*—he thus replies to him:

“One of them,” says he, “appears to be scandalized by the title of *revelation*, which I have given to that discovery which God made of himself in the visible works of his creation. Yet it is no other than what the wise in all ages have given to it, who consider it as the most authentic and indisputable revelation which God has ever given of himself, from the beginning of the world to this day. It was this by which the first notice of him was revealed to the inhabitants of the earth, and by which alone it has been kept up ever since among the several nations of it. From this the reason of man was enabled to trace out his nature and attributes, and by a gradual deduction of consequences, to learn his own nature also, with all the duties belonging to it which relate either to God or to his fellow-creatures. This constitution of things was ordained by God, as an universal law or rule of conduct to man—the source of all his knowledge—the test of all truth, by which all subsequent revelations, which are *supposed* to have been given by God in any other manner, must be tried, and cannot be received as divine any further than as they are found to tally and coincide with this original standard.

“It was this divine law which I referred to in the passage above recited (meaning the passage on which they had attacked him) being desirous to excite the reader’s attention to it, as it would enable him to judge more freely of the argument I was handling. For by contemplating this law, he would discover the genuine way which God himself has marked out to us for the acquisition of true knowledge; not from the authority or reports of our fellow-creatures, but from the information of the facts and material objects which in his providential distribution of worldly things, he hath presented to the perpetual observation of our senses. For as it was from these that his existence and nature, the most important articles of all knowledge, were first discovered to man, so that grand discovery furnished new light towards tracing out the rest, and made all the inferior subjects of human knowledge more easily discoverable to us by the same method.

“I had another view likewise in the same passages, and applicable to the same end, of giving the reader a more enlarged notion of the question in dispute, who, by turning his thoughts to reflect on the works of the Creator, as they are manifested to us in this fabric of the world, could not fail to

observe, that they are all of them great, noble, and suitable to the majesty of his nature, carrying with them the proofs of their origin, and shewing themselves to be the production of an all-wise and almighty being; and by accustoming his mind to these sublime reflections, he will be prepared to determine, whether those miraculous interpositions so confidently affirmed to us by the primitive fathers, can reasonably be thought to make a part in the grand scheme of the divine administration, or whether it be agreeable that God, who created all things by his will, and can give what turn to them he pleases by the same will, should, for the particular purposes of his government and the services of the church, *descend to the expedient of visions and revelations*, granted sometimes to boys for the instruction of the elders, and sometimes to women to settle the fashion and length of their veils, and sometimes to pastors of the Church, to enjoin them to ordain one man a lecturer, another a priest;—or that he should scatter a profusion of miracles around the stake of a martyr, yet all of them vain and insignificant, and without any sensible effect, either of preserving the life, or easing the sufferings of the saint; or even of mortifying his persecutors, who were always left to enjoy the full triumph of their cruelty, and the poor martyr to expire in a miserable death. When these things, I say, are brought to the original test, and compared with the genuine and indisputable works of the Creator, how minute, how trifling, how contemptible must they be?—and how incredible must it be thought, that for the instruction of his Church, God should employ ministers so precarious, unsatisfactory, and inadequate, as the extacies of women and boys, and the visions of interested priests, which were derided at the very time by men of sense to whom they were proposed.

“That this universal law (continues Middleton, meaning the law revealed in the works of the creation) was actually revealed to the heathen world long before the gospel was known, we learn from all the principal sages of antiquity, who made it the capital subject of their studies and writings.

“Cicero (says Middleton) has given us a short abstract of it in a fragment still remaining from one of his books on government, which (says Middleton) I shall here transcribe in his own words, as they will illustrate my sense also, in the passages that appear so dark and dangerous to my antagonist.

“The true law (it is Cicero who speaks) is right reason conformable to the nature of things, constant, eternal, diffused through all, which calls us to duty by commanding—

deters us from sin by forbidding ; which never loses its influence with the good, nor ever preserves it with the wicked. This law cannot be over-ruled by any other, nor abrogated in whole or in part ; nor can we be absolved from it either by the senate or by the people ; nor are we to seek any other comment or interpreter of it but itself ; nor can there be one law at Rome and another at Athens—one now and another hereafter ; but the same eternal immutable law comprehends all nations at all times, under one common master and governor of all—God. He is the inventor, propounder, enactor of this law ; and whoever will not obey it must first renounce himself and throw off the nature of man ; by doing which, he will suffer the greatest punishments, though he should escape all the other torments which are commonly believed to be prepared for the wicked.” Here ends the quotation from Cicero.

“ Our Doctors (continues Middleton) perhaps will look on this as RANK DEISM ; but let them call it what they will, I shall ever avow and defend it as the fundamental, essential, and vital part of all true religion.” Here ends the quotation from Middleton.

I have here given the reader two sublime extracts from men who lived in ages of time far remote from each other, but who thought alike. Cicero lived before the time in which they tell us Christ was born. Middleton may be called a man of our own time, as he lived within the same century with ourselves.

In Cicero we see that vast superiority of mind, that sublimity of right reasoning and justness of ideas which man acquires, not by studying Bibles and Testaments, and the theology of schools built thereon, but by studying the Creator in the immensity and unchangeable order of his creation, and the immutability of his law. “ *There cannot,*” says Cicero, “ *be one law now, and another hereafter ; but the same eternal immutable law comprehends all nations, at all times, under one common master and governor of all—God.*” But according to the doctrine of schools which priests have set up, we see one law, called the *Old Testament*, given in one age of the world, and another law, called the *New Testament*, given in another age of the world. As all this is contradictory to the eternal immutable nature, and the unerring and unchangeable wisdom of God, we must be compelled to hold this doctrine to be false, and the old and the new law, called the Old and the New Testament, to be impositions, fables, and forgeries.

In Middleton, we see the manly eloquence of an enlarged

mind, and the genuine sentiments of a true believer in his Creator. Instead of reposing his faith on books, by whatever name they may be called, whether Old Testaments or New, he fixes the creation as the great original standard by which every other thing called the word, or work of God, is to be tried. In this we have an indisputable scale whereby to measure every word or work imputed to him. If the thing so imputed carries not in itself the evidence of the same Almighty power, of the same unerring truth and wisdom, and the same unchangeable order in all its parts, as are visibly demonstrated to our senses, and comprehensible by our reason, in the magnificent fabric of the universe, that word or that work is not of God. Let then the two books called the Old and New Testament be tried by this rule, and the result will be, that the authors of them, whoever they were, will be convicted of forgery.

The invariable principles, and unchangeable order, which regulate the movements of all the parts that compose the universe, demonstrate both to our senses and our reason that its creator is a God of unerring truth. But the Old Testament, beside the numberless, absurd, and bagatelle stories it tells of God, represents him as a God of deceit, a God not to be confided in. Ezekiel makes God to say, chap. 14, ver. 9, “And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I, *the Lord have deceived that prophet.*” And at the 20th chap. ver. 25, he makes God, in speaking of the children of Israel to say, “*Wherefore I gave them statutes that were not good, and judgments by which they could not live.*” This, so far from being the word of God, is horrid blasphemy against him. Reader put thy confidence in thy God, and put no trust in the Bible.

The same Old Testament, after telling us that God created the heavens and the earth in six days, makes the same almighty power and eternal wisdom employ itself in giving directions how a priest's garments should be cut, and what sort of stuff they should be made of, and what their offerings should be, gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and badger skins, &c. chap. xxv. ver. 3; and in one of the pretended prophecies I have just examined, God is made to give directions how they should kill, cook, and eat a he-lamb or a he-goat. And Ezekiel, chap. iv. to fill up the measure of abominable absurdity, makes God to order him to take “*wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentiles, and millet, and fitches, and make a loaf or a cake thereof, and bake it with human dung and eat it;*”

but as Ezekiel complained that this mess was too strong for his stomach, the matter was compromised from man's dung to cow dung, Ezekiel, chap. iv. Compare all this ribaldry, blasphemously called the word of God, with the Almighty power that created the universe, and whose eternal wisdom directs and governs all its mighty movements, and we shall be at a loss to find a name sufficiently contemptible for it.

In the promises which the Old Testament pretends that God made to his people, the same derogatory ideas of him prevail. It makes God to promise to Abraham, that his seed should be like the stars in heaven and the sand on the sea shore for multitude, and that he would give them the land of Canaan as their inheritance for ever. But observe, reader, how the performance of this promise was to begin, and then ask thine own reason, if the wisdom of God, whose power is equal to his will, could, consistently with that power and that wisdom, make such a promise.

The performance of the promise was to begin, according to that book, by four hundred years of bondage and affliction. Genesis, chap. xv. ver. 13, "*And God said unto Abraham, know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years.*" This promise then to Abraham, and his seed for ever, to inherit the land of Canaan, had it been a fact instead of a fable, was to operate, in the commencement of it, as a curse upon all the people and their children, and their children's children for four hundred years.

But the case is, the book of Genesis was written after the bondage in Egypt had taken place; and in order to get rid of the disgrace of the Lord's chosen people, as they called themselves, being in bondage to the Gentiles, they make God to be the author of it, and annex it as a condition to a pretended promise; as if God, in making that promise, had exceeded his power in performing it, and consequently his wisdom in making it, and was obliged to compromise with them for one half, and with the Egyptians, to whom they were to be in bondage, for the other half.

Without degrading my own reason by bringing those wretched and contemptible tales into a comparative view, with the Almighty power and eternal wisdom, which the Creator hath demonstrated to our senses in the creation of the universe, I will confine myself to say, that if we compare them with the divine and forcible sentiments of Cicero, the result will be, that the human mind has degenerated by

believing them. Man, in a state of grovelling superstition, from which he has not courage to rise, looses the energy of his mental powers.

I will not tire the reader with more observations on the Old Testament.

As to the New Testament, if it be brought and tried by that standard, which, as Middleton wisely says, God has revealed to our senses, of his Almighty power and wisdom in the creation and government of the visible universe, it will be found equally as false, paltry, and absurd, as the Old.

Without entering, in this place, into any other argument, that the story of Christ is of human invention and not of divine origin, I will confine myself to shew that it is derogatory to God, by the contrivance of it; because the means it supposes God to use, are not adequate to the end to be obtained; and therefore are derogatory to the Almightyness of his power, and the eternity of his wisdom.

The New Testament supposes that God sent his Son upon earth to make a new covenant with man; which the church calls *the covenant of Grace*, and to instruct mankind in a new doctrine, which it calls *Faith*, meaning thereby, not faith in God, for Cicero and all true Deists always had and always will have this; but faith in the person called Jesus Christ, and that whoever had not this faith should, to use the words of the New Testament, be DAMNED.

Now, if this were a fact, it is consistent with that attribute of God, called his *Goodness*, that no time should be lost in letting poor unfortunate man know it; and as that goodness was united to Almighty power, and that power to Almighty wisdom, all the means existed in the hand of the Creator to make it known immediately over the whole earth, in a manner suitable to the Almightyness of his divine nature, and with evidence that would not leave man in doubt; for it is always incumbent upon us, in all cases, to believe that the Almighty always acts, not by imperfect means as imperfect man acts, but consistently with his Almightyness. It is this only that can become the infallible criterion by which we can possibly distinguish the works of God from the works of man.

Observe now, reader, how the comparison between this supposed mission of Christ, on the belief or disbelief of which they say man was to be saved or damned—observe, I say, how the comparison between this and the Almighty power and wisdom of God demonstrated to our senses in the visible creation, goes on.

The Old Testament tells us that God created the heavens and the earth, and every thing therein, in six days. The term *six days* is ridiculous enough when applied to God; but leaving out that absurdity, it contains the idea of Almighty power acting unitedly with Almighty wisdom, to produce an immense work, that of the creation of the universe and every thing therein, in a short time.

Now as the eternal salvation of man is of much greater importance than his creation, and as that salvation depends, as the New Testament tells us, on man's knowledge of, and belief in the person called Jesus Christ, it necessarily follows from our belief in the goodness and justice of God, and our knowledge of his almighty power and wisdom, as demonstrated in the creation, that **ALL THIS**, if true, would be made known to all parts of the world, in as little time, at least, as was employed in making the world. To suppose the Almighty would pay greater regard and attention to the creation and organization of inanimate matter, than he would to the salvation of innumerable millions of souls, which himself had created, "*as the image of himself*," is to offer an insult to his goodness and his justice.

Now observe, reader, how the promulgation of this pretended salvation by a knowledge of, and a belief in Jesus Christ went on, compared with the work of creation.

In the first place, it took longer time to make the child than to make the world, for nine months were passed away and totally lost in a state of pregnancy; which is more than forty times longer time than God employed in making the world, according to the Bible account. Secondly; several years of Christ's life were lost in a state of human infancy. But the universe was in maturity the moment it existed. Thirdly; Christ, as Luke asserts, was thirty years old before he began to preach what they call his mission. Millions of souls died in the mean time without knowing it. Fourthly; it was above three hundred years from that time before the book called the New Testament was compiled into a written copy, before which time there was no such book. Fifthly; it was above a thousand years after that, before it could be circulated; because neither Jesus nor his apostles had knowledge of, or were inspired with the art of printing: and consequently, as the means for making it universally known did not exist, the means were not equal to the end, and therefore it is not the work of God.

I will here subjoin the nineteenth Psalm, which is truly deistical, to shew how universally and instantaneously the



works of God make themselves known, compared with this pretended salvation by Jesus Christ.

Psalm 19th. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work—Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge—There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard—Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a chamber for the Sun. Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race—his going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."

Now, had the news of salvation by Jesus Christ been inscribed on the face of the Sun and the Moon, in characters that all nations would have understood, the whole earth had known it in twenty-four hours, and all nations would have believed it; whereas, though it is now almost two thousand years since, as they tell us, Christ came upon earth, not a twentieth part of the people of the earth know any thing of it, and among those who do, the wiser part do not believe it.

I have now, reader, gone through all the passages called prophecies of Jesus Christ, and shewn there is no such thing.

I have examined the story told of Jesus Christ, and compared the several circumstances of it with that revelation, which, as Middleton wisely says, God has made to us of his Power and Wisdom in the structure of the universe, and by which every thing ascribed to him is to be tried. The result is, that the story of Christ has not one trait, either in its character, or in the means employed, that bears the least resemblance to the power and wisdom of God, as demonstrated in the creation of the universe. All the means are human means, slow, uncertain and inadequate to the accomplishment of the end proposed, and therefore the whole is a fabulous invention, and undeserving of credit.

The priests of the present day profess to believe it. They gain their living by it, and they exclaim against something they call infidelity. I will define what it is. **HE THAT BELIEVES IN THE STORY OF CHRIST IS AN INFIDEL TO GOD.**

THOMAS PAINE.

# APPENDIX.

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## CONTRADICTORY DOCTRINES

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT,

BETWEEN

*Matthew and Mark.*

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IN the New Testament, Mark, chap. xvi. ver. 16, it is said, "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.*" This is making salvation, or in other words, the happiness of man after this life, to depend entirely on believing, or on what Christians call faith.

But the 25th chapter of *The Gospel according to Matthew* makes Jesus Christ to preach a direct contrary doctrine to *The Gospel according to Mark*; for it makes salvation, or the future happiness of man, to depend entirely on *good works*; and those good works are not works done to God, for he needs them not, but good works done to man.

The passage referred to in Matthew is the account there given of what is called the last day, or the day of judgment, where the whole world is represented to be divided into two parts, the righteous and the unrighteous, metaphorically called the *sheep* and the *goats*.

To the one part, called the righteous, or the sheep, it says, "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world—for *I was an hungered and ye gave me meat—I was thirsty and ye gave me drink—I was a stranger and ye took me in—Naked and ye clothed me—I was sick and ye visited me—I was in prison and ye came unto me.*

"Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred and fed thee, or thirsty and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in, or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick and in prison, and came unto thee?"

"And the king shall answer and say unto them, *verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*"

Here is nothing about believing in Christ—nothing about that phantom of the imagination called *Faith*. The works here spoken of, are works of humanity and benevolence, or, in other words, an endeavour to make God's creation happy. Here is nothing about preaching and making long prayers, as if God must be dictated to by man; nor about building churches and meetings, nor hiring priests to pray and preach in them. Here is nothing about predestination, that lust which some men have for damning one another. Here is nothing about baptism, whether by sprinkling or plunging, nor about any of those ceremonies for which the Christian church has been fighting, persecuting, and burning each other, ever since the Christian church began.

If it be asked, why do not priests preach the doctrine contained in this chapter? The answer is easy:—they are not fond of practising it themselves. It does not answer for their trade. They had rather get than give. Charity with them begins and ends at home.

Had it been said, *Come ye blessed, ye have been liberal in paying the preachers of the word, ye have contributed largely towards building churches and meeting-houses*, there is not a hired priest in Christendom but would have thundered it continually in the ears of his congregation. But as it is altogether on good works done to men, the priests pass it over in silence, and they will abuse me for bringing it into notice.

THOMAS PAINE.

## MY PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON A FUTURE STATE.

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I HAVE said in the first part of the Age of Reason, that "*I hope for happiness after this life.*" This hope is comfortable to me, and I presume not to go beyond the comfortable idea of hope, with respect to a future state.

I consider myself in the hands of my Creator, and that he will dispose of me after this life, consistently with his justice and goodness. I leave all these matters to him as my Creator and friend, and I hold it to be presumption in man to make an article of faith as to what the Creator will do with us hereafter.

I do not believe, because a man and a woman make a child, that it imposes on the Creator the unavoidable obligation of keeping the being so made in eternal existence hereafter. It is in his power to do so, or not to do so, and it is not in our power to decide which he will do.

The book called the New Testament, which I hold to be fabulous, and have shewn to be false, gives an account in the 25th chapter of Matthew, of what is there called the last day, or the day of judgment. The whole world, according to that account, is divided into two parts, the righteous and the unrighteous, figuratively called the sheep and the goats. They are then to receive their sentence. To the one, figuratively called the sheep, it says, "*Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*" To the other, figuratively called the goats, it says, "*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels.*"

Now the case is, the world cannot be thus divided—the moral world, like the physical world, is composed of numerous degrees of character, running imperceptibly one into the other, in such a manner that no fixed point of division can be found in either. That point is no where, or is every where. The whole world might be divided into two parts numerically, but not as to moral character; and therefore the metaphor of dividing them, as sheep and goats can be divided, whose difference is marked by their external figure, is absurd. All sheep are still sheep; all goats are still

goats; it is their physical nature to be so. But one part of the world are not all good alike, nor the other part all wicked alike. There are some exceedingly good; others exceedingly wicked. There is another description of men who cannot be ranked with either the one or the other—they belong neither to the sheep nor the goats; and there is still another description of them, who are so very insignificant both in character and conduct as not to be worth the trouble of damning or saving, or of raising from the dead.

My own opinion is, that those whose lives have been spent in doing good, and endeavouring to make their fellow-mortals happy, for this is the only way in which we can serve God, *will be happy hereafter*: and that the very wicked will meet with some punishment. But those who are neither good nor bad, or are too insignificant for notice, will be dropt entirely. This is my opinion. It is consistent with my idea of God's justice, and with the reason that God has given me, and I gratefully know he has given me a large share of that divine gift.

THOMAS PAINE.

END OF THE THIRD PART.



## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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*The following Pamphlets are just published by R. CARLILE,  
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Price 6d. No. I. of*

# **THE DEIST;**

OR,

## **MORAL PHILOSOPHER.**

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THE DEIST is intended to be a Collection of all scarce and valuable Deistical Tracts, from both ancient and modern Writers; original articles will occasionally be inserted if approved.

No. I. Contains THE DOUBTS OF INFIDELS, submitted for elucidation to the Right Reverend the Archbishops and Bishops; after which will follow, "WATSON REFUTED," being an Answer to the "Apology for the Bible," in a series of Letters to the Bishop of Landaff, by SAMUEL FRANCIS, M. D.

### **ADDRESS.**

WHEN it is apparent that religious prejudices and bigotry are fast wearing off the human mind, and that the greater portion of the human race are stimulated with an enquiry into the grounds of their religious creeds, it is presumed that a publication of this description now offered to the public, even under the title of the "DEIST," will be very acceptable.

The miseries which have been entailed on the nations of the earth by propagating creeds with the sword, faggot, torture, and imprisonments, are fast dispelling by the genuine spirit of philosophy and free enquiry.

The religion of the Jews commenced with Abraham, who, it appears, had such an horrid idea of the attributes of the Deity, as to have been in the act of sacrificing his own and only son to the caprice of his own imagination. When the descendants of Abraham had become sufficiently numerous to shake off the yoke of the Egyptians, they commenced their mad and bloody career, under the mask of worshipping the only true God, and extirpating all the nations around, who differed with them.

No sooner had Mahomet attracted a sufficient number of followers, than he commenced a career similar to the descendants of Abraham; and wherever his authority reached, he destroyed all those who did not embrace its tenets.

The Christians of Europe, feeling strength within themselves, were actuated in their turn by the same spirit, and quitted their own territories in arms, and in immense numbers, to exterminate the followers of Mahomet; so that it is an incontrovertible fact, that whenever any sect or party become more powerful than their neighbours, they have invariably taken up arms to destroy the weaker party.

To exterminate such prejudices from the human mind, must be the wish of every virtuous man; it is with this feeling, and this only, that the present publication is offered to the public, by whose approbation and patronage it must stand or fall.



PART THE FOURTH,

CONTAINING

*A Letter to the Hon. T. Erskine,*

ON THE

PROSECUTION OF THOMAS WILLIAMS,

FOR PUBLISHING THE

**AGE OF REASON.**

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A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED TO

THE SOCIETY OF THEOPHILANTHROPISTS,

AT PARIS.

---

*Letter to Camille Jordan.*

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AN ESSAY ON THE ORIGIN OF FREE-MASONRY.

---

EXTRACT OF A

**Reply to the Bishop of Llandaff.**

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By THOMAS PAINE.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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IT is a matter of surprise to some people to see Mr. Erskine act as counsel for a crown prosecution commenced against the right of opinion: I confess it is none to me, notwithstanding all that Mr. Erskine has said before; for it is difficult to know when a lawyer is to be believed; I have always observed that Mr. Erskine, when contending as a counsel for the right of political opinion, frequently took occasions, and those often dragged in head and shoulders, to lard, what he called the British Constitution, with a great deal of praise. Yet the same Mr. Erskine said to me in conversation, were Government to begin *de novo* in England, they never would establish such a damned absurdity (it was exactly his expression) as this is. Ought I then to be surprised at Mr. Erskine for inconsistency?

In this prosecution Mr. Erskine admits the right of controversy; but says the Christian religion is not to be abused. This is somewhat sophistical, because, while he admits the right of controversy, he reserves the right of calling that controversy, abuse: and thus, lawyer-like, undoes by one word, what he says in the other. I will, however, in this letter keep within the limits he prescribes; he will find here nothing about the Christian religion: he will find only a statement of a few cases, which shews the necessity of examining the books, handed to us from the Jews, in order to discover if we have not been imposed upon; together with some observations on the manner in which the trial of Williams has been conducted. If Mr. Erskine denies the right of examining those books, he had better profess himself at once an advocate for the establishment of an Inquisition, and the re-establishment of the Star Chamber.

THOMAS PAINE.



A

## LETTER, &c.

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Of all the tyrannies that afflict mankind, tyranny in religion is the worst: Every other species of tyranny is limited to the world we live in; but this attempts a stride beyond the grave, and seeks to pursue us into eternity. It is there and not here—it is to God and not to man—it is to a heavenly and not to an earthly tribunal that we are to account for our belief: if then we believe falsely and dishonourably of the Creator, and that belief is forced upon us, as far as force can operate by human laws and human tribunals,—on whom is the criminality of that belief to fall? on those who impose it, or on those on whom it is imposed?

A bookseller of the name of Williams has been prosecuted in London on a charge of blasphemy, for publishing a book intitled the *Age of Reason*. Blasphemy is a word of vast sound, but equivocal and almost indefinite signification, unless we confine it to the simple idea of hurting or injuring the reputation of any one, which was its original meaning. As a word, it existed before Christianity existed, being a Greek word, or Greek anglofied, as all the etymological dictionaries will shew.

But behold how various and contradictory has been the signification and application of this equivocal word. Socrates, who lived more than four hundred years before the Christian era, was convicted of blasphemy, for preaching against the belief of a plurality of gods, and for preaching the belief of one god, and was condemned to suffer death by poison. Jesus Christ was convicted of blasphemy under the Jewish law, and was crucified. Calling Mahomet an impostor would be blasphemy in Turkey; and denying the infallibility of the Pope and the Church would be blasphemy at Rome. What then is to be understood by this word blasphemy? We see that in the case of Socrates truth was condemned as blasphemy. Are we sure that truth is not

blasphemy in the present day? Woe, however, be to those who make it so, whoever they may be.

A book called the Bible has been voted by men, and decreed by human laws to be the word of God; and the disbelief of this is called blasphemy. But if the Bible be not the word of God, it is the laws and the execution of them that is blasphemy, and not the disbelief. Strange stories are told of the Creator in that book. He is represented as acting under the influence of every human passion, even of the most malignant kind. If these stories are false, we err in believing them to be true, and ought not to believe them. It is therefore a duty which every man owes to himself, and reverentially to his Maker, to ascertain, by every possible inquiry, whether there be sufficient evidence to believe them or not.

My own opinion is decidedly, that the evidence does not warrant the belief, and that we sin in forcing that belief upon ourselves and upon others. In saying this, I have no other object in view than truth. But that I may not be accused of resting upon bare assertion with respect to the equivocal state of the Bible, I will produce an example, and I will not pick and cull the Bible for the purpose. I will go fairly to the case: I will take the two first chapters of Genesis as they stand, and shew from thence the truth of what I say, that is, that the evidence does not warrant the belief that the Bible is the word of God.

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## CHAPTER I.

1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2. And the earth was without form, and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.

4. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from darkness.

5. And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night; and the evening and the morning were the first day.

6. ¶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament, from the waters which were above the firmament : and it was so.

8. And God called the firmament heaven ; and the evening and the morning were the second day.

9. ¶ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear : and it was so.

10. And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he seas, and God saw that it was good.

11. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb, yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth, and it was so.

12. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind : and God saw that it was good.

13. And the evening and the morning were the third day.

14. ¶ And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night : and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

15. And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth : and it was so.

16. And God made two great lights ; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night : he made the stars also.

17. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth,

18. And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness : and God saw that it was good.

19. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

20. And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

21. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind : and God saw that it was good.

22. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

23. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

24. ¶ And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth after his kind : and it was so.

25. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind : and God saw that it was good.

26. ¶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness : and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air. and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27. *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them.*

28. *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

29. ¶ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed : to you it shall be for meat.

30. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat : and it was so.

31. And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

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## CHAPTER II.

1. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

2. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it : because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made.

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4. ¶ These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were created ; in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens,



5. And every plant of the field, before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field, before it grew; for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, *and there was not a man to till the ground.*

6. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

7. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

8. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward of Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

9. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

10. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

11. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.

12. And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx-stone.

13. And the name of the second river is Gibon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

14. And the name of the third river is Heddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

15. And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it.

16. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.

18. ¶ And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him an help meet for him.

19. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

20. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

21. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon

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Adam, and he slept ; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof.

22. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23. And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh ; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.

24. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife ; and they shall be one flesh.

25. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

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These two chapters are called the Mosaic account of the creation ; and we are told, nobody knows by whom, that Moses was instructed by God to write that account.

It has happened that every nation of people has been world-makers ; and each makes the world to begin his own way, as if they had all been brought up, as Hudibras says, to the trade. There are hundreds of different opinions and traditions how the world began. My business, however, in this place, is only with those two chapters.

I begin then by saying, that those two chapters, instead of containing, as has been believed, one continued account of the creation, written by Moses, contain two different and contradictory stories of a creation, made by two different persons, and written in two different styles of expression. The evidence that shews this is so clear when attended to without prejudice, that, did we meet with the same evidence in any Arabic or Chinese account of a creation, we should not hesitate in pronouncing it a forgery.

I proceed to distinguish the two stories from each other.

The first story begins at the first verse of the first chapter, and ends at the end of the third verse of the second chapter ; for the adverbial conjunction, **THUS**, with which the second chapter begins (as the reader will see), connects itself to the last verse of the first chapter, and those three verses belong to, and make the conclusion of the first story.

The second story begins at the fourth verse of the second chapter, and ends with that chapter. Those two stories have been confused into one, by cutting off the three last verses of the first story, and throwing them to the second chapter.

I go now to shew that those stories have been written by two different persons.

From the first verse of the first chapter to the end of the third verse of the second chapter, which makes the whole of the first story, the word **GOD** is used without any epithet or additional word conjoined with it, as the reader will see: and this style of expression is invariably used throughout the whole of this story, and is repeated no less than thirty-five times, viz. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and the spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, and God said, let there be light, and God saw the light, &c. &c."

But immediately from the beginning of the fourth verse of the second chapter, where the second story begins, the style of expression is always the *Lord God*, and this style of expression is invariably used to the end of the chapter, and is repeated eleven times; in the one it is always *God*, and never the *Lord God*; in the other it is always the *Lord God*, and never *God*. The first story contains thirty-four verses, and repeats the single word *God* thirty-five times. The second story contains twenty-two verses, and repeats the compound word *Lord-God* eleven times; this difference of style, so often repeated, and so uniformly continued, shews, that those two chapters, containing two different stories, are written by different persons: it is the same in all the different editions of the Bible, in all the languages I have seen.

Having thus shewn, from the difference of style, that those two chapters divided, as they properly divide themselves, at the end of the third verse of the second chapter, are the work of two different persons, I come to shew, from the contradictory matters they contain, that they cannot be the work of one person, and are two different stories.

It is impossible, unless the writer was a lunatic, without memory, that one and the same person could say, as is said in the 27th and 28th verses of the first chapter—"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them: and God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth on the face of the earth." It is, I say, impossible that the same person, who said this, could afterwards say, as is said in the second chapter, ver. 5, *and there was not a man to till the ground*; and then proceed in the 7th verse to give another account of the making a man for

the first time, and afterwards of the making a woman out of his rib.

Again, one and the same person could not write, as is written in the 29th verse of the first chapter; "Behold I (God) have given you every herb bearing seed, which is on the face of all the earth; and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree bearing seed, to you it shall be for meat," and afterwards say, as is said in the second chapter, that the Lord-God planted a tree in the midst of a garden, and forbad man to eat thereof.

Again, one and the same person could not say, "*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, and on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made;*" and shortly after set the Creator to work again, to plant a garden, to make a man and a woman, &c. as is done in the second chapter.

Here are evidently two different stories contradicting each other.—According to the first, the two sexes, the male and the female, were made at the same time. According to the second, they were made at different times: the man first, the woman afterwards. According to the first story, they were to have dominion over all the earth. According to the second, their dominion was limited to a garden. How large a garden it could be, that one man and one woman could dress and keep in order, I leave to the prosecutor, the judge, the jury, and Mr. Erskine, to determine.

The story of the talking serpent, and its tête-a-tête with Eve: the doleful adventure, called the *Fall of Man*: and how he was turned out of this fine garden, and how the garden was afterwards locked up and guarded by a flaming sword (if any one can tell what a flaming sword is), belong altogether to the second story. They have no connection with the first story. According to the first there was no garden of Eden: no forbidden tree: the scene was the whole earth, and the fruit of all trees was allowed to be eaten.

In giving this example of the strange state of the Bible, it cannot be said I have gone out of my way to seek it, for I have taken the beginning of the book; nor can it be said I have made more of it, than it makes of itself. That there are two stories is as visible to the eye, when attended to, as that there are two chapters, and that they have been written by different persons, nobody knows by whom. If this, then, is the strange condition the beginning of the Bible is in, it

leads to a just suspicion, that the other parts are no better, and consequently it becomes every man's duty to examine the case. I have done it for myself, and am satisfied that the Bible is *fabulous*.

Perhaps I shall be told in the cant-language of the day, as I have often been told by the Bishop of Llandaff and others of the great and laudable pains, that many pious and learned men have taken to explain the obscure, and reconcile the contradictory, or as they say, the *seemingly contradictory* passages of the Bible. It is because the Bible needs such an undertaking, that is one of the first causes to suspect it is NOT the word of God: this single reflection, when carried home to the mind, is in itself a volume.

What! does not the Creator of the Universe, the Fountain of all Wisdom, the Origin of all Science, the Author of all Knowledge, the God of Order and of Harmony, know how to write? When we contemplate the vast economy of the creation; when we behold the unerring regularity of the visible solar system, the perfection with which all its several parts revolve, and by corresponding assemblage, form a whole;—when we launch our eye into the boundless ocean of space, and see ourselves surrounded by innumerable worlds, not one of which varies from its appointed place—when we trace the power of a Creator, from a mite to an elephant; from an atom to an universe; can we suppose that the mind that could conceive such a design, and the power that executed it with incomparable perfection, cannot write without inconsistency; or that a book so written can be the work of such a power? The writings of Thomas Paine, even of Thomas Paine, need no commentator to explain, expound, arrange, and re-arrange their several parts, to render them intelligible—he can relate a fact, or write an essay, without forgetting in one page what he has written in another; certainly then, did the God of all perfection condescend to write or dictate a book, that book would be as perfect as himself is perfect: the Bible is not so, and it is confessedly not so, by the attempts to amend it.

Perhaps I shall be told, that though I have produced one instance, I cannot produce another of equal force. One is sufficient to call in question the genuineness or authenticity of any book that pretends to be the word of God; for such a book would, as before said, be as perfect as its author is perfect.

I will, however, advance only four chapters further into

the book of Genesis, and produce another example that is sufficient to invalidate the story to which it belongs.

We have all heard of Noah's Flood; and it is impossible to think of the whole human race, men, women, children, and infants (except one family) deliberately drowning, without feeling a painful sensation; that heart must be a heart of flint that can contemplate such a scene with tranquillity. There is nothing in the ancient mythology, nor in the religion of any people we know of upon the globe, that records a sentence of their God, or of their Gods, so tremendously severe and merciless. If the story be not true, we blasphemously dishonour God by believing it, and still more so, in forcing, by laws and penalties, that belief upon others. I go now to shew from the face of the story, that it carries the evidence of not being true.

I know not if the Judge, the jury, and Mr. Erskine, who tried and convicted Williams, ever read the Bible, or know any thing of its contents, and therefore I will state the case precisely.

There were no such people as Jews or Israelites, in the time that Noah is said to have lived, and consequently there was no such law as that which is called the Jewish or Mosaic Law. It is, according to the Bible, more than six hundred years from the time the flood is said to have happened, to the time of Moses, and consequently the time the flood is said to have happened, was more than six hundred years prior to the law, called the Law of Moses, even admitting Moses to have been the giver of that law, of which there is great cause to doubt.

We have here two different epochs, or points of time; that of the flood, and that of the law of Moses; the former more than six hundred years prior to the latter. But the maker of the story of the flood, whoever he was, has betrayed himself by blundering, for he has reversed the order of the times. He has told the story, as if the law of Moses was prior to the flood; for he has made God to say to Noah, Genesis, chap. vii. ver. 2, "Of every clean beast, thou shalt take unto thee by sevens, male and his female, and of beasts that are *not clean* by two, the male and his female." This is the Mosaic law, and could only be said after that law was given, not before. There was no such things as beasts clean and unclean in the time of Noah—it is no where said they were created so. They were only *declared* to be so, as *meats*, by the Mosaic law, and that to the Jews only, and there was no

such people as Jews in the time of Noah. This is the blundering condition in which this strange story stands.

When we reflect on a sentence so tremendously severe, as that of consigning the whole human race, eight persons excepted, to deliberate drowning; a sentence, which represents the Creator in a more merciless character than any of those whom we call Pagans, ever represented the Creator to be, under the figure of any of their deities, we ought at least to suspend our belief of it, on a comparison of the beneficent character of the Creator, with the tremendous severity of the sentence; but when we see the story told with such an evident contradiction of circumstances, we ought to set it down for nothing better than a Jewish fable, told by nobody knows whom, and nobody knows when.

It is a relief to the genuine and sensible soul of man to find the story unfounded. It frees us from two painful sensations at once; that of having hard thoughts of the Creator, on account of the severity of the sentence; and that of sympathising in the horrid tragedy of a drowning world. He who cannot feel the force of what I mean, is not, in my estimation of character, worthy the name of a human being.

I have just said there is great cause to doubt, if the law, called the law of Moses, was given by Moses; the books, called books of Moses, which contain among other things, what is called the Mosaic law, are put in front of the Bible, in the manner of a constitution, with a history annexed to it. Had these books been written by Moses, they would undoubtedly have been the oldest books in the Bible, and entitled to be placed first, and the law and the history they contain, would be frequently referred to in the books that follow; but this is not the case. From the time of Othniel, the first of the judges (Judges, chap. iii. ver. 9.) to the end of the book of Judges, which contains a period of four hundred and ten years, this law, and those books, were not in practice, nor known among the Jews, nor are they so much as alluded to throughout the whole of that period. And if the reader will examine the 22d and 23d chapters of 2d book of Kings, and 34th chapter 2d Chron. he will find, that no such law, nor any such books were known in the time of the Jewish monarchy, and that the Jews were Pagans during the whole of that time, and of their judges.

The first time the law, called the law of Moses, made its appearance, was in the time of Josiah, about a thousand years after Moses was dead, it is then said to have been

found by accident. The account of this finding, or pretended finding, is given, 2d Chron. chap. xxxiv. ver. 14, 15, 16, 18: "Hilkiah the priest *found* the book of the law of the Lord, given by Moses, and Hilkiah answered and said, to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord, and Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan, and Shaphan carried the book to the king, and Shaphan told the king (Josiah) saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book."

In consequence of this finding, which much resembles that of poor Chatterton finding manuscript poems of Rowley the Monk, in the Cathedral church at Bristol, or the late finding of manuscripts of Shakspeare in an old chest, (two well known frauds) Josiah abolished the Pagan religion of the Jews, massacred all the Pagan priests, though he himself had been a Pagan, as the reader will see in the 23d chap. 2d Kings, and thus established in blood, the law that is there called the law of Moses, and instituted a passover in commemoration thereof. The 22d ver. speaking of this passover, says, "Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges, that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor the kings of Judah;" and the 25th ver. in speaking of this priest-killing Josiah, says, "*Like unto him there was no king before him*, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; *neither after him arose there any like him.*" This verse, like the former one, is a general declaration against all the preceding kings without exception. It is also a declaration against all that reigned after him, of which there were four, the whole time of whose reigning make but twenty-two years and six months, before the Jews were entirely broken up as a nation and their monarchy destroyed. It is therefore evident that the law, called the law of Moses, of which the Jews talk so much, was promulgated and established only in the latter time of the Jewish monarchy; and it is very remarkable, that no sooner had they established it than they were a destroyed people, as if they were punished for acting an imposition and affixing the name of the Lord to it, and massacreing their former priests under the pretence of religion. The sum of the history of the Jews is this—they continued to be a nation about a thousand years, they then established a law, which they called the *law of the Lord given by Moses*, and were destroyed. This is not opinion, but historical evidence.



Levi the Jew, who has written an answer to the *Age of Reason*, gives a strange account of the law called the law of Moses.

In speaking of the story of the sun and moon standing still, that the Israelites might cut the throats of all their enemies, and hang all their kings, as told in Joshua, chap. x. he says, "There is also another proof of the reality of this miracle, which is, the appeal that the author of the book of Joshua makes to the book of Jasher,—*'Is not this written in the book of Jasher?'* Hence," continues Levi, "it is manifest that the book commonly called the book of Jasher, existed and was well known at the time the book of Joshua was written; and pray, Sir," continues Levi, "what book do you think this was? *why, no other than the law of Moses!*" Levi, like the Bishop of Llandaff, and many other guess-work commentators, either forgets or does not know what there is in one part of the Bible, when he is giving his opinion upon another part.

I did not, however, expect to find so much ignorance in a Jew with respect to the history of his nation, though I might not be surprised at it in a Bishop. If Levi will look into the account given in the first chap. 2d book of Sam. of the Amalakite slaying Saul, and bringing the crown and bracelets to David, he will find the following recital, ver. 15, 17, 18: "And David called one of the young men, and said, go near and fall upon him (the Amalakite), and he smote him that he died: and David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son; also he bad them teach the children the use of the bow;—*behold it is written in the book of Jasher.*" If the book of Jasher were what Levi calls it, the law of Moses, written by Moses, it is not possible that any thing that David said or did could be written in that law, since Moses died more than five hundred years before David was born: and on the other hand, admitting the book of Jasher to be the law called the law of Moses, that law must have been written more than five hundred years after Moses was dead, or it could not relate any thing said or done by David. Levi may take which of these cases he pleases, for both are against him.

I am not going in the course of this letter to write a commentary on the Bible. The two instances I have produced, and which are taken from the beginning of the Bible, shew the necessity of examining it. It is a book that has been read more, and examined less, than any book that ever existed. Had it come to us an Arabic or Chinese book, and

said to have been a sacred book by the people from whom it came, no apology would have been made for the confused and disorderly state it is in. The tales it relates of the Creator would have been censured, and our pity been excited for those who believed them. We should have vindicated the goodness of God against such a book, and preached up the disbelief of it out of reverence to him. Why then do we not act as honourably by the Creator in the one case as we would do in the other. As a Chinese book we would have examined it;—ought we not then to examine it as a Jewish book? The Chinese are a people who have all the appearance of far greater antiquity than the Jews, and in point of permanency there is no comparison. They are also a people of mild manners and of good morals, except where they have been corrupted by European commerce. Yet we take the word of a restless bloody-minded people, as the Jews of Palestine were, when we would reject the same authority from a better people. We ought to see it is habit and prejudice that have prevented people from examining the Bible. Those of the church of England call it holy, because the Jews called it so, and because custom and certain acts of parliament call it so, and they read it from custom. Dissenters read it for the purpose of doctrinal controversy, and are very fertile in discoveries and inventions. But none of them read it for the pure purpose of information, and of rendering justice to the Creator, by examining if the evidence it contains warrants the belief of its being what it is called. Instead of doing this, they take it blindfolded, and will have it to be the word of God whether it be so or not. For my own part, my belief in the perfection of the Deity will not permit me to believe, that a book so manifestly obscure, disorderly, and contradictory, can be his work. I can write a better book myself. This disbelief in me proceeds from my belief in the Creator. I cannot pin my faith upon the *say so* of Hilkiah the priest, who said he found it, or any part of it; nor upon Shaphan the scribe, nor upon any priest, nor any scribe or man of the law of the present day.

As to acts of parliament, there are some that say there are witches and wizards; and the persons who made those acts (it was in the time of James the First), made also some acts which call the Bible the Holy Scriptures, or Word of God. But acts of parliament decide nothing with respect to God; and as these acts of parliament makers were wrong with respect to witches and wizards, they may also be wrong

with respect to the book in question. It is therefore necessary that the book be examined; it is our duty to examine it; and to suppress the right of examination is sinful in any government, or in any Judge or jury. The Bible makes God to say to Moses, Deut. chap. vii. ver. 2, "And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them, thou shalt make no covenant with them, *nor shew mercy unto them.*" Not all the priests, nor scribes, nor tribunals in the world, nor all the authority of man, shall make me believe that God ever gave such a *Robespierian precept* as that of shewing *no mercy*; and consequently it is impossible that I, or any person who believes as reverentially of the Creator as I do, can believe such a book to be the word of God.

There have been, and still are, those who, whilst they *profess* to believe the Bible to be the word of God, affect to turn it into ridicule. Taking their profession and conduct together, they act blasphemously; because they act as if *God himself* was not to be believed. The case is exceedingly different with respect to the *Age of Reason*. That book is written to shew from the Bible itself, that there is abundant matter to suspect it is not the word of God, and that we have been imposed upon, first by Jews, and afterwards by priests and commentators.

Not one of those who have attempted to write answers to the *Age of Reason*, have taken the ground upon which only an answer could be written. The case in question is not upon any point of doctrine, but altogether upon a matter of fact. Is the book called the Bible the word of God, or is it not? If it can be proved to be so, it ought to be believed as such; if not, it ought not to be believed as such. This is the true state of the case. The *Age of Reason* produces evidence to shew, and I have in this letter produced additional evidence, that it is not the word of God. Those who take the contrary side, should prove that it is. But this they have not done, nor attempted to do, and consequently they have done nothing to the purpose.

The prosecutors of Williams have shrunk from the point, as the answerers have done. They have availed themselves of prejudice instead of proof. If a writing was produced in a court of judicature, said to be the writing of a certain person, and upon the reality or non-reality of which, some matter at issue depended, the point to be proved would be, that such writing was the writing of such person. Or if the issue depended upon certain words, which some certain per-

son was said to have spoken, the point to be proved would be, that such words were spoken by such person; and Mr. Erskine would contend the case upon this ground. A certain book is said to be the word of God. What is the proof that it is so? for upon this the whole depends; and if it cannot be proved to be so, the prosecution fails for want of evidence.

The prosecution against Williams charges him with publishing a book, entitled *The Age of Reason*, which, it says, is an impious, blasphemous pamphlet, tending to ridicule and bring into contempt the Holy Scriptures. Nothing is more easy than to find abusive words, and English prosecutions are famous for this species of vulgarity. The charge, however, is sophistical; for the charge, as growing out of the pamphlet, should have stated, not as it now states, to ridicule and bring into contempt the Holy Scriptures, but to shew, that the books called the Holy Scriptures are not the Holy Scriptures. It is one thing if I ridicule a work as being written by a certain person; but it is quite a different thing if I write to prove that such work was not written by such person. In the first case, I attack the person through the work; in the other case, I defend the honour of the person against the work. This is what the *Age of Reason* does, and consequently the charge in the indictment is sophistically stated. Every one will admit, that if the Bible be *not* the word of God, we err in believing it to be his word, and ought not to believe it. Certainly, then, the ground the prosecution should take, would be to prove that the Bible is in fact what it is called. But this the prosecution has not done, and cannot do.

In all cases the prior fact must be proved, before the subsequent facts can be admitted in evidence. In a prosecution for adultery, the fact of marriage, which is the prior fact, must be proved before the facts to prove adultery can be received. If the fact of marriage cannot be proved, adultery cannot be proved; and if the prosecution cannot prove the Bible to be the word of God, the charge of blasphemy is visionary and groundless.

In Turkey they might prove, if the case happened, that a certain book was bought of a certain bookseller, and that the said book was written against the Koran. In Spain and Portugal they might prove, that a certain book was bought of a certain bookseller, and that the said book was written against the infallibility of the Pope. Under the ancient mythology they might have proved, that a certain writing was bought of a certain person, and that the said writing

was written against the belief of a plurality of gods, and in the support of the belief of one God. Socrates was condemned for a work of this kind.

All these are but subsequent facts, and amount to nothing, unless the prior facts be proved. The prior fact, with respect to the first case, is, Is the Koran the word of God? With respect to the second, Is the infallibility of the Pope a truth? With respect to the third, Is the belief of a plurality of gods a true belief? and in like manner with respect to the present prosecution, Is the book called the Bible the word of God? If the present prosecution prove no more than could be proved in any or all of these cases, it proves only as they do, or as an inquisition would prove; and, in this view of the case, the prosecutors ought at least to leave off reviling that infernal institution, the inquisition. The prosecution, however, though it may injure the individual, may promote the cause of truth; because the manner in which it has been conducted, appears a confession to the world, that there is no evidence to prove that the Bible is the word of God. On what authority then do we believe the many strange stories that the Bible tells of God.

This prosecution has been carried on through the medium of what is called a special jury, and the whole of a special jury is nominated by the master of the crown office. Mr. Erskine vaunts himself upon the bill he brought into parliament with respect to trials, for what the government-party calls libels. But if in crown prosecutions, the master of the crown office is to continue to appoint the whole special jury, which he does by nominating the forty-eight persons from which the solicitor of each party is to strike out twelve, Mr. Erskine's bill is only vapour and smoke. The root of the grievance lies in the manner of forming the jury, and to this Mr. Erskine's bill applies no remedy.

When the trial of Williams came on, only eleven of the special jurymen appeared, and the trial was adjourned. In cases where the whole number do not appear, it is customary to make up the deficiency by taking jurymen from persons present in court. This, in the law term, is called a *Tales*. Why was not this done in this case? Reason will suggest, that they did not choose to depend on a man accidentally taken. When the trial recommenced, the whole of the special jury appeared, and Williams was convicted: it is folly to contend a cause where the whole jury is nominated by one of the parties. I will relate a recent case that

explains a great deal with respect to special juries in crown prosecutions.

On the trial of Lambert and others, printers and proprietors of the *Morning Chronicle*, for a libel, a special jury was struck, on the prayer of the Attorney-General, who used to be called *Diabolus Regis*, or King's Devil.

Only seven or eight of the special jury appeared, and the Attorney-General not praying a *Tales*, the trial stood over to a future day; when it was to be brought on a second time, the Attorney-General prayed for a new special jury, but as this was not admissible, the original special jury was summoned. Only eight of them appeared, on which the Attorney-General said, "As I cannot, on a second trial, have a special jury, I will pray a *Tales*." Four persons were then taken from the persons present in court, and added to the eight special jurymen. The jury went out at two o'clock to consult on their verdict, and the Judge (Kenyon) understanding they were divided, and likely to be some time in making up their minds, retired from the bench, and went home. At seven the jury went, attended by an officer of the court, to the Judge's house, and delivered a verdict, "*Guilty of publishing, but with no malicious intention.*" The Judge said, "*I cannot record this verdict; it is no verdict at all.*" The jury withdrew, and after sitting in consultation till five in the morning, brought in a verdict, NOT GUILTY. Would this have been the case, had they been all special jurymen nominated by the Master of the Crown-office? This is one of the cases that ought to open the eyes of people with respect to the manner of forming special juries.

On the trial of Williams, the Judge prevented the counsel for the defendant proceeding in the defence. The prosecution had selected a number of passages from the *Age of Reason*, and inserted them in the indictment. The defending counsel was selecting other passages to shew, that the passages in the indictment were conclusions drawn from premises, and unfairly separated therefrom in the indictment. The Judge said, *he did not know how to act*; meaning thereby whether to let the counsel proceed in the defence or not, and asked the jury if they wished to hear the passages read which the defending counsel had selected. The jury said NO, and the defending counsel was in consequence silent. Mr. Erskine then, Falstaff like, having all the field to himself, and no enemy at hand, laid about him most heroically, and the jury found the defendant *guilty*. I know not

if Mr. Erskine ran out of court and hallooed, huzza for the Bible and the trial by jury.

Robespierre caused a decree to be passed during the trial of Brissot and others, that after a trial had lasted three days, (the whole of which time, in the case of Brissot, was taken up by the prosecuting party) the judge should ask the jury (who were then a packed jury) if they were satisfied? If the jury said YES, the trial ended, and the jury proceeded to give their verdict, without hearing the defence of the accused party. It needs no depth of wisdom to make an application of this case.

I will now state a case to shew that the trial of Williams is not a trial, according to Kenyon's own explanation of law.

On a late trial in London (*Selthens versus Hoossman*) on a policy of insurance, one of the jurymen, Mr. Dunnage, after hearing one side of the case, and without hearing the other side, got up and said, *it was as legal a policy of insurance as ever was written*. The Judge, who was the same as presided on the trial of Williams, replied, *that it was a great misfortune when any gentleman of the jury makes up his mind on a cause before it was finished*. Mr. Erskine, who in that case was counsel for the defendant (in this he was against the defendant) cried out, *it is worse than a misfortune, it is a fault*. The Judge, in his address to the jury in summing up the evidence, expatiated upon, and explained the parts which the law assigned to the counsel on each side, to the witnesses, and to the Judge, and said, "*When all this was done, AND NOT UNTIL THEN, it was the business of the jury to declare what the justice of the case was; and that it was extremely rash and imprudent in any man to draw a conclusion before all the premises were laid before them, upon which that conclusion was to be grounded*." According then to Kenyon's own doctrine, the trial of Williams is an irregular trial, the verdict an irregular verdict, and as such is not recordable.

As to special juries, they are but modern; and were instituted for the purpose of determining cases at law between merchants; because, as the method of keeping merchants' accounts differs from that of common tradesmen, and their business, by lying much in foreign bills of exchange, insurance, &c., is of a different description to that of common tradesmen, it might happen that a common jury might not be competent to form a judgment. The law that instituted special juries, makes it necessary that the jurors be merchants, or of the degree of *squires*. A special jury in London is generally composed of merchants; and in the

country of men called country squires, that is, fox-hunters, or men qualified to hunt foxes. The one may decide very well upon a case of pounds, shillings, and pence, or of the counting-house; and the other of the jockey-club or the chase. But who would not laugh, that because such men can decide such cases, they can also be jurors upon theology. Talk with some London merchants about scripture, and they will understand you mean *scrip*, and tell you how much it is worth at the Stock Exchange. Ask them about theology, and they will say, they know of no such gentleman upon Change. Tell some country squires of the sun and moon standing still, the one on the top of a hill and the other in a valley, and they will swear it is a lie of one's own making. Tell them that God Almighty ordered a man to make a cake and bake it with a t—d and eat it, and they will say it is one of Dean Swift's blackguard stories. Tell them it is in the Bible, and they will lay a bowl of punch it is not, and leave it to the parson of the parish to decide. Ask *them* also about theology, and they will say, they know of no such a one on the turf. An appeal to such juries serves to bring the Bible into more ridicule than any thing the author of the *Age of Reason* has written: and the manner in which the trial has been conducted shews, that the prosecutor dares not come to the point, nor meet the defence of the defendant. But all other cases apart, on what ground of right, otherwise than on the right assumed by an inquisition, do such prosecutions stand? Religion is a private affair between every man and his Maker, and no tribunal or third party has a right to interfere between them. It is not properly a thing of this world; it is only practised in this world; but its object is in a future world; and it is no otherwise an object of just laws, than for the purpose of protecting the equal rights of all, however various their beliefs may be. If one man chuse to believe the book called the Bible to be the word of God, and another, from a convinced idea of the purity and perfection of God, compared with the contradictions the book contains—from the lasciviousness of some of its stories, like that of Lot getting drunk and debauching his two daughters, which is not spoken of as a crime, and for which the most absurd apologies are made—from the immorality of some of its precepts, like that of shewing no mercy—and from the total want of evidence on the case, thinks he ought not to believe it to be the word of God, each of them has an equal right; and if the one has a right to give his reasons for believing it to be so, the other has an equal right to give his reasons for believing the *contrary*. Any thing that goes



beyond this rule is an inquisition. Mr. Erskine talks of his moral education; Mr. Erskine is very little acquainted with theological subjects, if he does not know there is such a thing as a *sincere* and *religious* belief that the Bible is not the word of God. This is my belief; it is the belief of thousands far more learned than Mr. Erskine; and it is a belief that is every day increasing. It is not infidelity, as Mr. Erskine prophanely and abusively calls it: it is the direct reverse of infidelity. It is a pure religious belief, founded on the idea of the perfection of the Creator. If the Bible be the word of God, it needs not the wretched aid of prosecutions to support it; and you might with as much propriety make a law to protect the sunshine, as to protect the Bible, if the Bible, like the sun, be the work of God. We see that God takes good care of the Creation he has made. He suffers no part of it to be extinguished; and he will take the same care of his word, if he ever *gave one*. But men ought to be reverentially careful and suspicious how they ascribe books to him as his *word*, which from this confused condition would dishonour a common scribbler, and against which there is abundant evidence, and every cause to suspect imposition. Leave then the Bible to itself. God will take care of it if he has any thing to do with it, as he takes care of the sun and the moon, which need not your laws for their better protection. As the two instances I have produced in the beginning of this letter, from the book of Genesis, the one respecting the account called the Mosaic account of the Creation, the other of the Flood, sufficiently shew the necessity of examining the Bible, in order to ascertain what degree of evidence there is for receiving or rejecting it as a sacred book; I shall not add more upon that subject; but in order to shew Mr. Erskine that there are religious establishments for public worship which make no profession of faith of the books called holy scriptures, nor admit of priests, I will conclude with an account of a society lately began in Paris, and which is very rapidly extending itself.

The society takes the name of Theophilantropes, which would be rendered in English by the word Theophilanthropists, a word compounded of three Greek words, signifying God, Love, and Man. The explanation given to this word is, *Lovers of God and Man*, or *Adorers of God and Friends of Man*, *adorateurs de Dieu et amis des hommes*. The society proposes to publish each year a volume, entitled *Armée Religieuse des Theophilantropes*, Year religious of the Theophilanthropists; the first volume is just published, entitled

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## YEAR RELIGIOUS OF THE THEOPHILANTHROPISTS,

OR,

*ADORERS OF GOD, AND FRIENDS OF MAN;*

Being a collection of the discourses, lectures, hymns, and canticles, for all the religious and moral festivals of the Theophilanthropists during the course of the year, whether in their public temples or in their private families, published by the author of the Manuel of the Theophilanthropists.

The volume of this year, which is the first, contains 214 pages duodecimo.

The following is the table of contents :

1. Precise history of the Theophilanthropists.
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8. Extracts from divers moralists upon the nature of God, and upon the physical proofs of his existence.
9. Canticle, No. IV. Let us bless at our waking the God who gives us light.
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21. Canticle, No. VIII. Every thing celebrates the glory of the eternal.
22. Continuation of the moral thoughts of Chinese authors.
23. Invocation for the country.
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25. Invocation, Creator of man.
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27. Extracts from the book of the Moral Universal, upon happiness.
28. Ode, No. X. Supreme Author of Nature.

## I N T R O D U C T I O N,

ENTITLED

### PRECISE HISTORY OF THE THEOPHILANTHROPISTS.

“ Towards the month of Vendimiaire, of the year 5, (Sept. 1796) there appeared at Paris, a small work, entitled, Manuel of the Theoantrophiles, since called, for the sake of easier pronounciation, Theophilantropes (Theophilanthropists) published by C——.

“ The worship set forth in this Manuel, of which the origin is from the beginning of the world, was then professed by some families in the silence of domestic life. But scarcely was the Manuel published, than some persons, respectable for their knowledge and their manners, saw, in the formation of a society open to the public, an easy method of spreading moral religion, and of leading, by degrees, great numbers to the knowledge thereof, who appear to have forgotten it. This consideration ought of itself not to leave indifferent those persons who know that morality and religion, which is the most solid support thereof, are necessary to the maintenance of society as well as to the happiness of the individual. These considerations determined the families of the Theophilanthropists to unite publicly for the exercise of their worship.

“ The first society of this kind opened in the month of Nivose, year 5, (Jan. 1797) in the street Dennis, No. 34, corner of Lombard-street. The care of conducting this society was undertaken by five fathers of families. They adopted the Manuel of the Theophilanthropists. They agreed to hold their days of public worship on the days corresponding to Sundays, but without making this a hindrance to other societies to choose such other day as they

thought more convenient. Soon after this, more societies were opened, of which some celebrate on the decadi (tenth day) and others on the Sunday: it was also resolved, that the committee should meet one hour each week for the purpose of preparing or examining the discourses and lectures proposed for the next general assembly. That the general assemblies should be called Fetes (festivals) religious and moral. That those festivals should be conducted in principle and form, in a manner, as not to be considered as the festivals of an exclusive worship; and that in recalling those who might not be attached to any particular worship, those festivals might also be attended as moral exercises by disciples of every sect, and consequently avoid, by scrupulous care, every thing that might make the society appear under the name of a sect. The society adopts neither *rites* nor *priesthood*, and it will never lose sight of the resolution not to advance any thing, as a society, inconvenient to any sect or sects, in any time or country, and under any government.

“ It will be seen, that it is so much the more easy for the society to keep within this circle, because, that the dogmas of the Theophilanthropists are those upon which all the sects have agreed, that their moral is that upon which there has never been the least dissent; and that the name they have taken, expresses the double end of all the sects, that of leading to the *adoration of God and love of man*.

“ The Theophilanthropists do not call themselves the disciples of such or such a man. They avail themselves of the wise precepts that have been transmitted by writers of all countries and in all ages. The reader will find in the discourses, lectures, hymns, and canticles, which the Theophilanthropists have adopted for their religious and moral festivals, and which they present under the title of *Armée Religieuse*, extracts from moralists, ancient and modern, divested of maxims too severe, or too loosely conceived, or contrary to piety, whether towards God or towards man.”

Next follow the dogmas of the Theophilanthropists, or things they profess to believe. These are but two, and are thus expressed, *les Theophilanthropes croient à l'existence de Dieu et à l'immortalité de l'ame*. The Theophilanthropists believe in the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul.

The Manuel of the Theophilanthropists, a small volume of sixty pages, duodecimo, is published separately, as is

also their catechism, which is of the same size. The principles of the Theophilanthropists are the same as those published in the first part of the *Age of Reason* in 1793, and in the second part in 1795. The Theophilanthropists, as a society, are silent upon all the things they do not profess to believe, as the *sacredness* of the books called the Bible, &c. &c. They profess the immortality of the soul, but they are silent on the immortality of the body, or that which the church calls the resurrection. The author of the *Age of Reason* gives reasons for every thing he *disbelieves*, as well as for those he *believes*; and where this cannot be done with safety, the government is a despotism, and the church an inquisition.

It is more than three years since the first part of the *Age of Reason* was published, and more than a year and a half since the publication of the second part: the bishop of Llandaff undertook to write an answer to the second part; and it was not until after it was known that the author of the *Age of Reason* would reply to the bishop, that the prosecution against the book was set on foot; and which is said to be carried on by some clergy of the English church. If the bishop is one of them, and the object be to prevent an exposure of the numerous and gross errors he has committed in his work (and which he wrote when report said that Thomas Paine was dead), it is a confession that he feels the weakness of his cause, and finds himself unable to maintain it. In this case, he has given me a triumph I did not seek, and Mr. Erskine, the herald of the prosecution, has proclaimed it.

THOMAS PAINE.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON  
FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE PRESENT TIME  
BY  
JOHN HUTCHINGS  
OF THE BOSTON BAR  
IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I.  
BOSTON: PUBLISHED BY  
J. B. ALLEN, 1825.

A  
**DISCOURSE**

*Delivered to the Society of Theophilanthropists at Paris.*

RELIGION has two principal enemies, Fanaticism and Infidelity, or that which is called Atheism. The first requires to be combated by reason and morality, the other by natural philosophy.

The existence of a God is the first dogma of the Theophilanthropists. It is upon this subject that I solicit your attention : for though it has been often treated of, and that most sublimely, the subject is inexhaustible ; and there will always remain something to be said that has not been before advanced. I go therefore to open the subject, and to crave your attention to the end.

The universe is the Bible of a true Theophilanthropist. It is there that he reads of God. It is there that the proofs of his existence are to be sought and to be found. As to written or printed books, by whatever name they are called, they are the works of man's hands, and carry no evidence in themselves that God is the author of any of them. It must be in something that man could not make, that we must seek evidence for our belief, and that something is the universe ; the true Bible ; the inimitable word of God.

Contemplating the universe, the whole system of creation, in this point of light, we shall discover, that all that which is called natural philosophy is properly a divine study. It is the study of God through his works. It is the best study, by which we can arrive at a knowledge of his existence, and the only one by which we can gain a glimpse of his perfection.

Do we want to contemplate his power ? We see it in the immensity of the Creation. Do we want to contemplate his wisdom ? We see it in the unchangeable order by which

the incomprehensible WHOLE is governed. Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful. In fine, do we want to know what God is? Search not written or printed books, but the scripture called the *Creation*.

It has been the error of the schools to teach astronomy, and all the other sciences, and subjects of natural philosophy, as accomplishments only; whereas they should be taught theologically, or with reference to the Being who is the author of them; for all the principles of science are of divine origin. Man cannot make, or invent, or contrive principles. He can only discover them; and he ought to look through the discovery to the author.

When we examine an extraordinary piece of machinery, an astonishing pile of architecture, a well executed statue, or an highly finished painting, where life and action are imitated, and habit only prevents our mistaking a surface of light and shade for cubical solidity, our ideas are naturally led to think of the extensive genius and talents of the artist. When we study the elements of geometry, we think of Euclid. When we speak of gravitation, we think of Newton. How then is it, that when we study the works of God in the Creation, we stop short, and do not think of God? It is from the error of the schools in having taught those subjects as accomplishments only, and thereby separated the study of them from the Being who is the author of them.

The schools have made the study of theology to consist in the study of opinions in written or printed books; whereas theology should be studied in the works or book of the Creation. The study of theology in books of opinions has often produced fanaticism, rancour, and cruelty of temper; and from hence have proceeded the numerous persecutions, the fanatical quarrels, the religious burnings and massacres, that have desolated Europe. But the study of theology in the works of the Creation produces a direct contrary effect. The mind becomes at once enlightened and serene; a copy of the scene it beholds; information and adoration go hand in hand; and all the social faculties become enlarged.

The evil that has resulted from the error of the schools, in teaching natural philosophy as an accomplishment only,



has been that of generating in the pupils a species of Atheism. Instead of looking through the works of the Creation to the Creator himself, they stop short, and employ the knowledge they acquire to create doubts of his existence. They labour with studied ingenuity to ascribe every thing they behold to innate properties of matter; and jump over all the rest by saying, that matter is eternal.

Let us examine this subject; it is worth examining; for if we examine it through all its cases, the result will be, that the existence of a superior cause, or that which man calls God, will be discoverable by philosophical principles.

In the first place, admitting matter to have properties, as we see it has, the question still remains, how came matter by those properties? To this they will answer, that matter possessed those properties eternally. This is not solution, but assertion; and to deny it is equally as impossible of proof as to assert it. It is then necessary to go further; and therefore I say, if there exists a circumstance that is *not* a property of matter, and without which the universe, or, to speak in a limited degree, the solar system, composed of planets and a sun, could not exist a moment; all the arguments of Atheism, drawn from properties of matter, and applied to account for the universe, will be overthrown, and the existence of a superior cause, or that which man calls God, becomes discoverable, as is before said, by natural philosophy.

I go now to shew that such a circumstance exists, and what it is:

The universe is composed of matter, and, as a system, is sustained by motion. Motion is *not a property* of matter, and without this motion, the solar system could not exist. Were motion a property of matter, that undiscovered and undiscoverable thing called perpetual motion would establish itself. It is because motion is not a property of matter that perpetual motion is an impossibility in the hand of every being but that of the Creator of motion. When the pretenders to Atheism can produce perpetual motion, and not till then, they may expect to be credited.

The natural state of matter, as to place, is a state of rest. Motion, or change of place, is the effect of an external cause acting upon matter. As to that faculty of matter that is called gravitation, it is the influence which two or more bodies have reciprocally on each other to unite and be at rest. Every thing which has hitherto been discovered with

E

respect to the motion of the planets in the system, relates only to the laws by which motion acts, and not to the cause of motion. Gravitation, so far from being the cause of motion to the planets that compose the solar system, would be the destruction of the solar system, were revolutionary motion to cease: for as the action of spinning upholds a top, the revolutionary motion upholds the planets in their orbits, and prevents them from gravitating and forming one mass with the sun. In one sense of the word, philosophy knows, and Atheism says, that matter is in perpetual motion. But the motion here meant refers to the *state* of matter, and that only on the surface of the earth. It is either decomposition, which is continually destroying the form of bodies of matter, or re-composition, which renews that matter in the same or another form, as the decomposition of animal or vegetable substances enter into the composition of other bodies. But the motion that upholds the solar system is of an entire different kind, and is not a property of matter. It operates also to an entire different effect. It operates to *perpetual preservation*, and to prevent *any change* in the state of the system.

Giving then to matter all the properties which philosophy knows it has, or all that Atheism ascribes to it, and can prove, and even supposing matter to be eternal, it will not account for the system of the universe, or of the solar system, because it will not account for motion, and it is motion that preserves it. When, therefore, we discover a circumstance of such immense importance, that without it the universe could not exist, and for which neither matter, nor any, nor all the properties of matter can account; we are by necessity forced into the rational and comfortable belief of the existence of a cause superior to matter, and that cause man calls God.

As to that which is called nature, it is no other than the laws by which motion and action of every kind, with respect to unintelligible matter, is regulated. And when we speak of looking through nature up to nature's God, we speak philosophically the same rational language as when we speak of looking through human laws up to the power that ordained them.

God is the power or first cause, nature is the law, and matter is the subject acted upon.

But infidelity, by ascribing every phenomenon to properties of matter, conceives a system for which it cannot account,

and yet it pretends to demonstration. It reasons from what it sees on the surface of the earth, but it does not carry itself on the solar system existing by motion. It sees upon the surface a perpetual decomposition and recomposition of matter. It sees that an oak produces an acorn, an acorn an oak, a bird an egg, an egg a bird, and so on. In things of this kind it sees something which it calls natural cause, but none of the causes it sees is the cause of that motion which preserves the solar system.

Let us contemplate this wonderful and stupendous system consisting of matter and existing by motion. It is not matter in a state of rest, nor in a state of decomposition or recomposition. It is matter systematized in perpetual orbicular or circular motion. As a system that motion is the life of it: as animation is life to an animal body, deprive the system of motion, and, as a system, it must expire. Who then breathed into the system the life of motion? What power impelled the planets to move, since motion is not a property of the matter of which they are composed? If we contemplate the immense velocity of this motion, our wonder becomes increased, and our adoration enlarges itself in the same proportion. To instance only one of the planets, that of the earth we inhabit, its distance from the sun, the centre of the orbits of all the planets, is, according to observations of the transit of the planet Venus, about one hundred million miles; consequently, the diameter of the orbit or circle in which the earth moves round the sun, is double that distance; and the measure of the circumference of the orbit, taken as three times its diameter, is six hundred million miles. The earth performs this voyage in 365 days and some hours, and consequently, moves at the rate of more than one million six hundred thousand miles every twenty-four hours.

Where will infidelity, where will Atheism find cause for this astonishing velocity of motion, never ceasing, never varying, and which is the preservation of the earth in its orbit? It is not by reasoning from an acorn to an oak, or from any change in the state of matter on the surface of the earth, that this can be accounted for. Its cause is not to be found in matter, nor in any thing we call nature. The Atheist who affects to reason, and the fanatic who rejects reason, plunge themselves alike into inextricable difficulties. The one perverts the sublime and enlightening study of natural philosophy into a deformity of absurdities by not

reasoning to the end. The other loses himself in the obscurity of metaphysical theories, and dishonours the Creator, by treating the study of his works with contempt. The one is a half-rational of whom there is some hope, the other a visionary to whom we must be charitable.

When at first thought we think of a Creator, our ideas appear to us undefined and confused; but if we reason philosophically, those ideas can be easily arranged and simplified. *It is a Being whose power is equal to his will.* Observe the nature of the will of man. It is of an infinite quality. We cannot conceive the possibility of limits to the will. Observe, on the other hand, how exceedingly limited is his power of acting compared with the nature of his will. Suppose the power equal to the will, and man would be a God. He would will himself eternal, and be so. He could will a creation and could make it. In this progressive reasoning, we see, in the nature of the will of man, half of that which we conceive in thinking of God; add the other half, and we have the whole idea of a being who could make the universe, and sustain it by perpetual motion; because he could create that motion.

We know nothing of the capacity of the will of animals, but we know a great deal of the difference of their powers. For example, how numerous are the degrees, and how immense is the difference of power, from a mite to a man. Since then every thing we see below us shews a progression of power, where is the difficulty in supposing that there is, at the *summit of all things*, a Being in whom an infinity of power unites with the infinity of the will. When this simple idea presents itself to our mind, we have the idea of a perfect being that man calls God.

It is comfortable to live under the belief of the existence of an infinitely protecting power; and it is an addition to that comfort to know, that such a belief is not a mere conceit of the imagination, as many of the theories that are called religious are; nor a belief founded only on tradition or received opinion, but is a belief deducible by the action of reason upon the things that compose the system of the universe; a belief arising out of visible facts: and so demonstrable is the truth of this belief, that if no such belief had existed, the persons who now controvert it, would have been the persons who would have produced and propagated it, because, by beginning to reason they would have been led on to reason progressively to the end, and thereby have

discovered that matter and all the properties it has, will not account for the system of the universe, and that there must necessarily be a superior cause.

It was the excess to which imaginary systems of religion had been carried, and the intolerance, persecutions, burnings, and massacres, they occasioned, that first induced certain persons to propagate infidelity; thinking, that upon the whole it was better not to believe at all, than to believe a multitude of things and complicated creeds, that occasioned so much mischief in the world. But those days are past; persecution has ceased, and the antidote then set up against it has no longer even the shadow of apology. We profess and we proclaim in peace, the pure, unmixed, comfortable, and rational belief of a God, as manifested to us in the universe. We do this without any apprehension of that belief being made a cause of persecution as other beliefs have been, or of suffering persecution ourselves. To God, and not to man, are all men to account for their belief.

It has been well observed at the first institution of this society, that the dogmas it professes to believe, are from the commencement of the world; that they are not novelties, but are confessedly the basis of all systems of religion, however numerous and contradictory they may be. All men in the outset of the religion they profess are Theophilanthropists. It is impossible to form any system of religion without building upon those principles, and therefore they are not sectarian principles, unless we suppose a sect composed of all the world.

I have said in the course of this discourse, that the study of natural philosophy is a divine study, because it is the study of the works of God in the Creation. If we consider theology upon this ground, what an extensive field of improvement in things both divine and human opens itself before us. All the principles of science are of divine origin. It was not man that invented the principles on which astronomy, and every branch of mathematics are founded and studied. It was not man that gave properties to the circle and the triangle. Those principles are eternal and immutable. We see in them the unchangeable nature of the Divinity. We see in them immortality, an immortality existing after the material figures that express those properties are dissolved in dust.

The society is at present in its infancy, and its means are small; but I wish to hold in view the subject I allude to,

and instead of teaching the philosophical branches of learning as ornamental accomplishments only, as they have hitherto been taught, to teach them in a manner that shall combine theological knowledge with scientific instruction ; to do this to the best advantage, some instruments will be necessary for the purpose of explanation, of which the society is not yet possessed. But as the views of the society extend to public good, as well to that of the individual, and as its principles can have no enemies, means may be devised to procure them.

If we unite to the present instruction, a series of lectures on the ground I have mentioned, we shall, in the first place, render theology the most delightful and entertaining of all studies. In the next place, we shall give scientific instruction to those who could not otherwise obtain it. The mechanic of every profession will there be taught the mathematical principles necessary to render him a proficient in his art. The cultivator will there see developed, the principles of vegetation ; while, at the same time, they will be led to see the hand of God in all these things.

# LETTER TO CAMILLE JORDAN,

ONE OF THE COUNCIL OF FIVE HUNDRED,

OCCASIONED BY HIS REPORT ON THE PRIESTS, PUBLIC  
WORSHIP, AND THE BELLS.

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[*The Publisher regrets that he has not been able to obtain a perfect Copy of this Letter ; the following is taken from the Courier of July 13, 1797, the Editor of which observes, "As the commencement of this Letter relates to Mr. PAINE's Opinions on the BIBLE, we are under the necessity, for very obvious reasons, of omitting it."*]

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IT is want of feeling to talk of priests and bells whilst so many infants are perishing in the hospitals, and aged and infirm poor in the streets, from the want of necessaries.—The abundance that France produces is sufficient for every want, if rightly applied ; but priests and bells, like articles of luxury, ought to be the least articles of consideration.

We talk of religion. Let us talk of truth ; for that which is not truth, is not worthy of religion.

We see different parts of the world overspread with different books, each of which, though contradictory to the other, is said, by its partizans, to be of divine origin, and is made a rule of faith and practice. In countries under despotie governments, where inquiry is always forbidden, the people are condemned to believe as they have been taught by their priests. This was for many centuries the case in France : but this link in the chain of slavery is happily broken by the revolution ; and, that it may never be rivetted again, let us employ a part of the liberty we enjoy in scrutinizing into the truth. Let us leave behind us some monument, that we have made the cause and honour of our Creator an object of our care. If we have been imposed upon by the terrors of government and the artifice of priests in matters of religion, let us do justice to our Creator by examining into the case. His name is too sacred to be affixed to any thing which is fabulous ; and it is our duty to inquire

whether we believe, or encourage the people to believe, in fables or in facts.

It would be a project worthy the situation we are in, to invite an inquiry of this kind. We have committees for various objects; and, among others, a committee for bells. We have institutions, academies, and societies for various purposes; but we have none for inquiring into historical truth in matters of religious concern.

I have already spoken of the Quakers—that they have no priests, no bells—and that they are remarkable for their care of the poor of their society. They are equally as remarkable for the education of their children. I am a descendant of a family of that profession; my father was a Quaker; and I presume I may be admitted an evidence of what I assert. The seeds of good principles, and the literary means of advancement in the world, are laid in early life. Instead, therefore, of consuming the substance of the nation upon priests, whose life at best is a life of idleness, let us think of providing for the education of those who have not the means of doing it themselves. One good schoolmaster is of more use than a hundred priests.

If we look back at what was the condition of France under the *ancient regime*, we cannot acquit the priests of corrupting the morals of the nation. Their pretended celibacy led them to carry debauchery and domestic infidelity into every family where they could gain admission; and their blasphemous pretensions to forgive sins, encouraged the commission of them. Why has the Revolution of France been stained with crimes which the Revolution of the United States of America was not? Men are physically the same in all countries: it is education that makes them different. Accustom a people to believe that priests, or any other class of men, can forgive sins, and you will have sins in abundance.

I come now to speak more particularly to the object of your report.

You claim a privilege incompatible with the constitution and with rights. The constitution protects equally, as it ought to do, every profession of religion; it gives no exclusive privilege to any. The churches are the common property of all the people; they are national goods, and cannot be given exclusively to any one profession, because the right does not exist of giving to any one that which appertains to all. It would be consistent with right that the churches be sold, and the money arising therefrom be invested as a fund for the education of children of poor parents of every profes-



sion, and, if more than sufficient for this purpose, that the surplus be appropriated to the support of the aged poor. After this, every profession can erect its own place of worship, if it chuse—support its own priests, if it chuse to have any—or perform its worship without priests, as the Quakers do.

As to bells, they are a public nuisance. If one profession is to have bells, another has the right to use instruments of the same kind, or any other noisy instrument. Some may chuse to meet at the sound of cannon, another at the beat of drum, another at the sound of trumpets, and so on, until the whole becomes a scene of general confusion. But if we permit ourselves to think of the state of the sick, and the many sleepless nights and days they undergo, we shall feel the impropriety of increasing their distress by the noise of bells, or any other noisy instruments.

Quiet and private domestic devotion neither offends nor incommodes any body; and the constitution has wisely guarded against the use of externals. Bells come under this description, and public processions still more so.—Streets and highways are for the accommodation of persons following their several occupations, and no sectary has a right to incommode them—If any one has, every other has the same; and the meeting of various and contradictory processions would be tumultuous. Those who formed the constitution had wisely reflected upon these cases; and, whilst they were careful to preserve the equal right of every one, they restrained every one from giving offence, or incommoding another.

Men who, through a long and tumultuous scene, have lived in retirement, as you have done, may think, when they arrive at power, that nothing is more easy than to put the world to rights in an instant; they form to themselves gay ideas at the success of their projects; but they forget to contemplate the difficulties that attend them, and the dangers with which they are pregnant. Did all men think as you think, or as you say, your plan would need no advocate, because it would have no opposer; but there are millions who think differently to you, and who are determined to be neither the dupes nor the slaves of error or design.

It is your good fortune to arrive at power, when the sunshine of prosperity is breathing forth after a long and stormy night. The firmness of your colleagues, and of those you have succeeded—the unabated energy of the Directory, and the unequalled bravery of the armies of the Republic, have made the way smooth and easy to you. If you look back at

the difficulties that existed when the constitution commenced, you cannot but be confounded with admiration at the difference between that time and now. At that moment, the Directory were placed like the forlorn hope of an army, but you were in safe retirement. They occupied the post of honourable danger, and they have merited well of their country.

You talk of justice and benevolence, but you begin at the wrong end. The defenders of your country, and the deplorable state of the poor, are objects of prior consideration to priests and bells and gaudy processions.

You talk of peace, but your manner of talking of it embarrasses the Directory in making it, and serves to prevent it. Had you been an actor in all the scenes of government from its commencement, you would have been too well informed to have brought forward projects that operate to encourage the enemy. When you arrived at a share in the government, you found every thing tending to a prosperous issue. A series of victories unequalled in the world, and in the obtaining of which you had no share, preceded your arrival. Every enemy but one was subdued; and that one (the Hanoverian government of England) deprived of every hope, and a bankrupt in all its resources, was suing for peace. In such a state of things, no new question that might tend to agitate and anarchize the interior, ought to have had place; and the project you propose, tends directly to that end.

Whilst France was a monarchy, and under the government of those things called kings and priests, England could always defeat her; but since France has **RISEN TO BE A REPUBLIC**, the **GOVERNMENT OF ENGLAND** crouches beneath her, so great is the difference between a government of kings and priests, and that which is founded on the system of representation. But, could the government of England find a way, under the sanction of your report, to inundate France with a flood of emigrant priests, she would find also the way to domineer as before; she would retrieve her shattered finances at your expence, and the ringing of bells would be the tocsin of your downfall.

Did peace consist in nothing but the cessation of war, it would not be difficult; but the terms are yet to be arranged; and those terms will be better or worse, in proportion as France and her councils be united or divided. That the government of England counts much upon your report, and upon others of a similar tendency, is what the writer of this letter, who knows that government well, has no doubt. You

are but new on the theatre of government, and you ought to suspect yourself of misjudging ; the experience of those who have gone before you, should be of some service to you.

But if, in consequence of such measures as you propose, you put it out of the power of the Directory to make a good peace, and to accept of terms you would afterwards reprobate, it is yourselves that must bear the censure.

You conclude your report by the following address to your colleagues :—

“ Let us hasten, representatives of the people ! to affix to these tutelary laws the seal of our unanimous approbation. All our fellow-citizens will learn to cherish political liberty from the enjoyment of religious liberty : you will have broken the most powerful arm of your enemies ; you will have surrounded this assembly with the most impregnable rampart—confidence, and the people’s love. O ! my colleagues ! how desirable is that popularity which is the offspring of good laws ! What a consolation it will be to us hereafter, when returned to our own fire-sides, to hear from the mouths of our fellow-citizens, these simple expressions—*Blessings reward you, men of peace ! you have restored to us our temples—our ministers—the liberty of adoring the God of our fathers : you have recalled harmony to our families—morality to our hearts : you have made us adore the legislature and respect all its laws !*”

Is it possible, citizen representative, that you can be serious in this address ? Were the lives of the priests under the *ancient regime* such as to justify any thing you say of them ? Were not all France convinced of their immorality ? Were they not considered as the patrons of debauchery and domestic infidelity, and not as the patrons of morals ? What was their pretended celibacy but perpetual adultery ? What was their blasphemous pretensions to forgive sins, but an encouragement to the commission of them, and a love for their own ? Do you want to lead again into France all the vices of which they have been the patrons, and to overspread the republic with English pensioners ? It is cheaper to corrupt than to conquer ; and the English government, unable to conquer, will stoop to corrupt. Arrogance and meanness, though in appearance opposite, are vices of the same heart.

Instead of concluding in the manner you have done, you ought rather to have said,

“ O ! my colleagues ! we are arrived at a glorious period—a period that promises more than we could have expected, and all that we could have wished. Let us hasten to take into consideration the honours and rewards due to our brave

defenders. Let us hasten to give encouragement to agriculture and manufactures, that commerce may reinstate itself, and our people have employment. Let us review the condition of the suffering poor, and wipe from our country the reproach of forgetting them. Let us devise means to establish schools of instruction, that we may banish the ignorance that the ancient regime of kings and priests had spread among the people. Let us propagate morality, unfettered by superstition—Let us cultivate justice and benevolence, that the God of our fathers may bless us. The helpless infant and the aged poor cry to us to remember them—Let not wretchedness be seen in our streets—Let France exhibit to the world the glorious example of expelling ignorance and misery together.

“Let these, my virtuous colleagues! be the subject of our care, that, when we return among our fellow-citizens, they may say, *Worthy representatives! you have done well. You have done justice and honour to our brave defenders. You have encouraged agriculture—cherished our decayed manufactures—given new life to commerce, and employment to our people. You have removed from our country the reproach of forgetting the poor—You have caused the cry of the orphan to cease—You have wiped the tear from the eye of the suffering mother—You have given comfort to the aged and infirm—You have penetrated into the gloomy recesses of wretchedness, and have banished it. Welcome among us, ye brave and virtuous representatives! and may your example be followed by your successors!*”

THOMAS PAINE.

AN ESSAY  
ON THE  
ORIGIN OF FREE-MASONRY.

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It is always understood that Free-Masons have a secret which they carefully conceal; but from every thing that can be collected from their own accounts of Masonry, their real secret is no other than their origin, which but few of them understand; and those who do, envelope it in mystery.

The Society of Masons are distinguished into three classes or degrees. 1st. The Entered Apprentice. 2d. The Fellow-Craft. 3d. The Master Mason.

The entered apprentice knows but little more of Masonry, than the use of signs and tokens, and certain steps and words, by which Masons can recognize each other, without being discovered by a person who is not a Mason. The fellow-craft is not much better instructed in Masonry, than the entered apprentice. It is only in the Master Mason's lodge, that whatever knowledge remains of the origin of Masonry is preserved and concealed.

In 1730, Samuel Pritchard, member of a constituted lodge in England, published a treatise entitled *Masonry Dissected*; and made oath before the Lord Mayor of London, that it was a true copy.

“Samuel Pritchard maketh oath that the copy hereunto annexed is a true and genuine copy in every particular.”

In his work he has given the catechism, or examination, in question and answer, of the apprentices, the fellow-craft, and the Master Mason. There was no difficulty in doing this, as it is mere form.

In his introduction he says, “the original institution of Masonry consisted in the foundation of the liberal arts and sciences, but more especially on Geometry, for at the building of the Tower of Babel, the art and mystery of Masonry

was first introduced, and from thence handed down by Euclid, a worthy and excellent mathematician of the Egyptians; and he communicated it to Hiram, the Master Mason concerned in building Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem."

Besides the absurdity of deriving Masonry from the building of Babel, where, according to the story, the confusion of languages prevented builders understanding each other, and consequently of communicating any knowledge they had, there is a glaring contradiction in point of chronology in the account he gives.

Solomon's Temple was built and dedicated 1004 years before the Christian era; and Euclid, as may be seen in the tables of chronology, lived 277 years before the same era. It was therefore impossible that Euclid could communicate any thing to Hiram, since Euclid did not live till 700 years after the time of Hiram.

In 1783, Captain George Smith, inspector of the Royal Artillery Academy at Woolwich, in England, and Provincial Grand Master of Masonry for the county of Kent, published a treatise entitled, *The Use and Abuse of Free-Masonry*.

In his chapter of the antiquity of Masonry, he makes it to be coeval with creation. "When," says he, "the sovereign architect raised on masonic principles the beauteous globe, and commanded that master science, Geometry, to lay the planetary world, and to regulate by its laws the whole stupendous system in just unerring proportion, rolling round the central sun."

"But," continues he, "I am not at liberty publicly to undraw the curtain, and thereby to descant on this head; it is sacred, and ever will remain so; those who are honoured with the trust will not reveal it, and those who are ignorant of it cannot betray it." By this last part of the phrase, Smith means the two inferior classes, the fellow-craft and the entered apprentice, for he says, in the next page of his work, "It is not every one that is barely initiated into Free-Masonry that is entrusted with all the mysteries thereto belonging; they are not attainable as things of course, nor by every capacity."

The learned, but unfortunate Doctor Dodd, Grand Chaplain of Masonry, in his oration at the dedication of Free-Mason's-Hall, London, traces Masonry through a variety of stages. Masons, says he, are well informed from their own private and interior records, that the building of Solomon's Temple is an important era, from whence they derive many

mysteries of their art. "Now (says he), be it remembered that this great event took place above 1000 years before the Christian era, and consequently more than a century before Homer, the first of the Grecian Poets, wrote; and above five centuries before Pythagoras brought from the east his sublime system of truly masonic instruction to illuminate our western world.

"But remote as this period is, we date not from thence the commencement of our art. For though it might owe to the wise and glorious King of Israel, some of its many mystic forms and hieroglyphic ceremonies, yet certainly the art itself is coeval with man, the great subject of it.

"We trace," continues he, "its footsteps in the most distant, the most remote ages and nations of the world. We find it amongst the first and most celebrated civilizers of the East. We deduce it regularly from the first astronomers on the plains of Chaldea, to the wise and mystic kings and priests of Egypt, the sages of Greece, and the philosophers of Rome."

From these reports and declarations of Masons of the highest order in the institution, we see that Masonry, without publicly declaring so, lays claim to some divine communication from the Creator, in a manner different from, and unconnected with, the book which the Christians call the Bible; and the natural result from this is, that Masonry is derived from some very ancient religion, wholly independent of, and unconnected with that book.

To come then at once to the point, Masonry (as I shall shew from the custom, ceremonies, hieroglyphics, and chronology of Masonry) is derived, and is the remains of the religion of the ancient Druids; who, like the magi of Persia and the priests of Heliopolis in Egypt, were priests of the Sun. They paid worship to this great luminary, as the great visible agent of a great invisible first cause, whom they stiled, Time without limits.

The Christian religion and Masonry have one and the same common origin, both are derived from the worship of the sun; the difference between their origins is, that the Christian religion is a parody on the worship of the sun, in which they put a man whom they call Christ, in the place of the sun, and pay him the same adoration which was originally paid to the sun, as I have shewn in the chapter on the origin of the Christian religion\*.

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\* Referring to the Third Part of Paine's Age of Reason not published. See Extract from Mr. Paine's Will in the preface to this volume.

In Masonry many of the ceremonies of the Druids are preserved in their original state, at least without any parody. With them the sun is still the sun; and his image in the form of the sun, is the great emblematical ornament of Masonic Lodges and Masonic dresses. It is the central figure on their aprons, and they wear it also pendant on the breast in their lodges, and in their processions. It has the figure of a man, as at the head of the sun, as Christ is always represented.

At what period of antiquity, or in what nation, this religion was first established, is lost in the labyrinth of unrecorded times. It is generally ascribed to the ancient Egyptians, the Babylonians and Chaldeans, and reduced afterwards to a system regulated by the apparent progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the zodiac by Zoroaster the lawgiver of Persia, from whence Pythagoras brought it into Greece. It is to these matters Dr. Dodd refers in the passage already quoted from his oration.

The worship of the sun, as the great visible agent of a great invisible first cause, time without limits, spread itself over a considerable part of Asia and Africa, from thence to Greece and Rome, through all ancient Gaul, and into Britain and Ireland.

Smith, in his chapter on the antiquity of Masonry in Britain, says, that "notwithstanding the obscurity which envelopes masonic history in that country, various circumstances contribute to prove that Free-Masonry was introduced into Britain about 1030 years before Christ."

It cannot be Masonry in its present state that Smith here alludes to. The Druids flourished in Britain at the period he speaks of, and it is from them that Masonry is descended. Smith has put the child in the place of the parent.

It sometimes happens, as well in writing as in conversation, that a person lets slip an expression that serves to unravel what he intends to conceal, and this is the case with Smith, for in the same chapter he says, "The Druids, when they committed any thing to writing, used the Greek alphabet, and I am bold to assert that the most perfect remains of the Druids' rites and ceremonies are preserved in the customs and ceremonies of the Masons that are to be found existing among mankind. "My brethren," says he, "may be able to trace them with greater exactness than I am at liberty to explain to the public."

This is a confession from a Master Mason, without intending it to be so understood by the public, that Masonry



is the remains of the religion of the Druids, the reason for the Masons keeping this a secret I shall explain in the course of this work.

As the study and contemplation of the Creator in the works of the creation, of which, the sun as the great visible agent of that Being, was the visible object of the adoration of Druids, all their religious rites and ceremonies had reference to the apparent progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and his influence upon the earth. The Masons adopt the same practices. The roof of their temples or lodges is ornamented with a sun, and the floor is a representation of the variegated face of the earth, either by carpeting or Mosaic work.

Free-Mason's Hall, in Great Queen-street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, is a magnificent building, and cost upwards of 12,000 pounds sterling. Smith, in speaking of this building, says, (page 152) "The roof of this magnificent hall is, in all probability, the highest piece of finished architecture in Europe. In the centre of this roof, a most resplendent sun is represented in burnished gold, surrounded with the twelve signs of the Zodiac, with their respective characters:

♈ Aries		♎ Libra
♉ Taurus		♏ Scorpio
♊ Gemini		♐ Sagittarius
♋ Cancer		♑ Capricornus
♌ Leo		♒ Aquarius
♍ Virgo		♓ Pisces

After giving this description he says, "The emblematical meaning of the sun is well known to the enlightened and inquisitive Free-Mason; and as the real sun is situated in the centre of the universe, so the emblematical sun is the centre of real Masonry. We all know, continues he, that the sun is the fountain of light, the source of the seasons, the cause of the vicissitudes of day and night, the parent of vegetation, the friend of man; hence the scientific Free-Mason only knows the reason why the sun is placed in the centre of this beautiful hall."

The Masons, in order to protect themselves from the persecution of the Christian church, have always spoken in a mystical manner of the figure of the sun in their lodges, or, like the astronomer Lalande, who is a Mason, been silent upon the subject. It is their secret, especially in Catholic

countries, because the figure of the sun is the expressive criterion that denotes they are descended from the Druids, and was that wise, elegant, philosophical religion, the faith opposite to the faith of the gloomy Christian church.

The lodges of the Masons, if built for the purpose, are constructed in a manner to correspond with the apparent motion of the sun. They are situated East and West. The master's place is always in the East. In the examination of an entered apprentice, the master, among many other questions, asks him,

Q. How is the lodge situated?

A. East and West.

Q. Why so?

A. Because all churches and chapels are, or ought to be so.

This answer, which is mere catechismal form, is not an answer to the question. It does no more than remove the question a point further, which is, why ought all churches and chapels to be so? But as the entered apprentice is not initiated into the Druidical mysteries of Masonry, he is not asked any questions to which a direct answer would lead thereto.

Q. Where stands your master?

A. In the East.

Q. Why so?

As the sun rises in the East, and opens the day, so the master stands in the East, (with his right hand upon his left breast, being a sign, and the square about his neck), to open the lodge, and set his men at work.

Q. Where stands your wardens?

A. In the West.

Q. What is their business?

A. As the sun sets in the West to close the day, so the wardens stand in the West with their right hands upon their left breasts, being a sign, and the level and plumb rule about their necks to close the lodge, and dismiss the men from labour, paying them their wages.

Here the name of the sun is mentioned, but it is proper to observe, that in this place it has reference only to labour or to the time of labour, and not to any religious Druidical rite or ceremony, as it would have with respect to the situation of Lodges East and West. I have already observed in the chapter on the origin of the Christian religion, that the situation of churches East and West is taken from the worship of the sun which rises in the East. The Christians

never bury their dead on the North side of a church ; and a Mason's Lodge always has, or is supposed to have, three windows, which are called fixed lights, to distinguish them from the moveable lights of the sun and the moon. The master asks the entered apprentice,

Q. How are they (the fixed lights) situated ?

A. East, West, and South.

Q. What are their uses ?

A. To light the men to and from their work.

Q. Why are there no lights in the North ?

A. Because the sun darts no rays from thence.

This, among numerous other instances, shews that the Christian religion, and Masonry, have one and the same common origin, the ancient worship of the sun.

The high festival of the Masons is on the day they call St. John's day ; but every enlightened Mason must know that holding their festival on this day has no reference to the person called St. John ; and that it is only to disguise the true cause of holding it on this day, that they call the day by that name. As there were Masons, or at least Druids, many centuries before the time of St. John, if such person ever existed, the holding their festival on this day must refer to some cause totally unconnected with John.

The case is, that the day called St. John's day is the 24th of June, and is what is called Midsummer-day. The sun is then arrived at the summer solstice ; and with respect to his meridional altitude, or height at high noon, appears for some days to be of the same height. The Astronomical longest day, like the shortest day, is not every year, on account of leap year, on the same numerical day, and therefore the 24th of June is always taken for Midsummer-day ; and it is in honour of the sun, which has then arrived at his greatest height, in our hemisphere, and not any thing with respect to St. John, that this annual festival of the Masons, taken from the Druids, is celebrated on Midsummer day.

Customs will often outlive the remembrance of their origin, and this is the case with respect to a custom still practised in Ireland, where the Druids flourished at the time they flourished in Britain. On the eve of St. John's day, that is, on the eve of Midsummer day, the Irish light fires on the tops of the hills. This can have no reference to St. John ; but it has emblematical reference to the sun, which on that day is at his highest summer elevation, and might

in common language be said to have arrived at the top of the hill.

As to what Masons, and books of Masonry tell us of Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem, it is no wise improbable that some masonic ceremonies may have been derived from the building of that temple, for the worship of the sun was in practice many centuries before the temple existed, or before the Israelites came out of Egypt. And we learn from the history of the Jewish Kings, 2 Kings, chap. xxii. xxiii. that the worship of the sun was performed by the Jews in that temple. It is, however, much to be doubted, if it was done with the same scientific purity and religious morality, with which it was performed by the Druids, who by all accounts that historically remain of them, were a wise, learned, and moral class of men. The Jews, on the contrary, were ignorant of astronomy, and of science in general, and if a religion founded upon astronomy, fell into their hands, it is almost certain it would be corrupted. We do not read in the history of the Jews, whether in the Bible or elsewhere, that they were the inventors or the improvers of any one art or science. Even in the building of this temple, the Jews did not know how to square and frame the timber for beginning and carrying on the work, and Solomon was obliged to send to Hiram, king of Tyre, (Zidon) to procure workmen; "for thou knowest, (says Solomon to Hiram, 1 Kings, chap. v. ver. 6.) that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Zidonians." This temple was more properly Hiram's temple than Solomon's, and if the Masons derive any thing from the building of it, they owe it to the Zidonians and not to the Jews.—But to return to the worship of the sun in this temple.

It is said, 2 Kings, chap. xxiii. ver. 8. "And King Josiah put down all the idolatrous priests that burned incense unto the sun, the moon, the planets, and to all the host of heaven."—And it is said at the 11 ver. "and he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of the Lord, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire, ver. 13, and the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon, the King of Israel had builded for Astoreth, the abomination of the Zidonians (the very people that built the temple) did the king defile.

Besides these things, the description that Josephus gives of the decorations of this Temple, resembles on a large scale those of a Mason's Lodge. He says that the distribution of the several parts of the Temple of the Jews represented all nature, particularly the parts most apparent of it, as the sun, the moon, the planets, the zodiac, the earth, the elements, and that the system of the world was retraced there by numerous ingenious emblems. These, in all probability, are, what Josiah, in his ignorance, calls the abominations of the Zidonians\*. Every thing, however, drawn from this temple†, and applied to Masonry, still refers to the worship of the sun, however corrupted or misunderstood by the Jews, and, consequently, to the religion of the Druids.

Another circumstance which shews that Masonry is derived from some ancient system, prior to, and unconnected with, the Christian religion, is the chronology, or method of counting time, used by the Masons in the records of their lodges. They make no use of what is called the Christian era; and they reckon their months numerically, as the ancient Egyptians did, and as the quakers do now. I have by me, a record of a French Lodge, at the time the late Duke of Orleans, then Duke de Chartres, was Grand Master of Masonry in France. It begins as follows: "*Le trentieme jour due sixieme mois de l'an de la V. L. cinq. mil sepcnt soixante trize*," that is, the thirtieth day of the sixth month of the year of the venerable Lodge, five thousand seven hundred and seventy three. By what I observe in

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\* Smith, in speaking of a Lodge, says, when the Lodge is revealed to an entering Mason, it discovers to him *a representation of the world*: in which, from the wonders of nature, we are led to contemplate her great original, and worship him from his mighty works; and we are thereby also moved to exercise those moral and social virtues which become mankind as the servants of the great architect of the world.

† It may not be improper here to observe, that the law called the law of Moses could not have been in existence at the time of building this temple. Here is the likeness of things in heaven above, and in the earth beneath. And we read in 1 Kings, chap. 6, 7, that Solomon made cherubs and cherubims, that he carved all the walls of the house round about with cherubims and palm-trees, and open flowers, and that he made a molten sea, placed on twelve oxen, and the ledges of it were ornamented with lions, oxen, and cherubims; all this is contrary to the law, called the law of Moses.

English books of Masonry, the English Masons use the initials A. L. and not V. L. By A. L. they mean in the year of the Lodge, as the Christians by A. D. mean in the year of the Lord. But A. L. like V. L. refers to the same chronological era, that is, to the supposed time of the creation. In the chapter on the origin of the Christian religion, I have shewn that the cosmogony, that is, the account of the creation, with which the book of Genesis opens, has been taken and mutilated from the Zend-Avistä of Zoroaster, and is fixed as a preface to the Bible, after the Jews returned from captivity in Babylon, and that the rabbins of the Jews do not hold their account in Genesis to be a fact, but mere allegory. The six thousand years in the Zend-Avistä, is changed or interpolated into six days in the account of Genesis. The Masons appear to have chosen the same period, and perhaps to avoid the suspicion and persecution of the church, have adopted the era of the world, as the era of the Masonry. The V. L. of the French, and A. L. of the English Mason, answer to the A. M. Anno Mundi, or year of the world.

Though the Masons have taken many of their ceremonies and hieroglyphics from the ancient Egyptians, it is certain they have not taken their chronology from thence. If they had, the church would soon have sent them to the stake; as the chronology of the Egyptians, like that of the Chinese, goes many thousand years beyond the Bible chronology.

The religion of the Druids, as before said, was the same as the religion of the ancient Egyptians. The priests of Egypt were the professors and teachers of science, and were styled priests of Heliopolis, that is, of the *city of the sun*. The Druids in Europe, who were the same order of men, have their name from the Teutonic or ancient German language: the Germans being anciently called Teutones. The word Druid signifies a *wise man*. In Persia they were called magi, which signifies the same thing.

"Egypt," says Smith, "from whence we derive many of our mysteries, hath always borne a distinguished rank in history, and was once celebrated above all others for its antiquities, learning, opulence, and fertility. In their system, their principal hero-gods, Osiris and Isis, theologically represented the Supreme Being and universal nature; and physically, the two great celestial luminaries, the sun and the moon, by whose influence all nature was actuated. The experienced brethren of the Society (says Smith in a note to this passage) are well informed what affinity these symbols

bear to Masonry, and why they are used in all Masonic Lodges."

In speaking of the apparel of the Masons in their Lodges, part of which, as we see in their public processions, is a white leather apron, he says, "the Druids were apparelled in white at the time of their sacrifices and solemn offices. The Egyptian priests of Osiris wore snow-white cotton. The Grecian and most other priests wore white garments. As Masons, we regard the principles of those *who were the first worshippers of the true God*, imitate their apparel, and assume the badge of innocence.

"The Egyptians," continues Smith, "in the earliest ages, constituted a great number of Lodges, but with assiduous care kept their secrets of Masonry from all strangers. These secrets have been imperfectly handed down to us by tradition only, and ought to be kept undiscovered to the labourers, craftsmen, and apprentices, till by good behaviour and long study, they become better acquainted in Geometry and the liberal arts, and thereby qualified for Masters and Wardens, which is seldom or ever the case with English Masons."

Under the head of Free-Masonry, written by the astronomer Lalande, in the French Encyclopedia, I expected from his great knowledge in astronomy, to have found much information on the origin of Masonry; for what connection can there be between any institution and the sun and twelve signs of the Zodiac, if there be not something in that institution, or in its origin, that has reference to astronomy. Every thing used as an hieroglyphic, has reference to the subject and purpose for which it is used; and we are not to suppose the Free-Masons, among whom are many very learned and scientific men, to be such idiots as to make use of astronomical signs without some astronomical purpose.

But I was much disappointed in my expectation from Lalande. In speaking of the origin of Masonry, he says, "*L'origine de la maconiere se perd, comme tant d'autres dans l'obscurite des temps*;" that is, the origin of Masonry, like many others, loses itself in the obscurity of time. When I came to this expression, I supposed Lalande a Mason, and on enquiry found he was. This *passing over* saved him from the embarrassment which Masons are under respecting the disclosure of their origin, and which they are sworn to conceal. There is a society of Masons in Dublin who take the name of Druids; these Masons must be supposed to have a reason for taking that name,

I come now to speak of the cause of secrecy used by the Masons.

The natural source of secrecy is fear. When any new religion over-runs a former religion, the professors of the new become the persecutors of the old. We see this in all the instances that history brings before us. When Hilkiah the priest and Shaphan the scribe, in the reign of king Josiah, found or pretended to find the law, called the law of Moses, a thousand years after the time of Moses, and it does not appear from the 2nd Book of Kings, chapters 22, 23, that such law was ever practised or known before the time of Josiah, he established that law as a national religion, and put all the priests of the sun to death. When the Christian religion over-ran the Jewish religion, the Jews were the continual subjects of persecution in all Christian countries. When the Protestant religion in England over-run the Roman Catholic religion, it was made death for a Catholic priest to be found in England. As this has been the case in all the instances we have any knowledge of, we are obliged to admit it with respect to the case in question, and that when the Christian religion over-ran the religion of the Druids in Italy, ancient Gaul, Britain, and Ireland, the Druids became the subjects of persecution. This would naturally and necessarily oblige such of them as remained attached to their original religion to meet in secret and under the strongest injunctions of secrecy. Their safety depended upon it. A false brother might expose the lives of many of them to destruction; and from the remains of the religion of the Druids, thus preserved, arose the institution, which, to avoid the name of Druid, took that of Mason, and practised, under this new name, the rights and ceremonies of Druids.

THOMAS PAINE.



EXTRACT OF A REPLY  
TO THE  
BISHOP OF LLANDAFF.

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GENESIS.

THE Bishop says, "the oldest book in the world is Genesis." This is mere assertion; he offers no proof of it, and I go to controvert it, and to shew that the book of Job, which is not a Hebrew book, but is a book of the Gentiles, translated into Hebrew, is much older than the book of Genesis.

The book of Genesis means the book of Generations; to which are prefixed two chapters, the first and second, which contain two different cosmoganies, that is, two different accounts of the creation of the world, written by different persons, as I have shewn in the preceding part of this work.

The first cosmogany begins at the first verse of the first chapter, and ends at the end of the third verse of the second chapter; for the adverbial conjunction *thus*, with which the second chapter begins, shews those three verses to belong to the first chapter. The second cosmogany begins at the fourth verse of the second chapter, and ends with that chapter.

In the first cosmogany the name of God is used without any epithet joined to it, and is repeated thirty-five times. In the second cosmogany it is always the Lord God, which is repeated eleven times. These two different styles of expression shew these two chapters to be the work of two different persons, and the contradictions they contain, shew they cannot be the work of one and the same person, as I have already shewn.

The third chapter, in which the style of Lord God is continued in every instance, except in the supposed conversation between the woman and the serpent (for in every place in that chapter where the writer speaks, it is always the Lord God) shews this chapter to belong to the second cosmogany.

This chapter gives an account of what is called the fall of

man, which is no other than a fable borrowed from, and constructed upon the religion of Zoroaster, or the Persians, of the annual progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the Zodiac. It is the *fall of the year*, the approach and *evil* of winter, announced by the ascension of the autumnal constellation of the *serpent* of the Zodiac, and not the moral *fall of man*, that is the key of the allegory, and of the fable in Genesis borrowed from it.

The fall of man in Genesis, is said to have been produced by eating a certain fruit, generally taken to be an apple. The fall of the year is the season for gathering and eating the new apples of that year. The allegory, therefore, holds with respect to the fruit, which it would not have done had it been an early summer fruit. It holds also with respect to place. The tree is said to have been placed in the *midst* of the garden. But why in the midst of the garden more than in any other place? The solution of the allegory gives the answer to this question, which is, that the fall of the year, when apples and other autumnal fruits are ripe, and when days and nights are of equal length, is the mid-season between summer and winter.

It holds also with respect to cloathing, and the temperature of the air. It is said in Genesis, chap. iii. ver. 21, "*Unto Adam and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and cloathed them.*" But why are coats of skins mentioned? This cannot be understood as referring to any thing of the nature of *moral evil*. The solution of the allegory gives again the answer to this question, which is, that the *evil of winter*, which follows the *fall of the year*, fabulously called in Genesis the *fall of man*, makes warm cloathing necessary.

But of these things I shall speak fully when I come in another part to treat of the ancient religion of the Persians, and compare it with the modern religion of the New Testament. At present, I shall confine myself to the comparative antiquity of the books of Genesis and Job, taking, at the same time, whatever I may find in my way with respect to the fabulousness of the book of Genesis; for if what is called the fall of man in Genesis be fabulous or allegorical, that which is called the redemption in the New Testament cannot be a fact. It is logically impossible, and impossible also in the nature of things that *moral good* can redeem *physical evil*. I return to the Bishop.

If Genesis be, as the Bishop asserts, the oldest book in the world, and, consequently, the oldest and first written book of the Bible, and if the extraordinary things related in it, such as the creation of the world in six days, the tree of life, and of

good and evil, the story of Eve and the talking serpents, the fall of man and his being turned out of paradise, were facts or even believed by the Jews to be facts, they would be referred to as fundamental matters, and that very frequently in the books of the Bible that were written by various authors afterwards; whereas there is not a book, chapter, or verse of the Bible, from the time Moses is said to have written the Book of Genesis, to the book of Malachi, the last book in the Bible, including a space of more than a thousand years, in which there is any mention made of these things, or of any of them, nor are they so much as alluded to. How will the Bishop solve this difficulty, which stands as a circumstantial contradiction to his assertion?

There are but two ways of solving it:

First, that the book of Genesis is not an ancient book; that it has been written by some (now) unknown person after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, about a thousand years after the time that Moses is said to have lived, and put as a preface or introduction to the other books, when they were formed into a canon in the time of the second temple, and, therefore, not having existed before that time, none of these things mentioned in it could be referred to these books.

Secondly, that admitting Genesis to have been written by Moses, the Jews did not believe the things stated in it to be true, and, therefore, as they could not refer to them as facts, they would not refer to them as fables. The first of these solutions goes against the antiquity of the book, and the second against its authenticity, and the Bishop may take which he pleases.

But be the author of Genesis whoever he may, there is abundant evidence to shew, as well from the early Christian writers, as from the Jews themselves, that the things stated in that book were not believed to be facts. Why they have been believed as facts since that time, when better and fuller knowledge existed on the case, than is known now, can be accounted for only on the imposition of priestcraft.

Augustine, one of the early champions of the Christian church, acknowledges in his *City of God*, that the adventure of Eve and the serpent, and the account of Paradise, were generally considered as fiction or allegory. He regards them as allegory himself, without attempting to give any explanation, but he supposes that a better explanation might be found than those that had been offered.

Origen, another early champion of the church, says, "What man of good sense can ever persuade himself that there were a first, a second, and a third day, and that each of these days had a night, when there were yet neither sun, moon nor stars. What man can be stupid enough to believe that God, acting the part of a gardener, had planted a garden in the east, that the tree of life was a real tree, and that its fruit had the virtue of making those who eat of it live for ever?"

Marmonides, one of the most learned and celebrated of the Jewish Rabbins, who lived in the eleventh century (about seven or eight hundred years ago) and to whom the Bishop refers in his answer to me, is very explicit, in his book entitled *More Nebachim*, upon the non-reality of the things stated in the account of the Creation in the book of Genesis. "We ought not (says he) to understand, nor take according to the letter, that which is written in the book of the Creation, nor to have the same ideas of it with common men; otherwise, our ancient sages would not have recommended, with so much care, to conceal the sense of it, and not to raise the allegorical veil which envelopes the truths it contains. The book of Genesis, taken according to the letter, gives the most absurd and the most extravagant ideas of the Divinity. Whoever shall find out the sense of it, ought to restrain himself from divulging it. It is a maxim which all our sages repeat, and above all with respect to the work of six days. It may happen that some one, with the aid he may borrow from others, may hit upon the meaning of it. In that case, he ought to impose silence upon himself; or if he speak of it, he ought to speak obscurely, and in an enigmatical manner, as I do myself, leaving the rest to be found out by those who can understand."

This is, certainly, a very extraordinary declaration of Marmonides, taking all the parts of it.

First, he declares, that the account of the Creation in the book of Genesis is not a fact; that to believe it to be a fact, gives the most absurd and the most extravagant ideas of the divinity.

Secondly, that it is an allegory.

Thirdly, that the allegory has a concealed secret.

Fourthly, that whoever can find the secret ought not to tell it.

It is this last part that is the most extraordinary. Why all this care of the Jewish Rabbins, to prevent what they

call the concealed meaning, or the secret from being known, and if known, to prevent any of their people from telling it? It certainly must be something which the Jewish nation are afraid or ashamed the world should know. It must be something personal to them as a people, and not a secret of a divine nature, which the more it is known, the more it increases the glory of the Creator, and the gratitude and happiness of man. It is not God's secret, but their own, they are keeping. I go to unveil the secret.

The case is, the Jews have stolen their cosmogony, that is, their account of the Creation, from the cosmogony of the Persians, contained in the books of Zoroaster, the Persian lawgiver, and brought it with them when they returned from captivity by the benevolence of Cyrus King of Persia; for it is evident, from the silence of all the books of the Bible upon the subject of the Creation, that the Jews had no cosmogony before that time. If they had a cosmogony from the time of Moses, some of their judges who governed during more than four hundred years, or of their kings, the Davids and Solomons of their day, who governed nearly five hundred years, or of their prophets and psalmists, who lived in the meantime, would have mentioned it. It would, either as fact or fable, have been the grandest of all subjects for a psalm. It would have suited to a tittle the ranting, poetical genius of Isaiah, or served as a cordial to the gloomy Jeremiah. But not one word nor even a whisper, does any of the Bible authors give upon the subject.

To conceal the theft, the Rabbins of the second temple have published Genesis as a book of Moses, and have enjoined secrecy to all their people, who by travelling or otherwise might happen to discover from whence the cosmogony was borrowed, not to tell it. The evidence of circumstances is often unanswerable, and there is no other than this which I have given, that goes to the whole of the case, and this does.

Diogenes Laertius, an ancient and respectable author, whom the Bishop, in his answer to me, quotes on another occasion, has a passage that corresponds with the solution here given. In speaking of the religion of the Persians as promulgated by their priests or magi, he says, the Jewish Rabbins were the successors of their doctrine. Having thus spoken on the plagiarism, and on the non-reality of the book of Genesis, I will give some additional evidence that Moses is not the author of that book.

Eben-Ezra, a celebrated Jewish author, who lived about

seven hundred years ago, and whom the Bishop allows to have been a man of great erudition, has made a great many observations, too numerous to be repeated here, to shew that Moses was not, and could not be, the author of the book of Genesis, nor of any of the five books that bear his name.

Spinosa, another learned Jew, who lived about an hundred and thirty years ago, recites, in his treatise on the ceremonies of the Jews, ancient and modern, the observations of Eben-Ezra, to which he adds many others, to shew that Moses is not the author of these books. He also says, and shews his reasons for saying it, that the Bible did not exist as a book, till the time of the Maccabees, which was more than a hundred years after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity.

In the second part of the Age of Reason, I have, among other things, referred to nine verses in the 36th chapter of Genesis, beginning at the 31st verse, "These are the kings that reigned in Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel," which it is impossible could have been written by Moses, or in the time of Moses, and could not have been written till after the Jew kings began to reign in Israel, which was not till several hundred years after the time of Moses.

The Bishop allows this, and says, "I think you say true." But he then quibbles and says, that a small addition to a book does not destroy either the genuineness or authenticity of the whole book." This is priestcraft. These verses do not stand in the book as an addition to it, but as making a part of the whole book, and which it is impossible that Moses could write. The Bishop would reject the antiquity of any other book if it could be proved from the words of the book itself that a part of it could not have been written till several hundred years after the reputed author of it was dead. He would call such a book a forgery. I am authorised, therefore, to call the book of Genesis a forgery.

Combining, then, all the foregoing circumstances together respecting the antiquity and authenticity of the book of Genesis, a conclusion will naturally follow therefrom; those circumstances are,

First, that certain parts of the book cannot possibly have been written by Moses, and that the other parts carry no evidence of having been written by him.

Secondly, the universal silence of all the following books of the Bible, for about a thousand years, upon the extraordinary things spoken of in Genesis, such as the creation of

the world in six days—the garden of Eden—the tree of knowledge—the tree of life—the story of Eve and the serpent—the fall of man, and of his being turned out of this fine garden, together with Noah's flood, and the tower of Babel.

Thirdly, the silence of all the books of the Bible upon even the name of Moses, from the book of Joshua until the second book of Kings, which was not written till after the captivity, for it gives an account of the captivity, a period of about a thousand years. Strange that a man who is proclaimed as the historian of the Creation, the privy-counsellor and confidant of the Almighty—the legislator of the Jewish nation, and the founder of its religion; strange, I say, that even the name of such a man should not find a place in their books for a thousand years, if they knew or believed any thing about him, or the books he is said to have written.

Fourthly, the opinion of some of the most celebrated of the Jewish commentators, that Moses is not the author of the book of Genesis, founded on the reasons given for that opinion.

Fifthly, the opinion of the early Christian writers, and of the great champion of Jewish literature, Marmonides, that the book of Genesis is not a book of facts.

Sixthly, the silence imposed by all the Jewish Rabbins, and by Marmonides himself, upon the Jewish nation, not to speak of any thing they may happen to know, or discover, respecting the cosmogony (or creation of the world) in the book of Genesis.

From these circumstances the following conclusions offer:

First, that the book of Genesis is not a book of facts.

Secondly, that as no mention is made throughout the Bible of any of the extraordinary things related in Genesis, and has not been written till after the other books were written, and put as a preface to the Bible. Every one knows that a preface to a book, though it stands first, is the last written.

Thirdly, that the silence imposed by all the Jewish Rabbins, and by Marmonides upon the Jewish nation, to keep silence upon every thing related in their cosmogony, evinces a secret they are not willing should be known. The secret therefore explains itself to be, that when the Jews were in captivity in Babylon and Persia they became acquainted with the cosmogony of the Persians, as registered in the Zend-Avesta, of Zoroaster the Persian law-giver, which after their return from captivity they manufactured and modelled as their own, and anti-dated it by giving to it the name of Moses.

The case admits of no other explanation. From all which it appears that the book of Genesis, instead of being the *oldest book in the world*, as the Bishop calls it, has been the last written book of the Bible, and that the cosmogony it contains, has been manufactured.

#### ON THE NAMES IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

Every thing in Genesis serves as evidence or symptom, that the book has been composed in some late period of the Jewish nation. Even the names mentioned in it serve to this purpose.

Nothing is more common or more natural, than to name the children of succeeding generations, after the names of those who had been celebrated in some former generation. This holds good with respect to all the people, and all the histories we know of, and it does not hold good with the Bible. There must be some cause for this.

This book of Genesis tells us of a man whom it calls Adam, and of his sons Abel and Seth; of Enoch, who lived 365 years (it is exactly the number of days in a year), and that then God took him up. It has the appearance of being taken from some allegory of the Gentiles on the commencement and termination of the year, by the progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the zodiac, on which the allegorical religion of the Gentiles was founded.

It tells us of Methuselah who lived 969 years, and of a long train of other names in the fifth chapter. It then passes on to a man whom it calls Noah, and his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet: then to Lot, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and his sons, with which the book of Genesis finishes.

All these, according to the account given in that book, were the most extraordinary and celebrated of men. They were, moreover, heads of families. Adam was the father of the world. Enoch, for his righteousness, was taken up to heaven. Methuselah lived to almost a thousand years. He was the son of Enoch, the man of 365, the number of days in a year. It has the appearance of being the continuation of an allegory on the 365 days of a year and its abundant productions. Noah was selected from all the world to be preserved when it was drowned, and became the second father of the world. Abraham was the father of the faithful multitude. Isaac and Jacob were the inheritors of his fame, and the last was the father of the twelve tribes.

Now, if these very wonderful men and their names, and the book that records them, had been known by the Jews before the Babylonian captivity, those names would have



been as common among the Jews before that period as they have been since. We now hear of thousands of Abrahams, Isaacs, and Jacobs among the Jews, but there were none of that name before the Babylonian captivity. The Bible does not mention one, though from the time that Abraham is said to have lived to the time of the Babylonian captivity is about 1400 years.

How is it to be accounted for that there have been so many thousands, and perhaps hundreds of thousands of Jews of the names of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob since that period, and not one before? It can be accounted for but one way, which is, that before the Babylonian captivity the Jews had no such books as Genesis, nor knew any thing of the names and persons it mentions, nor of the things it relates, and that the stories in it have been manufactured since that time. From the Arabic name *Ibrahim* (which is the manner the Turks write that name to this day) the Jews have, most probably, manufactured their Abraham.

I will advance my observations a point further, and speak of the names of *Moses* and *Aaron*, mentioned for the first time in the book of *Exodus*. There are now, and have continued to be from the time of the Babylonian captivity, or soon after it, thousands of Jews of the names of *Moses* and *Aaron*, and we read not of any of that name before that time. The Bible does not mention one. The direct inference from this is, that the Jews knew of no such book as *Exodus* before the Babylonian captivity. In fact, that it did not exist before that time, and that it is only since the book has been invented, that the names of *Moses* and *Aaron* have been common among the Jews.

It is applicable to the purpose to observe, that the picturesque work, called *Mosaic-work*, spelled the same as you would say the *Mosaic* account of the Creation, is not derived from the word *Moses* but from *Muses* (the *Muses*), because of the variegated and picturesque pavement in the temples dedicated to the *Muses*. This carries a strong implication that the name *Moses* is drawn from the same source, and that he is not a real but an allegorical person, as Marmonides describes what is called the *Mosaic* account of the Creation to be.

I will go a point still further. The Jews now know the book of Genesis, and the names of all the persons mentioned in the first *ten chapters* of that book, from Adam to Noah: yet we do not hear (I speak for myself) of any Jew, of the present day, of the name of Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Methusalah, Noah, Shem, Ham, or Japheth, (names men-

tioned in the first ten chapters) though these were, according to the account in that book, the most extraordinary of all the names that make up the catalogue of Jewish chronology.

The names the Jews now adopt, are those that are mentioned in Genesis after the tenth chapter, as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, &c. How then does it happen, that they do not adopt the names found in the first ten chapters? Here is evidently a line of division drawn between the first ten chapters of Genesis, and the remaining chapters, with respect to the adoption of names. There must be some cause for this, and I go to offer a solution of the problem.

The reader will recollect the quotation I have already made from the Jewish Rabbin Marmonides, wherein he says, "We ought not to understand nor to take according to the letter that which is written in the book of the Creation. It is a maxim (says he) which all our sages repeat *above all*, with respect to the work of six days."

The qualifying expression *above all*, implies there are other parts of the book, though not so important, that ought not to be understood or taken according to the letter, and as the Jews do not adopt the names mentioned in the first ten chapters, it appears evident those chapters are included in the injunction not to take them in a literal sense, or according to the letter; from which it follows that the persons or characters mentioned in the first ten chapters, as Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Methusalah, and so on to Noah, are not real but fictitious or allegorical persons, and therefore the Jews do not adopt their names into their families. If they affixed the same idea of reality to them as they do to those that follow after the tenth chapter, the names of Adam, Abel, Seth, &c. would be as common among the Jews of the present day as are those of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Aaron.

In the superstition they have been in, scarcely a Jew family would have been without an *Enoch*, as a presage of his going to heaven as ambassador for the whole family. Every mother who wished that the *days* of her son *might be long in the land* would call him *Methusalah*; and all the Jews that might have to traverse the ocean would be named Noah, as a charm against shipwreck and drowning.

This is domestic evidence against the book of Genesis, which, joined to the several kinds of evidence before recited, shew the book of Genesis not to be older than the Babylonian captivity, and to be fictitious. I proceed to fix the character and antiquity of the book of

## JOB.

The book of Job has not the least appearance of being a book of the Jews, and though printed among the books of the Bible, does not belong to it. There is no reference in it to any Jewish law or ceremony. On the contrary, all the internal evidence it contains shews it to be a book of the Gentiles, either of Persia or Chaldea.

The name of Job does not appear to be a Jewish name. There is no Jew of that name in any of the books of the Bible, neither is there now that I ever heard of. The country where Job is said, or supposed to have lived, or rather where the scene of the drama is laid, is called Uz, and there was no place of that name ever belonging to the Jews. If Uz is the same as Ur, it was in Chaldea, the country of the Gentiles.

The Jews can give no account how they came by this book, nor who was the author, nor the time when it was written. Origen, in his work against Celsus (in the first ages of the Christian church), says, *that the book of Job is older than Moses*. Eben-Ezra, the Jewish commentator, whom (as I have before said) the Bishop allows to have been a man of great erudition, and who certainly understood his own language, says, that the book of Job has been translated from another language into Hebrew. Spinosà, another Jewish commentator of great learning, confirms the opinion of Eben-Ezra, and says moreover, "*Je erois que Job étoit Gentil*;"\* I believe that Job was a Gentile.

The Bishop (in his answer to me) says, "that the structure of the whole book of Job, in whatever light of history or drama it be considered, is founded on the belief that prevailed with the Persians and Chaldeans, and other Gentile nations, of a good and an evil spirit."

In speaking of the good and evil spirit of the Persians, the Bishop writes them *Arimanius* and *Oromasdes*. I will not dispute about the orthography, because I know that translated names are differently spelled in different languages. But he has nevertheless made a capital error. He has put the Devil first; for *Arimanius*, or, as it is more generally written, *Atriman*, is the *evil spirit*, and *Oromasdes* or *Ormud* the good spirit. He has made the same mistake, in the same

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\* Spinosà on the Ceremonies of the Jews, page 296, published in French at Amsterdam, 1678.

paragraph, in speaking of the good and evil spirit of the ancient Egyptians *Osiris* and *Typho*, he puts *Typho* before *Osiris*. The error is just the same as if the Bishop, in writing about the Christian religion, or in preaching a sermon, were to say the *Devil and God*. A priest ought to know his own trade better. We agree, however, about the structure of the book of *Job*, that it is Gentile. I have said in the second part of the *Age of Reason*, and given my reasons for it, that *the drama of it is not Hebrew*.

From the testimonies I have cited, that of Origen, who, about fourteen hundred years ago, said that the book of *Job* was more ancient than *Moses*, that of Eben-Ezra, who in his commentary on *Job*, says, it has been translated from another language (and consequently from a Gentile language) into Hebrew; that of Spinoso, who not only says the same thing, but that the author of it was a Gentile; and that of the Bishop, who says that the structure of the whole book is Gentile. It follows then, in the first place, that the book of *Job* is not a book of the Jews originally.

Then in order to determine to what people or nation any book of religion belongs, we must compare it with the leading dogmas and precepts of that people or nation; and therefore, upon the Bishop's own construction, the book of *Job* belongs either to the ancient Persians, the Chaldeans, or the Egyptians; because the structure of it is consistent with the dogma they held, that of a good and evil spirit, called in *Job*, *God* and *Satan*, existing as distinct and separate beings, and it is not consistent with any dogma of the Jews.

The belief of a good and an evil spirit, existing as distinct and separate beings, is not a dogma to be found in any of the books of the Bible. It is not till we come to the New Testament that we hear of any such dogma. There the person called the Son of God, holds conversation with Satan on a mountain, as familiarly as is represented in the drama of *Job*. Consequently the Bishop cannot say, in this respect, that the New Testament is founded upon the Old. According to the Old, the God of the Jews was the God of every thing. All good and all evil came from him. According to Exodus it was God, and not the Devil, that hardened Pharaoh's heart. According to the book of Samuel it was an evil spirit from God that troubled Saul. And Ezekiel makes God to say, in speaking of the Jews, "*I gave them the statutes that were not good, and judgments by which they should not live.*" The Bible describes the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in such a contradictory

manner, and under such a two-fold character, there would be no knowing when he was in earnest and when in irony; when to believe, and when not. As to the precepts, principles, and maxims, in the book of Job, they shew that the people, abusively called the heathen in the books of the Jews, had the most sublime ideas of the Creator, and the most exalted devotional morality. It was the Jews who dishonoured God. It was the Gentiles who glorified him. As to the fabulous personifications introduced by the Greek and Latin poets, it was a corruption of the ancient religion of the Gentiles, which consisted in the adoration of a first cause of the works of the creation, in which the sun was the great visible agent.

It appears to have been a religion of gratitude and adoration, and not of prayer and discontented solicitation. In Job we find adoration and submission, but not prayer. Even the ten commandments enjoin not prayer. Prayer has been added to devotion, by the church of Rome, as the instrument of fees and perquisites. All prayers by the priests of the Christian church, whether public or private, must be paid for. It may be right, individually, to pray for virtues, or mental instruction, but not for things. It is an attempt to dictate to the Almighty in the government of the world. But return to the book of Job.

As the book of Job decides itself to be a book of the Gentiles, the next thing is to find out to what particular nation it belongs, and lastly, what is its antiquity.

As a composition, it is sublime, beautiful, and scientific: full of sentiment, and abounding in grand metaphorical description. As a drama, it is regular. The dramatis personæ, the persons performing the several parts, are regularly introduced, and speak without interruption or confusion. The scene, as I have before said, is laid in the country of the Gentiles, and the unites, though not always necessary in a drama, are observed here as strictly as the subject would admit.

In the last act, where the Almighty is introduced as speaking from the whirlwind to decide the controversy between Job and his friends, it is an idea as grand as poetical imagination can conceive. What follows of Job's future prosperity does not belong to it as a drama. It is an epilogue of the writer, as the first verses of the first chapter, which gave an account of Job, his country and his riches, are the prologue.

The book carries the appearance of being the work of some of the Persian Magi, not only because the structure of it corresponds to the dogmas of the religion of those people, as founded by Zoroaster, but from the astronomical references on it to the constellations of the zodiac and other objects in the heavens, of which the sun, or their religion called Mithra, was the chief. Job, in describing the power of God (Job ix. v. 27), says, "Who commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars—who alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea—who maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south." All this astronomical allusion is consistent with the religion of the Persians.

Establishing then the book of Job, as the work of some of the Persian or Eastern Magi, the case naturally follows, that when the Jews returned from captivity, by the permission of Cyrus, king of Persia, they brought this book with them; had it translated into Hebrew, and put into their scriptural canons, which were not formed till after their return. This will account for the name of Job being mentioned in Ezekiel (*Ezekiel, chap. xiv. v. 14*), who was one of the captives, and also for its not being mentioned in any book said or supposed to have been written before the captivity.

Among the astronomical allusions in the book, there is one which serves to fix its antiquity. It is that where God is made to say to Job, in the style of reprimand, "*Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades.*" (*Chap. xxxviii. ver. 31*). As the explanation of this depends upon astronomical calculation, I will, for the sake of those who would not otherwise understand it, endeavour to explain it as clearly as the subject will admit.

The Pleiades are a cluster of pale, milky stars, about the size of a man's hand, in the constellation Taurus, or in English, the Bull. It is one of the constellations of the zodiac, of which there are twelve, answering to the twelve months of the year. The Pleiades are visible in the winter nights, but not in the summer nights, being then below the horizon.

The zodiac is an imaginary belt or circle in the heavens, eighteen degrees broad, in which the sun apparently makes his annual course, and in which all the planets move. When the sun appears to our view to be between us and the group of stars forming such or such a constellation, he is said to be in that constellation. Consequently the constellation he

appears to be in, in the summer, are directly opposite to those he appeared in in the winter, and the same with respect to spring and autumn.

The zodiac, besides being divided into twelve constellations, is also, like every other circle, great or small, divided into 360 equal parts, called degrees; consequently each constellation contains 30 degrees. The constellations of the zodiac are generally called signs, to distinguish them from the constellations that are placed out of the zodiac, and this is the name I shall now use.

The precession of the equinoxes is the part most difficult to explain, and it is on this that the explanation chiefly depends.

The equinoxes correspond to the two seasons of the year, when the sun makes equal day and night.

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*\*\*\* The above is all the Publisher has been able to obtain of Mr. Paine's Answer to Bishop Watson. He is sorry to say, that it is somewhat doubtful whether the entire work will ever meet the public eye.*

FINIS.











