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ADVERTISEMENT.



AN association was formed during the last summer, by a few gentlemen, of whom some are now, and others have been, inhabitants of this city, for the purpose of composing a series of Miscellaneous Essays for the Richmond Enquirer. These Essays were regularly published every Saturday, during the months of August, September, and October. The first number appeared on the 11th of August, and the last on the 20th of October. These numbers, taken together in the order in which they were published, will constitute the first series of the Rainbow: and it is this first series which is now presented by the proprietors of the Enquirer to the amateurs of Literature, and to its patrons in Virginia. The second series will probably be communicated to the public in the present form, as soon as it shall be completed by the members of the association.

RICHMOND, Dec. 6th, 1804.

THE RAINBOW.

NUMBER I.

THE INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

On the UTILITY of MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS.

NO Literary Productions are more generally admired, or read with greater advantage and delight, than periodical and miscellaneous essays. Of this species of composition, the classical remains of antiquity do not furnish a single model, or solitary specimen. We shall not on this account, be disposed to entertain an humbler idea of its utility and dignity, when we retrace its origin and review its influence. Its descent, altho' not ancient, is sufficiently illustrious. It is the legitimate offspring of the art that ennobles and immortalises every work of genius; preserves the lights of science from extinction, and the beauties of literature from decay,—of the art that promises to make truth triumphant, liberty universal, and society progressive.—It claims its origin from the *art of printing*, and can only arrive at perfect maturity, produce its most wholesome fruits, and display all the luxuriance of its beauty, under the genial influence of a free press. Previous to the invention of the art of printing, there existed no means of bestowing on productions so fugitive and perishable, a form sufficiently permanent, or a circulation sufficiently diffusive. Until the press was unshackled from restraint, periodical essays could not become the vehicles of intercourse betwixt the enlightened and the ignorant, convey the maxims of moral and political truth, from the profound philosopher to the plodding ploughman, and transmit “the glowing sentiment and the lofty speculation” to minds of every grade and dimension. Nor have the effects of miscellaneous essays been less beneficial, than their origin was honorable. Their rapid multiplication, diversified enquiries, and extensive dispersion,

have made the benefits and pleasures of reading and reflection, common as light and air. They have opened a secure and an easy access to the garden of literature, and invited the humblest of Adam's descendants to pluck the ripe, wholesome, unforbidden fruits "of the tree of knowledge." They have fashioned and subdivided the bullion of science, before "monopolized by a few opulent minds," into a species of literary currency, of which the demand is incessant, and the circulation universal.

The composition of large and elaborate works on scientific subjects, requires a portion of genius and learning which is rarely attained by the sons of men. The profitable perusal even, of such works, presupposes an improvement of intellect and an extent of information, to which those who enjoy the advantages, of what is styled liberal education, rarely aspire. But, to compose with correctness and elegance, and peruse with advantage and delight, a short essay, on some instructive or amusing subject, demands only a moderate degree of ingenuity, curiosity and culture. Publications of this nature, are admirably adapted to improve and to amuse every description of readers, every class of society, every grade and variety of intellect. The indolent are allured by their brevity, the gay by their novelty and variety, the frivolous and superficial by the access they afford to some portion of rational entertainment and instruction, without persevering attention, or elaborate research. Even the sordid drudge of avarice, and the infatuated debauchee, who regard with indifference and disgust the voluminous depositories of science and learning, will be induced to animate the occasional intervals of business or dissipation, by the perusal of a lively or instructive essay. During these intervals, when the cares of selfishness are forgotten, when the senses are sated with indulgence, the "mental monitor wakes," and awakens liberal curiosity and serious meditation. In this state of mind, the man of business and the man of pleasure, look for something, which whilst it agreeably exercises their mental faculties, may prove an opiate to the suggestions of "rancorous remembrance," and fill "the aching void" of apathy and inaction. In this situation the perusal of short literary and moral essays, seems to be happily calculated to enliven and amuse a listless, weary or wounded mind: they communicate va-

luable information, suggest admirable reflections, and without requiring much earnestness of attention, or, occasioning unusual vehemence of emotion, imperceptibly enlighten the understanding and mend the heart. Could we trace with accuracy and minuteness, and illustrate by biographical anecdotes, the influence of moral and literary essays on all the varieties of individual mind, the correctness of these observations might probably receive the amplest confirmation. But facts of this sort are rarely observed, recollected or recorded. Although essentially connected with social happiness and personal improvement, they are destitute of those attractions that awaken curiosity and captivate attention. The historian deems every event unworthy of commemoration, which has not occurred in the "gorgeous palace" or the "tented field." The biographer, attracted by the vicissitudes of fortune, or the adventures of enterprise and genius, rarely possesses inclination or ability, to enrich his narrative by an analysis of the circumstances, that secretly fashion the character of the hero of his tale. Hence probably arises the difficulty of illustrating by *particular* instances and *striking* facts, the practical utility of periodical essays: not because such facts and instances do not exist, but because like the subtle agency of elastic fluids, they become observable only in their remote and combined effects, and in their primitive simplicity and secrecy, elude alike the indolence of the vulgar and the pride of the curious enquirer. But although we may explore in vain the volumes of history and biography for details of this sort, yet I will venture to refer with confidence to a more authentic and accessible, though less dignified source of information, *the personal experience of my readers*.

Let any of my readers, how scanty soever his opportunities for intellectual improvement may have been, recollect the books which originally awakened his sensibility to the beauties of literature, and accustomed his mind to rational speculation on the affairs of life, the character of man, the history, structure and prospects of society. He will probably find, that he was indebted for these inestimable benefits and refined pleasures, to the labours of the miscellaneous essayist. When I retrace the progress of my own mind (and on this subject I shall not probably expose myself to the charge of improper egotism, by referring to my own ex-

perience) I can truly say, that to the perusal of literary and moral essays, I was indebted for my most valuable juvenile acquisitions and enjoyments. They kept alive the flame of curiosity and the love of knowledge, which the jargon, rote, and discipline of an injudicious course of scholastic education had a direct tendency to extinguish. My mind, accustomed to miscellaneous enquiries and logical analysis, gradually acquired sufficient vigour and penetration to comprehend those more profound and methodical disquisitions of philosophy, which without these preliminary attainments, I should neither have possessed ability to analyse, nor courage to explore. For it ought to be clearly perceived, by every patriot, and if possible by every parent in Virginia, that unless the youthful mind is stored with elementary ideas, and exercised by miscellaneous enquiries, the truth deposited in the volumes of philosophy, will be inaccessible and useless "as the unsunned silver of the mine," and even the flowers that bloom in the garden of literature will "waste their sweetness in the desert air." There is probably no person who speaks the English language, however humble his capacity, or however narrow the range of his ideas, who has not imbibed some notion of literary and moral refinement from the essays of Addison, Johnson, Hawkesworth and Mackenzie. As well might it be believed, that the solar rays and genial dews, could penetrate the bosom of the earth without fertilizing the soil, as that the extensive circulation of such works as the Spectator, Rambler, Adventurer and Mirror should fail to improve and refine the general mind. Some are disposed to undervalue miscellaneous essays, on account of the light, cursory and superficial ideas which they necessarily convey. They have a tendency, it has been urged, to breed smatterers, pedants and sciolists, and to enable ignorant pretenders to usurp the stations, and assume the privileges which are due only to those who have attained solid and extensive information. This objection is probably altogether fallacious. What is urged as a disadvantage, is in truth one of the principal recommendations of miscellaneous essays. The mass of the people cannot be profound: peasants and mechanics cannot become philosophers, critics and scholars.* But altho' the un-

* The writer of this Essay, performs what he feels to be in the most emphatic sense of the term, a social duty, when on this subject he recommends to

alterable condition of society prevents a great majority of its members from attaining profound and comprehensive knowledge, is it desirable that they should be excluded from every degree of intellectual improvement? Do not the sobriety, industry, probity and intelligence of the active classes of society, essentially depend upon the ability they acquire, and the opportunities they enjoy, to devote some portion of their leisure to reading, conversation and reflection? Are not nations uniformly respectable, orderly and happy, in proportion to the degree in which they possess this ability and enjoy these opportunities? Surely, the general diffusion of useful knowledge is peculiarly desirable and even necessary amongst a people, who have recently organised a republican government; who possess individually a larger portion of liberty and leisure than any other upon earth; who, from the influence of pre-established habits and peculiar temptations to excessive sensuality, are opprobriously prone to abuse these inestimable boons; and who are called upon collectively and at short intervals to discharge political duties, to the faithful performance of which discernment and intelligence are indispensable qualifications. And, are not miscellaneous essays, from their cheapness, intelligibility and brevity, singularly adapted to facilitate and second the agency of other causes, in the accomplishment of this valuable end? May not the literary essayist in Virginia, aspire, without vanity or presumption, to occupy an higher rank in the scale of public estimation and moral utility, than any of his European models and precursors could indulge a hope of attaining?

Whilst the nations of Europe are involved in war, distracted with factions, and overrun by oppression, we enjoy the blessings of peace, liberty, security and leisure. We

such of his readers as may not have been fortunate enough to peruse "Essay on Population," by Malthus. From the perusal of this great work, he has derived more original and valuable information, on the most important subject that can exercise superior genius, or attract the attention of an enlightened people, than from any other book, or from all the other books he has ever read. It is equally calculated to correct the gross prejudices of mere common sense, and dissipate the splendid illusions of fanciful speculation respecting the immutable condition of man on earth, the productive causes and proper correctives of human misery and vice, and the future prospects of social improvement. To many of his readers this note may probably appear to be superfluous, and perhaps impertinent. For surely a work of such inestimable value and celebrity must be already in the hands of every man who aspires to discharge the functions of an editor, legislator or instructor in Virginia.

rest in the shade whilst they are toiling in the tempest ; we enjoy the substance, whilst they are pursuing a shadow ; their sun is verging towards evening, whilst ours is ascending to his noon. All that seems wanting to ripen the harvest of national happiness, which exhibits so luxuriant a promise, and realise every hope which human nature can rationally indulge, is a more extensive diffusion of useful knowledge. May not the regular insertion of miscellaneous essays on useful subjects, be employed with the happiest effects, for this important purpose ? Periodical prints are more numerous, more extensively dispersed, read by a greater number of individuals, and with greater avidity of attention in the United States, and particularly in Virginia, than in any other part, probably, of the civilised world. Does not this circumstance furnish the enlightened patriot with a *great moral power* for enlightening public opinion, and correcting anti-republican propensities and habits ? By this means every intelligent citizen may communicate immediately and distinctly, his convictions, his feelings, his information, and may even propose his conjectures, enquiries and doubts on important subjects, to every other ? The inviolable freedom of the American press ; the sleepless vigilance of its guardians, and the general intelligence of the people, preserve the atmosphere of public opinion, pure, clear and pervious throughout to the light of truth, from whatever quarter its irradiations may proceed, whatever facts they may reveal, and to whatever conclusions they may conduct the enlightened mind.

May not periodical prints, hitherto devoted almost exclusively to the publication of facts, principles and sentiments relative to foreign and domestic politics, embrace a greater variety of topics and a wider range of usefulness ? May not intelligent editors with the assistance of their enlightened friends and compatriots explore a richer field of enquiry, and accompany their political details, with information more elementary, miscellaneous and instructive ? Were the public prints uniformly conducted by men of genius, integrity and information ; were a few columns of every paper regularly devoted to the insertion of useful or elegant essays, composed by the editors themselves, or furnished by their literary friends ; were permanent associations formed by men of talents for the purpose of preparing successive-

ly, such essays for publication, how diffusive would be the influence of knowledge! how splendid the improvement of our national character! To how many noble purposes might not the judicious execution of a design of this sort be made subservient? Might not the composition of such essays and their extensive dispersion by the public prints, operate as a temporary substitute for the agency, and an auspicious preparative for the introduction, (on a purer and more comprehensive plan) of those public establishments and literary institutions, from which the nations of Europe derive so many inestimable benefits? Might they not be employed to compare our codes, constitution and legislative provisions, with the best existing standards of political truth, and thereby accelerate the removal of every imperfection which experience may unfold, and the adoption of every improvement which sagacity may suggest, genius invent, or experience reveal, for the progressive melioration of our political institutions? May they not be employed to review literary works of celebrity and importance, to display the merits of books calculated to enlighten, and expose the pernicious and fallacious reasonings of such as have a tendency thus to corrupt the minds of young and inexperienced readers? Might they not thus contribute, not only to encrease the number and extent of public and private libraries, but, (which is of infinitely greater moment) to facilitate the selection and circulation of useful books, and conduct ingenious and uninformed minds to the genuine fountains of improvement? Might they not thus assist in consigning to merited oblivion, those "volumes of delusion" which, whether from their antiquity, or their novelty, the charms of meretricious eloquence, the artifices of venal sophistry, or the contagious enthusiasm of conscientious error, are at present so extensively injurious: which, unless strangled in their birth, or arrested in their progress, must in every condition of civilized society, and especially under a republican government, greatly abridge and adulterate the benefits which the art of printing and the freedom of the press are so admirably adapted to dispense? May they not be employed to accomplish (what is at present a desideratum in moral science) a correct analysis of the proper province and purposes of amusive literature, illustrating their reasonings on these important subjects by cri-

tical remarks on the mechanism and moral tendency of such literary productions in poetry and prose, as may attract any considerable share of general curiosity and admiration? May not enlightened men, through the medium of periodical essays, inserted in the public prints, call the attention of parents and patriots to the solemn consideration of that momentous and neglected subject, the establishment of public schools? * Through this medium, may they not discuss with advantage the important question whether such establishments ought to be affected solely by the genius and enterprise of individuals, aided by local patronage and spontaneous contributions: or, whether academies should be established and endowed at the public expense, the various departments distributed into professorships, and instructors appointed by trustees incorporated by the legislature? In other words, whether the demand for juvenile instruction, like the demand for bread, should be supplied by the unfettered competition and unassisted industry of individuals, or adequately provided for by legislative interference and national institutions?

May not periodical essays be employed with peculiar advantage to improve the minds and manners of women, to extinguish that rage for expensive splendour and foreign fashions, and that fondness for scandal which must necessarily occupy the attention and dissipate the activity of uncultivated minds; and by exciting a taste for literature, reflection and rational conversation, banish those frivolous, unhealthy and unamiable amusements, which are at present so fatally fashionable amongst the fair? May not the reasonings of enlightened men, through this medium, have a powerful

* Were the writer of this Essay to conceive one of those tutelary divinities, to whom the fiction of classical mythology, and the credulity of primeval ages, consigned the superintendence of the destiny of nations, to inscribe on consecrated tablets, or reveal from "a fainted shrine" a monitory oracle to the patriots of America—IT WOULD BE THIS!—"In vain have the people, whose prosperity is committed to your care, obtained the fairest part of the *New World*; in vain are their liberties established on a basis alike immovable by foreign invasion and domestic conspiracy; in vain does an unfettered commerce extract from the collective industry of the world, whatever can supply their wants or multiply their enjoyments; in vain does the accumulated wisdom of ages deposit its treasures at their feet. These advantages cannot secure the happiness which the genius of Columbia has promised to bestow, until thro' the medium of a purer and more comprehensive plan of juvenile education, the rising generation shall adopt sentiments and habits suitable to the dignity of the characters they aspire to form, and the glorious career they are invited to pursue."

tendency to divert the predominant passion of every generous and enlightened spirit, the *love of distinction*, into its natural channel, the acquisition of useful knowledge, the exhibition of liberal accomplishments, and the achievements of moral enterprise and expanded beneficence? In fine, might not an extensive combination and regular succession of such literary associations, speedily restore that simplicity of manners and dignity of soul, that characterised the ancient republics, and eradicate from the minds of our people their predilection for those expensive luxuries, which constitute the baubles of our colonial childhood, the badges of the aristocratical distinctions we have abjured, and the idols of the abominable passions, which we have sworn on the altars of the revolution to expunge from our souls?

Can the enlightened patriot conceive or contrive a plan fraught with more extensive benefits to his country than this? Can a generous and heroic ambition, pant for a purer glory, or a more splendid prize than is here proposed! Might not the American press thus conducted, be said without extravagance & hyperbole, "to embrace millions in its grasp and educate in one school the preceptor and his pupil!"

O.

P. S. The writers of the essays, the first of which is now presented to the public, will not probably attempt to investigate all or even any considerable number of the topics, which have been just suggested. The writer of the preceding essay however, indulges a hope from the number of his literary associates, the corresponding diversity of subjects which will naturally divide their attention, and the abundant leisure which the intervals of rotation will afford, without an injurious or inconvenient interference with their professional duties, that their essays will afford some degree of pleasure and improvement to every description of readers.

He indulges a hope that the title prefixed to the essays, will be found neither an unmeaning emblem, nor a faithless indication of their character and tendency. Not that the most attractive ornament of a vernal sky, the beauteous offspring of the glittering dewdrop and the solar ray, the welcome harbinger of fruitful showers and exuberant vegetation, is chosen to allegorise and announce their high hopes of the literary attractions, or moral utility of their essays. The

title of the Rainbow was selected on account of its novelty and for the purpose of discrimination. It is intended to convey no other emblematic reference to the essays it discriminates and adorns, than as its varied hues and transient duration, may serve to indicate the diversity of amusing topics which they will embrace, and the fugitive form they will assume. Perhaps in another point of view, the Rainbow may serve to denote, vividly and justly, the intention of the writers of these, and the general tendency of, moral and miscellaneous essays.

We are taught by the traditions of our fathers to believe, that this lovely phenomenon, first made its appearance in the sky, to announce the cessation of a deluge, and the returning mercies of an offended God. The bow suspended in the celestial arch unstrung in sign of peace, presents to the Christian a mild memento of the former displeasure and a delightful token of the future benignity of his God, affords a beautiful subject of allusion to the poet, and analysis to the philosopher; ravishes with its beauty even "the brute unconscious gaze," and is hailed by the peaceful husbandman as the pleasing pledge of vernal luxuriance and autumnal plenty. Is not the Rainbow, therefore, happily fitted to indicate the attractions and utility of a species of composition, which has an analogous influence in moral nature, which divides the "rays of science" into all their native and beautiful colours; captivates, by its novelty and variety the attention of every description of readers, and showers its prolific bounties on minds of every dimension and in all situations? May not the *Rainbow* afford an appropriate and auspicious title to a design, whose object it is to divert some portion of public curiosity to enquiries in which all parties and classes are equally interested, because in these the detection of error and the discovery of truth are equally desired by all?

NUMBER II.

On the CONDITION of WOMEN.

IT has been said that the civilization of a country may be fairly estimated by the degree of respect which is paid to its women. The sentiment is not more gallant than it

just. Its truth has been demonstrated by Messieurs Alexander, Thomas, Russell, and various other writers; who, for this purpose, have resorted, not to any abstracted enquiries into the characters of the sexes; but to a direct appeal to the experience of nations. They have shewn, by a curious and most interesting investigation, that from the benighted and sensual savage of New-Zealand, or of Nootka Sound, through every gradation, up to the polished gentleman of Europe or America, the deference and veneration for the female part of the society is exactly in proportion to the degree of refinement which each nation has attained. In a national point of view, Virginia need not to shrink from this test of her refinement. In every social circle in which the sexes are blended, we may observe a sanctity as well as a tenderness of attention to the fair, which would not disgrace a knight in the proudest days of chivalry. But the moralist, who aims at the culture of the virtues, will direct his attention not so much to the manners of the drawing-room, as to those which may be observed in still more private life. He will look through the ceremonies which men may act from deference to their company, and by which indeed, they recognize and bow obedience to the sentiment above expressed; he will look through these blinds of state, into the bosom of the private family, and watch the manners of the husband and the father when every restraint is removed. It will be by the discoveries which he shall make here, that he will direct his admonitions; and on this ground, I fear that the moralist, not of Virginia only, but of all those states which boast of their refinement, will find too much room for censure and admonition.

What is true of nations, in this case, is, I presume, equally true of individuals; or in other words the civilization of the man, like that of the nation, may be fairly estimated by the degree of respect which he pays to the fair. When I speak of civilization, I do not mean science; since we have sometimes seen a very highly illuminated mind, connected with a cold, a malignant, or a ferocious heart; but by civilization, I mean, that change which is wrought upon the savage man by the humanizing, softening, refining power of social virtue. Neither by *respect to the fair* do I mean the bows and grimace of a *petit maitre*, which a monkey might learn; nor the still more imposing exterior

of elegance and sensibility which a Zeluco could assume; but, by *respect to the fair*, I mean a genuine and tender deference, which has not merely glanced upon the surface, but penetrated and pervaded every portion of the heart; I mean not an occasional shew, but a sincere, a perennial, an habitual respect and affection, which renders a man involuntarily assiduous to the wants, and sympathetic with the minutest sufferings of the softer and gentler sex. With these explanations, I resume my position, and I beg my male reader to assure himself that whatever figure he may make in other respects; however brilliantly he may shine as a man of erudition, genius, wit, or humour, he is, nevertheless, civilized or not in proportion as he has learned to respect the fair; and more particularly that portion of them whose protection he may have assumed.

It is a mournful truth that the life of the finest girl among us, is too often a series of suffering and of sorrow. Too many of them pass on to death, without having once found the "sunny slope" of tranquillity, on which they could repose and declare themselves, for a moment, at ease. Their sufferings begin often with life. The restraint of their childhood even when they are salutary, are sources of trouble; because their motive is not yet perceived by the young & inexperienced mind. But not unfrequently the restraints of childhood instead of being prompted by parental wisdom and tenderness, are the momentary dictates of headlong passion and brutal cruelty. This tyranny commenced in their childhood, is extended even to their maturer years; and it becomes the more severe as it is then inflicted on a mind capable of estimating its wrongs, and often exerted on those sensibilities of the heart which can least brook the curb and lash of authority. Marriage itself is, too frequently, little more than a change of tyrants; and the idol of the sighing and adoring lover, dwindles down into the neglected, oppressed, insulted drudge of an unprincipled and profligate husband. If the poor, lonely mourner, gives birth to sons; she looks on with remorse to the time when they, in their turn, armed with the authority of a husband, shall "play such fantastic tricks before high Heaven, as will make even angels weep": if she gives birth to daughters—it would not be a subject of great wonder, if, like the miserable mothers on the banks of the Oronoko,

she should slay them, out of compassion, & smother them in the hour of their birth.—How many women have here their history sketched! Look closely into the domestic movements of our people, and you will find that this sombre picture has too many originals. I am not accusing parents or husbands with the practice of savage violence on their daughters or their wives: to a generous woman there are many wrongs infinitely more humiliating and agonizing than the infliction of actual violence.

The destiny of poor *Maria* differed in some respects from the preceding sketch. *Maria* was among the fairest and sweetest girls that I have ever known. If the love of the fondest and best of parents—if the most enchanting grace and beauty—if the pure spirit and dispositions of a seraph could have saved her from misery, *Maria* had been saved. My heart bleeds at the recollection of her. But let me try to command myself while I tell this tale of joy turned into sorrow; of the fairest hopes reversed and blasted—of the brightest lustre and beauty extinguished forever.

Her parents were not rich; but they were good. Although they had lived much in the world, they retained a simplicity of character which is now rarely encountered except in the description of poets. Their benevolent breasts were fraught with a tenderness of feeling whose luxury is known only to the poor and humble. The rich and the prosperous know it only by name. Their simplicity, their benevolence, their sensibility were concentrated in the bosom of the young *Maria*—They gave an emphasis to her opening beauty—suffused her cheek with a richer hue—and rode, in triumph, on the beams of her eyes, through the heart of every beholder. I remember *Maria* at her first appearance in the ball room. She was then about fourteen years of age. The enquiry ran——“what rose-bud of beauty is this?” The epithet was applied with peculiar propriety: it depicted in one word, her youth, her beauty, her innocence and sweetness. She danced; when, light and ethereal as a sylph, she surpassed whatever we have read of the wild, the striking, the captivating graces displayed by the rural beauties on the flowery side of *Ætna*. It was easy to read in the countenance of this gay and artless young creature the exulting expectations with which she was entering on life. Her childhood had passed away amid the blandish-

ments and caresses of her fond parents ; all had been ease, indulgence, and gratification ; admired, applauded and beloved by every body who saw or knew her, every day, every hour, every minute had been filled with animation, joy and rapture. As yet she had frolicked only on "life's velvet lawn," covered with a canopy of blooming amaranth ; and her young fancy was teeming with visions of bliss in bright and boundless prospect. Alas ! poor Maria ! How soon was this serene and joyous morning to be overcast ? A lover presented himself. Like Maria, he was in the bloom of youth, and had every advantage of person and address ; but his breast was not like Maria's, the residence of pure and exalted virtue. He loved her indeed ; or rather, he was infatuated by her beauty ; but he was incapable of forming a correct estimate of the treasure which was lodged in her bosom ; of that heart whose purity, fidelity, generosity and sensibility, an angel might have avowed without a blush. The dupe, however, of fervent and pathetic professions, she accepted this man ; and Maria, who was formed to crown the happiness of a sensible and virtuous man, became the miserable wife of a weak and vicious one. Merciful God ! Must I remember the contrast which I so often witnessed, in agony ! Poor Maria ! Her velvet lawn was exchanged for a wilderness of briars and brambles ; her amaranthine canopy, for the keen and cutting blasts of a winter's sky. I have seen Maria in the thronged assembly-room when every eye was fixed upon her with delight, and followed her in speechless admiration thro' the mazes of the graceful dance ; and I have seen the same Maria far removed from the world's society, and, even yet in the bloom of youth, all lonely and drooping like a wounded flower. I have seen the lovely girl, presiding, like a bright, propitious planet, at her father's hospitable board ; and I have seen her the solitary and menial drudge of her own gloomy and forsaken household. I have beheld her the animating soul of the polished circle, dispensing light and life by her smiles—and my own soul has sunk within me, to see her insulated from the world, and pierced and languishing under the neglect of her once ardent and assiduous husband. She had seen the time when every transitory dejection of countenance had been watched by him, its cause sedulously explored, and consolation administered with a tenderness

which could not fail of its effect. But now, without a single enquiry, without one touch of pity, he could see her face pale with sorrow, and her once radiant eyes dim with weeping. At such a moment, instead of bending before her as he had once done, and pressing her hand to his sympathetic heart, he could cast on her a look so cold and chilling as to freeze the vital stream of life even in its fountain, fling out of his house with contempt and disgust, and lavish on the vicious and impure, those affectionate attentions which he had solemnly vowed to her alone. He might have been happy; and he might have realized to his beautiful wife all those dreams of conjugal innocence and bliss with which her youthful fancy was wont to regale her. But instead of those pure and calm joys, whose recollection might have gilded even the moment of death, he chose riot, debauchery and guilt; to his own virtuous and celestial bed, he preferred habitual impurity and prostitution; and instead of the perpetual spring which she had fondly anticipated, poor Maria experienced only perpetual winter. The blast was too keen for her tender frame. She is gone; and, with her sister angels, she has found that peace which her unfeeling husband refused to her on earth. Her death stunned him into his senses. In vain he endeavoured to recall her fleeting breath; in vain he promised and vowed if she could be restored to him, to atone for his past neglect by future tenderness. To him the resolution of amendment came too late; may it come in time to a portion of my readers.

Y.

NUMBER III.

On POLITENESS.

THE efforts of individuals to correct and reform society would be more efficient, if it were not for the pertinacity with which most of us assume the exclusive right to examine our own faults. The propriety of erecting an independent tribunal to decide between persons indifferent to us, is never questioned; but touch ourselves or our favourites, and we instantly become hoodwinked: errors the most glaring are readily covered by partiality, while we adorn

with the utmost subtilty, all that is engaging and meritorious.—There are however those, who with becoming diffidence lend their minds to the tutelage of experience : to such I address myself, since they may be operated upon, although in different degrees, by discreet and temperate reproof.

Every member of society has certainly a deep interest in promoting that quality, which we understand by the appropriate term, **POLITENESS**. In the intercourse which necessarily subsists between individuals in affairs of commerce, politics, arts and science, so much of our pleasure depends upon the urbanity and good breeding of our companions, that no hint should be disregarded, which may, in the remotest degree improve our manners or refine our tastes.—Some men have learnt to appreciate the advantages of genteel deportment and suavity of manners ; and conscious of the influence they have attained by the respect which such qualities command, *only because they are rare*, have applied them to purposes of seduction : they have thereby too often stolen the affections of the people, & wounded their morals by examples of deception, which however specious, are disowned and disdained by the frankness of genuine politeness.—In republics therefore, it is essentially important, that we should cultivate affability and politeness. This would lead to an habitual elegance, and an agreeable *equality of manners* : an equality as desirable as that of intellect, and scarcely less important than that which our law of distributions was designed to promote.—An interchange of civilities, and a tender of reciprocal aid among neighbours, would win the heart of any man, that would take the trouble to contrast them with such manners as are always the offspring of a rude and unpolished state of society ; where brutal intoxication and the horrible dexterity of pugilism are in the van : where the loss of an ear may disfigure us, or the loss of our eyes deprive us of all that is beautiful. Bereft of the most delightful sense, the parent may hear the voice of his beloved infant, but the angelic smile of innocence which touches the tenderest fibre in his heart is forever closed from his view.—Let us then by correcting our manners, restrain by degrees that ferocity and licentiousness, which have afforded the enemies of democracy some plausible grounds of censure.—

That we can all attain the same eminence in the various

graces which ornament a truly polite man, is not to be expected. Clowns and Coxcombs will fill up their circle, and a few of them answer very well to form a comparison. There are nevertheless certain leading points, which every man of common sense may acquire: namely—patience in argument—forbearance towards the ignorant—a prompt attention to those with whom we have to transact business: the strictest delicacy and respect towards females—an unbounded attention to cleanliness: and, avoid absence: that *dignified inattention* which claims the repetition of our names before we can condescend to *lend an ear*, is insufferable. Above all; if you wish to retain the supremacy of your species—if it is not your desire to degenerate into the most disgusting and swinish brutality, give yourself time to take your meals! pray do not employ both hands in serving your mouth, nor labor till you perspire. Never be too busily employed in emptying your own plate, to assist the company to the viands that are near you.—The ceremonies of the table, constitute an important item in *good breeding*. I have frequently been disgusted with the habits of some of your ostentatious dispensers of flesh, vegetables, &c. They will insist upon it that you *eat nothing*; and although you earnestly contend for the contrary, persist in helping you to a *nice little bit* of their own choice. When we analyse this behavior, it stands thus: “Sir, you must feel some embarrassment, since you have not been accustomed to such company as that of which you are now a member; pray disengage yourself from the confusion which perplexes you: it destroys your appetite: I am truly sorry to see you under such restraint: choose for yourself, or, as I know what is good better than you do, I will choose for you: I assure you that you are heartily welcome; consider yourself at home.”—All this stuff is probably uttered with so little grace and sincerity, and merely because the upstart who repeats it has heard something like it at those tables to which *his Dollars have been invited*, that the person to whom it is addressed, if he has common sense, feels insulted and degraded by his visit, and too well assured that *he is not at home*. It is ridiculous to tell a man how free he may behave at your house; he can ascertain this by your manners: but if you want address to give him a complete idea of your hospitality, you had better let him guess at it than foolish-

ly attempt to ornament beyond its bearing, that which he has the means of comprehending.—Every man can *feel* when he is welcome.

When the ceremony of eating is over, the no less fatiguing routine of wine-drinking demands its due respect. Here most frequently, although brutal inebriation is avoided, enough is taken into the brain, to produce

“A clash of argument, and jar of words,
“Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords.”

When this *happy point* is reached, we are told in bacchanalian language, to leave *no heel-taps*. In obedience to custom, and through respect to the benevolent gentleman who will not permit us to depart either *sorrowful or sober*, we take off heel-taps, till we have some very serious admonitions that they are transferred to the brain. This is a *glorious point gained*: we are now prepared to drink a *Toast*, and a *BUMPER*! This punishment, for such it often is, is not prescribed by the company: the master of the house, who has requested his guests *to act precisely as they pleased*, dictates a toast, probably disgusting and offensive to three-fourths of the company. By the bye, toasts lead to excess and irritation: Excess, by keeping a party over the fumes of wine, when otherwise, they would retire to a drawing-room, and converse rationally and temperately; Irritation, when an unpopular or ridiculous toast is given. For example—the first toast which you receive from an agent of the British government, is *GEORGE the third*! Unluckily, this gentleman is frequently out of his senses: we had as well drink *PEC NICHOLSON*. So, when General Washington was President of the United States, have some of those characters drank his health at the house of the American minister, who had theretofore proscribed him as a traitor and a rebel.

There is a fitness in things which should always be regarded. When we hear of a man eminent for his talents, integrity, and devotion to polite learning; when for instance, we read his speeches in some public assembly, and find them bold, nervous and beautiful; when we know him to be the ardent and zealous advocate of the rights of man, and disinterestedly risking health and tranquillity for the good of his country; the generous mind lingers for an opportunity to offer testimonials of regard and veneration to one so

highly entitled to them. The period at length arrives, when the stranger is to meet with this object of respect and esteem.—With such qualities previously ascertained, he of consequence associates the accomplishments of easy deportment, of free access, and gentlemanly affability. These acquirements have frequently been seen together; and as a judicious writer has remarked, when two objects have been seen together, the imagination acquires a habit of passing easily from one to the other. If the first appears, we lay our account that the second is to follow, and we feel an impropriety in their separation. We miss something that we expected to find, and the habitual arrangement of our ideas is disturbed by the disappointment. So it is at the first interview with the person just described. We seize the introduction, to cultivate an acquaintance with a man so eminently useful, and of talents so brilliant. But to our mortification and chagrin, and in return for the compliment which our countenances upon such occasions *never fail* to express, a cold repulsive bow and a *leaden hand*, require you to be more distant. They bid you to approach the majestic sternness of democracy, with steps of caution and reserve. In conversation, contradiction however decently expressed, produces a dignified silence. If you essay once more to renew the topic, a stiff revolution upon the heel, and some observation to a third person, closes for ever the debate. And gladly let it close, says the disappointed stranger; so says every independent citizen. The talents of such a man may command respect, but the friendly affections of the heart, will seek for materials more congenial with themselves: they will not attempt to rest in a climate so cold and inauspicious to their growth. Hence a due regard to manners somewhat more flexible, becomes an object of important consideration, even to minds which look down upon them as light and frivolous. We should consult our friends, and correct habits in some degree immoral and injurious. Injurious, because the want of good manners must in some measure check the progress of exertions, which would otherwise obtain a wider spread. Much depends upon the accessibility and engaging ease of him who wishes to give force and currency to his opinions. From the picture just drawn, we turn with delight to those *great men*, who have the art of uniting us to their hearts at

once : Who have attained the inimitable facility of interchanging ideas so completely, that they seem to impart all they know and all they feel : by such characters, we are imperceptibly elevated in our own opinions, and are stimulated to reach such excellence. They keep nothing under that mysterious reserve, which would seem to say you know not all ; some qualities of my mind and some acquirements, have raised me above you ; these I hold close.—When such people fall in my way, I know that they have gained a reputation to which they are not entitled, and that it must be supported by art. Fearful to lose a point of dignity and fame, because they feel that they have neither talents nor address to retrieve it, they humbly take refuge under a *mysterious carriage of the body, to cover the defects of the mind.*

EXAMINER.

NUMBER IV.

FRENCH REVOLUTION;

A N D

EMPERORSHIP OF BONAPARTE.

THE intelligence that Bonaparte has founded his imperial throne, on the ruins of republican France, has excited very opposite sensations, among the political sects of different civilized nations ; of joy and triumph with the advocates of despotism ; of indignation and regret, among the friends of liberty ; if not unpleasant sensations of doubt and despair, with respect to the general practicability of mild and economical political institutions. The first may be supposed to have felt that kind of troubled pleasure, if pleasure it can be called, which Milton describes the arch-fiend to have enjoyed, when he seduced the mother of mankind ; or that still more horrid sentiment of malicious satisfaction, which the same poet attributes to death, when he was made acquainted with the numberless victims, which the success of his infernal father would furnish his devouring jaws : they “ grin horribly, a ghastly smile.” They are much better pleased that the French revolution has commenced, progressed and terminated as it *appears* to have done, than if such a revolution had never taken place, and the ancient

despotism had remained unshaken. They consider the experiment and its failure as the last link in the long chain of proofs, which tend to establish unalterably and incontrovertibly, this great and important political axiom—THE INSECURITY AND INSTABILITY OF REPUBLICAN INSTITUTIONS. They declare that we have now before our eyes the fairest experiment, the grandest effort, and the ablest conducted attempt towards the establishment of a representative democracy, in a highly enlightened nation; that has ever been made: And that its failure is a confirmation of the universal testimony of all antiquity, and the experience of modern times, that mankind are so radically and irremediably prone to vice and corruption as to render them unfit, and, in fact, incapable of governing themselves, but require the chastening hand of a *master* to secure their *happiness*. They contend, whatever doubts may have been heretofore entertained, with respect to the probability of a gradual emancipation of the human race, from civil and religious tyranny, in proportion as they become enlightened, on the subject of their political and social rights, that *now*, such doubts must be changed into certainties of their impracticability; what was once prophecy, is now history; what was once conjecture is now experience; what was once theory, is now practice. The example of antiquity it is no longer necessary, say they, to produce; they are willing to rest the force of the argument on the *French experiment*: external violence had no agency in the destruction of French liberty; like Rome of old, she lost her liberty at the period when she had triumphed over all her enemies; but the French revolution was a monster, generated in vice and depravity, which, for lack of other victims, has at length devoured its own abortive offspring. The destruction of this monster and its offspring produces the return of social order, tranquillity and happiness, which can only be secured by monarchy. Emperor Napoleon has awakened the dreaming philosopher, and rent the veil from the eyes of the visionary speculator. With better success than Canute, when he addressed the surges that rolled at his feet, he has issued his mandate to the rising flood of liberty and emancipation—"so far shalt thou go—and no farther!" Such is an abstract of what I imagine to be the feelings and opinions of the advocates of despotic power.

Far different are those entertained by the friend of liberty. The freedom of another hemisphere seemed to dawn, and gleam upon his delighted soul, like the all-cheering luminary of day; but the vice of man has overshadowed the scene; his fancies have fled from before him, as the unreal shades of deceptive twilight; the long night of despotism succeeds. He looks back with regret to the beautiful visions which he indulged, at a period when he could hail a French, a Batavian, an Helvetian, a Ligurian, a Cisalpine, a Roman, and a Parthenopean Republic, as inhabiting, like America, "the modest mansion" of representative democracy. In the bitterness of his soul he curses the bloody tyrant who has directed the master energies of his mind to the destruction of those fair fabrics. Bonaparte might have ranked with the Scipios and Catos of antiquity; he is now associated with the despots of modern Europe; his venerated name would have gone down the stream of time, 'till time shall be no more, and unfading laurels have encircled his immortal brow; it will now descend, with accumulating disgrace, to the latest posterity; and infamy, eternal, everlasting, will be inseparably connected with his name. But the friend of liberty, indignant at the usurpation of Bonaparte, and lamenting the event as a permanent and irremediable destruction of the freedom of France, although he does honor to the generosity and ardor of his republican feelings, yet falls into the error of slaves and tyrants, when he believes that the Organic Senatus Consultum is the grave of French liberty. Though his feelings and actions are perfectly dissimilar, yet he seems to believe, with them, that it is a fate, which even American freedom will one day experience, when age has ripened it for the repose of despotism, and time for the sleep of death. But these opinions and feelings, if I may judge from my own experience, will, in a great measure subside; and our contempt for the worn out, common-place, ordinary direction, which Bonaparte's ambition has taken, will, in some degree, be diminished, upon cooler and more mature reflection. We shall be led to enquire whether the elevation of Bonaparte is really so permanently inauspicious to liberty, and disastrous to France, as the honest indignation of our first impressions would persuade us to believe. In this inquiry, two prominent points seem to present themselves for considera-

tion. *First*; Has the French revolution actually ended? *Second*; If it has ended, what will France, in particular, and the general cause of liberty and of mankind, lose or gain by it?

The most ancient and general division of the different kinds of governments, is into monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical. But this division does not appear to discriminate with sufficient precision, between the most usual systems of rule established among men. I speak in general terms; I do not descend to the particular and numberless modifications and mixtures, of which they are all susceptible. I shall adopt therefore, as a first and general division, one that appears liable to fewer objections, viz: Despotism—Limited Monarchy—and, Representative Democracy. It cannot be denied by the most enthusiastic philanthropist, that there are many nations, whose moral and political condition will not admit of any other species of government than the first—that is absolute and unqualified despotism. Such are most of the nations of Asia and Africa, and many in Europe. Neither will it be denied, I presume, that there are other nations, among whom there has been such a diffusion of knowledge, particularly as it respects their rights and liberties, as to admit of a milder government—limited monarchy. The most enlightened nations of Europe, (other circumstances concurring) are in a situation to enjoy this kind of government. For instance Great-Britain; which actually does enjoy it; and perhaps several other nations of Europe are equally qualified. But *it is* denied by many, (not enlightened philosophers, indeed,) that *any* nation is now, or will ever be capable of governing itself, permanently, by a representative democracy. It is in vain to tell them that experience, as upon other occasions, is the surest test of truth, and to point out to them, which by the bye, they cannot avoid seeing, unless wilfully blind, our own happy representative democracy, now “in the full tide of successful experiment.” They will answer as has been answered three thousand years ago, and, for ought I know, will be answered three thousand years hence, by a prediction—that such a state of things will not last *always*. Now as the period for verifying this prediction, like the mission of the Jewish Messiah is *always* approaching but never ar-

rives, the argument must stop here ; for who will attempt to disprove a prediction, which allows eternity for its accomplishment ? Yet notwithstanding this denial of the practicability and permanence of representative democracies, I shall not resist the evidence at present before me, that I actually reside under such a government. After making these distinctions, I proceed to observe that the seventeen states of North-America, called the United States, enjoy the best of all governments, a representative democracy ; one or two in Europe, the next best, a limited monarchy ; and, that the rest of mankind, who live under any regular government, are subjected to the worst of all—despotism. It seems to be acknowledged by most of those, whose opinions are entitled to any respect, that a representative democracy ensures a greater portion of happiness to a larger number of individuals than the best constituted limited monarchy. But from the doubts which continue to be entertained, of the practicability and permanence of such governments—from the anarchy incident to ancient republics, and the more recent example of France—many very well meaning and intelligent men, the friends of human happiness, believe that a limited monarchy is the best safeguard against the miseries of despotism, as well as the disorders of republicanism, which generally terminate in tyranny. This opinion, however erroneous, is entertained by a very respectable portion of civilized society. A majority perhaps, counting numbers, are in favour of a representative democracy. Some few, abandoned of God and man, with cool deliberate villainy, advocate the cause of despotism. Crowds follow through venality or timidity. This class, therefore, is numerous, but base. It is thus that parties seem to be divided in every civilized nation of the earth. At the commencement of the French revolution, it is believed, that a great majority of the thinking part of the nation were in favour of limited monarchy. The advocates of despotism were those only who were immediately interested in its continuance—the king, the nobility, and the clergy. Even many of these too, virtuous and great men, joined either the mild monarchists, or the rigid republicans. So that many nobles and ecclesiastics, as well as philosophers, and factious zealots, were in favor, from the beginning, of establishing a representative democracy, on

the ruins of the old monarchy. But, as just mentioned, limited monarchy appears to have been the wish of the nation. It was therefore established by the constituting Assembly of 1789, 1791 and 1792. Happy had this been the last, as it was the first era of the French revolution. Two causes produced the destruction of this constitution, and the shocking scenes of violence, anarchy and bloodshed which ensued; the insincerity and flight of the king, and the insulting manifestoes and actual invasion of France by the combined powers. It was evident that Louis XVI would not be faithful to the constitution, nor exercise the powers with which it had invested him, for the defence of the nation. Under the pressure of existing circumstances it therefore became necessary to depose the king and elect another, or, to abolish the office and alter the constitution. Many enlightened friends of liberty were for the first measure; but their adversaries prevailed. This change was premature; it was a kind of government for which the French were evidently unfit. It is never politic to establish the simplest forms of government upon the ruins of the most tyrannical. It requires a generation or two to clear away the rubbish of prejudice and vicious habits. Some middle course is best; for, as it is observed by an elegant historian, "among the many ills originating from, or inherent in slavery, it renders its victims long unfit for the enjoyment of the very blessings they have panted after." This state of things therefore could not be permanent. Accordingly a government was organized by the convention, upon the more complex principle of checks and balances, with a splendid and energetic executive. But the new born French citizen had not as yet arrived to a sufficient maturity of age, and stability of principle, to walk without the leading strings and corrective arm of a much stronger authority than was conferred upon, or imposed by the executive directory, and the two councils of ancients and of five hundred. This government was eminently defective; and lost all the conquests achieved by the unexampled enthusiasm, which the national convention, and their committees of public safety, infused into the republican soldiery. Perhaps this is no weak argument in favour of a numerous executive, in opposition to the received opinion, that to ensure secrecy and dispatch, it is necessary that the execu-

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tive, especially in times of warfare, should be composed of a single individual, or, at least a small number. Dissensions and factions in the cabinet and councils, and bribery and corruption among the ministers and generals produced repeated disasters and continued defeats among the national troops. France was at this time engaged in a destructive war with almost all Europe, and a part of Asia and Africa. The government was despised by the generals, who in their turn lost the confidence of their armies; and the coalition of despots seemed once more about to subjugate the republic, or deprive her of her fairest provinces. More energetic and united councils or a change in the government was called for. The first seemed unattainable; the second was contemplated, under the auspices of Moreau; and by him rejected. At this critical period Bonaparte arrived from Egypt, and usurped the government of France from the feeble hands of the Directory, almost without a struggle. We have thus seen the French attempt to mould down an absolute despotism into a limited monarchy; we have seen them foiled in the attempt by the perfidy of the man whom they had permitted to remain their chief executive hereditary magistrate, and by the atrocious policy of the surrounding kings; we have seen the disorders which ensued, upon the dissolution of this government, among a people "made mad by oppression, and drunk with the acquisition of new born power;" we have seen their disorders imperfectly corrected, by "experiments hastily begotten in the bosom of tempests;" and lastly, we have seen these tempests lulled at the irresistible mandate of a military adventurer! * * * * * This usurpation must be *permitted* by the French nation, from one, or the other of these causes; *first*, an actual inability to resist the military force at the disposal of the usurper; or, *second*, a desire to re-establish the ancient despotism; or, *third*, and last, a national langour, a kind of tedium, a wish for repose, after the gigantic struggles of the revolutionary contest. The first supposition cannot be admitted. However *indisposed* the French nation may, *at present*, be, to go into such an extreme, they certainly are not *unable*, instantaneously to crush the power of Bonaparte. The throne of Louis XVI. himself the successor of sixty-eight kings, was supported by the veneration of fourteen centuries; by the most nu-

merous, opulent, and enthusiastic nobility in Europe, and by large bodies of devoted mercenaries and loyal troops : yet when the nation willed it, Louis tumbled from his height of power. Bonaparte is an upstart foreigner, whose reign has just commenced, the founder of his own dynasty ; unsupported by, or allied to, any respectable class of ancient nobility ; and although in point of military force he exceeds any of the former monarchs of France, yet if the nation willed it, Napoleon would share a similar fate to that of Louis ; or a man who more resembles him, Robespierre. It may therefore be concluded that the present order of things is not permitted in France from any inability in the nation, to resist the power of Bonaparte.

Does it then proceed, in the second place, from their desire to re-establish despotism ? This desire did not manifest itself at the formation of the first constitution ; for it was professedly instituted, to limit and restrain that despotism. Nor was it at the decapitation of Louis XVI ; for then the monarchy was changed into a republic. If such then was ever the latent wish of the nation, it would have exhibited itself at some period of defeat, disaster, or weakness of the republican government ; but the national spirit never seemed to be roused so high, as when the republic was in danger. When the Duke of Brunswick invaded France, and during the war of La Vendee, when the French royalists had actually defeated the republican generals in many pitched battles, and conquered or occupied many departments, upon the supposition that the nation had had any hankering for *its first love* of despotism, the dormant desire would have been awakened into action, and the Bourbons restored. But the republican spirit was never more ardent than at these periods. This wish then can only be supposed to have manifested itself, at the present epoch, when Bonaparte has assumed the imperial purple. This event, however, appears to have been effected more by internal apathy, the consequence of wearisome struggles, than any cordial acquiescence of the French nation. The jealousy and animosity of the neighbouring nations, the dread of internal commotions, with a sense, under such circumstances, of the necessity of a strong, military government,—these causes have elevated Bonaparte ; and when these causes cease to exist, royalty, in France, will make its quiet exit,

along with them.—Opinions, feelings and passions operate the same upon thirty millions of individuals, as they do upon one ; and according to every law, by which opinions, feelings or passions are associated together, a returning fondness for despotism would have been connected with a renewed idolatry towards the Capets. Experience, in aid of theory confirms this truth. When the death of Oliver Cromwell and the imbecility of his son Richard awakened the royalists of England to a sense of their strength, the re-establishment of kingly government produced the re-establishment of the Stuarts.

A party in this country, who, under the appellation of a strong government, mean a limited monarchy, always connect their wishes upon this subject, with the forms and principles of the British constitution. From the many excellent opportunities which the French neglected of restoring despotism, as well as from the consequences which would have resulted had such been the national wish, it may not then be absurd to conclude that the usurpation of Bonaparte does not proceed from an inclination to re-establish despotism. But it has been stated that one or the other of three causes, induces the French to submit to the power of Bonaparte. And I have endeavoured to shew that it is neither the first, nor second. It follows then that it must be the third ; a sense of the necessity of a temporary, strong, military government ; from the enmity of surrounding states, and the as yet unsettled state of the interior revolutionary ferment ; a national languor, a kind of tedium, a wish for repose after the gigantic struggles of the revolutionary contest. The nation sleeps soundly after its Herculean efforts ; Bonaparte alone watches at his post. He has connected the greatness of France with his own usurpation ; but it must be confessed that under his auspices, the nation has arrived to an unexampled pitch of power and prosperity. While secure in their mighty resources against all external attack, and by the strength and vigilance of the government, from proscription and bloodshed, the effects of internal commotions, the nation appears to have sunk into a lethargy, which does not mark, or is indifferent to the means by which their great chief has acquired these blessings for them. Provided the bloody rage of faction is chastised, and tranquillity restored, they seem to give themselves no trou-

ble to enquire whether Bonaparte has modified the government, according to his own whim, or their *permanent* happiness. The consul, taking advantage of these circumstances, has endeavoured to render hereditary, in his family, and permanent to the nation, that power, and those cautionary regulations which were intended to be temporary; and he has bribed or overawed the constituted authorities to legalize and sanction his usurpation. Too justly disgusted with revolutions, the French view their present state of things, although it has been unexpectedly stolen upon them, as a smaller evil than a recurrence to and a renewal of those scenes of horror from which they have been so lately respite. Dazzled by the splendour of Bonaparte's almost unrivalled achievements, his government, perhaps, is viewed with complacency, if the forms by which he rules are not admired. But heroes of Marengo and Aboukir, are not hereditary; and when Bonaparte shall have ended his mortal career by the hand of violence or of nature, his imperial institutions will crumble into insignificance, faster than his body into dust. The forms of the republic will be restored, and profiting by past experience, it will be "organized in tranquillity." This view, which I so sanguinely indulge, is infinitely consoling to the friend of humanity. It holds out the prospect of a bloodless change. Reforms are always desirable; revolutions ever to be dreaded. In such an event the passions of civilized society will not again be enlisted on the side of tyrants, the nation will be completely prepared for the peaceful triumph of principle; and the surrounding states of Europe, warned by woeful experience, will not feel inclination or interest in coalescing to restore an upstart emperor, or a mushroom legion of honor. The change from imperial to republican France, will not be sudden or bloody, but gradual and peaceable; not a mobbish revolution, but a philosophic reform; it will be slower but surer; and it will come when the circumstances of the times call for it, as they now in some measure, call for the government of Bonaparte or some such man. If the preceding remarks be correct, the French revolution is not at an end; but the most bloody part has past away; several grand eras have succeeded each other; the last will be the final emancipation of the nation, some time during the nineteenth century. I cannot admit that I am here falling into

the prophetic mania which I have just condemned. The revolutionary wheel has been in motion fifteen years ; it has had several pauses, but rolled on again ; I therefore think it precipitate and premature to conclude that it has now stopt forever.

But *if* this terrible convulsion ; this political earthquake, which shook the civilized earth to its centre, while its extremities trembled, has finally rumbled into silence, by the weight and influence of one of its own stupendous productions ; *if* the French revolution has actually ended in the despotism of Bonaparte—what will France, in particular, and the general cause of liberty and of mankind, lose, or gain by it ? In order to ascertain this point, it will be necessary briefly to compare the state of France, under the last of the Capets, with its situation under the first of the Bonapartes. Jurists have long since made a compendious division of the absolute rights of man—*life, liberty, and property*. These rights are completely secured only in the United States ; Great-Britain ranks next in the scale of freedom. But the question before us, is not which government of the earth most effectually secures these rights, but whether they were best secured by the government to which Louis XVI. was born, or, by those institutions which Napoleon I. has established. Among others, of inferior consequence, there seem to be six points of comparison, by which the two governments may be judged. 1. The origin of the two despotisms. 2. The nature of the nobility. 3. The hierarchy, or church-establishment. 4. The administration of justice. 5. The financial arrangements. 6. The feudal system. *First*, as to the origin of the two despotisms. And here I must premise that by the word origin I do not mean the actual, *real* origin of the two governments, but the ideas of the ruler, and the received popular notions, respecting his *right to command*, and their *duty to obey*. Under the old system, kings were the immediate vice-gerents of God. They considered and avowed, that they were accountable to him alone for their actions. *Dieu et mon droit*—God and my right, was their appeal. The people were lost in the dust while the monarch was elevated to the clouds. Louis was the Lord's anointed ; the nobles and the priests were his slaves ; and the peasantry again were the beasts of burden for these. When the king and

the people were brought into comparison, the latter were considered as *dust in the balance*. The ease of one man was thought of more importance, than the happiness of twenty-five millions; *and many a summer's day, and many a winter's night*, "wretches have been hung up, in long tortures, lest luxury should feel a momentary pang."

But Napoleon is neither the vice-gerent of God, nor the Lord's anointed; he is not the sovereign, but the chief magistrate of the people; for among the host of defects observable in the new order of things, we yet find some important principles recognized: the sovereignty of the people, with their right to alter and abolish their governments at pleasure; equality of all men in respect to their rights; religious toleration; taxes in proportion to property; these, with some other principles, declared and acknowledged in the better times of the republic, are still sacredly regarded as inherent in the nation. Louis was literally king of *France*; without any legal or literary fiction, upon certain contingencies, the whole territory of France might be forfeited to the monarch; he was the proprietor, and the nation, from the prince to the peasant, were his tenants. But Napoleon is Emperor of the *French*; the soil of France belongs to the people of France; and the last title which he has assumed, merely expresses the political relation in which the governor stands to the governed. This is one great point gained; not only to France, but to mankind in general. We hear no more of divine right, or any other right than that of the sovereign people; and though they may abuse it, as they have recently done, yet the bare acknowledgement that such a right exists, and its being recognized by the governing power, as the only legitimate origin and basis of his authority, is a material advance in practical politics.

Second and third—the nature of the nobility, and hierarchy, or church-establishment. I do not speak of the nobility and hierarchy as it relates to their feudal privileges; these will be considered presently; but as hoary, civil and sacerdotal aristocracies, whose power and pretensions were viewed with awe and reverence, by an ignorant and superstitious peasantry. The lord, who occupied the manors and the mansions, which his ancestors had occupied in succession, so many centuries before him, was easily impressed with a belief, by the circumstances of his birth and edu-

cation, that there was an immeasurable distance between the feelings and the rights (if such were allowed) of the polished baron and the rugged peasant. The peasant too, servant to the son of that father, who had been served by his father, before him, and whose ancestors had from time immemorial, been in the relative situation, with their barons, of master and slave, could not but believe that his Lord was a superior being, invested by nature with all the rights, while the services (miserable birthright!) alone belonged to him.—These sentiments of domination on the one side, and debasement on the other, were greatly aggravated, whenever the peasant's lord happened to be an ecclesiastic. Family distinction was united with priestly hauteur; but the unbending austerity of sacerdotal pride is proverbial.

There is a wide difference between the preceding, and any order of nobility, hereditary distinction, or religious establishment, which is now to be found in France. Any nobility which Bonaparte *can* establish, if, which we must suppose, he chooses them from among his adherents, will be an upstart nobility. The people of France will witness their creation. They will see their old companions, brewers and bakers, hewers of wood and drawers of water, made members of the legion of honor, from their alertness as spies, or their perseverance as blood-hounds. And while it has a tendency to extinguish every spark of veneration and respect for *nobles*, it elevates them, in their own imaginations, by exhibiting so palpably that between the peasant and his lord there are only artificial distinctions. It therefore has a double effect, in raising the class to which the peasant belongs, in his own estimation, (which is important; for the moment a man believes that he moves in a lower circle than his merits entitle him to, he becomes restless and uneasy—) while it depresses the order to which his comrade has been elevated. He very naturally and very justly imagines that he has the same rights as his quondam friend the brewer; nor will the pageantry of power be able to beat this imagination from his brain. The present religious establishment in France, is widely dissimilar to the old hierarchy. The domains of the church have been sold, and the sale repeatedly legalized and sanctioned by successive factions, from Robespierre to Bonaparte. A new division of dioceses has been made by Bonaparte, in concert

with the Pope; and a new division of parishes by the bishops; the government nominates the latter, who, in their turn, nominate to the parishes. All ministers of religion are paid from the public treasury. The superiority of the present establishment will be seen at a glance. Formerly, immense landed estates were attached to each diocese, or bishop's see, connected with which, were myriads of idle pretensions, oppressive privileges and cruel extortions. A French bishop of Bonaparte, compared with a French bishop of Louis XVI. is as powerless and insignificant as a Virginian parson. In this point of view, therefore, in suppressing the ridiculous veneration for nobles, and the impious idolatry for priests, the French Revolution and Emperorship of Bonaparte, has been singularly happy, not only for France, but for the progress of liberal thinking.

Fourthly—The administration of justice, in the old and new governments. It is indeed a perversion of terms to call the judicial proceedings, under the old government, an administration of justice. The shocking degree of corruption and venality which pervaded these courts, cannot be paralleled in any other age or country. Instead of employing honest and able attorneys, fairly and ingenuously to state the matter in dispute, to an impartial jury and upright judge, there was notoriously and avowedly, a certain class of females, who, under the name of *Les Solliciteuses*, were bribed, by rival clients, to corrupt the court by the most infamous sacrifices. But there is another feature, in the *ancient regime*, which tends more pointedly to shew the dreadful insecurity of the lives and liberties of all classes of men. I allude to the *lettres de cachet*. These were a species of blank *mittimus*. The date of the warrant, the name of the victim, and the price of imprisonment, remained blank. This price may be supposed to have varied, according to the wealth, rank or power of the person to be immured. When this was ascertained and paid, the blank warrant was delivered to the purchaser, who inserted the name of his enemy, and delivered it, thus fraught with misery, to the officers of JUSTICE! It is difficult to imagine a more horrible instrument of despotism than the *lettres de cachet*. The unhappy victim, unconscious of his crime, and ignorant of his persecutors, seized at the silent hour of mid-night, and spirited away, from human society, is for-

ever immured in the dark and loathsome dungeons of a subterranean prison. This was a fate to which almost every man in the kingdom was subject. But the lives of the lower orders, were not secured even by the flimsy ceremony of *lettres de cachet*. They were considered as of no greater value than beasts of the field. In the time of Louis XIV. the Count de Charolois sometimes *amused* himself by *shooting* his peasants. The only reparation which was offered by the tyrant king, who had before frequently pardoned the count, for his *venial excesses*, was, this royal witticism—"I again pardon you, but at the same time I promise the like favor, to him who shall kill you." As late as the year 1789, an ecclesiastic named de Bauffremont, is said to have been still fonder of this lively sport; and so common was it in a particular district, that it obtained the name of *la chasse aux vilains*.

The situation of France, with respect to the administration of justice, has been totally changed by the revolution. The civil and criminal code has been greatly reformed and ameliorated. In cases of *meum and tuum* the tribunals are no longer venal. It is believed that they are much inferior to those of England and America; but vastly superior to those of the old government. From what has appeared upon the subject in the French papers, there is no reason to believe that the proceedings have been unfair: * There is now but one man in France who has the power of committing murder with impunity; and this is Bonaparte: and in doing this, under the plea of public necessity, he is obliged to resort to the *forms* of law, which, although it is a bitter mockery to the persecuted individual, evinces that the emperor of the French, in the zenith of his power, is compelled to pay that outward respect to the laws of the country which his predecessors of the Bourbon race disdained. It is a great point gained to the nation, to possess a code of equitable laws, even if these laws are imperfect and occasionally abused. General regulations, in their nature, cannot descend to the detail of cruelty which the caprices of individuals are wont to exercise. The murder of the Duke d'Enghien, although no man is less disposed than myself to palliate such atrocious conduct, ought no more to

* From Cobbett's Register, June 30.

be considered as a proof of the corrupt administration of justice in France, than that of Jonathan Robbins should decide upon the excellence of our criminal code. The illustrious victim makes the case more striking, as it respects him, but the life of the brave tar was a sacrifice equally great, in the eye of strict justice. Both cases only prove that where governments interfere with the prescribed course of national jurisprudence, courts are too apt to be compliant. It is probable that where the government is not concerned, the administration of justice is better in France than in any other country, England and the United States excepted. It is true that we hear of imprisonments and executions by the ministers of Bonaparte ; but never at the instance of individuals ; we never hear of the avowed sale of blank warrants of perpetual imprisonment, under the name of *lettres de cachet*. The Count de Charolois, and M. de Bauffremont, who were so fond of *hunting peasants*, have vanished, with the execrable institutions which authorised such horrors. It would seem therefore that in the administration of justice, the revolution has produced important and auspicious changes ; immediately beneficial to the French nation, and remotely to mankind ; since every improvement in the condition of a people, whose language and influence are so fashionable and extensive, may be considered as reaching every corner of the globe.

Fifthly, the system of finance, under the old and the new government. Under the old government, three fourths of the territory of France, independent of the feudal bondage, under which the whole of it was held, belonged either to the king, the nobility or the clergy. The royal domains, as well as the estates of the nobility and clergy, were exempt from taxes. The burden of these fell entirely upon the peasantry who were least able to bear it. It follows, therefore, that *all* the taxes of the old government, were levied upon *one quarter* of the property of the nation ; which property was parcelled out, in diminutive and scanty portions among twenty millions of meagre, squalid bondsmen ; that the remaining three fourths, in the hands of the king, the nobility and the clergy, contributed nothing to the revenue ; while this very revenue, " wrung from the hard hands of peasants " by every species of *indirection*, was squandered by those very privileged orders which had not paid a *sous* towards it.

Now the Emperor of the French has no domains; no hereditary nobility, or dignitaries of the church, are proprietors of the soil: for the royal domains, the estates of the emigrant nobles, and most of the lands of the church, were confiscated and sold during the revolution; and this sale is sanctioned, by the same instrument, which has made Bonaparte emperor. There is now, therefore, in France, no part of the territory privileged from contributing its portion of the revenue.—Taxes are levied in proportion to the ability of those who have to pay them. And although there is undeniably a very shameful misapplication of the immense sums which France pays to Bonaparte; yet the mode of levying the taxes, as well as the persons and property upon whom they fall, is infinitely more equitable than under the *ancient regime*. This may be considered as one of the most material benefits which the French people have derived from the revolution. The mild or oppressive mode of collecting the revenues of a country, distinctly marks the nature of the government. In Turkey, the taxes are levied with the scimitar and the musket. Under the old government of France, they were *farmed out*; that is, the wants of the court being ascertained, in order to come at the amount by a more summary process, than was requisite by the tedious forms of collecting it from so many individuals, the *farmers general* kindly stepped in between the people and the king, and advanced the sum, to the latter; they were then invested with the power of indemnifying themselves among the peasantry, by every species of oppression and imposition which avarice and cupidity can invent. The ingenuity of man can scarcely devise a more odious and cruel method of collecting the revenues of a country, than that practised in France, under the Bourbon race. It appears, therefore, that upon this very important point, (the mode in which public contributions are levied upon the people) the French have been relieved from innumerable inequalities and oppressions.

Sixthly, and lastly, the feudal system.—Ample, elegant and correct histories of the feudal system, may be found in Hume, Robertson and Gibbon; and a condensed account of its introduction into England, its abuses, and its abolition, during the reign of Charles II. by Blackstone, is familiar, I presume, to every student of law. I shall not

therefore attempt a lengthened detail of the servitude incident to this strange polity, but shall content myself with a brief abstract of its most prominent and debasing features. The barbarous jargon, of *aids*, *reliefs*, *primer seisins*, *wardships*, *marriages*, *finés* and *escheats*, incident to this system, will be, perhaps unintelligible to many of my readers. A complete explanation of the degrading services and cruel exactions meant by these terms, would surpass the limits of this essay, already I fear extended to too great a length. But an adequate idea may be formed, of the consequences resulting from the feudal privileges, even among the gentry and lower nobility, by recurring to Blackstone; the most abridged, and at the same time, the most forcible description of that tyranny that I have ever met with. He observes—"the families of all our nobility and gentry, grappled under the intolerable burdens, which, (in consequence of the fiction adopted after the conquest) were introduced and laid upon them by the subtlety and finesse of the Norman Lawyers. For besides the escutages for which they were liable in defect of personal attendance, which, however, were assessed by themselves in parliament, they might be called upon by the king or lord paramount for *aids*, whenever his eldest son was to be knighted, or his eldest daughter married: not to forget the ransom of his own person. The peer, on the death of his ancestor, if of full age, was plundered of the first emoluments arising from his inheritance, by way of *relief* and *primer seisin*; and, if under age, of the whole of his estate during infancy. And then, as Sir Thomas Smith very feelingly complains, "when he came to his own, after he was out of *wardship*, his woods decayed, houses fallen down, stock wasted and gone, lands let forth and ploughed to be barren," to reduce him still farther, he was yet to pay half a year's profit as a *fine* for suing out his *livery*; and also the price and value of his *marriage*, if he refused such wife as his lord and guardian had bartered for, and imposed upon him; or twice that value, if he married another woman. Add to this, the untimely and expensive honor of *knighthood*, to make his poverty more completely splendid. And when by these deductions, his fortune was so shattered and ruined, that perhaps he was obliged to sell his patrimony, he had not even that poor privilege allowed him, without paying an exorbitant fine for a

license of alienation.”—This being the situation of the nobility and gentry of England, where the feudal system was mild, compared with its bloody ferocity, and stern rigour, on the continent of Europe, to what misery and degradation must the lower orders in society have been reduced! Accordingly, we shall find that the sufferings of the nobility and gentry were light indeed, compared to the brutal debasement to which the unhappy peasantry were reduced. There never has been imposed by the policy or barbarity of man, a slavery so complicated and degrading as that which arose out of the feudal system. The condition of our negroes is infinitely superior to the villein, or bondsman of Europe. They were the property of their lords, and either attached to the soil of the barony, or the person of the baron; they were transferrable in like manner as our slaves; if they ran away, or were stolen, they were recoverable in the same way; they were incapable of acquiring property; of giving testimony against a freeman; were obliged to shave their heads, as a mark of servitude; and although in England rape and murder were the only excesses to which the lord of the manor could not carry his power, yet on the continent a baron might violate the person of his female slave, with impunity; it was indeed one of their privileges, (and this was also the case in Scotland) to have the first night’s enjoyment whenever their bondswomen married.* But although the baron of England, had not the power of murdering his vassals, it was otherwise in many parts of the continent; and particularly in France. In some districts, they were used in carriages, instead of cattle; were compelled to pass whole nights in preventing the frogs from disturbing the sleep of their lords; were obliged to feed and maintain his dogs; and, *in certain cantons, after the sports of the chase, the baron had the privilege of ripping open the bellies of his slaves, to bathe his feet in their reeking bowels!* Such was the condition of the lower classes in France, previous to the revolution. Incapable of acquiring or possessing *property*; deprived by the cruel destiny of their birth, of the blessings of *liberty*; the honor of their females, and the *lives* of all were equally exposed to the brutality and cruelty of their Lords!

* “I cannot learn,” says Blackstone, “that ever this custom prevailed in England, though it certainly did in Scotland, (under the name of *mercheta* or *marceta*) till abolished by Malcolm III.”

In conclusion, it will be sufficient to observe, that at one mighty sweep, this old and terrible fabric of servitude, misery and death, was effaced from the civil institutions of France. Her territory is "liberated from feudal bondage" and her "agriculture is unfettered by ecclesiastical imposts." Every man in France is a free citizen; all the property is held in fee simple, as with us; *bannalites*, *franc-fiefs*, *corvees*, *grueries*, and *main mortes* are abolished. Contributions are levied in an equitable proportion; the administration of justice is no longer venal; and, "notwithstanding some of the wanton and capricious freaks which ever follow in the train of absolute power, *personal safety* and *private property* are much more safe than before."*

S—.

Richmond, September 7, 1804.

* Stephens's wars of the French Revolution.

NUMBER V.

On the AMERICAN GENIUS.

PART I.

THERE is not a country on the face of the globe, to which nature has been more bountiful than to the United States. The felicity of our situation and the diversified blessings we enjoy, have been the theme of panegyric, until it is no longer possible to advance a new idea, or to modify an old one, so as to give it an appearance of novelty. Without entering on a minute repetition of those advantages of soil, climate, productions, and remoteness from the Eastern continent, which seem to promise us an eternity of happiness; I shall confine my present remarks to those moral causes which are intimately connected with the character of a nation.

Europeans have sometimes accused America of a poverty of genius and weakness of intellect, which place her much behind the ancient world; and even the enlightened Buffon has adopted the idea that nature is more feeble in her efforts, in the Western than in the Eastern hemisphere. The charge itself is a proof that European sagacity is still

far from having attained its perfection. It could only have been dictated by an illiberal preference of the soil on which we have been accidentally cast, and a contempt for all other nations whose habits, manners, and improvements, are not similar to those of our own country. A philanthropist will pause, before he consigns to oblivion the fairest portion of our planet; and a philosopher will forget that he has any other country than the Globe itself, while he pierces with ardent gaze the mysteries of nature. If we cast our eyes over the map of America, we shall perceive that nature has not merely consulted its convenience or happiness in the distribution of her favors; she has done more; she has put forth all her strength, and erected monuments to her own glory. She has worked on a scale of grandeur and magnificence, before which the boasted prodigies of Europe hide their diminished heads. Where will Europe shew her Andes which heave their snow-capt summits above the clouds? Where are her *Amazon* and *La Plata*, which would be regarded as fabulous, did not authentic history attest them? Where will she exhibit lakes like those of Canada, which connected with each other and with the ocean, bind all the Northern part of this great continent in one indissoluble commercial chain? The most enthusiastic admirers of European excellence must shrink from this comparison; and so far must acknowledge that nature is here at least as bold in her sketches and as vigorous in her productions as on the Eastern Continent.

When these truths present themselves to our minds with irresistible force, are we to conclude that the hand which has lavished such unequalled favors, has penuriously withheld the more estimable endowments of the mind and the heart? Has a paradise been given to degenerate souls who are insensible to its charms? Is not the mind of the American sufficiently expanded to take in these vast objects in all their magnitude and sublimity? I will not insult my countrymen by addressing the question to *them*. I perceive a glow of indignation on every cheek, and, while I write, I feel it difficult to suppress my own. But it will be a more instructive task to examine the basis of these exalted pretensions; to pay the just tribute of deference and homage to European superiority, if it should be established by investigation; or to render to the insulted American the honors which nature

has conferred upon him, but which human ignorance has vainly endeavoured to obscure.

It has been a question of endless speculation among the curious, at what time America was peopled, and whether her inhabitants are her own offspring, or emigrants from the old continent. If we are to suppose America coeval with the world, and that she became peopled as soon as the other parts of the earth, we may be asked with triumph, upon what principle we are to account for her vast inferiority in intellectual improvement? Why did the adventurous bands of enlightened Europe, who first explored our shores, find the native American, naked, ignorant and ferocious? Upon the supposition of equal talents and equal advantages of soil and climate, we may be told, that we have a right to expect an equal progression in the arts and sciences in any given time. The same causes must always produce the same effects. If the American genius had been equal to the European, it ought in the same lapse of years to have explored as many sciences, invented as many arts, and humanized and polished manners in an equal degree.

This reasoning is at first sight specious and imposing; but cannot withstand the test of rigid enquiry. I shall assume the hypothesis most disadvantageous to my position; that America is as old and has been as long peopled as Europe, Asia or Africa. I shall also make the comparison, with the most enlightened part of the old world. When I select Europe for this purpose, it ought not however to be forgotten, that the arts and sciences have not originated with her, but have sprung up in Asia; from thence have been transplanted to the southern parts of Europe, and by very slow degrees have spread themselves into more Northern climates. It is also worthy of remark, that those countries into which the sciences were first received, where they were most patronized, and flourished with richest luxuriance, are now the gloomy residence of want, ignorance and despotism.

Whoever has observed the progress of the human mind, must have perceived that its first struggles with ignorance are always more painful and difficult, than its subsequent efforts. The steps by which we ascend from discovery to discovery, from science to science, are short, gradual, natu-

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ral and easy. But to leap at once from absolute ignorance even to the humblest rudiment of knowledge, is indeed an Herculean task, and more frequently results from lucky accident, than any effort of the mind. This remark, which is here applied to the general progress of mankind in the career of improvement, is exemplified and fully established, by their advances in every particular science. Until the beginning of the eighteenth century, the world had adopted the ideas of Aristotle on all metaphysical subjects, and it would have been blasphemy to have *doubted* their orthodoxy. Locke explored the inlets of the understanding, and explained some of its processes; and what has been the consequence? Within the course of one century a galaxy of illustrious philosophers have arisen, who seem to have left scarcely any thing to be discovered hereafter. For many ages astronomers had vibrated from one absurdity to another, which were all at length *swallowed up* in the *vortices* of *Descartes*; a greater absurdity than all the rest. Newton appeared; recalled the mind from its devious eccentric track; gave it a *projectile* impulse, and taught it to move in the *orbit* of truth. The world has not since produced a Newton; but a thousand humble followers have arisen, who have carried the science of astronomy beyond the utmost limits, which even his ætherial genius could reach. These examples are sufficient to establish the position, *that the first step in the progress of the human mind is the most difficult, and that when this is attained, all the rest will naturally follow.*

If these propositions are correct, it will follow that when we compare two nations with each other, we should first enquire whether their situations have been equally auspicious to their gaining this *first step*, and whether untoward circumstances have occurred to retard their progress afterwards. I shall endeavour to shew, that the superiority which Europe has enjoyed over savage America, results, in fact, from the fortuitous circumstances which attended her first settlement, by which she was enabled both to make an earlier advance in science, and to pursue her discoveries to a greater extent.

Greece was inhabited by savage and barbarous tribes, when the Phœnicians, a people of Asia, sent forth colonies

who took up their abode within her bosom. These colonists carried with them the arts of the mother country, which were indeed very inconsiderable in themselves, but highly important, as I have already shewn, as they related to the future progress of their possessors. We know but little of Phœnicia, or whether she derived her knowledge from others or gave birth to it herself. But whatever was the mode by which she acquired it, we may presume that it resulted from nearly the same causes which conspired to preserve, enlarge and ripen it, after it was transferred to the Greeks. As this period is more within the compass of history, our conclusions from it will be more just and accurate, than from any prior æra.

These colonists, small in number ; surrounded by numerous bands of hostile barbarians ; and unable to occupy an extensive territory, contracted themselves within the walls of cities, together with a small margin of land around them. As population encreased, this land became insufficient for their support, and hence they were driven to the invention of new arts ; hence they resorted to commerce as a mode of procuring subsistence ; hence many turned their enquiries into the walks of literature, and gave to Greece her splendid pre-eminence over the nations of antiquity. Greece lost her liberties, but retained her science. The barbarians who came to despoil her of her wealth, carried off also a more precious treasure, of whose value they were unconscious, the seeds of learning and the sublime speculations of ethicks, which required only time to germinate and mature. The rifled flower faded and expired ; but its sweets were hoarded up by the industrious plunderers, to become the sources of a more permanent delight. The human mind, which had flowed like a majestic river through the favoured soil of Greece, and dispensed its blessings around, now changed its channel, and by this melancholy alluvion, left its ancient bed a naked, dreary and sterile desert. It happened, fortunately for Europe, that all the countries into which literature was introduced after the ruin and subjugation of the Grecian states, were limited like them in extent of territory, abounding in inhabitants, and condensed within the dimensions of single cities. The necessary consequence of populous communities, is, that a di-

vision of labour should take place, which infallibly leads to excellence in all the arts which embellish life, as well as in those which minister to the wants of men. The Arcadian scenes of rural life may be the residence of peace, simplicity, innocence and happiness; but it is in the collision of towns, that the human energies are called forth, and the human mind swells into gigantic stature. It is in towns that the arts and sciences receive their birth; and there also they are carried to perfection. Rome assumed the wreath of the muses which had been plucked from the brow of Greece; and she in her turn resigned it to the Northern barbarians who have founded the present political societies of Europe. From this rapid review of the progress of learning, it appears, that Europe was peculiarly happy, first, in having received the germs of literature from another country; and secondly, in having them deposited in cities, which like hot-beds quickened their growth.

The situation of America was the reverse of all this. A country of unbounded extent; possessing spontaneously every species of wholesome aliment; its forests filled with those animals which invite man to the chase; these apparent advantages of nature are the real causes of the retardation of the human intellect in America. None of those causes existed which could *compel* the American to take the *first steps* towards improvement; and men are only to be driven from ignorance by the strong arm of necessity.

America it is true was occupied, like ancient Greece, by inhospitable and ferocious tribes. But this circumstance could only induce them to remove farther from each other, which an unbounded continent enabled them to perform, without limitation. Nor should it be forgotten that uniform experience tells us, that there is a certain fascination in the wild and unrestrained state of nature, which would forever deter men from the yoke of civilization, did not necessity entame them.

Z.

NUMBER VI.

ON THE BUILDING OF TOWNS.

MR. Volney, in his "View of the soil and Climate of the United States," has indulged the sarcasm so peculiar to him, in making strictures on the *diet* of the people of America. In the present number I must be permitted to relate the observations of a foreigner of another country, on a subject not less important to the health and comfort of our citizens, than the composition of our "gravies." He, however, cannot be charged with "requiting hospitality by *publishing* calumnies." It is true, the remarks were his, but they were colloquial; the blame, then, of making them public, attaches exclusively to me, and I know but little of the temper of my countrymen, if they are not always as willing to receive useful and improving hints, as they are unwilling to bear with impunity disgusting and unqualified censures.

On an oppressively hot day, in the course of the present summer, chance threw me into the company of an Englishman, who had lately arrived in this country. The conversation naturally turned towards the weather, and I was forcibly struck with the observations of the stranger.

"When I embarked for this country (said he) I figured to myself the happiness of your citizens, so completely emancipated from the despotic *laws* of Europe. I did not anticipate that, when that great end was accomplished, the people of an independent country would remain subject to the still more despotic *customs* of their mother country. I did suppose that the freedom and independence of fashions and manners would soon follow the freedom and independence of your political station; for it appears to me as natural that a youth of eighteen should clothe himself in the habiliments, and assume the prop of his grand-father of four-score, as that a young *continental* nation should imitate the *fashions* of an old and *insular* country.

"How strange! that notwithstanding your great freedom of enquiry, and notwithstanding the annual recurrence of a pestilential disease in your larger towns, (which always occurs in the hottest weather too) you have not bestowed more

attention on the subject of constructing *town-houses*, in such a manner as to render them as cool and healthy as possible. And still more strange! that the subject of planning your *towns* with the view of attaining the same end, has occupied *no* part of your reflections on public improvements. It is admitted by all that the diseases of *hot* weather are more numerous and more fatal in your Atlantic towns, than those of cold: does it not follow then, that the structure of your houses, and the plans of your towns, should be as well adapted to exclude the heats of summer, as a due reference to the cold of winter will allow? To effect this, is it not essential to keep the scorching rays of the sun at as great a distance as possible, by trees, porticoes or thick walls, and to admit the heated air as sparingly as possible through small apertures? It has often been remarked, that "in the religious and castellated forms of Gothic architecture," the apartments are infinitely cooler than in the modern fashionable edifices. In them the walls are exceedingly thick, and the windows too small to admit a sufficiency of light for ordinary purposes. That stile of building has been abandoned in England, because their climate being an insular and humid one, the sunbeams are ever hailed as a welcome guest; but in the southern parts of Europe, where the sun's influence, as in your's, is powerfully oppressive, castles are the abodes infinitely preferred. In Spain, where they have not the advantage of the "castellated form," they have a very simple mode of keeping their apartments cool, by opening the windows at night to *admit* the cool air, and closing the shutters in the morning to *exclude* the hot air. Even this precaution, however is not taken in America. Your apartments, with four or six large windows, often without shutters, exhibit a very good model of a receptacle for exotics of the vegetable kingdom, but are surely not very well calculated to promote the pleasurable sensations of a human being. No one can enjoy more than I do, the "life-infusing air" of morning; but it would be almost as rational to invite a stream of the Syroc of Italy or the Symoon of the African desert, as a current of your "tainted air" passing over a pavement heated even to inflammation by the noon-day sun."

Our Englishman conceiving that his argument was so far

established (for it was difficult to controvert his *facts*) pursued the course of moral reasoners, who extend their principles from man to those collections of men denominated *nations*, in extending his arguments from one house to those collections of houses denominated *towns*.

“ If it be admitted (continued he) that cold be a negative quality, or nothing more than the absence of heat, I presume that the greater portion of shade, or in other words, the smaller the portion of solar rays falling on your streets, the cooler will be your towns. This, I take for granted, is precisely upon the same principle that the night is cooler than the day; a fact which, I believe, stands undisputed. Without reflecting, however, on the difference of climate, you as servilely imitate the English in the plan of your towns, as in the padding of your coats or the stuffing of your cravats. *There*, wide streets and low houses are proper, because in a moist and northern climate it is essential to admit the sun-beams as copiously as possible.—*Here*, narrow streets and high houses are proper, because in a dry and southern climate it is essential to exclude the sun-beams as completely as possible. In order to effect this, two different modes may be recommended: the one perhaps more convenient, the other certainly more beautiful. The first consisting chiefly of *alleys*, the second of *piazzas* or *collonades*.

“ In the first mode, there might be two descriptions of streets: the one for carriages of all kinds, the other exclusively for pedestrians. The streets for carriages might be sufficiently wide for three to pass, and would require no foot pavements; and along these might be ranged all the wholesale stores and warehouses. The other streets would only be narrow alleys smoothly paved, into which the dwelling houses and retail stores might open. Upon this plan there would be an immense saving in the expense of pavement, and these passages would be much more agreeable than wide streets, owing to the constant shade of the houses on each side, and the current of *cooled* air that must rush through them in the summer season. In Edinburgh there are many of these alleys opening into wide streets, and as the air becomes heated and rarified in the latter, its place is supplied by a current through the former, which passes, in a warm day, with such velocity as to be compared to the o-

peration of the blow-pipe. In China, I am informed, they improve on the plan of narrow alleys, by spreading matts over them, from the tops of the houses, during the heat of the day. That this plan is more *healthful* too, we have the testimony of the most eminent physicians of Paris, who assert that in the old part of that city, where the houses are so high and the streets so narrow as never to be dry, the inhabitants are more healthy *in summer*, than those of the other parts of the city, notwithstanding their poverty and filth, which are powerfully exciting causes of disease. In addition to these advantages, it is certainly as easy and as cheap to keep narrow streets clean as wide ones, and whatever filth may be carelessly left on them is surely much less liable to putrefaction from the absence of the sun's rays. It will be remembered that streets are only intended as pass-ways from one place to another, and are only used as places of rendezvous for business or pleasure, where there are no porticoes or public squares. Public gardens or squares should never be dispensed with in any town, for when laid out with taste they not only embellish the appearance of the town itself, but also, by inviting to exercise companies of both sexes, unquestionably contribute greatly to the health and sociability of the inhabitants.

“ Here suffer me to express my astonishment (observed the stranger) at the apathy which pervades the citizens of Richmond in their neglect of the Capitol square. Although there are several wealthy gentlemen residing on the confines of this square, whose dwellings would be highly ornamented by its improvement; although the citizens below the hill have not a spot to which they can send their children to take the air; although there is no such place as a *Promenade*, to which persons of both sexes can resort for society and for exercise; although the town would be so much embellished by surrounding the Capitol with trees—not one effort is made towards effecting this desirable object. It is difficult to calculate the advantages to society by such a place of resort. You must permit me to say that you do not occupy at present the most elevated rank on the scale of *refined* society. The sexes are sever'd. The men frequent the Capitol, the Post Office, the Taverns, and the Barbacues. The women remain at home, or visit *each other* in neigh-

bourhoods, as if your town were laid out in little cantons. A public garden would often bring together and make acquainted persons of both sexes, who now scarcely exchange a word with each other. The pleasures of social intercourse might thus be daily enjoyed without the trouble or parade of *formal* visits.

“ If, however, (continued the communicative Englishman) the prejudices of your country so far prevail as to reject the plan of narrow streets, I would recommend a second mode, which although not in my opinion so well adapted to a warm climate, has many advantages over your present mode, and would certainly be infinitely more beautiful. I mean that of Piazzas, or Collonades. In all your towns which have come under my observation, the side-ways or foot-pavements are about fifteen feet wide, by which the streets are rendered thirty feet wider than they would otherwise be. If then, the houses were projected these fifteen feet on each side over the street and supported by arches as at the Piazza of our Covent-Garden, or on columns as in the Rue des Colonnes at Paris, you would of course have your streets thirty feet narrower and the same space within the Piazza which you now have for side-walks. This plan has the double advantage of increasing the shade of the streets by approximating the houses, and of protecting the persons engaged in business from the oppression of the mid-day summer’s sun, and the inclemency of the winter’s storm.”

I.

NUMBER VII.

ON THE ILLUSIONS OF FANCY.

NO single faculty of the mind affords materials for such various and curious disquisition as the fancy, or imagination. The metaphysician views it as the mimic of the senses, whose functions it sometimes so aptly performs, as to impose on the mind fiction for truth. In thus substituting the pictures or *images* of its own creation, for those of nature, he perceives that it only separates or combines those ideas which were imparted by the senses and repositied in

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the memory: That it can generate no simple idea, but is merely the intellectual artificer who makes a fabrick of the materials with which it is furnished by the senses. In the course of his enquiry into the principles of its operation, he is astonished to find that even this power of separating or combining has its limits; and that, with all the seeming irregular and discursive movements of the fancy, there are but two or three natural relations, which as *pons volans* enable it to pass from one region of thought to another; and that the mind can never shift itself from idea to idea, unless there is *proximity* of time or place, *resemblance*, or *contrast* between them. Thus this lively faculty, whose anomalies seemed at first view to defy the powers of human investigation, is found to act upon principles at once regular, simple, and few. Different persons possess in different degrees the power of perceiving what is contiguous in time or place, and what is like or unlike; according to which degrees they are said "to have an active, or a dull, imagination," and sometimes, "to possess, or to want, fancy."

Since eloquence and poetry owe their highest ornaments to the imagination, it naturally becomes one of the principal topics of literary criticism. As it is the object of the orator to persuade, and of the poet to please, the critic considers the fancy merely as an instrument for these purposes, and derives a set of rules from the laws of our nature, by which he ascertains the fitness of the means to the ends. He points out where a loose should be given to the native impetuosity of the imagination, and where its unlicensed sallies should be curbed: shews what passages possess the awful grandeur of the sublime, and what the attractive loveliness of beauty, and distinguishes those pictures of fancy which are dissonant to nature from those which are hit off in the spirit of her finest models. In a word, guided at one and the same time by the most liberal feelings of the heart, and the nicest dictates of reason, he praises or blames the works of imagination according to the judgment of *taste*.

Nor is this busy faculty unworthy the consideration of the *moralist*. Our desires and aversions either derive new vigor from the imagination or owe their existence to it altogether. It is sometimes their parent and always their nurse. By its extensive influence over our pleasures and our pains it goes far towards regulating our moral conduct,

and according to the direction it may take, gives birth to the sublimest heroism or the most unnatural depravity.

To shew the full extent of its influence on human happiness would lead me into too wide a field of moral and metaphysical speculation ; but as a branch of the subject, I purpose to shew how much it tends to substitute falshood for truth, by enumerating some of the most ordinary illusions of fancy ; in which enumeration, the examples are either the result of my own observations, or are believed to be in strict analogy with the acknowledged principles of human nature.

Sometimes the suggestions of the imagination are mistaken for those of the memory. This propensity is almost always to be perceived in children of very tender years. They prattle of visits they never made ; repeat conversations they never heard, and describe objects they never saw ; all this too, without the smallest consciousness of falshood. The same predominance of fancy over memory is occasionally seen in grown persons who deal much in narrative. The foible of these people never fails to incur the contempt of the world, and is generally imputed to vanity ; but where it is united to a character otherwise irreproachable, as I have sometimes seen it, it is fair to presume that it proceeds from an imbecility of the mind rather than obliquity of the heart. Every man who watches the operations of his intellect, must have discovered that he occasionally had formed a *new* association of ideas at the very time he thinks he is merely *retracing* an association *previously* formed.

Women have always been observed to have livelier imaginations than men. A natural consequence of this superior facility of associating ideas, is, they are less accurate in reciting matters of fact. Not only the merits of a favorite, the splendor of an exhibition, or the horrors of a calamity, are exaggerated by the force of their imaginations, but what consists in mere number and quantity is apt to be encreased or diminished by the same cause. One lady, boasting of the beaux who have led her daughter out to dance, will convert twelve into twenty ; while an envious neighbour by an opposite deception, will diminish the number to five or six : and yet both of these ladies may be innocent of voluntary falsehood. The fact is that each listened to

that suggestion of fancy which was most agreeable to her feelings.

I once knew two ladies dispute, and at length bet, on the height of their respective gallants, who were very well known to both. The gentlemen turned out to be of equal height, but each lady had been confident that her own favorite was at least two inches taller than the other.

Very ardent lovers have observed that when they first met after a long separation, they feel disappointed in each other's appearance. It is because the picture of the beloved object was not in the mind merely as memory had drawn it—imagination had superadded the colors of her own bright pencil.

Sometimes we see the imagination so lively, so completely master of the mind, that it prevails over the plain and direct communications of the senses.

On occasion of a riot, Gov. C—— of New-York, put himself at the head of a chosen party to quell the tumult. The sword he carried was by some accident broken off near the hilt. With this fragment in his hand he pushed on, and endeavoured to force his way through the crowd. One man feeling the pressure of the mutilated weapon, looked back, and fixing his eyes on the spot, exclaimed “a dead man,” and fell senseless on the ground, under a temporary conviction that he was run through the body.

Major H. whose life was spent in mischievous waggery, having given a strolling fiddler some liquor, pressed him to repeat his draught with great earnestness. By winks and nods to the bystanders, suspicions were artfully excited in the poor fiddler—at length he was told with a face of gravity and condolence that he had taken an emetic which would be good for his health. Warm water was accordingly prepared, and the credulous son of Orpheus was made to vomit as freely by the energy of his own imagination as he could have been by the most powerful drugs of pharmacy.

A clergyman and his daughter were once viewing the face of the full moon. The young woman was clear she saw in it the figure of a *young man*; but the father rebuking the daughter for not seeing a *church*, says, “why child, don't you see the steeple?”

To ordinary palates good wine at the table of a poor man

will seem bad, and ordinary wine at the house of a reputed epicure, has a most exquisite flavour.

Æsop, by way of characterising the blind partiality of a mother, makes the owl, in describing her young to the eagle, dwell with great emphasis on their pretty faces.

Persons who feel a dread of apparitions need but meet with a white cow or linen garment, and their fancy supplies whatever is wanting to complete a picture of horror—gives it form, color, motion, nay even a distinct and articulate voice. Ghosts were never yet seen by those who did not previously entertain a dread or belief of them.

When Wilkes was in the zenith of his popularity, one of his most enthusiastic female admirers would not admit that he squinted. Yielding to the effect of a nearer inspection, she replied to her triumphant adversary, "Well, I am sure if it is so, he squints no more than a gentleman ought to do."

The wretch who has been for years the helpless victim of disease, has imagined himself cured by the touch of an iron bodkin: and on one occasion I knew a rheumatic patient to be scratched with a quill (imposed on him for one of Perkins's points) till he was able "to take up his bed and walk."

It is a similar illusion of fancy which procures the ready sale of the nostrums of empirics, and vouches with such grateful zeal for the cures they have wrought.

Jugglers and ventriloquists owe their success chiefly to the deluded imaginations of their beholders.

Hypochondria, delirium, and madness, though remotely caused by corporeal disease, are the *immediate* effects of an imagination stimulated to preternatural vigour.

The false promises of hope are nothing but the judgment led astray by the imagination.—Ambition derives its strength from one species of mental illusion, and avarice from another. Jealousy, envy, revenge, make the imagination convert beauty into deformity and virtue into vice, while love, pity, and admiration, cause an opposite metamorphosis. When party spirit runs high, the same essay, the same speech is thought to have or to want merit, according to the sentiments they express. This prejudice, as it is commonly called, or this illusion of fancy, is often extended most ludicrously to the cut of a coat, the air of a popular

song, or even to a color that happens to be the badge of a party. A few years since a black cape probably often excited more horror in Paris than a street murder; and I verily believe that some zealous partizans among ourselves have thought the very Rainbow hideous from its resemblance to the *tricolor* of France.

If imagination is capable not only of substituting its own copies of the perceptions of sense for those of memory, but even of cheating us out of these perceptions themselves, how much and how often must it pervert the judgment! How liable is every chain of reasoning to be turned this or that way from the right line of truth, when every link is so likely to be distorted! Few are the opinions we can form which are not connected with some sentiment of pleasure or pain, and these sentiments are always nourished more or less by fancy.

Let these considerations teach charity and moderation to zealots of every description, and let them recollect that the opinions of whose truth they have the deepest conviction, if they were formed when the mind was much excited by feeling, are less likely to be the demonstrations of *reason* than the *illusions of fancy*.

X.

NUMBER VIII.

TRUTH AND ELOQUENCE.

AN ALLEGORY.

IN the first ages of the world, Vice, it is said, was unknown among the sons of men. The descendants of our first parents, for many generations, spent their days in the enjoyment of those tranquil and pure pleasures, which spring from innocence and love, and from gratitude to the beneficent beings, by whom these blessings were bestowed. The earth was then watered by innumerable streams, and covered with perpetual verdure. The forests were filled with lofty and majestic trees, whose shade invited to medi-

tation or repose ; while on their wide-spread branches the feathered choir displayed the beauties of their plumage, and warbled throughout the day, either songs of joy, or solicitations to love. The fields and meadows were embellished by countless flowers, diffusing fragrance through the air ; and produced, though not spontaneously, yet in abundance, those nourishing fruits, which imparted beauty to women, and health and strength to man. This was indeed the golden age : and the celestial beings contemplating the felicity which was enjoyed below, deigned sometimes to assume a human shape, and for a time, to make their abode on earth, among the wise and happy mortals who then possessed it. But after the lapse of many centuries, man became tired of the pleasures which he had so long been permitted to enjoy. The Dæmon of selfishness, escaping from the gulph of Tartarus, to which ages before, by a council of the Gods, he had been condemned, found his way to the habitations of men, and soon seduced the greater part of the human race from the allegiance which they owed to their celestial benefactors. The enemies of the invader were firm, and for a long time maintained an unequal conflict ; but they were finally overpowered by numbers, and almost entirely destroyed. From that time the Gods renounced all intercourse with men, and left the earth and its inhabitants, a prey to those physical and moral evils which have since never ceased to afflict them.

Among those who had exerted themselves to oppose this humiliating revolution, *Truth* and *Eloquence* had borne the most conspicuous part.

Truth and *Eloquence*, it has been sometimes said, were of celestial origin. But this opinion is not correct. *Truth* was the legitimate daughter of Labor and Wisdom, the most venerable among the inhabitants of the antedeluvian world. Amidst the confusion and crimes, which induced the Gods to abandon the earth, Labor had been seized by the partizans of Selfishness, beaten with many stripes, loaded with chains, and compelled to toil for the benefit of others. Wisdom did not experience equal cruelty, but she was banished by a decree of the usurpers. The place of her retreat has never yet been discovered. It is said that her footsteps have been sometimes traced in Europe, and that they have been distinctly perceived in America ; but it seems

most probable, that Minerva, who respected her virtues and pitied her sufferings, soon procured her a seat in Heaven, and thus placed her beyond the reach of men, who, in every age, and in every country, have proved by their conduct, their entire contempt for her character and counsels.

Truth had been the favorite of Minerva. Many of her infant years she had spent under the immediate guardianship of the Goddess, and by her she was irrevocably confirmed, in those principles which she had been taught by her venerable parents. On a first acquaintance, her countenance seemed gloomy, and her manners austere. Her conversation was generally serious and her language plain. The votaries of pleasure, awed by her looks, avoided her society; the advocates of vice trembled in her presence; but to those who knew her well, she appeared invariably graceful and benevolent; and even her worst enemies, after a few interviews, have sometimes acknowledged the injustice of their first impressions, and devoted their lives to her service, with unalterable fidelity and zeal.

The birth of *Eloquence* was not so respectable. She was the child of Enthusiasm, and on her mother's side, was nearly related to some of the first families of the ancient world—to Taste, Fancy, Sensibility, Genius, Benevolence, and Virtue. But who her father was, is yet unknown. Some have thought, that she displayed a strong resemblance to Ambition; others have been equally confident that she bore the features of Avarice. But however divided men might be as to her birth, they were unanimous in their approbation of herself. The expression of her eye, varying with every thought; the melody of her voice, whether in persuasion or command: the grace and dignity of her gestures; her prompt wit; her extensive knowledge, made her the object of universal admiration. But her fortune when young was not so auspicious as that of *Truth*. Her mother, tho' passionately fond of her, sometimes left her. Carried away by her own contemplations, she forgot for a time her darling child. It chanced that Mercury found her during the absence of her mother, and struck with the readiness of her infantine replies, he carried her away. He retained her in his hands for a considerable time, and did not return her to her mother, until he and his friend Proteus had amused themselves with teaching her some of the arts by which they

had been accustomed to impose upon mankind. The impression upon the mind of the infant, produced by this disastrous event, was not, however, immediately perceived.

At the commencement of the conflict, which we have mentioned, *Truth* and *Eloquence* were in full maturity. In the age of innocence they had been inseparable companions. *Eloquence* had imbibed from her mother, the most ardent affection for *Truth*, and notwithstanding her own aspiring temper, had, for a long time, voluntarily acted as her attendant and handmaid. Beloved by the Gods, and for a long time respected by men, they had exerted their united influence and powers, to avert from mankind the evils with which they foresaw their enemy designed, treacherously, to overwhelm them. Even now, notwithstanding the multitudes who had deserted, they did not despair; and in the presence, and with the approbation of the Gods, who had assembled before their final departure from the earth, they bound themselves to live in perpetual amity, and in the prosecution of their labours for the good of mankind, never to suffer any difficulties or dangers to separate them. *Truth*, tho' apparently austere in her deportment, and confident in her individual strength, did not disdain the alliance. Tho' not convinced of its necessity, she knew it might be useful, and without ceremony or hesitation offered her hand to *Eloquence* as a pledge of her sincerity. *Eloquence* seized with promptitude the proffered hand of *Truth*, pressed it to her bosom with inimitable grace, and in a voice sweet as the sound of the harp touched by the hand of Apollo, congratulated herself on the solemn ratification of a compact, which alone could justify a hope that she could be useful to the world. The celestial audience, impressed with reverence for the exalted character of *Truth*, and delighted by the charms of *Eloquence*, gave them their benediction, and departed for ever.

Such were *Truth* and *Eloquence*, when they formed their compact. *Truth* reflected that this alliance would facilitate her progress, and that the aid of *Eloquence* would more effectually dispose mankind, to receive from her those salutary counsels, on which the welfare of the whole race depended. On the other hand, *Eloquence* knew that vicious as the world had become, her admonitions, unless enforced by her

ally, tho' they might be heard with pleasure, could not long be regarded with reverence.

The treaty being thus formed, the confederates began their career together, with entire good faith. They addressed all they saw, and endeavoured to reclaim those, who had patience to hear them, from the brutality of ignorance; and the misery of vice. *Truth* adhering firmly to her exalted principles, pursued an undeviating course. Without regard to wealth or power, in the gilded palace, and the straw-built shed, to the tyrant and the slave, her manners and her language were the same. Pride was always offended by her sincerity. Power always felt uncontrollable terror at her approach. They therefore combined against her, insulted her in gross and barbarous terms, and often offered violence to her person. Upon occasions like these *Eloquence*, stepped forth to rescue her friend from danger. She often succeeded in appeasing the wrath of those who had been employed to prosecute her, and sometimes convinced them that she was worthy of their friendship and admiration.

In process of time, *Eloquence* began to perceive that she herself was acting only a secondary part. *Truth* was always treated by their mutual friends, with the most profound respect: while that which was paid to herself, seemed daily to be diminished—and what was still more mortifying, to be diminished exactly in proportion as their acquaintance with *Truth* increased. She never failed at first to receive the tribute of their fervent admiration; but in time this admiration subsided, and in some instances totally disappeared. In fact she discovered that she was still regarded merely as the handmaid of *Truth*, and that upon many occasions her presence was deemed not only unnecessary, but inconvenient: that she served no other purpose but to call the attention of mankind to the merits of her friend; of which, when her hearers were convinced, they gradually lost their respect for herself, by whom they were introduced. In the excess of her mortification, she one day made a pathetic complaint on this subject, in the hearing of *Truth*. With the candour with which she always spoke, *Truth* told her, it was in vain to repine, as her unaided talents, brilliant as they were, however they might amuse the idle, could never permanently secure for her the respect or friendship of the wise. *Eloquence* mortally offended at this reply, declar-

ed the treaty void, and separated herself immediately from her friend. *Truth*, unmoved at this event, pursued steadily the same course which she had before marked out; but finding herself sometimes impeded in her progress for want of her former associate, endeavoured to re-collect and to adopt some of the graces by which *she* had been distinguished. She learned, therefore, in process of time, to lay aside the awkward and negligent phraseology, which she was accustomed to use, and to express her sentiments, not only with the animation and firmness which she had before displayed, but in language which, tho' plain, was always correct, selected with care, and elegantly arranged. From the first moment of separation, *Truth* has never sought the society of *Eloquence*. It is true that she does not avoid her, but she never goes out of her way to seek her. The aid of *Eloquence* on any momentous occurrence, is accepted if offered, but it is never solicited. *Truth* is always content to rely upon herself. She is right. Her credit is daily rising, and she is now known to multitudes, by the simplicity of her manners, the plainness, perspicuity and brevity of her discourse, the unshaken firmness of her mind, and her unconquerable attachment to every principle tending to promote the liberty and happiness of mankind.

Eloquence, after she had leisure for reflection, soon perceived that this separation if generally known, would greatly impair if not destroy her influence. She took therefore the utmost care to conceal it. Even when she was animated by the most deadly hate, she failed not to profess the utmost veneration for her ancient ally, and often, availing herself of what she had learned in her infancy, assumed her appearance, as well as her name. In this character, and in this way, she has invariably imposed on ignorance and credulity, and scrupled not to advocate the most pernicious doctrines. She has not only defended errors, but crimes. Influenced by ambition, or by avarice, she has become occasionally the advocate of murder, of tyranny, of persecution, war and desolation: of every act, which injures individuals, or lays waste a world. To gratify her intemperate love of fame, and fondness for wealth, she will take any side, of any question, and if her talents are admired, is content that her principles shall be condemned. Such is her abandoned effrontery, that she has been known to denounce

Truth herself, as an impostor, and to claim in her name the homage and admiration of the world.

But this shameful prostitution of her splendid talents, is not without some interruption. Sometimes influenced by her mother's spirit, she devotes herself to the service of *Truth*, with the zeal and intrepidity of her ancient friendship. Then it is that she assumes a new form. Her voice seems more than human. Her eye seems to flash with the fire of heaven, and delivering only the precepts of *Truth*, she is heard with ten thousand emotions, which she alone is able to describe.

So profligate, however, has her conduct generally been, that she has excited the indignation of mankind; and unless she will be content to be again the handmaid of *Truth*, it is said, that a petition will be speedily presented to the Gods, praying that she may be forever banished from the earth.

NUMBER IX.

On the CONDITION of WOMEN.

IT is certain that the female sex are held in high estimation in Virginia, as well as in other civilized nations of the world; and it is true that the spirit of the American revolution has in some degree destroyed that unjust inequality, which the laws of England have created between the sexes. The superiority which was insolently assumed by the male sex, has almost entirely vanished before the light of reason, while the legislature of our state, by the single act of annihilating the right of the eldest son to inherit all the property of his father, and of dividing it equally amongst all his children, has blasted the germ of family pride, and solemnly recognized the principle, that the male and female sex are equal. But although we have done something in favour of the sex, yet an impartial observer of our manners and laws, will perhaps find as much to blame as to commend. So far from being able to boast that our women are the favourites of the laws, we must be compelled to acknowledge that a very unjust partiality is exhibited by them in favour of the men, and that our manners are not better calculated

to exalt the fair to that point on the scale of society, to which they are destined to rise.

Let it not be supposed that I am an advocate for the unlimited extension of political rights to women, or that I wish to encumber them with improper duties. I am aware that nature has established a broad distinction between the sexes; that there are certain spheres of action in which females can never move, and boundaries which they can never with propriety overleap. Nature has not endowed them with the strength of the warrior's arm, and although in the history of past times, there are some few instances of heroines, who have conducted armies to victory, yet these are to be considered as metcors, whose appearance defies the efforts of calculation. Circumstances also of an obvious kind, must necessarily exclude them from a participation in the cares and duties of political assemblies. And although many cogent reasons may with great propriety be urged in favour of an extension of the elective franchise to the female sex, yet I do not mean at this time to advocate such a revolution in our political systems. All that I at present contend for is, that the women ought to have the same civil rights as the men, and that the legislature ought to extend the same opportunities of intellectual improvement to the one sex as to the other.

One would suppose, from the total silence of the laws of Virginia on the subject of female education, that our general assembly had either adopted the Mahometan notion, that women have no souls, or the still more romantic opinion, that nature had inspired them with such an over-portion of genius that the labour of the teacher is to them a matter of supererogation. It is unfortunately too true, that a great deal of supineness is discoverable throughout the state on the subject of public schools, even for the male sex. Many of our young men are sent to distant universities to acquire the elements of science, and all of those who are destined to become members of the medical profession, will in vain search for a medical school in any part of Virginia. But we have not been totally regardless of the education of our young men. We have a few colleges, one of which will not yield to her northern sisters in the acquirements of her professors, or in the number of men of talents who have issued from her walls. Our statute book also abounds with

laws establishing academies, at which the dead and living languages may be acquired by young men; but there is not to be found a single public seminary, and hardly a private one, in which the female mind is furnished with an opportunity of increasing its stores of knowledge.

I cannot suppose that this apathy of the Virginians towards female education, can proceed from an opinion of their inferiority. The history of Europe, and each man's personal observation must convince him, that such an opinion is not founded on truth. We often see in the same family, the girl equally quick in apprehension with the boy; her memory as retentive, and her imagination perhaps more alive to the beauties of nature. In early life, there is scarcely any difference between them, and in those families in which education is not an object of attention, the equality continues through life; but in a family of a different description, the pride and partiality of the father soon begin to display themselves in the different conduct observed towards his son and daughter. The son must be prepared for one of the learned professions, and already the phantom of glory begins to fire the imagination of the fond father. He already anticipates the period, when his son shall be hailed as the defender of freedom in the senate, or when the listening croud shall be delighted with his eloquence in the forum. He accordingly spares no expence to strengthen, improve, and polish the mind of his son, who, from the age of seven to twenty-two, is constantly employed in drawing knowledge from the fountain of ancient literature, or modern science. In the mean time the mind of his daughter is almost entirely neglected; it becomes a barren waste, in which if a flower should now and then spring up, it withers and perishes for want of the care and skill of an assiduous cultivator. For her no teacher holds up the map of science; to her view knowledge does "ne'er unroll her ample page." The lamentation of Gray is perhaps more applicable to the Virginia women, than to the inhabitants of an English hamlet:

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
"And waste its sweetness on the desert air!"

It is Education, not Nature which creates the difference between the sexes. It is perhaps not necessary to dwell on the propriety and importance of improving the female mind.

Although they cannot be warriors, legislators, judges, or executive officers, there is no situation in life in which an improved understanding is not an useful and delightful companion. Improve the minds of your daughters, and they will make their sons heroes and patriots. They will awaken the curiosity of their infant minds, and inspire them with the love of wisdom and of virtue. And who can doubt that the society of the fair would be infinitely more interesting if an equal degree of that labour which is employed to adorn their persons, were applied to the cultivation of their intellectual powers? Although I cannot entirely agree with Akenside, that

“ Mind alone———
The sacred fountain in itself contains
Of beauteous and sublime ;”———

Yet it is certain that the intelligence which beams from the eye, throws a lustre on the countenance of beauty itself. Perhaps the low state of science in Virginia, and the almost exclusive attention which has been devoted to politics and law, will afford us a satisfactory reason why the minds of my fair country-women have not aspired to literary excellence. In France and Great Britain the women shine bright stars in the galaxy of literature and science. The annals of the French revolution, and the writings of Mrs. Wolstonecraft, of Eliza Hamilton, of Miss Seward, and others in England, at once refute the dogma of the inferiority of the female mind, and prove how high it is capable of soaring. The legislature of our state will confer great honor on themselves, by constantly turning their attention to the education of both sexes.—From the view which I have taken it appears evident, that the efforts which have been made to educate our youth, have been exclusively favourable to the male sex, and that our habits are equally partial.

When we examine our regulations respecting property, we shall probably find that the same partiality pervades a great part of our system. The reciprocal rights of the husband and wife, acquired by marriage, will clearly prove my position. The husband is entitled, as a tenant by the Curtesy, to all the lands of his wife during his life, if the wife has had a child at any time during the marriage; but if she

has never had a child born alive, he is deprived of any portion of her lands. On the other hand, when the husband dies, the wife is entitled to one third only of his land during her life; but this right exists whether she has children or not. Although I pretend not to be skilled in the science of calculation, it is obvious that, in a country where early marriages are fashionable, at least nineteen out of twenty of those who are married, are blessed with children. Virginia husbands have therefore nearly an equal chance to possess, during their lives, the whole of the lands of their wives, which the latter have of one third of the lands of the former. Whatever may have been the original cause of this distinction, it is certain that it has long ago ceased, and I cannot but think that if the case had been reversed, and the common law had been more favorable to the women than the men, our legislature would have discovered that it was an odious distinction, originating in feudal barbarism, and supported by prejudice and selfishness. The favour shewn to the male sex is still more obvious in the regulations respecting personal property. The more a country increases in commerce, the more does its personal property increase in value, and hence the subject becomes daily of more importance in Virginia. By marriage, a husband acquires an absolute right to dispose of the whole of his wife's personal estate during his life, and by his will may deprive her of the whole of it. If, however, she chooses, within a year, to claim a legal share of it, she is entitled to one third; and the same provision is made for her in case of the intestacy of her husband. When she has no child, instead of one third, her portion is one half. Let it be remembered also, that there is one unfortunate species of personal property in Virginia, to which the husband acquires an absolute right by marriage, but in which the wife can only claim the above mentioned proportion *for her life*, even although the whole may have been originally hers. The obvious tendency of these regulations is to keep the fair in a state of entire subjection to the stronger sex. It holds out a tempting lure to avarice, and exposes the unsuspecting to the arts of the mercenary. I have heard of some instances in which its operation has placed a sting in the bosoms of the innocent, and brought affliction and desolation to the mansions of the virtuous.

There is one other law which has always appeared to me to be repugnant to the best feelings of human nature, and by which the sex is most cruelly and unjustly degraded. No person can doubt that the mother has in general a more tender affection for her infant offspring than the father. In this country it is particularly true, for while our men too often roam from flower to flower, our women are, with the constancy of Penelope, devoted to the welfare of their families. What then shall we think of a law, which authorises the father on his death bed, to deprive a virtuous wife of the guardianship of his child, and to transfer it to the most worthless of the creation. This law is certainly founded on an improper opinion of female weakness, or a false idea of female virtue. If carried into complete operation, it would bring discord into every family, and fill every humane heart with woe.

I do not intend to enquire at present into the effects which a change of our laws and manners respecting the fair sex, would produce. It is sufficient if I have proved, that although we have done much, much remains undone.

Wm. Brockbury M.
1016. July

NUMBER X.

On the Establishment of Charity Schools; respectfully addressed to the good sense of the people of Virginia.

MOST of those, who have hitherto described to you the condition and the claims of the poor, have generally contented themselves with addressing your sensibility, and moving your compassion. Their imaginations have conducted you to the shades where poverty and ignorance preside; where the finest endowments of nature are fettered at their birth, or perverted in their progress. They think they have done enough, when they have exerted their pathetic eloquence in *intreating* you to relieve those distresses, from which you are fortunately exempted: and when they have succeeded in drawing forth one sympathetic sigh, or one tender tear, they please themselves with thinking,

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that they have obtained the greatest and most useful triumphs of which their cause is susceptible. They observe indeed, that too frequently is the "tear forgot as soon as shed," and that the sigh which is given to the passing winds, has more than once relieved the painful sympathies of the bosom, from which it escaped. But reason or vanity is ready to supply them with the means of consolation. They persuade themselves that it was from no want of pathos, or the most impressive elocution that this melancholy change took place. In the fickleness and imbecility of human nature, they will readily find the most ample means for explaining the lamentable change, & soothing their own disappointment.

To such sublime exertions I should not venture to wing an uncertain flight. I know too well that it is not every fancy which can create, every eye that beams, or every tongue which can express the conceptions of eloquence. It is not every poet that can "wake to ecstasy the living lyre."—And yet, even if such affecting efforts were completely within my power, I should almost disdain to employ them on an occasion like the present. When arguments so various and so luminous are thickly strewed before me, it would surely be improper to wander from the high road of the understanding, and go in search of the meretricious arts of supplication. It is not for me to draw before your imagination the weeping form of Charity, surrounded by her disconsolate family, who, with uplifted hands and broken voice, petition you for a scanty relief. I choose rather to bring before you the venerable figure of JUSTICE, bearing aloft the indestructible balance, in which are weighed the most comprehensive measures of nations, and the minutest actions of individuals. I mean not that subordinate Justice, who writes in the statute book, and presides in the courts. I speak of that general Justice, who extends her vigilance to all the concerns of man; who decides upon all those private actions, which the law is not subtle enough to embrace; who criticises the very laws of the statute book and re-judges the judgements of the judge. May I, venerable Divinity! expect to escape thy disapprobation, while for a moment, I assume thy attributes; while I dare to expound thy holy nature, and employ thy principles for the use of those who most want thy aid: of the heartbroken, the ignorant, and the poor.

No man in society stands alone. There is not an individual, who has not drawn out and fastened his lines of connection to innumerable others, by which like the divergent rays of a spider's web, he communicates and receives ten thousand sensations. There is not an individual, whose talents, temper and employment, have not a certain influence upon the happiness of others. The very meanest and lowest of mankind have their circles to fill up; a family to felicitate or disturb, some little friendships to cultivate, or some petty resentments to revenge. But if we wish to see the extent and attenuation of this influence completely unfolded, we must seek it in the history of those extraordinary characters, "who have filled a vast space in the eye of mankind." We must look for it in the history of rulers, who have depopulated whole provinces by their ambition, or ennobled their country by a virtuous administration. We must seek it in the volumes of authors, who have dissipated the errors of science, or enlarged her truths, whose works have traversed the countries of the earth or descended through ages.

This influence may be various in different individuals; and yet it is equally clear, that there is one only way, in which this influence can be *best* exerted. The capacities of any thing can receive but one direction, that is productive of the greatest possible happiness. Apply it to a different purpose, and you pervert its proper tendency; you so far injure the welfare of society. Would any prudent man consent to "hew blocks with a Razor?" Should a man, whose endowments are rare, admirable and extensive, whose wisdom might enlighten the ignorance of his countrymen, and "scatter plenty o'er a smiling land," should such a man be doomed to languish under the labours of the oar, or perish amid the damps of a mine? Could any one approve of the destination of capacities even less useful in degree, to purposes even less improper in their tendency? I ask whether such a perversion could be considered as moral? May I not then be permitted to say, that no man's influence can be regarded as perfectly moral, that is not exerted to produce the greatest possible happiness, with which he is sufficiently acquainted; and that his actions only become so, when they tend to that object?

In this sense, morality may be defined the œconomy of

the general happiness. It is then that the moralist puts on the most august attributes, with which the human character can be adorned; when he strives to fulfil this sacred function. Like the curious bee, he becomes active, sagacious, and persevering. No fortunate combination of events can escape him, in which he does not perceive and gather its most hidden sweets. Prosperity furnishes him with new means of enlarging the sphere of his beneficence; and even from the bosom of adversity he extracts the warnings of experience and the lessons of philosophy. He submits without a murmur to the sacrifices which may be required of him by the general welfare; for he finds in the habitual energy of his moral principles, and in a vivid perception of the happy tendency of his actions, a sufficient compensation for the generous sacrifice.

I am not here drawing the picture of a moral anachorite, who surrenders up his days to penance and mortification, in the pursuit of an imaginary good. Nor am I describing the hero of a moral romance, who makes himself completely miserable from a fear that others should not be completely happy. To such moral abortions I mean not to refer. I speak of a man whose personal happiness, amidst his contributions to the general welfare, sustains little diminution, whilst it may sometimes receive an incalculable augmentation. Should this system of liberal morality, for example, procure the approbation and sanction of the virtuous and the wise, the sum of his real enjoyments may be immensely extended. To-day he has perhaps some article of property in his possession which may be less serviceable to him than to his benevolent neighbour. He postpones his own gratification, and obeys the calculations of morality. To-morrow perhaps his neighbour has another instrument of happiness in his possession, which may be susceptible of a less fortunate application in his hands, than in those of our moralist. The pleasure, which he had received, is now reciprocated; and thus a mutual liberality succeeds in giving birth to a greater mass of enjoyment than what would have arisen from their contracted selfishness.—Should there even be no one else to assist and partake of his benefactions; should his be the only open bosom in which this system may seek a friendly asylum; even then the personal happiness of our moralist is secured from destruction. The same

consideration which impels him to promote the welfare of others, is due to his own. The very principles by which he is wont to regulate his conduct to others, would now justify a greater degree of attention to his personal welfare; and even for the surrender which his principles may then recommend, he will enjoy the resources of an unbounded consolation. The sympathy of those on whom he has conferred a voluntary benefit, the approbation of the disinterested persons who disapprove even of his principles, the consciousness of an unsullied integrity, all elevate him above the dominion of selfishness, and the turbulence of the passions.

Such is the man of general *Justice*. Such is the man who calculates all the consequences of his actions, and denominates them just or unjust, according to the general happiness or misery which will most probably attend them. How would a man of this character support the claims of the poor to greater refinement and instruction? By what arguments might he wish to vindicate the propriety of establishing schools and eleemosinary-houses for the attainment of these interesting objects? Perhaps he might reason in the following manner:

Every civilized society produces more than enough for the subsistence and comfortable accommodation of its members. The earth, when properly solicited, amply repays the toils of the husbandman. The employment of machines greatly supercedes the use of manual labour, and renders the industry of man astonishingly productive in the arts and manufactures. Hence every individual will have more of his own work to enjoy, and more to exchange for the labour of others. The necessities and conveniences of life will thus increase in quantity and extend in circulation. Many of those finer arts too, which embellish society, which awaken the ingenuity of the mind or furnish the instruments of philosophical research, will invite the labour and obtain the patronage of men. Yet after all the various deductions from the general wealth, which the consumption of those various articles must occasion, there will always remain in the hands of certain individuals, a supernumerary Fund of considerable amount, whose particular destination will attract the anxious and vigilant attention of the friend of society. Shall it go to the support of an useless number of servants in the houses of the rich? Shall it

maintain splendid equipages, or raise magnificent palaces? Shall it minister to the follies of the young, or the vices of the old, to the triumphs of pride, or the schemes of ambition? Or can it receive a more useful destination?

Here a more particular view of society will readily suggest to us a more fortunate application. Although every civilized country contains a great abundance of the necessities and conveniencies of life, they do not always receive an equal or nearly equal distribution. Adverse situations have exposed many individuals to 'the stings and arrows of fortune.' The want of industry, the want of prudence, unexpected misfortunes or unjust persecution, have heaped upon their heads disease, poverty and disconsolation. Many have been disabled in the battles of their country: And many an unhappy female, who has wandered from the path of propriety has enlisted the agonies of want under the banners of infamy. Shall these misfortunes pass by without the necessary relief? And yet these abodes of misery will frequently contain more unfortunate objects, who have even a greater claim upon our justice. Let us enter their houses. You will observe their children with tattered garments and pallid countenances. Converse with them, and perhaps you may find the spirit of useful curiosity slumbering, or their minds awake only to young debauchery and cunning prudence. When a deformed child was born among the ancient Spartans, it was their barbarous policy to expose it to an early death. 'Tis true that civilized society does not murder the children of the wretched, yet how often does she subject them to imbecility and disease, by frequent abstinence, & insufficient support! A tribe of the old* Germans used to reserve their deformed children for the menial purpose of drawing their vehicles. Civilized society, 'tis true, does not turn the children of the wretched into brutes, yet how often do they wear the form of man, divested of all pretensions to the dignity of his nature! And yet let the capacities of these unfortunate children be impartially analysed. Will not their frames be found as complicated and subtile, as those of the rich? Are not their senses as susceptible of impression? Can they not see and hear, and smell, and taste & touch as delicately? Is their me-

* Note—See 4th book of *Cæsar on the manners of the Suevi.*

mory imperfect? Cannot they compare, reflect and reason? Has no individual on whom "Fortune frowned unfeeling at his birth," ascended afterwards to the heights of distinction and science? Was it simply the inspiration of an ardent genius, or was it not rather the imposing lessons of experience, which dictated to the pathetic poet of the county church-yard his most affecting strains! When we accompany Gray to this melancholy receptacle of the dead, and when like him we meditate over the mouldering ruins of the poor; what is it that gives a more thrilling sensation to the soul, than the comparison which our imagination is so prone to indulge, of what these humble inhabitants of the hamlet formerly were, with what they were once capable of becoming? Even at that moment, when not an object meets our senses but "some frail memorial" of departed life, and extinguished intellect, even then we secretly acknowledge the capacities of the poor. Even then we fancifully retrace the incidents of each one's life, and conceive how much of fortune and fame their native genius might have enabled them to attain, had a more fortunate star shone upon their birth.

We have thus a simple picture of the intellectual condition of the poor; of mind struggling in its very birth for the means of unfolding its finest energies. For these lamentable misfortunes we have found also an adequate cure. Would society cultivate these capacities; would she exert a maternal affection for their support and improvement, she would scarcely fail to raise them up into useful and respectable children. But should she suffer them to protract a miserable existence, surrounded as they too often are by thoughtless debauchery and wild intoxication, stimulated by poverty and degraded by contempt, what security can she have that she will not hereafter find in them an active nuisance calculated to interrupt her order, and disturb her repose?

Compare now this complicated chain of consequences with those which may be expected to arise from the different destinations that were imagined to be given to the super-numerary fund of society; compare the subsistence, the cloathing, and the information of the poor, with the injurious superfluities of the rich; and to which side, let me ask, may not the greatest happiness be expected to fall! It is now that justice weighs them in her golden balance, and

pronounces her impartial decree: *Let Society fulfill the Claims of the poor.*

We might here go on to enquire into the different means of accomplishing this desirable object. I might compare together the respective consequences of a legislative provision and individual contribution, and show the distinguishing advantages which the latter possesses over the former. Yet at present I must decline these important researches.

We might also enquire into the propriety of the different systems, which have been proposed for the support and instruction of the poor. I might here investigate the various ways, by which they ought to be fed, clothed and lodged, with the different species and degrees of knowledge, in which they should be initiated. But this too is an investigation, which at the present moment, extends beyond the measure of my strength.

Already have I accomplished enough, if I have succeeded in placing upon its *true* basis the rights and privileges of the sons of the poor. And here then is an object which is eminently worthy of the most energetic exertions of the friend of justice. In the selfish passions of other men, he may no doubt expect to find the most stubborn impediments to the execution of any plans which is destined to the improvement of the children of the poor.

Yet even these will sometimes give way to the exertions of the man, who is not willing to indulge a premature despair. The more he meditates upon the principles, which direct his efforts, upon the various details of his benevolent system, and the different expedients which he may be able to employ, the nearer will he approach the goal of his laudable ambition. Tho' this desirable object may seem to swell beyond his immediate grasp, it becomes him never to lose sight of its possible attainment. The æronaut, who now soars among the clouds, would never have ascended above the earth, if the aspirations of his fancy had not long before anticipated the researches of reason.

R.

End of Series First.