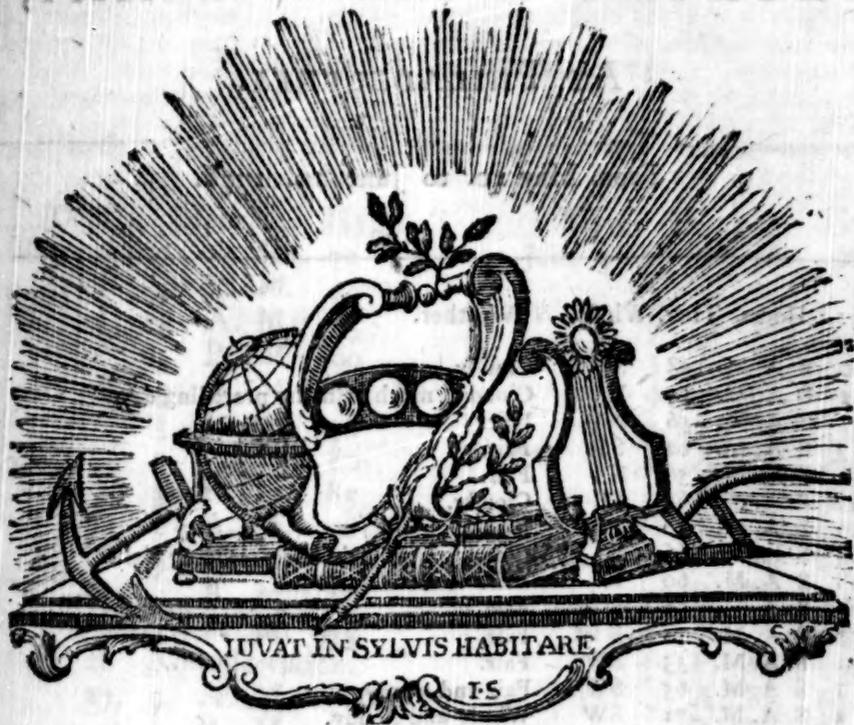


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P H I L A D E L P H I A :

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The DRUID, N^o. II.

WHEN I first came into this country, nothing was farther from my expectation than the contest that has now taken place between Great-Britain and the Colonies. The reader, I suppose, will also readily believe me when I affirm, that what relates to this important struggle, made but a small part of the matter I had meditated and digested for the subject of these dissertations. But from some letters which I have received, and much conversation that I have heard, it appears plain that something of this kind is expected from me, and that if it is long withheld it will be difficult to avoid suspicion from the warmer sons of liberty. It is not easy to determine what branches of this great argument it would be best to take up, as most suitable to a speculative philosopher, and at the same time most necessary or useful to the bulk of my readers. The natural rights of mankind, and the cause of liberty in general, have been explained and defended in innumerable treatises, ancient and modern. The application of these principles to the American controversy, has been made by many writers among us, with the greatest clearness and precision. The nature of government, and method of balancing a civil constitution, I cannot say has been handled either with so much fulness or propriety as the other topics, yet on this also many excellent observations have been made. If it has not been much reasoned on, it seems never-

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theless to be both felt and understood in almost every corner of this Continent.

Leaving therefore these subjects for the present, as we are yet engaged in a war somewhat singular in its nature, important in its consequences, and uncertain in its duration, I shall beg leave to make some remarks as a scholar, and as a citizen of the world, on *the manner of carrying on war*. By this is not meant to lay down a plan of discipline or tactics for an army, or of stratagems and manœuvres for a general or inferior leader; but to consider by what means wars of different kinds may be carried on, consistently with reason, conscience, or common utility. Every body must have observed how frequently the newspapers are filled with complaints of our enemies, as acting savagely and barbarously—as being guilty of unnatural cruelty—as carrying on a felonious and piratical war—as acting contrary to the laws of war. I have, however, taken notice, that among all these dissertations, little or nothing has been said to shew *why* they have acted barbarously, further than that they have acted unjustly in being our enemies at all. No one has told us what are the laws of war, or endeavoured to make us understand when enemies may be said to act a fair and honourable, and when a dastardly and cruel part.

This subject I shall now therefore enter upon, and will endeavour to handle it with as much simplicity as possible, that it may be useful to persons of the lowest rank, and most common under-

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standing

standing. Let me trace it to its source. Wherever society exists, founded upon clear established laws, this obliges us to form an idea of a state previous to the formation of society, or before such or any laws were made and acknowledged to be in force. This is called a state of nature. I do not enter into the innumerable questions upon this subject; as, how long it could continue, when men increased in number? Whether it is a state of war or peace? Whether inclination prompted, or necessity compelled men to enter into society? It is sufficient for my purpose to observe, that independent nations are in a state of natural liberty with respect to one another, or as man to man previous to the social compact. When they disagree they have no common umpire or judge to resort to, but must decide their quarrels by the sword. The questions then to be resolved are three; 1. Are there any laws at all by which they are bound? or, are all kinds of force or violence equally just? 2. If not, what is the law? what is it that makes the distinction? and, 3. What is the sanction of the law? To whom shall we complain when it is broken?

If there is any such law, it is certainly very justly denominated, by civilians, *the law of nature and nations*. Of nature, because its principles are to be derived from the state of natural or universal liberty, and personal independance; and of nations, because there is no person in such a state at present, excepting nations or large bodies, who consider themselves as independent of each other. Now that there is such a law I think is evident, not only from the universal acknow-

ledgment of men, and the practice of nations from the earliest ages, but from the nature of the thing. If there are any duties binding upon men to each other in a state of natural liberty, the same are due from nation to nation. Bodies politic do not in this circumstance differ from individuals. The same answer must be made to the second question. It is impossible to mention any right that an individual may justly claim, either as to person or property, from his fellow men, but a society has the like claim upon any other society. Their persons must not be assaulted, nor their property invaded. The single purpose of society, indeed, is to protect the individual, and to give him the strength of the public arm, in defence of his just and natural rights.

But it will be asked, in the third place, What is the sanction of this law? and, who is to call the offender to account? To this I answer, That the sanction of the law of nature is nothing else but a sense of duty, and accountableness to the Supreme Judge; to which may be added, such a sense of general utility, as makes men fear that if they notoriously trample upon it, reproach and infamy among all nations will be the effect, and probably resentment and indignation by common consent. Agreeably to this, having recourse to force is often called an appeal to heaven, and it is, at the same time, generally accompanied with an attempt, by some public declaration, to convince other nations of the justice of the cause.

Omitting many things that are not connected with the point I have in view, particularly without enumerating the legitimate causes
of

of war, but supposing nations engaged in a war which they believe on both sides to be just, let us ask, What are the means by which this war is to be carried on? The first and most obvious answer is, By all manner of force or open violence; and the most able warrior is presumed to be the one that can invent weapons the most deadly and destructive. It is admitted also on all hands, that force may be used not only against the persons and goods of the rulers, but of every member of the hostile state. This may seem hard, that innocent subjects of a state should suffer for the folly and indiscretion of the rulers, or of other members of the same state. But it is often unavoidable. The whole individuals that compose a state, are considered but as one body. It would be impossible for an enemy to distinguish the guilty from the innocent. When men submit to a government, they risk their own persons and possessions in the same bottom with the whole, in return for the benefits of society.

Upon this principle, open violence may be said to have no bounds, and every method that can be invented to send destruction and misery to any part of the hostile state, may be thought to be permitted. But upon the principles of general equity, and the consent and practice of modern times, acts of cruelty and inhumanity, are to be blamed, and to be considered as a violation of the law of nations. Many of them might be easily enumerated, such as refusing quarter to those who submit, killing prisoners when they might be kept without any danger, killing women and children, inventing methods of torture, burning and destroying every thing

that might be of use in life. The use of poisoned weapons also has been generally condemned, as well the poisoning of springs and provisions.

The celebrated Dr. Robertson of Edinburgh, in a sermon before the society for propagating Christian knowledge, has made an observation to this purpose, 'that to the honour of modern times, and (as he thinks) particularly to the honour of Christianity itself, there is much more gentleness and humanity in the manner of carrying on war than formerly.' If we look into ancient history we shall see such instances of ferocity and cruelty in many cases, as are too shocking to be related. There is no fact, however, in the records of antiquity on this subject, that ever struck me so much as the account given of Sesostris, because it shews, not the barbarity of a particular monster, but the spirit of the times. He is extolled by many ancient authors for his clemency, because he did not put to death the princes whom he unjustly attacked and conquered. Yet he ordered them to wait upon him with a yearly tribute, and on these occasions used to yoke them in his chariot, and make them draw him, in place of horses, to the temple. How much worse than death would this appear at present to a captive prince?

But however justly praise may be due to modern times for comparative humanity, what we have said above is only general and undefined. Let us seek for the true principle that ought to govern the conduct of refined and enlightened nations. This, if I mistake not, is, *That all acts of cruelty which have*

no tendency to weaken the resisting force, are contrary to reason and religion, and therefore to the law of nature and nations. The end of war is to obtain justice and restore peace, therefore whatever tends to lessen or destroy the force of the enemy, must be permitted. It is in this view alone that the capture of private property is allowed and justified. But to take lives without necessity, and even to treat prisoners with oppression or insult, above all to destroy or torture the weaker sex, or the helpless infant, ought to be detested by every nation professing the gospel.

The principle which I have laid down, may be applied universally, and will serve to point out when any measure is to be justified or condemned between persons professing open hostility against each other. I will take the liberty to apply it to some things that have been done or attempted in the present war, carried on by Great-Britain against America. It is now undeniable that endeavours have been used to bring the Indian tribes upon the back settlements. This I call an act of extreme and unjustifiable barbarity, because their manner of making war is well known. They are neither formidable for their number nor their strength, but for making inroads upon the dwellings of their enemies, and putting to death women and children, with circumstances of horrid cruelty. This is so far from weakening the force of the people against whom it is practised, that it tends to inspire them with a revenge and fury not to be resisted. The well known history of the late war, will both explain and support what I have said. The cruelty of the Indians produced a spirit in

the back settlers, which not only repelled their attacks, but in some instances retaliated their injuries, in a manner that I will not take upon me either to defend or excuse. Therefore, when we blame the British ministry for stirring up the Indians against us, we do not blame them for asking assistance from other nations, which is common in all wars, when any party apprehends itself weak, but for a method of attack the cruelty of which bears no proportion to any advantage that can be derived from it.

The same thing I say of proclaiming liberty to slaves, and stirring them up to rebel against their masters. There is, however, some little difference in the application of the principle to this and the preceding instance. It is probable that the people in Great-Britain reckoned upon a degree of advantage from this measure, vastly superior not only to what it produced in effect, but to what they themselves expected from the incursions of the Indians. I gather this from an expression in a treatise published in England on the American controversy, to this purpose, that 'if England declare freedom to the slaves, they (the Americans) have not six weeks to be a people.' These apprehensions may be thought to justify them in the attempt, as they must have taken it to be so speedy and effectual a mean of producing absolute submission. But I must observe in addition to what I have said above, that there are some things so base and treacherous in their nature, and so pernicious in the example to human society in general, that whatever effect they might be supposed to have in a particular case, all men

of liberal minds have concurred in rejecting them. For example, tho' it is generally agreed that aiming particularly at the life of a leader in battle, is not only lawful but prudent, as it is of more consequence than fifty others, yet to suborn his servants to assassinate him privately, though it might have the same effect upon the military operations, is universally condemned. An instance in history occurs to me, in which a measure, though likely to have a great influence in weakening the enemy, yet, for its extreme cruelty, deserves to be spoken of with horror. It was that of king James VII.'s general at the siege of Londonderry, 1689, who when the garrison was reduced to extremity for want of provision, drove all the protestants within thirty miles, chiefly old men, women, and infants, under the walls of the city, to be either taken in, or suffered to perish with hunger under the eyes of their friends. Had this measure been successful, it would have been, notwithstanding, condemned as unjust; but I am happy in being able to observe, that acts of extreme cruelty do very seldom produce the effects intended by them. When a certain point is exceeded, fear itself is converted into rage, and produces the unexpected and incredible efforts of despair.

The principle I have above laid down will also enable us to judge what opinion we should form of acts of violence and depredation. When an army can avail itself of the goods and property of the members of a hostile state, or probably reduce them to the necessity of making peace, not only the seizure but the destruction of both may be justified upon the principles of reason. But when men can on-

ly destroy and not possess, and that destruction can only fall upon an inconsiderable number of helpless people, it is at once inconsistent with greatness of mind, and for the most part against the interest of the destroyer. It operates as an inflammatory principle, and calls up every man from the strongest to the feeblest, to resist in repelling or punishing the savage invader. For this reason I give it as my opinion, that burning and destroying houses where there is no fortress, as has been in some instances done, deserves all the epithets of barbarous, savage, and inhuman, that have been bestowed upon it, either by those who have suffered, or those who have felt in their behalf.

A few more reflections should have been added upon wars differently circumstanced, and particularly upon civil wars, but they must be referred to the next or some future paper.

A REMARKABLE WILL.

The last WILL and TESTAMENT of me, a poor sinful and worthless Creature, commonly known by the assumed name of George Pfalmanazar.

THY ever blessed and unerring will, Oh! most gracious, though offended God, be done by me and all the world, whether for life or death.

Into thy all-merciful hands I commit my soul, as unto a most gracious Father, who, though justly provoked by my past vain and wicked life but more especially so during the youthful follies of a rash and unthinking part of it, has yet been graciously pleased, by thy undeserved grace and mercy, to preserve me from the reigning errors and heresies, and the more deplorable apostacy and infidelity of the present age, and enabled me to take a constant and stedfast hold on the holy author of our salvation, thy ever adorable and divine Son Jesus Christ, our powerful and meritorious redeemer, from whose alone, and all-powerful intercession