

AN
HISTORICAL AND MORAL VIEW
OF THE
FRENCH REVOLUTION.

B O O K V.

CHAPTER I.

ERROR OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN NEGLECTING TO SECURE THE FREEDOM OF FRANCE. ITS CONDUCT COMPARED WITH THAT OF THE AMERICAN STATES. NECESSITY OF FORMING A NEW CONSTITUTION AS SOON AS AN OLD GOVERNMENT IS DESTROYED. THE DECLARING THE KING INVIOLEABLE A WRONG MEASURE. SECURITY OF THE FRENCH AGAINST A COUNTER-REVOLUTION. THE FLIGHT OF THE KING MEDITATED.

THE conduct of the assembly in losing so much time—the most precious time to secure the happiness of their country, and enable the present generation to participate in the blessings they were preparing for posterity, instead of having to encounter all the miseries of anarchy, can never be sufficiently lamented. France had already gained her freedom; the nation had already ascertained certain

certain, and the most important, political truths : it ought, therefore, to have been the next consideration, how these were to be preserved, and the liberty of the empire consolidated on a basis that time would only render more firm.

Moderate men, or real patriots, would have been satisfied with what had been gained, for the present, allowing the rest to follow progressively. It was the most political and the most reasonable way to secure the acquisition. In this situation France had to contend with the prejudices of half Europe, at least, and to counteract the influence of the insidious intriguers, who were opposing themselves to her regeneration ; to facilitate which the assembly ought to have made it one of their main objects to render the king contented with the change ; and then the machinations of all the underminers of the revolution, would not have loosened one fundamental stone, to endanger the rising edifice.

Such is the difference between men acting from a practical knowledge, and men who are governed entirely by theory, or no principle whatever. Most of the United States
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of America formed their separate constitutions within a month, and none took more than three, after the declaration of their independence by congress. There certainly was a vast distinction between those States, then the colonies of Great Britain, and France after the 14th of July; but both countries were without a government. America with an enemy in the heart of their empire, and France threatened with an attack. The leading men of America, however, knew, that there was a necessity of having some kind of government, and seem to have perceived the ease, with which any subsequent alterations could be effected. The members of the national assembly, on the contrary, found themselves surrounded with ruins; and aiming at a state of perfection for which the minds of the people were not sufficiently mature; affecting likewise to be directed by a magnanimous disinterestedness, they not only planted the germ of the most dangerous and licentious spirit, but they continued to irritate the desperate courtiers, who, having determined to oppose stratagem to force, and not succeeding, rested all their future hopes on the king's escape.

The liberty of the press, which had been virtually established, at this period, was a successful engine employed against the assembly. And to a nation celebrated for epigrammatic fancy, and whose taste had been so refined by art, that they had lost the zest of nature, the simplicity of some of the members, their awkward figures, and rustic gait, compared with the courtly mien, and easy assurance of the chevaliers of Versailles, afforded an excellent subject. Some of these satires were written with considerable wit, and such a happy turn of caricature, that it is impossible not to laugh with the author, though indirectly ridiculing the principles you hold sacred. The most respectable decrees, the most important, and serious discussions, were twisted into jests; which divided the people without doors into two distinct parties; one, speaking of the assembly with sovereign contempt, as a set of upstarts and babbling knaves; and the other, setting up new thrones for their favourites, and viewing them with blind admiration, as if they were a synod of demi-gods. The countenancing of this abuse of freedom was ill-judged. The different parties were already
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sufficiently heated ; yet it would have been impossible, perhaps, to have restrained the temper of the times, so strong is the intoxication of a new folly, though it would have been easy for the assembly to have passed a decree respecting libels. But so ardent was become their passion for liberty, that they were unable to discriminate between a licentious use of that important invention, and it's real utility. Treating then with an untimely disdain the many abusive publications, which were sold within the very walls where they were sitting, they were not aware of the effect which they produced on the minds of mock heroes, who, having no principle but honour, were ready to risk their lives to sooth distressed beauty, no matter what produced it ; or to alleviate the sufferings of a king, though the consequence of his turpitude or tergiversation.

After the wreck of a government the plan of a new constitution ought to be immediately formed, that is, as soon as circumstances will possibly admit, and presented to the citizens for their acceptance ; or rather the people should depute men for that purpose, and give them a limited time for framing one.

A constitution is a standard for the people to rally round. It is the pillar of a government, the bond of all social unity and order. The investigation of its principles makes it a fountain of light ; from which issue the rays of reason, that gradually bring forward the mental powers of the whole community. And whenever the wheels of government, like the wheels of any other machine, are found clogged, or do not move in a regular manner, they equally require alteration and improvement : and these improvements will be proportionably perfect as the people become enlightened.

The authority of the national assembly had been acknowledged nearly three months previous to this epocha, without their having taken any decided steps to secure these important ends. Indeed it does not appear to have been their first object. They seem not to have known, or at least not to have been apprehensive, that, in proportion to the length of time that the people are without an established government, anarchists gain an ascendancy over their minds ; and it then becomes no easy task to form a constitution adapted to their wayward tempers.

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When a few fundamental principles are ascertained, and the state has determined that they shall form the basis of it's polity, it seems to be no difficult matter to give motion to the new springs of government. It is true, that many of the prejudices of frenchmen were still inveterate, and in some measure influenced them; and it is also certain, that their total ignorance of the operations of any rational system of government was an impediment to this motion; but it is nevertheless to be presumed, that, the liberty of frenchmen having been previously secured by the establishment of the declaration of rights, if the assembly had formed some kind of a constitution, and proposed it to the nation, and to the king, if he were considered as forming a part of it, for their acceptation, the dispute between the people and court would have been brought to a speedy issue; and the public attention directed to a point would have given dignity and respectability to their proceedings. If such measures had been followed, and it appears a little strange they were not, most probably the king and court, perceiving that their future consequence wholly depended on their acquiescence

with the state of reason, and temper of the times, would have relinquished all those absurd and dangerous projects for overturning the rising political fabric of the nation, which anarchy fostered.

It is the pillars of a building, which indicate it's durability, and not the minor beams that are inserted through them, in order to rear the structure. The natural, civil, and political rights of man are the main pillars of all social happiness; and by the firm establishment of them, the freedom of men will be eternally secured. The moment, therefore, a state has gained those important and sacred privileges, it is clear, that it ought to form some kind of government, grounded upon this firm and broad basis, that being the only possible way to give them permanency. But the constituent assembly, unmindful of the dreadful effects beginning to flow from an unbounded licentiousness, continued to pursue a romantic sublimity of character, dangerous to all sublunary laws; whilst most interestedly attentive to things that should have been subordinate to their first object, they were led into a procrastination, which in
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it's consequence has been fatal in the extreme.

The decree which made the king inviolable, passed on the 15th of september, at the time the crown was declared hereditary, and the empire indivisible, was the most idle, if not the most dangerous measure, both for him and France, which could have been devised. The former life of Louis had exhibited a series of follies, and displayed an insincerity not to be tolerated, much less encouraged ; and it was likely, if this doctrine, a relict of the abasement of ignorance, that kings can do no wrong, should be carried into a law, forming part of the constitution, that he would avail himself of the decree of the assembly to cover his contempt of the national sovereignty. When kings are considered by the government of a country merely as ciphers, it is very just and proper, that their ministers should be responsible for their political conduct : but at the moment when a state is about to establish a constitution on the basis of reason, to undermine that foundation by a master-piece of absurdity, appears a solecism as glaring as the doctrine itself is laughable, when applied to an enlightened

policy. In fact, whilst Mirabeau contended for the infallibility of the king, he seems to have had no right from reason to deride those who respected that of the church : for, if the government must necessarily be supported by a pious fraud, one was as respectable as the other.

The bigotry of Louis was well known ; nay, it was notorious, that he employed his confessor to erase from his tender conscience the remembrance of the vices he resolved to indulge, and to reconcile the meanest dissimulation with a servile fear of the Being whose first attribute is truth.—This man, whose bestiality had been carefully pampered by the queen and count d'Artois, because in those moments of revelry, prolonged to the most disgusting excess of gluttony and intoxication, he would sanction all their demands, was made in his person and conduct sacred and unimpeachable. This was the extreme folly of weakness. But, when it is also kept in view, that, at the very period when he was declared inviolable, he was suspected, in concert with the court, to be actually meditating his flight, there seems to be a pusillanimity in it as contemptible as the
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pretended dignity of the assembly was ridiculous.

True firmness consists in doing whatever is just and reasonable, uninfluenced by any other consideration. The defining the power of the crown in the assembly to be subordinate to the authority of the people must have appeared to the kings of Europe a dangerous encroachment on their indefeasible rights :— a heresy tending to undermine their privileges, should such audacity pass unchastized, and to destroy the splendour of royalty by presuming to control it's omnipotence. It was then scarcely to be expected, that their resentment would be appeased by shielding the person of Louis against the danger of intrigue and violence. It was not, indeed, the preservation of the life of this unfortunate man, that interested them so sensibly as to appall the sycophants of Europe.—No ; it was the attack made on despotism ; and the attempt to draw aside the splendid curtain which concealed it's folly, that threw them into a general ferment and agitation. This agitation could not fail to inspire the court of Versailles with hope, and they stood prepared to take advantage of the gathering storm, as
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eagerly as a distressed mariner, who has long laid becalmed, perceiving at length a gentle heaving of the sea, and feeling the undulating motion of his bark, foresees the approaching breeze, and spreads his sails to catch the first breath of wind. The effect of the feigned or real pity of many of the admirers of the old system, who were deeply wounded by the wrong done, as they insisted, to their king, was to be dreaded; for it was not to be supposed, that the chivalrous spirit of France would be destroyed in an instant, though *swords had ceased to leap out of their scabbards* when beauty was not deified. It was then undoubtedly to be feared, that they would risk their lives and fortunes to support the glory of their master, and their own notions of honour: and the assembly, by making Louis not accountable for any of his actions, however insincere, unjust, or atrocious, was affording all his abettors a shelter, encouraging at the same time his hypocrisy, and relaxing the little energy of character, which his misfortune seemed to be calling into play.

Mistaken lenity in politics is not more dangerous than a false magnanimity is palpable

ble littleness in the eyes of a man of simple integrity. Besides, had the representatives of the people considered Louis merely as a man, it is probable he would have acted more like one. Instead of palliating the matter, they should, on the contrary, have proclaimed to all Europe, with a tone of dignified firmness, that the french nation, willing for themselves, regardless of the rights and privileges of others, though respecting their prejudices, finding that no compromise could be formed between the court and people, whose interest neither justice nor policy ever required should be distinct, do not consider themselves accountable to any power or congress on earth, for any measure they may choose to adopt in framing a constitution to regulate their own internal polity. That treating their monarch like a man, and not as a mere idol for state pageantry, they would wish, by establishing the dignity of truth and justice, to give stability to the freedom of frenchmen, and leave a monument in their institutions to immortalize a sincere and acquiescing king. But that, though their ideas might differ greatly from those of their neighbours, with whom they desired to live on the
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most amicable terms, they would pursue the path of eternal reason in consolidating the rights of man ; and by a striking example lay the foundation of the liberty of the whole globe, of that liberty which had hitherto been confined to the small island of England, and enjoyed imperfectly even there.

The house of Austria was at this period engaged in a war with the turks, which obliged it to withdraw most of it's troops from Flanders ; and the intelligence, that the flerings, highly discontented with the innovations, which the vain weathercock Joseph the Second had made in their form of worship, were on the eve of an insurrection, more against the folly of the man than the despotism of his court, calmed the fears of the french, as to the danger of being immediately attacked by Germany. This security, for they had no dread of Sardinia, made them consider the possibility of a counter-revolution being effected by foreign enemies as far from alarming. It is true, there was not any just cause of apprehension, unless they took into the calculation, that the policy of Europe for ages past had been subject to sudden changes ; a state of profound tranquillity giving

ing place to sanguinary scenes of confusion, and inhuman butcheries—often about such trifling insults and idle pretentions, as individuals would be ashamed to make a pretext for quarrelling; and having reason to expect these changes as long as the systems of courts preserve their existence, France could not reckon, with any degree of certainty, on the continuation of peace.—Neither did the national assembly appear to have calculated upon it; for they undoubtedly betrayed symptoms of pusillanimity, when they suffered their conduct to be in the smallest degree influenced by the apprehension of a combination of the crowned heads of Europe to replace the royal diadem of France, should the most brilliant of it's jewels be touched by profane hands.

These fears, perhaps, were the secret cause, combined with the old habit of adoring the king, as a point of honour, and loving the court, as an affair of taste, that induced them to preserve the shadow of monarchy in the new order of things. It's preservation might have been politically necessary; because, before abolishing any ancient form, it is necessary to secure whatever political good may have flowed from it, and guard against being exhausted

exhausted by cutting off an excrescence.— But, if the continuance of a king in the new system were expedient to avert present evil, they should have allowed him the power necessary to give energy to the government ; and making him responsible for the rectitude of his actions, the man would have had a fair trial, and posterity, judging of his conduct, would have been enabled to form a just estimate of a kingly government.

Machiavelian cunning, however, still directed the movements of all the courts of Europe ; and these political moles, too well perceiving the timidity that was mixed with the blustering courage of the assembly, only waited for a favourable season to overturn the rising edifice. Their agents had private instructions to promote the escape of Louis, as the surest mode of making a decided schism in the national politics ; and they firmly believed, that the affection still subsisting for his christian majesty would facilitate the execution of their plan. The court also presuming on the divisions and lenity of the assembly, took the most indefatigable pains to foster in the mind of the public, nay, in that of all Europe, pity for the degraded person of the king,

king, and detestation of the sacrilege, which had been committed on the dignity of royalty. Their continual theme was the ignominious state to which the most mild of the Bourbons was reduced, by men, who usurped the reins of government, and trampled on the honours of that august and ancient family. Restraining the authority of a throne, which supported the most abominable tyranny, they were shaking the despotism, which held in bondage nine-tenths of the inhabitants of the world. These were alarming signals to a certain class of men, to the drones and myrmidons who live on the spoil and blood of industry and innocence. The intrusion of knowledge, which was sure to render them an useless set of beings in society, was to be prevented by ingenious clamours, whilst a great number of weak, well-meaning people, and still more knaves, enlisted under their banner.

The universal damp, which the revolution had given to the courts of Europe, producing among them a lively sympathy for the sombre atmosphere of Versailles, a general sorrow was consequently expressed by all their minions, and expressed with unfeigned concern; for the want of the usual routine of amusements tended

tended to make it real. Hope, indeed, began again to animate them, when the king was prevailed on to concert his escape ; yet their eagerness to accelerate his departure for the frontiers, where they purposed to erect the royal standard, to avail themselves of the proximity of german connections, was in a great degree the cause of defeating that ill-contrived design.

A design formed very early, and systematically pursued, was probably rendered entirely abortive by the obstinacy of the court ; who still persisted to cherish the belief, that the public opinion was changed only for the moment, and that their deeply rooted love of royalty would bring them back to what they termed their duty, when the effervescence excited by novelty had subsided. And thinking, that the cordial reception given by the parisiens to the soldiery had contributed to estrange them, and effect the revolution, they determined to regain their lost ground, and dazzle them by feasts, instead of stealing on their affections by hospitality.—Still, bearing impatiently their humiliating situation, the courtiers could not help vauntingly exposing their project ; and the babbling of joy showed the

the weakness of the heads, that could so soon be intoxicated by hope.

A preparatory step was thought necessary to awaken a sense of allegiance in the breasts of the people, and to promote a division amongst them, if not their entire concurrence, after the cabinet should have securely in their possession the person of the king; and this division would then enable them to calculate their strength, and act accordingly. For this purpose, in spite of the comments that had been made on the festivity at Versailles, which seemed before to insult the misery of the people, and greatly tended to provoke the exertions that overturned the Bastille and changed the whole face of things, they projected another entertainment to seduce the military, encouraged to throng round the court, whilst famine was at the very gates of Paris. But previously the old french guards, who had been incorporated with the *garde bourgeoise*, began to manifest some symptoms of discontent at not being allowed to guard the person of the king. Whether they considered their honour as wounded, or were spirited up to aspire at regaining this privilege, is not decided; but it is clear, that the court,

either to facilitate the entrance of fresh troops, or from a real dislike to men, who had taken such an active part in disconcerting their first plot, opposed their wish ; and even the municipality, as has been already noticed, was induced to request, that a regiment of fresh troops might be called in to guard the person of the king, and keep the peace, which this trifling dispute, swelled into an insurrection in the report, threatened to disturb.

The king's body-guards, whose time of service expired the first of october, were still retained with those who came to replace them ; and an immense crowd of supernumeraries continued daily to increase this corps, which had not yet sworn allegiance to the nation. The officers, in particular, flocked to Versailles, amounting to between eleven or twelve hundred, constantly parading together. The universal topic was commiseration of the king's fate, and insinuations respecting the ambition of the assembly. Yet, even there the court party seemed to be prevailing : a president attached to loyalty was elected ; and Mirabeau's remonstrances, respecting the augmentation of the troops, were disregarded.

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Mean time, not only the officers of the new regiment, but those of the national guards, were caressed by the court, whilst the citizens, with more sagacity, were lavish of their attention to the soldiers. The cabinet had not sufficient discernment to perceive, that the people were now to be led, not driven ; and the popular promoters of anarchy, to serve their private interest, availed themselves, unfortunately, but too well of this want of judgment.—Thus whilst one party, declaiming on the necessity of order, seemed to be endeavouring to rivet on them the chains of servitude, the other lifted them above the law with vain glorious notions of their sovereignty.—And this sovereignty of the people, the perfection of the science of government, only to be attained when a nation is truly enlightened, consisted in making them tyrants ; nay the worst of tyrants, because the instruments of mischief of the men, who pretended to be subordinate to their will, though acting the very part of the ministers whom they execrated.

CHAPTER II.

ENTERTAINMENT AT VERSAILLES. THE NATIONAL COCKADE TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT. A MOB OF WOMEN PROCEED TO THE HOTEL -DE -VILLE—AND THENCE TO VERSAILLES. THE KING'S REPLY TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY'S REQUEST, THAT HE WOULD SANCTION THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS AND THE FIRST ARTICLES OF THE CONSTITUTION. DEBATES ON IT. ARRIVAL OF THE MOB AT VERSAILLES. THE KING RECEIVES A DEPUTATION FROM THE WOMEN, AND SANCTIONS THE DECREE FOR THE FREE CIRCULATION OF GRAIN. THE ASSEMBLY SUMMONED. LA FAYETTE ARRIVES WITH THE PARISIAN MILITIA. THE PALACE ATTACKED BY THE MOB—WHO ARE DISPERSED BY THE NATIONAL GUARDS. REFLECTIONS ON THE CONDUCT OF THE DUKE OF ORLEANS.

ON the first of october, in consequence of these fresh machinations, a magnificent entertainment was given in the name of the king's body-guards; but really by some of their principal officers, at the opera-house of the castle. The affectation of excluding the dragoons, distinguished for their attachment to liberty, seemed to show, but too plainly, the end in view, rendered still more conspicuous by the unusual familiarity of persons of the first rank with the lowest soldiers.

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When their heads were heated by a sumptuous banquet, by the tumult of an immense crowd, and the great profusion of delicious wines and *liqueurs*, the conversation, purposely turned into one channel, became unrestrained, and a chivalrous scene completed the folly. The queen, to testify her satisfaction for the homage paid to her, and the wishes expressed in her favour, exhibited herself to this half-drunken multitude; carrying the dauphin in her arms, whom she regarded with a mixture of sorrow and tenderness, and seeming to implore in his favour the affection and zeal of the soldiers.

This acting, for it is clear that the whole was a preconcerted business, was still more intoxicating than the wine.—The exclamation *vive le roi, vive la reine*, resounded from all sides, and the royal healths were drunk over drawn swords, whilst that of the nation was rejected with contempt by the body-guards. The music, the choice could not have been the effect of chance, played the well known air—O Richard! O my king! the universe abandons thee*! and during this

* O Richard, O mon roi,
 * L'univers t'abandonne !'

moment of fascination some voices, perhaps bribed for the occasion, mingled execrations against the assembly. A grenadier even darted from the midst of his comrades, and accusing himself of having been unfaithful to his prince, endeavoured, several times, to plunge his sword into his bosom. His held arm was not indeed allowed to search for the disloyal heart; but some blood was permitted to flow—and this theatrical display of sensibility, carried to the highest pitch, produced emotions almost convulsive in the whole circle, of which an english reader can scarcely form an idea. The king, who is always represented as innocent, though always giving proofs that he more than connived at the attempts to recover his power, was likewise prevailed on to show himself at this entertainment. And some of the same soldiery, who had refused to second the former project of the cabal, were now induced to utter insults and menaces against the very authority, they then supported. ‘The national cockade,’ exclaimed Mirabeau, ‘that emblem of the defenders of liberty, has been torn in pieces, and stamped under foot; and another ensign put in its place.—Yes; even under the eye of the monarch,

‘narch,

‘ narch, who allowed himself to be styled—
 ‘ *Restorer of the rights of his people*, they have
 ‘ dared to hoist a signal of faction.’

The same scene was renewed two days after, though with less parade ; and invitations for a similar treat were given for the following week.

The rumour respecting them, which reached Paris, contained many exaggerated circumstances ; and was regarded as the commencement of fresh hostilities, on the part of the court. The cry now was, that the stunned aristocracy had again reared it's head ; and that a number of old officers, chevaliers of St. Louis, had signed a promise to join the body-guards in a new attempt. This list was said to contain thirty thousand signatures ; and idle as the tale was, it seemed to be confirmed by the appearance of white and black cockades, which inconsiderate individuals displayed at the risk of their lives. These, said the parisiens, are the first indications of a projected civil war—the court wish only to have the king safe to head them before they speak out :—he ought, therefore, to be removed to Paris, inferred the politicians of the palais royal. The exasperating of the people in this

manner was certainly the most absurd blundering folly that could have ruined a party, who apparently saw the necessity of dividing the people in order to conquer them. It was, in fact, a species of madness, and can be accounted for only by recollecting the ineffable contempt really felt by the court for the *canaille*, which made them still imagine the revolution to be only a temporary convulsion, not believing it possible, in spite of the daily events, that they could be crushed by the mass they despised. Their presumption proceeded from their ignorance, and was incurable.

The queen was supposed to be at the head of this weak conspiracy, to withdraw the soldiery from siding with the people. She had presented colours to the national guards of Versailles, and when they waited on her to express their thanks, she replied, with the most winning affability, ‘ the nation and ‘ the army ought to be as well affected to the ‘ king as we ourselves are. I was quite ‘ charmed with what passed on thursday.’ This was the day of the feast.

A scarcity of bread, the common grievance of the revolution, aggravated the vague fears of the parisiens, and made the people so desperate,

perate, that it was not difficult to persuade them to undertake any enterprize ; and the torrent of resentment and enthusiasm required only to be directed to a point to carry every thing before it. Liberty was the constant watch word ; though few knew in what it consisted.—It seems, indeed, to be necessary, that every species of enthusiasm should be fermented by ignorance to carry it to any height. Mystery alone gives full play to the imagination, men pursuing with ardour objects indistinctly seen or understood, because each man shapes them to his taste, and looks for something beyond even his own conception, when he is unable to form a just idea.

The parisiens were now continually brooding over the wrongs they had heretofore only enumerated in a song ; and changing ridicule into invective, all called for redress, looking for a degree of public happiness immediately, which could not be attained, and ought not to have been expected, before an alteration in the national character seconded the new system of government.

From the enjoyment of more freedom than the women of other parts of the world, those of France have acquired more independence

of spirit than any others ; it has, therefore, been the scheme of designing men very often since the revolution, to lurk behind them as a kind of safeguard, working them up to some desperate act, and then terming it a folly, because merely the rage of women, who were supposed to be actuated only by the emotions of the moment. Early then on the fifth of october a multitude of women by some impulse were collected together ; and hastening to the *bôtel-de-ville* obliged every female they met to accompany them, even entering many houses to force others to follow in their train.

The concourse, at first, consisted mostly of market women, and the lowest refuse of the streets, women who had thrown off the virtues of one sex without having power to assume more than the vices of the other. A number of men also followed them, armed with pikes, bludgeons, and hatchets ; but they were strictly speaking a mob, affixing all the odium to the appellation it can possibly import ; and not to be confounded with the honest multitude, who took the Bastille.—In fact, such a rabble has seldom been gathered together ; and they quickly showed, that their movement was not the effect of public spirit,

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They first talked of addressing the committee appointed by the municipality to superintend the operations necessary to obtain provision for the city, and to remonstrate respecting their inattention or indifference to the public calamity. Mean time a new cord was fixed to the notorious lamp-iron, where the amusement of death was first tolerated. The national guards, forming a hedge of bayonets to prevent the women from entering the hotel, kept them in suspense a few moments.—When, uttering a loud and general cry, they hurled a volley of stones at the soldiers, who, unwilling, or ashamed, to fire on women, though with the appearance of furies, retreated into the hall, and left the passage free. They then sought for arms; and breaking open the doors of the magazines, soon procured fufils, cannons, and ammunition; and even took advantage of the confusion to carry off money and notes belonging to the public. In the interim some went to search for the volunteers of the Bastille, and chose a commander from among them to conduct the party to Versailles; whilst others tied cords to the carriages of the cannons to drag them along.—But these, being mostly marine artillery, did not follow with the alacrity
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necessary to accord with their wishes ; they, therefore, stopped several coaches, forcing the men to get out and the ladies to join them ; fastening the cannons behind, on which a number of the most furious mounted, brandishing whatever weapon they had found, or the matches of the cannons. Some drove the horses, and others charged themselves with the care of the powder and ball, falling into ranks to facilitate their march. They took the road by the *Champs Elisées* about noon, to the number of four thousand, escorted by four or five hundred men, armed with every thing on which they could lay their hands.

Mean time the *tocsin* sounded from all parts ; the french guards, still urged on by wounded pride, loudly declared, that the king ought to be brought to Paris ; and many of the citizens, not on duty, concurred with the rest of the national guards in the same opinion, particularly those accustomed to attend the harangues at the Palais Royal. La Fayette, refusing to accompany, endeavoured to calm them. But finding, that the tumult increased, and that prayers were giving place to menaces, he offered to make known to the
king,

king, at their head, the wishes of the capital, if the municipality gave him orders to this effect. Their council was now assembled ; yet prolonging the deliberation till between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, the people became so very impatient, that it was thought prudent to allow them to set out : and the exclamations of the populace proved how easy it was to govern, or lead them astray, by every fresh hope.

Few events have happened at Paris, that have not been attributed by the different parties to the machinations of the leaders on the other side ; to blacken whose characters, when they had the upper hand, the most audacious falsehoods have been industriously circulated ; the detection of which has induced many calm observers to believe, that all the accounts of plots and conspiracies were fabricated in the same manner ; not considering, that even the universality of these suspicions was a proof of the intriguing character of the people, who from a knowledge of themselves became thus mistrustful of others. It was currently reported, that very considerable sums had been distributed amongst the mob, before it marched to Versailles ; and, though many
fabulous

fabulous stories of showers of gold have since been retailed by the credulous, this seems, from their subsequent conduct, to have had some foundation : for nothing like the heroism, the disinterestedness, appeared, which, in most other risings of the parisiens, has formed a striking contrast with their barbarity ; sometimes sufficient to oblige us, lamenting the delusions of ignorance, to give the soft name of enthusiasm to cruelty ; respecting the intention, though detesting the effects. Now, on the contrary, acting like a gang of thieves, they gave colour to the report—that the first instigators of the riot were hired assassins.—And hired by whom ? —The public voice repeats, on every side, the despicable duke of Orleans, whose immense estate had given him an undue influence in the bailliages, and who still exercised all the means that cunning could devise, and wealth produce, to revenge himself on the royal family. He was particularly incensed against the queen, who having treated him with the contempt which he doubtless merited, and even influenced the king to banish him to one of his country seats, when he uttered some popular sentiments, he continued to nourish the
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most implacable hatred to her person, whilst the changing sentiments of the nation respecting the present branch of his family excited in him hopes, that would at once have gratified both his revenge and his ambition.

There is no calculating the mischief which may be produced by a revengeful cunning knave, possessing the forcible engine of gold to move his projects, and acting by agency, which, like a subterraneous fire, that for a long time has been putting the combustible matter into a state of fusion, bursts out unexpectedly, and the sudden eruption spreads around terror and destruction.

The agents of despotism, and of vengeful ambition, employed the same means to agitate the minds of the parisiens; and covered as they now are with foul stains, it is an acknowledgement due to their original good disposition, to note, that at this period they were so orderly it required considerable management to lead them into any gross irregularity of conduct. It was, therefore, necessary for the duke's instruments to put in motion a body of the most desperate women; some of whom were half famished for want of bread, which had purposely been rendered

scarte to facilitate the atrocious design of murdering both the king and queen in a broil, that would appear to be produced solely by the rage of famine.

The shameless manner in which the entertainment of the officers of the body-guards had been conducted; the indiscreet visit of the queen to interest the army in the cause of royalty, coming in artfully after the rabble of soldiers had been allowed to enter; together with the imprudent expressions of which she afterwards made use; served as pretexts, nay, may have been some of the causes of these women suspecting, that the dearth of bread in the capital was owing to the contrivance of the court, who had so often produced the same effect to promote their sinister purposes. They believed then, that the only sure way to remedy such a grievous calamity, in future, would be to implore the king to reside at Paris: and the national militia, composed of more orderly citizens, who thought the report of a premeditated escape was not without foundation, imagined, that they should nip a civil war in the bud, by preventing the king's departure, and separate him effectually from

from the cabal, to whom they attributed all his misconduct.

Whilst the multitude were advancing, the assembly were considering the king's reply to their request to sanction the declaration of rights, and the first articles of the constitution, before the supplies were granted. The reply was couched in terms somewhat vague, yet it's meaning could not be misunderstood.—He observed, that the articles of the constitution could be judged of only in their connection with the whole ; nevertheless he thought it natural, that at the moment the nation was called upon to assist the government by a signal act of confidence and patriotism, they should expect to be re-assured respecting their principal interest.—‘ Accordingly,’ he continues, ‘ taking it for granted, that the first
 ‘ articles of the constitution, which you have
 ‘ presented to me, united to the completion
 ‘ of your labours, will satisfy the wishes of
 ‘ my people, and secure the happiness and
 ‘ prosperity of the kingdom, conformably to
 ‘ your desire I accept them ; but with one
 ‘ positive condition, from which I will never
 ‘ depart ; namely, that from the general result of your deliberations the executive power

' shall have it's entire effect in the hands of
 ' the monarch. Still it remains for me to
 ' assure you with frankness, that, if I give
 ' my sanction of acceptance to the several
 ' articles, which you have laid before me, it
 ' is not because they indiscriminately give me
 ' an idea of perfection; but I believe it lauda-
 ' ble in me to pay this respect to the wishes
 ' of the deputies of the nation, and to the
 ' alarming circumstances, which so earnestly
 ' press us to desire above all things the
 ' prompt re-establishment of peace, order, and
 ' confidence.

' I shall not deliver my sentiments respect-
 ' ing your declaration of the rights of man
 ' and of citizens. It contains excellent maxims
 ' proper to direct your deliberations; but
 ' principles susceptible of application, and
 ' even of different interpretations, cannot be
 ' justly appreciated, and have only need of
 ' being so when their true sense is determined
 ' by the laws, to which they ought to be the
 ' basis.'

In the subterfuge employed in this answer,
 the profound dissimulation of the king ap-
 pears; and that ' pitiful respect for false
 honour,' which makes a man boggle at a
 naked

naked untruth, even when uttering a number of contemptible prevarications. Thus did he at first struggle against every concession, against granting any real freedom to the people ; yet afterwards unable to maintain his ground, he impotently gave way before the storm he had raised, every time losing a part of the authority which depended on opinion.

The assembly manifested an universal discontent. One of the members remarked, that the king withheld his acceptance of the declaration of rights ; and only yielded to circumstances in accepting the constitutional articles : he, therefore, moved, that no taxes should be levied, before the declaration of rights and the constitution should be accepted, without any reservation.—Another asserted, that the king's reply ought to have been counter-signed by one of the ministers. What an absurdity ! yet the inviolability of the king standing in their way, it seemed to be necessary to secure ministerial responsibility, to render it null ; not only to prevent the ministers from finding shelter behind it, but to make it utterly useless to the king, who was thus, literally speaking, reduced to a cipher.

Mirabeau, however, after alluding with energy to the entertainment, which, out of derision, had been termed patriotic, made three or four motions. One was, ‘ that no ‘ act emanating from the king should be declared without the signature of a secretary ‘ of state.’—So inconsistent was the man, who argued with such eloquence for the absolute *veto*:—Another was, ‘ that his majesty would ‘ please to be explicit; and not by a conditional consent, extorted by circumstances, ‘ leave any doubt of his sincere concurrence ‘ in the mind of the people.’ It was also noticed, to corroborate the inference, that the king was only yielding, for the moment, to opinions which he hoped to see exploded, that the decree for the circulation of grain had been altered before the publication, and the usual preamble, *for such is our pleasure*, formed a strange contrast with an acknowledgement of the legislative rights of the nation. Robespierre, particularly, maintained, that the nation had not any need of the assistance of the monarch to constitute itself—that the king’s reply was not an acceptance, but a censure; and, consequently, an attack on the rights of the people.

This

This seemed virtually the opinion of the assembly, though Mirabeau's soft style of expressing their will was adopted. It was particularly in this decision, that the deputies displayed a great degree of the weakness, which mistakes temerity for courage, and the shadow of justice for verity.—And affecting to say, to reconcile a contradiction, that the authority of kings is suspended as often as the sovereign is occupied in framing the elements of the constitution, or altering fundamental laws, they demonstrated the inconsistency of their own system, and acknowledged it's absurdity; which is still more flagrantly shown in Mirabeau's irrational declaration, that, 'by a pious fiction of the law, the king cannot himself deceive; but the grievances of the people demanding victims, these victims are the ministers.'

At this juncture of the debate the tumultuous concourse of women arrived at Versailles: but it must not be unnoticed, that there was a number of men with them, disguised in women's clothes; which proves, that this was not, as has been asserted, a sudden impulse of necessity. There were besides men in their own garb armed like ruffians,

with countenances answerable, who, swearing vengeance against the queen and the body-guards, seemed to be preparing to put their threats in execution. Some barbarians, volunteers in guilt, might perhaps have joined, spurred on solely by the hope of plunder, and a love of tumult ; but it is clear, that the principal movers played a surer game.

The women had taken two routes ; and one party, without arms, presented themselves at the gate of the assembly, whilst the other clustered round the palace waiting for them. The avenues were already filled with body-guards, the flanders regiment was drawn up in ranks ; in short, the soldiers were gathered together quickly in one quarter, though the people of Versailles were exceedingly alarmed, and particularly by the appearance of the vagabonds, who followed the female mob.

With some difficulty the women were prevailed on to allow a few to enter orderly into the assembly, with a spokesman to make known their demand ; whilst crowds, taking refuge in the galleries from the rain, presented there the strange sight of pikes, fusils, and

and tremendous sticks bound with iron. Their orator represented the grievances of the people, and the necessity of continually providing for their subsistence : he expressed the concern of the parisiens on account of the slow formation of the constitution, and attributed this delay to the opposition of the clergy. A bishop then presided in the absence of Mounier, the president, who had been dispatched by the assembly with their expostulatory petition to the king. A deputy, to spare him the embarrassment of a reply to the insinuation against his order, reprimanded the petitioner for calumniating that respectable body. He accordingly made an apology, yet justified himself by declaring, that he only reported the purport of the discontentment of Paris. They were informed, in reply, by the vice-president, that a deputation was already sent to the king, requesting his sanction of a decree to facilitate the interior circulation of grain and flour : and finding, that it was impossible to attend to the business of the day, he adjourned the assembly, without waiting for the return of the president.

The women about the palace entered into conversation with the soldiers, some of whom

said, ‘ that were the king to recover all his
 ‘ authority, the people would never want
 ‘ bread!’ This indiscreet insinuation exaspe-
 rated them; and they replied in the lan-
 guage, that is proverbial for being the most
 abusive. A fray also ensuing, brought on
 by a dispute relative to the affair of the
 cockades, one of the body guards drew his
 sword, which provoked a national guard of
 Versailles to give him a blow with his mus-
 ket, that broke his arm.

The national troops were eager to convince
 the mob, that they were equally offended at
 the disrespect paid to the emblem of liberty;
 and the Flemish regiment, though they were
 in battle array, made the women let their
 rings drop into their guns, to be convinced
 that they were not charged: saying, ‘ It was
 ‘ true, they had drunk the wine of the body
 ‘ guards; but what did that engage them to
 ‘ do? They had also cried, *vive le roi*, as the
 ‘ people themselves did every day; and it
 ‘ was their intention to serve him faith-
 ‘ fully, but not against the nation!’—with
 other speeches to the same effect;—adding,
 ‘ that one of their officers had ordered a thou-
 ‘ sand cockades; and they knew not why
 ‘ they

‘ they were not distributed !’ Enraged by the tenour of this discourse, a body-guard’s man struck one of the soldiers talking thus; who, in return, fired on him, and fractured his arm. All was now confusion; and every thing tended to render the body guards more odious to the populace.

The king arrived in the midst of it from hunting, and admitted at the same time the deputation from the national assembly, and an address from the women. He received the latter with great affability, testified his sorrow on account of the scarcity of bread at Paris, and immediatly sanctioned the decree, relative to the free circulation of grain, which he had just received from the assembly. The woman who spoke, attempting to kiss his hand, he embraced her with politeness, and dismissed them in the most gentleman-like manner. They immediately rejoined their companions, charmed by the reception they had met with; and the king sent orders to the guards not to make use of their arms. The count d’Estaing, the commander in chief, announced likewise to the militia of Versailles, that the body-guards would the next day take the oath of allegiance to the nation,

nation, and put on the patriotic cockade. ' They are not worthy,' was the indignant growl of the multitude.

Some women now returning to Paris, to report the gracious behaviour of the king, were unfortunately maltreated by a detachment of body-guards, commanded by a nobleman; and the volunteers of the Bastille coming to their assistance, two men, and three horses, were killed on the spot. These same irritated women meeting, likewise, the parisian militia, on their way to Versailles, gave them an exaggerated description of the conduct of the guards.

The court now taking the alarm, fearing that their plan would be defeated, by the king's being obliged to go to Paris, urged him immediately to set out for Metz, and the carriages were actually prepared. It is scarcely credible that they would have gone so far without his concurrence.

One loaded coach had been permitted to go out of the gate; but the national troops beginning to suspect what was going forward, obliged it to re-enter. The king then, with his usual address, finding his escape at that time impracticable, and not wishing to shed
blood

blood in forcing his way, made a merit of necessity, and declared he would rather perish than see the blood of frenchmen streaming in his quarrel ! So easy is it for a man, versed in the language of duplicity, to impose on the credulous ; and to impress on candid minds a belief of an opinion that they would gladly receive without any doubting alloy, did not other circumstances more strongly contradict the persuasion. This declaration, however, which was re-echoed with great eagerness, was considered as a manifest proof of the purity of his intentions, and a mark of his fixed adherence to the cause which he affected to espouse. Yet, to prove the contrary, it is only necessary to observe, that he put off the acceptance of the declaration of rights, and the first articles of the constitution, till after the attempt to escape was frustrated : for it was near eleven o'clock when he sent for the president, to put into his hands a simple acceptation, and to request him to convoke the assembly immediately, that he might avail himself of their counsel at this crisis ; alarmed by the mob without, who, exposed to all the inclemency of the weather, it being a very wet and stormy night, were
uttering

uttering the most horrid imprecations against the queen and the body-guards.

A drum instantly summoned the assembly ; and La Fayette arriving with his army in less than an hour after, the president was again called for, who returned to the assembly with the king's assurance, that he had not even thought of leaving them, nor would he ever separate himself from the representatives of the people.

La Fayette had previously assured the king of the fidelity of the metropolis, and that he had been expressly sent by the municipality of Paris to guard his august person. A rumour had prevailed, ever since the arrival of the women, that the parisian militia were coming to second them ; but as the *commune* of Paris had not determined till late in the afternoon, the messenger from La Fayette to the palace could not have reached Versailles long before him : but the court supposing that they would come, and having heard of the wish of the parisians to bring the king to Paris, where they had always spies to give them the earliest notice of what was going forward, pressed him to set out without loss of time ; still they were actuated solely by the

the desire of getting him away, and not from any apprehension that his life was in danger.

After tranquilizing the king, La Fayette joined the parisian militia in the avenue, to inform them, that the king had sanctioned the decree of the assembly for expediting the more speedy circulation of provisions ; that he accepted, without any reservation, of the declaration of rights, with the first articles of the constitution, declaring at the same time his unshaken resolution to remain among his people ; and that he consented also to have a detachment of the national troops of Paris to contribute to guard his person.

Joy now took place of dread at Versailles ; and the citizens distributed their addresses amongst the soldiers, offering them lodgings ; they having been previously requested, by the beating of a drum, to receive as many of the parisian militia as they possibly could. The rest, after passing several hours in arms round the palace, sought for shelter, as the morning began to dawn, in the churches. Every thing appearing quiet, the harassed king and queen were prevailed on to seek the repose they needed ; and La Fayette, about five in the morning, retired to his chamber,

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to write to the municipality an account of his proceedings, before he likewise endeavoured to snatch a little rest.

Scarcely an hour after, the restless mob, great part of which had taken refuge in the hall and galleries of the assembly, began to prow! about. The most decent of the women, who had been pressed into the service, stole away during the night. The rest, with the whole gang of ruffians, rushed towards the palace, and finding its avenues unguarded, entered like a torrent ; and some among them, most probably, conceived, that this was the moment to perpetrate the crime for which they had been drawn from their lurking-holes in Paris.

Insulting one of the body-guards who opposed their entrance, he fired, and killed a man. This was a fresh pretext for entering to search for the murderer, as he was termed by these rioters ; and driving the guards before them up the grand stair-case, they began to break into the different apartments, vowing vengeance against the body-guards, in which were mingled the bitterest curses, all levelled at the queen.

Catching

Catching one unfortunate guard by himself, he was dragged down the stairs ; and his head, instantly severed from his body, was mounted on a pike, which rather served to irritate than glut the fury of the monsters, who were still hunting after blood or plunder.

The most desperate found their way to the queen's chamber, and left for dead the man who courageously disputed their entrance. But she had been alarmed by the tumult, though the miscreants were not long in making their way good, and, throwing a wrapping-gown around her, ran, by a private passage, to the king's apartment, where she found the dauphin ; but the king was gone in quest of her : he, however, quickly returning, they waited together in a horrid state of suspense. Several of the guards, who endeavoured to keep back the mob, were wounded ; yet all this happened in a very short space of time.

The promptitude and rapidity of this movement, taking every circumstance into consideration, affords additional arguments in support of the opinion, that there had been a premeditated design to murder the royal family.

mily. The king had granted all they asked the evening before ; sending away great part of the multitude delighted with his condescension ; and they had received no fresh provocation to excite this outrage. The audacity of the most desperate mob has never led them, in the presence of a superiour force, to attempt to chastise their governors ; and it is not even probable that banditti, who had been moved by the common causes of such insurrections, should have thought of murdering their sovereign, who, in the eyes of the greater number of frenchmen, was still shrouded by that divinity, tacitly allowed to hover round kings, much less have dared to attempt it.

La Fayette was quickly roused ; and, sending his *aides-de-camp* to assemble the national guards, he followed the ruffians with equal celerity. They had actually forced the king's apartment at the moment he arrived ; and the royal family were listening to the increasing tumult as the harbinger of death,—when all was hushed,—and the door opening a moment after, the national guards entered respectfully, saying they came to save the king ;—‘ and we will save you too, gentlemen,’

men,' added they, addressing the body-guards, who were in the chamber.

The vagabonds were now pursued in their turn, and driven from room to room, in the midst of their pillage, for they had already begun to ransack that sumptuously furnished palace. From the palace they repaired to the stables, still intent on plunder, and carried away some horses, which were as quickly retaken. Every where they pursued the body-guards, and every where the generous parisian troops, forgetting their piqued pride and personal animosity, hazarded their lives to save them.—Till, at length, order was perfectly established.

Such was the termination of this most mysterious affair ; one of the blackest of the machinations that have since the revolution disgraced the dignity of man, and sullied the annals of humanity. Disappointed in their main object, these wretches beheaded two of the guards, who fell into their hands ; and hurried away towards the metropolis, with the *insignia* of their atrocity on the points of the barbarous instruments of vengeance—showing in every instance, by the difference

of their conduct, that they were a set of monsters, distinct from the people.

Whilst nature shudders at imputing to any one a plan so inhuman, the general character and life of the duke of Orleans warrant the belief, that he was the author of this tumult. And when we compare the singularly ferocious appearance of the mob, with the brutal violation of the apartment of the queen, there remains little doubt, but that a design was on foot against the lives of both her and the king.—Yet in this, and most other instances, the man has wanted courage to consummate his villany, when the plot he had been following up was ripe.

It is, perhaps, not the least noble faculty of the mind, to question the motives of action, which are repugnant to the feelings of nature, outraging the most sacred feelings of the human soul. But it is the developement of a character, that enables us to estimate it's depravity ; and had the conduct of that wretch ever varied, the veil of mystery might still have remained unrent, and posterity, hearing of the judgment of the *châtelet*, would have believed *Egalité* innocent. The court had become highly obnoxious to the nation, and
with

with it the king was implicated, in spite of the efforts of Mirabeau, and some other favourites of the people, to render him respectable; so that there wanted not a plausible reason for suspecting, that the duke might aspire at obtaining the regency, though Louis was neither massacred, nor allowed to escape. But the present scheme being disconcerted, fear, for a while, damped his ambition: and La Fayette, finding that these suspicions still formed a pretext to excite commotions, with a view to quiet the minds of the parisiens, seconded the importunities of the duke, who wished to visit England, till the affair blew over. The king, therefore, was prevailed on to give him a nominal commission, to be made use of as a plea to obtain liberty of absence from the assembly, of which he was a member.

He was certainly very apprehensive of an investigation of the business; and revenge and ambition equally giving way to personal fear, he left his colleagues to finish the constitution, and his agents to recover his fame, by representing the story as a calumny of the royalists, against whom the public were sufficiently enraged to credit any aspersions.

The bold tone he assumed the july following was far from being a proof of his innocence ; because it was not very probable, that a cunning man should take his measures in such a critical affair without due precaution.—On the contrary, he would labour to sink so entirely into the back-ground of the plot, as to render it difficult, if not impossible, for him to be perceived. And this was practicable to a man, who was willing, in the promotion of his purpose, to dissipate the most splendid fortune.

To a disposition for low intrigue was added also a decided preference of the grossest libertinism, seasoned with vulgarity, highly congenial with the manners of the heroines, who composed the singular army of the females.

Having taken up his abode in the centre of the palais royal, a very superb square, yet the last in which a person of any delicacy, not to mention decorum, or morality, would choose to reside ; because, excepting the people in trade, who found it convenient, it was entirely occupied by the most shameless girls of the town, their hectoring protectors, gamesters, and sharpers of every denomination. In short, by the vilest of women ; by wretches,
who

who lived in houses from which the stripped bodies, often found in the Seine, were supposed to be thrown*—and he was considered as the grand sultan of this den of iniquity. Living thus in the lap of crime, his heart was as tainted as the foul atmosphere he breathed.—Incapable of affection, his amours were the jaundiced caprices of satiety; and having proved in the affair of Keppel and d'Orvilliers, that he wanted the courage of a man, he appears to have been as fit for dark under-hand assassinations as he was unequal to any attempt flowing from virtuous ambition.

That a body of women should put themselves in motion to demand relief of the king, or to remonstrate with the assembly respecting their tardy manner of forming the constitution, is scarcely probable; and that they should have undertaken the business, without being instigated by designing persons, when all Paris was dissatisfied with the conduct and the procrastination of the assembly, is a belief which the most credulous will hardly swallow, unless they take into their view, that the want of bread was the bye word used by

* They used to lie to be owned in a conspicuous part of the city.

those, who in a great measure produced it ; for perceiving the turn the public mind was taking, they drove the mob on to perpetrate the mischief long designed, under the sanction of national indignation.

It is evident, that the court was not concerned, however desirous the cabinet might have been to render the people discontented with the new order of things ; for they seem to have been entirely occupied with the scheme, on which they built the most sanguine expectation, of prevailing on the king to retire to Metz. Besides, the course the project took is a circumstantial evidence, that, designed against Versailles, it was not meditated there.

That the Châtelet should not have been able to substantiate any proof of his guilt, is not in the least extraordinary.—It is only necessary to be acquainted with the general propensity of the french to intrigue, to know, that there is no service, however dangerous, or purpose, however black, for which gold will not find a man. There were wretches, who would have considered exile as an escape from the continual dread of menaced detection, could they carry with them a sum to com-
mence

hence anew their fraudulent practices in another country ; and money the duke did not spare to gratify his passions, though sordidly mean when they were out of the question.

His remaining also in England for such a length of time, merely to avoid disturbing the tranquillity of the state, when it was possible, that by it's disorder and agitation he might gain a sceptre, cannot be credited ; because it is well known, that he never sacrificed any selfish consideration to the general good. Such examples of self-denial and true patriotism are uncommon, even from the most virtuous men ; and it is idle to imagine, that a man, whom all the world allowed to be vicious, should risk the popularity, which he had been at such pains to acquire, unless it were to guard his life.

On his return, nevertheless, finding that all was safe, he appeared in the assembly, provoking the inquiry from which he had before skulked ; and braving detection, when the danger was passed, he had the address to persuade the public of his innocence. Nay, the mock patriots of the day, pretending to despise princes, were glad to have a prince on their side.

The report, that Mirabeau, always an avowed advocate for a limited monarchy, was concerned in the plot, was certainly a calumny; because it is notorious, that he had an habitual contempt for the duke, which had even produced a decided coolness some time before. And, if any collateral proof of his innocence were necessary, it would be sufficient to add, that the abbé Maury, his competitor in eloquence, and opponent in opinion, declared there was no ground for his impeachment.

It is unfortunate, indeed, that some of the villains employed were not immediately interrogated. The soldiery, in chasing them from one quarter to another, gave proofs not only of their intrepidity, but attachment to the new government; and the only reprehensible part of their conduct was suffering the murderers to escape, instead of apprehending as many as they could, and bringing them to condign punishment. Such an omission, it was to be feared, would produce the most fatal consequences, because impunity never fails to stimulate the wretches, who have arrived at such a pitch of wickedness, to commit fresh, and, if possible, still more atrocious crimes; and it is by suspending the decrees of justice,
that

that hardened miscreants, made so by oppression, give full scope to all the brutality of their sanguinary dispositions.

This neglect, in their turn, was not the least reprehensible or fatal error, produced by the factions of the assembly. The crisis demanded vigour and boldness.—The laws had been trampled on by a gang of banditti the most desperate—The altar of humanity had been profaned—The dignity of freedom had been tarnished—The sanctuary of repose, the asylum of care and fatigue, the chaste temple of a woman, I consider the queen only as one, the apartment where she consigns her senses to the bosom of sleep, folded in it's arms forgetful of the world, was violated with murderous fury—The life of the king was assailed, when he had acceded to all their demands—And, when their plunder was snatched from them, they massacred the guards, who were doing their duty.—Yet these brutes were permitted triumphantly to escape—and dignified with the appellation of the people, their outrage was in a great measure attempted to be excused by those deputies, who sometimes endeavoured to gain an
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undue influence through the interposition of the mob.

At this moment the assembly ought to have known, that the future respectability of their laws must greatly depend on the conduct they pursued on the present occasion ; and it was time to show the parisiens, that, giving freedom to the nation, they meant to guard it by a strict adherence to the laws, that naturally issue from the simple principles of equal justice they were adopting ; punishing with just severity all such as should offer to violate, or treat them with contempt. Wisdom, precision, and courage, are the permanent supports of authority—the durable pillars of every just government, and they only require to be, as it were, the porticos of the structure, to obtain for it, at once, both the admiration and obedience of the people. To maintain subordination in a state by any other means is not merely difficult, but, for any length of time, impossible.

They ought to have stood up as one man in support of insulted justice ; and by directing the arm of the law, have smothered in embryo that spirit of rebellion and licentiousness, which, beginning to appear in the metropolis,

tropolis, it was to be feared would attain herculean strength by impunity, and ultimately overturn, with wanton thoughtlessness, or headstrong zeal, all their labours. Yet, so contrary was their conduct to the dictates of common sense, and the common firmness of rectitude of intention, that they not only permitted that gang of assassins to regain their dens; but instantly submitted to the demand of the soldiery, and the peremptory wish of the parisiens—that the king should reside within the walls of Paris.

The firmness of conduct, which the representatives of a people should always maintain, had been wanting in the assembly from the moment their power had been acknowledged; for instead of being directed by any regular plan of proceeding, a line equally marked out by integrity and political prudence, they were hurried along by a giddy zeal, and by a burlesque affectation of magnanimity; as puerile as the greater part of their debates were frivolous. Whilst their vanity was gratified by the lively applauses lavished on their inflated and popular declamation, they set fire to the foibles of the multitude, teaching their desperate demagogues to become their rivals in this species

species of eloquence, till the plans of the leaders of clubs, and popular societies, were generally admired and pursued.

The will of the people being supreme, it is not only the duty of their representatives to respect it, but their political existence ought to depend on their acting conformably to the will of their constituents. Their voice, in enlightened countries, is always the voice of reason. But in the infancy of society, and during the advancement of the science of political liberty, it is highly necessary for the governing authority to be guided by the progress of that science; and to prevent, by judicious measures, any check being given to its advancement, whilst equal care is taken not to produce the miseries of anarchy by encouraging licentious freedom. The national assembly, however, delighted with their blooming honours, suffered themselves to be hurried forward by a multitude, on whom political light had too suddenly flashed, and seemed to have no apprehension of the danger, which has so fatally resulted from their tame acquiescence.

The people of Paris, who have more than their portion of the national vanity, believed that they had produced the revolution; and
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thinking

thinking themselves both the father and mother of all the great events, which had happened since it's commencement, and that the national assembly, whose conduct indeed betrayed symptoms of an understanding not adult, ought to be directed by their leading-strings, frequently declared, that liberty would not be secured, until the court and the assembly were brought within the walls of the capital. This was the subject of club debates, decided with legislative pomposity, on the rumour of the intended evasion of the king; and the insult offered to the national cockade, the first of october, brought them to the determination—that it was proper he should be there.—Such was their will, the capital of the nation—now sovereign. Foreseeing also, as they had already dreaded, that the only security for infant freedom would be to guard the court, and place in the centre of information their infant representatives; whom they alternately idolized and suspected.

The decorum of manners in a people, long subordinate to the authority of their magistrates, had on several occasions, and even on the fifth of october, controlled the impetuous populace, who had undertaken, or joined in
the

the enterprize ; and considering the manner in which they were pushed on, it is extraordinary, that they did not commit greater depredations. For with all their brutality, and eagerness to plunder the palace, they did not attempt to pillage Versailles, though half famished.

The army of La Fayette indeed, principally composed of citizens, behaved not only in an irreproachable manner ; but the celerity of their movements, their obedience to the discipline which they had so promptly acquired, joined to the clemency and moderation they displayed, excited the gratitude and respect of all parties.—Still, trembling for the rights that had been so gloriously snatched out of the clinched hand of despotism—it was the wish of all the leaders to have the king at Paris. It was in fact the general sentiment at Paris, and of the greater part of the nation.

That city, which had contributed so essentially in effecting the revolution, viewed with anxiety the influence of a party spirit in the assembly, though themselves split into several political sects, who almost execrated each other. And finding, that the indecision of the members had given fresh hopes to the
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court, which at last might render their emancipation merely a dazzling meteor, they were restlessly bent on having the king and assembly more immediately in their power. The report, likewise, of Louis's intended escape; which had he effected, it was probable, that he would have been in the next place prevailed on to join the discontented princes and nobles, thus producing a schism in the kingdom, that must infallibly have brought on not only a cruel civil war, but have embroiled them with all the different powers of Europe; was a still more urgent motive: for whilst they were constantly affecting to believe in the goodness of his heart, they never showed by their conduct, that they had any confidence in his sincerity.—Their opinion of the assembly was equally unfixed.—One day a deputy was extolled as the hero of liberty, and the next denounced as a traitorous pensioner of despotism.

These sentiments were dangerous to the authority of the new government; but they were sentiments which never would have been promulged, even had they existed, had the assembly acted with integrity and magnanimity. Because, though the people do not al-

ways reason in the most logical or rhetorical style, yet they generally perceive in what consists the defects of their legislators. And in every free government, when the deputies of the state, convened to form laws, do not act with precision and judgment, they will be sure to lose their respectability ; and the consequence will be a dissolution of all authority.

It appears to amount to a certainty, that the assembly did not at that time possess the implicit confidence of the people, by their demanding, that the king should be obliged to reside within the barriers of the capital.—It was surely as possible to guard him at Versailles as at Paris ; and if it were necessary, that he should be kept as a prisoner of state, or hostage, the government was the proper authority to determine how, and where :—and in giving up this necessary privilege of authority, they surrendered their power to the multitude of Paris.

Or rather a minority of the assembly, who wished to be removed to the capital, by exciting and humouring the people, directed the majority ; and in the same manner has the dignity of the representative body ever since
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been trampled under foot by selfishness, or the blind zeal of vanity.—It is in reality from this epocha, not forgetting such a leading circumstance, that the commencement of the reign of anarchy may be fairly dated. For, though a tolerable degree of order was preserved a considerable time after, because a multitude long accustomed to servitude do not immediately feel their own strength; yet they soon began to tyrannize over one part of their representatives, stimulated by the other. They, however, continued to respect the decrees of the national assembly especially as there were rarely any passed on which the public opinion had not been previously consulted, directed as it was by the popular members, who gained their constant suffrage by the stale trick of crying out for more freedom. It was the indispensable duty of the deputies to respect the dignity of their body—Instead of which, for sinister purposes, many of them instructed the people how to tyrannize over the assembly; thus deserting the main principle of representation, the respect due to the majority. This first grand desertion of the principles, which they affected to adopt in all their purity, led to public misery; involving these

short-sighted men in the very ruin they had themselves produced by their mean intrigues.

The authoritative demand of the parisiens was striking so directly at the freedom of the assembly, that they must either have been conscious of wanting power, or they had no conception of dignity of action, otherwise they would not have suffered the requisition of the people to have been complied with. Yet they seem to have considered it, if it be not paradoxical to assert it, as an advancement of their independence; or, perhaps, as giving security to their authority, childishly proud of regulating the business of the nation, though under the influence of the parisian despotism.

It is true, such things are the natural consequence of weakness, the effects of inexperience, and the more fatal errors of cowardice. And such will always be the effects of timid, injudicious measures. Men who have violated the sacred feelings of eternal justice, except they are hardened in vice, are never afterwards able to look honest men in the face; and a legislature, watched by an intelligent public, a public that claims the right of thinking for itself, will never after

go beyond it, or pass one decree which is not likely to be popular.

To consult the public mind in a perfect state of civilization, will not only be necessary, but it will be productive of the happiest consequences, generating a government emanating from the sense of the nation, for which alone it can legally exist. The progress of reason being gradual, it is the wisdom of the legislature to advance the simplification of it's political system, in a manner best adapted to the state of improvement of the understanding of the nation. The sudden change which had happened in France, from the most fettering tyranny to an unbridled liberty, made it scarcely to be expected, that any thing should be managed with the wisdom of experience: it was morally impossible. But it is nevertheless a deplorable reflection, that such evils must follow every revolution, when a change of politics equally material is required.—Thus it becomes more peculiarly the duty of the historian to record truth; and comment with freedom.

Every nation, deprived by the progress of it's civilization of strength of character, in

changing it's government from absolute despotism to enlightened freedom, will, most probably, be plunged into anarchy, and have to struggle with various species of tyranny before it is able to consolidate it's liberty ; and that, perhaps, cannot be done, until the manners and amusements of the people are completely changed.

The refinement of the senses, by producing a susceptibility of temper, which from it's capriciousness leaves no time for reflection, interdicts the exercise of the judgment. The lively effusions of mind, characteristically peculiar to the french, are as violent as the impressions are transitory ; and their benevolence evaporating in sudden gusts of sympathy, they become cold in the same proportion as their emotions are quick, and the combinations of their fancy brilliant. People who are carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment, are most frequently betrayed by their imagination, and commit some error, the conviction of which not only damps their heroism, but relaxes the nerve of common exertions. Freedom is a solid good, that requires to be treated with reverence and respect.—

spect.—But, whilst an effeminate race of heroes are contending for her smiles, with all the blandishments of gallantry, it is to their more vigorous and natural posterity, that she will consign herself with all the mild effulgence of artless charms.

CHAPTER III.

THE MOB DEMAND THE KING'S REMOVAL TO PARIS.
THIS CITY DESCRIBED. THE KING REPAIRS TO THE
CAPITAL, ESCORTED BY A DEPUTATION OF THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE PARISIEN MILITIA.
THE KING'S TITLE CHANGED. PROCEEDINGS OF
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. REFLECTIONS ON THE
DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

AFTER the wild tumult, on the morning of the 6th of october, abated, the king showed himself to the people, in the balcony, and the queen followed with the dauphin in her arms. At first, he vainly attempted to speak; but La Fayette informed the people, that his majesty came forward to assure them, that it should be the business of his life to contribute to the happiness of his people. *The king at Paris*, exclaimed a voice, which was quickly re-echoed by the crowd. 'My children,' replied the king, 'you wish me to be at Paris, and I will go; but it is on the condition, that my wife and family accompany me.' A loud shout of *vive le roi* testified the extacy of the moment. The king made a sign to demand silence; and then,
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with tears in his eyes addressed them again. —‘ Ah! my children, run to the relief of ‘ my guards.’ Immediately two or three appeared in the balcony with the national cockade in their hats, or the cap of liberty on their heads. The king threw his arms round one of them, and the people following his example embraced those whom they had taken prisoners in the court. One sentiment of gladness seemed to animate the whole concourse of people; and their sensibility produced as mad demonstrations of joy as lately had been displayed of ferocity. The soldiery all mingled together, exchanging swords, hats, or shoulder belts—exhibiting in the most striking manner the prominent features of the french character.

Meanwhile the assembly, instead of instantly examining into the particulars of that alarming convulsion, and exerting themselves to cause a proper respect to be paid to the sovereignty of the law, childishly gave way to the universal transport: instead of considering the peremptory wish of the people to remove the king to Paris as a distrust of their wisdom, as well as of the veracity of the court, which was in some measure the

case, they unanimously agreed to the motion of Mirabeau, seconded by Barnave, ‘ that the king and assembly should not be separated during the present sessions.’ Mirabeau, and other popular members, were probably glad to have the person of the king secured, without being obliged to appear, in an ostensible manner, in the affair; because they always endeavoured to keep a little hold on the court, whilst they led the people. Such are the pitiful shifts of men, who are not guided by the compass of moral principles, which alone render the character dignified or consistent. Readily then acquiescing in a measure the most fatal and contemptible, they decreed, that the assembly was inseparable from the person of the king, and sent a deputation to inform him of this resolve, previous to his departure.

That Louis, finding all his projects for the present defeated, and after such a narrow escape for his life, should readily have acceded to the demand of the multitude, is not in the least extraordinary.—But, that the representatives of the nation should, without resistance or remonstrance, have surrendered their authority, and thrown themselves head-
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long into the heart of a city, which could be suddenly agitated, and put into the most disorderly and dangerous commotion, by the intrigues or folly of any desperate or factious leader of the multitude—suffering themselves to be environed by it's wall, shut in by it's barriers—in a word—choosing to live in a capacious prison; for men forced, or drawn into any such situation, are in reality slaves or prisoners,—almost surpasses belief. This absurd conduct, in fact, can be accounted for only by considering the national character, and the different though equally interested views, of the court and popular parties, in the assembly.

Independent of the additional incense of praise, with which Mirabeau wished to be continually regaled, in the metropolis, he had a decided preference for it, frequently asserting, that it was the only place where society was truly desirable; the people and place, in spite of their vices and follies, equally attaching the taste they cultivated.

Exclaiming against capitals, the impartial observer must acknowledge, that much has been done to render this a superb monument of human ingenuity.

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The entrance into Paris, by the Thuilleries, is certainly very magnificent. The roads have an expansion that agrees with the idea of a large luxurious city, and with the beauty of the buildings in the noble square, that first attracts the travellers eye. The lofty trees on each side of the road, forming charming alleys, in which the people walk and lounge with an easy gaiety peculiar to the nation, seem calculated equally to secure their health and promote their pleasure. The barriers, likewise, are stately edifices, that tower with grandeur, rendering the view, as the city is approached, truly picturesque.

But—these very barriers, built by Calonne, who liked to have Paris compared with Athens, excite the most melancholy reflections.—They were first erected by despotism to secure the payment of an oppressive tax, and since have fatally assisted to render anarchy more violent by concentration, cutting off the possibility of innocent victims escaping from the fury, or the mistake, of the moment.—Thus miscreants have had sufficient influence to guard these barriers, and caging the objects of their fear or vengeance, have slaughtered them; or, violating the purity of justice,

tice, have coolly wrested laws hastily formed to serve sinister designs—changing it's sacred sword into a dagger, and terming the assassin's stab the stroke of justice, because given with the mock ceremonials of equity, which only rendered the crime more atrocious. The tyrant, who, bounding over all restraint, braves the eternal law he tramples on, is not half so detestable as the reptile who crawls under the shelter of the principles he violates. Such has been the effect of the enclosure of Paris: and the reflections of wounded humanity disenchanting the senses, the elegant structures, which served as gates to this great prison, no longer appear magnificent porticoes.

Still the eye of taste rests with pleasure on its buildings and decorations: proportion and harmony gratify the sight, whilst airy ornaments seem to toss a simple, playful elegance around. The heavens too smile, diffusing fragrance: and as the inhabitants trip along the charming boulevard, the genial atmosphere seems instantaneously to inspire the animal spirits, which give birth to the varied graces that glide around. Clustering flowers, with luxuriant pomp, lend their sweets, giving

ing a freshness to the fairy scene—nature and art combining with great felicity to charm the senses, and touch the heart, alive to the social feelings, and to the beauties most dear to fancy.

Why starts the tear of anguish to mingle with recollections that sentiment fosters—even in obedience to reason?—For it is wise to be happy!—and nature and virtue will always open inlets of joy to the heart. But how quickly vanishes this prospect of delights! of delights such as man ought to taste!—The cavalcade of death moves along, shedding mildew over all the beauties of the scene, and blasting every joy! The elegance of the palaces and buildings is revolting, when they are viewed as prisons, and the sprightliness of the people disgusting, when they are hastening to view the operations of the guillotine, or carelessly passing over the earth stained with blood. Exasperated humanity then, with bitterness of soul, devotes the city to destruction; whilst turning from such a nest of crimes, it seeks for consolation only in the conviction, that, as the world is growing wiser, it must become happier; and that, as the cultivation of the soil meliorates a climate, the improvement of

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the understanding will prevent those baneful excesses of passion which poison the heart.

A deputation of the national assembly accompanied the royal family to Paris, as well as the parisian militia. A number of the women preceded them, mounted on the carriages which they had taken in their way to Versailles, and on the cannons, covered with national cockades, and dragging in the dirt those that were considered as symbols of aristocracy. Soon after they set out, either by chance, or, which is more probable, pursuant to a plan contrived by some person in power, forty or fifty loads of wheat and flour fell into the procession, just before the king, giving weight to the exclamation of the populace, that they had brought the baker and his family to town.

The assembly continued to sit at Versailles till the nineteenth ; and several interesting debates were entered upon, particularly one brought forward by the bishop of Autun, respecting the appropriation of the estates of the clergy to supply the exigences of the government. The abolition of *lettres de cachet* was considered, and a fresh organization of the municipalities proposed ; but as none of
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these motions were carried before they were more fully discussed at Paris, it seems best to bring the different arguments on those important subjects under one point of view.

Settling the articles of the constitution, however, which previously occupied them, several frivolous discussions, respecting the style of expression to be adopted to signify the king's acceptance of their decrees, were lengthened out with warmth, and puerile objections made to ancient forms—that were merely forms. After some disputation, the title of the monarch was changed from king of France, with the rest of the formule, for that of king of the French; because Rousseau had remarked, perhaps fastidiously, that the title ought to express rather the chief of the people, than the master of the soil.

The intended removal of the assembly to Paris also produced several warm debates. This resolution, indeed, excited, not without reason, apprehensions in the breasts of some of the deputies, relative to their personal safety, should they, in future, venture to oppose any of the motions of the popular party, which that party instructed the mob of Paris to support.

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The president, Mounier, pleading his bad state of health, begged to be dismissed ; and Lally-Tolendal, thinking that he could not stem the torrent, retired from public business at the same time. A great many of the members hinting their fears, that the assembly would not be free at Paris, on various pretexts demanded such a number of passports, as to make the president express some apprehension lest the assembly should thus indirectly dissolve itself ; whilst other deputies uttered a profusion of indecent sarcasms on a conduct, which the behaviour of the populace, and even of these very orators, seemed to justify. Mirabeau, who so earnestly desired to be at Paris, ridiculed with unbecoming bitterness every opposition made to the removal of the assembly ; yet, listening to the representation, that the allowing so many malecontents to retire into the provinces might produce dangerous fermentations, he proposed that no passport should be granted, till the deputy who demanded it had made known his reason for so doing to the assembly. A letter from the king, notifying his intention of residing most part of his time at Paris, and expressing his assurance, that they did not mean to separate themselves

themselves from him, now requested them to send commissioners to Paris, to search for a proper place, where they might in future hold their sessions. They accordingly determined to go thither, conformably to the decree of the sixth of october, when a convenient situation should be found.

After this determination, several members gave an account of the gross insults they had received at Paris. One in particular, who was not obnoxious to the public, narrowly escaped with life, only because he was mistaken for a deputy against whom the mob had vowed vengeance. Another, who had also been insulted, with proper spirit moved, that a decree respecting libels should instantly be passed. ‘Are we,’ he asked, ‘to be led to liberty only by licentiousness? No; the people, deceived and intoxicated, are rendered furious. How many times (he added) have I lamented the impetuosity of this assembly, who have accustomed the public, seated in our galleries, to praise, to blame, to deride our opinions, without understanding them.—And who has inspired them with this audacity?’ — He was interrupted by signs of disapprobation; and personalities now
disgraced

disgraced the debate, in which Mirabeau mingled satirical observations and retorts, that did more credit to his abilities than to his heart. But, a day or two after, recollecting himself, he presented the plan of a decree to prevent riots, which he introduced, by saying, that it was an imitation, though not a copy, of the English riot act.

The evening before the departure of the assembly for Paris, passports being still demanded with earnestness, a decree was made, ' that passports should be granted only for a ' short and determinate time, on account of ' urgent business; and that unlimited passports, ' in cases of ill health, should not be granted ' before the deputies were replaced by their ' substitutes;' and further, cutting a knot that might have revived old claims and animosities, had it been brought forward alone, they decreed, ' that in future the substitutes ' should be nominated by the citizens at large; ' and that, eight days after the first session at Paris, there should be a call of the house; ' suspending till then the consideration of the ' propriety of printing and sending to the provinces the list of the absent deputies.'

The conftraining fo many members to remain at their pofts, and condemning a man to a ftate of ignominious fervitude, whilft they were talking of nothing but liberty, was as contemptibly little, as the policy was injudicious. For if the king pretended to acquiefce in their meafures the better to difguife his real intention, which doubtlefs was to fly as foon as he could find an opportunity, or was at liberty, what did they gain ? For as they muft have known, that his emancipation would be the confequence of his acceptance of the conftitution, his imprifonment could only tend to retard their operations : yet they had neither the magnanimity to allow him to depart with an handsome ftipend, if fuch were his wifh ; nor to grant him fuch a portion of power, in the new conftitution, as would, by rendering him refpectable in his own eyes, have reconciled him to the deprivation of the reft. But, as things were fettled, it was morally certain, that, whenever his friends were ready, a blow would be directed againft them, which they were then as well prepared to meet as they could be at a fubfequent period.

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Under the influence of fixed systems, certain moral effects are as infallible as physical. —That every insidious attempt would be made by the courts of Europe, to overturn the new government of France, was therefore certain; and, unless they had all been overturned at the same time, was as much to be expected as any effect from a natural cause. The most likely mean then to have parried the evil would have been a decided firmness of conduct, which, flowing from a real love of justice, produces true magnanimity; and not a parading affectation of the virtues of romans, with the degenerate minds of their posterity.

Precision, wisdom, and courage, never fail to secure the admiration and respect of all descriptions of people; and every government thus directed will keep in awe it's licentious neighbours. But fear and timidity betray symptoms of weakness, that, creating contempt and disrespect, encourage the attempts of ambitious despots; so that the noblest causes are sometimes ruined or vilified by the folly or indiscretion of their directors. All Europe saw, and all good men saw with dread, that the french had under-

taken to support a cause, which they had neither sufficient purity of heart, nor maturity of judgment, to conduct with moderation and prudence; whilst malevolence has been gratified by the errors they have committed, attributing that imperfection to the theory they adopted, which was applicable only to the folly of their practice.

However, frenchmen have reason to rejoice, and posterity will be grateful, for what was done by the assembly.

The economy of government had been so ably treated by the writers of the present age, that it was impossible for them, acting on the great scale of public good, not to lay the foundations of many useful plans, as they reformed many grievous and grinding abuses.—Accordingly we find, though they had not sufficient penetration to foresee the dreadful consequences of years of anarchy, the probable result of their manner of proceeding, still by following, in some degree, the instructions of their constituents, who had digested, from the bright lines of philosophical truths, the prominent rules of political science, they, in laying the main pillars of the constitution, established beyond a possibility of obliteration,

tion, the great principles of liberty and equality.

It is allowed by all parties, that civilization is a blessing, so far as it gives security to person and property, and the milder graces of taste to society and manners. If, therefore, the polishing of man, and the improvement of his intellect, become necessary to secure these advantages, it follows, of course, that the more general such improvement grows, the greater the extension of human happiness.

In a savage state man is distinguished only by superiority of genius, prowess, and eloquence. I say eloquence, for I believe, that in this stage of society he is most eloquent, because most natural. For it is only in the progress of governments, that hereditary distinctions, cruelly abridging rational liberty, have prevented man from rising to his just point of elevation, by the exercise of his improveable faculties.

That there is a superiority of natural genius among men does not admit of dispute; and that in countries the most free there will always be distinctions proceeding from superiority of judgment, and the power of ac-

quiring more delicacy of taste, which may be the effect of the peculiar organization, or whatever cause produces it, is an incontestible truth. But it is a palpable error to suppose, that men of every class are not equally susceptible of common improvement : if therefore it be the contrivance of any government, to preclude from a chance of improvement the greater part of the citizens of the state, it can be considered in no other light than as a monstrous tyranny, a barbarous oppression, equally injurious to the two parties, though in different ways. For all the advantages of civilization cannot be felt, unless it pervades the whole mass, humanizing every description of men—and then it is the first of blessings, the true perfection of man.

The melioration of the old government of France arose entirely from a degree of urbanity acquired by the higher class, which insensibly produced, by a kind of natural courtesy, a small portion of civil liberty. But, as for political liberty, there was not the shadow of it ; or could it ever have been generated under such a system : because, whilst men were prevented not only from arriving at public offices, or voting for the nomination
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of others to fill them, but even from attaining any distinct idea of what was meant by liberty in a practical sense, the great bulk of the people were worse than savages; retaining much of the ignorance of barbarians, after having poisoned the noble qualities of nature by imbibing some of the habits of degenerate refinement. To the national assembly it is, that France is indebted for having prepared a simple code of instruction, containing all the truths necessary to give a comprehensive perception of political science; which will enable the ignorant to climb the mount of knowledge, whence they may view the ruins of the ingenious fabric of despotism, that had so long disgraced the dignity of man by its odious and debasing claims.

The declaration of rights contains an aggregate of principles the most beneficial; yet so simple, that the most ordinary capacity cannot fail to comprehend their import. It begins by asserting, that the rights of men are equal, and that no distinctions can exist in a wholesome government, but what are founded on public utility. Then showing, that political associations are intended only for the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights

rights of man, which are his liberty, security of property, and resistance against oppression; and asserting also, that the nation is the source of all sovereignty; it delineates, in a plain and perspicuous manner, in what these rights, and this sovereignty, consist. In this delineation men may learn; that, in the exercise of their natural rights, they have the power of doing whatever does not injure another; and that this power has no limits, which are not determined by law—the laws being at the same time an expression of the will of the community, because all the citizens of the state, either personally, or by their representatives, have a right to concur in the formation.

Thus, having taught the citizens the fundamental principles of a legitimate government, it proceeds to show how the opinion of each may be ascertained; which he has a right to give personally, or by his representatives, to determine the necessity of public contributions, their appropriation, mode of assessment, and duration.

The simplicity of these principles, promulged by the men of genius of the last and present ages, and their justness, acknowledged
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by every description of unprejudiced men, had not been recognised by any senate or government in Europe ; and it was an honour worthy to be reserved for the representatives of twenty-five millions of men, rising to the sense and feeling of rational beings, to be the first to dare to ratify such sacred and beneficial truths—truths, the existence of which had been eternal ; and which required only to be made known, to be generally acknowledged—truths, which have been fostered by the genius of philosophy, whilst hereditary wealth and the bayonet of despotism have continually been opposed to their establishment.

The publicity of a government acting conformably to the principles of reason, in contradistinction to the maxims of oppression, affords the people an opportunity, or at least a chance, of judging of the wisdom and moderation of their ministers ; and the eye of discernment, when permitted to make known its observations, will always prove a check on the profligacy or dangerous ambition of aspiring men.—So that in contemplating the extension of representative systems of polity, we have solid ground on which to
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rest the expectation—that wars and their calamitous effects will become less frequent, in proportion as the people, who are obliged to support them with their sweat and blood, are consulted respecting their necessity and consequences.

Such consultations can take place under representative systems of government only—under systems which demand the responsibility of their ministers, and secure the publicity of their political conduct. The mysteries of courts, and the intrigues of their parasites, have continually deluged Europe with the blood of it's most worthy and heroic citizens, and there is no specific cure for such evils, but by enabling the people to form an opinion respecting the subject of dispute.

The court of Versailles, with powers the most ample, was the most busy and insidious of any in Europe; and the horrors which she has occasioned, at different periods, were as incalculable, as her ambition was unbounded, and her councils base, unprincipled, and dishonourable. If, then, it were only for abolishing her sway, Europe ought to be thankful for a change, that, by altering the political systems of the most improved quarter
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of the globe, must ultimately lead to universal freedom, virtue, and happiness.

But it is to be presumed, when the effervescence, which now agitates the prejudices of the whole continent, subsides, the justness of the principles brought forward in the declaration of the rights of men and citizens will be generally granted; and that governments, in future, acquiring reason and dignity, feeling for the sufferings of the people, whilst reprobating the sacrilege of tyranny, will make it their principal object, to counteract its baneful tendency, by restraining within just bounds the ambition of individuals.

CHAPTER IV.

PROGRESS OF REFORM. THE ENCYCLOPÉDIE. LIBERTY OF THE PRESS. CAPITALS. THE FRENCH NOT PROPERLY QUALIFIED FOR THE REVOLUTION. SAVAGE COMPARED WITH CIVILIZED MAN. EFFECTS OF EXTRAVAGANCE—OF COMMERCE—AND OF MANUFACTURES. EXCUSE FOR THE FEROCITY OF THE PARISIANS.

PEOPLE thinking for themselves have more energy in their voice, than any government, which it is possible for human wisdom to invent ; and every government not aware of this sacred truth will, at some period, be suddenly overturned. Whilst men in a savage state preserve their independence, they adopt no regular system of policy, nor ever attempt to digest their rude code of laws into a constitution, to ensure political liberty. Consequently we find in every country, after it's civilization has arrived at a certain height, that the people, the moment they are displeased with their rulers, begin to clamour against them ; and, finally rejecting all authority but their own will, in breaking the shackles of folly or tyranny, they glut their resentment by the mischievous destruction of
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the works of ages, only considering them as the moments of their servitude.

From the social disposition of man, in proportion as he becomes civilized, he will mingle more and more with society. The first interest he takes in the business of his fellow-men is in that of his neighbour ; next he contemplates the comfort, misery, and happiness of the nation to which he belongs, investigates the degree of wisdom and justice in the political system, under which he lives, and, striding into the regions of science, his researches embrace all human kind. Thus he is enabled to estimate the portion of evil or good which the government of his country produces, compared with that of others ; and the comparison, granting him superiour powers of mind, leads him to conceive a model of a more perfect form.

This spirit of inquiry first manifests itself in hamlets ; when his views of improvement are confined to local advantages : but the approximation of different districts leading to further intercourse, roads of communication are opened, until a central or favourite spot becomes the vortex of men and things. Then the rising spires, pompous domes, and majestic

jestic monuments, point out the capital; the focus of information, the reservoir of genius; the school of arts, the seat of voluptuous gratification, and the hot-bed of vice and immorality.

The centrifugal rays of knowledge and science now stealing through the empire, the whole intellectual faculties of man partake of their influence, and one general sentiment governs the civil and political body. In the progress of these improvements the state undergoing a variety of changes, the happiness or misery produced occasions a diversity of opinions; and to prevent confusion, absolute governments have been tolerated by the most enlightened part of the people. But, probably, this toleration was merely the effect of the strong social feelings of men; who preferred tranquillity, and the prosperity of their country, to a resistance, which, judging from the ignorance of their fellow citizens, they believed would bring more harm than good in its train. In short, however long a combination of tyranny has retarded the progress, it has been one of the advantages of the large cities of Europe, to light up the sparks of reason, and to extend the principles of truth.

Such is the good and evil flowing from the capitals of states, that during the infancy of governments, though they tend to corrupt and enervate the mind, they accelerate the introduction of science, and give the tone to the national sentiments and taste.

But this influence is extremely gradual; and it requires a great length of time, for the remote corners of the empire to experience either the one, or the other of these effects. Hence we have seen the inhabitants of a metropolis feeble and vitiated, and those of the provinces robust and virtuous. Hence we have seen oppositions in a city (riots as they are called) to illegal governments instantly defeated, and their leaders hanged or tortured; because the judgment of the state was not sufficiently matured to support the struggle of the unhappy victims in a righteous cause. And hence it has happened, that the despots of the world have found it necessary to maintain large standing armies, in order to counteract the effects of truth and reason.

The continuation of the feudal system, however, for a great length of time, by giving an overgrown influence to the nobility of France, had contributed, in no small degree,

to

to counteract the despotism of her kings. Thus it was not until after the arbitrary administration of Richelieu, who had terrified the whole order by a tyranny peculiar to himself, that the insidious Mazarine broke the independent spirit of the nation by introducing the sale of honours ; and that Louis XIV, by the magnificence of his follies, and the meretricious decorations of stars, crosses, and other marks of distinction, or badges of slavery, drew the nobles from their castles ; and, by concentrating the pleasures and wealth of the kingdom in Paris, the luxury of the court became commensurate to the product of the nation. Besides, the encouragement given to enervating pleasures, and the venality of titles, purchased either with money, or ignoble services, soon rendered the nobility as notorious for effeminacy as they had been illustrious for heroism in the days of the gallant Henry.

The arts had already formed a school, and men of science and literature were hurrying from every part of the kingdom to the metropolis, in search of employment and of honour ; and whilst it was giving it's tone to the empire, the parisian taste was pervading Europe.

The vanity of leading the fashions, in the higher orders of society, is not the smallest weakness produced by the sluggishness into which people of quality naturally fall. The depravity of manners, and the sameness of pleasure, which compose a life of idleness, are sure to produce an insupportable *ennui*; and, in proportion to the stupidity of the man, or as his sensibility becomes deadened, he has recourse to variety, finding a zest only from a new creation of charms; and commonly the most unnatural are necessary to rouse sickly, fastidious senses. Still in the same degree as the refinement of sentiment, and the improvement of taste advance, the company of celebrated literary characters is sought after with avidity; and from the prevalence of fashion, the empire of wit succeeds the reign of formal insipidity, after the squeamish palate has been rendered delicate even by the nauseous banquets of voluptuousness.

This is the natural consequence of the improvement of manners, the harbinger of reason; and from the ratio of it's advancement throughout society, we are enabled to estimate the progress of political science. For no sooner had the disquisition of philosophical

subjects become general in the select parties of amusement, extending by degrees to every class of society, than the rigour of the ancient government of France began to soften ; till it's mildness became so considerable, that superficial observers have attributed the exercise of lenity in the administration to the wisdom and excellence of the system itself.

A confederacy of philosophers, whose opinions furnished the food of colloquial entertainment, gave a turn for instructive and useful reading to the leaders of circles, and drew the attention of the nation to the principles of political and civil government. Whilst by the compilation of the *Encyclopædia*, the repository of their thoughts, as an abstract work, they eluded the dangerous vigilance of absolute ministers ; thus in a body disseminating those truths in the economy of finance, which, perhaps, they would not have had sufficient courage separately to have produced in individual publications ; or, if they had, they would most probably have been suppressed.

This is one of the few instances of an association of men becoming useful, instead of being cramped by joint exertions. And the

the cause is clear :—the work did not require a little party spirit ; but each had a distinct subject of investigation to pursue with solitary energy. His destination was traced upon a calm sea, which could not expose him to the Scylla or Charybdis of vanity or interest.

The economists, carrying away the palm from their opponents, showed that the prosperity of a state depends on the freedom of industry ; that talents should be permitted to find their level ; that the unshackling of commerce is the only secret to render it flourishing, and answer more effectually the ends for which it is politically necessary ; and that the imposts should be laid upon the surplus remaining, after the husbandman has been reimbursed for his labour and expences.

Ideas so new, and yet so just and simple, could not fail to produce a great effect on the minds of frenchmen ; who, constitutionally attached to novelty and ingenious speculations, were sure to be enamoured with a prospect of consolidating the great advantages of such a novel and enlightened system ; and without calculating the danger of attacking old prejudices ; nay, without ever considering, that it was a much easier task to

pull down than to build up, they gave themselves little trouble to examine the gradual steps by which other countries have attained their degree of political improvement.

The many vexatious taxes, which under the french government not only enervated the exertions of unprivileged persons, stagnating the live stream of trade, but were extremely teasing inconveniences to every private man, who could not travel from one place to another without being stopped at barriers, and searched by officers of different descriptions, were almost insuperable impediments in the way of the improvements of industry: and the abridgment of liberty was not more grievous in it's pecuniary consequences, than in the personal mortification of being compelled to observe regulations as troublesome as they were at variance with sound policy.

Irritations of the temper produce more poignant sensations of disgust than serious injuries. Frenchmen, indeed, had been so long accustomed to these vexatious forms, that, like the ox who is daily yoked, they were no longer galled in spirit, or exhaled their angry ebullitions in a song. Still it might have been supposed, that after reflecting little, and
talking

talking much, about the sublimity and superiour excellence of the plans of *french* writers above those of other nations, they would become as passionate for liberty, as a man restrained by some idle religious vow is to possess a mistress, to whose charms the imagination has lent all it's own world of graces.

Besides, the very manner of living in France gives a lively turn to the character of the people ; for by the destruction of the animal juices, in dressing their food, they are subject to none of that dulness, the effect of more nutritive diet in other countries ; and this gaiety is increased by the moderate quantity of weak wine, which they drink at their meals, bidding defiance to phlegm. The people also living entirely in villages and towns are more social ; so that the tone of the capital, the instant it had a note distinct from that of the court, became the key of the nation ; though the inhabitants of the provinces polished their manners with less danger to their morals, or natural simplicity of character. But this mode of peopling the country tended more to civilize the inhabitants, than to change the face of the soil, or lead to agricultural improvements. For it is by

residing in the midst of their land, that farmers make the most of it, in every sense of the word—so that the rude state of husbandry, and the awkwardness of the implements used by these ingenious people, may be imputed solely to this cause.

The situation of France was likewise very favourable for collecting the information, acquired in other parts of the world. Paris, having been made a thoroughfare to all the kingdoms on the continent, received in its bosom strangers from every quarter ; and itself resembling a full hive, the very drones buzzed into every corner all the sentiments of liberty, which it is possible for a people to possess, who have never been enlightened by the broad sunshine of freedom ; yet more romantically enthusiastic, probably, for that very reason. Paris, therefore, having not only disseminated information, but presented herself as a bulwark to oppose the despotism of the court, standing the brunt of the fray, seems with some reason, to pride herself on being the author of the revolution.

Though the liberty of the press had not existed in any part of the world, England and America excepted, still the disquisition of po-

litical questions had long occupied the intelligent parts of Europe ; and in France, more than in any other country, books written with licentious freedom were handed from house to house, with the circumspection that irritates curiosity. Not to lay great stress on the universality of the language, which made one general opinion on the benefits arising from the advancement of science and reason pervade the neighbouring states, particularly Germany ; where original compositions began to take place of that laborious erudition, which being employed only in the elucidation of ancient writers, the judgment lies dormant, or is merely called into action to weigh the import of words rather than to estimate the value of things. In Paris, likewise, a knot of ingenious, if not profound writers, twinkled their light into every circle ; for being caressed by the great, they did not inhabit the homely recesses of indigence, rusticating their manners as they cultivated their understandings ; on the contrary, the finesse required to convey their free sentiments in their books, broken into the small shot of innuendoes, gave an oiliness to their conversation, and enabled them to take the lead at tables, the voluptu-

ousness of which was grateful to philosophers, rather of the epicurean than the stoic sect.

It had long been the fashion to talk of liberty, and to dispute on hypothetical and logical points of political economy; and these disputations disseminated gleams of truth, and generated more demagogues than had ever appeared in any modern city.—The number exceeded, perhaps, any comparison with that of Athens itself.

The habit also of passing a part of most of their evenings at some theatre gave them an ear for harmony of language, and a fastidious taste for sheer declamation, in which a sentimental jargon extinguishes all the simplicity and fire of passion: the great number of play-houses*, and the moderate prices of the pit and different ranges of boxes, bringing it within the compass of every citizen to frequent the amusement so much beloved by the french.

The arrangement of sounds, and the adjustment of masculine and feminine rhymes, being the secrets of their poetry, the pomp of

* There are upwards of thirty scattered throughout the city.

dition gives a semblance of grandeur to common observations and hackneyed sentiments ; because the french language, though copious in the phrases that give each shade of sentiment, has not, like the italian, the english, the german, a phraseology peculiar to poetry ; yet it's happy turns, equivocal, nay even concise expressions, and numerous epithets, which, when ingeniously applied, convey a sentence, or afford matter for half a dozen, make it better adapted to oratorical flourishes than that of any other nation. The french therefore are all rhetoricians, and they have a singular fund of superficial knowledge, caught in the tumult of pleasure from the shallow stream of conversation ; so that if they have not the depth of thought which is obtained only by contemplation, they have all the shrewdness of sharpened wit ; and their acquirements are so near their tongue's end, that they never miss an opportunity of saying a pertinent thing, or tripping up, by a smart retort, the arguments with which they have not strength fairly to wrestle.

Every political good carried to the extreme must be productive of evil ; yet every poison has it's antidote ; and there is a pitch of
luxury

luxury and refinement, which, when reached, will overturn all the absolute governments in the world. The ascertainment of these antidotes is a task the most difficult ; and whilst it remains imperfect, a number of men will continue to be the victims of mistaken applications. Like the empirics, who bled a patient to death to prevent a mortification from becoming fatal, the tyrants of the earth have had recourse to cutting off the heads, or torturing the bodies, of those persons who have attempted to check their sway, or doubt their omnipotence. But, though thousands have perished the victims of empirics, and of despots, yet the improvements made both in medicine and moral philosophy have kept a sure, though gradual pace.—And, if men have not clearly discovered a specific remedy for every evil, physical, moral, and political, it is to be presumed, that the accumulation of experimental facts will greatly tend to lessen them in future.

Whilst, therefore, the sumptuous galas of the court of France were the grand source of the refinement of the arts, taste became the antidote to *ennui* ; and when sentiment had taken place of chivalrous and gothic tournaments,

ments, the reign of philosophy succeeded that of the imagination. And though the government, enveloped in precedents, adjusted still the idle ceremonials, which were no longer imposing, blind to the imperceptible change of things and opinions, as if their faculties were bound by an eternal frost, the progress was invariable ; till, reaching a certain point, Paris, which from the particular formation of the empire had been such an useful head to it, began to be the cause of dreadful calamities, extending from individuals to the nation, and from the nation to Europe. Thus it is, that we are led to blame those, who insist, that, because a state of things has been productive of good, it is always respectable ; when, on the contrary, the endeavouring to keep alive any hoary establishment, beyond it's natural date, is often pernicious and always useless.

In the infancy of governments, or rather of civilization, courts seem to be necessary to accelerate the improvement of arts and manners, to lead to that of science and morals. Large capitals are the obvious consequences of the riches and luxury of courts ; but as, after they have arrived at a certain magnitude

tude and degree of refinement, they become dangerous to the freedom of the people, and incompatible with the safety of a republican government, it may be questioned whether Paris will not occasion more disturbance in settling the new order of things, than is equivalent to the good she produced by accelerating the epocha of the revolution.

However, it appears very certain, that should a republican government be consolidated, Paris must rapidly crumble into decay. It's rise and splendour were owing chiefly, if not entirely, to the old system of government; and since the foundation of it's luxury has been shaken, and it is not likely that the disparting structure will ever again rest securely on it's basis, we may fairly infer, that, in proportion as the charms of solitary reflection and agricultural recreations are felt, the people, by leaving the villages and cities, will give a new complexion to the face of the country—and we may then look for a turn of mind more solid, principles more fixed, and a conduct more consistent and virtuous.

The occupations and habits of life have a wonderful influence on the forming mind;
so

so great, that the superinductions of art stop the growth of the spontaneous shoots of nature, till it is difficult to distinguish natural from factitious morals and feelings; and as the energy of thinking will always proceed, in a great measure, either from our education or manner of living, the frivolity of the french character may be accounted for, without taking refuge in the old hiding place of ignorance—occult causes.

When it is the object of education to prepare the pupil to please every body, and of course to deceive, accomplishments are the one thing needful; and the desire to be admired ever being uppermost, the passions are subjugated, or all drawn into the whirlpool of egotism*. This gives to each person, however different the temper, a tincture of vanity, and that weak vacillation of opinion, which is incompatible with what we term character.

Thus a frenchman, like most women, may be said to have no character distinguishable from that of the nation; unless little shades,

* I use this word according to the french acceptation, because we have not one to express so forcibly the same signification.

and casual lights, be allowed to constitute an essential characteristic. What then could have been expected, when their ambition was mostly confined to dancing gracefully, entering a room with easy assurance, and smiling on and complimenting the very persons whom they meant to ridicule at the next fashionable assembly? The learning to fence with skill, it is true, was useful to a people, whose false notions of honour required that at least a drop of blood should atone for the shadow of an affront. The knack also of uttering sprightly repartees became a necessary art, to supply the place of that real interest only to be nourished in the affectionate intercourse of domestic intimacy; where confidence enlarges the heart it opens. Besides, the desire of eating of every dish at table, no matter if there were fifty, and the custom of separating immediately after the repast, destroy the social affections, reminding a stranger of the vulgar saying—‘every man for himself, and God for us all.’ After these cursory observations, it is not going too far to advance, that the french were in some respects the most unqualified of any people
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in Europe to undertake the important work in which they are embarked.

Whilst pleasure was the sole object of living among the higher orders of society, it was the business of the lower to give life to their joys, and convenience to their luxury. This cast-like division, by destroying all strength of character in the former, and debasing the latter to machines, taught frenchmen to be more ingenious in their contrivances for pleasure and show, than the men of any other country ; whilst, with respect to the abridgment of labour in the mechanic arts, or to promote the comfort of common life, they were far behind. They had never, in fact, acquired an idea of that independent, comfortable situation, in which contentment is sought rather than happiness ; because the slaves of pleasure or power can be roused only by lively emotions and extravagant hopes. Indeed they have no word in their vocabulary to express *comfort*—that state of existence, in which reason renders serene and useful the days, which passion would only cheat with flying dreams of happiness.

A change

A change of character cannot be so sudden as some sanguine calculators expect: yet by the destruction of the rights of primogeniture, a greater degree of equality of property is sure to follow; and as Paris cannot maintain its splendour, but by the trade of luxury, which can never be carried to the same height it was formerly, the opulent having strong motives to induce them to live more in the country, they must acquire new inclinations and opinions.—As a change also of the system of education and domestic manners will be a natural consequence of the revolution, the french will insensibly rise to a dignity of character far above that of the present race; and then the fruit of their liberty, ripening gradually, will have a relish not to be expected during its crude and forced state.

The late arrangement of things seems to have been the common effect of an absolute government, a domineering priesthood, and a great inequality of fortune; and whilst it completely destroyed the most important end of society, the comfort and independence of the people, it generated the most shameful depravity and weakness of intellect; so that we have seen the french engaged in a business
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the most sacred to mankind, giving, by their enthusiasm, splendid examples of their fortitude at one moment, and at another, by their want of firmness and deficiency of judgment, affording the most glaring and fatal proofs of the just estimate, which all nations have formed of their character.

Men so thoroughly sophisticated, it was to be supposed, would never conduct any business with steadiness and moderation: but it required a knowledge of the nation and their manners, to form a distinct idea of their disgusting conceit and wretched egotism; so far surpassing all the calculations of reason, that, perhaps, should not a faithful picture be now sketched, posterity would be at loss to account for their folly; and attribute to madness, what arose from imbecility.

The natural feelings of man seldom become so contaminated and debased as not sometimes to let escape a gleam of the generous fire, an ethereal spark of the soul; and it is these glowing emotions, in the inmost recesses of the heart, which have continued to feed feelings, that on sudden occasions manifest themselves with all their pristine purity and vigour. But, by the habitual slothfulness of rusty in-

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tellects,

telleſts, or the depravity of the heart, lulled into hardneſs on the laſcivious couch of pleaſure, thoſe heavenly beams are obſcured, and man appears either an hideous monſter, a devouring beaſt ; or a ſpiritleſs reptile, without dignity or humanity.

Thoſe miſerable wretches who crawl under the feet of others are ſeldom to be found among ſavages, where men accuſtomed to exerciſe and temperance are, in general, brave, hofpitable, and magnanimous ; and it is only as they ſurrender their rights, that they loſe thoſe noble qualities of the heart. The ferocity of the ſavage is of a diſtinct nature from that of the degenerate ſlaves of tyrants. One murders from miſtaken notions of courage ; yet he reſpects his enemy in proportion to his fortitude, and contempt of death : the other aſſaſſinates without remorse, whiſt his trembling nerves betray the weakneſs of his affrighted ſoul at every appearance of danger. Among the former, men are reſpected according to their abilities ; conſequently idle drones are driven out of this ſociety ; but among the latter, men are raiſed to honours and employments in proportion as a talent for intrigue, the ſure proof of littleneſs of

of mind, has rendered them servile. The most melancholy reflections are produced by a retrospective glance over the rise and progress of the governments of different countries, when we are compelled to remark, that flagrant follies and atrocious crimes have been more common under the governments of modern Europe, than in any of the ancient nations, if we except the jews. Sanguinary tortures, insidious poisonings, and dark assassinations, have alternately exhibited a race of monsters in human shape, the contemplation of whose ferocity chills the blood, and darkens every enlivening expectation of humanity : but we ought to observe, to reanimate the hopes of benevolence, that the perpetration of these horid deeds has arisen from a despotism in the government, which reason is teaching us to remedy. Sometimes, it is true, restrained by an iron police, the people appear peaceable, when they are only stunned ; so that we find, whenever the mob has broken loose, the fury of the populace has been shocking and calamitous. These considerations account for the contradictions in the french character, which must strike a stranger : for robberies are very rare in

France, where daily frauds and fly pilfering prove, that the lower class have as little honesty as sincerity. Besides, murder and cruelty almost always show the dastardly ferocity of fear in France ; whilst in England, where the spirit of liberty has prevailed, it is usual for an highwayman, demanding your money, not only to avoid barbarity, but to behave with humanity, and even complaisance.

Degeneracy of morals, with polished manners, produces the worst of passions, which floating through the social body, the genial current of natural feelings has been poisoned ; and, committing crimes with trembling inquietude, the culprits have not only drawn on themselves the vengeance of the law, but thrown an odium on their nature, that has blackened the face of humanity. And whilst it's temple has been sacrilegiously profaned by the drops of blood, which have issued from the very hearts of the sad victims of their folly ; a hardness of temper, under the veil of sentiment, calling it vice, has prevented our sympathy from leading us to examine into the sources of the atrocity of our species,

species, and obscured the true cause of disgraceful and vicious habits.

Since the existence of courts, whose aggrandisement has been conspicuous in the same degree as the miseries of the debased people have accumulated, the convenience and comfort of men have been sacrificed to the ostentatious display of pomp and ridiculous pageantry. For every order of men, from the beggar to the king, has tended to introduce that extravagance into society, which equally blasts domestic virtue and happiness. The prevailing custom of living beyond their income has had the most baneful effect on the independence of individuals of every class in England, as well as in France ; so that whilst they have lived in habits of idleness, they have been drawn into excesses, which, proving ruinous, produced consequences equally pernicious to the community, and degrading to the private character. Extravagance forces the peer to prostitute his talents and influence for a place, to repair his broken fortune ; and the country gentleman becomes venal in the senate, to enable himself to live on a par with him, or reimburse himself for the expences of electioneering, into
which

which he was led by sheer vanity. The professions, on the same account, become equally unprincipled. The one, whose characteristic ought to be integrity, descends to chicanery; whilst another trifles with the health, of which it knows all the importance. The merchant likewise enters into speculations so closely bordering on fraudulency, that common straight forward minds can scarcely distinguish the devious art of selling any thing for a price far beyond that necessary to ensure a just profit, from sheer dishonesty, aggravated by hard-heartedness, when it is to take advantage of the necessities of the indigent.

The destructive influence of commerce, it is true, carried on by men who are eager by overgrown riches to partake of the respect paid to nobility, is felt in a variety of ways. The most pernicious, perhaps, is it's producing an aristocracy of wealth, which degrades mankind, by making them only exchange savageness for tame servility, instead of acquiring the urbanity of improved reason. Commerce also, overstocking a country with people, obliges the majority to become manufacturers rather than husbandmen; and then the division of labour, solely to enrich the
pro-

proprietor, renders the mind entirely inactive. The time which, a celebrated writer says, is fauntered away, in going from one part of an employment to another, is the very time that preserves the man from degenerating into a brute ; for every one must have observed how much more intelligent are the blacksmiths, carpenters, and masons in the country, than the journeymen in great towns ; and, respecting morals, there is no making a comparison. The very gait of the man, who is his own master, is so much more steady than the flouching step of the servant of a servant, that it is unnecessary to ask which proves by his actions he has the most independence of character.

The acquiring of a fortune is likewise the least arduous road to pre-eminence, and the most sure : thus are whole knots of men turned into machines, to enable a keen speculator to become wealthy ; and every noble principle of nature is eradicated by making a man pass his life in stretching wire, pointing a pin, heading a nail, or spreading a sheet of paper on a plain surface. Besides, it is allowed, that all associations of men render them sensual, and consequently selfish ; and
whilst

whilst lazy friars are driven out of their cells as stagnate bodies that corrupt society, it may admit of a doubt whether large work-shops do not contain men equally, tending to impede that gradual progress of improvement, which leads to the perfection of reason, and the establishment of rational equality.

The deprivation of natural, equal, civil and political rights, reduced the most cunning of the lower orders to practise fraud, and the rest to habits of stealing, audacious robberies, and murders. And why? because the rich and poor were separated into bands of tyrants and slaves, and the retaliation of slaves is always terrible. In short, every sacred feeling, moral and divine, has been obliterated, and the dignity of man sullied, by a system of policy and jurisprudence as repugnant to reason, as at variance with humanity.

The only excuse that can be made for the ferocity of the parisiens is then simply to observe, that they had not any confidence in the laws, which they had always found to be merely cobwebs to catch small flies. Accustomed to be punished themselves for every trifle, and often for only being in the way of the rich, or their parasites; when, in fact,

had the parisiens seen the execution of a noble, or priest, though convicted of crimes beyond the daring of vulgar minds?—When justice, or the law, is so partial, the day of retribution will come with the red sky of vengeance, to confound the innocent with the guilty. The mob were barbarous beyond the tiger's cruelty : for how could they trust a court that had so often deceived them, or expect to see it's agents punished, when the same measures were pursuing?

Let us cast our eyes over the history of man, and we shall scarcely find a page that is not tarnished by some foul deed, or bloody transaction. Let us examine the catalogue of the vices of men in a savage state, and contrast them with those of men civilized ; we shall find, that a barbarian, considered as a moral being, is an angel, compared with the refined villain of artificial life. Let us investigate the causes which have produced this degeneracy, and we shall discover, that they are those unjust plans of government, which have been formed by peculiar circumstances in every part of the globe.—Then let us coolly and impartially contemplate the improvements, which are gaining ground in the for-

mation of principles of policy ; and I flatter myself it will be allowed by every humane and considerate being, that a political system more simple than has hitherto existed would effectually check those aspiring follies, which, by imitation, leading to vice, have banished from governments the very shadow of justice and magnanimity.

Thus had France grown up, and sickened on the corruption of a state diseased. But, as in medicine there is a species of complaint in the bowels which works it's own cure, and, leaving the body healthy, gives an invigorated tone to the system, so there is in politics : and whilst the agitation of it's regeneration continues, the excrementitious humours exuding from the contaminated body will excite a general dislike and contempt for the nation ; and it is only the philosophical eye, which looks into the nature and weighs the consequences of human actions, that will be able to discern the cause, which has produced so many dreadful effects.

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