

but their impetuosity to accomplish the object which they had in view, led them to associate with men of very different principles and intentions—who without property and without principle, neither feared God nor regarded man. These men only sought for power to abuse it. These, as might easily have been foreseen, overthrew the more moderate party—destroyed without remorse, former associates, or open enemies; and on the ruins of all social order, endeavoured to raise their own barbarous fabric of folly and mischief. The source of this evil was not the work of a day, nor the business of a moment. Man does not become wholly depraved at once, “on step by step he goes.” Voltaire and his associates, laid the foundation of this hideous fabric. It was built upon, with the greatest assiduity, by his thoughtless countrymen, and other mischievous hands, without any measure being taken to check its increase. The general corruption of manners and of morals in France, before the Revolution, is well known. One class were sunk in the most grovelling superstition; and the other under the most abandoned contempt of every thing sacred. Amidst this scene of depravity and confusion, a set of metaphysicians and philosophers sprang up, who, abandoning all religion and revelation, who denying the existence of the Deity, endeavoured to raise a building without a foundation; and who, inculcating doctrines, but too agreeable to the evil dispositions of man, were eagerly listened to, implicitly followed, and terribly obeyed. In a soil but too well adapted to the culture of such baneful seeds, these grew with an alarming rapidity. They spread their noxious branches into every land; and in that wherein they had been at first planted, overthrew every thing, civil or sacred—good and virtuous—Morality and Religion—the altar and the throne. One hideous ruin, overwhelmed every thing which man had hitherto held sacred—which had either rendered him happy here, or that could prepare him for happiness hereafter. The dread of a Supreme Being, no longer restrained his wicked desires, and odious appetites—nothing remained to curb or controul them, for it was idle to think of human laws being any barrier to a man, who conceived it no wrong to violate them; and who only framed the laws of the country, where he lived, to suit his caprice—his pursuits, and his profligate prin-