

every other case, advises him out of two evils to choose the least. Wherefore, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows that whatever form thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us with the least expense and greatest benefit is preferable to all others." This is not the truth as now seen in the light of historical philosophy and general science, yet it is nearer the truth than either Hobbes's "Leviathan," on one side, or Rousseau's "State of Nature" on the other; and the conclusion is practically safe. Paine is not made deaf by theory to the counsels of political prudence. "It is always better policy," he says, "to leave removeable errors to reform themselves than to hazard too much in contending against them theoretically." He was as far as possible from being a Nihilist or an Anarchist. The government of law was his aim. He upheld the Bank against demagogic violence, and our National Currency friends will be rather startled when they hear that, having seen the fiscal ruin and moral depravity begotten by paper currency during the Revolutionary War in the United States, he solemnly declared his opinion that any one who should propose a renewal of that system ought to be punished with death. The most unseemly passage in his life is his quarrel with Washington, whom, having once eulogized, he afterwards denounced with his usual truculence. In denunciation of Washington, however, he could not possibly go beyond other writers and speakers of the ultra-democratic and French party, to which he belonged. In this case he had a personal as well as a public grievance: when he was lying in a Jacobin prison, he had in vain solicited the interposition of Washington, who abhorred the excesses of the Revolution, cordially detested the Jacobins, and, perhaps, without being very accurately informed as to the particulars of the case, fancied that Paine had been taking part in the crimes of the Terrorists, and had met his deserts. Paine lived in an age in which his destructive forces had work to do and were doing it. He was one of the acrid solvents of an obsolete system. For the special odium attaching to a name which has become almost a