

review the long and illustrious names which adorn the annals of that body—and bring together the almost numberless accessions to every branch of science, which have been the fruit of their exertions through the reign of their despotic founder, and of his no less immediate despotic successors—we are reluctantly compelled to acknowledge, that the encouragement of this branch of human knowledge, (the sciences,) is not confined to free forms of government, and that there is nothing peculiarly hostile to their progress, even in the most despotic. Absolute rulers, indeed, so far from having any interest in shackling or impeding scientific or literary inquiries, have an obvious and strong motive for aiding and promoting them.

They afford a safe and harmless employment to many active spirits, who might otherwise take a fancy to look into politics and laws—to investigate the source, form, duties and proceedings of governments, and the rights of the governed. A wise despot will be glad to see such dangerous topics exchanged for inquiries into the history of a plant or animal—into the properties of a mineral, or the form of a fossil—into the uses of a piece of old Roman or Grecian crockery—or the appropriation of a mutilated statue to its rightful owner in some heathen goddery. Shutting out the human mind from some of its most interesting and important exertions, he will open every other path as widely as possible.

But, thank God, it is not so in our own country; we ought to rejoice, not only for ourselves, but for all mankind, that here is an asylum for the victims of power and oppression—that it is, not a spot, but a vast region of the earth, lavishly endowed with Nature's fairest gifts, and exhibiting, at the same time, to the admiring world the grand and animating spectacle of a country sacred to civil liberty—where man may walk erect, in the conscious dignity of independence,

• Lord of the lion heart and eagle eye,

and enjoy full freedom of word and action, without the permission of those combinations or conspiracies of the mighty, which threaten to convert Europe into one great State prison.

Nature has made it a fundamental law, that no two of her productions shall be exactly alike; and this law is invariably observed through the whole creation. Each tree, each flower, each leaf, exemplifies it; every animal has its individual character; each human being has something distinguishing, in form, proportions, countenance, gesture, voice—in feelings, thought, and temper—in mental as well as corporeal physiognomy. This variety is the source of everything beautiful and interesting in the external world—the foundation of the whole moral fabric of the universe.

In concluding, we cannot help pointing out to our readers how strongly the voice of nature, so clearly expressed in this obvious law, opposes all attempts at making mankind act or think alike. Yet the legislators and rulers of the world have persisted, for centuries, in endeavouring to reduce the opinions, the belief of their subjects, to certain fancied standards of perfection. The mind, however, cannot be drilled—cannot be made to move at the word of command: it scorns all shackles, and rises, with fresh energy, from every attempt to enthrall its energies. All the oppression and persecution, all the bloodshed and misery, which the attempts to produce uniformity have occasioned, are, however, a less evil than the success of these mad efforts would be, were it possible for them to succeed, in opposition to the natural constitution of the human mind—to the general scheme and plain design of nature.

The most powerful monarch of modern history, who exhibited the rare example of a voluntary retreat from the cares of empire while still able to wield the sceptre, was rendered sensible of the extreme folly he had been guilty of, in attempting to produce uniformity of opinion among the numerous subjects of his extensive dominions, by finding himself unable to make two watches go alike, although every

part of this simple mechanism was constructed, formed, and adjusted by himself. The dear experience and candid confession of Charles V. were thrown away on his bigoted son—who repeated, on a still grander scale, with fresh horrors and cruelties, the bloody experiment of dragging his subjects into uniformity, only to instruct the world by a still more memorable failure.

LORD AND LADY CONYNGHAM.

Lady Conyngham, since become so celebrated in England, was then in the full bloom of her charms. In this respect, she was entitled to a brilliant reputation; but, I confess, I could never admire beauty so totally devoid of expression. I am not surprised at the Venus de Medicis not returning my smile, because she is a statue, and nothing but marble; but when I approach a beautiful woman, I expect a look and expression of animated nature. This was not to be found in Lady Conyngham. She was very elegant, took great care of her beauty, dressed well, and carried the care of her person so far as to remain in bed the whole day until she dressed to go to a ball. She was of opinion that this preserved the freshness of her complexion, which she said was always more brilliant when she did not rise till nine at night. She was a beautiful idol, and nothing more. Lord Conyngham, her husband, might be called ugly. The Duchess of Gordon, who, in her frightful language, sometimes uttered smart things, said of Lord Conyngham, that he was like a comb, all teeth and back.—*Memoirs of the Duchess of Abrantes, lately published.*

CHARACTER OF THE GREAT LORD CHATHAM.

“Not so—the virtue still adorns our age,
Though the chief actor died upon the stage.
In him Demosthenes was heard again;
Liberty taught him her Athenian strain;
She clothed him with authority, and awe
Spoke from his lips, and in his looks gave law;
His speech, his form, his action full of grace,
And all his country beaming in his face.
He stood, as some inimitable hand
Would strive to make a Paul or Tully stand.
No sycophant or slave, that dared oppose
Her sacred cause, but trembled when he rose;
And every venal strickler for the yoke
Felt himself crushed at the first word he spoke.

Cowper.

THE BEGUM SUMROO.

In descending from the northern mountains, our travellers passed through the territories of the Sumroo Begum, a name familiar to our countrymen in India; and as the account given of her history by Major Arthur seems to be more authentic than any we have met with, we shall venture to extract it, though somewhat long. A female sovereign and warrior, in such a country as India, will, by most of our readers, be regarded as rather a novelty.

“Sirdanah is the city and head-quarters of the Begum Sumroo, who possesses the country around as a life-fief or jagheer; which, originally estimated at six, is, by her extreme good management, made eight lacs annually. The history of this remarkable woman is such, that a slight and perhaps imperfect account, or rather glance at it, may prove of interest.”—“In early life she was a match girl; but who her parents were, or from what part of the country she came, is now lost to information; it is, however conjectured, from her exceeding fairness of complexion, and peculiar features, that her family were of northern extraction. Her attractions and accomplishments secured the attentions of a German adventurer, by name Sumroo, which