

"time the King did not commune, there were upwards of a million of subjects in France, who no longer partook of the sacraments: that the desertion from the holy table was become general," &c. &c.

Then speaking of constitutions, they added, "That God had given power to his ministers to absolve past sins; that repentance effaced in heaven crimes committed upon earth: that the Divinity, in forming man, had been obliged to give way to his weaknesses: that we should always fulfil our christian obligations, notwithstanding the continual temptations with which the heart of man is surrounded," &c. &c.

In a word, I saw through these maxims of the fathers of the church, that the King, in order to be a good catholic, should be regularly guilty of profanation of the sacrament once a year.

I refused taking upon myself this moral commission. I had a glimpse of those consequences which might have affected myself. This prince's approaching the communion table, must necessarily have caused a revolution in him. I was under less apprehension for the King's religion, than the intrigues of churchmen. The confessor was particularly to be dreaded. He is always powerful, when the monarch is frequently at his feet.

Neither did I advise the King to absent himself from the holy table. I left things just as they were.

Peace, which had restored political tranquillity, of itself produced fresh divisions in the state. Churchmen, the clergy, and the parliament, who in time of war, unite themselves to the administration, to participate of public misfortunes, in their turn create them, when battles and sieges are passed: so that by a fatality, which is, perhaps, derived from the constitution itself, France must always be armed to avoid domestic quarrels; or continually wage war with