

THE

MASONIC ESSAYIST.

*A Vindication of Masonry from a Charge of having given rise to the French Revolution.**Continued from page 57,*

That excellent moralist, Dr. Johnson, has somewhere in his "Rambler" made an observation to this effect, "that no man should suffer his heart to be inflamed with malice but by injuries, nor busy himself in contesting the pretensions of others, but when some right of his own is involved in the question."

"The mysteries of Freemasonry" (says the foregoing letter writer) "have in a great measure contributed to those changes in sentiment and morality, no less than in government, amongst a neighbouring people, which the surrounding nations view with such surprise."

The morality inculcated in the disciples of our institution I have never heard disputed before: and those to whom the mysteries of our first degree are familiar, well know, that the lectures peculiar to that Degree constitute one of the most beautiful systems of morality that ever was inspired by God or conceived by man.

That the institution of Masonry is of all others the most ill calculated to effect any change of political opinion, much less to promote a revolution in any government under which it may be permitted to operate, is an indisputable truth; for, one of the most positive injunctions imposed on a candidate for our order, and the admonition most frequently repeated in our general assemblies, is, cheerfully to conform ourselves to the government under which we live, and to pay implicit obedience to those laws which afford us protection; this admonition accompanies our progress through all countries of the universe, as well as at home, but it is strengthened with this further impression, that in whatever quarter of the world we may travel, we should never forget the allegiance due to our native sovereign, nor suffer to subside that warm and natural attachment which we owe to the soil whereon we first drew breath. These, it is well known, are among our most positive and binding regulations; yet it seems as if our ancestors, fearful of not sufficiently guarding the fraternity against the possibility of being suspected of disloyalty, had judged it necessary, in their general laws, positively to prohibit the utterance of a single sentence in our meetings on any political subject whatever*.

* No private piques or quarrels must be brought within the door of the Lodge, far less any quarrels about religion, or nations, or state policy;