

ignorant of the consequences that would result from its destruction?

The truth is, that the attachment of ignorant people to a good, and to a bad government, is the same. It is, in both cases, equally possible; for it is always accidental. Even under the best forms of government, and the most upright administration, much hardship and many privations must be suffered, in the present condition of men; and the ignorant are never able to distinguish, whether their misfortunes are occasioned by the tyranny of their superiors, or by the necessary imperfection of human things. Nor do they know that the blessings which they enjoy are separable from their condition, and might be wrested from them by a change of government. Under tyrannical government, on the other hand, they are equally ignorant what portion of their calamities is referable to the tyrant that oppresses them. They feel, indeed, the misery of which he is the remote, though certain cause; but his minions every where proclaim, that this misery cannot be prevented, that it arises from the necessary imperfection of human government, and that no nation in the world is happier than theirs. They have no knowledge and no experience by which they can refute these assertions. And they submit or resist, just as a greater or less degree of art is employed to deceive them.

The conduct of the uninformed subjects of every kind of government appears to be this:—If, by chance, they are pleased with the government under which they live, all goes on well. They are contented and happy. They will do every thing in their power for the support of government. They will encounter death in its defence. But if some fit of ill-humour seize them, if some measure of administration give them offence, if some demagogue inspire them with disaffection; their attachment will be extinguished, and most probable will never be revived. They will then become a prey to every pretender who warmly professes an interest in their welfare. Their simplicity and credulity form the foundation of his hopes, and give success to all his schemes. It is vain to oppose reason and common sense to the torrent with which they proceed. Their passions are inflamed, and cannot be calmed, but by time and the calamities which inevitably follow. Such a people know not their own interest. They cannot be taught it by the example of other nations. They have no means of learning it, except from the fatal experiment which involves them in ruin. It is on ignorance and credulity that the ascendancy of demagogues and revolutionists has always been founded. This is the soil on which they have ever sowed with most success the seeds of anarchy and confusion.

It is however objected, that the small degree of instruction which the lower classes can ever attain, is rather hurtful than salutary. Seditious writings, it is observed, are easily disseminated among a people who have been taught to read. And this, it must be acknowledged, is an engine of discord which could not otherwise be employed. But, there is good reason to believe that the cause which is the instrument of this abuse, is at the same time the means of preventing another and a far greater evil. The art of reading which sometimes gives rise to the perusal of seditious publications, prepares the mind for resisting impressions of a much more dangerous nature. Let us consider only