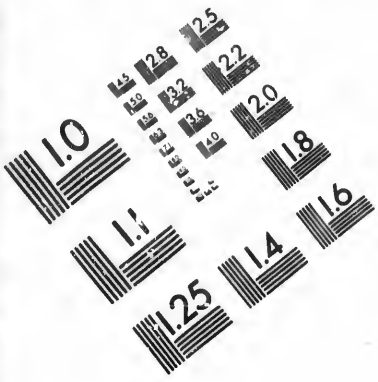

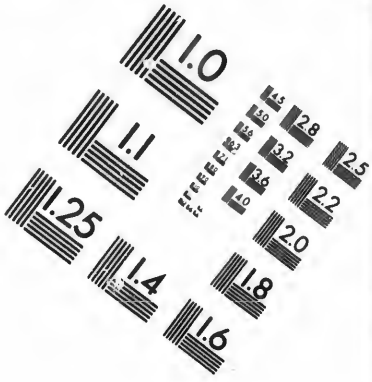

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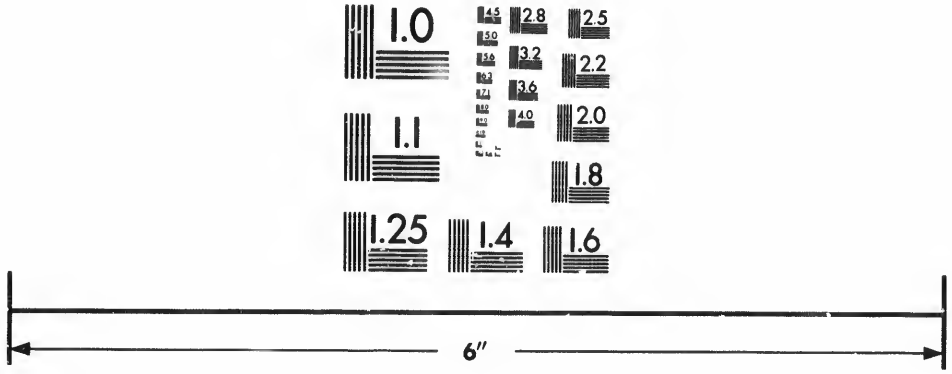

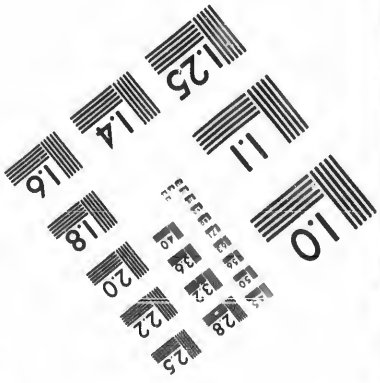

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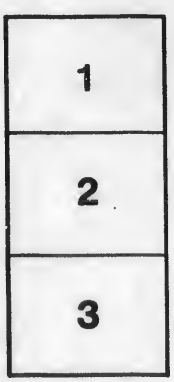

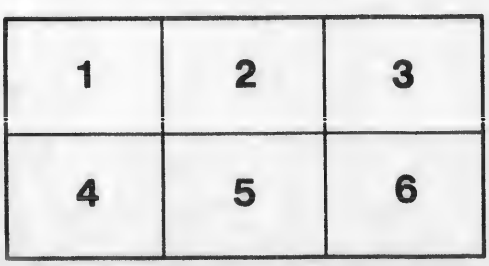

Stephen

DANGER

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE first part of this Pamphlet was written, and partly sent to press, soon after the ruin of the Prussian army was certainly known in England, and when we supposed ourselves to be again left alone in the war; a conjuncture, at which the feelings of the Public, as to the perils of our situation, were probably much more in unison than now, with those of the Author. At present, perhaps, a proposition which he has assumed, *viz.* that the danger of an invasion, though very indistinctly and inadequately conceived, is universally admitted to exist, may be far from the truth. But he deems it, on this account, only the more necessary to raise his feeble voice against the indifference and supineness which prevail in regard to our public defence; since the apprehension of immediate danger no longer tends to correct these faults, and they may, by a false sense of security, be fatally confirmed.

May the next news from the seat of continental war, be of a kind to diminish further the apparent importance of his labours? But, in his estimate, our danger from the power of France was never more serious and imminent than at the present moment.

January 21, 1807.

THE

DANGERS OF THE COUNTRY.

Sect. 1. *We may be conquered by France.*

IN the revolutions which overthrow the power and the independency of nations, there is nothing more astonishing than the extreme improvidence which sometimes prepares their fall. Let us mark in the page of history the periods which immediately preceded the subjugation of Greece, by Philip and Alexander, the dreadful overthrow of Carthage, by Rome, and of Rome herself by the Barbarians, and we shall perceive that their fate was long very visibly approaching, that it might probably have been averted by vigour and prudence, but that the devoted nations strangely neglected the obvious means of self-preservation, till the opportunity of using them was lost.

How deplorably does the age we live in abound with similar cases!

Nations, however, like individuals, seem rarely if ever, to take warning from the fatal errors of each other. Such wisdom is indeed cheaply bought, but not so cheaply reduced into practice; for the measures of preventive prudence generally demand some renunciation of present ease, or apparent advantage. It is easy to see what timely sacrifices others should have made to avoid impending ruin. It is not so easy to make those necessary sacrifices ourselves.

Besides, there seems to be an unaccountable prejudice, a sense of inextinguishable vitality, in the body politic as well as natural, which cheats us into a persuasion, that whatever may have befallen others in similar circumstances, our own existence is secure.

"All men think all men mortal but themselves."

The same may be said of nations; and the delusion perhaps is still stronger with them, than with individuals.

It seems impossible upon any other principles than these, to account for the apathy of the British public at the present most tremendous crisis. The torrent of French ambition, has now washed away every mound that opposed it on the continent. We stand as on a little spot of elevated ground, surrounded with inundations; and while the waters are still rising on every side, and rapidly undermining our base, we look on with stupid indifference, or torpid inactivity, heedless of the means by which safety might be still attained.

These strictures I hope are not now applicable to those with whom the government of the country is intrusted.—Measures are probably preparing in the cabinet such as our perilous situation demands: but the people at large are not sufficiently awake to the tremendous evils which menace them, and the duties to which they are called.

A sufficient proof of this might be found in the spirit of personal and party rivalship, which has abounded in our late parliamentary elections, and that exclusive attention which they excited throughout the country at large.

Never in the present reign did the choice of a new parliament produce a greater number of obstinate contests, and never were important national questions less generally involved in the rivalship of contending candidates; yet when has the public mind been more closely intent on the concerns of a general election? It must have been obvious to every calm observer, that the combats of the hustings had more interest than the battles in Saxony, that the state of the poll was the subject of more anxiety than the advance of the Russians, and the subversions of thrones, events of less concern than the rejection of a favourite candidate.

Could this disposition be resolved into a magnanimous contempt of danger, it might perhaps be deemed a feature of national character by no means of evil omen. The Spartans, on the eve of the battle of Thermopylæ, were seen combing their long hair, and indulging in their usual amusements. But this construction of the public feelings, though complimentary, would not be just. The dangers of the country I fear have not been so much despised, as forgotten; and the patriotic emotions which the conjuncture ought to inspire, have been superseded by the nearer interest of borough or provincial politics.

This, however, is by no means the only indication of popular insensibility to the present dangers of the country.

Have pride, dissipation, or luxury, contracted in any degree their

accustomed range, or are their votaries less intent than before on their favourite pleasures? Has the civil war of parties been suspended; or have we in earnest begun to make our peace with a chastising Providence, by religious and moral reformation?

The nations of antiquity, while they possessed their freedom, that true source of patriotic feeling, were neither too gay to mourn, too luxurious to retrench, too factious to unite, nor too proud to repent and pray, in seasons of public danger. A situation like our own, at Sparta, at Athens, or at Rome, in their best days, would have been marked by gravity and mourning, by a suspension of civil feuds, by an emulation in every species of private sacrifice to the public service, and by such propitiations as their religion taught them to offer, to their offended gods. The most distant danger from a foreign enemy, united every Roman in a generous self-devotion to the state. The rich remitted their exactions, the poor renounced their complaints; the patrician forgot his pride, the plebeian his factious discontent, the tribune his mob-importance, the senators their mutual discord. If the assault or defiance of an enemy found them in the heat of civil commotions, it in a moment put an end to the strife: If the people were drawn up by their demagogues on the *Mons sacer*, their citadel of sedition, they descended without delay to the *Campus Martius*, and crowded to be enrolled for the military service of their country.

We admire this spirit; we perceive in it one great cause of the long conservation of Roman freedom, and an essential basis of Roman greatness.—Yet what have Romans, Grecians, or any other people ancient or modern, had to attach them to their country, compared with the social blessings of these much favoured islands? The sun, in six thousand years, has beheld no human beings so happy in their civil condition as ourselves; has enlightened no land which its inhabitants had so vast an interest in defending as Great Britain.

Whence then that indifference, that strange defect at least of patriotic zeal and exertion, which marks this arduous crisis?

It cannot be the effect of a rational confidence in our security, for who is there now that does not admit the country to be in danger?

The absurd opinion that England cannot be invaded while we have an invincible fleet, is now rejected by every intelligent man, as it always was by men of nautical knowledge; and the government itself has long since practically admitted, by various costly preparations for our interior defence, that a powerful descent on our shores is no impossible event.

Those who formerly thought such an enterprize impracticable, must have rested their opinion on the extreme depression of the French marine. But from this state it has already begun to recover, and there can be no doubt that unless the enemy should be rash enough to expose himself to new Trafalgars, his navy will rapidly encrease. When we consider the large acquisitions of ships of all kinds, of naval magazines, of forests ripe for the axe, of excellent docks, and harbours, and even of able seamen, which France has unhappily made by conquest during the two last campaigns; and when we regard her as mistress of all the coasts of continental Europe, from the bottom of the Adriatic gulf to the straits of Gibraltar, and from Cape Finisterre to the Baltic, it would be idle indeed to suppose that the disparity of her naval power to that of the British islands, will long continue to be great.

But even a very inferior fleet to our own, might as I shall hereafter shew, give her ample means of invasion.

That an invading army would infallibly be repelled by the force we at present possess on shore, is a persuasion that may still be too general, yet can hardly now maintain its ground in well informed and considerate minds.—It must at least be greatly weakened, if not removed, by the late tremendous events on the continent.

Are we proudly confident in our military prowess? So were the renowned battalions of Frederick the Great.—The Prussians marched from Berlin as to a certain triumph. Intelligent English gentlemen who were there at the moment, declare that the general confidence was extreme; that it was impossible to make the most rational Prussians with whom they conversed, admit a doubt of the victorious armies of France being defeated by the Prussian tactics; and that to suggest any uneasiness on the subject, was regarded as preposterous at least, if not insulting.

Yet where is now that mighty army that was drawn up by the veteran generals of Prussia in the plain of Auerstadt? Dispersed, as with the impetuous breath of a whirlwind, or rather the blast of an explosion, its scattered fragments were soon to be found only on the shores of the Baltic; and even there were gathered up by its enemies.

The mendacious vanity of the victors here found no place for exaggeration. It was strict truth to say that a late mighty monarch, flying from the throne of his ancestors across the Oder and the Vistula, carried with him only a handful of guards from the great army which he lately commanded, and that with this exception, not a man of that vast host, escaped. Neither the defeat of Darius at Arbela,

or any other victory by which empires have been overthrown, was in this respect half so disastrous.

Where has since been found the proper reserve of regulars, or of citizens in arms to repair this misfortune? Like the masses of Bohemia and Hungary, after the defeats at Ulm and Austerlitz, such forces have not been ready to take the field in time, either to stem the tide of conquest, or make a new stand for their country? Prussia, like Austria, neglected, alas! to call forth the spirit, and prepare the defensive energies of the people till the important opportunity was lost.

If examples like these cannot open the eyes and excite the apprehensions of England; if she can still repose on an army, hardly recruited so fast as it is exhausted by colonial service, and upon volunteers, which from existing defects in their constitution are declining in numbers and discipline every hour, it must be from an infatuation against which it would be idle to reason.

But the truth is, that the national slumber proceeds less from a rash confidence, than from inattention to the terrible nature of the events with which we are visibly threatened.

There are objects of apprehension so dreadful in their general aspect, that we rarely give ourselves the pain to examine them steadily enough to contemplate their particular features. Much less do we anticipate with a distinct foresight, the consequences which they are known to involve.

Of this kind, is the approaching death of a beloved wife or husband. The heart recoils at the idea of such an event in the abstract, and we shut our eyes to all its concomitant horrors. The sight of long protracted agonies, in a frame endeared to us by a thousand tender recollections, the plaintive eye imploring from us unavailing pity, the tears of children surrounding the bed of pain and death, the last fond and sad adieu to them and to ourselves, the ghastly lineaments of death on a face which had long used to beam upon us with intelligence, sensibility, and love; these, and many other sad accompaniments of the loss, are unimagined till they are felt; nor are the cheerless hours of widowhood that succeed, the gloom that long broods over the once cheerful family table, and winter fireside, the gall that now mingles with all the wonted sweets of parental affection, the black cloud with which recollection suddenly and cruelly darkens the brief occasional sunshine of the mind, subjects of anticipated pain.

The same, I conceive, is the case in the public mind at this juncture, in respect of those possible and dreadful events, our being in-

vaded and conquered by France. Strangers to the yoke of a foreign master, strangers even to the ordinary miseries which belong to a state of war in countries which are the theatres of its horrors, we have indeed some dread of those events, but it is a vague and indefinite apprehension. We do not distinguish the many specific evils which would make up the aggregate disaster of such a conquest; much less do we look forward to the miseries that would unquestionably follow.

I would endeavour therefore to supply in some measure the defects of these loose conceptions, to analyze the tremendous mischief which is possibly impending over us, to exhibit some of its calamitous elements, and point out the exquisite wretchedness which it would entail upon my country. We must unavoidably be soon called upon for very great and very painful sacrifices, in order to avert the national ruin with which we are menaced by the power of France. Let us fairly examine then the impending evil, that we may be reconciled to the unpleasant means by which alone it can be averted.

Sect. 2. The effects of such a conquest.—Usurpation or destruction of the throne.

It is needless to insist much on that ordinary, and most prominent feature, in the revolutions of kingdoms by conquest, the transfer of the royal power, from a native to a foreign monarch. It is an evil which the loyalty of my countrymen, and their affection to the best of sovereigns, will sufficiently appreciate.

If the ruthless Napoleon has ever spared for a while, a prince whom he had power to depose, it has been from motives of policy which would find no place in England. He may safely trust a legitimate monarch to wield for a while a feeble and tarnished sceptre on the continent, while his dominions, reduced in extent, stripped of their best interior resources, and deprived of every outwork that can guard them from invasion, are in no condition to oppose his ulterior projects. It may even serve his purposes, to make these degraded sovereigns instruments of his rapacity, in exacting for his use contributions from their wretched subjects; as well as involuntary ministers to his ambition, in the further extension of his conquests. When rendered by such means, hateful to their subjects, and to their neighbours, they may be more safely commanded to descend from their thrones, and make room for some upstart successor. He seems even to have a cruel pleasure in this course of proceeding; as the

tiger plays with its wounded victim, and apparently enjoys its dreadful suspense, prior to its final destruction.

But should this subverter of empires ever become master of England, the illustrious house of Hanover will have no such protracted torments, nor any equivocal fate. Our island is not capable of a secure or convenient partition among his satellites. There are no conquests beyond us, to which England, like Holland or Saxony, may furnish, under a nominal independency, a safe and convenient scaffold. And, what is more decisive, the natural bulwarks of England cannot be removed. The straits of Dover cannot, like the fortresses on the Rhine, or the passes of the Tyrol, be annexed to a hostile state, and the popularity of our beloved sovereign would still more effectually secure his fall; for he has a throne in the hearts of his subjects that a conqueror could not subvert.

Perhaps in consideration of our maritime fame, we might be honoured with the gift of the imperial admiral *Jerome Bonaparte*, as our new sovereign lord; and he might even deign to accept the hand of some female descendant of the princess Sophia, in order to plant a new dynasty, on something like hereditary right. Nor is it impossible that the male branches of that illustrious house, might soon be so disposed of, as to leave none who could dispute the legality of the marriage, or of any title founded upon it. England has no Salic law; the usurper is not scrupulous in his means, and he has shewn that he knows the value of that hereditary right upon which he has so violently trampled.

I must admit, however, that it is more probable we should not be trusted with any shew of national independence; but be either reduced avowedly into the form of a province, or honoured with the name of a department. If the choice of the French people had any weight, such would of course be our destiny; since our insular situation and maritime character, might soon convert a nominal, into a real independence.—Rome did not think herself safe, while Carthage had walls or foundations.

I leave these prospects without remark to a spirited and loyal people. True loyalty, like love, is too delicate to admit of excitement or expostulation, unless from the object of its attachment.

Sect. 3. *Overthrow of the Constitution.*

What shall I say of the subversion of that glorious fabric the British constitution! We have been lately exercising the elective franchise, and if the spirit of our contests for representatives in par-

liament, at this arduous crisis, has in some instances deserved reproof, at least we must admire that perfect freedom of choice, which so many have been able to exercise. Whether more of that freedom is safely attainable than the present scheme of representation affords, is a question which it would be impertinent to discuss in these sheets, nor is this a proper season for such discussions. It is not when the ship labours in the tempest, and when breakers are under her lee, that you would set about an alteration in her cabin, or even think of repairing her helm. It is easy to find faults in every thing human; but when in danger of losing what we love, we think not of its faults, but of its value. He that really loves British liberty, therefore will now be disposed to forgot for a while what he may deem imperfect in it, and reflect with fond anxiety on its inestimable worth.

What nobler civil exhibition did earth ever afford than the election of a British House of Commons! A whole people, not in a rude state, or while few in number, but when forming a mighty nation, great in arms, great in civilization, commerce, and wealth, freely assemble in their various districts to choose their own legislators, the organs of their will, the delegates of their authority, the guardians of their rights. If influence be used by the existing administration, what is the administration but a power, which the attachment of former representatives of the people, as much perhaps as the choice of the sovereign, has created or upheld? Influence too is used in an opposite direction, not perhaps with less zeal or effect. Man is not made universally to act in society from purely spontaneous motives. But force, brute force, that engine of usurped authority, that instrument of almost every other human government, however legitimate, in matters that concern the state, is driven from the hallowed precincts of our elective freedom, like a demon from consecrated ground. The ordinary instruments of monarchical power, the military, though here never employed but in subservience to, and at the requisition of the laws, are forbidden to approach the place where these high franchises are exercised, lest even the shadow of constraint should seem to diminish their lustre.

Would French conquest leave us such liberties to boast? Let us look to Switzerland, to Holland, to France herself, for an answer to that question.

The freedom of our constitution, mortifying and opprobrious in its example to Frenchmen, is the last of our blessings that the usurper would consent to spare. To subvert this freedom, by the inviting image of which his throne is perpetually endangered, is

more than ambition, more than revenge, or the thirst of glory, the true object of his arms. He would rather by far, leave us our political independency, and our commerce, than our civil institutions.

I dare not venture however to affirm, that we should have no more parliaments. It is his policy to retain the name of every sacred establishment, the spirit and use of which he takes away: and we should probably therefore, in losing the substance of parliamentary representation, be insulted with its empty form.

I am not sure even that we should not have mock contested elections: the mummery of Garret Green might be transferred to Covent Garden or Guildhall. But woe to those electors, or to that populace which should be simple enough to suppose that the return of members was indeed submitted to their choice. A vote against the nominee of the court, or a hiss at the Frenchified hireling, would fatally mark the disaffection of its author, and ere long he would have leisure in a dungeon to bewail his temerity and folly.

Sect. 4. Subversion of our Liberty and Laws.

Our freedom of choice, however, and our elective franchises in general, are rather buttresses of civil liberty, than the happy edifice itself. That inestimable blessing, chiefly consists, in the supremacy of known and equal laws, in their upright administration, and in the security of the individual, against the oppression of the civil magistrate, or the state.

And here, what people ever had so much to lose, as the inhabitants of this favoured land!

When I enter that venerable [illegible] which for many centuries has been the seat of our superior tribunals, and contemplate the character of the courts which are busily exercising their several jurisdictions around it, I am almost tempted to forget the frailty of man, and the imperfection of his noblest works. There, justice supported by liberty and honour, sits enthroned as in her temple, elevated far above the region of all ignoble passions. There, judicial character is so strongly guarded by ages of fair example, by public confidence, by conscious independence, and dignity of station, that it is scarcely a virtue to be just. There, the human intellect nourished by the morning dew of industry, and warmed by manly emulation, puts forth its most vigorous shoots, and consecrates them to the noblest of all sublunary ends.

If the rude emblems of heavenly intelligence with which our pious ancestors have adorned that majestic roof, were really what

they were meant to represent, they might announce to us that they had looked down upon an administration of justice, advancing progressively, from the days of our Henries, at least, in correctness, liberality, purity, and independence, till it has arrived at a degree of perfection, never before witnessed upon earth, and such as the children of Adam are not likely ever to surpass.

This blessing, the fairest offspring of freedom, or rather its purest essence, may like all other advantages, be undervalued by those who have always enjoyed it, and know only by report the evils of a different lot. But those Englishmen who have travelled far enough, to see ignorance, prejudice, servility, and oppression, in the seat of justice, know how to appreciate and admire the tribunals of their native land.

Nor is the protecting power of our superior courts less distinguished than their purity. In what other realm can an independent judge, deliver him whom the government has consigned to the darkness of a dungeon? Where else is the sword of the state chained to its scabbard, till drawn by the sentence of the law? And who but an Englishman can defy, while judges are incorrupt, the proudest minister, or most insidious minion of a court!

The unique and inestimable institution of trial by jury, is an item only, though a proud and precious one, of this glorious account. The Englishman's life, his honour, and, with some reasonable exceptions, his property too, are placed not only under the protection of the laws, but under the further safeguard of his neighbours and equals in private life, without whose sanction, solemnly given upon oath, he cannot be condemned.

Such, my countrymen, are some of the blessings of our freeborn jurisprudence; and these, I need not tell you, would all cease to exist, if we fell under the dominion of France.

None of you can be so ignorant as to suppose, that Buonaparte would allow a habeas corpus, a jury, or a gaol-delivery, to the victims of his state-craft or revenge. He has replaced by a hundred bastilles, the one which he has assisted to destroy. A thousand miserable prisoners groan in his dungeons for one that met that fate under the unfortunate Bourbons. He has found the secret also, of obtaining from civil as well as military tribunals, a blind obedience to his will.

It cannot be supposed that he will submit to the restraint of laws in a province, while he rejects it in imperial France. We must bid farewell therefore, should he become our master, to protecting laws, to independent and upright judges, to trial by jury, and to all those

privileges which now constitute our security from civil or military oppression. The innocent will no longer be able to lie down in peace, secure that they shall not be torn from their families ere morning, to be examined by tortures, or perish in the gloom of a dungeon.

From that time, integrity will retire from the seat of justice, and corruption take its place. Judgments, in civil cases, will be sold; in criminal, will be dictated by the ruthless voice of oppression. Fraud and violence will every where prevail, and cunning servility be the only path to safety. If any of our laws remain unaltered, they will be such only as may serve, when no longer guarded by the checks of a free constitution, to multiply the modes, and aggravate the weight of despotism.

Let us look next to the infallible and total suppression of the liberty of our press.

While any portion of this privilege remains in any country, there is, if not a hope of deliverance, at least some consolation for the oppressed.

The minions of power may be kept in check, by the publicity of transactions which, though not directly arraigned, would speak their own condemnation. But if not, the victim of despotism will at least know that he is pitied, perhaps admired and applauded, by his virtuous fellow citizens; and that reflection will make his chains sit lighter.

But no such consolation remains where the power of Buonaparte prevails. He has made a league with darkness. He has declared war against the mutual intelligence and sympathy, as well as the happiness of mankind. He has not indeed destroyed the organs of public information; but he has done infinitely worse: he has appropriated them all to his own tyrannic use, compelled them to utter all his falsehoods and calumnies, and forbad them to speak or whisper with any breath but his own.

The government of the press by the French Bourbons, or even by the Spanish Inquisition, was wholly of a negative kind. Robespierre, his associates, and successors, imposed no restraints on the press, unless through the unavoidable terror of their power; and we learned, even from the Parisian journals, the worst crimes of those sanguinary rulers.

But Buonaparte, more crafty, though not less cruel, than his predecessors, suppresses every act of government that he wishes to conceal, as well as every adverse remark on his conduct; while he obliges every vehicle of public intelligence to circulate, as on its own

authority, whatever impostures or forgeries he chuses to propagate. The victims of his tyranny, if not plunged in oblivion, are defamed in their characters, and misrepresented in their conduct; yet find no possible means of reply. They are not only deprived of liberty and life, but defrauded of the sympathy of their friends, of their families, and mankind.

Fancy not then, Englishmen, that under the oppression of this unparalleled tyrant, you would have the consolation of knowing that your most cruel wrongs, or the honourable fortitude with which you might sustain them, were known and pitied by your country. You might be tortured to death, like Pichegru, and accused of suicide; you might be murdered, like D'Enghien, and represented as convicted assassins. You might be buried in a dungeon, like Toussaint, and libelled as perfidious traitors. Nay, you might, like his unfortunate family, be hidden for ever from the world, or secretly destroyed in prison, without a voice that could convey to the public, or even to your anxiously inquiring friends, the cause or nature of your fate.

It would be endless to enumerate the various and peculiar miseries which the sudden subversion of our liberties would produce, among a generous and high spirited people.

When Buonaparte bade Frenchmen resume their chains, it was little more than a change from one form of slavery to another. Even in their short-lived zeal for liberty and equality, they never for a moment tasted the rich fruit of genuine freedom. But Englishmen have enjoyed for ages that inestimable blessing; and how shall we be able to bear its sad reverse? How shall we endure the contemptuous despotism of office, the exactions of rapacious commissaries, and the harsh controul of a military police?

We must lay aside, my countrymen, that indignation at injustice in the exercise of power, which is so natural to the free born mind, when stung by the sense of oppression. We must also suppress that generous sympathy for the wrongs of others, which is so easily excited in the breasts of an English populace. That amiable feeling, now too often abused with tales of imaginary oppression, must then be suppressed, even on the most real and extreme provocation. Fatal would it then be to murmur, when we saw our innocent countrymen, our friends, or dearest connections, dragged away by the rude hand of power, at the mandate of some angry despot, to imprisonment or death.

The foulest corruption, the basest perfidy, the most savage cruelty, when clothed with the authority of our new masters, must

pass without reprehension, or audible complaint; nay, must be treated by us with lowly submission and respect.

We must lay aside also that proud sense of personal inviolability, which we now cherish so fondly; and what is justly prized still more, the civil sanctity of our homes. The Englishman's house must be his castle no more.

Instead of our humble watchmen to wish us respectfully goodnight when returning to our abodes in the evening, we shall be challenged at every turning by military patroles; and shall be fortunate, if we meet no pert boy in commission, or ill-natured trooper, to rebuke us with the back of his sword, or with a lodging in the guard-house, for a heedless or tardy reply. Perhaps, after all, when we arrive at our homes, instead of that quiet fire-side at which we expected to sit in domestic privacy with our wives and children, and relieve our burthened hearts by sighing with them over the sorrows of our country, we shall find some ruffian familiars of the police on a domiciliary visit; or some insolent young officers, who have stepped in unasked to relieve their tedium while on guard, by the conversation of our wives and daughters. It would be dangerous, however, to offend such unwelcome guests; or even not to treat them with all the respect due to brave warriors who have served under Napoleon the Great.

But should we escape such intruders for the evening, still we must lie down uncertain whether our dwellings will be left unviolated till the morning. A tremendous noise will often at midnight rouse the father of a family from his sleep, and he will hear a harsh voice commanding to open the gate, through which its hapless master will soon pass to return no more.

These are but a small part of those intolerable reverses in point of civil government to which Englishmen would be doomed to submit. I will however pursue no further their odious detail; but proceed to another consequence of the supposed conquest—the transition from opulence to ruin.

Sect. 5. *Destruction of the Funds, and ruin of Property in general.*

It cannot be necessary to prove, that the rapid decline, if not the immediate ruin, of our manufactures and commerce, would be a certain effect of subjection to a foreign power.

These envied possessions of England, would be the favourite spoils of the conqueror; and though he might not find it easy to re-

move, it would be perfectly so to destroy them. Indeed his utmost efforts to preserve them to us, could we expect such a benevolent attempt, would certainly be fruitless. They are the creatures of general confidence and credit, of legal security, and of the peculiar excitements which have been held forth to commercial industry and enterprise, by the genius of our happy constitution. Still more do they owe their extent and prosperity to that maritime greatness, which they reciprocally nourish and sustain. They depend much also, on what would of course immediately vanish, the confidence and respect of foreign nations, and those treaties which give us a preference in their markets. Need I add, that another of their grand supports, the commerce of the East, would no longer be ours; nor those colonies which we value too much.

But it is idle to dwell on such remarks. As well might we expect the tree to flourish after its roots are cut off, as our commerce or manufactures to survive the loss of our power, independency, and freedom.

A still more awful view of the effects of conquest, will be found in the contemplation of our public funds.

Is any man absurd enough to expect, that the annuities of the stock-holders, will be paid under the government of Buonaparte? I fear there are at least many who have not thought seriously upon the question, or reflected on the certainty of the opposite event, and its truly dreadful consequences: for otherwise we should certainly never hear of the weight of taxes, or of financial dangers from the war, when the security of the country is at stake.

The speedy wreck of the funds is demonstrated, the moment it is ascertained that commerce and manufactures must be ruined: for the whole current of the revenue has now barely force enough to keep the immense wheels of our finances in motion, and carry them smoothly through their annual revolutions. The loss of commerce and manufactures, let it be remembered, is not merely the loss of an equal portion of duties in the customs and excise; though that alone would be fatal. It involves also the decline of various collateral branches of revenue; of the duties on income, of assessed taxes, and all the various direct and indirect contributions, of the merchant, the manufacturer, their families and dependents. It leads also to a more than proportionate increase of parochial contributions, those great drawbacks on the national resources.

But if our funds could possibly survive the loss of commerce and manufactures, their vitality would certainly not be proof against the grasp of a rapacious government. Buonaparte would assuredly find

other uses for our remaining revenue, than that of paying dividends at the bank, to the public creditors of England.

I know not how many tens or hundreds of thousands of French soldiers, it might be thought necessary to station here, for the support of the new government: but beyond doubt we should, like Holland, and the conquered countries on the Rhine, be honoured with the presence of a strong army of the best troops of the great nation, who would invite us to practise in a very liberal way towards them, the virtues of hospitality.

We should also have to provide for the splendour of a royal or proconsular court, which would ill second the views of the magnificent Napoleon, if it did not compensate for the want of native dignity, by a luxury and extravagance far surpassing in expense the charges of a legitimate government. Supposing however, that our revenue should exceed the immense demands of our new civil and military establishments, still who can doubt that the surplus would be drawn away into the treasury of the great nation, or the privy coffers of its imperial master? Unhappy creditors, to whom above twenty-two millions a year are now issued in public annuities, your rights would be a weak obstacle to the avarice of your conquerors, even though his appetite for plunder were not sharpened by necessity.

The conquest of Europe, let it be considered, is a costly thing; and so must long be the maintenance of those prodigious armies, and the enriching of those numberless needy instruments, military and civil, by which the conquest must be maintained. But the continent is already impoverished. Even France herself has been lately obliged to pay her contributions in kind. If all the millions, therefore, which this country must raise in order to be solvent, could be still raised when our freedom is no more, not one of them, we may be sure, would be spared in compassion to the British stockholder. When solvency should become plainly hopeless, and a small composition be all that justice itself could offer, our new government would not foolishly embarrass itself with the trouble of apportioning such a pittance among the hungry multitude, but take the short and simple course of shutting up the books at once.

Without therefore stopping to enquire, whether bank paper would retain its value after the supposed conquest, or whether any other medium of payment could be found, I may safely assume, that with the independency of our country, the dividends at the bank would cease. It is not even too much to assert, that a stockholder, before in the receipt of thousands per annum, might be unable to pay for his dinner.

That this sudden annihilation of our funds, would be a certain effect of the conquest, will, probably, not be disputed by any reasoning mind. Let us pause then awhile, and contemplate that dreadful event. Men are very apt to deceive themselves on this subject, by false analogies in the history of other countries. "America became a bankrupt to her own citizens; so did the French republic; and the consequences, no doubt, were dreadful; but they were endured—they were even exceeded by other calamities of the same unfortunate periods."

But have we considered the essential and fearful differences, between our own public debt, and that of America or France?

First, as to its amount.—The sums for which those countries failed, bore no proportion to the mass of their general property. The people, collectively, lost not a hundredth part, perhaps, of their possessions. But Great Britain owes, and chiefly to her own subjects, above six hundred millions sterling, bearing an interest of above twenty-two millions yearly; and the whole rental of our lands, estimated even at the rate to which the artificial effects of this very debt has raised it, does not exceed twenty-five millions.* If the rental be taken at the value, to which the fall of our funds would rapidly reduce it, the loss of the public creditors collectively, would greatly exceed the whole remaining income of the country, except that which is produced by commerce, manufactures, and other modes of active industry. The amount of income that might be derived from such sources, after the national ruin here supposed, cannot easily be estimated; but it would unquestionably become inadequate to the support of the millions who now depend upon it, and would by its sudden fall, prodigiously augment the mass of the general distress more directly occasioned by the wreck of the funds. It would probably, on the whole, be no extravagant conjecture, that by the mediate and immediate, direct and collateral, effects of this great calamity, one half of all the income of the kingdom derived from actual property, would be suddenly annihilated.

Happy, however, comparatively would the case be, if the consequence only were, that each individual possessed of property lost a half part of his income; or if the loss were to be in any degree equally divided. On the contrary, to a very great proportion of our stockholders, the sudden effect would be the loss of all that they possess: an instant reduction from opulence or competency, to total and absolute ruin.

* This was Mr. Pitt's estimate for the purpose of the Income Tax.

Dreadfully in other respects, would such a case be distinguished from those of other nations, in which public insolvency has occurred. Never elsewhere was public credit so well established on the basis of long experienced security, and so upheld by the firm pillars of public principle, and constitutional controuls, that men have been confident enough to trust their all, to the integrity and prudence of the government. Nor ever elsewhere was property so widely diffused, that multitudes of all classes, from the peer to the peasant, had a pledge of this nature to confide. In other instances of national bankruptcy therefore, it has been the calamity, not of the many, but the few; and even to these, has been but a partial loss. Nay, it has principally fallen upon those to whom it was rather an ordinary casualty of commercial adventure, than an unforeseen and total privation of actual property, supposed to have been realized, and placed beyond the reach of hazard. Foreign stock, like the share of a new loan, or canal subscription, has been rather a subject of gainful speculation, than a depository for quiescent capital, invested with a view to fixed and permanent income.

From the same causes another distinction, still more deplorable, has arisen. There are periods in the life of almost every man who possesses property, in which its security is far more important to him than its increase, and when this creature of society, acquires in his eyes its highest interest and value. Such is the case with the father and the husband, when, in the contemplation of death, he sits down to exercise the power and the duty of making his last will, and providing for the well being of those who are dearest to him, after his decease. In such cases, what testator but an Englishman has generally thought of committing the whole subsistence of his widow and infant children, to the security of the public funds? But here, that has not only been the frequent, it has been the favourite and ordinary course, even with the most prudent parents and husbands, who have had personal property to invest. The funds having long been deemed equally secure with real estate, have been esteemed the most convenient depositary for the property of those who, in respect of their years or sex, are unable to improve or manage it for themselves.

Our courts of equity, too, in the exercise of their controul over executors and trustees, and in their protection of the estates of married women and infants, have followed the same course. The most conservatory and beneficial application of personal estate, under the direction of those courts, has been thought to be an investment in the purchase of bank annuities; and a great multitude of widows

and orphans, are at this hour receiving their daily bread from the interest of monies so invested, not through the providence of their deceased relations alone, but by the decrees of our civil tribunals.

The certainty of punctual half yearly payments, and the convenience with which they are received, have also induced persons advanced in years, or retiring from business, to invest their capitals in the public funds, preferably to all other securities; and it is probable, that among twenty such persons living in retirement on their incomes, landholders excepted, scarcely more than one could be found, that does not chiefly or wholly depend on his half yearly dividends at the bank, for his subsistence.

There is besides, a virtual and indirect dependency of capital and income on the national funds, which is scarcely less comprehensive than that which is direct and immediate; and which also involves a large proportion of the aged and helpless. The creditors or annuitants of public companies, the bond creditors of private merchants, nay even in great measure the mortgagees of real estate, would find the wreck of the public funds a source of general ruin.

The mortgagee indeed might be safe, when his loan, and all prior incumbrances taken together, bear but a small proportion to the value of the estate; but in that case only: because it is demonstrable that as the value of land has risen progressively with the growth of our funds, the annihilation of the latter would reduce that value almost to its ancient level; while the enormous increase of poor rates, the effect of general ruin, would sink the landholder's net revenue, out of which the interest of incumbrances must be paid, still more perhaps than the value of his capital.

And here we may perceive a new range of calamity, within which the families even of our most opulent landholders would fall. Fortunate is that real estate, which is not heavily charged with jointures, and portions for younger children, and with mortgages, and other incumbrances besides, which are often prior in point of charge to those family burthens.

The interest of the proprietor therefore might be wholly sunk in the general wreck, should it materially lower his rental; and so might the whole incomes of all his nearest relations. It is highly probable, however, that the estates of the great landed proprietors would soon be confiscated, and given to the officers of the army appointed to keep us in subjection. The policy of William the Norman would furnish an inviting precedent to our new conqueror, and would perhaps be the best means of finally breaking down the British spirit of the country.

In short all who have property of any species, would share soon or late in the common disaster, while a very great majority of them would be instantly deprived by it of their whole subsistence.

Nor would this calamity be limited to the loss of actual possessions. How many parents and husbands are there now in this kingdom, whose sole hope that a helpless family will not want bread after their decease, is built upon life insurances! To sustain this hope, multitudes have long been paying premiums which they could ill afford, and renouncing perhaps, in these costly times, long accustomed gratifications, that they might avoid the intolerable dread, of leaving a beloved wife and children in absolute indigence and want.

But what will become of the security of life insurances, when the national funds are no more? Ask the directors of those great public companies whose credit is the most undoubted, and they will tell you that their whole capital consists of stock, or other public securities; and that when the state shall become insolvent, their policies may be thrown into the fire.

Where then, in this dreadful case, will the unfortunate, though not improvident man, who had relied upon such insurances, find any refuge from his cares? He had not property to lose, but he has lost much more. He is bereft of the chief human consolation, from which he used to derive comfort in the prospect of approaching dissolution. Perhaps he has already entered upon the confines of the grave; a broken constitution, or the debility of age preclude the hope of his seeing another summer, and still more of his saving, by future industry, a provision for his family. A faithful wife therefore who is beginning to feel the infirmities of declining years, and beloved daughters who have no means of providing for their own support, must soon be left exposed to all the horrors of want. Who can conceive the sharpness of parental and conjugal misery, in situations like these!

Without attempting to pursue further the dreadful effects of national bankruptcy into their numberless ramifications, I would ask the considerate reader, what proportion would subsist between such a case as this, and any revolution of property that the world has yet seen? The funding system, which alone could produce such terrible consequences, is of very modern growth, and from its worst casualties experienced in other countries, a national bankruptcy in England would differ as widely, as an earthquake in a crowded city differs from a shipwreck on the ocean.

Ruin, though it may elsewhere have invaded the helpless, has not made them its peculiar prey; but here, its most numerous vic-

tims would be found among the feeble, the aged, the widow, and the orphan; among those who are the least able to struggle against the waves of adversity, and who on the loss of their property would be destitute of every resource. Tens, or even hundreds of thousands, of hapless Englishmen, would in one day, be reduced from ease and affluence, to extreme and remediless distress. Elegance would be exchanged for rags, luxury for hunger and cold, comfort and security for misery and despair.

I know not even whether the benign institution of our poor laws, and our many charitable foundations for the relief of the aged and destitute, would not aggravate the general distress. Most of the latter, would be entirely deprived of the funds provided for their support; and the multitudes of poor to be sustained by parochial rates, would become a burthen scarcely supportable by the impoverished contributors, reduced as they would greatly be in number as well as in fortune. Persons in the upper and middle ranks of society, would be consequently the less able to assist each other in the dreadful event supposed. The hand of friendship or benevolence, would be arrested by the grasp of the tax-gatherer.

Most persons have friends in whose affectionate sympathy they think a resource would be found, under the greatest malice of fortune; but in this tremendous case, whole circles of the dearest connections, or most familiar acquaintances, would all find themselves under the sad necessity of soliciting, instead of being able to impart, relief. Their fortunes being all sunk in the same enormous vortex, they would be in no more capacity to assist each other, than passengers in the same ship, when she goes to pieces on the rocks, or hungry mariners on the same desolate island. Or could a wretched family invoke the aid of some acquaintance or friend, who had still some landed income, or other means of support, they would find him pre-occupied by nearer claims; or so surrounded with supplicants, the objects of equal sympathy, as to have but a mere useless pittance to afford. The best hope of the miserable many, therefore, would be to partake of such parochial relief, as a ruined country might still be able to give to the common mass of its paupers.

How terrible would it be for an accomplished and virtuous female, who till now had been accustomed to all the comforts, and elegant enjoyments of an easy fortune, to become, with her lovely children, an inmate of a parish workhouse! Yet those receptacles of coarse and unsightly indigence, from which even the more decent of our poor now turn with disgust, would then become an asylum, to which the most refined and delicate might be driven to resort. They

might wish perhaps, that the humanity of their country had provided no such sad alternative to famine; but the imperious requisitions of hunger, or a conscience revolting at suicide, would compel the starving individual, much more the wretched family, to protract a painful existence even on those loathsome terms.

The prospect of such calamities is enough to make an Englishman view with anxiety and alarm, those appearances of general opulence, in which we are too apt to exult.

When we walk in the neighbourhood of this grand metropolis, through any of those pleasant villages with which it is surrounded, we see the wealth and prosperity of the nation, in their most pleasing and captivating dress. The road is bordered on each side, and the green or common surrounded with country retreats of all dimensions, from the stately villa, down to the little painted box, which mocks the tax-gatherer with its single window: and through the whole range of the scale, all is neatness and comfort. Almost every mansion, however small, is provided with its parterre in front, and its garden behind; unless fortunate enough to possess a more extensive allotment of land, in the centre of which, surrounded with ornamental shrubs and flower-plots, it exhibits a still more inviting shew of retirement and independence.

Yet these are the abodes of men engaged in the busy occupations of commerce; and a great many of them too, in subordinate stations; men, who in any other country, and forty years ago in our own, would have been shut up in the smoky town, under the same roof with their counting houses or shops.

If we pass in the morning, the masters of these happy retreats are seen issuing with cheerfulness, refreshed by the pure breezes of the country, to repair on horseback or in carriages, to their daily business in London. In the afternoon, we see them returning in the same easy and commodious way, to enjoy their family comforts; or already sat down to the social meal, which waited their arrival. In the interior of these rural mansions, all is answerable to their outward appearance. The smallest of them can boast, if not elegance, at least neatness, cleanness, and convenience in its furniture, and plenty, if not luxury, on its table, greater than are always seen in other countries even in the mansions of the great.

This wide extent of domestic enjoyments, exhibits more clearly as well as more pleasingly, the general affluence of the country, than even the profusion of private carriages, and the many splendid equipages, which crowd the roads to a great distance from the metropolis.

Often in the contemplation of such scenes, have I shuddered at the thought of that sad reverse which may be near at hand. How possible is it that in a few years, aye, in a few months, all this unexampled comfort and happiness, may vanish, like the painted clouds in a western sky, before an evening tempest!

These enjoyments of the merchants, and other busy actors in the various industry of London, may be compared to the tulips and hyacinths which we sometimes see blowing in flower glasses in their parlour windows. The numberless fibres from which they derive their nutriment, are not inserted in the solid earth of real property, but float in the loose element of public credit; and the wreck of the funds would be as fatal to them, as the fall of the glass cylinder to the flower.

Our merchants would have again to return to the parsimonious habits, and rigid industry of their fore-fathers. Instead of being able to unite as now, the profits of the town, with the health and pleasures of the country, at the charge of two residences, and the expensive means of communication between them, singularly fortunate would be that individual, who could find, by immuring himself and his family in the heart of the metropolis, and by using every resource that painful industry and parsimony could there explore, the means of escaping want.

Those numberless costly villas, therefore, which now arrest the eye in every direction, those interminable ranges of less conspicuous, but not less happy dwellings, which form the suburbian villages, would soon be deserted; and would fall to the ground almost as rapidly as they arose from it. In a few years, a walk six miles from London, instead of exciting, as now, lively emotions of patriotic joy and admiration, would be like an evening visit to a church yard; presenting nothing but the shadows of impotent ambition, and the mouldering records of departed happiness. The wretched survivor of the freedom of his country, would be happy to escape from that wide circle that now comprises the most interesting displays of our commercial affluence, to leave Hampstead, or Woodford, Clapham, or Norwood, behind him, in order to find a country less incumbered with ruins, and deliver himself awhile from the torments of visual recollection.

Sect. 6. *Dreadful extent and effects of the contributions that would be exacted.*

IN this sad foresight of the desolation of my country, I have passed over unnoticed some of the earlier and more terrible effects of conquest.

On the probable carnage in the field, it would be uncandid to lay any stress. England I trust would not be lost without a struggle worthy of such a stake; and though the astonishing celerity of our enemy's operations, might defraud a large proportion of our military defenders of the chance of dying for their country, yet there probably would be some actions fertile enough in slaughter. But it would be unfair to reckon this among the aggravations of our fate; for scenes would soon ensue, which would make the living envy the dead their peace, as well as their glory. Let us rather look therefore, to some of the manifold and endless oppressions which would await the hapless survivors.

I have generally and faintly sketched some parts of the wretchedness of losing property; but a worse mischief will be the false repute of possessing it.

Here again we are in danger of misapplying, by false analogies, the lessons of experience. In other countries which have been conquered by France, their impoverished and exhausted state has been generally known to the victors. They have been either the seats of war, and drained by previous contributions; or like Holland, conquered under circumstances which made it prudent to practise forbearance, till time had gradually revealed the real indigence of the people. In other cases too, a native government has been made the instrument of exactions; and its representations, the sincerity of which there has been little room to doubt, have sometimes induced the conquerors to moderate their extreme requisitions. At worst, such a government has been permitted to regulate, equalize, and soften, the actual collection. The fate of these countries has nevertheless been severe enough; and much more so than they have dared to reveal, through any public channels of complaint.

But if England be conquered, it will be under circumstances which will leave France nothing to fear from the odium which she may contract by the utmost rapacity of conduct; and to a native British government, we shall unquestionably not be intrusted.

What is a still more fearful distinction, our enemies have the most extravagant ideas of our public and individual wealth. Far from understanding the great financial difficulties under which we actually labour, they suppose us to have gold enough yet in reserve to subsidise the whole continent for ages; and that instead of being impoverished, we have been greatly enriched by the war.

I ask then, what eloquence, or what attainable proofs, would serve to convince these rapacious masters, that the largest contribution, or the greatest number of heavy contributions, which they

might successively impose upon us, were too much for our purses to yield? Sums would soon be required, which the subordinate administrators of finance for the country at large, would find it impossible to raise. Our tyrants would then perhaps apportion the charge, upon counties, cities, towns, and even parishes. But the inefficacy of this, and every other resort, would infallibly sooner or later bring the levy home to our houses, by the mode of individual assessments; and a system of inquisitorial exaction and oppression would ensue, more cruel than ever before existed upon earth.

Let the owner of an elegant villa, or sumptuous town mansion, consider how he would be able to satisfy a military commissary of his poverty, when called upon for a thousand guineas; or let the master of a handsome house either in town or country, reflect how he could prove his inability to pay a hundred? Each indeed might truly allege, that he had not one guinea in his possession or power, that his wealth had been annihilated by the public bankruptcy, and that his daily subsistence now depended upon the credit which he still found, for a while, with his tradesmen, or upon the compassionate assistance of friends. But all this would be regarded as common and stale pretence, which every man might set up, which could never be clearly investigated, and which must therefore be generally disallowed. The unhappy man perhaps might truly add, that his plate had already been seized, his cabinets rifled, and his most valuable moveables sold, to satisfy former requisitions. But this would be considered only as evidence of former contumacy, and systematic deception. The splendid or genteel manner, in which he would be known recently to have lived, would be deemed a presumption against him paramount to every proof that could be offered of present poverty or distress.

In truth, nothing would be more natural than the surmise, that poverty was a pretence to elude the demands of the state. With many, their pleas of inability, if not wholly groundless, would at least be exaggerated statements; and the detection of falsehood in some cases, would seem to justify incredulity in all. Besides, after every allowance made for the long use of our paper representatives for money, it would be very difficult for a foreigner to believe that so small a quantity of specie remained in the country, as would be actually found. Some few persons too might be detected in having buried or concealed it; which when discovered, would perhaps be almost as fatal to their countrymen, as the expedient of some unhappy Jews (who on the capture of Jerusalem by Titus swallowed their gold) was to their wretched fellow sufferers.

Perhaps some of my readers may suppose, that the worst consequence of suspicion, or of an imputation of contumacy, would be the having French soldiers quartered in their houses, in order to inforce discovery or compliance: a consequence certainly dreadful enough, especially to those who have wives or daughters: but unless we are treated better than Frenchmen are in like cases, torture or death may be probably superadded to that odious mode of exaction.

The report that Toussaint was tortured to death, with a view to extort a discovery of the treasures which he was supposed to have hid in St. Domingo, and that his hapless wife shared the same fate, seems not to be improbable. By recent accounts from that island, it appears, that the suspicion of his having buried wealth to a large amount, in a spot known only to himself, or to those in his most secret confidence, certainly did prevail with the French party. But if this crime be doubtful, not so the murder, upon the same sordid principle, of M. Fedon, a white man, as well as a Frenchman, whose case may be worth attention.

General Rochambeau, finding that one of his last requisitions of money from the inhabitants of Cape François collectively, was not sufficiently productive, proceeded to assess individual merchants, at the sums of which he thought them to be still possessed; and M. Fedon, being a merchant of the first eminence of that place, was required to pay down immediately as his quota, 5000 dollars in specie. He truly pleaded inability to comply; and gave a reason somewhat similar to that which an unfortunate Englishman might allege, in the case which I wish to illustrate.—His whole funds, the goods in his warehouses excepted, had been invested in bills drawn upon the French government, for public services in that colony, under the authority of the general himself, or his predecessor; which bills had been returned protested. The same had been the fate of like paper to a large amount, in the hands of other merchants in the town; by which means general distress from the want of a circulating medium, had been produced at that calamitous juncture. But though the general fact was indisputable, the particular excuse was not accepted. M. Fedon was put under arrest; and with peremptory orders to the officer who took charge of him, to shoot him at three o'clock the same day, unless the money should be previously paid.

It was in vain, that the unhappy merchant offered his keys, to ascertain that he had no money in his coffers, and in vain that he offered to redeem his life with goods, or government bills, to any

amount. Neither his offers nor complaints were regarded; and the money not being brought forward by the appointed hour, he was led forth and actually shot on the public parade, pursuant to the general's order. His counting-house and warehouses were then taken possession of by the same tyrannic government, and, on a strict search, the cash found there amounted to about five dollars.

This transaction, which through the loud complaints of a brother of the deceased, and of his mercantile friends, is quite notorious in the West Indies, and America, and which, if I mistake not, was either mentioned, or referred to, in the official dispatches of our naval officers, employed in the reduction of the Cape, has never been disavowed by Rochambeau; and his impatience to go from this country to France on his parol, is a proof that he apprehended no punishment for so foul a murder, though the complaints of M. Fedon the brother are known to have made their way to the Thuilleries. In fact, he threatened all the merchants at the Cape, French or American, with similar treatment, and would no doubt have followed up the dreadful precedent, but fortunately, the only subsequent assessment which he had time to make before his expulsion from the island, did not exceed a sum, which, by making a common stock of all their resources, the merchants were able to pay.

Were it not for the rigorous and unprecedented restraints imposed upon the press, in every country under Buonaparte's power or influence, there would probably be no difficulty in citing many instances of similar oppression in Europe; and even in France itself: but the crimes of his interior government, are always perpetrated in silence, except when it becomes necessary to divulge them for some political purpose; and even then, care is taken to put every gloss upon them that state-craft can devise. Torture and death may very probably have been the secret fate of hundreds, who have been made the victims of this frightful despotism, whether upon motives of policy, avarice, or revenge.

Here, the rapacious spirit of the victors, excited by the expectation of inexhaustible spoil, and abetted by a long cherished lust of vengeance, would take its most direful range; and horrors would ensue, at the report of which our fellow vassals on the continent might stand aghast, forgetting their own sufferings, in their pity of miserable England.—Alas, those unhappy nations now bitterly repent their own supineness and folly, and regard us with envy, because we have still the power of escaping the torments, to which they are irretrievably doomed. How would they rejoice to be again as we now are, in a capacity to defend their liberties, though at the

cost of every painful sacrifice, and every arduous effort of patriotism, which they fatally shrunk from before.

——— ———"Quam vellent æthere in alto,
Nunc et pauperiem, et duros perferre labores!"

Let us cease in time to follow their example, that we may not be partakers of their plagues.

Sect. 7. Rigorous and merciless government that would certainly ensue.

In England, various motives would stimulate our new masters to more than their usual excesses.

Could we be fortunate enough, even in the total surrender of public and individual property, to satisfy our spoilers that no more remained behind, still rage and revenge would claim their promised prey. Has not Napoleon solemnly declared, that the last of his combined enemies, shall expiate the offence of them all, and feel the full weight of his vengeance? Has he not repeatedly held out allurements to the army destined to invade us, such as plainly imply engagements to give us up to the rapine and violence of his soldiers? When was he known to be less cruel in act than in promise, and what ground has England to expect that his barbarous nature will relent in her case alone?

It is a peculiar characteristic of this insolent conqueror, to treat every opposition to his purposes by foreign patriots, whether sovereigns, ministers, generals, or private persons, as a reproach and a crime. Does an illustrious veteran retire mortally wounded from the field, with the wreck of an army which he had gallantly commanded, his loyalty and courage are made reasons for spoiling his domains, and excluding him from the tomb of his ancestors. Does a gallant youth of high birth and early reputation, nobly perish in battle, a martyr to the cause of his country, Napoleon is too crafty to deny some praise to the soldier, but the memory of the patriot, is treated with the most vindictive censures, and insolent derision. His ebullitions of rage against that gallant officer sir Sidney Smith, and his less impotent malice toward our unfortunate countryman captain Wright, are specimens of the same spirit.

But why do I dwell on inferior instances, when deposed monarchs, nay their unhappy queens, though the graces of beauty in distress might aid the sympathy due to fallen royalty, are grossly insulted by this unfeeling man, for having dared to resist his arms. He, who punishes with death the publication of strictures on his

own unworthy conduct, by men who owed him no allegiance, fills every newspaper with his coarse abuse of sovereigns, who ought to be sufficiently protected by the respect due to long hereditary majesty, and to the grandeur of those thrones in which they lately sat; but who would find with every liberal mind a still more secure protection, in pity for their unparalleled misfortunes, and their extreme distress. It would seem as if this audacious man arrogated to himself a natural right to be lord of the human species; regarding his usurpations only as the uniting possession to a title which belonged to him before, and which it was always treason to oppose. Certain it is, that patriotism, loyalty, and courage, which other conquerors have respected in their foes, are with him unpardonable crimes.

What then has England to expect from this inexorable victor? No nation that he has yet subdued, has opposed him so obstinately and so long; and I trust the measure of our offences in this respect, is yet very far from being full. Here, too, that species of hostility which he most dreads and hates, though he employs it without scruple against his enemies, has been peculiarly copious and galling. Instead of one Palm, he will here find a thousand, who have attempted while there was yet time, to awaken their country to a due sense of his crimes, and of our danger from his pestilent ambition.

But it is needless perhaps to prove what he so freely and frequently avows. If there be any sincerity in his language, when there is no use in dissimulation, if either his proclamations, his bulletins, his gazettes, his avowed, or unavowed, his deliberate, or hasty language, may be trusted, a deadly, acrimonious hatred to this country, is the most settled and ardent feeling of his soul. He hates us as a people; and would conquer us less even from ambition, than from anger and revenge.

It is to be feared, besides, that partly from his unwearied misrepresentations, and partly perhaps from certain errors in our own conduct, he has made this sentiment very popular in France; and that the severest treatment which, as a conquered people, we could possibly receive, would expose him to no censure at home, much less be unacceptable to the enraged "Army of England."

It would not, after all, perhaps, be possible for foreigners to govern us without a rod of iron, while the memory of our beloved liberties was recent, and custom had not yet taught us to carry our chains with patience.

A free people when conquered, and placed under an arbitrary government, must be kept in awe by a discipline peculiarly strict and severe, till their high spirit shall be subdued; like the wild ma-

tive of the forest, which must be domesticated and tamed, by a severity of treatment, such as the spaniel never requires.

Above all, every open act of sedition or insubordination among such a people, must be terribly chastised. An illustration of this may be found in our own treatment of the Koromantyn negroes, or natives of the Gold Coast; as explained by Mr. Bryan Edwards, in his History of the West Indies. Among all the different nations, and tribes of Africans, whom we reduce to a slavery unknown in their native land, by making them work for life under the whips of our drivers, the Koromantyns, from their martial spirit, and perhaps from a peculiar degree of civil liberty possessed by them in their native country, are found, by far, the hardest to break in, or to *season*, as it is called, to the duties of West India bondage. Other negroes quietly submit, though they die by great numbers in the process; but the Koromantyns, as we learn from Mr. Edwards, are so intolerant of the yoke, as often to escape from it by self-murder.

They are naturally, therefore, very apt to resist the master's sovereign authority; and sometimes form bold, though impotent conspiracies, or desperate revolts; and the consequence is, that the people of Jamaica and other islands, have thought it right to make, in such cases, the most dreadful examples, roasting the insurgents to death by slow fires, or hanging them up alive in irons, to perish on a gibbet.*

* Edwards's History of the West Indies, vol. 2, book iv, chap. 3. The following is an account of one case of this kind, of which he was an eye-witness. "Of those who were clearly proved to have been concerned in the murders committed at Ballard's Valley, one was condemned to be burnt, and the other two to be hanged up alive in irons, and left to perish in that dreadful situation.

"The wretch that was burnt, was made to sit on the ground, and his body being chained to an iron stake, the fire was applied to his feet. He uttered not a groan, and saw his legs reduced to ashes with the utmost firmness and composure. After which, one of his arms by some means getting loose, he snatched a brand from the fire that was consuming him, and flung it in the face of the executioner.

"The two that were hung up alive, were indulged, at their own request, with a hearty meal before they were suspended on the gibbet, which was erected in the parade of the town of Kingston. From that time until they expired, they never uttered the least complaint, except only of cold in the night; but diverted themselves all day long in discourse with their countrymen, who were permitted, very improperly, to surround the gibbet. On the seventh day, a notion prevailed among the spectators, that one of them wished to communicate an important secret to his master my near relation, who being in St. Mary's parish, the commanding officer sent for me. I endeavoured by means of an interpreter to let

That Frenchmen would follow precedents so horrible as these, in punishing English insurgents, is perhaps more than we have reason to apprehend; but the example proves, that dreadful severities would be used; for we should certainly be, in comparison with other subjected nations, what the Koromantyns are, in comparison with other Africans, when carried into slavery by our merchants. The plea of necessity will be found here, as well as in Jamaica; for when a whole people is reduced to slavery, the more abhorrent to nature that condition is, the more fatal would be the effects of unsubdued resistance.

A French government too, would naturally form exaggerated notions of the danger arising from any effervescence of popular discontent.

Under the old regime in Paris, mobs were sometimes raised in the Fauxbourgs, during a scarcity of bread; when, instead of turning out the constables, reading a riot act, or even giving warning to disperse on the arrival of a military force, a troop of horse coolly rode in among them, and used the sabre, till the streets were cleared, at the expense of many lives.

Since that period, the Parisian mobs have furnished some apology for their having been formerly controuled by such sanguinary means; and so far is Buonaparte from being disposed to brook the smallest demonstration of popular discontent, that he lately told the citizens of Berlin, their sovereign had deserved to be dethroned, because he had not taken vengeance of them for breaking the windows of an obnoxious minister.

The British multitude would have a new lesson to learn therefore, or would be fatally misunderstood by their new masters. They would have to renounce their hisses, their cat-calls, their Green men, and broad faced orators, and must be careful how they even huzzaed too loudly, should they still find any subject of applause. A tenth part of the tumult of the late Westminster election, would be enough to cover our pavements with the dead or wounded, and tinge our sewers with blood.

The clubs, and numerous associations which now abound among

him know that I was present, but I *could not* understand what he said in return. I remember that both he and his fellow-sufferer laughed immoderately at something that occurred: I know not what. The next morning one of them silently expired, as did the other on the morning of the ninth day." (History of West Indies, vol. 2, book iv, chap. 3.)

our middle and lower classes, would also be liable to dangerous misconstructions.

They would, no longer, indeed, have any of those interesting objects of union, the forming funds for mutual support in sickness, old age, or temporary loss of employment, the securing reversionary interests to surviving relatives, or any of the various other useful purposes, to which our national taste for clubs has been made subservient. The wreck of our funds, would have ruined all these humble but beneficent establishments; and the prudence of the poor, disappointed in its present confidence, would no more be listening to the advice of the benevolent, so as to provide, by timely sacrifices, against the ordinary evils of their situation. But convivial, and other private motives, of union, might still draw men together in numbers alarming to the jealousy of a foreign government; the ignorance or malevolence of a spy might misrepresent their intentions; and Englishmen, might soon find it dangerous to assemble beyond the limits of a family circle, though they should abstain from the consolation of lamenting together over their wrongs, and the sorrows of their country.

Our appetite for public news, and our propensity to political discussion, would give further occasion of frequent offence to the ruling powers, and often provoke the scourge of a rigid police, till we had learnt the hard lesson to forget the liberty of speech, as well as the freedom of the press.

But it would be endless to anticipate all the instances, in which our present civil happiness, would then become a source of pre-eminent misery. Every distinguishing feature of our national character, would be offensive, or alarming to our new masters. An entire revolution in our manners, our feelings, and opinions, must be effected, before we could have such rest as the prostration of habitual servitude affords. Meantime if France has chastised other nations with whips, she would punish us with scorpions.

Among the direct and comprehensive modes of oppression, to which rich and poor would be equally subjected, military conscriptions are of course to be reckoned. It cannot be imagined, that our conqueror would treat us in this respect better than his other provinces: and as compulsory service in foreign countries, has been hitherto unknown to us, we should feel this species of tyranny also, more keenly than our neighbours. The flower of the British youth, of all ranks, would soon be compelled to take up the musket, and to bleed and die, in distant climates, for the glory of the great nation. But this is a subject which I shall have occasion to reconsider, in

one of its most striking relations; I will not therefore enlarge upon it now.

Sect. 9. Subversion of our religious liberties.

Servants of God, sincere professors of the religion of Jesus, suppose not that in this rapid and imperfect sketch of the calamities with which French conquest would overwhelm our country, I have forgotten, or mean to pass unnoticed, the grand interests of piety and virtue.

On these, however, I need not much insist; for men who know how to value them, are not among the listless or careless observers of the scourge that is impending over us. Neither need they in general to be taught, how closely the cause of religion is associated with the liberty and independency of our country.

The church of Christ, indeed, is "built upon a rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The word of omnipotence is pledged for its security; and it may therefore defy the floods of civil revolution, and the conflagrations of conquest. But it pleases divine providence, to accomplish its purposes in human affairs, chiefly by human hands; and though true religion has never been propagated by arms, yet the defensive courage of nations, has sometimes been employed as the instrument of its protection. Witness the glorious reign of our own Elizabeth, and the contemporary triumphs of religious liberty in Holland.

We are not now menaced by a Philip the second; but have a far more dangerous enemy; and if any man suppose that he would long spare our religious, after trampling on our civil freedom, he must have examined very carelessly the character, and the policy of Buonaparte.

That this man of blood, this open apostate from Christianity, is not what he has the impious grimace to affect to be, a truly penitent son of the Roman church, and zealous for her superstitions, I fully admit. Beyond doubt he still is, what he was by education, a despiser of revealed religion in all its forms; and probably, as such men commonly are, profoundly ignorant of its nature.

But that as an engine of state, he sets a high value upon the Romish faith, has been evident from his conduct, ever since he first seized upon the sovereign power in France. He perceived that the influence of the priesthood, and the authority of an infallible church, might be made useful supporters of his throne; since by their aid, he might remove from the minds of the pious, the horror they felt

at his usurpation; and even transfer to himself, the benefit of those religious sanctions, which bound them to their lawful sovereign.

But though he could entirely govern the pontiff, as well as the bishops and clergy, there was one great drawback on the immediate effect of this policy, in the general infidelity and ignorance of the people; for while Popery and Christianity had been subverted together, in the minds of multitudes who were once believers in the gospel, few among that great part of the nation which had been born or educated since the revolution, had been at all instructed in religion of any kind. He had in great measure, therefore, to rebuild that engine of Popish superstition, with which he was desirous to work.

To this end he has long assiduously laboured; and, among other means, has lately procured a new catechism to be drawn up, and established by the papal authority, for the use of the French church, in which all the old errors and superstitions of Popery are strongly inculcated, and maintained, by such miserable sophistry, as is commonly used in their support. In this respect it is well adapted to the capacities of boys, and of adults in the lower ranks of society;*

* I have not room for any long specimen of its stile; but the following extracts, of some of the propositions of faith, may suffice to prove that Napoleon's popery, has not at all degenerated from the standard of Leo the 10th.

Q. What is the sacrament of the Eucharist?

A. The Eucharist is a sacrament which contains, really and substantially, the body, blood, soul, and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the forms or appearance of bread and wine.

Q. Why after having spoken to God, do you address the holy virgin?

A. That she may offer our prayers to God; and that she may assist us by interceding with him for us.

Q. Is it good and useful to pray to the saints?

A. It is very good, and very useful, to pray to them.

Q. Why do you add the satisfaction of the saints, to that of Jesus Christ?

A. Because of the goodness of God, who is willing, on the behalf of his most pious servants, to forgive the other.

Q. Why besides?

A. Because the satisfaction of the saints are united to that of Jesus Christ, whence they derive all their value.

Q. When did Jesus Christ give the priests the power of remitting sin?

A. When he said to them in the person of the apostles, "receive the Holy Ghost;" sins shall be forgiven to those to whom you shall remit them, and they shall be retained to those, to whom you retain them.

Q. Do you believe only what is written!

A. I believe also what the Apostles have taught by word of mouth, and which has always been believed in the Catholic church.

and on the whole, a more ingenious composition for his purpose could not have been framed. With the solemn sanction of the pope's bull, an archiepiscopal mandate, and an imperial decree, in its front, is now carefully circulated, and assiduously taught, in every parish of the empire.

If it were possible, on a contemplation of Buonaparte's general conduct and character, to question whether superstition, or policy, had kindled his zeal for restoring the faith, he has, by the spirit of this curious instrument, removed all doubt on the subject. A gentleman who has just published an English translation of it, justly remarks, that "the moral duties which it specifies, are all on one side; that what inferiors owe to their superiors, is minutely detailed, and sternly enjoined; but that what superiors owe to their inferiors, will be sought for in vain; for not a word on the subject is to be found."*

Q. How do you call this doctrine?

A. I call it the unwritten word of God, or tradition.

Q. Why is the Catholic church called Roman?

A. Because the church established at Rome is the head, and the mother of all other churches.

Q. Why do you ascribe this honour to it?

A. Because at Rome the chair of St. Peter was established, and of the popes his successors.

Q. What do you understand by the words, "I believe the church?"

A. That the church may always continue; that all it teaches must be believed, and that to obtain eternal life, one must live and die in its bosom.

Q. Why must we believe all that the church teaches?

A. Because it is enlightened by the Holy Ghost.

Q. Is the Catholic church then infallible?

A. Yes; and those who reject its decisions are heretics.

Q. What does faith teach us concerning indulgences?

A. That the church has received from Jesus Christ the power of granting them, and that the use of them is very salutary to Christians.

Q. Why are indulgencies so salutary?

A. Because they are established to moderate the rigours of the temporal pains due to sin.

N. B. This is explained by another article to relate to purgatory.

Q. Is it necessary to know precisely how this rigour is moderated?

A. No; it is sufficient to believe that a good mother like the church, gives nothing to her children, but what really serves to relieve them in this world and the next.

* Introduction to this catechism by Mr. Bogue.

So much for the champion of equality, the democratical Buonaparte!

But then, he has carefully taught the duties, which both high and low, rich and poor, owe to his heaven-delegated self; and that too, as a branch of the Decalogue!!! The reader's curiosity will be still more strongly excited, when I add, that it is the fourth commandment, which has happily provided buttresses to the throne of this usurper: but it is right to explain, that as Papists prudently omit the second, the fourth commandment, in their table, is that which enjoins us to honour our parents.

Cardinal Caprara, the legate *a latere* at Paris, and cardinal de Belloy, archbishop of Paris, and "*member of the Legion of Honour*," have distinguished their pious ingenuity, by the following very clear expesition, of what Protestants call the fifth commandment.

Q. What are the duties of Christians in regard to the princes who govern them, and *in particular what are our duties towards Napoleon the First, our emperor?*

A. Christians owe to the princes who govern them, and, *we owe in particular to Napoleon the First, our emperor*, love, respect, obedience, *military service*, and the tributes ordained for the preservation and the defence of the empire, and of his throne; besides we owe him fervent prayers for his safety, and for the temporal and spiritual prosperity of the state.

Q. Why are we bound to all these duties towards our emperor?

A. First, because God, who creates empires, and who distributes them according to his will, in loading our emperor with favours, whether in peace or war, *has established him our sovereign, has made him the minister of his power, and his image on earth. To honour and serve our emperor, is therefore to honour and serve God himself.*

Q. Are there not particular motives which ought to attach us more strongly to Napoleon the First, our emperor?

A. Yes; for he it is whom God has raised up, in difficult circumstances, to re-establish the public worship of the holy religion of our fathers, and to be the protector of it; he has restored and preserved public order, by his profound and active wisdom; he defends the state, by his powerful arm; *and* IS BECOME THE ANOINTED OF THE LORD, BY THE CONSECRATION WHICH HE HAS RECEIVED FROM THE CHIEF PONTIFF, HEAD OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH.

Q. What are we to think of those who should fail in their duty towards the emperor?

A. *According to St. Paul the Apostle, they would resist the order established by God himself; and would render themselves worthy of eternal damnation.*

Q. Are the duties by which we are bound towards our emperor, equally binding towards his legitimate successors.

A. Yes, undoubtedly; for we read in sacred Scripture, that God the Lord of heaven and earth, by a disposition of his supreme will, and by his providence, gives empires not only to a person in particular, but also to his family.*

It would have been creditable to these worthy cardinals, if they could have left out the sixth commandment, as well as the second; for it certainly follows too close on the commentary, by which this man of blood, this destroyer of the house of his lawful and pious sovereign, is described as a delegate of heaven.

There is such a combat between horror, and the sense of ridicule in the mind, upon reading these impious absurdities, that we cannot fully give way to either emotion; and it therefore seems almost irreverent towards the sacred text, to quote them; yet it is necessary that English Protestants, and even pious Papists, should see how religion is likely to be prostituted and profaned, wherever this vile hypocrite is master.

Infinitely more does he disparage our common faith, by acknowledging the Messiah at Paris, than he did by denying him in Egypt.

This catechism, promulgated a few months ago, is but one of a train of concurrent measures, all directed to the same political end. Bonaparte has not only taken pains to restore the former superstí-

* The following curious apology is offered by the cardinal archbishop, in his prefatory letter, for thus prostituting religion to sanction usurpation and treason.

After intimating that the catechism, as far as relates to the doctrines of the Catholic church, is taken from the writings of the celebrated bishop of Meaux, (that zealous defender of Popery, against the Protestants, in the days of Louis 14th), he adds, "The duties of subjects towards the princes who govern them, "are more fully explained in it than they had ever been before; because the cir- "cumstances of the times in which we live, resemble not those of the times "which have preceded them; because Christians have never feared when cir- "cumstances seemed to require it, to declare their sentiments concerning the "powers established by God to rule the world." A most valorous instance, to be sure we here have, of this Christian sincerity and freedom!!!

tions, at the expense of sneers from his philosophical friends, but sacrifices much time, of which unhappily he is a great economist, in attending the celebration of mass, and the other rites of the Popish communion. He even labours to restore, what after the public detection of the impostures of priestcraft in the days of the revolution, we might have supposed incapable of being renewed,—the popular reverence for relicks: for he has lately transported, with solemn pomp, a crown of thorns, pretended to be the identical one worn by our Saviour, from Italy to France. How indefatigable he was, in compelling the aged pontiff to assist at his coronation, and anoint him with his holy chrism, the public cannot have forgot; and the catechism strongly teaches us the reason.

Nor is his disregard to the temporal rights of the pope, a trait at all inconsistent with the rest of this policy; for the most superstitious sovereigns of France, have not scrupled to adopt a similar conduct. It has been the ordinary tone of the Gallican church, even among its most pious and orthodox members, to limit the political power of their holy Father, however fully they admitted his supremacy in questions of faith.

In short, Napoleon has been steadily aiming at acquiring, in the eyes of the vulgar, the character of a good Catholic, and sincere son of the church.

"But Napoleon," it may be objected, "has not yet shewn himself a persecutor of the reformed churches."—Certainly not,—it would have been too gross and sudden an apostacy from his philosophical creed, not utterly to disgust and outrage all those men of science, whom it was his policy and vanity to attach to him; and what was more dangerous, even the officers of his army.

Some of the latter, were said openly to have expressed, at the first, their contempt for those religious solemnities which they saw the chief consul attending; and educated as they for the most part were, it may probably be some time, before the spirit of open and contemptuous scepticism will be sufficiently subdued in the army, to make persecution entirely convenient.

But already the conceited French infidels are reconciled to the policy of cheating the ignorant populace with the errors to which they are foolishly prone, and re-building the fabric of superstition, for the sake of its civil effects. Already, as may be perceived by Napoleon's Te Deums, his high masses, and canting professions of piety, in his bulletins or general orders, the politic hypocrisy which he practises is beginning to be popular in the army. It will be but one, and an easy step more, to profess himself the restorer of the

true Catholic faith, and to obtain that glory, to which Charles the Fifth, Philip the Second, and Louis the Fourteenth, vainly in the plenitude of their greatness aspired, by the utter extirpation of schism and heresy in the Christian church.

It is quite unnecessary to suppose, as a motive for such an enterprise in the emperor's mind, any real preference of the Romish faith, in opposition to the reformed religions; and yet it is highly probable that such a predilection exists. It is a strikingly uniform characteristic of the zealous enemies of revelation, even among those who have laboured most to discredit it in Protestant countries, that they have a pre-eminent aversion to those forms of faith, which are the least assailable by the shafts of wit on the score of folly and superstition.

An attentive reader, of Hume or Gibbon, will perceive that they have much more indulgence for the grossest errors and abuses of Popery, than for the rational faith of a sincere Protestant Christian. If the former are ever mentioned by them in strong terms, or depicted in high colouring, it is only for the sake of insiduously confounding them with the latter; and thereby holding up all belief in revelation, to ridicule or abhorrence. Hume, will be found much more sparing than other historians, of his censures on the persecuting bigots of the Romish church, in the unhappy days of Mary; and equally distinguished by his severity against the excesses of the reformers, in the following reigns; and on the whole, he is evidently partial to Popery, though this characteristic may escape the notice of such readers as take a much higher interest in constitutional, than theological discussions. His malice against religious principle in general, is conveniently disguised, under a just severity towards those political errors, with which, in that age, it was too often associated.

As to Gibbon, he manifested, both in literary and private character, the affinity between Romish superstition, and philosophical scepticism. He was a convert to Popery, before he became an unbeliever; and though the questions between Protestant and Catholic, did not lie in his historical path, it is not difficult to perceive, that he, like Hume, is jealous of all mediums between his own philosophy, and a blind devotion to the tenets of an infallible church. Even in regard to questions in which the generality of Protestants and Roman Catholics are on the same side, against sects whom they both condemn for attempting a compromise between natural and revealed religion, the partialities of Gibbon are on the opposite side to those on which we might have expected to find them. If he prefers Julian to Con-

stantine, he prefers also the Athanasians to the Arians; and to none of his controversial opponents was he more bitter and contemptuous, than to the Socinian and philosophical Priestley.

A living writer, of the same school, has laboured openly to defend against the opinions of his Protestant countrymen, both the practice of auricular confession, and masses for the dead.

Nor is there in all this, any thing strange or uncommon. The Deist is naturally indignant at those Christians, who would presume to rival him in the field of reason, and to exercise as freely as himself the right of private judgment, while they nevertheless admit the truth and divine authority of the Scriptures. He regards them as hostile borderers; and hates them, because he dreads them, more than the blind bigots of a gross superstition.

For these and other reasons, it would be childish to imagine, that there is any security in the irreligion of Buonaparte, against his denying liberty of conscience to his subjects, when political expediency shall seem to him to demand, or not to forbid, such oppression. Indeed, it seems to me, that a purpose of enforcing by his power a uniformity of faith, and submission to the church of Rome, throughout his dominions, is, either by inadvertency or design, pretty plainly intimated, in the solemn instruments prefixed to his new catechism. But let the reader judge for himself.

"The constant prayer of the church, dearly beloved brethren is, "*that the doctrine of Christ, being essentially one, may be uniformly* "*taught; and that Christians having the same sentiments and the same* "*belief, may every where use the same language.* In pursuance of this "object, and in obedience to a previous law, conformable to the "desire of the Church, a catechism has been composed *designed* "*to be the only one used in all the Churches of the French Empire.*"

Again—"The Prince under whose government we live, though "raised by Providence to the pinnacle of human power, glories to "acknowledge that priests, and not emperors, are to preach the doc- "trines of the holy church. *He unites with one of his illustrious* "*predecessors, who sat on the throne of France,* in saying, that if the "duty of bishops is to make known with freedom the truth which "they have received from Jesus Christ, that of the prince is to hear "it from them founded on the Scriptures, *and to enforce it with all his* "*might.*"

So runs the pastoral letter or mandate of Cardinal Belloy. In the imperial decree that follows, the catechism is directed to be used "in all the *Catholic* churches of the empire," a change of phrase,

which seems to manifest that the generality of the former instrument, as descriptive of the emperor's design, had not passed unnoticed. Why then was it not altered: unless for the sake of intimating to zealous Catholics, that the ulterior purpose was wider than the immediate practice? But the allusion to that persecuting bigot, Louis IVth, and the emphatic words that follow, seem to mark the same intention more clearly.

Whether this construction be admitted or not, the immediate practical moderation of a government, which in the nineteenth century, so anxiously inculcates submission to the church of Rome as essential to salvation, and openly brands as heretics all who deny its infallibility, is certainly very suspicious. Napoleon, it is true, for the present, tolerates the reformed religion in Holland, and even in France; but did not Charles the fifth do the same in Germany, till he was able conveniently to throw off the mask? Nay, did not Louis the fourteenth, profess himself the protector of the Protestant states of that country, when it suited the views of his ambition? Let us look forward then to a state of things, alas! too nearly accomplished, when Europe will have no more power of resistance to this imperious man. Let us suppose him master of England, as well as of the continent; and ask ourselves what will then be the barrier of religious freedom, in this once fortunate island.

He has found the utility of that alliance between the throne and the altar, against which, in common with his Jacobin friends, he once so loudly inveighed. But to what altar will he look for support? Not surely to one on which he cannot sacrifice, and the votaries of which will never repair to his own. He will, on the contrary, feel, like most of his predecessors in the career of conquest, that an opposition in faith may one day lead to a dismemberment of empire; and that unity in church-government, is a necessary buttress to the stupendous fabrick of usurpation which he has raised. Such a unity can only be found, in restoring the universal supremacy of the see of Rome; and to him, the measure would be more inviting by far than it ever was to any former son of the church, however powerful; since he can have no fear that the holy father will ever dare to oppose his will. The keys of heaven on the contrary, will be turned at his command; and enable him to secure with a triple bolt the fetters that his arms have imposed. Without arrogating to himself that divine legation as a teacher, which he already impiously assumes as a subverter of thrones, he might add like the Caliphs, the power of a spiritual, to that of his temporal empire.

We may add to these considerations, that Buonaparte, in preserving the religious liberties of Great Britain, would have to maintain, not only a Protestant Episcopal church, but the Presbyterian establishment of Scotland, the constitution of which would present to him the alarming image of popular and representative government; and also to tolerate those numerous sects of dissenters, whose interior organization and discipline, wear still more of a democratical aspect: nor would his alarm be lessened, by the discovery that our Protestant dissenters have at all times been determined enemies to arbitrary power.

Happily indeed, this has long ceased to be a distinction between Englishmen; and since a well defined freedom has limited the prerogative of our kings, the throne has not had more faithful supporters, than have been found among dissenters from the established church. In hatred to a foreign yoke, Britons of all religious denominations would be equally ardent; but the tyrant might find in our civil history, and in the political prejudices against sectaries, which still linger among us, as well as in the habits of some very popular religious societies, peculiar grounds of distrust.

His dread of such sectarian associations however, would not be fatal to dissenters alone. If unwilling to preserve our present system of toleration to its full extent, the sure alternative would be the requiring an entire uniformity of faith and discipline. In him, as a Papist, it would be the only consistent course; and besides, were the work of persecution once begun, resistance would soon push him into extremes against all who presumed to lay claim to liberty of conscience. The line of demarcation would not easily be drawn, between this, and that, heretical communion.

Buonaparte, it may further be added, would probably be led by his temper, as well as his policy, to put down all religious dissent from the creed which he deigns to profess. His imperious pride, and insatiable appetite for domination, would after the conquest of England, soon find no change of the high-flavoured food to which they have been used, but in subduing the consciences of mankind.

The religious then, of every denomination among us have peculiar cause to tremble at the idea of our becoming a province of France. The terrible scenes which were exhibited there upon the revocation of the edict of Nantz, might soon be reacted in England. Dungeons and tortures might be employed to subdue the courage of the faithful, and the reverend bishops and pastors of our church, again be led out to a fiery trial in Smithfield.

If there be men, who without any concern for religion, are really anxious about the interests of virtue, let them also, shudder at this prospect.

The utter dissolution of morals in France, is a fact too fully attested to be disbelieved, even by those who do not perceive in it a necessary consequence of general and open infidelity. Vice, in her most licentious forms, abound especially amongst the French military, who would of course be our principal guests. How indeed could it be otherwise, among officers and soldiers educated like those who now serve in the armies of France?

Sixteen or seventeen years have now elapsed since the foundations of religion and morality were wholly broken up in that country; and but a very small part of its soldiers, can count twice as many years from their cradle; while a vast majority of them, are too young to remember any other than the present licentious times. Their ethics can have been acquired only in the Jacobin schools; or in the camp. As pupils of experience also, their lessons have been of the worst sort. They have seen nothing but the crimes and disorders of revolution at home; nothing but scenes of blood and rapacity abroad.

Truly frightful is the thought, of having such men spread over every district of our yet happy island, and executing among us all the functions of an interior police: yet such would certainly be our lot. They would not only keep guard in our cities, but be quartered in our country towns and villages, where few decent houses would escape the pollution of a private soldier or two, as its constant billetted guests; except perhaps the mansions of the village squires, or the chief inhabitants of the towns, which might have the honour of receiving the officers.

The latter, would of course enter into every circle of public and private society, and give the lead wherever they appeared; not only by the means of wealth and splendour, of which they would be the chief or sole possessors, and by the natural confidence of their characters; but by the aid of that timid and servile deference which the terror of their power would inspire. Much would be to be dreaded from the direct effects of their libertinism; bnt still more from their pestilent example. We should soon become as vicious as themselves; or rather more so. Like the poor enslaved Africans in our colonies, we should imitate the immoralities of our masters, and add to them the vices of servility.

It would soon be in vain to search for those modest and lovely young women, who now captivate our youth; for those virtuous matrons, who are the blessings of our manhood and our age; or for those moral feelings in either sex, which are the guards of domestic honour, purity and happiness. That probity of character also, which has distinguished the middle ranks of Englishmen, in commercial and private life, that abhorrence of falsehood and fraud, in our intercourse with our equals, that disdain of servility, in our demeanour towards the great, that generosity, which, with one strange and sad exception, gives to the oppressed an advocate in every British bosom, would soon be found no more. The next generation, if not the present, would be all *frenchified*, and debased, even below the vile standard of our oppressors. Yes, Englishmen! your children would become in morals, as well as in allegiance, *Frenchmen!* I can say to you nothing worse.

When I contemplate all these sure and tremendous consequences of a conquest by France—the exchange of the best of sovereigns, for the worst of tyrants; of the happiest constitution that ever blessed the social union of mankind, for a rapacious military despotism; of the purest administration of justice upon earth, for barefaced corruption, unbridled violence, and oppression in its foulest forms; of unrivalled wealth and prosperity, for unparalleled misery and ruin; when I reflect on the direful means, by which this conquest must be accomplished, and the still more dreadful means by which it must be maintained; and when I add to this black catalogue, the horrors of religious persecution, and that general corruption of morals, which would probably ensue; I stand aghast at the frightful prospect. "Who shall live," I could exclaim in the words of Scripture, "when "God doeth this thing?"

It reminds me of the vengeance denounced by prophecy against the great commercial city, the Babylon that is yet to be destroyed. "Babylon the great, is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of "devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean "bird. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, "so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. There- "fore shall her plagues come in one day; death and mourning, and "famine. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn "over her, for no man buyeth their merchandize any more. The

" merchandize of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls,
" and of fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyme
" wood, and all manner of vessels of most precious wood, and of
" brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and oint-
" ments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and
" wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves,
" and souls of men, and the fruits which thy soul lusted after, are
" departed from thee; and all things which were dainty and goodly,
" are departed from thee; and thou shalt find them no more at all.
" The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her,
" shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wail-
" ing, and saying, alas! alas! that great city, that was clothed in fine
" linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious
" stones, and pearls. For in one hour, so great riches is come to
" nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and
" sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when
" they saw the smoke of the burning, saying, what city is like unto
" this great city? And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weep-
" ing and wailing, and saying, alas! alas! that great city, wherein
" were made rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her cost-
" liness; for in one hour is she made desolate."*

* See the 18th chapter of the Revelations.—The author, in thus availing himself of the forcible and awful language of inspiration, to express ideas which his mind in vain labours to convey, trusts that he shall not be accused of presumptuously interpreting this prophecy, as predictive of the fate of his country. He holds it vain, if not irreverent, to attempt prospective interpretations of that kind; and feels his own extreme incompetency to offer, even conjectures, on such a difficult subject.—Besides, this prophecy, is by most, if not all, the ablest Protestant commentators, supposed to relate to the destruction of Papal Rome.

PART II.

Sect. 1. *Of the Means by which these Dangers may be averted.*

THESE painful anticipations would be worse than useless, if the sad fate which seems to be impending over the country, were such as no possible efforts could prevent.

I see not the wisdom of propagating alarm without any ulterior object; or for the sake merely of discrediting the measures of a former government. But if the public be, as I conceive it in general is, unconscious of the true extent and dreadful character, of those calamities with which we are menaced; and if the most arduous exertions, animated by a spirit of unbounded devotion to the cause of our country, can alone preserve us from destruction; a more important service to the state cannot be rendered, than to awaken the people to their danger.

By a fatality which seems like the mysterious work of a chastising Providence, the nations successively subdued by France, have had no adequate conceptions of the sad destiny which awaited them, till they have actually felt the yoke. Some of them have wilfully assisted her in forging their own chains; and all have been wanting in that resolution and ardour, with which so dreadful a foe ought to have been resisted. Their governments, perhaps, may have been chiefly in fault, but, except in the useless struggles of the brave Calabrians and Tyrolese, we have no where seen a popular energy equal to the occasion; but rather a torpor and indifference hard to be explained.

It would seem as if their and our deadly enemy possessed, like the rattlesnake, whose destructive malignity and contortive progress he imitates, the power of fascination. This pernicious reptile, being encumbered with a rattle, which, like the despotism of Napoleon, gives a wholesome alarm to all around him, would rarely be able to destroy the animals who are his ordinary victims, if it were not for a

strange stupifying influence which he is able to exert upon them, as soon as his fiery eyes have arrested theirs, and marked them for destruction. From that moment, instead of frustrating, they favour, his murderous purpose. Far from exerting their sure powers of resistance or escape, they await motionless his approach; or even by an unconscious suicide, rush upon his fatal fangs. The horrible tortures which ensue, can alone awaken them from the charm. Travellers confidently assure us, that not only the squirrel, the raccoon, and still larger animals, but even man himself, is the victim of this strange fascination. It is added, that birds on the wing are arrested in their flight, the moment their eye meets that of the rattlesnake on the earth below them; and that renouncing the security of an element in which this deadly enemy cannot reach them, they drop from the air into his voracious jaws. Of this last particular I should, I own, be incredulous, but for the recollection that there are Englishmen, who would, by making peace at this juncture, lay open the sea to France.

If governments have been elsewhere blameable, for not informing the mind, and exciting in due time the active courage of the people, the prodigy is not lessened, but only altered in its form. It is true, that under despotic governments, the popular spirit can have few spontaneous movements; but kings and ministers, at least, have been fascinated by Buonaparte; and their superior means of information, add greatly to the wonder.

In England, however, the government and the people mutually and strongly act upon each other. It is just therefore to say, that a want of energy in preparing for our defence, must be the fault of both; and with the voice of an independent, but loyal Englishman, I will endeavour to point out duties which each has hitherto neglected.

But before I proceed to suggest the public measures, which appear to me essential to the salvation of the country, let me briefly, but firmly, protest against one, which would greatly aggravate its dangers.

Sect. 2. *Ought we to make Peace with France?*

We lately endeavoured to find a palliation for the evils of the times, by an immediate termination of the war; and happy is it for England, perhaps, that the experiment did not succeed.

Events have since occurred, which seem to remove all danger of the same attempt being speedily resumed; and yet there are per-

sons, who, by a strange inversion of what appears to me right reasoning, regard the ruin of the continent, and the extreme aggrandizement of France, as arguments for a maritime peace. It may not be wholly useless, therefore, to condemn the late abortive attempt; though I trust, that Auerstadt, and the fall of Prussia, have now evinced the danger of a line of policy, which Austerlitz, and the peace of Presburgh, might have sufficed to preclude.

To censure a great political measure of the present able and enlightened cabinet, is perhaps presumptuous in a private individual; and is a work which I perform with regret. I am conscious that the awful considerations which may weigh in the choice between a pacific or warlike system, cannot be perfectly known to the public at large; and the distinguished talents now united in the ministry, certainly challenge the strongest general confidence in the wisdom of our counsels. Yet I dare not suppress, at this awful conjecture, a very sincere, though perhaps erroneous opinion, that a peace with France, if accomplished by the late negociations, would have been fatal to the security of the country.

Unfortunately, from the nature of our constitution, ministers are not always at liberty to follow that path of policy which they may deem the best in itself. Interior difficulties, arising from parliamentary opposition, or from the popular voice, may drive them out of that course which they would otherwise think it prudent to steer; and in this instance, it seems to have been imagined, that the public voice began to declare for peace.

At the same time, I find it difficult to conjecture whence that impression arose; unless from a natural source of mistake to which great men, whether in or out of office, are unavoidably exposed. There is nothing on which it is safer to hazard an opinion in private, than the inclination of the popular voice; and a statesman is not likely to hear any information, hostile to opinions, which are understood to be his own. In this case it certainly was very generally understood that the new administration, especially Mr. Fox, and his friends, were decidedly bent upon peace.

But whatever might be the source of this impression, I am confidently of opinion that it was erroneous; that the nation at large was never more generally disposed for the prosecution of war; and that the burst of joy with which the rupture of the late negociation was received at the Exchange, would have been echoed from the remotest parts of the kingdom, if its sound, and its occasion, could have been heard so far. Not that the people love, or do not deplore the war; but that they wisely despair of any real or abiding peace; and dread the

consequences of any treaty that can be made with France at this period.

That there was not more reason to apprehend opposition to a determined war system in parliament, I dare not affirm; and feeling how much party spirit is now to be deprecated, I venture to censure the negociation the more freely, because if it was wrong to negociate with France, it was an error which the present opposition does not, and cannot arraign. The leading members of that body, some of whom well deserve the esteem of their country, had not indeed expressly declared for a pacific system; but language was held by them which plainly implied an opinion, that peace might not improperly be negociated for at that disastrous æra, on what they called "honourable terms."

The true objections to the measure then, as well as at the present more awful crisis, apply to the unavoidable nature and effects of any treaty that could be proposed; not to its particular terms; yet we heard of "a good peace," and "an honourable peace," as proper to be treated for with France. For my part, if the possibility of a *safe* peace can be shewn, I will heartily admit, be its articles what they may, that it is good for my country in these evil times; and not dishonourable to her, but glorious to those who may make it. But while no such peace is to be hoped for, I would not treat; because I would not lead the people of England into the dangerous error of supposing, that peace with France, in her present attitude, is compatible with their safety; nor would I lead the people of Europe and America to believe that England is of that opinion.

The great and insuperable objections to a treaty of peace with Buonaparte in the existing state of Europe, are first, that it will enable him to prepare new means for our destruction; secondly, that it cannot abate his inclination to use them; and thirdly, that it can bring us no pledge or security whatever against his pursuing the most hostile and treacherous conduct.

We have heard much lately of the *uti possidetis*; but this basis, from the offer of which the enemy receded in respect of the shore, he cannot be expected to extend to the sea. If he would apply it to the relative situations of the British and French navies, allowing us to keep the exclusive possession of the ocean, and engaging neither to increase his marine, nor send his fleets out of port, nor prepare seamen to man them hereafter, the true spirit of the *uti possidetis* might apply to the present new and extraordinary case; in which, as Napoleon himself admits, the dominion of the sea is in our possession; and is an advantage which forms our only counterpoise to his

tremendous continental power. But since this application of the principle cannot be hoped for or proposed, the specious thesis for which we so eagerly contended, would in truth be fallacious and unequal. It would leave to France all her present means of annoyance; and soon deprive us of that extreme ascendency at sea, which is our chief mean of defence. It is like the equality of proposing to a man that has a shorter sword than his enemy, that each shall keep his pistols, provided he will come out of the house in which he has taken shelter, or let the door be open to both.

Napoleon, however, thought even this bad bargain too good for us, when he found us ready to accept it: or rather, as we were disposed to leave him possessed of every usurpation in Europe, he postponed the agreement, till he should have usurped a still larger share of the continent; and thrown down every remaining outwork by which we might hope to be in any degree covered, when no longer irresistible on the ocean. I doubt not, that when his continental enemies shall have been brought to acquiescence in a new manufactory of kingdoms, out of the ruins of their power, he will again offer to us the *uti possidetis*.

In yielding to us the sovereignty of new colonies and settlements beyond the Atlantic, or in the extremity of Africa, he well knows that he shall give us no means of future security against his arms; but on the contrary, increase those fatal drains which exhaust our defensive energies. What can a man who wishes to conquer England, desire better, than to give her new colonies to garrison, in the sickly swamps of Guiana; and new civil and military establishments to maintain, at the Cape of Good Hope? He professes indeed to place a great value on colonies; and perhaps, considering the situation of France, might reasonably do so; but new distant territory to Great Britain, is like new projections from the upper floors of a building which already overhangs its base.

If, however, Buonaparte were short sighted enough not to perceive that we should be enfeebled by such acquisitions, he knows at least that the free use of the sea, is worth to him a hundred such colonial cessions, as the *uti possidetis* would give us. We should in effect pay him a large compensation for the spoils of his allies in the colonies; while he would retain the enormous spoils of our allies in Europe, without paying for them any compenstion at all. I cannot think therefore that he has receded from this offered basis, except for a short interval, and with a view to finish his usurpations on the continent, before he accepts our comprehensive sanction of them in a new treaty of peace.

Supposing this basis unsafe for us, what other it may be asked, would be less so? I answer, what in the existing posture of affairs is diametrically opposite, the *status quo ante bellum*, for ourselves and our allies.

But this, it may be exclaimed, it would be preposterous to expect at present from France. I admit it, and therefore it would be preposterous to expect at present a peace safe for Great Britain. The impossibility consists in this, that France *will not* relinquish her new possessions on the continent; and that therefore Great Britain *cannot* safely relinquish her undivided possession of the sea. We cannot do so, not only because we should, by opening the sea to our enemy, enable him soon to become a formidable maritime power, but because his usurped empire on shore, would become far more terrible and irresistible than it is, were its commercial communications restored. We dare not give him back his navigation, and let him keep all his new territory too.

These principles, in any day but the present, would have needed no demonstration. If we can safely make peace with France in her present most alarming attitude, we have been fighting since 1792, and even in all our wars since the treaty of Ryswick, not only without necessity, but upon the most irrational and extravagant views that ever governed the policy of a nation.

To the argument—"How can we now hope to redeem the continent by war?" I answer, its redemption by peace, is at least equally hopeless. Let us, therefore, if the continent be indeed irrecoverably lost, look well to what remains,—to the last hope of Europe, as well as our own nearest interest, the safety of the British islands. There was a time perhaps, when it might have been more prudent to open the sea to France, leaving her in a state of great continental aggrandizement, than to risque her pushing her conquests still further, if that could have been prevented by any pacific conventions that we had power to make, for ourselves and our allies; but if there was ever a proper season for such policy, it plainly exists no longer; and this, not only because our enemy has shewn that no confidence can be placed in any treaty which opposes his thirst of universal empire; but because it may now fairly be doubted, whether any further increase of his dominions, would really add to his power.

For my own part, however singular the opinion may seem, I should have less apprehension of danger from the arms of Napoleon, if the remaining territories of Prussia, and Austria, and even the immense domains of Russia and Turkey, were added to his conquests, than I feel at the present moment. At sea, the acquisition of every

bottom still friendly to this country, would not now enable him to cope with us: and on shore he has power enough already for our destruction, when it can be brought into action against us. The momentum of the vast machine, on its present scale, is more than we can hope finally to resist: but every enlargement of its dimensions, and multiplication of its intricate movements, increases its tendencies to interior derangement; and therefore, without adding to our immediate peril, improves our chance of escape. Buonaparte has hitherto been so astonishingly prudent or fortunate, that we naturally begin to doubt whether there be any thing too difficult for him to accomplish; but his power is already composed of so many discordant elements, that their cohesion is truly wonderful: and as he proceeds, he is gaming at double or quits. Even the large armies, which he has to station in so many conquered countries, will soon be very difficult to govern. They, or their generals, will probably recollect, that the Roman legions bestowed the purple, as well as kept the provinces in subjection; and revolutions in this extraordinary age move with a celerity of which history has no example.

But if it be still thought that we have cause to dread the further extension of French empire on the continent, it is a danger against which peace can furnish no degree of security. Napoleon will not treat our mediation or remonstrances now, with more deference than he did after the treaty of Amiens.

I conclude, therefore, that in relaxing by a peace, that naval and commercial embargo to which the enemy is now subjected by our fleets, and enabling him thereby to replenish his treasury, and restore his marine, we should incur very formidable new dangers, without at all diminishing the old. We should not check, but accelerate, the growth of his tremendous power on the continent; while we should give him the opportunity of building that bridge for it to the British islands which is now happily wanting.

If peace would not diminish the power of Napoleon to prepare means for the conquest of England, still less would it remove his present hostility to our independence and freedom.

In truth, it is impossible, that he should ever cease to regard our subjugation as the first and most necessary object of his policy. His throne cannot be stable, while civil liberty remains unsubverted in any part of Europe; and though freedom is every where the object of his hatred and dread, yet it is particularly terrible to him here. With such a neighbour as the British constitution, he knows that his military despotism can never cease to be invidious and odious in France.

Equally impossible is it, that new subjects of contention, should not soon and often arise. Already he justly foresees one of them, which he is by no means prepared to tolerate, in the freedom of our press; and therefore has modestly proposed its abolition by act of parliament, as essential even to that temporary peace, which he is willing, for his own purposes, to accord to us. If he did not press that demand as an indispensible condition of the treaty lately projected, it only proves the more clearly, that he either was insincere in negociating for a peace, or meant to make use of it as a mere stratagem the better to insure our destruction.

But supposing that he really means to live in peace with a country whose news-writers shall dare to divulge and arraign his crimes, it is an intention to which he would be incapable of adhering. He is not less proud or irascible now, than before he had assumed the title of Emperor, or won the battle of Austerlitz; and yet during the last peace, he resented with great indignation the censures of our press.

What then is to be done? He disdained in the case of M. Peltier the satisfaction of a prosecution at law; nor would he consent to distinguish between strictures such as our courts might deem libellous, and those remarks upon his public conduct, which might be within the strictest limits of allowable public discussion. We know his system of government for the press, and the policy on which it is founded. Nothing, according to his maxims, ought to be published, whereby a tyrant may be rendered deservedly odious at home, or a conqueror be obstructed in his schemes against the independency of foreign nations. Even political rumours in conversation are with him capital crimes. When it was lately reported in Hanover, that a Russian army was marching for that country, the French governor publicly announced that such rumours were by the law of France, punished with death.

We know too, by Mr. Palm's case, with what vengeance Napoleon pursues the offences of a foreign press, when he has the power to punish. To proclaim in a neutral country, the dangers with which Europe is menaced by his ambition, is with him an atrocious crime; and entitles him to trample on the rights of nations, as well as of individuals, in order to avenge it. Are we prepared then to prohibit our press from divulging even such enormities of this man's conduct, as it may most behove the people of England to know? If not, what hope of abiding peace with Buonaparte?

I will not insist on the danger of quarrels on account of his future outrages against other nations, and his usurpations of new king-

doms and colonies in time of peace; for to all this we must of course be prepared to submit. It would be grossly inconsistent to go to war again for such causes, if we make peace at the present juncture; nor would the people of England be easily brought to engage again in a foreign quarrel, when persuaded that the most enormous aggrandizement of France is compatible with their own peace and security. Buonaparte, therefore, must be left to act as he did after the treaty of Amiens; and to take if he pleases the rest of the world, as the price of abstaining awhile from war against the British dominions.

But our commerce, and our navigation, would become sure subjects of early dispute, unless we were willing tamely to submit, to injuries fatal to our trade, to our revenue, and maritime power.

It is impossible, when we consider Napoleon's maxims of commercial policy, to doubt that he will avail himself, as soon as the sea is open, of all his enormous power and influence, to exclude us by means of treaties, and of municipal laws, not only from France, but from every other country in Europe, to the government of which he can dictate. With a sincerity unusual to him, he has already pretty plainly intimated that such will be his pacific system, by protesting, *in limine*, when he began to negotiate, against every stipulation in favour of our commerce. He would have no commercial treaties with us whatever.

And here I must own myself quite at a loss to comprehend the views of those, who regard the interests of our commerce and manufactures, as considerations on the side of peace. That such is not the opinion of our merchants in general, is well known; and yet they judge perhaps only from the necessary effects of a free peace competition against them, under the present great disadvantages of the country, without taking into the account the unfair preferences and exclusions, to be systematically opposed to them in foreign countries.

Who that attentively considers the spirit of Napoleon's late decree against our commerce, can be insensible to the danger of his acting on the same principle in time of peace? He might then perhaps find means to carry into effect, what he now impotently threatens. The necessities of his subjects, and of the subjects of his allies and dependents, will secure to us their custom during war, in spite of his prohibitions; for it cannot be supposed that our government will omit to employ the obvious means of counteracting them. I hope rather that we shall embrace the fair opportunity which it affords of asserting more firmly our maritime rights, and thereby giv-

ing new vigour to British commerce. But when we shall have no longer the power of opposing to regulations on shore, the pressure of our hostilities by sea; when the ships of France, Spain, Holland, Genoa, and Venice, and all the other maritime countries now hostile to us, shall be able to navigate without interruption, on every voyage, and with every species of merchandize; the same interdict on our trade, in the inoffensive form of municipal laws, may produce the desired effect, and gradually exclude us from almost all the ports of Europe.

Commerce, it is true, will force its way in spite of prohibitions, where the demand and the profits sufficiently excite the enterprize of the merchant; but it is difficult to believe that the manufactures and trade of this country, under the extreme pressure of our public burthens, will long retain inherent energy enough in the comparative cheapness and skill with which they are conducted, to supplant other maritime nations, in their own, or neighbouring markets; and if by a hostile system which we cannot retaliate, they shall be further encumbered with all the disadvantages and risks of a contraband carriage, while our rivals can trade safely, and with every encouragement that commercial laws can afford, I see not how we can hope long to maintain the unequal contest. In this view, the comparison between peace and war is plain and simple. Napoleon is fully resolved to deprive us of the commerce of the continent; but in war, he has the inclination without the power; in peace he will have both. He holds the continental gates of the market; but in war we command all the roads that lead to it, and can therefore starve him into the admission of our trade: In peace, the roads will be free to him, and he will still command the gates.

Let me not be understood to propose commercial advantages as motives of war; but when the question is of abandoning a contest, on a firm perseverance on which our liberty and national existence may depend, from the dread of ruin to our manufactures and trade; it is right to consider how these would be affected by peace. Let it be shewn therefore what reason we have to hope, that Buonaparte would be disposed to spare them. He must willingly abstain in this respect from lawful means of depressing a rival, or we should probably soon have to choose between the ruin of our commerce, and the recommencement of war.

The last, and most decisive objection to peace, is that Napoleon clearly cannot be trusted; and has now so completely broken down the balance of Europe, that he has no guarantee to offer to us for his observance of any treaty that he may make.

That he is faithless, is sufficiently notorious; and what is worse, he feels no restraint from a regard to character, but is on the contrary, vain of his fraudful policy. This trait in the character of that extraordinary man, has not, in my apprehension, excited all the attention that it deserves; for it is in a high degree curious and important. Other conquerors have been perfidious; but I can recollect no instance of any other sovereign, who was proud and ostentatious of his contempt for truth and justice, both in the cabinet and in the field.

To the intelligent reader, instances of this peculiarity in Napoleon, may perhaps readily occur. The Egyptian expedition, a creature of his own, abounded, from first to last, with proofs of it. His dispatches, under a thin veil of expression, too flimsy even to deceive the lowest of the vulgar, and used only to make his address conspicuous, informed France and Europe of that foul perfidy, with which nations at peace with the republic, Turks, Mamelukes, and Arabs, were alternately cajoled and deceived. The sanguinary means of conquest, were also coolly narrated; and Denon, in his account of the expedition to Upper Egypt, published at Paris under the auspices of Buonaparte himself, needlessly enlarges upon the barbarities committed by the French army in the villages of the miserable Cophts, as if they added to the honours of his patron.

He took care also that his impious hypocrisy in that country, should be perfectly understood in France. His open disavowal of Christ, in his proclamations to a Mahometan people, and his assumption of the name of Ali, to countenance the pretence of his being a convert to their faith, appeared, if I remember right, in his official dispatches, as well as in his Egyptian state papers; and it is probable, that the desire of being admired for his address at home, more than the hope of any direct benefit from the cheat among the Mussulmans, was the motive of that vile expedient.

His late elaborate, though contemptuous, answer to the Prussian manifesto, is evidently an instance of similar conduct. The absurd policy into which he had long betrayed the unfortunate monarch, is artfully pointed out to the notice of every observant reader; and those measure which were the result of a fatal complaisance for, and confidence in the usurper himself, are held up as having exposed their credulous and simple author to the distrust and hatred of Austria, and thereby prepared his fall.

In publishing Sebastiani's report, he gave, according to Mr. Pitt's observation, a greater cause of war than even the insidious mission of that agent; and yet it was evidently published, not for the sake of insulting the powers with which he was then at peace, but

for the sake of exhibiting his state-craft, and contempt for the obligation of treaties.

Other instances not less striking, might be found in his European policy; and if so strange a singularity of character were still doubtful, we might borrow a still stronger illustration of it from a case well known in the West Indies; and which, though little noticed in this country, was recorded in the Paris gazettes. I mean not the well-known treachery towards Toussaint, but the treatment of Pelage, the chief leader in Guadaloupe, and the black army under his command.

The negroes in that island, remained perfectly quiet and obedient to their masters, through the most trying revolutionary times, till Victor Hugues, and his brother commissioners, arrived with a decree for their enfranchisement, in the summer of 1794; and by their help, reconquered the island from the British army, to which it had surrendered. From that time to the peace of Amiens, the new citizens not only defended the island for France, when she had no other possession left in the Antilles, but enabled her to do infinite mischief to the neighbouring British colonies; and powerfully diverted our arms and treasure from the European contest, at the most critical period of the war.

Interior subordination and good conduct, accompanied these important services; and Buonaparte himself on the restitution of peace, publicly praised these black patriots, whose freedom was then anew most solemnly guaranteed by the state, and by himself, for having maintained the island in a state of great agricultural value. He added, by way of apology to the planters, that "it would "cost humanity too much to attempt there, a new revolution." At the same moment, however, he sent a new governor, La Crosse, with an army, to restore slavery and the cartwhip; and that officer was proceeding to execute his instructions, when the negroes, under Pelage their chief leader, resisted, and drove him from the island.

They acted, nevertheless, with the utmost humanity and moderation; and sent a very loyal address to the chief consul, humbly justifying their conduct, imputing the strange attempt of La Crosse to a breach of his orders, and offering to receive dutifully any other governor whom the republic might chuse to send. Napoleon took them at their word; and Richepanse, whom he sent out with new and most solemn declarations that liberty should be inviolably maintained, was received by Pelage and the chief part of his black army, with all the honours due to the representative of the republic. A part however of the negro army, being less credulous after what

they had recently witnessed, refused to obey his orders; upon which Pelage marched his loyal troops against them, and after several bloody conflicts, completely suppressed all resistance to the authority of the new governor. The last body of the disaffected negro soldiery that held out, consisting of some hundreds, took shelter in a fort, and when they found it no longer tenable against their numerous and brave assailants, followed a memorable example of ancient resolution in the cause of liberty, by setting fire to their magazine. The explosion, not only saved every one of these intrepid men from the whips of the drivers, but was fatal to many of their brave deluded brethren, who were approaching to storm the walls.

Buonaparte, in his gazette account, paid a very high tribute of praise to the astonishing gallantry of Pelage and his black battalions, by whom such determined enemies had been subdued. But what was their immediate reward? To be treacherously divided, seized at their different posts by surprize, sent on board transports, and, as was supposed in the neighbouring islands, drowned at sea. The only reason for imagining that the report of their being destroyed in that mode, may not have been universally true, is that at the commencement of the present war, an article appeared in some French news-papers, importing that Pelage was set at liberty from a prison in France; but it was probably only designed to inspire a fear into our government, that this brave leader might again be employed to annoy us in the Antilles: for neither he, nor his exiled followers, have since been heard of.

I do not cite this case for the very needless purpose of shewing that Buonaparte is perfidious in the highest degree, but to prove that he is proud of that quality; for this unparalleled instance of fraud and ingratitude, though notorious in the West Indies, would probably never have been fully known in Europe, if he had chosen to conceal it; and he had actually concealed the cause of the expulsion of La Crosse, together with the loyal address of Pelage and his countrymen, for the sake of suppressing the disgraceful result of his first attempt on negro liberty in Guadaloupe, till he received accounts of the success of his second perfidious stratagem. But as soon as he learnt from Richepanse, that all the military negroes were destroyed, and their unarmed cultivators in his power, he filled the columns of the Moniteur with their address, though then several months old; and a few days after, announced all the events that followed; relating coolly the arrest and deportation of Pelage and his troops, without even accusing them of a fault, or suggesting any other excuse, for that unexampled perfidy of which they were the victims.

Such is the man, whose good faith must now be our only security for his maintaining the duties of peace, or observing the conditions of treaties. Were he, while bound by pacific conventions to us, suddenly to land an army in Ireland or Great Britain, he would rather boast of, than blush for, the stratagem. Much less would he be ashamed of insidiously stirring up against us new and dangerous wars in India, for which he would immediately prepare, when the sea should be no longer impervious to his emissaries and his troops.

The difficulties of making peace with enemies of a faithless character, have heretofore been commonly obviated or lessened, by the mediation and guarantee of powerful neutral states; or where these have not thought fit directly to interfere, a treaty has still been held the less insecure, because other nations likely to censure, perhaps to assist in avenging, any flagrant act of perfidy, were privy to the compact. But France, having left in the civilized world no independent power but England at all capable of annoying her, has no longer any thing to fear, nor have we any thing to hope, from the interference of other states.

Is there any reason then to expect that the sense of self interest, or the political maxims of Napoleon, will lead him to adhere to his pacific engagements? On the contrary, were his revenge and hatred towards us, and even his dread of the example of our civil liberty, removed, still he would feel it necessary to crush a power which so obstinately opposes the march of his ambition.

It is a common error, of which we find many fatal examples in history, to suppose that a mind inflamed with the lust of conquest and dominion, has set certain bounds to its desires; and that by allowing it the quiet possession of present usurpations, it will be sated and become quiescent. As well might we expect the flames to subside, because the conflagration is already enormous, while there is fresh fuel within reach of their spires. The prodigious ascent of Buonaparte, is alone a sure earnest, that he will never rest, while it is possible to mount any higher.—A mighty monarch, who inherited his throne from his ancestors, may greatly aggrandize himself by conquest perhaps, without giving decisive proof of an ambition absolutely boundless: but what can be capable of satisfying the man, who when suddenly elevated from a private station, to the throne of the Bourbons, and possessed of a dominion greater by far than the Bourbons ever possessed, could not for a moment be content? It is not enough for him, that his own brows are bound with an imperial diadem.—He must set crowns also on the heads of all

his near relations and connections. Nay his friends and followers, must be raised to the rank of princes, and placed on a level with the most illustrious houses of Europe. Is it in nature that ambition like this, will ever respect any limits over which it is possible to vault? What human passion was ever diminished by excessive indulgence, while the power of its more extensive gratification remained?

Let it be recollected that the appetite of a conqueror is, not to enjoy dominion, but to acquire and extend it; or rather, to find in that favourite work, new sources of military fame. He values a kingdom after it is subdued, no more than the sportsman a fox or hare, after it is run down: the pleasure is in the pursuit. Alexander understood this, though his friend Parmenio did not, when Darius offered half his dominions to save the rest, together with his daughter in marriage. "I would accept the proposal," said the friend, "were I Alexander,"—"so would I," replied the conqueror, "were I Parmenio."

In a word, when we consider attentively the peculiar force of this destructive passion, in the breast of Buonaparte, and the abstinence from its gratification which must be the price of a durable peace with England, his personal feelings, still more than his interest or his policy, render his adherence to a pacific system utterly hopeless.

For these reasons, as well as others, the policy of treating with France at the present conjuncture, is by no means like that which prevailed at the close of the last war. The treaty of Amiens, was, I then thought, and still think, a wise and laudable measure. Buonaparte had not then given unequivocal proof that he was actuated by views incompatible with a true or lasting peace. On the contrary, there was reason to hope that he desired to build his future fame, and his domestic authority, on that popular foundation. Besides, he had not then abolished the republican government, and established his power upon the basis of an absolute monarchy. The popular voice in France therefore was likely to be respected, and it was decidedly in favour of peace.

At the same time it seemed highly probable, that the strength of the republic, if not her warlike disposition, would decline, when the pressure of foreign hostilities should be removed, and her discordant interior elements be left to their natural motion. These are times when no man need be ashamed of erroneous calculations on such subjects; for the extraordinary course of events has placed the most heedless rashness, and most cautious circumspection, in

political judgment, nearly on a level. Now however, the character and system of Buonaparte are become matters not of speculation but experience, while his power seems to be irreversibly established: consequently the hopes which justified the treaty of Amiens, could not now be rationally admitted, even if the state of Europe were equally favourable to peace.

But the most important distinction between that case and the present, is to be found in the much altered, and now deplorable state of the continent. The great military powers, our natural allies, were then left in a condition to keep in check the ambition of France, by a timely union; and in this we had some apparent security for her future moderation, which is now entirely lost.

In this respect, the case is most decisively altered for the worse, even since the late negociation at Paris. Neither the example therefore of the administration which treated at Amiens, nor that of the present cabinet and Mr. Fox, would afford any sanction for a new experiment upon the good faith and moderation of France, after the battle of Auerstadt, and the total ruin of Prussia.

Surely the ungrateful treatment of that power, will convince us of the extreme folly of hoping to conciliate Napoleon by a timid pacific system. If not, we shall give a more striking instance than has yet been exhibited of that infatuation which prepares for him his victims; since England has at present a security in war, that neither Prussia nor Austria possessed.

Such are my reasons for thinking that a peace with Buonaparte, would not lessen, but aggravate our dangers.—Those who maintain the contrary, are prudently sparing of explanations. They hold it enough to spread before our eyes the dangers and inconveniences of war, without shewing how they are to be diminished by peace; or what possible hope we have, that any peace we can make will be lasting.

In a view to finances indeed, they say, how are we long to carry on the war?—I admit the difficulty, but retort the question, how are we to carry on the peace?

Dares any minister promise us a peace which will so far deliver us from the necessity of defensive precautions, as greatly to diminish our expenses?—But to justify a negociation in this view, its advocates should go much farther, and shew, that contrary to the calculations of our merchants, peace will make no shrink in our commercial revenue; otherwise the diminution of import and export duties, may be more than equal to any possible saving of expenditure. Some statesmen are said to assert, that we may by persevering in

the system of finance, established by Mr. Pitt, soon find resources for prosecuting the war without any additional taxes; but nobody I believe will maintain, that a peace destructive of our commerce would be consistent with any such hope.

If our finances were likely to be improved in peace, it would be a new and decisive reason with Buonaparte for the speedy renewal of war. But without taking any such motive into the account, it must be, and is admitted, even by the most sanguine advocates for a peace, that its duration would be in the highest degree precarious. We must therefore set against the very slender chance of financial savings by a pacific system, the probable and vast expense of renewing, at an early period, our war establishments, after they may have been broken up or reduced.

When these considerations are fairly weighed, it will appear very doubtful whether a steady prosecution of the war be not the most economical, as well as the safest course, we can at present pursue. That would at least, I dare affirm, be the case, supposing the war to be conducted upon right principles, and such as the duty of self-preservation, at this awful crisis, demands. If we are still to persevere in military expeditions to distant countries, those sure sources of enormous peculation and waste, the war indeed may be costly enough; but if we wisely keep at home the army which may be essential to our domestic safety, act only on the defensive on shore, and assert firmly our belligerent rights on the ocean, we shall find it more frugal by far to continue at open war, than to suspend hostilities again for a year or two, by an anxious and dangerous peace. Such a use of our maritime power as the state of Europe, and of the world, would abundantly justify, and as the late conduct of the enemy invites, would give us means of maintaining the contest for fifty years if necessary, without an additional tax, except such as France, her allies, and the states under her influence would pay.

The only additional argument for sheathing the sword that is commonly urged, appears to me perfectly frivolous, "If we continue the war, it is said, from a dread of making peace with France in her present state of aggrandisement, we may continue it for ever; for we cannot deprive her of her conquests." Permanent war, no doubt is a dreadful idea; but let it be contrasted, as (to meet fairly the present arguments for war,) it ought, with permanent servitude to France, and perhaps its horrors will vanish.

The objection however supposes, that because we cannot dislodge the enemy from his present possessions, they must of course

be perpetual; and that all the other dangers which forbid a pacific system at the present alarming juncture, are also interminable. But if the territorial aggrandisement of France, and what is not less dangerous, the talents, strength, and ambition of her present government, are to last for ever, so much the less can we afford to divide with her the possession of the sea. If in that case, the naval power of the enemy is to vegetate long and freely upon the enormous fields of dominion now plowed up for its culture, farewel to every hope of our permanent safety: but we may now cut off from it by war, that maritime carriage and trade, which are essential to its nutrition and growth.

For my part, I regard neither Buonaparte, nor his conquests, nor his ambitious system, as immortal; though all may live long enough for the ruin of England, if we give him a peace at this juncture.

Judging from historical examples, and natural probability, which notwithstanding the strange occurrences of the age, we must still do, if we would anticipate future events, I cannot believe that the new erected empire of France will long survive the builder. It has been put together too hastily, and with too many unseasoned materials, to be durable. It may even fall by the rupture of that military scaffolding by which it was raised. The deposed sovereigns may probably not be restored, nor the conquered nations delivered from a foreign master; but it seems probable that the captains of this second Alexander, will at his decease at least, if not during his life, carve out for themselves their respective kingdoms, without much respect for the claims of the Corsican family. He has already shewn them the way to take up crowns with the sword, and has whetted their appetite for sovereign power, by the elevation of their comrades. France, therefore, may like Macedon, be soon glad to maintain her ancient borders against those who conquered in her name; and new political combinations, may produce a new balance of power in Europe. The conqueror himself even, may possibly meet the fate of his brother emperors, Cæsar, and Dessalines; and if we must at last fall, it will be something at least, to have escaped by a protracted war, the yoke of Buonaparte.

We should dread subjection to this man, beyond all other foreign masters; not only because he personally hates us, and all that is most noble among us; but because, of all those scourges of mankind called conquerors, there has been none more truly odious.

And here let me deprecate with just alarm, let me reprobate with honest indignation, the grovelling sentiments that would ascribe

to this phænomenon and reproach of our age, the character of a hero, or the appellation of Great. Should we unhappily fall under his yoke, we shall be compelled like Frenchmen to praise him; but let us not prematurely teach our children to admire, or even to view him without abhorrence. It is of some importance to the cause of morals, and more to the temporal destiny of mankind, that the standard of heroism should not be reduced to the low level of Buonaparte.

There has always been in the world a fatal propensity to admire those pests of our species, called conquerors, and to pay them in fame the wages for which they labour in the fields of blood. But this error has in general one excuse. We commonly observe in this mischievous race, as in the lion, a savage dignity at least, if not a generosity of character. Even in their crimes there is a sublimity, which inspires terror indeed, and perhaps indignation, but not disgust or contempt. How different the man, who after the battle of Auerstadt, could send forth those pitiful bulletins against an unhappy woman, and a queen, which have appeared in the French gazettes; who has repeatedly indulged the same paltry spite against the unfortunate queen of Naples, and the brave Englishman that foiled him in Syria; who refused to allow the body of the gallant old duke of Brunswick to be laid in the tomb of his ancestors; and who in the case of Trafalgar, and many other instances, has not scrupled to disgrace himself in the eyes of all Europe, by the grossest forgeries and falsehoods.

I fear that the detestation due to this last mean part of Buonaparte's character, begins to wear out, from the frequency of its exhibition. Let us recollect then if we can, any other man in ancient or modern story, known by the appellation of Great, who ever stooped to the pitiful tricks of systematic falsehood, in their public relations of facts. To the dignity of ancient heroism the vice was utterly unknown; and though in our modern wars with the kings of France, accounts of battles are said to have been unfair, at least on the side of our enemies, the misrepresentations have been such as might, in good measure, be ascribed to the deceptious reports of subordinate commanders, or to the sincere partiality of self-love. The misrepresentations of the Brussels gazettes became in the last reign proverbial; yet the French king was probably more the dupe of flattery, than the author of wilful falsehood. Widely different however, were the glosses and strongest distortions of facts used in those days, from the shameless effrontery which could represent our glorious victory at Trafalgar as a battle in which we

had lost fifteen or sixteen ships of the line, and forge letters from Gibraltar to confirm the vile imposture.

There is even a generical difference between this mean habit of Napoleon, and the falsehoods ever before used by any monarch who has stooped to this grovelling vice. Deceits have been practised privately in the cabinet; but they have been regarded, at least by those misjudging minds which used them, as the lawful circumvention of an enemy or a rival; and such violations of truth, have commonly been perpetrated in the hope of escaping detection. But the mendacious gazettes of Buonaparte, differ from such secret and particular crimes, as open prostitution, differs from a private intrigue. He publishes without a blush, relations the gross falsehood of which he knows to be notorious at the moment to every man in Europe, except those who are prevented from reading any newspapers but his own; and which must soon lose their credit even with his own deluded subjects. For a temporary domestic purpose, this mighty monarch is content to incur an infamy from which every gentleman shrinks with abhorrence, and the proper epithet for which is too low to sully these sheets.

If any man can regard a contemptible trait of character like this, as compatible with true greatness, let him look to another criterion. There is a comity in heroism, and a sympathy between great minds, which have secured to illustrious characters, when fallen, respect and kindness from their conquerors. Antiquity abounds with examples of such magnanimity, which we admire, though we feel, at the same time, that they could hardly be of difficult practice. But the pseudo-heroism of Buonaparte, has no such amiable feature.

I will not stop to illustrate his odious want of sensibility in such cases, by instances to which Europe has been sufficiently awake; but refer to one that appears to me the most remarkable and shameful.

He had once an illustrious opponent, who attracted much attention in the present day, and will probably be still more admired in the calm view of future ages; I mean that extraordinary African Toussaint. Napoleon himself pronounced his eulogy in these terms, "Called by his talents to the chief command in St. Domingo, he "preserved the island to France during a long and arduous foreign "war, in which she could do nothing to support him. He destroy-"ed civil war, put an end to the persecutions of ferocious men, and "restored to honour the religion and worship of God, from whom "all things come."* The praise when bestowed, was by no means

* Speech of July or August, 1802, in the London newspapers of August 9th.

excessive, or even adequate; and yet Toussaint's subsequent conduct, added greatly to his former glory. Incorruptible, disinterested, intrepid, and humane, he performed, in his last contest for freedom, actions that would bear comparison with the most brilliant traits of ancient heroism and virtue; and they were crowned by a triumph over the conquerors of Europe. We know too well the rest. Circumvented by the foulest fraud, he fell into the power of his unprincipled enemy.

Here, however, it might have been supposed, hostility would have ended, and generosity begun to act. Delivered from the opposition of his arms, the usurper might have been expected to honour this extraordinary character, and take pride in rewarding his merit. The interesting singularity of his fortunes and extraction, as well as his worth, would have led a mind of any liberality to treat him with tenderness and respect. Though depressed in early life below the level of manhood, he had risen to the rank of heroes. Before he mounted into the region of illustrious deeds, he had to cleanse his wings from the filth of a brutalizing bondage: Yet he became a victorious general, a wise legislator, an enlightened statesman, and the chief of a people, formed by his own genius, from slaves and barbarians, into citizens and soldiers. He was never conquered; and what is far higher praise, never faithless, cruel, or unjust. In all the relations of private life, he was truly amiable; and to crown all, a pious Christian.

Who, that ever pretended to the appellation of Great, except the vile Buonaparte, could have torn such a captive from his beloved family, and thrown him into a dungeon to perish!! A Cæsar or Alexander, would have honoured, a Timur or an Attila, would have spared, him; but it was his hard lot to fall into the hands of an enemy, who adds to the ferocity of a savage, the apathy of a sceptic, and the baseness of a sham renegado.

When we add to this want of every generous and elevated sentiment, the numberless positive crimes against humanity, justice, and honour, by which Napoleon is disgraced, it seems astonishing, and is truly opprobrious to the moral taste of the age, that he should still find any admirers.

There may, I admit, be a dignity even in the most vicious characters. When Satan is represented rising from the lake of fire, haranguing the fallen angels, or steering his adventurous course through chaos, to wage new wars against the Almighty, in a new created world, we conceive of him with fear and hatred indeed, but there is a majesty in his crimes, which screens him from contempt.

Not so, when he meanly lies to the archangel; and still less, when, in the shape of a loathsome reptile, he sits at the ear of our first mother, practising detestable frauds and falsehoods upon her fancy, for the ruin of her innocence and peace. His dignity now vanishes, and admiration is lost in abhorrence. Yet the fiend still sins in the prosecution of a public purpose: he is serving the state of Hell, and not merely the individual Satan. The heroism of Buonaparte, on the contrary, is sunk in selfishness, as well as in despicable crimes. His private personal feelings are ever predominant: it is the opposition to, or the libel against Napoleon, that provokes his bitterest vengeance—it is for little self, and its connections, that he murders, deceives, insults, oppresses, and betrays.

The extreme elevation to which talents and success have raised him, makes these mean and loathsome qualities only the more opprobrious and disgusting. How abject must be the constitution of that mind, which such fortunes could not ennoble! Antichristian philosophy, behold thy work! See here the difference between thy godless heroism, and the dignity, I will not say of Christian, but even of Pagan, greatness. The majesty of the Temple it ruined, because there was no sense of a present Divinity to guard it from pollution. It is as if the sublime dome of St. Paul's were lined, and its lofty pillars covered, with the rags of Chick-lane, and the offals of Newgate-market.

If the irreligious character of the age has generated this spurious greatness, let us distinguish and revere the appropriate justice of Heaven. We would have morals without religion; and God has sent us ambition without dignity in return. We admire talents more than morals; and he has chastised us by means of a mind born to illustrate the pestilent effects of their disunion. We have rebelled against him, by opposing publicly to his laws the idolatrous worship of expediency; and he has put the scourge into a hand which dishonours, while it chastises, our proud and boastful age. It is like the punishment of a noble traitor, whose bodily indignities and pains are aggravated, by the sentence that he shall receive them from the vile hands of a common executioner.

Should this man, however, become our master, his vices will no longer be objects of censure, but rather themes for applause, and patterns for imitation. The moral taste of the country, and of Europe, will be corrupted by the example of their mighty lord, as well as by the debasing effects of his oppression, and the licentious manners of his soldiers. I repeat, therefore, that should perseverance in war fail to produce our final deliverance from the power of France,

it will be still an effect of great value if it secures us from that of Buonaparte.

Sect. 3. The military force of the country ought to be greatly encreased.

Having thus cursorily shewn that a treaty of peace would be a source of new dangers, rather than of security to the country, against the power of France, I proceed to point out the means by which such security may be effectually attained.

They are, in general, MILITARY VIGOUR, PATIENCE, UNANIMITY, and REFORMATION; means, the first and last of which I propose, distinctly, but briefly, to consider.

And first, a much greater proportion of *military vigour*, than now exists, must be infused into our defensive preparations; or the nation will very probably be lost.

I have already offered some observations, tending to shew, that the conquest, as well as the invasion, of our country, is by no means an impossible event; though we may, like the unhappy and infatuated Prussians, proudly believe the reverse. We are at present in peculiar danger of a fatal self-deception on this point; because the enemy, occupied with the conquest of other nations, or engaged in treacherous negociations for peace, has long discontinued his threats of an immediate invasion. The danger had before been lessened in our eyes by familiarity, and is now still more diminished by imaginary distance. We may fondly suppose, perhaps, that Buonaparte seriously expects to vanquish us by a commercial war; or that, having easier conquests in view, he has ceased to be intent upon the speedy subjugation of England.

It is true that he has for the moment other work on hand; and it is possible that he may not again directly employ himself in that of our destruction by arms, till he has finished the defeat of his continental enemies, and found that we are not to be ensnared into a ruinous peace. Hence we have a happy, and I trust a providential opportunity, of better preparing for our defence.

But that this season of apparent security will last long, cannot be supposed by those who reflect on the present situation of affairs, unless they expect that Russia will still be able to turn the tide of war, and find long employment for all the armies of France. May such be the event; but the contrary is much rather to be feared. While I write, it is not improbable that a new treaty of peace for the continent, has been extorted by the threat of restoring the throne of Po-

land; and that French columns have begun their march from the Vistula, which may soon be on the coast of the channel. Besides, the immense armies now advancing towards the seat of war, occupy already all the intermediate space; and as soon as the command to halt is given in the front, the rear divisions will be ready to throw themselves into the now vacant camp at Boulogne.

Those innumerable hosts, will then have no object worthy of their arms, but the conquest of Great Britain. We shall employ the undivided attention of an enemy, who adds to the insatiable ambition, the military talents, and the fortune of an Alexander, the multitudinous forces of a Xerxes. If half a million of French soldiers, elated with victory, were not sufficient for our destruction, he could reinforce them with near as many more of the vassals whom he calls allies; while France herself is ready at his call, to supply him every year with eighty thousand new conscripts, in the prime of youthful manhood.

His means of wafting armies to our shores, are indeed at present limited and precarious. If they were not, our situation would be desperate indeed. But those means have encreased, and are rapidly encreasing, and we may not be able to find, by rencounters with his fleets on the ocean, opportunities of checking their growth. When we look at the geographical range of the territories now at the devotion of France, and the maritime resources they furnish, it would be irrational to hope that the hostile navies will remain in their present state of depression; though we may, by perseverance in the war, maintain a decisive superiority over them, such as to prevent their openly contesting with us the dominion of the sea. The mind of Buonaparte will soon direct all its energies towards their restitution. Ships and seamen will be the only acceptable tribute which a fawning world can bring to him. He will invite, or exact them, from every province, from every conquered country, from every ally, and even perhaps from countries which he yet allows to be nominally neutral. In short, "all the resources of his empire" (to quote his own words) "will be again employed in constructing fleets, forming his marine, and improving his ports."*

Though his threats of invasion have been suspended, not so his naval preparations. He has not discontinued the building of that great number of ships of the line, the keels of which were long since laid at Antwerp, at Brest, and in various other ports of his dominions; and the dock yards of Venice, are now fully employed, as well as

* M. Bacher's Address to the Diet of Ratisbon, Sept. 1805.

those of Spain and Holland, in preparing for him a regular marine. Meantime, the Boulogne flotilla, has been carefully maintained upon that extensive scale, and in that fitness for immediate service, to which he had raised it before his march for the Rhine. It is, if public and general report may be credited, capable of transporting by a single embarkation, 150,000 men, to our shores. Nor is that flotilla to be despised, as an instrument of invasion, when in the hands of a man prodigal of the lives of his troops, and inexorably bent on the accomplishment of his purpose: more especially now, when he has gained renown enough, and strength enough, both at home and abroad, to be in no danger, from the discontent that might be excited by the loss of an army.

We had some security perhaps till now, from the dilemma in which Napoleon was placed, by the necessity of either risquing his own person in the passage, or resigning to another commander the glory of the expedition, in the event of its success. But now he can afford to spare, to Murat, to Massena, Davoust, or some other distinguished general, the renown of conquering Great Britain; not feel any apprehension that such a delegate will use the large force to be committed to him, either at Boulogne, or on this side the channel so as to triumph with safety, and avoid the fate of Moreau. The usurper will therefore most probably not expose himself to the inconvenience of leading the army of England, nor rashly re-engage himself to do so; but will yield to the prayers of his *anxiously affectionate* subjects, and devolve on some favourite chief, that hazardous command.

But the Boulogne flotilla will not be relied upon, as the only mean of invasion. In other ports of the channel, in the German ocean, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the Adriatic, regular and powerful armaments will be prepared, so as to distract our attention, and divide our naval force; nor would it be possible for us to blockade them all, through every season, and with fleets and squadrons sufficiently strong, if our navy were three times as large and potent as it actually is. It would be preposterous therefore to suppose, that from no part of his immense maritime regions, will the enemy be able to send expeditions to sea; and not less so, to rely that his fleets and transports will all be met with by British squadrons, before they can land troops on our shores.—Even the vigilance and energy of Nelson, could not prevent the powerful invasion of Egypt; and if prior to 1805, any man believed that it is impossible for the hostile fleets to steal from their harbours, to perform voyages, and to land forces in distant parts, without being ar-

rested by British fleets in their way, he must now be quite cured of that mistake. We have learnt by reiterated experience within the last two years, that all this may be done, without the discovery even of the point of destination, till it is too late to frustrate the plan.

It would not be quite so easy, I admit, to collect and send to sea with equal secrecy, a fleet large enough to waft over an army adequate to the invasion of England; but supposing such fleets to be collected at more ports than one, even this might very probably be effected. It must not, however, be concluded that the enemy will certainly be driven to the necessity of embarking by stealth.—A much more likely, and feasible expedient would be, the bringing together, by combined and well concerted movements, a large part of his naval force, at the destined point of embarkation, and then sailing openly for our coast, under the protection of a fleet such as we could not immediately collect ships enough to intercept and defeat.

It has been computed by sea officers of reputation and judgment, that 150,000 men might be embarked at Boulogne in a single day: for the vessels now collected there, are so constructed as to take the ground without damage; and when anchored at high water mark, on a long sandy beach which is impregnably fortified for their protection, they are left dry for hours by the ebb tide; so that the troops may march on board by means of planks, as quickly almost as they could file off into their barracks; and at the return of high water, be ready to put to sea. If so, the command of the channel for eight and forty hours, might suffice for the most formidable invasion.

A plan of this kind is supposed to have been formed in the summer of 1805. The combined fleets, after leading a good part of ours to the West Indies, were suddenly to have returned, to have raised the blockades of Cadiz, Brest, and Rochefort, and being reinforced by all the ships in those ports, proceeded to Boulogne, where perhaps the fleet from the Texel would have been brought to their aid. They were then to have convoyed the flotilla, with as large an army as Buonaparte thought proper to embark; and England might possibly have been lost before her scattered fleets could be collected in sufficient numbers to oppose them. This plan, it is true, was frustrated by the energy of Nelson, and the prudence of our admiralty; and above all, by the mercy of Providence, which combined with those means, very propitious coincident events. But similar schemes may be formed hereafter; they will become more feasible in proportion to the increase of the enemy's force; and their chances of success may be multiplied, by the collection of an adequate number of transports

at different ports, far remote from each other. They would also be greatly facilitated by the possession of Venice, and of those other new maritime stations, acquired by Buonaparte, during the two last campaigns; for these, give him not only new ships, but the means of diverting the navy of England by a much wider extent than before, in necessary foreign service.—Unhappily, our own distant conquests, of which at this conjuncture, we are unaccountably fond, by no means lessen, but on the contrary, encrease this advantage.

It would be easy to enlarge on this subject, and to demonstrate clearly the facility of open invasion, by the sudden concentration of an inferior, during the dispersion of a superior navy. But having many new topics yet to touch upon, I will rely upon what has already been offered, or rather on the plain nature of the case, in proof that we may probably be invaded by a very powerful army, notwithstanding our maritime power.

On what human foundation then can we repose a tranquil confidence in the present state of the country? We have no inexpugnable fortresses, like Austria and Prussia; no Alpine mountains, like Switzerland; no dykes and means of inundation, like Holland; no sandy deserts, like Egypt. All those impediments have been surmounted by our formidable enemy; but he would find none such to oppose his progress in England. The torrent must be stemmed, if at all, by the force of our arms in the field.

What then is this last retrenchment of the inestimable liberties of England? What is this ulterior defence, against the most deplorable revolution that conquest ever made; against miseries more dreadful, those of the devoted Jews excepted, than any people ever endured?

We have a regular army, which I will suppose to be in point of quality throughout, such as specimens of it have gloriously proved to be upon trial, both in Italy and Egypt. But it is widely dispersed, by a policy which at this arduous conjuncture I am quite at a loss to comprehend, upon foreign and distant services. Not less than five different British armies are said to be at this moment employed in, or destined to, five different regions of the globe: and I am really afraid to state the small amount to which some credible reports now reduce the regular infantry actually within the realm.

But it is not necessary to my argument to ascertain such alarming facts: for were our whole army within the island, it would still be very unequal, in point of numbers, to our defence, supposing an invasion to take place, on a scale suitable to the magnitude of the object, and to the ordinary maxims of our enemy. Could our regular troops

be collected at once from every part of the island, they might find themselves greatly outnumbered. But we should, through the great quickness of the enemy's motions, be obliged to fight him previous to any general union of our forces, or give him possession of the capital.

A country so exposed by the extent of its assailable coast, and by its defenceless interior situation as England, would perhaps hardly be safe from conquest, much less from ruin, when invaded, if it contained in its whole extent, three soldiers for every enemy that should land on its shores. Whereas France, if she invade us at all, will probably send a force exceeding that of our regulars and militia united. I suppose, it is true, in this estimate, an equality of military character; but I calculate also on that new system of tactics which is so formidable in offensive war, in which our enemies so fatally excel, and for which England presents to them a most favourable field.

That daring confidence which never measures difficulties in advancing, which reckons too surely on victory, to make any provision for retreat, has been known ever since the days of Agathocles, to be most propitious to invaders; and it has probably been partly owing to a more cautious character of war in modern ages, that the subversion of thrones by conquest, has been a very rare event in Europe, till the present disastrous times. But to this audacious spirit, our enemies have added an astonishing celerity of movements, which is perhaps still more peculiarly characteristic of their military system, and a greater cause of their success. The invaded country has no time to collect its proper domestic resources, much less receive succour from its allies; it must submit to the ravages of a conqueror, or with such a force as it can bring in a moment into the field, stake its fate upon the issue of a battle. If a defeat be the event, the victors advance with a rapidity that destroys every ulterior hope. It is the speed, not of an army, but a post. They bring the first news of their own victory to the dismayed capital; and the flying divisions of the routed army, instead of meeting friendly battalions advancing to their support, find enemies in their front, as well as in their rear. Their utmost speed is arrested by their impetuous pursuers, and the passes by which they hoped to escape, are seized by hostile corps, who arrive at the defiles before them. It is then too late to call out an irregular defensive force; or even to collect the regular troops from distant positions, and the garrisons of interior towns. The invaders have seized upon the central points of union, have occupied every pass, and cut off every source of communication or concert, between the different districts. The vital organs of the state too, are

in their hands, and they can controul all its functions. The disconnected efforts of patriotism and courage that may still be made in different places, are like the convulsive motions of members just severed from the body; a mere semblance of life, momentary and useless.

When I reflect upon the terrible effects of this impetuous warfare, by which Europe has been repeatedly dismembered; when I behold the last example of its force, in the yet rolling fragments of a mighty monarchy, which it has recently burst asunder; I am amazed and confounded, at the strange presumption of those who rely on our present means of interior defence, while they admit the probability of invasion.

It has been said, I know, that though London were lost, the country would still be safe. Were our proper defensive preparations fully made, it would be right to cherish that opinion. But it cannot be supposed that the metropolis would be given up without a battle; and should we lose a battle first, and London afterwards, our final security must depend upon exertions equally difficult and precarious. I am at a loss to comprehend the practical views upon which an opposite opinion can be founded.

That the loss of the metropolis would immediately follow the loss of a battle, unless we had a second army at hand to retrieve the miscarriage of the first, is evident. What then would be our military reserve, supposing a regular army large enough to make a stand against the invaders, should be defeated? "Our volunteers, a hundred tongues will be ready to reply, are that grand ulterior resource; nay, many of them would be in the advanced guard of their country."

The volunteers, I most cordially admit, will do all that their numbers, their degree of discipline, and their physical powers, animated by an ardent love of their country, and a high sense of honour, will enable them to perform. But of our volunteers, how small a part are really effective in the proper sense of that term; and how many are from age, bodily constitution, and fixed habits of life, utterly unfit for the duties of the field.

Far indeed is it from my intention, to detract from the merits of these corps, or to deny their high utility and importance. I would most anxiously maintain, were it necessary, that they are essential means for the permanent safety of the country; and, without believing that any member of the present cabinet ever entertained, or meant to express, a contemptuous estimate of their value, I lament that such an idea has unfortunately gone abroad.

But it is one thing to applaud an institution in the abstract, and another to say that it has attained to practical perfection; or that it is equal to the important purposes for which it was designed. They who regard the volunteer corps as radically unfit for the defence of their country, are, I am persuaded, greatly mistaken: but on the other hand, they who suppose this defensive force to be, in its present state, sufficient to insure our safety, are in a far more dangerous error.

Various objections have been made to these establishments on the score of discipline, which no candid friend to them will affirm to be wholly unfounded. A still more serious objection, however, is that both their discipline and their effective force, is very generally and rapidly declining. But what has always appeared to me the chief defect in these corps, and the natural source of their decay is a vice in their original constitution; I mean the indiscriminate mixture of men of widely different ages, and bodily habits, of which they are composed.

Of all qualities in a soldier, his physical powers are of the greatest importance; but more especially, when his services are likely to be of a severe and laborious kind; and still more, when he is suddenly to be called from the habits of civil life, into actual service. I would by no means undervalue the effects of patriotic and military ardour, with which our volunteers, if opposed to an invading enemy, would, I doubt not, be generally inspired. But though the body, in such cases, may be powerfully sustained by the mind, there are limits to the possible effect of such an influence; and the qualities of the inferior part of our natures will unavoidably determine, in a great degree, our powers of military exertion. It is not in the love of country, long to sustain under the sense of cold, hunger, and fatigue, a man of tender habits, who has passed the prime of his life without any acquaintance with such hardships.

That our volunteers must unavoidably be in such respects inferior to regular troops, is evident. They are not inured, by long and constant practice, to the duties of a military life: they are, for the most part, men unaccustomed even to those laborious branches of civil industry, which are the best nurseries for the army; and a great majority of them, are inhabitants of cities and large towns; men of domestic and sedentary habits, to whom, even exposure to the inclemency of the weather, is a novelty, and a hardship.

But though some of these disadvantages are inherent in the very nature of the institution in question, they certainly now exist in a much greater degree than was necessary. We have more towns-

men, and fewer villagers, among our volunteers, than we might and should have had, but for causes to be presently noticed. We have also more men of the middle and upper ranks of society, in proportion to the hardy poor, than would have been inrolled, if those accidental causes had not existed.

The most unfortunate defect of all, however, and which greatly aggravates the effects of all the rest, is one which might most easily have been prevented, and which still admits of a remedy. I mean the number of volunteers to be found in every corps, who have passed the meridian of life, or at least the age of juvenile activity and vigour; and yet are indiscriminately mixed in the ranks, with much younger and abler associates.

There is a season of life, when our ductile natures may be most easily bent to new habits; and when the elasticity of our muscles and animal spirits, is proof against the severest pressure. The same is the season, when brisk and vigorous action is luxury, rather than fatigue; and what we are prone to, by the impulse of nature, even when duty points to repose. The imagination also, is then powerfully impressed by the charms of novelty, in every employment; and sympathies of all kind, but especially in bold and ardent pursuits, have an irresistible influence. If man at such a season of life, has peculiar animal qualifications for a soldier, much more for a volunteer. If he be fit for gradual and permanent, much more for sudden and unaccustomed, service in war; and especially if that service be of a brisk, active, and laborious kind.

This season is early manhood. It may vary greatly as to age, in different constitutions; but its limits, I conceive, are in general those of the French conscription; namely, from eighteen to twenty-five. Some of these qualities, indeed, belong also to our boyhood, and some of them may be unimpaired at thirty; but I speak of a time when the body has nearly, or fully acquired its maturity of strength, without any diminution of juvenile spirits.

And here, though it may lead me to digress a little, and upon a subject with which I have no professional acquaintance, I will not suppress an opinion, that *France owes her military success, in great measure, to the youth of her soldiers.*

It is a common remark, among those who have had the misfortune to see much of the French armies, that they are almost entirely composed of striplings, or very young men. And indeed how can the case be otherwise? The slaughter of the sanguinary wars that have raged since 1792, must have left few veterans now remaining, who had served under their lawful sovereign; and the requisitions,

now called conscriptions, by which such immense armies have since been annually raised, have not yet comprised a single man above the age of twenty-five. Reckoning, therefore, from 1792, when that system began, the oldest soldier produced by it, has not yet attained forty; while an equal number at least, even of the earliest requisition, must be seven years younger. But supposing equal numbers to have been raised by it in each year, and to have comprised an equal proportion of men of every age, from eighteen to twenty-five, it would follow, that a majority of the whole, if living, would now be under twenty-nine. The classes, however, who have served the greatest number of years, must, *cæteris paribus*, have been the most reduced by losses in action, and other casualties of war. Supposing, therefore, that in respect of natural causes of mortality, the chance of a youth of eighteen, to be found alive at the distance of fourteen years, only equals that of a man of twenty-five, it is plain that the surviving conscripts, of a later, must be far more numerous than those of an earlier requisition.

Soldiers thus raised, have a right to be discharged, as I apprehend, when they have passed their twenty-fifth year; but since it is probably a right not much respected in time of war, I will take credit for little or no diminution in the relative numbers of old and new conscripts on this account.

But there remains another consideration of great importance; for it is evident, that each successive conscription, if impartially made, must include a larger proportion than the preceding one, of men in the earliest stage of the limited time of life. Supposing the last year's levy, for instance, to have been universal, there could be no conscripts of the present year, returned emigrants excepted, but such as have attained the age of eighteen, since the conscription of 1805; and consequently, whatever portion of the people may be actually conscribed, unless there be a partial exemption of the younger classes, which we have no reason whatever to suppose, each successive levy under this system, while it is annually used, must produce a much greater proportion of soldiers of eighteen, than of any other age. But eighteen is probably found an age too early, in many constitutions, for maturity of growth and strength; and therefore I presume it is, that in the last conscription of 80,000 men, for service in the present year, Napoleon has required that they shall all be of the age of twenty, and no more.

On the whole, it seems not too much to conclude, that while the French army comprises very few soldiers who have attained forty, a

great majority of the 600,000 men, of which it is said to consist, are under twenty-five.

Unless this extraordinary circumstance in the constitution of the armies of France, can be regarded as of a neutral or indifferent kind in war, it must be admitted to have favoured their success; for we have wonders enough to account for in their atchievements, without supposing that so striking a physical peculiarity, was a disadvantage to be overcome.

In this respect, the composition of every army which they have conquered, has been very different. The Austrian and Prussian battalions, which they have so strangely overwhelmed, the latter especially, contained a large proportion of old or middle aged soldiers. Perhaps, with equal numbers to the French, they could have counted twice as many years. The same, I apprehend, has been the case with such Russian armies, as have been chiefly engaged in these disastrous wars.

The British army, from its fatal employment in the West Indies, has, alas! not much longevity. A great part of it, has been formed during the last and present war, by very young recruits; and this circumstance also seems, when we regard the success of our arms, rather to support, than oppose, the conclusion to which I reason. I am far from ascribing indeed, to the youth of our soldiery alone, the failure of the enemy's fortune in the field, when opposed to British battalions. The gallantry of our officers and troops, and their hereditary sense of superiority to our insolent neighbours, might sufficiently account for it. But the army of Egypt, I apprehend, had but a small proportion of veterans in the ranks; and the brave corps which so well sustained the military fame of their country at Maida, were chiefly composed of very young men.

I am aware that it has the air of heresy in the science of war, to regard men who have but just emerged from boyhood, as an overmatch for veterans in the field. But if there be any truth in the preceding observations, this is not merely an opinion; it is a fact; and the business is, not to prove, but explain it. The young soldiery of France, have in fact, triumphed over the veteran troops of their continental enemies.

Innumerable attempts have been made at different times, and in reference to the various disasters of our allies, to account for this uniform success of the enemy, by the treason of generals, the disaffection of troops, and by accidents of various kinds; but the solutions are all either inadequate, or highly incredible; as well as inconsistent with each other. Let us try then whether this very disparity of

age between the soldiers of the contending armies, may not, in spite of old received notions, go far to explain the whole.

Buonaparte, and other French generals, have repeatedly spoken of the old tactics with contempt; and it is at length become fashionable, with those who have, as well as with those who have not, some little knowledge of the subject, to cry down the old art of war. We begin to look back on Marlborough and Turenne as drivellers, who did nothing great in comparison with what they might have effected; but spent half an age, in slowly attaining, what ought to have been the work of a month. If, however, Marlborough or Turenne had commanded the youthful revolutionary armies of France, I cannot help thinking that they would have discovered the same new methods of warfare, which so many French generals have practised, and used them with equal success: for great commanders in all ages, seem to have been men of strong natural parts, who triumphed, not by a pedantic adherence to established rules, but by the application of plain common sense, to the circumstances in which they were placed. It was, I conceive, not difficult to discover that the cautious and dilatory system formerly in vogue, was not fit for those inexhaustible multitudes of ardent young soldiers, whom France in the delirium of her enthusiasm for liberty, poured forth upon her enemies.

The situation of the republic, at the first, prescribed impetuous and decisive operations; and what was perhaps then but a daring and necessary effort, became afterwards from its signal success, an established new system of war. Without depreciating the value of the discovery, it may with probability be supposed to have been, like many others of great importance, the result of accident, rather than design. Buonaparte's genius may possibly be as great as his fortune; but the new tactics, were Moreau's before they were Buonaparte's, and Pichegru's before they were Moreau's.

All I wish to establish however is, that the success of this new system, has been promoted by the peculiar and advantageous circumstance in question, the youth of the French soldiers. A Frenchman, from the vivacity of his nature, has a juvenile impetuosity even in sober manhood. How much more when sent into the field between 18 and 25. With such a soldiery it might have been difficult to sit down to sieges and blockades; or cautiously to watch the movements of an enemy, as on a chess-board, through a tedious campaign: but it was easy to overwhelm him at once, by a rapid march, and an impetuous attack.

One of the greatest advantages of this grand physical distinction, is the capacity which young men have of sustaining for a long time,

with far less inconvenience than their seniors, an excess of violent exercise; and of this Buonaparte has availed himself beyond any of his predecessors. It is perhaps the chief source of his superiority to them in brilliant atchievements. His astonishing march over Mount Cenis into the plains of Italy; his still more rapid advance from Boulogne to Bavaria and Ulm; what were they, but wonders performed by youthful alacrity and vigour. His enemies were taken by surprise, and ruined, because they thought such marches impossible; and so they would really have been, to elderly or middle aged soldiers.

By the same means, he has been able to make the fruits of a victory decisive, and the rout of an enemy irretrievable, beyond all former example. Not to mention the celerity of his movements after the capitulation of Ulm, the late unprecedented fate of the Prussian army, subsequent to the battle of Auerstadt, affords too strong an instance of it.

I have already touched on that painful subject; and if more need be offered, to illustrate the physical disparity between the pursuers and the pursued, let General Blucher's narrative be read. He does not indeed remark, that his veteran soldiers were opposed to much younger men; but the remark is needless. We find, that though traversing a friendly country, his soldiers were fainting with fatigue and hunger, and dropping, by fifties at a time, on the road; so that at last he brought but a remnant of his original force in miserable plight to Lubeck; while his more vigorous pursuers, followed close at his heels, passed as enemies through the same country which he had previously exhausted, arrived in full force, almost at the same moment with him on the coast of the Baltic, and in such unimpaired spirits, as to storm his batteries before they halted. The contradictions publicly given to this narrative by the enemy, certainly deserve little confidence; otherwise they would greatly strengthen these remarks. But thus much cannot be denied—that the French had marched as many miles as the Prussians—that they must have set off with as little food, or else have been more incumbered on their way; and that a friendly territory, in which General Blucher, by spreading his army over a circumference of thirty miles, could hardly obtain refreshment, could not a few hours after, have yielded greater relief to his enemies. At the same time the brave old General speaks, in the highest terms, of the resolution and patience of his troops. They did therefore all that they could.

Something, I admit, should be allowed in this case, for the difference between the elation of victory, and the dejection of defeat;

but no man of 50, or even 40, who remembers his own bodily powers and spirits at 25, will be at a loss for a more adequate cause of this disparity, between the conscripts of Buonaparte, and the veterans of Frederick the Great.

How different was the case with Moreau, in his famous retreat before the Archduke Charles, in the campaign of 1796? He had to make his way through a hostile country, from the Danube to the Rhine, by a most difficult route of three hundred miles in length; and yet effected it with so little loss, that the retreat was held to be more glorious than a conquest. Yet nothing is recorded of that exploit, that may not be fully explained by the same bodily superiority of his troops. He made forced marches of such length, and with such extreme perseverance, as baffled all the efforts of his enemies.

Whether, therefore, in advancing or retreating, our enemies triumph by the juvenility of their soldiers. Their innovations on the old system of war, are calculated to make the most of this advantage. They have wisely turned war, from a minuet into a race; for they are sure that their veteran enemies, will first be out of breath.

Nor is the same superiority unfelt in the field of battle. No man has as much active or animal courage at 45, as he had at 21. The passive courage of the veteran, it is true, may be increased, rather than diminished by experience; that is, he may stand longer motionless under a cannonade, or the fire of musquetry; and be more coolly obedient to orders, and observant of discipline. Hence also the old tactics suited him perhaps better than the new. But now, the steadiness of troops alone will not suffice; their strength, and spirits, are tried to the uttermost, by brisk, persevering, and reiterated attacks; new troops are brought up from distant quarters, with such rapidity, that they arrive before they were known to be on the march; and the bayonet, is employed with a frequency formerly unknown. Sometimes, it is brought into action late in a hard fought day; and when a line of steady veterans are already fatigued, and nearly exhausted, by a long continued engagement, they are suddenly assailed with that formidable weapon. At the battle of Marengo, victory long hovered in suspense; and the Austrians, after many hours of brave and arduous conflict, were about, perhaps, to reap the fruits of their perseverance, when the same young soldiers, who had lately rushed from Dijon across the Alps, charged them vigorously with the bayonet, and the fate of Europe was decided.

To what extent these reflections are liable to controversy, I know not. They seem to me, to rest upon plain reason, and acknowledged fact.—But, if any man doubt, whether the youth of a soldier be a great advantage under the new system of war, when he is opposed to a well disciplined veteran; at least it will be universally admitted, that the young are far better qualified to form new habits, and sustain unaccustomed hardships, than the old. There is in this view, if in no other, an undeniable importance in the age of our volunteers. A man who has been in the army thirty years, may be as hardy, though not as agile or vigorous, as his younger comrade; but if two men, of different ages are to be taken at once from the tender habits of domestic life, and exposed to the toils of a campaign, who can hesitate to say, that the younger, is likely best to sustain the trying effects of the transition.

Let it be fairly considered, how extreme the contrast would be, between the duties to which a volunteer, in the event of invasion, would be summoned, and the ordinary habits of a man who has always resided in the bosom of his family, in a commercial town or city. Even to young men, if used to the comforts commonly enjoyed by the middle ranks of Englishmen, the change would be painful enough; but to sustain, for a few days or weeks, hardships before unknown, would be to them, if not an easy, at least a practicable task. Not so to a man who has passed his prime, without having ever learned to bear the inconveniences of wet clothes, bad lodgings, watching, fatigue, and the other sufferings incident to a military life. The sense of honour, or fear of shame, might indeed goad him on, to endure them for a while: but he would soon be reduced to an absolute incapacity of further perseverance. He might continue his march, or stand under arms a second day, or a third perhaps; but at length would be obliged, however reluctantly, to ask leave to retire, or sink under the weight of his sufferings.

Nor would the loss of service of such feeble soldiers, be the only ill consequence of their involuntary failure. The years, and the situations in life, which unfit them for active service, naturally give them more influence in the corps to which they belong, than younger members; and an example, the necessity of which might however painfully felt by themselves, be equivocal in the eyes of others, would have a contagious effect. They would at first retard the corps by their languor, and afterwards dishearten it by their defection.

On the whole therefore, I conclude, that those truly patriotic and valuable establishments, our volunteer corps, are as now consti-

tuted, from the ages and confirmed habits of many of their members, as well as from some existing defects of a remediable kind, which have been noticed by others, a species of force not well qualified to repel, by laborious and persevering efforts, the impetuous armies of France.

After all, have we effective soldiers, regular or irregular, sufficient in point of numbers, to make the country perfectly safe against a powerful invasion?

The volunteers, much more than the regulars, are dispersed in every part of the island; and no great proportion of them could be convened at any given point, soon enough to stop the progress of an enemy, who might land on our eastern or southern coast, before he could become master of London. Besides, the defects which I have just been stating, would be found peculiarly fatal, if such troops were to be marched from distant parts of the island, immediately prior to their being brought into action.

Of the volunteers now enrolled throughout the kingdom, a great many are certainly, in point of discipline as well as bodily qualifications, unfit for actual service; and a large proportion even of those who are returned as effective, will not be found so upon trial?—It is too common, I fear, to keep every member on the effective list, who has once exercised with the corps in battalion upon an inspection or general muster; though perhaps, he never was perfect even in his manual exercise, and has forgot the little he once learned of it. These undisciplined effectives too, are, it is probable, increasing very rapidly, in almost every corps not receiving pay, though their nominal force remains undiminished.

Without enlarging on this subject, I will hazard an opinion that there are not 50,000 volunteers in the whole island, now ready to take the field, and fit to act against an enemy; yet were there six times as many, it would be difficult to draw together two armies of that amount, in time to make a first, and second stand, for the existence of their country. Supposing a battle to be lost, and London in the hands of the invaders, the subsequent junction of volunteers who are scattered over the whole face of the island, would be no easy work. With a most active and energetic enemy in the centre, the communications between the east and the west, the north and the south, of the island, would not be long open. The hope therefore of further resistance, would depend, not merely on our having enough of effective volunteers, to form a powerful reserve, but on their being sufficiently numerous, to make head in different parts of the country at the same moment, and fight their way in large bo-

dies to a general rendezvous, though opposed by powerful detachments.

If it be objected, that these calculations are founded on an assumption that we should be taken by surprise; I answer, that our notice of an approaching invasion would probably be extremely short, and quite insufficient for the purpose of embodying our volunteers throughout the island, prior to the actual descent. The means of suddenly embarking a large army at Boulogne, are continually at the enemy's command. The only requisite for invasion therefore, which, unless he trusts to the flotilla alone, he must provide by new expedients, is a convoying fleet: and this, as has been already shewn, he may very possibly obtain by a preconcerted junction of different squadrons off that or some neighbouring port. But the only probable means of so obtaining a temporary superiority in the channel are so far from being inconsistent with secrecy, that they necessarily imply that quality; nor would the opportunity when found, admit of any delay. It seems not unlikely therefore, that the same day would bring us advice that the blockade of Boulogne was raised by a strong hostile fleet, and that the troops were beginning to embark: nor is it impossible, that the flotilla might be already on our coast, before the danger could be announced by government, at any great distance from London.

What then is to be done in order to prepare effectually against the danger of such a surprise, with our present means of interior defence? Are the volunteers to be called from their homes, and marched into distant parts of the kingdom, there to be formed into armies, on every alarm? The repetition of such costly and vexatious means of preparation, would soon exhaust both the purse and the patience of the country. Besides, as the danger must always be imminent as long as a large army is encamped within sight of our coasts, and the most specious indications of an immediate intention to embark, could be easily made, the enemy, if he found he could reduce us to such costly defensive expedients, would take care we should have alarms enough to harrass our volunteers prior to an actual attempt. It is plain then, that forces which are to be assembled from many different districts of the kingdom, at the expense of every branch of civil industry, as well as of domestic comfort, must probably be, for the most part, unembodied when the enemy is on his way to our shores.

What is the practical conclusion from these remarks? That the volunteers ought to be disbanded, or discouraged?—far from it—that their numbers ought to be very greatly increased, and their disci-

pline improved. But that if this cannot be effected, some other means must be found, to cover the country more abundantly with armed citizens, fully prepared for its defence.

The danger of a surprise will obviously be less formidable, the mischief of losing a battle less irreparable, the power of assembling new armies even after the loss of the capital, less difficult, in proportion as our volunteers, or other defensive forces, become more abundant. But there is another consideration of great weight, which we need not disdain to learn from Buonaparte. In a late decree or proclamation for multiplying still further his forces by new conscriptions, he observes, that while the objects of the war are better secured by increasing the amount of the forces employed in it, war itself becomes less sanguinary, to the party who has a great superiority in numbers; resistance being speedily subdued, and the horrors of a long protracted contest avoided. The justice of the doctrine, as applied to his own enterprizes, may indeed well be doubted; because he extends his operations, and his ambitious designs, in proportion to the magnitude of the force which he progressively acquires. But if applied to a war, the field and object of which are limited, and especially to a war of interior defence, the remark is self-evidently true. The greater therefore the amount of our defensive force, regular or irregular, the less of British blood will be shed in the event of an invasion, while the dreadful issue of a foreign yoke will be the more certainly averted.

Besides, a feeble, and barely adequate preparation, though it might serve to repel, would not prevent invasion; and our country would be redeemed at a painful cost, though far inferior to the unspeakable value of the pledge, if we had to combat a powerful French army on British ground, with the arms of our volunteers. But if the people were generally armed in defence of the country, few or none might have to bleed for it. The enemy, in all probability, would not dare to assail, on their own soil, a whole nation of soldiers. But if he should act with such temerity he would be repulsed with an overwhelming energy, that would for ever preclude a renewal of the mischievous attempt.

War too itself might be shortened by such decisive preparations. The enemy seeing that we are not to be conquered, might be glad to give us peace: not such a peace as would make him speedily master of our fate; not a peace by which he would add the sea to the shores of his tremendous dominion in the old world, by ceding to us another colony or two in the new; but a peace of real security, and genuine honour: a peace by which, in some degree at least, the sad destiny

of our allies might be repaired, and the bulwarks of Europe restored. At present, if we are not strong enough at home for a war, much less so for a peace, with Buonaparte. If our interior force gives no adequate protection against him during the present depression of the French marine, where will be our security on its restitution? and if we are now not sufficiently prepared to repel invasion, after three years notice of the danger, how much less should we be so on a sudden recommencement of war, of which the appearance of a French fleet on our shores, would, perhaps, give the first intimation.

Were there no other argument against making peace at this juncture, a decisive one might be found in the present inadequate and declining state of our domestic defence. To improve it when the dangers of war shall be supposed to have subsided, will neither be so easy in respect of the feelings of the people, nor so conciliatory in regard to those of a just reconciled enemy, as to be a work fitter for that period, than the present.

If, after all, any reader be sanguine enough to think that we have already enough of military force for our protection, let him compare the fatal consequences of a mistake on that side, with the inconveniencies of superfluous preparations. Where the evil to be risked is infinite, no preventive means can be excessive, which may contribute to lessen the danger. But I am persuaded, that a great majority of the public will require no arguments to convince them that our interior defensive force ought to be improved. They will feel more difficulty perhaps on the subject to which I next proceed, the means of improving it.

To advance the discipline, meliorate the physical character, and enlarge the number, of our volunteer corps, are beyond doubt, the best defensive expedients we can possibly resort to, if such improvements can be made. That they are in a financial, commercial, and constitutional view, more desirable than a large increase of our regular army, can, I presume, be doubted by nobody; and in a military estimate, they are, I am confident, liable to no sound objections, but such as may be removed.

To suppose that these patriotic bands are not capable of being made fit for the secure defence of their country, because they can have no actual employment in war till the event of an invasion, is to adhere to old theories, in contempt of the most decisive experience. The French officers, are said to express astonishment at our having a diffidence in our volunteers on this exploded principle; and so they reasonably may; for by whom have the most brilliant exploits

of their own campaigns been performed, but troops that had never seen service? We ourselves, however, might have learnt to correct the old prejudice earlier, by our experience in America; and what a glorious refutation was lately given of it by the 78th regiment at Maida?

The bravo young Scotchmen who composed that corps, were raised in 1805, and sent to the Mediterranean in September of that year. Till they landed in the bay of St. Euphemia from Sicily, on the first of July last, they had never seen a musket-shot fired in actual service; and yet they confounded by their steadiness, as well as by their intrepidity and ardour, the bravest battalions of France.*

* The following is an extract of a letter, from one of the gallant young officers by whom this corps was raised, to his father, a respectable gentleman in this country.

"The light infantry battalion, commanded by lieutenant-colonel Kempt, the 78th, Highlanders, and the 81st regiment led the attack. We formed line, at about a mile in front of the enemy, and advanced in ordinary time, keeping an excellent line. When arrived within a quarter of a mile of the enemy, we perceived them in three large solid columns, with about 300 cavalry on their right. They advanced, halted and deployed into line with much seeming regularity and steadiness. After a halt of about five minutes, they advanced with drums beating and loud shouting, (the latter is an expedient by which the French attempt to intimidate their enemies, at the critical moment of an attack, and often with great success) and at 200 yards distance, the firing commenced on our right, by the light infantry battalion. The 78th at the same time advanced, but without firing, until within 100 yards of them; when we commenced and received a heavy fire for a quarter of an hour. The enemy then retired: and we charged them four times, but they never would look us in the face—they fled about half a mile, and we halted to breathe a little.

"By this time, the 78th had advanced considerably beyond the corps on their right and left. The enemy perceiving our situation, brought forward their cavalry to charge us, but they could not make them advance. We were soon supported by the light infantry battalion, and 81st regiment. At eight o'clock, a large column of the enemy was perceived on the left flank of the first line, they having out flanked us by marching along a hollow way to our left; but the second line had perceived this manœuvre, and were prepared for them. Our regiments individually charged; and after three hours very hard fighting, the enemy gave way in all quarters. The 78th and light infantry continued the pursuit, until near two o'clock. The French had about 8000 men in the field, and the British army did not exceed 4795 rank and file, as you will perceive by the annexed accurate statement."

"The commander in chief, and the whole army, have bestowed on the 78th the greatest praise, for their brave conduct; *for indeed, nothing on earth, could possibly resist the determined bravery of our dear lads; who repeatedly charged, driving every thing before them.* The French troops were mostly light infantry—two

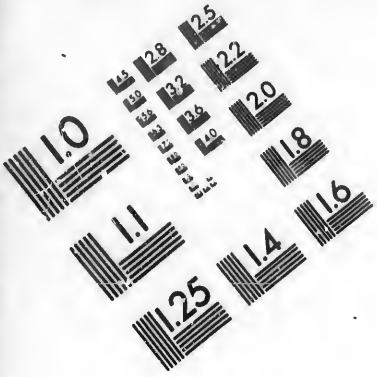
But the troops who have thus immortalised their first attempts in arms, have not been men who at the middle period of life, or when they began to feel the infirmities of declining years, have been transformed at once from citizens into soldiers; nor have they been taught by halves, those essential, though soon acquired arts, of using their arms, and performing military movements. Their want of experience in war, and of long habit in the exercises of the camp, have been their only defects; but then these also are the only defects inherent in the constitution of the British volunteers; and while such defenders of their country can be found with the natural requisites of the soldier, I see not why they should not be enabled to rival, if they found an opportunity in England, the heroes of Jemappe, and of Maida.

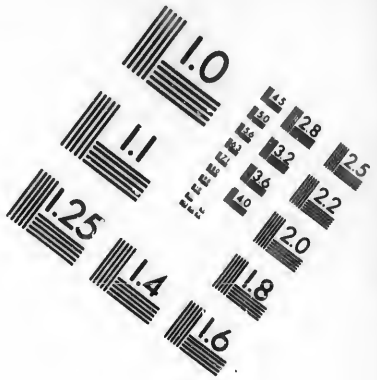
But how, it may be asked, are we to improve the physical character and discipline of our volunteers, and at the same time increase their numbers? In order to answer that question, I must look back to the original constitution of these corps; and point out the sources of those defects which are at present to be found in them.

If the youth of any country are the fittest to defend it in war, they are also the most likely to become its voluntary champions. The same feelings which qualify them for soldiers, impel them to be the most forward in the pursuits of fame; and especially of military glory. But our volunteer corps are of two classes; the one formed prior to the training act of 1803, the other subsequent to that period; and both were composed of a pretty large mixture of

regiments of them were favourite corps of Buonaparte. These regiments behaved extremely well, and did not retire till nearly the one half were bayoneted."

Of 950 young men, of whom the 78th consisted, more than the half were under twenty years of age; and further extracts of the same letter, might serve to shew the importance of that quality on which I have before remarked, the youth of soldiers, especially in services of hardship and fatigue. During five days preceding an attack in which these youths displayed such extraordinary ardour, they were without cover, without any change of clothes, and without any better lodging than the bare ground, "we make however," adds the writer, "snug little places, with bushes and weeds, *and I assure you sleep most comfortably.*" During two days also they had very little food. Let the volunteer of 40 or 50 consult his own experience of the bodily effects of such hardships as he has ever known, and then suppose himself to have been in the 78th regiment, first sharing the hardships here mentioned for five days, then marching and fighting, from one in the morning, till two o'clock in the afternoon; and say what would have been his probable share of strength and animation in the battle. If this case proves that the country may be safely intrusted to young soldiers, it proves no less clearly that they should be young men.





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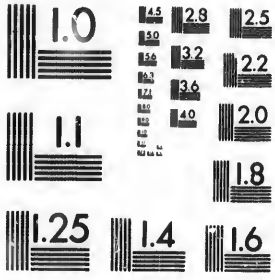

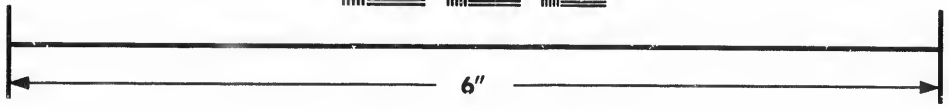

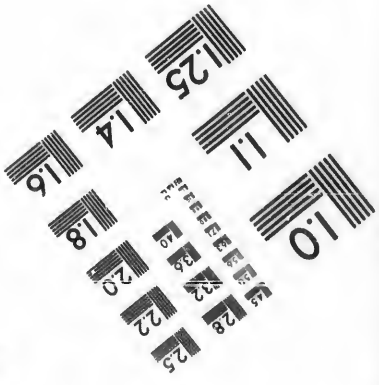

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middle aged and elderly men, as well as men of delicate habits, from artificial causes. The former, were chiefly enrolled in troublesome times, with a view to assisting the civil power in the suppression of popular insurrections; a purpose in which men above the lower class, and who had passed the prime of life, were led to engage, chiefly for the sake of promoting the public object by their influence and example; considering that as there was no danger of their being called into any service far beyond the limits of the town in which they resided, they should be exposed to no very inconvenient or laborious duties. Yet when the country began to be thought in danger from without, such men felt an honorary objection to retiring from the corps in which they were enrolled, and to the formation of which they had contributed.

The same was a frequent case, in several corps raised during the last war, under an alarm of invasion, but whose offers of service were then restricted to particular districts.

The great æra, however, of volunteer institutions was in the year 1803, when the act for the defence of the country, usually called the levy in mass act, held forth to every male between the ages of 17 and 55, the alternative of either serving in a volunteer corps of his own choice, or being trained with men of all ranks, in a compulsory way, in the parish to which he belonged.

Regard to personal credit, ease, and convenience, now conspired with a sense of honour and patriotism, to induce gentlemen, and men above the labouring classes, to form volunteer associations, or to enter into those which were already formed, in the neighbourhood of their respective abodes. With many, the very circumstances which made them unfit for soldiers, were inducements to such conduct; for if their constitutions were delicate, or incapable of bearing fatigue, they naturally expected more consideration and indulgence when commanded by, and associated with, their equals and friends, than in the ranks of a parochial mass. As volunteers too, they had a certainty of the choice of good weather, and convenient hours, for the business of the drill. They knew indeed, that by volunteering, they might place themselves in a liability to be called out into the field in the event of invasion, when perhaps the latter classes, to which they would have belonged in the mass, might not have been put in requisition; but the nearer and more certain inconveniences of the drill, were more formidable, than the distant and precarious hardships of service against invaders; a service too, under which men of right feelings, expected that their bodies would be powerfully sustained by their minds. The expectation was in some

degree just; though knowledge of military duties, and experience of bodily hardships in general, had not taught them its proper limits. Besides, the levy in mass act, placed men under fifty, who were unmarried and had no children less than ten years old, in the second class or requisition. These therefore, very little increased their chance of actual service, by enrolling themselves as volunteers.

Fashion, and delicacy, soon inclined gentlemen the same way, who might have made a different choice; for it was perceived, that those who waited for the operation of the act, would find few of their own rank in life to keep them in countenance, and would have scarcely any other associates in the parish trained bands, than menial servants and labourers. Other gentlemen, very unfit by years and constitution, for military duties, but who had long before enrolled themselves in volunteer corps formed at much earlier periods, and when their constitutions, perhaps, were equal to those very limited services for which they engaged, felt an honorary repugnance to withdrawing, when their corps, at a period of public danger extended its offer of service, as required under the mass act, to any part of the realm.

The consequences of these concurring causes was, that a number of volunteers, more than sufficient to satisfy the wishes of government at that period, was speedily enrolled; but that the proportion of townsmen, in comparison with the more hardy inhabitants of the country, of middle aged or elderly men, in proportion to the young, of tender or valetudinary persons in proportion to the robust and healthful, and of gentry, or men above the lowest class, in comparison with the peasantry and workmen, was unnaturally and unfortunately great. Almost the only volunteer corps composed wholly, or chiefly of men who were corporeally fit to make good soldiers, were those which were put upon pay by private subscriptions. The common people, having no apprehension of being worse situated than others by the operation of the act, had scarcely any other motive for volunteering. They were, nevertheless, by the persuasion of their superiors, and by the prevailing argument, that they soon must be drilled, either by compulsion or choice, beginning to come forward in many places, when it was unfortunately announced, that volunteers enough had been found for the defence of the country, and that the mass act would not be enforced.

I have ever regarded it as a great and most unfortunate error on this occasion, that no attention was paid to age, rank, or situation in life; but to numerical sufficiency alone. It was an error, however, which took its rise in the defence act itself, which, in its estimate of

the sufficiency of a volunteer force, totally disregarded such differences; even that most important one, the distinction between youth and age, in a new soldier. When a number of volunteers, between seventeen and fifty-five years old, equal to three-fourths of the number of men in the first class in any district, should be actually enrolled, the king was empowered to suspend, in such dictrict, the operation of the act; so that a volunteer of fifty-five, was regarded as an adequate substitute for a man between seventeen and thirty. It was thought, perhaps, that volunteers might be safely left to appreciate for themselves their natural capacity for service; but this, under the artificial circumstances which I have stated, was a fallacious reliance; and besides, if that great master in the school of nature, Shakspeare, may be trusted, men who are the fittest for military duties, are very commonly the least willing to perform them.

In fact, the grand principle which I am so anxious to recommend, that by which France has performed her wonders in the two last wars, seems hardly to have had any place in our scheme of national defence. If the youth of men liable to service, determined their classification in the mass, it was in a compound ratio of years and domestic relations. The reason of imposing less public burthens on a married man who has infant children, than on a batchelor, is obvious: but there is no case perhaps in which it was of less force, than in that of a public exigency, which demands our personal service for the safety of the realm. At least, however, the public, was immoderately sacrificed to the private, consideration, when the unmarried man of fifty, was placed in the line of service, and of preparation for future service, before the married man of twenty or seventeen.

At the same time, it is right to observe, that the probable increase of parochial burthens, was a consideration of some weight, which reasonably, perhaps, controlled to a certain extent, the application of right military principles in a general law of that kind. But as far as the principle in question was adopted in the compulsory clauses of the mass bill, it should clearly have been extended to the commutation to be accepted in volunteer service. Returns, therefore, should have been required, of the ages of the men who had offered to enroll themselves; and individuals of the first class, should not have been exempted from the compulsory effect of the act, unless a competent number of men of the same preferable description, offered to serve as volunteers. It was not just or politic, that single men of twenty or twenty-five, should be exempted from the inconveniences of the training plan, and left in a state of unfitness to serve

their country in time of need, because married men, of forty-five or fifty, were more prompt in their offers of service.

The course that was taken, has not only given us a body of volunteers, inferior in natural qualifications, to that which we might have possessed; but has thereby very greatly tended to prevent the attainment of such perfection in discipline, as these defenders of their country might have acquired; and to occasion that decline, both in discipline and effective numbers, which we have now so much cause to lament. Had young men only been enrolled in the volunteer corps, youthful emulation would have led them to make greater exertions to become expert in their military exercises; and this spirit would not have been checked by the inconveniencies of fatigue or bad weather. "You cannot imagine, (wrote a young volunteer of Ireland, to his friend, when on service in the rebellion there) what fine sport we have had; we never halted long in the same place, but have been marching continually in all weathers, and slept on the ground all night." The imagination of youth is an alembic which can extract spirits, even from the cold dregs of discomfort. The lighter motives for volunteering also, are peculiarly felt by young men; but I will not particularize them, lest I should seem to detract from that manly, generous, and patriotic spirit, by which the defenders of their country are chiefly actuated. In all these respects, the volunteer of forty-five is a most unequal associate for his comrade of twenty. The stimulus is less with him, the sacrifices infinitely greater. The one returns from the drill, or the parade, fatigued and disordered, by a portion of exercise, by which the other is rather enlivened. The senior too surely anticipates a cold or rheumatism, from he effects of wet clothes at a review; while the junior laughs at his alarms, and escapes without any inconvenience. In short, nature, in the one case, inclines towards military service; in the other case strongly revolts from it.

If the elder, or less vigorous members of a corps, were induced by these disparities, to retire, they would, at least, do no harm to the cause; as the loss of such soldiers would be no subject of regret: but this, a false sense of honour, too generally prevents. Nor is it pleasant to a man's feelings, when he has been reported as an effective soldier, to request to be put on the non effective list, while his health is apparently good. The common expedient, therefore, in such cases, has been not to resign, but to withdraw more and more from the meetings of the corps; till at length such members rarely attend at all, except on extraordinary occasions. Their example, naturally induces others who are less unfit for service, to be very lax in their

attendance, when business or pleasure presents the smallest temptation to the fault; and the younger members at length think it quite allowable, and even fashionable, to be absent from the ordinary musters. Meantime, emulation in military exercise, is greatly damped by the same cause. The musters and inspections are so thinly attended, that the corps can no longer make a respectable appearance on the parade; and those who are most expert in the usual evolutions, find their merited credit lost, through the awkwardness and mistakes of some of the other members, who have been absent at previous meetings.

Having assigned the causes of these great defects in the composition of the volunteer corps, it remains to suggest some practical means by which they may be removed.

The chief defect of all, that which consists in the insufficiency of the numbers of volunteers of proper ages and habits, for our secure defence, can of course only be remedied by new enrollments. But the intermixture of young and old members, in existing corps, which is so great a drawback on the improvement of the former in discipline, and likely to ruin their efficiency in actual service, is an evil that may be easily corrected. Nothing more is necessary, than to distribute the members into two or three different classes, according to their different periods of life; and then form them into first, second, and third battalions, first, second, and third companies, or still smaller divisions, proportionate to the strength of the corps. Young men would then have a fair opportunity to qualify themselves completely for actual service, by exercising with men of their own age, without being retarded or embarrassed by their less expert and less active seniors: and the first divisions of many different corps, might be brigaded together, and taught the more complicated evolutions, on the largest scale, with the same important advanta[illegible] It would soon become discreditable among them to be lax in attendance, or to be found incorrect in the field; and in the event of an invasion, an incorporation of the first battalions, companies, or divisions of the nearest volunteer corps, would oppose to the enemy an army of youthful patriots, who, like the heroes of Maida, might in their first military essay, surpass his bravest troops.

Though this new regulation in our volunteer corps, would improve their military character, it would not, I admit, immediately increase their numbers. It would not, however, produce a contrary effect; for the younger members, would be bound more strongly than ever by a sense of honour, not to desert the cause of their country, when they found themselves peculiarly relied upon for its support;

and placed, as it were, in the front line of our domestic defence. Their elders, on the other hand, relieved from an arduous and unequal competition, and placed in their proper stations, would no longer have a satisfactory excuse for neglecting their assumed duties, and absenting themselves entirely from the parade. They would prepare themselves better for the services to which they might be really equal.

It might even not unreasonably be expected, that an improvement which would raise the reputation and consequence of the volunteers in general, would progressively add to their numbers.

While, however, I would thus cherish the spontaneous contributions of military spirit, and patriotic sentiment; while I place the highest value on the volunteer corps, and deprecate every thing which tends to their discouragement, I am far from thinking that the defence of England, at this awful conjuncture, should be left to their arms alone, limited as their efficient force now is, in conjunction with our present establishment of militia and regular troops. There was a time, when by adopting the principles here recommended, we might have had volunteers enough, and of the very best quality. A new call from the government and the legislature, perhaps, might still induce the youth of the country more generally to take up arms. But if not, such a call ought to be enforced by a new compulsory law.

And here again, I will dare to censure both the great parties in the state: the administration for being content with so very inadequate a measure as the existing Training Act; the opposition, for condemning even that faint approach towards vigorous preparation, as a needless burthen on the people.

While France, to use a phrase repeated so often that its awful import has ceased to be felt, is become *a nation of soldiers*, and while she is assiduously impressing on all her new dominions in Europe, the same terrible character, it is truly amazing to hear British statesmen condemn, as oppressive or needless, the principle of compulsory service. But it is not less extraordinary, to find the application of that principle, limited to a service of twenty-four days in three years. Yet this is the utmost effect of the Training Act now in force. His Majesty's undoubted prerogative in time of actual invasion, is not indeed impaired by this law. He may then call for the full service of all his people: but in an age when military science has reached such high perfection, and when all its instruments to be useful, must be prepared by previous discipline, this prerogative would be very ineffectual in the hour of danger, if previous measures should not have paved the way for its exercise. The legislature, therefore,

steps in to prepare the people for performing the most important duty of their allegiance in time of need; and sends them for *twenty-four days* to the drill, under parish constables!! Even this is to be done in so slow and progressive a method, that unless the enemy shall be very dilatory indeed, he may sooner provide a marine for the invasion of England, than a tenth part of the people of England fit for military service, will be thus trained to receive him.

It would be unjust to the minister who proposes this law, and who certainly possesses very rare and brilliant talents, not to observe, that he himself does not much rely on the effect of it for our security; but looks chiefly to a regular army.—Where however, is that army at present? I speak in reference, not to his plan for recruiting it, which seems to be built upon a wise as well as liberal principle; but to the disposition of its existing force. If the regular army is to be enlarged, only to furnish means of foreign expeditions, and colonial conquests, I see not how the ablest plan for its extension, can add to our domestic safety.

Is it really then thought too much, that Englishmen should be obliged to prepare themselves effectually for the interior defence of their country? In what nation, but our own, was it ever doubted, that free men are bound to serve the state with their arms, if necessary, even in foreign and distant war? In the freest communities of Greece, such was the common duty of all the citizens. At Rome, even in the utmost plentitude of her liberty, the free citizen who upon the *census* refused to take his military oath of enrollment, and to march wherever the Roman eagles led him, was sold into perpetual slavery; as unworthy to enjoy the freedom of that country, for which he was unwilling to fight.

By the happy effects of our insular situation, and maritime strength, aided by that inestimable modern defence of Europe, now so fatally subverted, the balance of power among nations, we have hitherto held in this respect, the richest inheritance of the earth, at the cheapest quit rent. Since the decay of the feudal system, and its military services, we have not been called upon to defend our freedom, perfect and unexampled, though it is, at the same cost which other nations have paid, for extending the power, and promoting the glory of their tyrants.

These happy times however, are passed away, and a new state of things, more natural in a world of violence and wrong, prescribes to us new duties. Yet still we have our citadel amidst the waves; and blessed be God, still possess our ascendancy in point of maritime power. We may yet therefore retain the best part of our singular

exemption from the military duties of free men. Foreign conquest, is not necessary to our safety; and therefore no Briton need be required to bear arms, except within the borders of his country.

Are there any men among us who hold even this too much? If so, they are unworthy of the national blessings they enjoy; and especially unworthy of British liberty.

If such persons would do less for the service of their country, than every other free people have been content to do in similar cases, let them regard with terror at least, if not with edification, the present example of France. The system began during her boasted liberty, is continued to this hour, and is not likely to be relinquished. There, every man is liable to serve who is of an age for military duties; though those between 18 and 25, alone, have yet been put in requisition. Is it fit, that Frenchmen should do and suffer more, to overthrow English liberty, than we to preserve it?—And if such a humiliating contrast were decorous; is it safe?—It is impossible, that a nation so superior in energy to us, should long fail to reduce us to the bondage we deserve? No,—it is the general, the inevitable course of human affairs, that a warlike people who sink the citizen in the soldier, must give law to their unarmed neighbours. Standing armies, however brave and faithful, will not long protect a community that trusts to them alone, against a nation of soldiers.

We may well lament that such a military system as that of France, should have started up again in Europe; and that the iron age of arms should revive in the 19th century; but the regret is unavailing—as our enemies have set this terrible example, we must follow it, or perish. Such would be the dilemma, even if these enemies, like the subverters of the Roman empire, were rude and uncivilized in comparison of ourselves, distant from us in place, and inferior in extent of dominion; how much more certainly so, when we have to conflict with a power, which rivals us in arts and arms, which looks into our harbours, and which can now summon to the field, more than half perhaps, of the whole military force of Europe.

But if any Briton can be unmoved with the dangers that menace his country, I beseech him to remember his own. He would not choose it seems to become a soldier, to avert all the horrors which would fall upon his native land, in the event of its conquest by France. But does he suppose, that in that event, he will be exempted from military service? No,—he may rest assured, that he would soon be compelled to take up arms in the hard service of the conqueror. *Si*

noles sanus, curres hydropicus. If he will not march as a free man, he will have to march as a slave.

Buonaparte, who has made Batavian and Italian conscripts, will infallibly make English conscripts too, whenever he has power. Is it supposed he will then have no more use for soldiers? He will find it convenient at least, to drain our captive land, of its young and ardent spirits, as the most likely to break their chains. Nor will he want new fields of blood for them, wherein they may gather fresh laurels to adorn the brows of their master. The vast extent of Russia, may find long employment for his arms; so may the distant regions of the new world; and even Africa, which during the late peace, he formed the plan of colonizing and covering with military stations, might furnish a copious drain for the juvenile conscripts of England. Righteous governor of the world! who knows, but it may be among the stores of thy retributory justice, already so conspicuous in our fate, that the youth of England shall be led captive into that very land, whose hopless children we now cruelly exile and enslave!

That our enemy aims at conquering the whole world is now abundantly evident. He will long therefore, have new battles to fight, or at least new nations to overrun; and when even the world is his own, the provinces of his empire, must be kept in awe by military force. There is no doubt therefore that his system of conscription will be as extensive as his conquests; and it will probably be his prudent plan, to transport the levies of every country into some distant province; just as he sent his unfortunate Polish legions, to employ their free born ardour in the slave-war of St. Domingo.

Should our gallant young men, from 18 to 25, be marched in chains, like the conscripts of France, to the coast, and embarked for service in the torrid zone, or in some other distant region; they may be indulged perhaps, with a last embrace of their chaste wives, or a last adieu to the dear objects of their first affections; and then, if the pain of leaving such pledges in the hands of their licentious masters shall admit of any aggravation, it may be found in the thought, that by a timely enrollment for the defence of their country, all this might have been avoided. How will they then execrate those improvident lawgivers and statesmen, who indulged their love of ease, at the expense of their civil security!

The obvious conclusion from these remarks, is that as far as involuntary service may be necessary for the full and perfect security of the country, it ought without scruple to be exacted.

How far such a necessity now really extends, it may not be easy

to determine; but looking at the present situation of Europe, and especially at the population of the French empire, it is surely no immoderate estimate, that what France has already done, England cannot safely omit. We should at least, go as far in preparation, as she has gone in practice. While her young men from 18 to 25 are actually serving, our young men of the same ages, should at least be preparing to serve.

I am far however from thinking, that this is the only part of our population which ought to be trained to arms. Every man under 45, should be in some degree prepared to take part in the defence of the country: but while a moderate share of discipline, might be all that the elder classes could conveniently acquire; the young, ought, with all possible expedition and correctness, to learn the whole business of a soldier.

Of the specific means, for thus generally arming the people, I speak with hesitation and diffidence, being conscious that there may be difficulties which I have not sufficiently weighed; and feeling my great incompetency to judge, either in a military or financial view, what particular plan is the fittest to adopt. That the people should be armed, and that the youth of the country should be assiduously prepared for service, plain common sense may suffice to discover, but in what specific mode, with what gradations, and by what persuasory or compulsory means, these great ends may be best obtained; are questions on which even the ablest field officer, and best informed statesman, may deliberate with anxiety and doubt.

At the same time I feel, that to suggest some practical ideas, is in such a case, the fairest way of bringing abstract principles under review; and I will therefore in a very brief, and general way, sketch the outline of a plan; not as the best possible application of the principles which should be adopted in the defence of the country, but as an example of their actual use.

First.—The fundamental maxim of the plan, should be that every man who is of an age to bear arms with effect, and disabled by no bodily infirmity, should be trained, as speedily and as fully as general convenience may permit, to the use of arms; and to all such duties of the soldier, as may be learned without actual service. Difference of age, should vary the time, the degree, and the manner of preparation; but the exceptions grounded on circumstances exterior to bodily fitness for service, should be such only as the nearest civil interests of the country, the very first of which is reverence for religion, indispensably require.

Second.—I conceive the limitation of age should be from 17 to

45. Men of a later period of life, might form themselves into, or continue in volunteer corps if they pleased; but should not be constrained to take up arms, nor permitted to mix themselves with younger volunteers, unless under such regulations as would prevent any prejudice to the corps at large, through their unfitness for actual service.

3d. The men liable to compulsory training, should be divided into three classes, as follows: The first, composed wholly of men between seventeen and twenty-five; the second, of men from twenty-five to thirty-five; the third, of men from thirty-five to forty-five years of age. If the classification should be varied in any degree, on account of conjugal or parental connections, as in the Defence Act of 1803, that principle should be admitted only in the two latter classes. The proportion of married men under twenty-five, who, with the aid of their wives, could not compatibly with the public services required from them maintain their families, would not be large; and a distinction therefore ought not to be admitted in favour of the married of that class, which would materially impair the best force of the country.

4th. Every man of either class, who chuses to equip himself, and be trained, at his own expense as a volunteer, should have liberty so to do, and be exempted from the compulsory training to which he would otherwise be liable, upon enrolling himself in some volunteer corps now existing, or in some new corps whose offers of voluntary service shall have been accepted by his majesty. The present volunteers, should of course have liberty to continue as now incorporated, subject only to the new interior arrangement already suggested. But it would be a point fit to be submitted to the discretion of his majesty, whether they should be recruited by new members of the first class; or whether in new corps to be formed, any intermixture of that with the elder classes, should be permitted.

By the volunteers however, whether old or new, much stricter regulations must be adopted for enforcing frequent meetings, and regular attendance, than now in general exist; nor should there be any relaxation of those duties, until upon the most exact inspection, all the members shall be reported, by a field officer, to be perfect in their military exercises and discipline. By the effect of this rule, members of the same association would become vigilant inspectors of each others regularity and progress; and a man, who by his negligence postponed the perfection of the corps, and the consequent relaxation of its active duties, being found a nuisance to

the rest, would either be reformed or expelled. A majority of members should have the power of expulsion for that cause; and a volunteer, once expelled from his corps, should be obliged to submit to compulsory training in his proper district, till being perfectly disciplined, he should be able again to obtain admission into the same, or some other corps.

The commanders in chief, or inspecting field officers of each district, should prescribe to each particular corps of volunteers, the time within which, upon pain of being disbanded, and made subject to compulsory training, they should attain the requisite degree of discipline, for actual service.—Herein, however, some regard might be had to the professions, occupations, or situations in life of the members; and a similarity in these particulars therefore, ought to, and would determine, the choice of a corps. The same officer ought also to approve their plan, as to times of meeting, fines for non-attendance, &c. though these might be left, in the first instance, to the judgment of the corps itself, and might be subject to occasional variations, under the inspecting field officer's sanction.

5th. When the volunteer corps were thus either formed entirely of men of the same class, according to the divisions already mentioned, or divided into first, second, and third companies, or other denominations, by the same rule; distinctions might and ought to be made, in the degree of application and dispatch required from different corps and divisions, in qualifying themselves respectively for service. The youngest class should be allowed a shorter time for that purpose than the second; and the second than the third. Young men may be expected to acquire expertness in the use of arms, and in the various movements of a battalion, much easier than men of more advanced years; for which reason, as well as because they will be the most efficacious soldiers in the field, they ought to be trained with much greater dispatch than their seniors.

6th. I think that no pay should be allowed to any member of a volunteer corps out of the national purse, unless when he is called into actual service, or permanent duty; though this rule may perhaps admit, and require particular exceptions. Nor should the allowance for the corporate expenses of these corps, be very considerable. The alleviation of public burthens in this respect, may be an important object; and the petty contributions of the members, might be considered as a tax paid by men who have property enough to prepare themselves for service at their own charge, for the superior ease and convenience of their military education.

Here it may perhaps be objected that the distinction between

such volunteering, and compulsory service, is merely nominal; and I admit it is so; except in the choice of a corps, and accommodation as to the times and places of exercise, and in the modes of coercion or discipline. In all other respects, the duties of the volunteer, and of his fellow citizens in general, supposing compulsory enrollments to be necessary for our defence, would, and ought to be, the same.

7th. Provision being thus made, if necessary, for the improvement and increase of the volunteer institutions; the whole mass of the people of proper age for service, except such of them as prior to a very early period, should produce certificates of their enrollment in some volunteer corps, ought to be speedily, but progressively, trained and disciplined, so as to fit them for actual service.

What proportion of them should be put in requisition, at once, for that purpose, I presume not to determine; but the men of the first class, should in a great degree, if not exclusively, be the first selected. The mode of compulsion, should, in the first instance, be as mild, and as analogous to the ordinary sanctions of municipal law, as possible. The best course, perhaps, would be the imposition of a small fine, for non-attendance, or for any act of insubordination, with a progressive increase in its amount on every repetition of the offence; and a discretionary power in this respect, should be intrusted to those who may be appointed to adjudge such penalties; in order that they may be fairly adapted to the fortune, or situation of the offender. The last resort against the untractable, after repeated convictions, should be the sending them to some corps of regular troops, to be appointed for receiving such persons; in which they should be subject to all the strictness of martial law, until thoroughly qualified for service.

It would be a convenient and fair expedient, to oblige those gentlemen in every district who are past the period of military duty, and yet not disabled by age or infirmities, to act in rotation, as deputy lieutenants or commissioners, for the purpose of adjudging fines, allowing excuses, and executing such other judicial functions, as the new system might require. It would thus become the duty and interest of every man in the community, who is capable either of military or civil service, to forward the grand common object, as speedily as possible; for when once the people were thoroughly trained, and not till then, all these troublesome functions would, for the most part, cease.

The process of training should be progressive, in respect of method, as well as of numbers: at least, such should be the case with

the younger classes. The business of the drill might be conveniently and expeditiously learnt by every man, in his proper parish, by the allotment of an adequate portion of time for the purpose in each day or week, without calling him far from his home, so as to interfere with his domestic comforts; but after the manual and platoon exercise are learnt, the young defenders of their country, may best be taught the more complicated business of the regular soldier, and initiated in his proper habits, by being embodied in battalions or brigades, and employed for a certain time exclusively, in military duties. Beyond all doubt, the first class ought to take the precedence, in thus finishing their military education.

If I may rely on the judgment of those who are best qualified to calculate the time necessary for this important purpose, it would not be necessary to separate our young men above three months in the whole from their ordinary residence, and civil employments, in order to make them perfect soldiers; by which I mean, as perfect as men who have not in the ordinary meaning of the phrase, "seen service," can possibly become.

Such is the brief outline of my ideas, crude and imperfect ones I admit, on this momentous subject.

I do not overlook the financial and political objections, that may be opposed to this, or any other plan for a general armament; but to state and answer them fully, would be greatly to exceed those bounds which must be prescribed to the present work. The great and compendious answer to them all is, that they must be surmounted, were they tenfold as strong as they are.

I conceive, however, that this great and necessary effort for the safety of the country, would probably in the end, be less expensive than the vexatious and costly means that must be employed greatly to increase our regular forces: and if there were now any possible cause of diffidence in the loyalty of the people at large, which I entirely deny, the best way to remove it, is to arm them in the national cause. Habits of military subordination, are the best correctives of a licentious popular spirit. If any man doubt it, let him contemplate the conduct of the army and conscripts of France; and this not only under Buonaparte, but through every change in the government that has succeeded the first revolution. Men are taught mechanically by military exercises, the strength of concentrated power, and the utility of obedience; and they become also attached by new feelings, to that government in whose support they are actively engaged.

I repeat, however, as the short answer to all objections which

apply to the principle of a general armament; it is indispensably necessary. Times are arrived, in which we can find no other sure expedient, to avoid a foreign yoke. We must become a nation of soldiers, or a nation of slaves.

Sect. 4. Reformation, is an essential basis of our national safety.

It remains to say something of that other mean of averting our public dangers, which I propose to consider, namely, reformation. As to *patience* and *unanimity*, their importance will be readily perceived; but the necessity of such *reformation*, as I mean to suggest, may perhaps not be equally obvious.

Were I to recommend the correction of abuses of a financial or constitutional kind, some readers would readily concur.—These, they would say, are indispensably necessary; and without these, patience and unanimity cannot be expected. But these are species of reformation, which it is not my design here to consider; both because there is no dearth of advocates to recommend them; and because a wish to reform such abuses, where they admit of safe correction, is not wanting in his majesty's councils.

Frugality in the public expenditure, is beyond all doubt a duty of high moment; and the neglect of it under the present circumstances of the country, would be truly opprobrious. Whether any such constitutional reformations, as moderate and wise men have desired, ought now to be attempted, is a question which I will not discuss. It is of too extensive and delicate a nature, to form an incidental topic in a work like this. I will only remark, that as there never was a period in which the popularity of our glorious constitution, and of our government, was more important; so never was it more dangerous to propose in parliament, any measure greatly desired by a large portion of the people, against the known sense of a majority of the legislature.

Leaving such questions to others, I would insist only on the immediate duty and necessity of one reformation, which we have too long owed, both to God and man; which a great part of the community most anxiously desires; to which both houses of parliament are now solemnly pledged; and which I firmly believe to be more essential to the salvation of the country, than her volunteers, her army, or her navy. I mean the abolition of the slave trade.

Here, perhaps, some readers who have hitherto assented to most of my remarks, and have found little to censure in these pages,

except the feeble and inadequate manner in which momentous truths have been treated, will be disposed to lay the pamphlet down with a smile; and exclaim, what connection has this stale subject with the fate of England?

I conjure them, however, if they have borne with me thus far, to listen a little longer. I implore them to recollect, that many of the most important relations between human events and human conduct, have been hidden from the wise and prudent, till subsequent to catastrophes which their timely discovery might have averted: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes."

That the slave trade is in its consequences, politically injurious to the country, is a proposition which has been proved so often, and so clearly, in parliamentary debates, and in arguments addressed to the public, that I need scarcely regret the want of time to offer here new demonstrations of its truth. It can be doubted only by those who will not listen or read on the subject; or whose prejudices are quite invincible.

The national mischiefs, however, produced by this commerce and the colonial system which it generates, are more and greater than even abolitionists have yet stated. They are evils sustained at the great expense of that commercial welfare which they are falsely alleged to promote; and by a still more ruinous waste of our national wealth. They have cost us tenfold as many millions as they have truly returned.

The bankruptcies among our merchants, and the losses among our manufacturers, produced by the slave trade, and by West India speculations in new lands, those kindred bubbles with which it is always associated, notoriously and greatly exceed, in number and extent, the gains and the fortunes produced by them.

I quarrel with no theorists here; unless they would push their maxims to preposterous extremes. Be it admitted, that the wrecks of individual enterprise are often public emolument: still there must be limits to the practical application of such theories. A nation cannot profit by the adventures of its citizens, when private ruin is the ordinary event; and success the rare exception.

Hazardous, and in a general view, unsuccessful, as these speculations have always been, they are now become infinitely more so. Before the markets of Europe were shut to our West India produce, the prices of sugar were so far from yielding a profit on the planter's capital, that they hardly paid his annual expenses, and the charges of sending his commodity to Europe. War has I admit,

contributed to these effects. But war, alas! is now become a perennial evil. Nor could peace bring any mitigation that could possibly turn the balance in favour of the planters at large. In fact, sugar planting has long been, on an average, a losing business; and is now become from the natural progress of causes inherent to the existing system, independently of the evils of war, but above all from the continuance of the slave trade, a speculation which, to the great majority of adventurers, is and must be ruinous.*

That men are found still to engage in it, is no argument whatever to the contrary; any more than the great sale of lottery tickets is a proof that the chances are on the whole beneficial to the purchasers.

The West India lottery, from the unhappy and extreme inequalities of sugar crops, has still a few tempting prizes: and so it would, perhaps, if upon the general capital embarked, there were a loss of 90 per cent. The successful adventures, like the 20,000l. prizes at Guildhall, are blazoned in every walk of English commerce; while the blanks are unnoticed and forgot. New dupes therefore are continually found; and while millions are periodically sunk by our planters, and slave traders, by our merchants and monied men who trust them, and by our manufacturers who trust the merchants; the nation, like a simple lottery club, is fatally persuaded, that it is beneficial to follow the game.

Meantime, the accursed system begotten and upheld in all its abuses by the slave trade, produces a state of interior weakness and danger in these colonies, which has made them, both in peace and

* That the sugar planters, in the old islands, have, for many years, been progressively sinking deeper and deeper in ruin, is a fact quite undisputed among those who know any thing of the case. In a late publication, by a gentleman of high commercial character, and intimately connected with the sugar colonies, it is held that estates in St. Kitt's, an island famous for the quantity and quality of its produce, do not produce on an average, for a series of years, 4 per cent. on the capital invested. Yet the legal interest of that island is 8 per cent.; and many planters are glad to obtain money at that rate. The incumbrances on estates in the West Indies, notoriously bear a large proportion to the whole value of the capital: it requires little calculation therefore to shew, that enormous losses must be incurred; and on whom do they chiefly fall, but English creditors?—See letter to William Manning, Esq. M. P. by C. Bosanquet, Esq. p. 17.

If further proof be wanted, that sugar planting is become a ruinous employment for our commercial capital, I refer to Sir William Young's late work; and to the last manifesto of the Jamaica Assembly, printed by order of the house of Commons, February 25th, 1805. Bankruptcy is there described as the almost universal lot of the planters of that island.

war, most expensive incumbrances on the revenues of the parent state; and fatal drains on our regular army. The West Indies have probably cost us more money since 1792, than all our military operations on the continent, and subsidies to our allies, united; and the waste of our regular infantry which they have occasioned within the same period, has beyond doubt, greatly exceeded the whole collective losses of our army, by sickness or the sword, in every other service.*

Were there no other objections to the slave trade, than that it is continually adding to the extent of mercantile capital, thus wastefully applied, and colonies thus dreadfully maintained, it would be a sufficient reason for its abolition. But this horrible commerce, at the same time, forms an insuperable obstacle to benign improvements in our sugar colonies; and tends to perpetuate every mischief, moral and political, that belongs to their interior system. While a slave market exists, neither wholesome laws, nor individual benevolence, will ever be able to meliorate the general lot of those wretched beings, who toil under the whips of the drivers. It would be as rational to attempt to bring a sea marsh into tillage, without first embanking against the tide.

That the propositions last advanced, are not wholly consistent with the delusive representations of self interested men, and with the prejudices of the ill-informed, I too well know; and yet I cannot consistently with the plan of the present work, proceed to demonstrate their truth. Should the grand abolition controversy not soon be shortened, by the force of those admitted principles on which it ought to be decided, the public shall ere long be possessed of some precise and systematic information respecting colonial slavery; and I trust then to satisfy every man who will take the pains to reason upon well established premises, that all these propositions and remarks, as to the ill effects of this commerce in the colonies are irrefragably true. Mean time, I will rather leave them unargued to the reflections of the discerning reader, than forbear to notice such powerful considerations, among the reasons for abolishing the slave trade.

* Sir William Young has given in his late work, authentic returns, whereby it appears, that out of 19,676 men, mustered in the windward and leeward islands from 1796, to 1802, we lost by death, no less than 17,173. But this account, I apprehend, contains no part of the army employed in St. Domingo, or Jamaica, nor does it embrace the losses during the years 1793,—4, and 5, during which the yellow fever was peculiarly destructive. *See West India Common Place Book, page* 218.

There are other and higher views however, upon which, without assuming any thing that can be the subject of controversy or doubt, we may arrive at the same practical conclusion.

The esteem of foreign nations, is obviously of consequence to us at all times, and especially at this singular conjuncture.—We feel it to be so; for we have endeavoured to conciliate their good opinion and friendship, by very costly sacrifices. Buonaparte too, is of the same mind; for he is scarcely more intent upon ruining our commerce, than destroying our reputation on the continent: and beyond doubt it would tend much to preclude our effectual interposition, at some future and auspicious season, between his ambition, and the remnant of Europe that has yet escaped his sword, if he could succeed in persuading the world, that we are a sordid, selfish, and unprincipled people, whose gold is their god, and who would spread desolation through the earth, for the sole purpose of extending their commerce. It might also further his present plan, of engaging the powers still neutral, in a confederacy against our maritime rights.

Now who can contemplate the slave trade, without feeling, that in that point, we are justly chargeable with the very crimes which the enemy imputes to us?—It is false, that we promote wars, for the sake of our trade in Europe; but that we thus sin in Africa, is unquestionably true. It is a foul libel, that the European continent owes its present miseries to British avarice; but that the great African continent owes chiefly to that cause, miseries far greater and more durable than those of Europe, cannot fairly be denied.

Buonaparte indeed, has not accused us of the slave trade. The prejudices of which he is the dupe, and the crimes which he has committed, have shut his mouth on that subject. But a great majority of his subjects, and of the people of all other nations, cannot but supply in their reflections, what his invectives have in this respect omitted; and when they think of the slave trade, must be prepared to believe us capable of all that he libellously imputes. Even accomplices in guilt, know how to estimate the indications which it furnishes, of the general principles of their associates. Let it be remembered too, that this is a crime, not in the contemplation of others merely, but in our own: a national iniquity, long since recorded as such, by the solemn confession of our representatives in parliament, as well as by the voices of thousands and tens of thousands of the people. Our public discussions on this subject, and the resolutions of the commons, in 1792, excited great attention in other nations, and no where more than in France. What then must be thought of our having for fifteen years subsequent to that period, not

only cherished the inhuman commerce which we had professed a resolution to abandon, but greatly enlarged its extent?

What is actually thought in France, we well know.—The apologists of the slave trade, as well as its enemies, accuse us of a vile hypocrisy; supposing that we meant to lead other nations into a dereliction of their share of the trade, in order that we might monopolize its profits. I am well informed, that Buonaparte mentioned his belief of our dissimulation on the subject to Mr. Fox, when in his company at Paris; and was assured by that great man, but probably without effect, that the opinion was unfounded.—No man could have repelled the charge with a better grace than that generous statesman; one of the ruling feelings of whose heart was abhorrence of this detestable traffic. He publickly professed that he should regard its abolition as an attainment valuable enough to overpay all the labours of his life; and regretted in death nothing more deeply, than his leaving that work unfinished.

But though Mr. Fox doubtless said to the First Consul, every thing which the wish to deliver his country from so opprobrious an imputation, could suggest, he must have felt that it was not easy to explain or defend our conduct. Buonaparte probably remained unconvinced; and wronged the sincerity of his illustrious guest, by supposing that he had less love for truth, than for the credit of his country.

That we have incurred upon this account, much odium and contempt with the French people in general, cannot be doubted. Even after the usurpation of Buonaparte, a large part of them were so averse to the infamy of repealing their own decrees against the slave trade, that a very bold stand was made against the measure in their senate; and the consul, notwithstanding the terror of his newly acquired power, found himself opposed by a minority of 27 to 54. Let us here be just to our unfortunate enemies (unfortunate they truly are, though guilty too). Their liberty was irretrievably lost, through the crimes which it had engendered; but they would have saved from the wreck the most generous of their reformations, if the sordid and mistaken policy of their new master had not opposed it.

They must have felt, however, with indignation, that England, more than Buonaparte, was in fault. His advocates strenuously pleaded our example as his apology; and the defence, it must be admitted, was far more specious, than that which some of the friends of this horrible commerce, offer upon the same principle in England. If the mistress of the ocean can plead, that she has no power to abolish the slave trade, while other nations continue to carry it on;

the same plea was much more allowable to France, who cannot in time of war, protect her colonies from conquest, much less their commercial laws from suspension, against her maritime and slave-trading enemy. Good men indeed, and even bad men, who reason clearly, would see the absurdity of the defence in a moral view; for France could at least deliver herself from the guilt and the shame, if not Africa from the scourge, of the commerce. But considering how small a share she possessed of it, and how large a portion of it is in our hands, she could not hope in any great degree to benefit the unhappy natives of that country, by a sacrifice in which we would not concur.

It seems impossible to doubt, that our opprobious adherence to this traffic, has added much to the popular prejudice against us in the minds of Frenchmen in general. During the last war, it naturally confirmed the apprehension, that we were, from selfish motives, enemies to their freedom and independency; for it indicated a national character consistent with such sordid feelings; and now when events have precluded that suspicion in regard to the present war, the same crime gives colour to the calumnies of Buonaparte, and prepares the people, especially the friends of the negroes among them, to believe that we basely wage war against them for the sake of commercial spoils. Sure I am at least, that our immediate renunciation of the slave trade, would tend to open the minds of Frenchmen, to our true character; to make the war with us unpopular among them, and lay a basis for solid reconciliation, when the spirit of their government, and the state of Europe, shall allow of our sheathing the sword.

If we turn to America, the importance of our national character, in this particular, will be more than equally apparent. There, we certainly labour under great and unmerited reproach. The most moderate and abstemious use even of our maritime rights, is indignantly resisted; and partly from misapprehensions which we vainly attempt to remove; because they spring from a rooted conviction, that our policy is uniformly directed by narrow minded and selfish principles: it is said that we scruple not to trample on the rights of the weak and defenceless, whenever it may promote the interests of our navigation and trade. It is equally singular and mortifying, that even Mr. Randolph, and our other apologists in that country, admit to their opponents, that we really act on such principles; contenting themselves with the argument that other nations do the same. Yet no reasonable ground or colour for such imputations, is to be found in our late treatment of the United States; except perhaps in our too

lavish concessions. It is true that self-interested individuals have, for their private ends, fomented this anti-British spirit in America, by false and injurious charges; but our general impressions of the moral character of any individual, have a powerful effect in our construction of his conduct towards us; and it is in some measure the same between nations.

There is, perhaps, no part of the world in which we have incurred so much disesteem by our conduct, in regard to the slave trade, as in the northern states of the American Union; in which the late resentment against us seems to have been the most prevalent; nor is there any country, in which the abandonment of this commerce, would have a more powerful influence in our favour. May it soon be in the power of our friends in America, when they hear us taxed with rapacious principles, and a contempt for the rights of mankind, to adduce our dereliction of the slave trade, as a clear refutation of the charge.

Should we now continue to refuse this long-promised reformation, the reproach must take a deeper tinge than ever in the eyes of all civilized nations. The lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, have at length concurred with the commons, in recognizing the moral turpitude of the trade, and in giving a pledge for its speedy excision, which it would be infamous not to redeem.

If it be important that our national character should be vindicated in the eyes of foreigners, not less so, that it should stand fair in our own.

Who can doubt that a high sense of national honour and virtue, a reverence, as well as love for our country, and above all a firm reliance on the protecting power of God, are popular sentiments of great value at an arduous crisis like the present. We are called upon to make great sacrifices; perhaps to give the last proof of fervent attachment to our country; it is fit therefore that she should appear fair and amiable in our eyes, and that whatever soils the lustre of her character should be instantly wiped away.

There is indeed an attachment to the land that gave us birth, which depends on no elevated sentiments. For my part, I am not ashamed to avow a love for the very soil itself; a weakness which has made me shed tears at bidding it a long adieu, which has made me review it with transport at my return, independently of the thought of every rational object of attachment comprised in the endearing name of country. I blush not to confess, that, in a distant climate, the expectation of death has been embittered by the thought that my dust would not mingle with my native soil. But

the patriotism that deserves the name, is composed of nobler elements. It is a filial sense of honour and duty; animated by reverence for all that is noble and great, by affection for all that is excellent and amiable, in the society to which we belong. It looks back on the glory of our ancestors, it looks up to the dignity of the throne, it looks round on the wise and beneficent institutions, the mild and equitable laws, the freedom, the happiness, the virtue, by which the social edifice is adorned; till glowing with a generous enthusiasm it exclaims, "this is my beloved country! I received it from my fathers; I will defend it with my blood; I will transmit it unimpaired to my children!"

If such patriotic feelings are at this awful moment peculiarly seasonable and important, let them not be chilled with the sad reflection, that this same beloved country is polluted by the most sordid and barbarous crimes; that though dear to ourselves, she is a curse to a large portion of the globe; that her wealth generates, and her power maintains, a greater mass of human wretchedness and guilt, than even the pestilent ambition of France: perhaps than all the other political crimes of the age. "I have often thought," a pious friend who is thoroughly acquainted with the slave trade, once said to me, "that were an angel to look down from heaven, in order to determine which of the nations of the globe is the greatest scourge to the human species, his eye would be arrested by Africa and the West Indies, and by those receptacles of unspeakable misery, the ships that are passing between them; and his awful report would be, Great Britain is that merciless nation."

It is by those only who have not read and reasoned upon the subject, or who suffer themselves to be deceived by rank and inconsistent imposture, that such an estimate as this can be thought excessive. But were the dreadful effects of the crime at all disputable, not so at least its sordid and infamous nature. What rational being, who ever heard of the slave trade, can attempt to rescue it from our contempt and abhorrence?

I demand here, however, no wider concession, than that this commerce is in fact a subject of extreme detestation with a large portion of the British people; and consequently a great drawback upon that reverence, and that ardent love, for the institutions and the moral character of his country, by which the mind of a patriot should be animated in times of danger and distress.

Let it be remembered too, that a large proportion of those who are most zealous for the abolition of the slave trade, are men of religious feelings; and who regard this traffic as a most heinous offence, not

only against man, but against God. If there be statesmen or legislators, who can reconcile to their own views of Christianity, their own erroneous and inadequate notions of the slave trade, by looking beyond the crimes and the cruelties perpetrated on the coast and on the middle passage, and even beyond the dreadful destruction of our species which ensues in the West Indies, and all the miseries of a hopeless bondage, to a supposed compensatory good; let them consider that a large and very valuable portion of their countrymen, not only utterly disbelieve the existence of any such compensation; but reject with horror the idea of abetting injustice, cruelty, and bloodshed, upon the principles of expediency. They even regard the deliberate admission of such a motive as an aggravation of the crime; because it implies that man is wiser than his Creator, whose beneficent purposes, are thus supposed to be at variance with his own commands.

I will suppose, for the argument's sake, that these men are unreasonably scrupulous; still their own timid consciences must give the law to their expectations of the favour or disfavour of God. Can it be doubted then that multitudes of Englishmen, who regard the slave trade in this light, are much disheartened and alarmed by that atrocious national sin? Can they hope as confidently in the benignant dispositions of Providence for the safety of their country, as if she were guiltless of innocent blood? On the contrary, many of them are much more intimidated by our persevering provocation of divine justice in the slave trade, than by all the burthens and all the visible dangers of the war. It alarms them more, and in the event of actual invasion, would tend more to damp that confidence so essential in the breast of a soldier, than all the victories of Buonaparte.

In the name then of this large portion of my fellow subjects, than whom none love their country more, than whom none are more ready to abide all extremities in her defence; in the name of those who worship God among us, and admit no pleas of expediency against his holy laws; I earnestly implore from parliament the immediate abolition of the slave trade.

God forbid, however, that I should dissemble on this sacred subject; and it would be dissimulation to state the uneasiness of religious minds on account of this great offence, without adding, that I think they are justly alarmed.

Yes! I will dare to avow an opinion, that the public calamities with which we have been so remarkably visited, ever since the iniquities of this commerce were laid open to the national conscience,

and reformation was callously withheld, have been chastisements for that odious cause.

It cannot be necessary to apologize, in a land called Christian, for assuming in times like the present, that we have incurred the anger of heaven; or for humbly inquiring by what offences, that anger is most likely to have been excited. At an æra so portentous and alarming, the atheist indeed, if there be such a character among us, may behold with a stupid stare the machinery of second causes, without raising his thoughts to that Providence by which it is directed; but all who believe, that "verily and indeed there is a God who governs the earth;" and especially the sincere Christian, will recognize in the afflicting prodigies of the age, the hand of the Most High.

That the good or evil destinies of nations are often the retributory appointments of divine justice or bounty, no man who believes in the scriptures can doubt: "A fruitful land maketh He barren for the wickedness of them that dwell therein." A thousand passages in holy writ might be cited to the same effect; as well as multitudes of examples there recorded of public calamities, which were expressly imposed as punishments for national sins.

What indeed can be more consonant to our views of the divine government, whether derived from revealed or natural religion, than such retributory justice? Kingdoms have no world to come; communities of men will not, as such, stand collectively, before the judgment seat of Christ. If then, it pleases the Almighty in his temporal providence, often to punish and reward in a remarkable manner, the vices and virtues of individuals; we may reason from analogy (that best natural interpreter of the unseen works of God) to the probability that nations will sometimes be made to illustrate in the same way, his justice, power, and mercy.

It would be easy to shew, that there is in fact a close analogy in what is called the ordinary course of providence, between the divine government of states, and of private persons. Their virtues equally tend to prosperity and long life; their vices to misery and dissolution. If the decline and fall of nations may generally be dated from the period of their highest attainments in arts and luxury, that is also the period of their most heinous offences against God; and however opposite the proposition may be to ordinary notions, their most cruel sins against man also. But I must abstain at present from abstract discussions like these; and rely, as it is right to do in such cases, on the express testimony of inspiration.

In the particular case in question, I might fortify my remarks if

necessary, by the authority of our national church. We have been repeatedly enjoined, on days of fasting and humiliation, to acknowledge that the calamities and dangers of the times are appointments of divine providence, on account of our national sins. The rulers of our church, have not indeed attempted to point out to us the particular offences which call for reformation. Spiritual admonition from the pulpit, is in the present age, of a general kind: but it is not less the right and the duty of individuals, to give a particular and practical application to these pious reproofs. It is obvious that a distinct conception of our sins, whether private or public, must be a necessary prelude to a sincere and efficacious repentance.

We have no prophet to declare to us the causes of the displeasure of heaven; but conscience may enable us to discover them; and if we fairly apply the examples and the declarations contained in the holy scriptures, to the case in question, we shall inquire in the proper way for its solution; and with a well-founded hope of success.

What can be more suitable to every exalted conception of the divine nature, than the causes which are most frequently assigned in scripture for the chastisement of sinful nations? They are, for the most part, the sins of oppression, injustice, and violence towards the poor and helpless; and the shedding of innocent blood. The offence of idolatry itself among the chosen people, was not more frequently denounced than these; nor more severely punished.

The passages of scripture which might be cited to this effect are numberless; and it is perhaps only weakening the general effect of the remark, to adduce examples of them. Yet for the satisfaction of those who are not sufficiently conversant with the bible, I offer a few in the annexed note.*

The almighty declared himself offended even with those solemn fasts, which were intended to avert his indignation, while oppression was unreformed. "Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?

* "For thus hath the Lord of Hosts said: Hew ye down trees and cast a mount against Jerusalem. This is the city to be visited; she is wholly oppression in the midst of her; violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually is grief and wounds." Jeremiah vi, 6, 7.

"Make a chain; for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence: Wherefore I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses." Ezekiel vii. 23-4.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord: Ye have not hearkened unto me in pro-

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen; to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke?"

Not less clear to the same effect, are the exhortations of the prophet Jeremiah: "Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor; and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, and the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood."

These, however, and a thousand such admonitions were slighted by the offending people; and what was the effect? An invading sword was sent through the guilty land, its throne and its altars were overturned, and its surviving inhabitants, were dragged away by a merciless conqueror, to groan in their turn under oppression, and to illustrate in a miserable captivity, the retaliating justice of God.

Were we with such scriptural precedents and explanations of the ways of the almighty before us, to search for the causes of the apparent displeasure of heaven; it would be natural to turn our eyes towards the slave trade, on account of the specific character of the guilt which it involves; even if its enormous magnitude, did not pre-eminently challenge attention. If rapine, oppression, violence to the poor, the stranger, and the destitute, dishonest gain, and the effusion of innocent blood, be put in inquest against England, where will they be found but in the slave trade; except indeed in its associated iniquity, the dreadful slavery of our colonies?

claiming liberty every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed with all the kingdoms of the earth." Jeremiah xxxiv. 17.

"The children also of Judah, and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border." "Behold, I will raise them up out of the place whither ye have sold them; and will return your recompence upon your own head." And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off: for the Lord hath spoken it." Joel iii. 6, 7, 8.

"Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein." "Wo to him that covetem an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil." "Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul." "For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it." "Wo to him that build-

I know there are many who suppose us to be merciless oppressors in the East Indies, as well as the West. But if the suspicion be applied to our treatment of the poor, or the great mass of the people; it is utterly unfounded. There is no slavery in the dominions of the East India company, unless the condition of a few domestic life servants, may deserve the name; and even these are so treated, that their bondage can scarcely be distinguished from freedom. But the labouring classes of the community, are in general free; nay, for the most part, the agricultural labourers till their own leasehold lands; for which they pay a fixed and very moderate rent. In no part of India are they so happy in this respect, as within the British territories; and if the native princes have ever had cause to complain of us; to their subjects at least, it has been an advantage and a blessing, to be transferred to the government of the company. I heartily wish we were as innocent of neglecting their moral, and spiritual improvement, as of impairing their temporal welfare.*

If we cast our eyes around us in this happy island, there is still less matter of charge against the national conscience on the score of violence and oppression. In no other part of the globe, are the poor and helpless so well protected by the laws, or so humanely used by their superiors. Nor are the laws chargeable with injustice towards the less fortunate peasantry of our sister island; though here perhaps, there is much that ought to be reformed. If the legislature be now culpable in regard to Ireland, it is for omission

eth a town with blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity." Habakkuk ii. 8—12.

"The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy; yea they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully." "Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath; their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord." Ezekiel xxii, 29—31.

"Behold therefore I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee." Ezekiel xxii, 13.

"By the multitude of thy merchandize they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will destroy thee." "Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thy iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic: therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth, &c.—and thou shall be a terror, and never shall thou be any more." Ezekiel xxviii, 18, 19.

* It is but just to say, that the late governor-general marquis Wellesley, was very laudably disposed to promote the religious instruction of the natives.

and neglect; rather than for positive wrong; nor does the fault arise from any of those unrighteous principles, or from that oppressive use of power, which are so peculiarly offensive to heaven.

If therefore we are suffering for such offences as have usually provoked the scourge of the Most High, if it be as the protector of the poor and destitute, that God has entered into judgment with us, we must I repeat, look to Africa, and to the West Indies, for the causes of his wrath. But the magnitude of the crimes of the slave trade, still more than their specific character, will conduct us to the same conclusion.

Near 37,000 unhappy men, women, and children, are yearly carried by us from their native land to a far distant country; there to perish prematurely; or to end their days in hopeless captivity and bondage.* They have given us no offence; they have, for the most part, committed no crime even against their countrymen, worthy of exile or slavery; the motive of our transporting them, is pure undefecated avarice. Yet by our hands, and by our procurement, the dearest ties of nature are barbarously rent asunder; the husband is dragged from the arms of his wife, the innocent child from the bosom of its parents, and the cries of their agonized feelings are ended only by the silence of despair. At this moment, ten thousand shrieks and groans, uttered by the helpless victims of British violence, are entering the ear of the Most High, the righteous judge of the whole earth, and demanding vengeance against us.

While our slave ships, like hungry vultures, hover continually over the coasts of that hapless continent, dreadful are the horrors in the interior by which their victims are prepared.

The exportable slavery of Africa, is for the most part, the produce only of crimes which we directly or indirectly stimulate the wretched natives to commit; and by our means, every species of misery, is continually propagated through the greater part of that vast continent. Treachery, false accusation, man-stealing, midnight rapine, and conflagration, are ordinary means, by which in aid of that more copious source, captivity in war, our demand for slaves

* The number of slaves carried from Africa in 1804, in ships cleared out from Great Britain, supposing their cargoes to have equalled, and not exceeded, the numbers limited by law, was 36,899. (See Sir W. Young's West India Common Place Book, page 8.) This account, however, comprises the slave ships *trading under British colours* only. If the British slave trade, carried on under American and Danish colours, prior to the act of last session, were included, the dreadful amount of the human victims immolated at the shrine of our national avarice, would be greatly enlarged.

is supplied; and while by the frequency of these crimes, man becomes to man a greater terror than the lion of the desert, to the destruction of all innocent commerce, and civil intercourse between individuals; frequent and dreadful wars are kindled between their petty states, for the sole purpose of obtaining captives to barter with our merchants, for the arms and luxuries of Europe.

Nor is war only increased in point of frequency; its horrid features are rendered far more dreadful, by the same detestable motive.—Populous villages are beset at midnight, by armed bands, who after killing all that make resistance, carry off, to a more dreadful fate, such of their prisoners as are fit for servitude; leaving of course to perish, all who from age or infirmity, depended upon the more vigorous for support.

That this description of the sources of exportable slavery is strictly true, all who will take the trouble of reading the most decisive public evidence, may be fully convinced. Their effects on the state of manners and society in Africa may be easily conceived: and where man is made at once so wretched and so guilty, it may scarcely excite additional horror, to reflect what enormous and various destruction of human life, must directly or collaterally result, from the same detestable commerce. This murderous waste, however, is of far greater extent than the uninformed suppose. Many of the unhappy captives are brought to the shores of the Atlantic from very remote parts of the interior country; and in their way have extensive desarts to pass, where so many external hardships and sufferings are added to the anguish of their minds, that of those who originally set out for the coast, a great number perish miserably on the journey.*

Exportable slavery then, is not only the fruit of atrocious crimes, and exquisite wretchedness; but this fruit is not, and from the nature of the case cannot be, thriftily gathered. The hapless country, for every bondsman placed in the hold of a slave ship, is deprived of much more than a single life.

But a still further waste of human existence takes place in that foul prison itself. The mortality on the short passage which ensues, among persons chiefly in the prime of life, is by the last accounts equal to five in every hundred; even when the excesses of a blind and merciless avarice are controlled by the regulations of the acts made to limit the carrying trade.†

* Some truly shocking illustrations of this truth may be found in Mr. Park's travels.

† Sir W. Young's West India Common Place Book, p. 10.

Much greater proportions of the slaves which arrive in the West Indies, are confessedly brought to an untimely and speedy death, by the *seasoning*, or training to compulsory labour, in our islands;* and on the whole, it may fairly be calculated, that not less than three human beings are directly, or indirectly sacrificed in Africa, on the middle passage, and in the West Indies, in order to place a single seasoned negro upon a sugar plantation.

Such is the murderous nature of this intercourse with Africa, which opprobriously to the character of commerce, is known by the name of the slave trade.

If we were to compute the homicides which it has produced since we first embarked in it, the amount would almost exceed credibility. Perhaps it would be no extravagant, though a horrible proposition, that a sword of divine vengeance which should utterly extirpate the whole population of England, would hardly exact more than life for life, for the innocent blood with which we are justly chargeable.†

* By a public document, in the possession of his majesty's ministers, it appears that in Trinidada a full moiety of between eight and nine thousand imported negroes had perished in two years. To enable the reader to conceive the complicated miseries which brought them to their end, it would be necessary to give much, and very shocking information, respecting the settlement of new lands in the West Indies.

It is reported that a great number of Chinese have lately been carried, by whose procurement I know not, to that island. It is impossible here to expose the false views on which such an expedient to settle the new lands by free labourers has been built; but I seize this opportunity to protest publicly against it, as a preposterous and cruel experiment.

† Mr. Edwards estimates the total import of negroes into the British colonies, from 1680 to 1786, at 2,130,000, but admits that this is much less than was commonly supposed; and it may, I conceive, be reasonably taken at three millions. In 1787 the importation was 21,023. (History of West Indies, vol. 2, book 4, chap. 2.) From 1795 to 1804, the numbers carried from Africa in British ships, were 380,893. (West India Common Place Book, page 8,) and these may be presumed to have been chiefly carried to colonies then in our possession; because our foreign slave trade was, during that period, chiefly carried on under American and other neutral colours.

I cannot immediately refer to any authentic information as to the state of the trade during the two last years, or during the years from 1788 to 1794 inclusive; but as it has progressively increased during the last twenty years, it will be a very moderate estimate to take the importation in the years last preceding each of those periods, as the average of the whole. The importation in 1787, therefore, being 21,023, that in seven years to the end of 1794, was at least 147,151; and the importation of 1804 being 36,899, we must add 73,798 for the two last years.

It would be quite incompatible with the necessary limits of this work, to state, even in the most summary manner, the dreadful op-

We have thus:

Prior to 1786 - - -	3,000,000
In 1787 - - - -	21,023
From 1787 to 1794 inclusive -	147,151
From that time to 1804 -	380,893
In 1805 and 1806 - - -	73,798
Total	3,622,865 imported into the

British colonies.

How many of these have prematurely perished by the seasoning, or from the subsequent effects of West India slavery, cannot be ascertained; but we may guess at it from the following data. Mr. Edwards asserts, that from authentic lists of entries in his possession, there were imported into Jamaica, from 1700 to 1786, 610,000 negroes, and we cannot suppose less than 100,000 to have been on the island at the commencement of that period. From 1786 to the end of 1792, the numbers imported, on the ordinary proportion which Jamaica has had of the whole British trade, could not be less than 30,000. These numbers together would give, supposing the births to equal the deaths, a population at the end of 1792 of 740,600 slaves; whereas Mr. Edwards publishing in June 1793, estimated their numbers at 250,000, being less by 490,600, than the numbers imported; and even this, was near 40,000 more than the amount of the last poll tax returns. (See History of Jamaica, vol. i, book 2, chap. 5.) The loss, therefore, in this island, would be near two-thirds of the whole number imported, if it were not for a deduction that is due on account of the numbers re-exported; which Mr. Edwards estimates to have been in Jamaica, about one-fifth part of the import. Allowing, by this rule, 128,120 to have been re-exported, the loss will be reduced to 362,480, or nearly one half.

It may perhaps be objected, that in the long period here taken, a great proportion of the whole number imported, must have died, even under the mildest treatment, and under circumstances the more favourable to longevity; and that the calculation, therefore, for the most part, only proves that the births have not equalled the deaths.

But I answer first, that it is impossible to suppose the growth of native population to have been kept down by any means, that have not at the same time shortened the lives of the adults; especially considering how extremely prolific negroes are in other places, under far less favourable circumstances of climate and local situation. Secondly, that it is an error to suppose that the difference between the numbers imported, and the remaining population, constitutes the whole loss by mortality. On the contrary, the numbers of children born and prematurely cut off, during so long a period, in an old settled island like Jamaica, may be fairly supposed to have much more than equalled the whole import. While we deduct then from the amount of a mortality produced by oppression among the parents, we must add to that which was produced by the same cause among the children.

pression to which the unhappy expatriated Africans are doomed, in the colonies to which we carry them. A subject so copious, so im-

Nor is it an answer to say, that a great proportion of infants every where perish without attaining to maturity; for such a surplus of births is also found, where oppression does not exist, as more than equals the loss, and makes the rising greatly exceed the declining generation.

It is true, that among new-imported negroes the males shamefully outnumber the females; but let it be put on the other side of the account that these are almost all in the prime of life, when added to the ancient stock.

If with all the blights to which infancy is subject, and all the barrenness of age, the grove of human society is still elsewhere full of leaves from shoots of its natural growth, what luxuriance of foilage would the transplantation of such multitudes of exotic seedlings in their full bearing have produced, had they found a genial soil.

If after all, such objections should be allowed to diminish the tale of actual murder, a more than equal addition might be made on the latter view to the dreadful character of the system. It has probably hindered the increase of our species, by four times the number of millions that it has directly destroyed.

The mortality in new settled colonies, is notoriously far greater than in such as like Jamaica, have been long in cultivation; and therefore if a moiety of the imported negroes have prematurely perished in that island, to suppose that the same proportion of all the slaves brought to our colonies in general, has met the same fate, will be probably far too low an estimate.—If so, we are guilty of the blood as well as the misery, of above one million eight hundred thousand of our fellow-beings, by premature mortality, the effects of their rigorous bondage, in our colonies alone.

But the dreadful account by no means ends here: for we have to add the great numbers lost upon the passage, and on the coast, prior to their departure from it, which during the long period that preceded the Slave-Carrying Acts, was probably at least 15 per cent. and we have next to widen the basis of computation, by the whole amount of our trade directly from Africa to foreign colonies, or with foreign ships on the coast. This has always borne a large proportion to the whole of our colonial imports. By the tables furnished by Sir W. Young in his recent work, it appears, that at the two different periods to which his account of our foreign Slave trade relates, viz. 1787 and 1802, it comprised nearly 4-7ths parts of all our exports from Africa. And of 20,658 slaves supplied to foreign colonies in the latter year, only 5389 were re-exported from British islands. On the whole, it may be very moderately computed that we have sent from Africa, including the vast numbers that used to be sold by our ships on the coast to the French and other foreigners, two-thirds as many in all as we have imported into British colonies: and therefore if we have carried directly to the latter 3,622,865, we have probably expatriated in all, above six millions of these unhappy fellow-creatures. Let the loss on the passage, and in the foreign colonies, upon this additional multitude be reckoned, and then let us take into the account the enormous waste of life that must have been produced in Africa, in the reducing by war, by conflagration, massacre, and all our other ordinary manufactories in that country, six millions of

portant, so much misrepresented, and so little understood, requires to be illustrated in a treatise of no small extent, confined to that single object: and such a treatise I have already promised to submit to the public, unless the interests of humanity should happily cease to demand it. Meantime I will in general affirm, that our sins against that devoted race in the New World, would even exceed those with which we are justly chargeable in Africa, were it not for the consideration that they are much less generally known in this country, and therefore less deeply affect the consciences of the people at large.

If the guilt of the slave trade, in respect of the nature of the offence itself, be enormous, how much more when we consider the peculiar obligations which we have long owed as a nation to a benignant Providence.

Who are the people that have provoked God thus heinously, but the same who are among all the nations of the earth, the most eminently indebted to his bounty? He has given to us an unexampled portion of civil liberty; and we in return drag his rational creatures into a most severe and perpetual bondage. Social happiness has been showered upon us with singular profusion; and we tear from oppressed millions every social, nay, almost every human, comfort. In short, we cruelly reverse in our treatment of these unhappy brethren, all the gracious dealings of God towards ourselves. For our plenty, we give them want; for our ease, intolerable toil; for our wealth, privation of the right of property; for our equal laws, unbridled violence and wrong. Science shines upon us, with her meridian beams; yet we keep these degraded fellow-creatures, in the deepest shades of ignorance and barbarity. Morals and manners, have happily distinguished us from the other nations of Europe; yet we create and cherish in two other quarters of the globe, an unexampled depravity of both. A contrast still more opprobrious remains. God has blessed us with the purest effulgence of the Gospel; and yet we dishonour by our slave trade the Christian name; and perpetuate the darkness of Paganism among millions of our fellow-creatures.

At this time of war, and impending danger, other striking contrasts arise, between the treatment which we have long received from the Almighty, and that which we give to our poor African brethren. He has girt our isle with a bulwark which for ages has

people in the prime of life, into a state of exportable bondage. When the whole of these dreadful items are put together, the conjecture in the text will perhaps appear to be no excessive estimate.

not been broken; war has scarcely during a century and a half, a brief and slight civil contest or two, excepted, visited our happy soil; and its horrors for the most part have been too remote, to excite even a fear of its contact. To devastation by foreign armies, we have been strangers for many centuries. In short, our domestic exemption from the miseries of war, has been perhaps unparalleled among nations. But the eye of an all-seeing God, beholds in Africa, a contrast dreadful indeed; and of which much favoured Britain is the chief, as well as most guilty, author. There, the wretched villager can at no time lay down his head in safety, secure from being, before the rising sun, the victim of a predatory invasion. To fill our slave ships, the sword, the fire arms which we furnish, and the torch of midnight conflagration, ravage that hapless land; and war, in its terrors at least, if not in its actual inflictions, is nearly incessant. By Britain, both the arms and the motives are supplied; by Britain, those horrid consequences of captivity, eternal exile and bondage, are chiefly inflicted. The commerce, the maritime energies, which to ourselves impart security, and internal peace; are in our hands, the instruments of unspeakable misery to helpless and unoffending millions.

Do we shudder at the idea of those calamities which a successful invasion would bring upon our country? They would, as I have faintly attempted to shew, be indeed dreadful; and a united people should prepare to make every sacrifice, and to encounter every danger, by which they may be averted. But while we contemplate these menaced evils; while we deprecate them in our closets, and in the house of God; let conscience fairly suggest to us what more dreadful invasions we are hourly abetting in Africa! how much worse than even French bondage, is the captivity which we multiply, and perpetuate among her innocent children! May the merciful disposer of all events, avert from us, guilty though we are, the horrors of a foreign yoke! but let not those who can, and will not, deliver us from the impious crime of the slave trade, join in this prayer for our country; lest it should from their lips offend, rather than propitiate, the just governor of the world.

The obstinate adherence to this crime, with which we have too long been chargeable, is another aggravation by which divine justice may be reasonably supposed to have been provoked; for perseverance in guilt, after admonitions to reform it, has in what we know of the course of Providence towards nations, been usually added to the offence, before the scourge has been inflicted.

The iniquities of the slave trade are of ancient date. During a long course of years it has been a standing crime of England to export Negroes from Africa, and sell them into a cruel bondage in the colonies.

But of a stubborn and obdurate mind, long perseverance in a particular sin is not conclusive evidence. An inveterate, as well as a recent, criminal habit, may have had its origin in ignorance, or heedlessness: and if conscience has at first been blind, or inadvertent, the error is more likely to be confirmed, than diminished by the length of the sinful practice.* The divine justice and mercy, therefore, are most clearly vindicated, when to long forbearance, awakening expostulation is added, prior to the avenging stroke. Accordingly, we are told that Noah preached righteousness to his contemporaries, prior to the overwhelming deluge. We find Lot, expostulating with the inhabitants of Sodom, before the fall of the avenging fire from heaven. Moses and Aaron were sent repeatedly to admonish the Egyptians, and to demand the dismission of the oppressed Israelites, before the various plagues which fell upon that devoted land, successively chastised its contumacy. Above all, the dreadful scourges which were inflicted upon the stiff-necked, though chosen race, were always preceded by an open exposition of their sins, and earnest calls to repentance; till at last the warning voice of the Messiah himself, loudly denounced those full-blown iniquities, which were consummated by their rejection of that sacred monitor, and were soon after punished by a terrible destruction.——Amidst so many signal examples of this righteous mode of dealing of the Most High, we have one, in which the obduracy of the human heart relented, and the uplifted scourge was withdrawn; for at the preaching of Jonas, Nineveh repented and was spared.

In alarming conformity to these scriptural precedents, will be found the conduct of Providence towards this long favoured nation, upon the hypothesis that severe chastisements for the guilt of the slave trade, have been already felt, and that still severer are now approaching.

The extreme wickedness of our African commerce, and of the colonial oppressions which it generates, were, till about 19 years ago, but little known to the British public at large; and even our most intelligent statesmen and senators, had but imperfect concep-

* It is well known, that queen Elizabeth was persuaded, that the Negroes, carried from Africa to her colonies, were voluntary emigrants; and expressed a pious horror at the idea of taking them by force.

tions, of the number and extent of those foul crimes which British subjects had long been perpetrating against the Negro race, upon both sides of the Atlantic.—The mode of procuring slaves in Africa, and the horrid effects of our enormous and increasing demand for them, in that ill-fated region, were distinctly known only to the obscure and sordid individuals immediately engaged in that opprobrious traffic.——Some crude notions prevailed, that men were unjustly torn from their native land in Africa, and oppressed in the West India islands; but the detail and the extent of their wrongs, were uninvestigated and unknown. It was not clearly understood, that multitudes of cruel murders were chargeable upon the British nation, as the ordinary effects of the slave trade.

"The times of this ignorance God winked at."

It pleased him in the inscrutable counsels of his providence, wherein compensations for temporal evil, rich enough to make its permission just, and beneficent, are reserved for the virtuous sufferer, that the cruelties of our traders and colonists, should be long shrouded in obscurity, and unarraigned at the national bar.

But the greatness and suddenness of the light, was at length as remarkable as the long duration of the darkness.—In the year 1787, the wrongs of the oppressed Africans, forcibly attracted the attention, and excited the compassion, of some able and eminent men. Their case was powerfully stated to the public, and still more powerfully brought into Parliament. The moral feelings of the nation were appealed to, and the appeal was at first very favourably received.—Pity, remorse, and indignation, were almost universally inspired; except, indeed, among that too large and powerful proportion of our fellow subjects, whose private interests and connections, or prejudices born of such influence, bound them to the side of the colonies.

This appeal to the national conscience, was not supported merely by the exertions of individuals, or by private and hasty examinations of the case. Obvious and seemingly irresistible, though the moral considerations were that demanded an abolition of the slave trade, it was made the subject of deep and long investigation. The great inquests of the crown, and the people; the privy council, and house of commons, went into elaborate inquiries respecting the nature and extent of those crimes, whereof the nation stood arraigned by some of its most respectable members: and while evidence was received on the part of the accusers, every opportunity was given to those who profited by the alleged iniquities, to deny, extenuate, or excuse them. Even the immediate perpetrators of those crimes,

were received as witnesses in their own favour. A denial upon the word of an African trader, or West India proprietor, of any charge by which his own interest and character were assailed, was admitted as freely, as the testimony of those who were liable to no selfish bias.

Inquiry, therefore, if not impartial, was at least, not partial to the accusers—Yet what was the result?

To state the substance of the evidence, even in the most compendious form, would be to demand the perusal of a large volume, upon a subject not likely I fear to obtain the attention which it pre-eminently deserves, at this alarming juncture.—But the general effect, is sufficient for my purpose, and may be briefly told. The slave trade was condemned in the house of Commons, the only branch of the legislature that gave an early opinion upon the evidence, in the most deliberate and satisfactory way. That immediate reformation was not voted, is a lamentable truth; but the reprobation of the slave trade upon moral principles, was not on that account less decisive, as a parliamentary verdict, of its iniquity. It was even more so perhaps, than had the just practical consequence been instantly adopted. There were enemies enough to virtuous reformation, to carry a vote for delay; but even these, with the exception of a self-interested few, were as strongly of opinion that the abolition of the trade was a moral duty, as their opponents: nay, they admitted, that even the imperious motives of a supposed political necessity, the ground upon which they voted against an immediate reform, would not justify the suspension of the measure beyond a period of eight or ten years.

To those who can not, or will not, undertake the laborious task of examining the printed evidence, more complete satisfaction as to the enormity of this national crime cannot be offered, than arises from the confessions of those senators by whose votes it was protracted. Does any man doubt that the slave trade is a system of gigantic guilt, let him go to their speeches for conviction. The talents of some of these men were very eminent, their diligence extreme, their sceptical dexterity in political discussions characteristically great. Can it be believed then, that they would have conceded to their opponents, ground so formidably strong, as the admission of the moral duty of terminating this traffic at an early period, if the effect of the evidence before the house had not irresistibly demanded such a concession? Were the guilt of a convict, whose execution had been respited, matter of doubt, what could be stronger satisfaction than to say, that the friends at whose earnest solicitation

his life had for a while been spared, had confessed the justice of the sentence; and petitioned for no more than a temporary stay of execution?

While the nature and magnitude of this grand iniquity, were thus incontestibly established in point of evidence, it pleased Heaven, to aid the effect which the display of its hideous features was fitted to produce, by various modes of direct and strong expostulation. Not only was a flood of light poured upon the conscience of the nation, which before lay sleeping in darkness, but a voice clear and loud, as ever spoke without miracle to man, called upon it to awake, and escape from the judgments of God. From the happy texture of our constitution, the public mind has many organs, through which knowledge, political as well as moral, can be conveyed with peculiar facility; and through them all, were the people of England addressed upon this occasion, in the most impressive manner. In parliament, the call for reformation, was supported by a concert of splendid talents, such as perhaps was never employed before, in the support of any national measure! Nor was the credit of high station, wanting to give weight to the persuasions of eloquence; though its official influence, was fatally withheld.

Supposing it to have been the will of God, that the result of this grand investigation should furnish clear evidence of our sinful character as a people, it is not difficult to discover, why while such strong expostulation was addressed to the commons, both in and out of parliament, the influence of government was neutralized, through an opposition in sentiment which prevailed between different members of the cabinet. Certain it is, that the theory of our constitution, was in this case followed in practice, with a much closer correspondence than is usual; and perhaps than is generally expedient; and that there never was known in parliament upon any question of equal interest and importance, since the influence of the crown succeeded to the awe of prerogative, so absolute a neutrality on the part of the administration.

The call thus fairly, and thus solemnly, made upon the parliament and people of England, though admitted to be just, has not hitherto alas! led to repentance. Like Pharaoh, we promised for a moment to let the people go; but like him, we speedily relapsed, and persevered in following the counsels of national avarice, in defiance of that voice of conscience, which is the undoubted messenger of God. Our public affront to the Majesty of Heaven, in this view, exceeded that of Pharaoh; for he appears to have doubted, till convinced by repeated plagues, that Moses spoke by divine authority;

whereas, Christians could not question the authority of those sacred principles, with the practical demands of which we nevertheless refused to comply.

I have not time to examine those strange and inconsistent excuses, that were offered by some respectable individuals in parliament, for withholding immediate reformation. They were not only unsound in moral principle, but founded on assumptions of facts that are demonstrably untrue; and most of their authors have since, either actively or passively, departed in conduct from those practical conclusions to which their own arguments led.—But no man can read the parliamentary debates on the slave trade, without perceiving the chief motives upon which the majority acted. The sordid consideration of commercial expediency, was in reality the ground upon which the solemn call upon the national conscience was effectually repelled; and moral principle was deliberately sacrificed by a national assembly, upon the altar of public interest.

Now what was this, but a public and systematic defiance of the authority of God?—Had the alleged notion of effects compensatory in point of humanity, that most specious, though preposterous plea, been ever so sincere, and well founded; still such a perseverance in acknowledged iniquity, would have been opprobrious to a Christian legislature; and, as I believe, without a precedent in any age or nation.—If individuals, in aiming to produce good by a breach of the divine law, contract presumptuous guilt; more obviously still may it be pronounced of nations, in such cases, that "their condemnation is just." In public morals, still more than in private, an infraction of acknowledged principles of the divine law, is ill compensated by any imaginary good consequence, while it is peculiarly affronting to the majesty of heaven; for this false principle, always implies that God is not the best judge of the tendency of his own institutions; and when irreverence to the deity, finds admission into senatorial assemblies, the example must be fatal indeed.

Murder, let it be remembered; deliberate, cruel, and wide-extended murder, is an indisputable, though by no means the only sin, continually produced by the slave trade. Thousands of innocent lives rapidly destroyed, and tens of thousands consequentially, and most miserably wasted, are annual fruits of our African commerce: yet this, and still deeper guilt, is openly persisted in by the vote of a British parliament, for the sake of the supposed temporal good to be produced by it, and the temporal evils that are feared from reformation.

We even aggravated this violation of the law of God, by alleging

as motives of perseverance in it, the interests of our navigation and trade. The singular resolution of a Christian legislature, to prosecute for years to come, a career of acknowledged oppression and bloodshed, upon principles of national convenience, seems to amount to a sin, which not only in its degree, but in its kind, is unprecedented and enormous. It is a contumacious denial of the supremacy of God; a kind of high treason against the majesty of heaven.

What made the massacres in the streets of Dublin some years ago, different in the species of crime, from ordinary murders, but the traiterous principle on which they were perpetrated? The rebels had not yet enthroned a usurper, or erected a republic; neither have we yet set up the image of commerce in St. Paul's Cathedral; but we carry slaughter among the innocent subjects of the king of heaven, as Emmitt and his followers, among the subjects of an earthly king, in open contempt of his laws; because there is an object of disloyal attachment in our hearts, which we avowedly prefer to our allegiance. We say, "It is true O God, thy laws are good, but the laws of commercial policy are better.—We must continue, for a while at least, to violate thy most solemn commandments, and to destroy, as well as oppress, thy rational creatures; because we can no otherwise preserve our commerce, our colonial interests, and navigation."

There remains one further scriptural characteristic of those crimes, by which the penal doom of nations has been sealed.—I mean the perverse and audacious extension, of that very iniquity, which has been the recent subject of divine expostulation, and of a neglected call to repentance.

"They be idle—therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God,—let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein."——"Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick as heretofore;—let them go and gather straw for themselves." (Exodus, chap. v, ver. 7, 8, 9.)—Such was Pharaoh's answer to that demand of God, "Let my people go, that they may serve me;" and thus did he audaciously straiten those bands of oppression which he was commanded to relax.——The same infatuated monarch, enhanced the guilt of his contumacy, even after he had been repeatedly chastised. Immediately before the slaughter of the first-born, the last and decisive plague, he drove the messenger of God finally from his presence, "Get thee from me; take heed to thyself, see my face no more: for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die." And Moses said, "thou hast well spoken,—I will see thy face no more." Exodus, chap. xxviii, ver. 29.

It was not possible for Great Britain, exactly to follow the first

part of this precedent, by increasing the labour of her West India bondmen. *They* were already making bricks without straw; and oppression in our colonies, had long produced an effect, for which a bloody mandate to the Egyptian midwives was found to be necessary, in the far milder bondage of the Israelites.—The poor negroes, who have no land of Goshen, no flocks, or herds, to be the subjects of divine protection, no fleshpots of Egypt, to sustain them, and who have, instead of task-masters, and a tale of bricks, drivers armed with whips, to urge forward their toil; could experience as the fruit of rejected intercession, no exacerbation of their fate.—Neither could slave making in Africa, be conducted with greater fraud and ferocity, than our white and black agents already employed and abetted, except through an extension of the trade.

But what we could do in defiance of omnipotent justice, dreadful to think! we did. If we could not make our colonial bondmen more wretched, we could add to their numbers. We could also enlarge the local domains of that abominable system, of which the dreadful nature and effects were now for the first time understood, and laid bare to the national eye. We could acquire, at the fearful cost of protracting a calamitous war, a new and vast aceldama, for the immolation of the victims of our avarice, in Trinidada; where the pestilent exhalations of an uncleared tropical soil, would quicken the lethiferous process of oppression; and where enormous and ever-growing demands on the British slave market, would protract the chief pretence for continuing the devastation of Africa.

Still more aggravation was possible; and, though at the expense of the most obvious principles of worldly policy, was accordingly practised.——Conquest had given to us a temporary and precarious possession, of a foreign territory of vast extent, on the continent of South America. To settle it by British capital, was like building on another man's freehold. The folly was still grosser; for it was to increase the competitory powers of a dangerous rival to our sugar colonies; and to augment the future maritime resources of an enemy.—Yet such was our increased and enamoured attachment to the manstealing trade, and to West India oppression; so eager were we to shew our contempt for consistency, and for the sacred principles upon which reformation had been promised;—so bold was our defiance of heaven; that full sixty thousand additional slaves were manufactured by crimes in Africa, torn from their native land, and placed permanently upon that conquered soil, in the short term of three or four years, by British subjects alone. New plantations, from 70 to 100 miles in length, upon a frontier line, were opened at

the same time in that foreign territory, upon British capital, or credit, in order to form still more extensive and insatiable demands for the same opprobrious commerce.*——These facts are so strange, that they will hardly be credible to future ages, though too notorious to be denied in the present. They imply a national infatuation which indicates, as well as an obduracy likely to have excited, the vengeance of the Almighty.

The enormity of the aggravation of our sin, since the first call to repentance, will perhaps be best estimated, by a view of the actual increase of the slave trade since the year 1787.

In that year, the number of slaves imported into our colonies collectively, including those which were afterwards re-exported, and sold to foreigners, was 21,023; and upon a medium of five years, from the end of the American war, the annual import was 21,307.† This too was a considerable increase upon the average of the three preceding years; and even while we possessed those colonies on the American continent which are now become independent states, our whole colonial import of slaves, is estimated by Mr. Edwards, at no more than 20,095 annually.‡ Yet during ten years, from 1795 to 1804, both inclusive, the average number of these unhappy men yearly brought from Africa in British vessels, and under British colours, was no less than 32,377.‖ Including the trade carried on by our merchants under neutral colours, the whole export on British account, probably amounted to near 50,000 per annum; and in a single year of that term, we exported under our own flag alone 53,051.§ On the whole, it is a moderate estimate, that we have more

* The following extract from the late work of Sir W. Young, an eminent colonist, and parliamentary defender of the Slave Trade, will shew what even gentlemen of that party, justly say of this branch of our national guilt:

"During the last war, and especially in the years from 1798 to 1800, the Slave Trade (per table 8,) appears to have been greatly extended, and which is to be attributed to the then speculations of settling the vast and rich plains of Demerara; which province, on the return to Dutch sovereignty, by the treaty of 1802, carried with it a vested British capital of many millions, and the means of increased produce to supply Europe with sugar, portending rivalship and ruin in the foreign market to the ancient British colonies."—(West India Common Place book, 11, 12.)

† See the account at large from authentic returns in Mr. Edward's Hist. of the West Indies, vol. 2, book 4, chap. 2, page 57.

‡ Ibid. p. 55.

‖ See the account at large in Sir W. Young's West India Common Place Book, p. 8.

§ Ibid.

than doubled this horrible trade, since we solemnly recognized its guilty nature, and pledged ourselves to abandon it.

When we advert to the grounds chiefly resorted to by the advocates for a gradual, in preference to an immediate abolition, our impious inconsistency will be still more apparent. We prolonged the slave trade that our plantations in the sugar colonies might fill up their numbers. But what was the whole amount of slaves in those colonies in 1787? According to the official returns in the report of the Privy Council, 465,276. What is now the amount? Only 524,205;* giving an increase only of 58,929; but of this surplus, the new-acquired colony of Trinidada furnishes, by the same estimate, 19,709; so that the actual increase in the colonies we held in 1787, is only 39,220. Yet we have brought from Africa in British vessels alone, since the pretended necessities of these colonies was made an apology for the slave trade, not less than 709,691.† If the trade under neutral colours, permitted till last year, be added to the account, we have probably dragged a *million* at least, of men, women, and children into perpetual exile and bondage, since we stood pledged to abandon such oppressive practises; and equalled in a few years of our promised penitence, the former crimes of half a century.

The foreign slave trade indeed is at last abolished by law; a reformation the value of which I am by no means inclined to disparage; but with many supporters of that great measure, its principle was purely political: and its effect in permanently reducing the extent of the slave trade, as well as in diminishing the guilt of that commerce, will be very equivocal, unless we now proceed to a radical and well-principled reformation. Meantime I am reviewing the conduct of our country, let it be observed, since the year 1787: from

* This is Sir W. Young's estimate for 1805. Ibid.

† By Sir W. Young's table copied from official returns to the house of commons, the numbers which the ships were allowed to carry from the coast (and it is a moderate assumption that they carried no less) were from 1795 to 1804 inclusively, 323,770. In 1787, the number actually brought to the British colonies, was 36,000.

No returns I believe have been published of the trade from that year to 1795; but it is a very low estimate to suppose, that at least as many were annually carried from the coast, as were imported in 1787. They were indeed probably far more numerous; but taking that as the average, we have in seven years 252,000. If we then estimate the exports of 1805 and 1806, of which there is also no authentic account, as equal to that of 1804, which was 36,899, there will be a further addition of 73,798. In all 706,691.

which period to that of the last sessions of parliament, our adherence to this national sin was unqualified, and its aggravation such as I have noticed.

Can it be denied then, that we have in this great national offence, an adequate cause of the displeasure of Heaven, and of the calamities which have fallen upon the country? or can it be alleged, that there is any cotemporary provocation that bears any proportion to the slave trade? If other sins of the same heinous species, could be justly charged upon us; if "the sorrowful sighing of the prisoner, the complaint of the poor oppressed, and the cry of innocent blood," had gone up against us from other regions than Africa, and the West Indies; still it ought to be shewn, that in those other cases, as in this, the crime had been aggravated by equal obduracy, and extended with equal perverseness, after the open exposure of its guilt, and solemn calls for reformation. But in these respects, as well as in its magnitude, and its cruel effects, the slave trade stands alone among our national offences; defying, like Satan, in the foremost rank, the wrath of the Almighty.

Could we suppose ourselves just arrived from another planet, impressed with our present ideas of the divine government, but ignorant of the history of Europe since the year 1787, and informed alone of the parliamentary discussions on the Slave Trade, and of those iniquities which England has since committed against the African race, we might naturally be disposed to inquire, "Has no scourge from Heaven yet appeared? Have no calamities, indicatory of divine wrath, overtaken that guilty land?" But should we next take up a history of the French revolution, and of the fatal wars that have ensued; and learn how strangely the prosperity, the peace, and the security of England have been subverted by them, what singular evils we have endured, ever since our first refusal to abolish the slave trade, and by what still greater evils we are at this moment threatened; it would be impossible I conceive, not to recognize with wonder and awe, the chastising hand of God. The only difficulty would be, to comprehend how the living witnesses both of the provocation and the punishment, could possibly be unobservant of the visible connection between them.

Never, to be sure, can phænomena more strikingly support any hypothesis of this kind, than the dates, the nature, and the extent, of our public calamities, the opinion that they are providential chastisements for the slave trade.—A guilty, though highly-favoured people, are called upon to renounce a criminal and cruel, but long-established practice, as repugnant to the laws of God.—They hear—delibe-

nate—disobey. While they still hesitate, a tremendous scourge is weaving for them in a neighbouring land—the moment they actually disobey, that scourge commences its inflictions.——

The abolition of the Slave Trade was first virtually refused by parliament, in April, 1792. Immediately, we were engaged in those stormy contentions within the realm, and those disputes with France, which soon terminated in the last calamitous war.——In February, 1793, the house of commons more openly and clearly declared against reformation, by postponing for six months a motion made by Mr. Wilberforce, for going into a committee on the Slave Trade; which was in effect to refuse even the gradual abolition voted in the preceding year.—In the same month, a sword was definitely drawn, which was not during nine years returned to its scabbard; and which is now redrawn, perhaps to be sheathed no more till England has ceased to exist.—Within that period of six months, during which the claims of justice and mercy were contemptuously adjourned, events took place in France, fertile to us of unprecedented evils, as we already feel; and perhaps decisive of our fate.

We have since gone on in the same path, rejecting motion after motion, and bill after bill, upon the same obdurate principles; and a chastising Providence has kept pace with our temerity; heaping misfortune on misfortune, and adding danger to danger. As we multiplied and aggravated the impious crime, God multiplied and aggravated the punishment. Treason, famine, mutiny, civil war, the loss of our specie, the sale of our land tax, the enormous growth of our national debt, the intolerable pressure of taxation, the discomfiture of our military enterprises, the destruction of our armies by disease, the deplorable ruin of our allies, the stupendous exaltation of our enemies; these, and other plagues, followed, like those of Egypt, in a rapid succession, upon every iteration of our refusals to obey the voice of God, by renouncing the execrable slave trade.

We obtained at length a breathing time of peace; but we were still contumacious to the behests of the Almighty; for such, I dare to call the plain demands of justice and humanity. He sent us therefore a new war; and tremendous have been its events.

Where will this sad series end? Can we weary out God? Are we stronger than he? Ah, infatuated men! who would still urge us to perseverance in this impious course, tremble at the prospect before you. Our public gloom, like the darkness of Egypt, may clear up for a while; but if you harden yourselves still, the final event will be dreadful.

It is needless to point out the extraordinary nature of the se-

cond causes by which these calamities have been produced. They have excited universal astonishment, they have confounded the wisdom of the wise, and are without a parallel in the history of mankind. Even those who do not seriously look up to the disposing power of an all-wise and omnipotent ruler of the earth, often speak of this case as if they did; because they have no other mode of expressing their amazement at the strange progress of events. But how can the devout mind, possibly pass unnoticed, the striking proportion and resemblance, as well as the singular coincidences in point of time, between these wonders, and the sin of the slave trade?

I date the grand provocation given by that crime, from the public developement of its nature, and the obdurate refusal to reform it. —And when upon earth, since the delivery of the Israelites from Egypt, was there an equal, or similar case? "*Ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth; and ask from one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it?—Hath God assayed to take to himself a nation out of the midst of another nation, &c.*"

Let me with reverence imitate these awakening expostulations; and ask, was it ever before heard, or known, that God, speaking by the voice of conscience, and of his own revealed laws, publicly called upon a great, civilized, and highly-favoured people, to desist from spreading desolation and misery over a large region of the globe; and from carrying into a horrible bondage, millions of his rational creatures?—Was any human legislature ever before appealed to on a subject of such stupendous moment to the inhabitants of the earth, or upon such high and awful principles? But a still more alarming inquiry is, Did ever before any people, Christian or Pagan, so flagrantly violate the religious principles which they profess to respect, and offer so gross an affront to the deity whom they outwardly worship; as the parliament of England, in rejecting this appeal, and redoubling the crimes of the slave trade?

Surely in such a case, it is consonant to our preconceptions of the ways of Providence, that the punishment should be singular and wonderful in its means, as well in its severity. Surely the prodigies of the age, furnish here an awful parallel to the iniquities of England!

It is, I feel, injuring this great and sacred subject, to treat it in a cursory and partial way. The reasoning by which my own mind has long been clearly satisfied, that our sins against the African race have chiefly, or solely, drawn upon us the calamities with which we

have during near fifteen years been visited, rests upon an induction from many particulars; and to omit any of them, is to weaken the force of the rest. Upon the singular and important events of the late war in the West Indies, and especially the extraordinary revolution in St. Domingo, many important observations might be made, tending greatly to fortify my general conclusion. But it is impossible in a work like the present fully to state, and still more to reason upon, the whole of the extraordinary phænomena from which my convictions are derived. Yet I cannot prevail on myself wholly to suppress, at this great crisis, an opinion so closely connected with my general subject, and with the destiny of my country; an opinion which has long had a powerful influence on the conduct of my life; and which I share in common with many men of the clearest understandings, as well as the most distinguished piety and virtue.

If my necessary limits will not allow me fully to state the hypothesis itself, and the positive arguments upon which it stands, much less to remove difficulties, or repel objections; but there is one which from its specious nature, demands from me some general notice.

Is it objected that other nations have also drunk, and hitherto much deeper than ourselves, of the phial of divine wrath poured out in the French revolution? I admit the fact.—But did they still drink deeper too of "the cup of trembling," the dregs of which may soon be all our own, the objection would still be of little weight.

Without attempting to explain, or conjecture, the entire scheme of a chastising Providence; it may be presumed, that those nations also, have all grievously provoked the indignation of a righteous God; and some of them in the same way, though not in the same degree, with ourselves. Infinite wisdom well knows how to punish many different offenders, by the same identical scourge, or through the same sources of evil.

I am relieved indeed from the necessity of suggesting a probable cause of provocation on the part of Austria, Prussia, and Russia; since the striking retaliation which two of those powers have already met with, for their injustice and cruelty towards Poland, seems of late to have made a strong impression on the public mind. We not only hear in the conversation of the serious, and even of the irreligious; but read in the public prints, where matter of pious observation does not often find a place, remarks on the exact retribution which divine Providence has in this case brought home to the spoilers of an unfortunate nation. To be sure, when we turn our eyes

to Poland as the seat of immediate war; when we recollect within how few years, its patriotic and unhappy soveriegn was deprived of his sceptre, by a foul confederacy of those powers, two of whom have since nearly lost their own; when we reflect on the unjust and violent partitions of territory, to which they have already been compelled in their turns to submit; and how reasonably they may dread a final dismemberment of their dominions:—When, in a word, we find Buonaparte at Warsaw; and recollect how lately he was at Berlin, and Vienna; it would be difficult even for an atheist, to ascribe such strong characteristics of a Providential retribution, to the mere effect of chance.

What I would wish to add to the existing popular impressions on that subject, is only the remark, that Poland was like Africa, impiously destroyed upon pleas of political *expediency*.—That idolatrous principle, that grand heresy of the age, which strikes at the very foundation of the whole edifice of morals, and insults the divine lawgiver, by arraigning the wisdom or goodness of his institutions, was the alleged defence of three mighty sovereigns, for an avowed violation of justice.—They threw down the gauntlet to Omnipotence; and his vengeance seems to have taken it up.

In other countries, causes of provocation enough might be found perhaps, without listening to those accounts which have been given of the degenerated state of their private morals and manners; enough at least to satisfy those, who consider the substitution of philosophical scepticism for Christianity, as no venial offence against God. In Italy, that Caprea of gross and beastly sensuality, it would be still less difficult to find adequate causes, for its share of the general plagues. But after all, should any apparent difficulties remain on this subject, they would be only such as belong, in our finite views, to the ordinary providence of God. Some less-offending nations of Europe, like innocent members of the same family, or country, may possibly be involved with their more guilty neighbours or connections, in evils which are the penal chastisement of extraordinary, as well as those which are the natural effects, of ordinary crimes. The Almighty has particular, or individual distinctions enough, and compensatory provisions enough, in store, to reconcile with universal justice the occasionally awful display of his moral discipline towards nations and communities of men, without disturbing the general laws of nature: but it is evident, that unless such a miraculous discrimination as was exhibited in Goshen, were again to be made; a scourge inflicted on many of the nations of Europe, must be felt in some measure by the rest.

As to France, Spain, Holland, and Portugal, their shares in the oppression of Africa, at that epoch of general provocation which immediately preceded the grand revolution in France, were only inferior to our own. I mean not to convey that they were chargeable with no other sins, peculiar in their extent and character to that period; but in Africa and the West Indies, those slave trading nations, had all like ourselves, recently and greatly aggravated their long established offences.

Here, as in other parts of this great subject, I deeply regret the necessity of abstaining from full historical statements, of facts little known to the public.

It may perhaps surprise many readers to hear, that the unfortunate Louis XVIth, a short time prior to the revolution, distinguished himself from all his predecessors, by zealous endeavours to extend the slave trade of France.

Such however was the fact. That shocking trade, had been nearly abandoned by the French merchants; and the misguided monarch, under evil advice, laboured strenuously to induce them to resume it. By an ordinance of Oct. 1784, he offered a bounty of forty livres per ton (which reducing the French measuration of ships to our own standard, was equal to eighty livres per ton English) upon all ships that should clear out from the ports of France for the slave trade; and he added premiums on negroes imported into the French colonies, of sixty livres per head, in the windward Islands, and one hundred livres in St. Domingo.——By subsequent ordinances, these premiums were raised by him to no less than one hundred and sixty livres in the former colonies, and two hundred and thirty livres in the latter.* The natural effect was so enormous an increase of this guilty commerce, that in 1787 and 1788, 60,345 slaves were imported into St. Domingo alone. On the whole, it may be fairly computed, that 300,000 human beings were carried into a miserable captivity, at the direct instigation of that government which was soon after so terribly chastised.

It may perhaps be equally unknown to the British public at large, that at the same memorable period, Spain began a new career of oppression in her colonies, and framed a new system of trade for them, expressly in order to encourage the importation of slaves. The facts of this latter case, are so various, striking, and important, that they deserve a very particular statement; but from the absolute necessity of compression, I will here only give the recital of a decree

* See Privy Council Report on the Slave Trade, Part 6. Title France.

of his Spanish majesty, of February, 1789, by which several of the new regulations were introduced.

"*In order*," says that ill-advised, and since unfortunate monarch, "*to promote by every imaginable means the great advantages which the encouragement of agriculture must produce, I thought proper to cause the several plans of the introduction of Negroes into the islands of Cuba Santo Domingo, Porto Rico, and the province of Caraccas, to be well examined, with a view of recurring to the urgent necessity there is of such helps, without which these countries can neither prosper or flourish, nor produce to the state the immense riches, which the climate and fertility of their soil afford; and having treated this serious subject with that attention which the importance of it claims, I have determined for the present that this trade shall be carried on under the following rules and conditions.*" He afterwards, in the 12th article, recites the object to be, "*to procure for all his subjects the greater advantages in the slave trade, as well as to augment the number of cultivators in the American colonies.*"*

The contemporary conduct of Holland, was of the same opprobrious cast. The Dutch slave trade had also languished, or rather was quite extinct, when in May 1788, the states-general, at the instance of the planters of Guiana, resolved on vigorous measures for its revival and extension. The leading resolution was in the following terms—"*That every means should be employed to promote the speedy enlargement of the slave trade.*" Accordingly, they voted 250,000 guilders to the West India Company; and adopted several regulations for encouraging the importation of negroes into their colonies.† They were indeed limited to the term of six years; but God prescribed nearly the same limitation to the commerce, the liberty and independency of Holland.

Portugal also, there is reason to believe, was rapidly increasing her slave trade at the time of the French revolution.—With her, however, it was not, as with the other powers, occasioned by a systematic change in her laws; or by the direct subornation of the government.—In her share of the scourge, she has been hitherto equally distinguished from them.

Thus cruelly did the great commercial nations of Europe, all at the same æra, resolve to extend the desolation, the miseries and crimes of Africa, to the utmost of their power. Already they dragged away every year 74,000‡ of her unhappy children; and a great part

* Privy Council Report on the Slave Trade, part 6. Title Spain.

† Same report, and part. Title Holland.

‡ Edward's W. Indies, vol. ii, p. 58.

of her coast began to be almost destitute of inhabitants: yet her insatiable tormentors were determined to drain the veins of her population still more copiously, and to obtain fuller meals for their avarice, though they should reduce her to a desert. But the eye of the Almighty was over them; and to avenge devoted Africa at least, if not to save her, he dropped down among them the French revolution.

Surely it was a strange coincidence of events, that so many different nations should at the same æra, offer new and extreme provocation to divine justice, by the same species of iniquity, though without any mutual concert; and that each of them should immediately after be involved, by the same cause, in new and extreme calamities. But when we regard the unforeseen and wonderful origin of all those calamities, the revolution of France, the coincidence becomes still more extraordinary. Induced, by a common temptation, the lucrative oppression of the African race, many nations start together in a new race of guilt: a strange source of unprecedented evil immediately bursts forth, and suddenly overwhelms them all. A cruel and unlimited slavery, is the subject of their crimes: a lawless and ferocious liberty, is made their common scourge. Not only France, but Europe, becomes almost a second Africa. Order, security, public morals, the sacred principles which mitigate the horrors of war, and regulate the intercourse of nations, have vanished, or are beginning to vanish, from this civilized quarter of the globe.——The public law of the slave coast may soon be upon a level with that of polished Europe; and the persons of individuals, like their property, become the spoil of predatory war, in these once happy regions.—Already, if recent intelligence from Hamburgh may be credited, Buonaparte takes credit for great moderation, in not selling his captives into slavery; and intimates that London will not be treated so mercifully in that respect, as Vienna and Berlin.

It must be quite unnecessary, with every considerate reader, to prove that France herself has had her full share of the sufferings, which she has been made the instrument of inflicting.—Of all the offending nations, her lot has been perhaps the most deplorable. Her glory, is like the light of a conflagration; a lustre fed by ruin, misery and death, in the mansion to which it belongs.

While so many nations have been sustaining extraordinary evils, has not the hand of providence distinguished some portion of the earth with blessings equally unusual?—It has. Let us turn our eyes to the rising western empire, and we shall see a people, whose fortunes furnish a striking contrast to the calamities of European countries. As the autumnal storm, while it strips the grove of its leaves,

and lays prostrate some of its more ancient trunks, favours the young and hardy pine, by opening to its aspiring point and expanding base, a freer course, and more copious sunshine; so have those revolutionary tempests which have laid waste the ancient realms of Europe, given an accelerated growth to the United States of America, both in their strength and stature. Population, agriculture, commerce, maritime power, how rapidly have they all increased in that country, since the revolution of France!. A new and vast domain also has been acquired, at the expense of the Spanish empire. With such prodigious rapidity has the navigation of the United States increased, that they promise soon to win from Europe, the trident at least, if not the sceptre, of the western world.

Now, let it be well observed, that the United States have alone, of all the nations of the earth, during the same period, done much to redeem themselves from those sins to which I chiefly ascribe the calamities of Europe. Indeed, their government and legislature, with whom the corporate responsibility in every country chiefly rests, have done all that was in their immediate power; while every state in the union but one, has long since finally delivered itself from the guilt of the African slave trade.

It is truly honourable to the president and the congress, to find by intelligence recently arrived, that the former has officially congratulated the latter, on the near approach of a period when they will possess the constitutional power of giving a final blow to that hated commerce. That the power will be exercised, immediately after it vests in the general legislature, has been long beyond a doubt; and though the first of January, 1808, is now at no great distance, the president suggests a mean of accelerating the effect of the intended law, by a previous notice, which may prevent the inchoation of voyages in the present year, to be terminated in the next.

I think my country has cause to complain of America; and am not sure that the amicable arrangements lately made, are of a kind to reconcile with her pretensions, our most essential belligerent rights. But while she acts, in relation to the most helpless and injured of the human race, upon such righteous and liberal principles, it is impossible to refuse her our esteem; or to grudge any sacrifice for the sake of her friendship that self-preservation may permit. I trust that a nation which thus honourably respects the sacred rights of humanity and justice, will not long persevere in a line of conduct which ministers to the pestilent ambition of France, and abridges the only remaining hope of liberty in Europe. Indeed, the late outrageous and preposterous measures of Napoleon, will probably su-

persede all questions that have lately subsisted between this country and the neutral powers; by the new and undeniable rights which result to us from such conduct in the enemy. May the harmony between England and America be settled on the firmest foundations; and among the many sympathies which ought to bind us to each other, may we soon have to add a mutual abhorrence, and conventional renunciation of the slave trade!

But while America, has thus honourably distinguished herself from other commercial nations, and has been equally distinguished by her singular prosperity in the present disastrous times, there is one country, I confess, which hitherto but imperfectly confirms, on a comparative view of her fortunes, the hypothesis I aim to establish. That country, alas! is Great Britain.—We have suffered enough to evince that we have incurred the disfavour of heaven; but other nations less guilty, in regard to the slave-trade at least, have been visited more severely. We have in truth, exceeded in this respect all their united provocations. Our offences against the helpless Africans, have been far greater in amount; and against God, we have sinned more deeply than others, by all the wide difference between our national blessings and theirs. Our share of the crime is also pre-eminent, through that peculiar knowledge of its detestable nature, which we have lately acquired. I fear it may even be added, that the perseverance of other nations in their iniquity, is fairly imputable to England; as being a natural effect of our example, after our deliberate examination of the case.

But England, though severely chastised, is not yet, like some of her fellow sinners, cast down or destroyed; and if the dangers of the country had finally subsided, this I admit, would be some apparent drawback on the force of the reasons that have been offered for ascribing our public calamities to the slave-trade.

But here it is, that I find by far the most alarming view of this truly awful subject. Let the sad prospects opened in the first division of this work, be fairly contemplated; and then let it be remembered, that the very country whose fate would demonstrably, in the event of its subjugation by France, be the most terrible that ever awaited a nation, is the same which has most highly provoked the avenging justice of God.—Nor let us harden ourselves on account of any seemingly auspicious change in the course of events, or the prospect of new confederacies. "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not pass unpunished."

At the present moment there is another consideration which fills me with the most painful anxiety; and which urges me here to con-

clude this work imperfect though it is, that I may no longer withhold from my country a feeble but seasonable warning. In a few days, or weeks, parliament will have to decide, whether it shall redeem the solemn pledge which it has recently given, for the excision of this dreadful traffic, or whether by a new apostacy, worse by far than any former provocation of the same kind, it shall fill up the measure of our iniquities, and draw down, upon us, perhaps, a speedy and signal vengeance.

I have too high an opinion of the dignity, as well as the moral feelings of the British legislature, to regard so opprobrious a relapse as a very probable event. But when I advert to the long and sad experience which we have had of the fate of such questions in parliament; when I remember the assiduous opposition, and the still more fatal apathy, by which the fairest expectations of the friends of the oppressed Africans, have been repeatedly ruined; my hopes are mingled, I own, with much uneasiness and fear.

May God, in whose hands are the hearts of all men, incline those who, under his permission, are our lawgivers, to deliver us at length, without delay, from the guilt of innocent blood!——Then only shall I hope that the wisest measures of defence will be truly efficacious; then only will solid peace and security put an end to the dangers of the country.

THE END.

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