

A

DISCOURSE

ON THE

CHARACTER

OF

King George the Third.

ADDRESSED TO THE

INHABITANTS OF BRITISH AMERICA.

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BY THE REV. JOHN STRACHAN,  
RECTOR OF CORNWALL, UPPER CANADA.  
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SERUS IN CÆLUM REDEAS ; DIUQUE
LATUS INTERSIS POPULO QUIRINI ; *Hor.*

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.....
1810.

ADVERTISEMENT.

A FINISHED picture of King George the Third can only be drawn by one who has lived near him, and enjoyed the honor of knowing him personally; such a writer will be able to enliven his narrative with a thousand amiable anecdotes to which the present author has no access. Living in the woods at a distance from books and from literary society, his situation is not favourable for the composition of a work of this kind, he is therefore very sensible that he has not done justice to a character which posterity will revere.

But he is induced to present, it, imperfect as it is, to the inhabitants of British America for several important reasons. The situation of this Country in respect to the United States is somewhat critical; we ought therefore to be prepared for the worst. And this preparation will be more cheerfully made, when we recollect what precious advantages we enjoy, and to what evils our subjection, even for a short time, to that unprincipled government, would expose us. The ruling party in the neighbouring States think it Orthodox to execrate our Constitution and to vilify the character of our venerable sovereign. As slander is more active than truth, thousands have never heard the name of our good king coupled with any thing but tyranny and oppression. Even the bulk of our own population in these colonies, are but very imperfectly acquainted with his true character, nor have they any opportu-

nity of acquiring the necessary information. This tract is intended to supply, in some degree, this deficiency, and it is hoped that it will enable them, in future, to judge more correctly of our sovereign, because it presents his true likeness.

I am also flattered with the hope that my pamphlet, if carefully read, will assist in quieting the minds of my fellow subjects, and dissipate murmurs and discontent by proving them totally unfounded. Our aged sovereign stands at the head of a constitution which requires only to be known to be beloved; its different parts are so harmoniously combined and incorporated as to produce the greatest possible good; for it not only insures the most extensive civil liberty to every individual, but preserves all the other properties of a good government, dispatch, secrecy, energy, wisdom and union.

If any suppose that I have spoken too harshly of the American Government, I have no apology to offer. It is obvious that I have chiefly in view the dominant faction, among the people in general, there are many individuals of high respectability and moral worth; religious, humane, hospitable and friendly, men who are an honor to human nature. I know several of this exalted character, but the reputation of the nation is sinking.

I have added a number of notes, some of which will be found interesting.

Cornwall, Upper Canada, 17 May, 1810.

A DISCOURSE.

THE accession of his present Majesty to the throne was attended with many pleasing anticipations. He was the first prince of the illustrious house of Brunswick born and educated in England. To him our language, our manners and customs, our laws and constitution, were early familiar, and it was reasonably supposed that he would be more attached to his native country than to his electoral dominions. It must not be concealed that although the British nation secured the most inestimable advantages by calling the elector of Hanover to the throne, some very considerable inconveniences resulted from that happy arrangement. George the First was a foreigner, unacquainted with the genius of his new subjects, and too far advanced in life ever to become well acquainted with their true interests. His advancement to the sovereignty of the British empire appeared somewhat precarious, and it was therefore natural for him to retain his predilection for his hereditary dominions. In the double capacity of elector of Hanover and king of Great Britain, he frequently found himself very awkwardly situated, and unable to act in such a manner as to please both his British and German subjects. His

abilities were indeed excellent, and he came with the best intentions to the throne, but he had the misfortune to fall into the hands of a vigorous but implacable faction, and rather appeared for some time the head of the Whig party than the illustrious chief of a united, powerful and loyal nation, George the Second, with less ability, was still more attached to his electorate, and during his reign, the British thought that they were involved, without any necessity, in every continental dispute. From being auxiliaries, they commonly became the principals in different wars, and were obliged to bear the most enormous burdens in order to pay nations for fighting their own battles.

These opinions, whether correct or not, were universally believed and lamented by the people. They were lamented even amidst that brilliant train of victories which closed the reign of the conqueror of Dettingen.* Our present sovereign was hailed at his accession with the most sincere and affectionate congratulations ; his administration was expected to produce a kind of millenium when British interests alone would sway the measures of government—nor have these hopes been disappointed. The blood and treasure, the bravery, the public spirit, the enterprise and the virtue of the British nation were no longer sacrificed for interests not their own. Ascending the throne in the bloom of youth, our monarch was animated with the most tender affection for his mother country, and willing to guide himself by the abilities and experience of his Parliament, he confi-

* See NOTE I.

dently depended upon the support of every honest man. I enter, exclaimed this virtuous Prince, with cheerfulness, into this arduous situation, and shall make it the business of my life to promote, in every thing, the glory and happiness of these kingdoms, and to strengthen the constitution in both church and state.

These manly sentiments which have been nobly maintained, increased the satisfaction of the people. They were delighted to behold an Englishman on the throne inspired with principles so generous, and who had nothing of that fatal predilection for Germany, which had proved, during the two former reigns, so injurious to the peace and prosperity of Great Britain. Nor were the people left to conjecture with regard to the sincerity of his attachment, for he boasted to his first Parliament, with an energy that penetrated every heart, that he gloried in the name of Briton, and that the peculiar happiness of his life would consist in promoting the welfare of a people whose loyalty and warm affection he justly considered as the greatest and most permanent security of his throne. In order to give new force and permanence to that ardent gratitude and affection which warms your bosoms towards the best of sovereigns, I have only to recal, to your recollection, the principal events of his life, devoted as it has been to promote the welfare and happiness of his people, by strengthening and extending our excellent constitution—by maintaining, with the strictest integrity, the civil and religious rights of all his subjects, and by encouraging and promoting the practice of true

religion and virtue. He may be truly said to have performed his duty who loves that which is right with all his heart, and does it with all his power. How far our gracious Sovereign has acted up to this rule, a view of his character as a private gentleman and as the first magistrate of a powerful nation will sufficiently prove:

In his private character, we have every thing to praise and nothing to condemn. We know that many have supposed that a public man may have a double character. That he may be lax in his private deportment, that he may even indulge in many vices, and allow himself a latitude of acting inconsistent with religion and virtue, and yet in his public capacity adhere to the most rigid integrity. I must confess that I am not among the number of those who can admit that he who is neither a good husband nor an affectionate parent, can acquit himself uprightly in a public station : or that the monarch whose private deportment sanctions licentiousness and dissipation can ever be a patriot king. Should his public measures issue from the most correct principles, he could never do so much good, because he never will be trusted. It is impossible to give such a person our unqualified confidence. Doubts will continually intrude themselves; and the disagreeable impression will be always suggesting itself, that he may prove false. His public virtue seems to be affected; a delusion, a borrowed character which we never can believe solid. It is at home, we say, in the bosom of his family, that a man is properly known, it is amidst his domestic circle, in the company of his friends

and companions that we discover the secret workings of his heart. To know people intimately, we must not rest satisfied with viewing them in public where they may be on their guard to save appearances, but we must follow them to their secret recesses, watch their minutest actions, and from these, divine their inmost thoughts. Upon this strict ground of examination, an examination which few characters would bear, I claim your warmest approbation of our beloved sovereign.

If we do not find him presenting, to his people, a pattern of the purest morals, elevating their minds by his active piety, and cherishing that spirit of liberty which renders the British nation the envy and the admiration of the world, we shall not require you to join us in pouring forth our thanksgivings to God for preserving him so long among us.

Our king supports and encourages the purest morals by his deportment as an affectionate husband, and tender parent ; in these endearing relations, he presents an illustrious example worthy of the strictest imitation. Convinced that marriage is a divine institution, that it is a union of hearts, affections and interests, and therefore to be most religiously observed, he displayed the greatest wisdom in forming so important a connexion, a connexion on which his future happiness so much depended. The famous letter which the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenbourg Strelitz wrote to the King of Prussia had made a lasting impression upon his heart. He thought, and he thought justly,

that a Princess capable of feeling so tenderly for the distresses of others,* and of expressing her feelings, in language so patriotic, so beautiful and pathetic must possess, in a very eminent degree, the virtues of the heart and understanding. This conviction of her merit, and this only, induced him to offer the amiable Princess his hand and throne. Nor have his just expectations been disappointed. The tender regard which he has at all times manifested for his affectionate consort, has been rewarded by the most sincere love and esteem. Marriage, producing a cordial union of hearts, becomes the bond of harmony and peace, and of the most refined and inviolable friendship; and such has our beloved Monarch always found it to be. The firm guardian of his consort's honour, faithful to the vows which he took at the holy altar, he gives a most valuable lesson to his people. Were they to indulge in the same love and affection, they would find, in the marriage state, a mutual communication of joys and sorrows, a fruitful source of solid felicity, instead of those jealousies, heart-burnings, and indifference which poison the peace and comfort of so many families.

And let not the dissipated, the giddy or the proud consider it a matter of small importance to give a faithful example in this the most interesting of all our relations; for, by this lesson, our affectionate king endeavours, as far as in him lies, to maintain the purity of morals in their source, for all the most valuable virtues begin at home. When

* See NOTE II.

marriage, that bond of happiness, that golden chain which softens and humanizes man, which expands his benevolent affections, and prepares, for him, new and more endearing duties, is polluted or even tarnished, what terrible consequences ensue—the seeds of perpetual discord are engendered—families are rent in sunder, the most implacable animosities are produced, children are brought up in vice and infamy, and the purest sources of felicity are dried up forever. Nor is it enough that the purity of this connexion is enforced by revelation as well as reason, if those in the higher walks of life are found guilty. To them it belongs, in a peculiar manner to enforce the practice of virtue, by example ; it is an imperious duty which their situation and interest especially demand ; a duty performed by our beloved sovereign in the most perfect manner : he considers his royal consort's honour and peace of mind his own, and never ceases to treat her with the most cordial love.

Behold him the father of a numerous offspring, anxious to form their minds to virtue and religion, to make them useful to their country, the guardians of its honour, and the terror of its enemies. Rewarded for his eagerness to inspire them with the purest principles of integrity, he has already seen them standing forward the steady pillars of the constitution, and the pride of the British nation.

Is it credible that this beloved monarch would have possessed the same influence over his people that he now enjoys, that he would have been enshrined in their hearts, and always mentioned

with the warmest veneration, had his conduct been different. Had the outset of his life been marked with vicious dissipation, had those hours which he spent at home with his children and amiable consort been consumed in disgraceful revelry or in the arms of a mistress. No, it is impossible—it is contrary to experience, contrary to the nature of man. Virtue possesses an extensive power over the human mind ; if its direct force cannot always be traced, it is easy to view it in the contrast. In vain is a man endowed with the most brilliant talents, if his morals are impure. He may speak eloquently of justice, of truth, and of virtue ;—he may attack existing abuses with the most pointed energy ;—he may profess the most incorruptible integrity, the most sincere love for his country, and the greatest anxiety to promote its prosperity and glory. But he speaks to the winds ; his words are forgotten ; they are never felt—they flow from a corrupt fountain, and in his mouth good appears evil.

It is this coincidence between his public and private character, that enables our gracious sovereign to establish his throne in the hearts of his people. They believe all his professions, for his actions prove their sincerity and truth ; and they willingly surrender their affections to a sovereign whose greatest ambition is to render them happy.

What is so lovely, so venerable and so delightful, as the contemplation of such a king ? What monarch ever deserved from his people greater admiration, gratitude and love ? Is it then any wonder that his authority is maintained rather by confi-

dence, affection and esteem, than by his greatness and power :

Perhaps the difficulties under which kings labour in acquiring a proper education, and the numerous temptations to which they are exposed, render their virtues more conspicuous, and more worthy of veneration. This may be, and certainly is the case with other sovereigns ; but our monarch requires no indulgences of this kind ; his merits reflect infinitely more splendour on his situation than they can possibly receive. Penetrated with the most ardent but rational piety, he regards the Supreme Being as the common Father of all, and mankind the children, the members of one family. He is not therefore puffed up with vain glory as if he were an independent being and his subjects beneath his regard ; he looks upon them as his children who turn to him for protection, and to promote whose happiness becomes the first of his duties ; and it is this conviction that determines him always to prefer the public to private good.

No wicked king can ever deserve or possess the affections of his subjects ; he may govern by fear, but never by love. His people may be loud and servile in their exterior demonstrations of respect, but these are never founded upon confidence and esteem. It is impossible to venerate a man who degrades himself, and who has lost all respect for the Supreme Being. If religion and virtue have lost their power over him, what shall restrain him or what shall prevent him from violating the most sacred rights and liberties of his people ? To no

purpose will such a monarch substitute parade and splendour, the tinsel of false glory and the glitter of unjust conquests for the solid virtues of the head and heart ; these may dazzle the people, but can never beget their veneration.

Our sovereign is better acquainted with human nature ; he knows that his station alone will never procure the love and veneration of his subjects : These must be derived from his personal conduct. We must be attached to the man, we must be convinced of his integrity and piety, before we can surrender him our affections, and before obedience to his commands becomes our honour and delight, as well as our duty. *

Such, my friends, is our sovereign in private life ; and were his subjects to follow his example, what consequences would ensue. The nation would be virtuous, and a virtuous nation is always powerful. Were the British to imitate the conduct of the king, and make a point of succeeding in that imitation, where should we find a man among them unworthy of confidence, destitute of probity, or intemperate in his living ? Justice and integrity would cover us as a garment ; punctual in our dealings and in the performance of promises : affectionate husbands, indulgent parents, not admitting that criminal indulgence so fatal to children, but that regular and yet tender discipline which becomes the foundation of future excellence. Pious without hypocrisy, more attentive to the spirit of religion than to idle distinctions, yet careful to preserve those exterior ordinances

* See NOTE III.

which she retains as her outworks, but without parade or ostentation. Were we to model our lives by the conduct of our sovereign, corruption and venality would hide their heads, and all would be cheerfully obedient to the laws. Instead of pride, cruelty and oppression, christian charity would reign, each would embrace his fellow subject as a brother deserving of his confidence and friendship. As no vicious character ever had access to the king, such would be hunted from society, and the irreligious spurned as the corrupters of the public happiness. All would be convinced that he who is false to God would prove so to man; that hatred to religion proceeds from levity or ignorance, from a corrupted heart or a perverse understanding. The friend of man must be the friend of religion, for religion is the most fruitful source of our enjoyments.

In becoming christians as he is a christian, we should suffer no vice to harbour in our souls, but be forever endeavouring to acquire superior wisdom and purer morals, and to distinguish ourselves by our virtues from those who are not christians. Then should we love God with fervent devotion, fearing him as a good child fears his father, and cheerfully submitting ourselves to his will. In all our social relations, we should be directed by justice, lenity and kindness: careful to cultivate meekness, forbearance and brotherly love; and to discharge, with fidelity, the duties of our particular station.

Such would be the subjects of our beloved sovereign, were we to follow his example. He

knows that he is himself a subject, as well as his people, of a far higher tribunal than his own, and that all must follow the same road to virtue, to godliness, to immortality and glory. He knows that if he possess more power he must do more good than other men; that as he enjoys more honour and respect, so ought he to deserve it by his generosity, his wisdom and his impartiality---that he cannot expect peace and harmony among his people, if he be not to them as a father; for if he requires their willing obedience, he must treat them as children.

Arduous indeed is the task which a king has to perform; but fifty years experience has proved that our sovereign has performed it well; he can say, with truth, that he was never urged on by a lust of power, that he never derided the distresses of his people, but that he has been continually anxious to present to the world, a christian prince guided by the principles of the gospel. Now the breezes of gratitude fan him on every side, and the evening of his days is cheered by the blessings of a great and generous nation.

If we have found the private life of our sovereign guided by the purest principles and worthy of our most unqualified approbation, we shall find his public actions no less deserving of praise. Called to the throne in the midst of an expensive and destructive, but successful war, he did not allow himself to be carried away by the lust of dominion, but exhibited uncommon moderation in the terms which he granted to his vanquished enemies. He knew that the continuance of hostilities, how-

ever successful and glorious, must be attended with some sacrifices, which humanity and patriotism, and even policy itself forbade. In the conclusion of the war he found an excellent opportunity of proving to the nation, that he was not dazzled by that species of glory, which is fed by human blood, and blasts the hopes of nations ; but that he preferred the happiness of his subjects and the peace of the world, to the empty acclamations of military renown. In order to render the peace permanent, the king was content to make it honourable ; that his enemy seeing his moderation, might not be induced to nourish any secret resentment, or be urged by the greatness of his losses and disgrace, to embrace the first occasion of renewing the war.

Before it was possible for him to procure peace to the nation, he had given an immortal pledge of the purity of those principles by which his administration was to be regulated. He mentioned to his Parliament, soon after his accession, the propriety of securing the independency of the judges. " I look," said our virtuous monarch, " upon the independency and uprightness of the judges of the land, as essential to the impartial administration of justice, as one of the best securities to the rights and liberties of my loving subjects, and as most conducive to the honour of the crown." Such a mark of true public spirit, such a warm regard for the security of the laws, liberty and property of subjects, has been seldom witnessed. It was the same spirit that induced him, when advised by one of his ministers to follow the custom of the

late reign in securing the elections, to spurn the counsel, and to declare, that as his sole ambition was to render the nation flourishing and happy, he would trust entirely to the loyalty of his people, not doubting but that their affection would sufficiently strengthen the hands of his government.

It has been by adhering to such principles, by cherishing and protecting the rights of his people, as much as the most valuable prerogatives of the crown, that our gracious sovereign has been able to cherish that spirit of liberty which flourishes in the British empire, when surrounding nations have fallen under the most intolerable slavery.

This has been a most wonderful age of innovation—men have mistaken licentiousness for liberty. They have sought for freedom in being removed from all restraint, although it be a self-evident maxim, that it is only by the due restraint of others that I can become truly free. A principle has been adopted by many writers, and held up as indisputable, that in society we surrender part of our natural liberty to secure the rest. This principle is false—we make no such surrender—we gain every thing, we lose nothing. The laws protect, warn and enlighten us; they are continually destroying or removing whatever is offensive. In the courts of justice they distribute their blessings like the dews of heaven; they impart refreshment and vigour to all the political body, and preserve the peace and happiness of the cottage as well as the palace. We no more restrain our liberty by entering into society, than we do in building a house to protect us from the cold—

a well regulated society, that is a just government, so far from infringing, establishes and extends our liberty. In a state of nature, or before the establishment of a society, if such a state ever can be found, there is no liberty, for there are no laws. All laws and regulations presuppose the establishment of society; they flow from the intercourse which they regulate, and experience has proved their utility, before they are publicly recognized. To seek for liberty, even in the first stages of society, is to seek for a calm in the midst of a tempest. Are the barbarians free who act by the caprice of the moment, who are governed by their passions and the cravings of their appetites? He then who will take the trouble to reflect, must clearly perceive, that without society we cannot enjoy liberty. What I possess another may take away; my freedom depends not so much on my own restraints as upon the restraints of others in respect to me. Now in a good government these restraints are the laws—and what do I lose or surrender by becoming obedient to these laws? Nothing; for by them my liberty is extended and secured. We do not enjoy what another may take away—and what is secure in a rude society? but civil liberty cannot be taken away by any individual, for we have the strength of the whole society on our side. The restraints therefore imposed by a good government are only the sovereignty of good laws, the restraints of sound principles, and the commands of duty.

The word liberty has been so much prostituted that we are in danger of losing its true meaning;

for it is a melancholy truth, that the science of good government and the principles on which it rests are much less known now than they were a century ago, notwithstanding the empty declamations which have disturbed the world since the American revolution, about freedom and equal rights. Nothing is more absurd than to suppose a nation free, because it possesses a written constitution which is little regarded in practice. Before a people can be called free, their freedom must have been tried. It must have given permanent proofs of its health. It must have braved the most terrible storms—weathered the attacks of tyranny on the one hand, and of faction on the other. And what is more, this freedom must have become the foundation of the public manners—it must have stamped itself on the people who enjoy it. And such is the freedom of the British nation ; it has undergone all these trials, and it has been triumphant. That magnanimity, that openness and independence of character, by which this nation is distinguished, prove its freedom. That generosity, sincerity, boldness and energy shew that oppression is unknown ; and that urbanity, harmony and order, free from slavish fear or democratic barbarity, and anarchy, discover that this freedom is wisely directed. Does any person doubt whether the British be the freest nation on earth, let him tell me where property and its rights are so well protected. This is the life and soul of liberty. What shall oppression seize when property is secure ? Even a tyrant will not be wicked for nothing ; but the motives and objects are re-

moved, and the seed of oppression destroyed, when property is safe. By this, life and liberty are rendered sacred.

And has our gracious sovereign ever endeavoured to abridge this liberty or to extend his prerogative at the expence of the people? Has he not on the contrary proved the watchful guardian of their interests, and holding the balance between the nobility and commons, become their common father, and demonstrated by a reign of fifty years, that a limited monarchy is the best of governments?

But let us follow him in the exercise of the different branches of his prerogative. As supreme magistrate his first care is the regular administration of justice. This power he delegates to the judges, and in the courts over which they preside every thing is carried on in his name. Has he ever tried to turn this prerogative to the augmentation of his power? So far from this, that we have seen him coming forward voluntarily to make the judges independent of the crown. Formerly they were during pleasure; now they are during good behaviour. And they have become, to all intents and purposes, the arbitrators between the king and his people, for they are independent of both. This single measure is sufficient to immortalize George the Third, had he done nothing else, for he has rendered it impossible for him or his successors to have any influence over the judges. Neither have these judges any power but what is given them by the laws, nor can they pass any sentence till the matter of fact has been settled

by men chosen by the parties. All private feelings, and consequently all respect of persons are banished from the British courts of justice. Those who are acquainted with human nature are able to appreciate this concession of the king. In renouncing for himself and his posterity the power of displacing the judges at the commencement of a new reign, he put the finishing hand to the constitution, and by founding it on the purest justice, gave it the fairest chance to become eternal. Such a sacrifice has been rarely made. Even virtuous kings are careful to preserve their authority and influence unimpaired, and rather inclined to augment than diminish their power.

In every country except Britain, to be prosecuted by the government is to be condemned. That this is the case under the present despotism of France, no person will have the boldness to deny. And in the United States, which have borrowed all that is valuable in their institutions from Britain, but which they have poisoned or deformed by their crudities, faction produces the same effects as the cruel tyranny in France. But we shall be told that as the purity of British justice essentially depends upon the trial by jury, that pillar of liberty ; and as our neighbours possess that trial in its full purity, why then can we assert that their administration of justice is corrupt ? We answer, that in England, generally speaking, the people are possessed of moral habits ; they are tremblingly alive to every thing that can affect their reputation, and they have a strong veneration for religion. But if there be a nation where neithe

religion, virtue nor reputation are much regarded, where democracy has corrupted the heart by rendering it familiar with deception, where political falsehoods are considered meritorious, and the principles of honour and integrity disregarded to advance a friend, or ruin a rival—in such a nation the trial by jury has lost its advantages. And is it not notorious that in that unhappy country, by the foolish called free, every man considers his cause lost, if the jury be composed of his political opponents? And the judges not being independent, are or may be as easily swayed as the juries. Liberty in such a country becomes worse than an empty name, a mask for oppression; the law sleeps or is wrested from its purpose, and the reigning faction becomes irresistible.*

Let it ever be remembered that the excellence of a jury entirely depends upon the purity of their religious principles. If a man fears not God, will his oath bind him, and will he not readily give it up to friendship, to interest, to solicitation or secret malignity? In England the laws are paramount, the king has never oppressed any of his subjects; his administration has always been directed by the purest justice and moderation: of this the people are so much convinced, that there is no sacrifice which they would not willingly make in his defence. Considering his rights as a trust which he is to exercise with the most scrupulous adherence to justice and religion, he reckons the privileges of the people a property which they ought never to alienate, and which it is nei-

* See Note IV.

ther his interest nor duty to undermine.—Above party spirit himself, he was determined from the first to abolish the ridiculous distinction of Whig and Tory which had so long distracted the nation, and to extend his power and protection equally to the whole body of the people. This he has at length accomplished, though not without much trouble and loud complaints from the expiring factions.

Wishing to unite all his subjects in harmony and peace, he has gradually removed those religious disabilities which the seclusion of the Stuarts from the throne and the protection of the national church had rendered necessary. Many severe laws had been enacted against the Catholics, who were supposed the friends of the banished family, and the Dissenters, by forsaking the established church, deprived themselves of many valuable privileges which their fellow subjects enjoyed. But no sooner did these dangers diminish, than the king cheerfully concurred in lessening the restrictions. From the reign of king William to that of our present sovereign, the Catholics of England had laboured under many privations, with a silence and patience which at length excited the attention of the nation. The parliament therefore, in conjunction with the king, removed those grievous penalties which had been imposed for the preservation of the constitution, then struggling into birth. That liberal spirit of christian charity which animates our king, made him rejoice in promoting such a measure, and eager to repeal laws which were calculated (now that

their cause was removed) to destroy all social and religious obligations, to poison the sources of domestic felicity, and to extinguish every principle of honour. The favour which had been shewn to the Catholics in 1778 was extended to the Dissenters in 1779. Our gracious sovereign, anxiously disposed to give every relief to his subjects, most readily assented to the bill presented by his parliament, for relieving this class of citizens from many painful restrictions. The same christian spirit of love still farther extended the bounds of toleration in 1791. The Pope, so long the terror of the world, had now sunk into weakness and contempt. The Catholics themselves had disavowed those principles which were most obnoxious or dangerous to Protestant states, and it was no longer necessary to enforce the laws which had been made against them : on the contrary, the zeal and attachment which they had frequently manifested for the king and constitution, merited encouragement and reward.

In 1793, the Catholics of Ireland were more favoured than even their brethren in England ; and except their exclusion from some confidential places in the executive government, and sitting in parliament, no restriction whatever was continued. Indeed the most generous system of concession and conciliation hath characterized his majesty's administration.

And while we praise our virtuous sovereign for so readily assenting to all those conciliating measures which served to allay religious controversies which, while they left the constitution secure in

church and state, added much to the comfort and happiness of those whom they relieved, we are called upon no less cheerfully to praise him for resisting a farther concession which he conceived dangerous to his government.

Whatever be the opinion of some individuals concerning the propriety of Catholic emancipation, the king's first motive for refusing his concurrence is in the highest degree honourable. He considers, and perhaps justly, that such a measure is inconsistent with his coronation oath. This scrupulous adherence to the sanctity of an oath, hath secured the gratitude and admiration, the affection and confidence of all ranks of men, even of those who conceive themselves sufferers by his firmness, and all regret the advanced age of our venerable sovereign, who rises in virtue as his years increase.

Here we have a sacred pledge of the excellence of his moral principles and the fervour of his piety ; and to shew that he was actuated on this occasion by the purest motives ; on being informed many years ago that the Catholics in Scotland were too poor to support their clergy, he bestowed upon their priests a small annual pension, which he quadrupled to the bishops.

But the claims of the Catholics to total emancipation, may be refused on the strongest grounds. While this body acknowledge the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope, they act directly in opposition to one of the fundamental doctrines of British liberty, which we ratify with an oath, " that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state or

potentate, hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence or authority ecclesiastical or civil within these realms." As long as the Catholics acknowledge a foreign jurisdiction, their church may become as much a political as it is a religious institution. How can they be depended upon in all cases as to the state, when their consciences are under the direction of a clergy who are bound by oath to obey the Pope? And is not the present Pope the creature, or rather the subject of our public and most inveterate enemy, who exercises the power of dispensing with oaths, and of dissolving people from their allegiance? This is a formidable objection to all further concessions to the Catholics.

The same liberality which has been so meritoriously granted to religious sects was also extended to political relations. The kingdom of Ireland had always been governed with a rod of iron; the jealousy of the British parliament had imposed restrictions on her trade and commerce at once oppressive, cruel and absurd; but during this happy reign they have been gradually removed. In 1778, a small beginning was made, but jealousy choked it in the bud. In 1780, good sense prevailed, and the trade of Ireland was placed on a liberal footing. It was no longer treated like an infant colony, and bound by unnatural restrictions.

In 1782, the British parliament renounced all power over that of Ireland, declaring it free and independent; and at the same time the king signified his intention of surrendering many important parts of his prerogative; and this magnanim-

ity was received with acclamation and gratitude by that high minded nation.

In 1783, these concessions were farther sanctioned by a law expressly enacted for the purpose of disclaiming forever all right in the British parliament to legislate for Ireland. Other advantages were given to the Irish ; but such was the unhappy situation of that people, that they could make no use of them. Divided among themselves, and governed by a junto which was equally deaf to the voice of the government and of the people, no solid relief could be given but by uniting the two kingdoms. This grand measure, which consolidates the empire, has been at length carried into effect, and is one of the most glorious events of his majesty's reign. Indeed no measure could be more judicious or necessary. The inhabitants of the three kingdoms are at length placed on an equal footing, and not separated as they formerly were by absurd regulations. United under one legislature, mutual jealousies are destroyed, and the advantages of free trade and commerce are open to all.

Our gracious king appeared determined to bury, if possible, the last remains of political animosity ; he had already restored the forfeited estates in Scotland to the families which had lost them in the rebellion, and, in 1800, with a promptness in the highest degree cordial and generous, he granted a pension of £ 4000 per annum to Henry Stuart, cardinal of York, (when reduced to absolute beggary by the robberies of the revolutionary French) the last branch of the illustrious but

unfortunate family of the Stuarts, although the cardinal had had the weakness to assert his title to the throne.

But the national prosperity, and the comfort and happiness diffused by the impartial administration of our beloved king, would have received a mortal stab, had not our finances been cured of that decrepitude into which they were sinking : national bankruptcy, a most dreadful calamity, was seriously apprehended by men of experience and penetration ; numbers thought it unavoidable, and many had prophesied the time of its happening—the king therefore united his exertions with those of his ministry to find out a remedy for this impending evil. It was Mr. Pitt's good fortune to discover a plan which dispelled the rising gloom, and whose efficacy displays in the strongest light, the greatness of his genius ; it insures for him the gratitude of the nation, and clothes him with immortality. By means of a sinking fund provision is made for gradually liquidating the former debts in a manner at once simple and effectual, and resting upon principles certain and uniform in their operation, as has been incontrovertibly proved by an experience of twenty years. But it was not enough to remove the danger arising from the debts of former wars ; the minister made it impossible to contract a new debt, without at the same time providing the means of discharging it in a moderate period. In these judicious arrangements, the king most readily concurred ; and the confidence which a system so perfect has inspired, hath greatly increased the enterprise and exertions

of the people. Our national resources* being thus improved, every possible encouragement has been given to trade, navigation and manufactures, and the public prosperity hath most wonderfully increased.

These and many other judicious regulations, it is true, may be ascribed to Mr. Pitt ; but the king shares the merit for selecting and keeping such a minister. The dread of the national debt seems now to be subsiding, though to some it is still a subject of gloom and despair : but such fears are not well founded ; for a strict examination will prove that our enormous taxes are the natural consequences of the greatness of our wealth.

It was reserved for the present reign to put an end to a traffic which had long been a disgrace to the nation and to all Europe, a traffic which gave currency to the most savage opinions, which occasioned the most dreadful crimes, which put all moral law to defiance, and which substituted the dominion of force for that of reason. The blood of the innocent Africans no longer cries to Heaven against us. Commerce has been taught to respect the laws of humanity, and the unhappy negroes are acknowledged to be men. Our sovereign rejoiced in passing this salutary law ; he rejoiced in the annihilation of a trade at which future ages will be astonished—a trade which outrages the principles of christianity, and tramples on human nature.

Though an ardent lover of peace, our king has had the misfortune to be engaged in several

* See NOTE V.

just and necessary wars. He was not able to inspire other nations with that moderation and love of order which animated his royal breast ; and found it necessary to maintain the honour of the nation by repelling unjust and unprovoked aggressions. The first of these was the Colonial or American war, the origin of which is to be found in the peace of 1763. Had our beloved Sovereign consented to restore Canada to France, the states of America had still been colonies.— Possessed of the navigation of the lakes, and claiming a passage to Louisiana, the French would have kept the Americans in continual alarm, harassing their frontiers and making encroachments upon their territories. Incapable of defending themselves against a nation so powerful, they would have anxiously maintained their connection with their mother country, and would have willingly contributed their share in the expence necessary for their protection. But no sooner are they relieved from impending danger than they turn upon their protector and sting the hand that saved them from destruction. It is not necessary to enter minutely into the cause and origin of the American war.* Future historians will do justice to Great Britain when the mania for undefined liberty and licentiousness shall have passed away. It is sufficient for us to remark, that they made a dismal return for the millions spent in their quarrels, and for the blood that had flowed in torrents. They proved themselves neither affectionate children, grateful colonies, nor

*See NOTE VI.

friendly allies. I rejoice however in their separation ; they had become an intolerable burthen to the British nation ; they drew the attention of the government from internal improvements (of infinitely more utility) to the fostering of insidious colonies ; and since this excrescence has been cut off, the British isles have advanced most rapidly in strength and prosperity. No Englishman has cause to blush on account of this war ;* it was excited by faction, and became successful through treachery.

But the most unfortunate event of the present reign is of a more general and destructive tendency, and is common to England with all Europe. The revolution in France has been the scourge of the world since its commencement. This dreadful convulsion was accelerated, if not entirely produced, by the rebellion in America. The discussions to which this singular contest gave rise, and the countenance granted by Louis XVI. to subjects in arms against their lawful sovereign, erased from the minds of a great portion of his people that reverence and devotion for royalty, with which they were formerly inspired. These impressions were extended and confirmed on the return of the troops which had been sent to America. The gifts of freedom were painted in the most fascinating colours ; the flame of blind enthusiasm was kindled in their breasts, and a desire for liberty excited which nothing could extinguish. Indeed the king of France signed his death warrant† and the ruin of his race when he signed the

* See NOTES VII. and VIII. † See NOTE IX.

treaty with the rebellious colonies. He suffered jealousy to conquer prudence, and rejoiced in the opportunity of humbling a rival.

It were easy to assign the causes which made the revolution of France more savage and more dangerous to other nations than that of America, but here it would be out of place. Our virtuous sovereign saw with concern the dreadful anarchy which pervaded that unhappy country, and the shocking massacres which were every day perpetrated, but he determined to preserve his neutrality, having laid it down as a maxim not to interfere with the internal arrangements of other nations. But the arrogance and ambition of the Ephemeral rulers of France, soon left him nothing but submission or resistance ; and after they had imbrued their hands in the blood of their humane and pious sovereign, it was vain to expect justice. Indeed the murder of their king roused the tender feelings of the whole British nation ; intercourse with France was suspended, and the National Convention hastened to declare war. With respect to the policy of a war with France, a difference of opinion at first prevailed. But whoever traces the progress of this terrible convulsion, must be convinced that it was impossible to maintain the relations of peace much longer. The rage for innovation was daily gaining ground and might in a short time have overturned our happy constitution. The French revolution presented a spectacle altogether new. Its sanguinary progress, its early attempt to overturn the Christian religion. The hopes it offer-

ed to the disaffected in all nations, and the zeal which it exerted to increase them, justified the king in breaking off all communication with a country, where the revolutionary fervour carried every thing before it. At this period the situation of the British empire was in the highest degree critical, and it was difficult to decide which course to pursue. Subsequent events have however justified the choice that was made, by proving that a neutrality, had it been possible, would have been infinitely more destructive than the most furious war. What has Spain gained by her patient alliance, her humiliations and sacrifices? What the king of Prussia for his temporising and insidious policy? What the Dutch for their meanness and condescension? Has Switzerland itself, formerly so virtuous and free, escaped the rage of conquest and revolution? And if I be asked what we have gained, I answer, we have gained security, we have preserved our happy constitution, we have maintained the purity of the public morals. Yes, that probity which seems on the continent of Europe to be lost, still distinguishes the British character. That abhorrence of fraud and falsehood, that dignified independence which every person feels, who is conscious of the equal protection of the laws—that disdain of all fawning servility and meanness, which the slaves of tyrants must put on, still adorn the British nation. Had it not been for the war, we might have become equally degraded with our enemies, deprived of our rights, all security of person and property annihilated, and been found bowing at the feet of

one of the Corsican usurper's satellites. Such a tyrant would have trampled on our laws, on our religion and civil policy ; he would have enforced with the most unrelenting cruelty, the most arbitrary and oppressive measures. Hating that love of liberty, of honour, and of virtue, implanted in our nature, he would have taken every method to debase our minds. This would have been the exchange that we should have made for the gracious sovereign whom we now praise. Instead of his paternal affection, his ardour to increase our happiness, his mild and faithful administration of the laws, we should have found ourselves groaning under a government of murder, a military despotism covered with corruption, at war with the virtuous, and deluging the kingdom with the blood of her most amiable children. Ruin and misery would have overspread the land ; the last asylum of liberty would have been destroyed ; the light of the world extinguished, and oppression in her most dreadful attire would have been seen sounding her victorious trumpet of horror and dismay. From evils so dreadful we have been preserved by our watchful sovereign ; and while other nations have fallen, we remain secure, happy and free. He has conducted the vessel of the state with a steady hand, and he continues victorious.

There is however one error, which, though flowing from a generous intention, has produced much evil and perplexity. The severity of our maritime laws is the ostensible pretence for arming all Europe against us ; but unwise relaxations of

these are the real source of our present difficulty. In the year 1756, Lord Chatham discovering that France, unable to resist our naval preponderance, had relaxed her colonial system, and permitted neutrals to bring home the produce of her colonies, which was done exclusively by her own ships in time of peace ; and perceiving that the pressure of the war would be thus lessened, adopted a rule by which the admiralty were to guide their decisions to counteract her design. The rule was, *That a neutral has no right to deliver a belligerent from the pressure of its enemies' hostilities, by trading with his colonies in time of war in a way that was prohibited in time of peace.**

The fairness of this rule must be admitted by every impartial person ; and its obvious tendency is to accelerate the return of peace : it was acted upon by Lord Chatham, and found efficacious. But since his time, the clamours of selfish neutrals have extorted a relaxation, as if the enforcement of so just a principle were contrary to morals. The first consequence has been, that the hostile colonies have found a benefit rather than a disadvantage in the war ; they were never more flourishing, and their produce never flowed into the mother country in such abundance, with so great cheapness, and in so great security. The navy have been thus deprived of their lawful prizes, the manufacturers of the enemy find employment, his taxes are rendered productive, and he is enabled to continue the contest.

But the second class of evils arising from this

* See NOTES XIV. XV. XVI.

injudicious relaxation of our maritime laws are still greater. The Americans becoming the carriers between the hostile countries and their colonies have risen to a height of prosperity which hath made them insolent and captious, and not being able to navigate their vast shipping, they entice our seamen from the service of their country. And so far are they from being satisfied with the relaxations already made that they demand still greater, such as must quickly undermine our naval power. They detain our sailors under pretence that they are American citizens—They refuse our right of search, and because we are not inclined to grant their requests, they debar us from their harbours and interdict all intercourse. One part of the dispute with the unprincipled Government of that nation is happily removed, the colonies of our enemies have all been conquered, and it is hoped that our sovereign perceiving that his generosity has produced nothing but evil, will return to that just and equitable rule on which Lord Chatham acted, and to which his illustrious son, in his last illness, declared that he was determined to revert. Firmly maintaining our maritime rights against open enemies and secret foes, we may despise this degenerate government equally destitute of national honour and virtue, and leave them in silent contempt to brood over their selfish and iniquitous proceedings and to become the execration of future ages.*

It is thus that the most virtuous and generous conduct sometimes produces, in this world, con-

*See NOTES X. XI. XII. XIII.

sequences partially grievous and which the strongest sagacity could not have foreseen. That free system of colonization adopted by England so very different from the severe and restrictive form used by other nations instead of nourishing gratitude and affection, raised discontent, enmity and hatred. Our aged monarch from his anxiety to gratify neutrals relaxes his maritime rights. This serves no other purpose but to encourage demands for farther relaxations. The Americans calling themselves friends, inveigle our seamen, and openly prefer the most paltry interests to our immediate and their own eventual safety as a nation. But the delusion is vanished, concessions are at an end, and the serpent is discovered.

Such are a few of the leading points of the reign of our gracious sovereign :—To these, many others might have been added. The improvement of the jurisprudence in Scotland—the great liberality exercised towards the French emigrants—the cordial reception given to the harrassed and unfortunate Louis XVIII. when all the other kings of Europe refused him an assylum. Is it then any wonder that the prosperity of the country hath increased in a most astonishing degree under an administration so paternal : that agriculture has flourished in a manner unexampled in history : that commerce has been extended in all its branches, and that the arts and sciences have advanced infinitely more in Britain than in any other country in Europe? Indeed learnig and the arts have always experienced the liberal protection of the king. In 1768, he instituted the

Royal Academy of Painting, under his immediate care, subject to the direction of forty artists of the first rank in their several professions. This reflects immortal honour on the taste and munificence of the king, and proves his eagerness to promote the progress of the arts. He cheerfully came forward to promote the establishment of the Royal institution in London for the purpose of giving regular lectures on the sciences : an institution which has already done much towards the diffusion and improvement of knowledge and produced a series of discoveries only surpassed by the discoveries of Newton, and which, but for this, might have been still unknown.

Animated by that pure patriotic flame which is the noblest passion that can enter the breast, he is forever seeking his people's good, and always teaching them, by his illustrious example, how to procure it. Though far distant, we are no less the objects of his paternal care. To us as well as to the inhabitants around him, he is the faithful guardian and dispenser of all the benefits flowing from the most perfect form of government. Our constitution, modelled after that of Great Britain, partakes of all the advantages which an experience of several centuries had accumulated. It is not, therefore, the work of a day ; it rests upon old and tried foundations, the more durable, because visionary empiricks have not been allowed to touch them. No fine spun theories of metaphysicians, which promise much and end in misery, have shared in its formation ; such men may destroy, but they can never build. All the privileges

which Englishmen possess are ours. In this respect, the British empire is united ; for with a generosity, never before equalled, these liberties were extended, without reserve, to the French inhabitants of Lower Canada. This portion of a once great and gallant nation, were received as fellow subjects ; every mark of subjection was carefully removed ; their very prejudices have been treated with the greatest respect, and they are left in the full exercise of their religion and of all their civil rights. Yes, Canadians, valuable are the advantages which you enjoy as British subjects ; your ancient laws respecting property have been retained because you desired it, and the severity of the criminal code has been removed by the introduction of the milder administration of the law of England. Your very feelings have been consulted with a condescension and delicacy highly pleasing ; your manners and customs have been cherished and protected, your language retained in the courts of justice, in parliament and upon all public occasions. Our gracious sovereign as well as his parliament, have manifested no other desire than to extend your liberty and increase your happiness. You have received the power of correcting what shall appear wrong in your laws and institutions, and of framing such new regulations as the growing interest and prosperity of the province shall require. Enabled to change, modify and improve the existing laws, and possessing all that is beneficial in the British constitution, what may be justly expected on your parts in return for gifts so precious ? Surely that you will return that

affection and love for our august sovereign, which he has manifested to you. That you will teach your children the value of the benefits which you have received, and inspire them with gratitude and loyalty. Behold, you will say, the generous treatment which we have experienced from the British. Thrown into their hands by the fortune of war, we found them friends instead of enemies. They relieved us from the numerous oppressions of our former government, and most anxiously removed all traces of recent victory.— We were enrolled among the number of British subjects, and all the rights, privileges, and immunities of that happy people were conferred upon us. And, my children, living under a king so generous, so benevolent and just, a king whose greatest joy is to see his subjects happy and free, what can we wish for that we do not possess : behold comfort, wealth and grandeur flowing in upon us, and our liberty giving our country the most solid charms, notwithstanding its freezing sky and procrastinated snows. To the freed man, labour loses its pain ; he may be poor, but he feels himself independent, and he bows not to the proud and the haughty, the rich or the powerful, for they dare not molest him. Other countries may enjoy a warmer climate, and may produce more delicious fruits, but are these an equivalent for anarchy, for despotism and oppression. Cultivate then my dearest children, your affection for the British king, government and laws, and for your British fellow subjects. This affection, this loyalty will be better than mines of silver and

gold ; it will warm your hearts and inspire you with the noblest virtues. And let not this sacred attachment to our king be cankered with the spirit of discontent : fly from those who endeavour to poison your minds with distrust of your British brethren with details of grievances which under so free and generous a government never existed, and of oppressions which under so free and generous a government never durst appear. And let not the sordid passions of the soul deter you from stepping forward, in the hour of danger, to defend your country, and to preserve, unimpaired, the glorious privileges which you have received. Trust to your fathers who are ready, after fifty years experience of the mildness, the justice and integrity of the British government, to prove their loyalty by the most precious sacrifices, and can you think that this upright government would change its virtues for severity and oppression ? No ; the interest of the people and the government is the same. Let us therefore rally round it and sacrifice, with alacrity, our wealth, even life itself to preserve it pure : that thousands may enjoy those blessings which it is qualified to bestow, contented if we can contribute to its permanence and be entombed for our exertions in the breasts of a grateful posterity. Such, Canadians, ought to be your exhortations to your children : inculcating, with paternal anxiety, affection for your fellow subjects, proper resignation and obedience to the laws, a due deference and homage for superiors, and for those who are publicly entrusted with the

administration of the province. To do this is more peculiarly your duty as partakers in the benefits of a constitution of government founded upon the most equitable, rational and excellent principles : a constitution of free and equal laws, secured on the one hand against the arbitrary will of the sovereign, and the licentiousness of the people on the other : a constitution which has become the fruitful source of heroes, the nourisher of liberty, the promoter of learning, arts and commerce : a constitution which protects and secures the life and liberty of every individual, and whose pure administration has been experienced for fifty years through a king who delights in being the guardian of freemen and the father of his people. To conclude, our gracious sovereign looks to the inhabitants of the Canadas with peculiar pleasure : He has bound the French part of the population by gifts and privileges which form ties of the most pleasing and lasting kind, and he well remembers the sacrifices which many of his subjects in Upper-Canada, Nova-Scotia and New-Brunswick have already made in his defence : He never forgets a kindness, and he has liberally rewarded them for the privations to which they have voluntarily submitted. So many marks of reciprocal affection insure the permanence of your loyalty ; the same ardour which you have formerly displayed, and which, though unsuccessful, covers you with glory, would still inspire you with the equal affection, and your hopes of success would be better founded. And you who are young, remember

that as our gracious sovereign is dear to all his subjects, he ought also to be dear to you : imitate the loyalty of your parents, and as you are heirs to their possessions, be heirs also to their virtues. And you who have come into this country voluntarily preferring it to your own, you will perceive the duty of being true to the oath of allegiance which you have taken. You have been recognized as British subjects, you have been adopted into our family and received as children.— Let then obedience and submission to the laws mark your conduct, and as you receive protection, our king has a just claim to your service.

But in speaking to British subjects, to men conscious of enjoying liberty in its highest perfection, it may be superfluous to exhort to loyalty. They know that to rise in defence of the king and constitution which nourishes and protects us, has, in all ages, been a mark of distinction. The greatest and best men recorded in history were eminent for their patriotism. Who can fight with more ardour for wealth, for property, for honour, for family, for friends and for his country, than he who arms himself to fight for his own property, for his own honour, for the safety of his friends, for his own family, his own felicity and the independence of his own country ?

In defending our venerable sovereign and the government over which he presides, we are defending our most precious interests, and discharging a debt of gratitude in a manner the most agreeable. For it is by affection and loyalty that we are enabled to sweeten the last days of our good king ;

those days which are incessantly employed in promoting our prosperity and happiness. His exhortations, his authority and example have always evinced the most generous zeal and activity in the public service, and his administration hath been principally known to us by acts of benevolence and mercy.

He is now verging towards the grave, and like the setting sun in a calm and serene sky, he is beheld by his affectionate subjects with praises and blessings. No murmurs cloud the horizon—the countenances of all are filled with the joy of grief. They know his value, they dread his loss. They are not supported by the hope which animated them during his sickness in 1789, that the strength of manhood would dissipate the disease. Alas ! there is no cure for declining years, and they will not again burst forth in the fulness of joy, with one heart and one voice, to thank God for his restoration. But they have spontaneously stamped his character with the fairest marks of honour and renown, when after an experience of his reign for fifty years, they rose with accordant voice ; rushing into the temples, and pouring out the effusions of their hearts in prayer and praises with thanksgivings and rejoicings, with deeds of benevolence and charity to their fellow subjects, they all expressed their gratitude to God for having spared his gracious life. Such are the grateful beams which illumine the evening of our sovereign's life ; such the benedictions that are showered upon his sacred head, and such the fulfilment of the Bishop of London's prophetic pray-

er at his acceffion to the throne. “Let there be,”
faid the loyal prelate, “but one conteft between
“them, whether the king loves his people beft, or
“his people him ; and may it be a long, a very
“long conteft, may it never be decided ; but let
“it remain doubtful, and may the paternal affec-
“tion on the one fide, and the filial obedience on
“the other, be had in perpetual remembrance.”

NOTES.

NOTE I. p. 6.

SEVERAL historians, and Dr. Smollet in particular, mention the rapid improvement of Hanover after its elector became king of Great Britain. And they assign, as the cause of this improvement, the partiality which George the First and Second entertained for their hereditary dominions. This partiality has given rise to loud and bitter complaints, and it has been admitted by writers of all parties that British interests were sacrificed in quarrels not their own. It cannot be denied that the present royal family as electors of Hanover were more intimately connected with the affairs of the continent than the Stuarts had occasion to be, but it does not follow from this that Hanover always gained as Great Britain lost. The very contrary was frequently the fact. It is worth observing that the Hanoverians have been as loud in their complaints on this head as the British, and probably with as good reason. They say that the king of Great Britain, invulnerable at home, was frequently attacked as elector of Hanover, and that country exposed to depredations which might have been easily avoided, had not the king of Great Britain disdained to adopt a policy which he would have willingly embraced as elector of Hanover. The clamour against the Hanoverians is therefore absurd: they suffer more than we can do by having their country made the theatre of wars which their native princes might have avoided, and what we lose is like dust in the balance compared to the invaluable advantages of securing our constitution, liberty, and laws.

NOTE II. p. 10.

THE rage for equality which the American and French revolutions have introduced, has given currency to many notions false and mischievous. Persons of high rank have not only been refused the respect and deference to which they were entitled, but republican ferocity has delighted to deprive them of reputation and talents. Kings and queens, nobles, and persons of quality, say these modest persons,

are unacquainted with the rights of humanity, incapable of sympathising with distress and conspicuous only for cruelty and ignorance. Amidst their invectives against rank and dignity, these anarchists have bestowed upon themselves the most disgusting praise as exclusively possessing all sense, humanity, taste and genius. Indeed the legislature of the United States seriously deliberated whether they should not declare themselves the most enlightened nation in the world. What will such persons say to the eloquent letter which follows :

“ May it please your Majesty,

“ I am at a loss whether I should congratulate or condole with you on your late victory ; since the same success which has covered you with laurels, has overspread the country of Mecklenburg with desolation. I know, sire, that it seems unbecoming my sex, in this age of vicious refinement, to feel for one’s country, to lament the horrors of war, or wish for the return of peace. I know you may think it more properly my province to study the arts of pleasing, or to turn my thoughts to subjects of a more domestic nature ; but however unbecoming it may be in me, I cannot resist the desire of interceding for this unhappy people.

“ It was but a very few years ago that this territory wore the most pleasing appearance. The country was cultivated ; the peasant looked cheerful ; and the towns abounded with riches and festivity. What an alteration at present from such a charming scene ! I am not expert at description, nor can my fancy add any horrors to the picture : But sure even conquerors themselves would weep at the hideous prospect now before me. The whole country, my dear country, lies one frightful waste, presenting only objects to excite terror, pity and despair. The business of the husbandman and the shepherd is quite discontinued ; the husbandman and the shepherd are become soldiers themselves, and help to ravage the soil they formerly occupied. The towns are inhabited only by old men, women and children ; perhaps here and there a warrior, by wounds or loss of limbs, rendered unfit for service, left at his door ; his little children hang round him, ask an history of every wound, and grow themselves soldiers before they find strength for the field.

“ But this were nothing, did we not feel the alternate influence of either army as it happens to advance or re-

treat. It is impossible to express the confusion which even those who call themselves our friends, create. Even those, from whom we might expect redress, oppress us with new calamities. From your justice therefore it is that we hope relief: To you even children and women may complain, whose humanity stoops to the meanest petition, and whose power is capable of repressing the greatest injustice. I am, sire, &c."

If this illustrious Queen were obliged to descend from her exalted station as soon as a lady could be found capable of writing a superior letter upon the same subject, will any person capable of judging, hesitate to say that she would have nothing to apprehend, for no such person ever could be found.

NOTE III. p. 14.

PERSONS of licentious lives and those who are not accustomed to examine the effects of moral causes, will be ready to suppose that I have dwelt too long upon the private and domestic virtues of our amiable sovereign. But I do not regard the opinions of such persons; they are not indeed qualified to decide, and I am sure of meeting, in this respect, with the approbation of the good, who are aware of the great importance of virtuous example. The writers on the French revolution unanimously declare that the general corruption of manners was one of the most powerful causes of that unhappy event. And this corruption was supported by the example of the king. Louis XV. lived in open adultery. He seduced a city matron, carried her publicly from her husband to exercise sovereign authority, and this opened a channel for licentiousness. This weak prince placed his sceptre at the feet of one of his mistresses who had been chosen from among the dregs of Paris, and this rascalliness covered him with contempt, the certain forerunner of state disasters. Governed by women of characters so abandoned, decency fled the court. All who made professions of honour and who respected propriety of conduct, were overwhelmed by the denunciations, the licentiousness, the intrigues and corruption of those abandoned women, who surrounded the king, with a crowd of people without morals, and enemies to virtue. This general corruption of manners, and the measures adopted by this devoted prince weakened his authority, undermined the state and assisted in producing that revolution in which his grandson

the virtuous and humane Louis the XVIth, perished.— When this prince ascended the throne, though fond of domestic happiness, he wanted energy to purify so corrupt a court and so rapacious an administration, and he sunk under the conflict. Many examples might be given of the bad effects of licentious morals in the higher orders. Indeed every father of a family who has been himself guilty, sooner or later deplores it in bitterness. In this new country where licentiousness has already made a most alarming progress, you frequently find people living debauched lives disgraceful to themselves and pregnant with future misery. Their numbers indeed keep them in countenance, and conceal, for a time, their contemptible situation. But I might appeal to many keepers who, after living in a degraded manner for a number of years, give their paramour the title of wife not from any affection for her, but on account of compassion for their children : Excluded from genteel society, they drag out a miserable existence, and the vulgarity of their domestic regulations and manners reminds them every day of their folly.

NOTE IV. p. 23.

WE are frequently deafened with absurd and ridiculous descriptions of American liberty : But the foundation of true liberty is the strict and impartial administration of justice. An obscure member of the house of commons, not many months ago, accused the duke of York of mal practices. He was attended to, and the conduct of the king's favourite son was strictly examined. The inquiry in as far as it respected his official business was highly creditable to his Highness, but notwithstanding he found it necessary to resign.

The commander in chief of the American army is accused not merely of mal practices in his official capacity, but of receiving bribes from a foreign power, and of conspiring the overthrow of his own government, and he is accused, not by an obscure individual, but by a senator in congress who declares himself ready to substantiate his charges, and to convict him of corruption and high treason before any court of justice ; but no proper enquiry takes place ; he is not tried, but the affair is huddled up. Lord Melville was accused, impeached by the House of Commons and tried by his Peers ; he was indeed honourably acquitted, but his friends durst not prevent his trial. Mr. Pitt and several of

the King's servants were summoned to give evidence at Maidstone on the trial of O'Conner; they all attended, they durst not disobey the summons of the Court; They gave their evidence. But Mr. Madison and his colleagues refused to obey the summons of the Court respecting Miranda's expedition, pretending that they were required in their several departments. This was to insult the Court, to expose it to contempt and to poison the source of justice.

The American Juries pay so little regard to an oath, so little attention to the evidence that their verdicts are often erroneous. Many of them have no religion; many despise it—numbers never have been baptised, and consider the oath a jest. So general is the corruption, and so certain are some persons of the impossibility of receiving justice from them that they wish that one or two upright judges were to decide, and juries, in civil cases, to be excluded. The American juries commonly enquire the political opinions of the litigators and give it to their friend, or if politics be out of the question, they decide in favour of the poorer; we do not say but that justice may be sometimes obtained, but her presence in the courts is rare.

But the lenity exercised towards general Wilkinson is not extended to thier political enemies, by the ruling party. Witness the vulgar and gross proceedings against judge Chase and the oppression of the Government on Burr. The President even insulted the judge for acquitting him in his public message to Congress.

NOTE V. p. 30.—ON THE FINANCE.

It was prophesied about a century ago by persons who had made the finances their particular study that the prospect before us was gloomy. Mr. Hume, in the first edition of his essays, asserted that we could not maintain our credit when our debt reached 100 millions, but he lived to see it double this sum, and prudently expunged this passage in the future editions of his works observing that it was impossible to conjecture how far we might extend our credit, or to what amount the debt might be raised. Our gradual increase of wealth has most happily averted all predictions of Bankruptcy, the improvement of our manufactures and the great extension of commerce aided by that national attachment which every Briton feels for his country, and which induces him to make the greatest sacrifice in its defence, have always enabled the state to procure the necessary sup-

plies. The experience therefore of the past justifies this comfortable conclusion for the future, that our finances require only to be directed by men of integrity and information, to enable the nation to meet any exigency, and to maintain this or any other just and necessary war, as long as our enemies remain deaf to truth and justice. The existence of a national debt may be perfectly consistent with the interest and prosperity of the Country, and it is only when the borrowing system has been abused, that it has become alarming. To those who may not be conversant in this interesting matter, the following short statement may be acceptable. Taking the public debt at 600 millions nominal capital, this when reduced to real money capital valuing 3 per cent. at 60 will amount to 360 millions. The sinking fund this present year enables the commissioners to pay off ten one half millions or about 1-34th part of the whole debt, so that in 34 years even if the sinking fund were not to accumulate, the present debt would be paid off. But it is evident that if 10½ millions of the 360 millions be paid this year, the interest of the money so paid is saved, which, in this case is something more than half a million, so that in 1811 something more than 11 millions can be paid; in fine, the whole debt would be extinguished on this plan in 17 years from this time, or in 1827. But as such a rapid extinction of the national debt would be attended with inconvenience, it is probable that Ministers will apply some part of the sinking fund to the immediate reduction of the more grievous taxes. Thus, for example, in the year 1818 when the sinking fund on the smallest scale, supposing it to receive no intermediate improvements, will amount to rather more than seventeen millions. Ministers may chuse to pay off only fourteen millions of the public debt, and repeal taxes to the extent of three millions per annum; next year or 1819, they can pay the same sum and repeal existing taxes to the amount of another million; thus the reduction of the taxes and of the debt would go hand in hand; nor do the new loans interfere with this admirable system—for it is enacted that every new loan shall be paid in 45 years by a sinking fund peculiar to itself. The Minister in providing for the interest of every new loan, provides one per cent above what is necessary, and this one per cent is applied towards reducing the capital which it does in about 45 years. This part of the system has been amended by making the appropriation larger especially in time of war, so that every new loan may be re-

paid in 14 years. On the whole, such is the resources of the country, and such the certain success of Mr. Pitt's plan that the national debt ceases to be an evil of any considerable magnitude.

NOTE VI. p. 31.

The policy adopted by the British Ministry towards the colonies after the peace of 1763 has been held up to execration, but when carefully weighed, we shall find that we go to the limits of our censure by calling it unwise. That they were endeavouring to lay a foundation for arbitrary power will not be easily credited by any impartial person. Soon after His Majesty's accession to the throne, the parliament voted three hundred thousand pounds to enable his Majesty to give proper compensation to the respective Provinces in North America, for the expenses incurred by them during the war. This generosity did not appear very consistent with ideas of immediate oppression. It is also worthy of remark that when the first bill for taxing America was brought into Parliament, it met with no opposition; the political enemies of the ministry who afterwards declaimed so bitterly against it, were silent. Indeed nothing could appear more reasonable than that those parts of the empire which had benefited most by the expenses of the war should contribute something to lessen the heavy debt which these expenses had occasioned, and not a member at that time, in the house of Commons, had the smallest doubt of the constitutional right vested in the parliament to raise the contribution. Afterwards when the colonies opposed the collection of these taxes, the opposition began to discover arguments in their favour, though they still admitted that Great Britain possessed the supreme governing and legislative power, and had always bound the colonies, by her laws, and by her regulations and restrictions in trade, navigation and commerce, but a distinction was attempted to be made between this power and that of taxing them, neither very evident nor ingenuous. All parties allowed that external taxes might be levied by parliament, but not internal. The parliament therefore conceded this point, and after repealing the stamp act, they imposed a small tax on tea. But the colonies, as had been foretold, began to exclaim, "if the parliament of Great Britain have no right to tax us internally, it can have none to tax us externally, and if it has no power to tax us without our own consent, it has none to govern or legislate

for us without our consent. It has been said that the colonies would have been content with a limited representation in parliament. This seems doubtful. They appear to have aimed at independence from the beginning, and it is more probable that no concessions, no advantages offered them by Great Britain would have availed. Besides the situation of the colonies and their mother country was peculiar : They were long weak and feeble, always receiving, and giving nothing. Moreover supposing such a concession to have been effectual, yet it could hardly be expected from those violent measures which the colonies adopted. Even granting that the acts of parliament were inexpedient, granting that they were wrong, it was difficult to repeal them in the face of insurrection and defiance. As the contest has long ceased, it may be thought nugatory to enter into the subject, but let it be remembered that by proving that Great Britain, in imposing certain duties, was not actuated by a spirit of oppression, but only with the desire of rendering her protection more efficacious, and if it appear probable that the States had determined to be satisfied with no concessions but to become independent : that they thanked Providence, that they had arrived at growth and strength sufficient to resist the mother country ; we shall be able to repel the insidious attacks made on our country by Americans. Indeed we might proceed to shew that the same insubordination which produced the revolution has caused several rebellions since, and will finally overturn the present government. Great Britain might be mistaken in her policy, but America cannot prove her guilty of injustice or oppression.

NOTE VII. p. 32.

THE French revolution must be allowed by those who were at first its Friends, to have so notoriously failed to produce the beneficial effects which were confidently promised by its authors, while it has been guilty of the most horrid excesses, and produced the most baneful effects that one cannot hear, without indignation, any person speaking of it as glorious. How comes it then that a very great proportion of the American people still regard this sanguinary revolution with exultation, and after it has sunk into the most alarming despotism that the world ever saw, a nation pretending to the greatest freedom behold its progress with joy. It is that the American revolution has as certainly

failed as that of France and is sinking fast into an anarchy which will give rise either to a general despotism, or to a division. Proofs are not wanting to establish the truth of this opinion, and a minute illustration of them would be doing an essential service to mankind. Europeans and those who live at a distance are misled, and suppose that Americans are free because they have a fine constitution written upon paper. They do not know that this constitution is liable to insuperable objections, and that it is only by infringing them that the government stands. Instead of possessing the happiest government in the world, the United States possess one of the worst, for who is ignorant that that unhappy country is subject to a Virginian oligarchy. Foreigners do not know until it be too late that the oligarchy or governing junta do not hesitate to break those parts of the constitution which are in themselves good, when they happen to stand in their way. The framers of the government of the states seem to have thought that liberty was every thing, but though this be the most material, other perfections must be united, otherwise liberty itself will be in danger. When a government possesses no vigor it cannot perform the duties of its institution : when it cannot take some of its measures secretly accountable indeed afterwards but not at the moment : the differing parts must be united : its measures must be executed with dispatch, and its arrangements must display wisdom. Nobody will be so bold as to say that the American government possesses any one of these advantages. The framers of their constitution have been called wise, but this production does not prove it. Let any person read Lock's treatises on government, De Lolme on the British constitution, Blackstone, Montesquieu, with a few other authors who wrote before the minds of men were agitated with successive revolutions, and compare them with the flimsy productions which have deluged the world since the American revolution, and they will be forced to confess, that in this subject, we seem to go back. The ancient authors appear to have studied the subject with more accuracy, and saw the necessity of uniting liberty with other estimable qualities. The friends of true and rational liberty have to contend with anarchists on the one hand, and the slaves of despotism on the other ; and were it not for the British government which is a practical proof of the propriety of their reasoning, they must be overwhelmed. The writer is not however so blind an admirer

of the British constitution as not to be aware of several imperfections, much less does he think it proper to identify the minister for the time being with the government : He conceives a man may be a firm friend to the constitution and hostile to the minister's measures, but he thinks this hostility has limits, and should never be so conducted as to raise murmurs or to transform opposition into rebellion as it has sometimes done (during the American war.) Conceiving the British the best practical form of government that ever existed, those who understand it best must love it best, and such will not hesitate to defend it at the hazard of their lives. In maintaining its purity, they will oppose any encroachment tending to arbitrary power on the one hand, or popular authority on the other. Preserving the balance with steady care, they will admit no changes on either side without the greatest deliberation.

NOTE VIII. p. 32.

A GOOD history of the American war is yet a desideratum and cannot perhaps be written for some time to come. The following dialogue between an American and an Englishman, throws some light upon the subject.

A. How happens it that I never hear you praising the noble stand for freedom which we made. *E.* Because I do not think that you have gained any advantage, and I am not satisfied of the justice of your cause. *A.* Justice of our cause ! can any thing be more clear ? Our property was to be taken from us without our own consent : We resisted so vile an attempt, and we were victorious. *E.* Two wars were undertaken on your account, and the mother country called upon you for assistance : You murmured, refused, and left her to pay debts which she had contracted on your account. *A.* But we had no representatives. *E.* Was the demand ever made in an amicable manner ? *A.* Yes, frequently ; petitions, remonstrances were often sent, but in vain. *E.* How were these expressed ? in language harsh and menacing. Were a person to come to you to ask you to do something for him, in language rude and harsh, holding a bludgeon behind his back ready to strike you on a refusal, would you grant his request ? My friend, your countrymen first murmured against the suppression of the illicit trade which they carried on with the Spanish colonies and which government found it necessary to prohibit from good faith pledged in treaties, perhaps it was done in too harsh a man-

ner, but this was not surely a sufficient reason for separation. After this you were called upon to pay something to defray the expences of the war : And the resistance first proceeded from those colonies which had been favoured with the freest constitution by the crown. They conceived this perhaps to be the easiest mode of getting quit of their obligation. *A.* But is there no time when colonies may lay aside their leading strings and rise up in their place among the nations of the earth ? *E.* Perhaps there is : Whenever they are so increased in numbers and strength as to be sufficient by themselves for all the good ends of a political union. These are the sentiments of a great writer. But you were not thus adequate till the French were driven out, and then you should have proceeded in a very different manner. No general application for a limited representation was ever made by the colonies. And did not Great Britain gradually repeal her obnoxious laws, and retain at last only a small pittance to save her honour and maintain her authority. Were you satisfied with these concessions, did you receive them with pleasure and proceed in modest petitions for the conceding of a right which was certainly doubtful ? No, you rose in a flame because you did not receive, at once, your whole demand. Britain willing to humour her froward children, retraced her steps, and only wished for a cover to give up the rest ; not that she was convinced of the justice of your cause, but she was averse to bring things to extremities. When two parties disagree about a doubtful point, mutual forbearance is expected : That Britain shewed this is certain—but which of the colonies shewed it. You speak of being represented, the people of England are partially represented, and had your representatives been present in parliament, they could not have prevented the passage of a single act. The Americans, at that time, did not exceed three millions—the inhabitants of Great Britain were about eleven ; but the proportion of taxes exacted would not have been *one nineteenth* of the annual expenditure. It will easily be seen by a close inspection of dates that while you were presenting petitions to the king, you were preparing vigorously not only for defensive but offensive war, and taking every method to vilify and to oppose the government from which you rebelled. But what gives me room to think your cause unjust, not one of those in both houses of parliament who brought forward measures of reconciliation, admitted the principles for

which you contended. How could they admit that three should dictate to eleven millions. The best plan would have been to have had nothing to do with you and left you to yourselves : But this could not be expected : The passions were raised on both sides the atlantic, and reason was not heard ; but no other mode would have answered. I am, in fine, of this opinion concerning the American war—That it was unwise in Great Britain to adopt coercive measures, but that the greater degree of injustice rested with the colonies—That no mode of reconciliation which could have been offered would have been effectually permanent ; a separation must have ensued, for that spirit of democracy which now prostrates every thing virtuous and honourable in the United States had already rendered them incapable of the most moderate subordination.

NOTE IX. p. 32.—*On the Declaration of Independence.*

ANY person who has conversed with Americans must have observed the veneration in which they hold the declaration of independence. This paper is valued more than Diana was by the Ephesians, and because Mr. Jefferson is supposed to have written it, the grateful States have quietly submitted to his ruinous policy for eight years : A policy which has placed them in the most despicable and ridiculous situation. This extraordinary specimen of gratitude in a people so much alive to their own interests, raised my curiosity to read and examine this declaration with greater care than I had ever done before, and not having any particular respect for its supposed author, I am willing to hazard a very few remarks upon its various contents.—Were I disposed to be merry, the preamble affords me a very good opportunity. The paper begins with much affected solemnity—"When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to a separation."

What does this sage writer mean by the laws of nature and of nature's God ? Are there two distinct codes ? Are the laws of nature and the laws of the God of Nature different ? This is either nonsense or tautology, or something

worse. Many have endeavoured to shew that this expression proved the truth of the accusation frequently preferred against the author that he was an atheist ; but as I conceive it impossible for any man that thinks, to be an atheist : It is enough to shew the clause to be nonsense, and surely such a specimen in the preamble militates very much against the high character of the paper. The second paragraph taken with a few verbal alterations from Hutchison's moral philosophy asserts the belief of the subscribers in several abstract truths, and which taken abstractly, nobody is disposed to deny. Consequently their solemn introduction in a declaration of this kind is, to say the least, exceedingly absurd—" We hold these truths to be self-evident ; that all men are created equal ; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness ; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed ; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it and to institute a new government laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

I have not quoted this long passage with a view of contradicting the statement it makes, although it might be shewn that, admitting these things to be true, they are not self-evident ; but trusting that I am as friendly to solid liberty as Mr. Jefferson, I embrace the opportunity which this passage, by stating too little, affords me of noticing an error which all the writers on government since Rousseau have wilfully committed. They speak always of rights but never of duties. Now it is evident that duties precede rights, indeed the establishment of our rights is the reward of our duty. If man cannot live solitary, he must join himself to other men ; by this junction they become useful to one another, that is they perform certain reciprocal duties, and the fruit of these duties is greater personal security ; greater power over property, more comfort, and more freedom. Now this life, this liberty, this happiness is in a manner created by society, is rendered valuable by the performance of certain duties. To speak therefore of liberty and happiness as rights previous to the establishment of society is absurd, and to speak of them at all,

without proving that they flow from the performance of duty is exceedingly incorrect, and leads to the most terrible consequences. To this wilful separation we may attribute many excesses in the late revolutions. The people were always told of their rights—never of their duties. They were loosed from all restraint ; they thought they might seize every thing and do nothing. No wonder that a doctrine of this kind was popular, but its first propagators who knew its sophistry have had no great cause to rejoice, for the mob have commonly assumed the dreadful right (for what villainous exertion of power has not been called a right) of putting them to death. The innovators in politics imitated the empirics in religion, the latter have long taught the doctrine of unconditional grace, that their followers shall be saved without doing any thing. The innovators in politics perceiving how popular this was, immediately offered liberty in its utmost perfection for nothing. The people had nothing to do but to enjoy.—After this clause which must deceive, for few can detect its sophistry, the Declaration proceeds, “ *That the history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over the states—To prove this let facts be submitted to a candid world.* Then follow what are deemed the facts, but which are, in truth, only vague assertions. The first twenty-three assertions relate chiefly to matters previous to the war, some of them instead of being grievances may be proved to have been highly beneficial to the states. Others refer to the exertion of such prerogatives of the crown as it always possessed and still possesses. And the remainder admit of such an elucidation as would entirely prove the falsehood of the first assertion in the declaration that a separation was necessary. To enter into a minute examination of each clause would be too much for a note, but such a work would be useful : We shall content ourselves with mentioning a few facts which prove the falsehood of the last quotation.

We mentioned, in a former note, the liberality of Parliament in voting £ 300,000 as a compensation to the colonies soon after His Majesty's accession. Was this oppression ?

In the peace of 1763, the interests of the colonies were principally attended to. Was this oppression ?

In 1764, some resolutions were adopted concerning the

American trade ; a year's delay was given to allow them to be canvassed. Was this like oppression ? The colonial agents were even invited to petition to be heard against the resolutions, but they declined. Oppression should be made of sterner stuff.

In 1767, some duties were laid upon glass, tin, paper, and painter's colours, imported from Great Britain into America. This was a mode of taxation admitted by the colonies and their friends ; but concession had now made them haughty, and they denied even this power in the British parliament. Indeed the assembly in New York resolved to pay no regard to an act for providing troops with necessaries in their quarters, but regulated the provisions according to their own fancy.

These last duties having created great commotions, ministers engaged to repeal them, and in 1770 they were all repealed except three-pence per lb. on tea. Was this oppression ?

In 1770, a tumult happened in Boston between the town-people and the soldiers, in which some of the former were killed. The soldiers were instantly delivered up for trial and acquitted by a jury of town-men. Was this oppression ?

In 1773, the Bostonians destroyed the tea, and this occasioned the Boston port bill, a measure certainly provoked by the conduct of the people of this town for several years previous to this, but which was only intended to be temporary.

In 1773, it was enacted that when any of the colonies should propose according to their abilities to raise their due proportion towards the common defence, such proportion to be raised under the authority of the assembly of such province and to be disposable by parliament, and when such colony should also engage to provide for the civil government and the administration of justice within such province, it should be proper if such a proposal should be approved of by his Majesty in parliament to forbear in respect to such colony to levy any duties or taxes or to impose any further duties or taxes except such as should be necessary for the regulation of trade.

While the colonies were sending the most specious declarations to the British, and petitions to the king and parliament, praying for a repeal of those acts which they considered grievous ; they were busy preparing to carry the war into Canada, and they did carry it there amidst their pro-

essions of loyalty. The republican cant of professing one thing and doing another was begun by these sages, although they did not carry it so far as the rulers of France. The different kinds of governments established in the colonies, all of them leaning too much towards democracy, left the mother country very little controul. In Massachusetts she had little or none, for the governor only was appointed by the king, the council and assembly were chosen by the people. It was the extreme mildness of the British government and the great liberty that was allowed them that produced the revolution. Many persons joined the rebellion from the purest motives, but it may be very easily proved that justice was on the side of Great Britain: She made concessions before the commencement of hostilities, as fast as could be reasonably expected.

The remainder of this famous paper blames the king for actions done after the war was begun and is ridiculous because they were themselves after this period, more active than he. In eight clauses he is branded with a number of crimes all incident to a state of war. If the war itself was just the prosecution of it could not be criminal. On the whole a critical examination of this paper is not much in its favour and had it been analyzed more minutely the falsehoods and misrepresentations which it contains would have appeared still more gross. It answered a party purpose, inflamed the minds of the people, but to posterity it can have no charms.

NOTE X. p. 37.

On the Conduct of the American War.

The plan adopted by the ministry for conducting the war was able and judicious. New York was to be the chief seat of military operations and a communication kept up between this city and the lakes. By this means the southern and northern provinces would have been effectually separated and the British commander would have had the power of prescribing the scene of action and of quitting it when he chose. But lord North committed two capital mistakes which produced the unfortunate issue of the war. After coercive measures were determined upon, he did not send one sixth of the force necessary and in the mean time the colonists were making every preparation and oppressing the friends of government, who remained without protection, in the most cruel manner. When a respectable force

was at length sent ; it consisted chiefly of Germans, men who had no interest in the event and whose movements were so slow that they ruined every thing. But the greater blunder of the two was lord North's appointing generals to the chief command in America who were against him in politics and who had publicly declared that this war was unjust. We must indeed admire the principle upon which he acted as candid and generous, the noble lord supposed that although in parliament they frequently voted against him, yet as men of honour they would do their duty at the head of their armies. In this expectation his lordship was grossly mistaken, and it is to be lamented that generals Howe and Burgoyne did not suffer for their misconduct. We must observe that lord North's liberality in this instance went before his understanding, for when he said, it does not follow that these men will disgrace themselves abroad, because they may oppose me at home, he reasoned erroneously.—Nor was he justified in hoping that at the head of their troops they would exert those talents which they were known to possess and crush the rebellion. For if the noble lord had considered the matter rightly, he would have discovered that he was acting against the most direct moral evidence. When men are sold to a party the probability is that they will remain true to that party at all hazards. The minister therefore should have employed officers even although their talents were inferior who considered Americans in arms the enemies of their country. It is notorious that general Howe ridiculed the friends of government and gave them no encouragement. The provincial regiments which joined his army were treated with the greatest disrespect, in so much that their uniform became a badge of disgrace.—The consequence was that many deserted and from being our friends became our most bitter foes. Thousands were prevented from joining when they beheld the royal generals rewarding their loyalty with insult. It was easier to bear the oppression of enemies than contempt and poverty when they expected friendship and protection. It is but justice to general Burgoyne to say that in this particular he acted much more honourably than general Howe, but Lord Dorchester, then general Carleton, was the most attentive to the American loyalists and always treated them with the greatest benevolence and respect. After all we cannot help admiring lord North's liberality in this particular, but let our statesman again reduce it to practice.

NOTE XI. p. 37.

On the Prosperity of Great Britain.

THE rapid increase of the trade and commerce of Great Britain, since the American revolution, has been truly astonishing, and fully justifies the conclusion, that before that period the attention of government was too much confined to the colonies. Since 1786, the exports and imports have more than doubled. The internal improvements have proceeded with still greater activity—roads, canals, docks, public buildings, increase of towns, &c. It would be easy to make this note long. I might mention that there is in value six or seven hundred millions of insurable property in Great Britain and Ireland; that the very houses are valued at more than two hundred and seventy millions; the merchant shipping at twenty-four millions, and the revenue exclusive of loans at fifty eight millions, &c.—but I forbear entering into details. See an excellent speech on this subject by the Honourable John Richardson in 1808, on committing a bill for establishing a bank in Lower Canada.

NOTE XII. p. 37.

On the Causes of the French Revolution.

THE dreadful picture drawn by professor Robison in his book of masonic conspiracies and by the Abbé Barreul of the vast influence of the philosophists, has always appeared to me greatly exaggerated. The mass of the people could neither read nor write, and to such Voltaire and his associates wrote in vain. But though these people could not read, they could hear, and the soldiers who had served in the American war did more on their return than all the philosophists together. Moreover the Americans had been patronised by the court: the public attention was turned towards them: their declarations and motives were examined, read by those who could read, and commented upon. It was popular with the court to defend their cause and it soon became popular with the nation. The literati never had the power of commanding an attention so general as this, although they, no doubt, made use of it when it was presented. But still the exaggerated description of the happiness of America by a wounded soldier, and of the rights and privileges of its free inhabitants would make a much more lively impression than the most finished harangue.—The American was therefore the chief cause of the French revolution. Other causes, no doubt, concurred. The cor-

ruption of the court ; the opposition of the parliament ; the miserable state of the finances ; the corruption of justice and of religion.

The progress of the French revolution has been most extraordinary. In 1793, the French guillotined their lawful king, Louis XVI. In 1804, they raised to the throne Bonaparte. It is worth the while to examine the characters of these two persons, that we may be able to value the advantages of the change. Louis XVI. possessed uncommon benevolence and goodness of heart ; ample proofs remain of his love for his people, and his earnest desire to promote their happiness ; no man ever shone more in domestic life, or excelled in the qualities which adorn a private station. His sentiments and directions which he addressed to the preceptor of his son, reflect on his head and heart immortal honour.—Magnify (said this amiable monarch) in his eyes the virtues which constitute a good king, and let your lessons be adapted to his comprehension. Alas, he will become one day but too strongly tempted to imitate such of his ancestors as were distinguished only by their warlike exploits ; military glory dizzies the brain ; and what species of glory is that which rolls its eye over streams of human blood, and desolates the universe ? Teach him with Fenelon, that pacific princes alone are held by the people in religious remembrance. The first duty of a prince is to render his people happy ; if he knows what it is to be a king, he will always know how to defend his people and his crown.

Teach him early to know how to pardon injuries, forget injustice and reward laudable actions, to respect morality, to be good, and to acknowledge the services which are rendered him. The whole letter is in the same strain, and constitutes the highest panegyric that can be pronounced on this amiable king. It must however be confessed, that as a public character, he wanted firmness and constancy, which disabled him from withstanding the slightest menace. The difficulties he had to encounter were too much, and he sunk in the conflict. Yet the French will, one day, recal to remembrance the wrongs they have done him, and they will curse the barbarity of the villains who durst imbrue their sacrilegious hands in the blood of so good a prince. The present emperor of France, the favourite and elect of the people, forms a complete contrast to the prince whom they murdered.—Louis XVI. was put to death for his virtues, and Bonaparte raised to the purple for his crimes. This emperor was first

a lieutenant of artillery, then one of the spies of the police ; he was made a general for marrying the cast-off mistress of his patron ; poisoned his sick soldiers in Egypt ; murdered his prisoners ; perjured himself in numberless instances ; subverted the constitution he had sworn to maintain ; massacred Capt. Wright, the Duc Enghein, Toussaint, Pichegru, Villeneuve, and in fine, what dreadful crimes hath not this man committed ? He is the betrayer of nations, and the scourge of the human race. In one thing he acts according to retributive justice ; he governs the French people with a rod of iron. Under his lash of scorpions, they will learn to value the peaceful monarch whom they have lost. As a public character, he possesses abilities ; but they are the abilities of a demon, always employed in promoting evil.

NOTE XIII. p. 37.

So much has been written concerning the impressment of British seamen from the ships of neutrals, by persons more competent to the task, that I shall content myself with making a very few general observations upon this important subject. When this question is argued upon the principles of the laws of nations, the disputants can find no precedents, and therefore each party draws inferences from, established rules, which the other is unwilling to admit. It is therefore no wonder that by this mode of discussion the question becomes more perplexed and obscure. What is commonly termed the law of nations is an imperfect collection of established usages, which contemplate a very few particulars, and which from their very nature must be always multiplying. The most perfect code of laws fails to comprehend every case, else there would be no necessity for the enactment of new regulations every year. Yet if it should be thought necessary to defend the conduct of the British upon this ground, it might be done with success. The law of nations expressly condemns sending arms or military stores by way of merchandize to either of the states at war, as a breach of neutrality, and even common provisions into a place besieged ; how much more detrimental is it to one of the belligerent powers to be deprived of her subjects, and those the very persons who must defend her : What is the use of ships of war without sailors to man them, and where shall sailors be found if a neutral state encourages them to desert. The British require only their own men.* They have uniformly discharged all foreigners when demanded, and shall they be

deprived of those who alone are able to defend them by a nation who pretends friendship ? But as it cannot be denied that much vexation and inconvenience are suffered by America from the right of search exercised by the British naval officers, and that the practice is not so beneficial to Great Britain herself as might be supposed, some arrangement of an amicable nature might be agreed on, without disadvantage to either party. And the United States ought to be the more ready to enter into such an arrangement, because the question issues in a great degree out of a policy adopted by them very different from that usual among European nations.

Several states of Europe, anxious to extend their commerce, and to render that commerce as independent as possible, have established navigation acts, by which a certain proportion of the crews of all their merchant ships must be natives. Foreigners, in consequence of this regulation, have rather been discouraged than invited ; and when war happens between Britain and any of her neighbours, the small number of her sailors to be found in the service of a neutral nation hardly merits attention. Besides the difference of manners and languages, the small wages and coarse provisions given by the continental powers of Europe to their seamen, effectually prevent British sailors from leaving their own country.

All these checks are removed in respect to the United States ; the wages are greater than the British merchant can well afford, the provisions equally good, and the manners and language nearly the same ; and instead of any preference being given to natives, the preference will often be given to the British sailor from his greater experience. The general policy of America seems to be to detain her own citizens at home, and to navigate her ships chiefly by foreigners. This policy however proceeds not from any superiour wisdom in her government, but from her situation. The melancholy wars which have agitated Europe, have increased her trade in a most astonishing degree ; and although the natural increase of her population has been prodigious, it was next to impossible for her to meet the demands of her increasing trade by an adequate supply of native seamen. Now as great numbers of British sailors have been employed in the ships of the United States during the last and the present war, after they had been publicly recalled for the defence of their native country ; it would have surely been proper for the American government, when it proposed to Great Britain to

relinquish the right of search, to accompany this novel proposition with such arrangements as would make her no loser by its suspension or relinquishment. That American merchant vessels should be an asylum for British sailors at all times, even when their own country is in the utmost danger and no means of redress offered, is a demand in itself so exceedingly unjust, and carries in its appearance so much of hostility and perverseness, as cannot fail to strike most forcibly every person of discernment. The language of America to Great Britain ought to have been very conciliating upon this subject. The difficulty of always distinguishing individuals should have been frankly acknowledged, and the most solemn assurances should have been given that every British seaman would be promptly given up on application to the necessary authority, and that laws for this purpose should be expressly enacted. An arrangement on this subject is attended, I am sensible, with great difficulty ; but had it been undertaken in the spirit of amity, it might have been adjusted in a manner agreeable to both nations. And surely America ought to have been very delicate in requiring a favourable decision of a question that can hardly arise between any two nations except the British and their children. Yet so little has this contested point been discussed in the spirit of liberality, that the American government demands it as a right that British sailors shall not be taken from their private ships, and they assert that it is their due from the established laws of nations. To found a claim upon laws in which it was never contemplated, and which are completely against it in as far as they can be applied, is not very judicious and convincing, and therefore on this ground Great Britain very properly refuses its admission.

After all, I do not think this question a sufficient cause of hostility ; it is not yet too late to enter into an amicable arrangement ; and as it can only be a matter of dispute in time of war, this should render the negotiators the more disposed to come to a settlement. I am aware that partial interests enter too much into modern politics, and that in making treaties exclusive commercial advantages are more sought after than the solid benefits which result from a more liberal policy. But if there ever was a time for two nations intimately connected with each other, to lay aside their jealousies, it is now, when a tyrant has appeared with immense power, who is essentially the enemy of both. Those who are acquainted with the prostitution of American protections,

and how cheaply they may be obtained, will see with me the necessity of new regulations in this particular, as the beginning of an amicable arrangement, for it has long been notorious that these protections are procured in the most nefarious manner. Not that the general government of the United States can always be blamed for the improper conduct of its officers; but certainly it behoves that government to remedy the evil by a stricter enquiry into the pretensions of those who demand protection, and never to grant them without the clearest proof that the claimants are native Americans.— If this were done as a previous step to all arrangements on the subject of search, it would evince a desire on the side of the American government to meet the British half way, and that they had no wish to detain our seamen, but only to escape the vexation of a search. After taking this preliminary step, they might adopt other regulations, which by securing her mariners to Great Britain, might induce her to concede the point in dispute. This might be done,

- 1st. By a navigation act;
2. By subjecting those who employ British seamen to a heavy penalty, when Great Britain is at war;
3. By readily giving up such seamen as shall still be discovered, on proper evidence being given that they are British subjects.

If a general navigation act should be thought disadvantageous to such a new country as the United States, as might be easily proved, the other modes strictly executed would be sufficient; and what prevents these and similar or better regulations from being adopted, but want of cordiality in the administration of the United States? Those who have read Mr. Munroe's able defence of himself for signing the treaty with Great Britain, will find that an informal arrangement respecting the impressment of seamen, was at the same time concluded, although there was no article respecting it in the treaty itself; how the American government rejected that arrangement is not easy to explain—certainly the British ministry made a very liberal concession. I am afraid that a want of sincerity will be discovered on the part of the American government in regard to that treaty, of which neither their own ambassadors nor the British ministry were aware. They seem to have had no desire to settle any thing finally, but to remain on the watch, ready to extort concessions from Great Britain at every favourable moment; that is, when she appeared unsuccessful, or hard pressed in the contest in which

she is engaged. This is a short-sighted policy, and is sure to engender hatred instead of friendship. No treaty can be solid unless both parties are equally pleased with the stipulations. When one takes advantage of another to extort conditions, these conditions will be violated as soon as opportunity serves. The page of history exhibits no cause of war so absurd, as that which is likely to produce a rupture between American and Great Britain.

Nations commonly quarrel on account of injuries done to their own subjects, and not for the protection of deserters, or to say the best, despicable wretches, who have the meanness to leave their country in a crisis of extraordinary peril. Let the American people only consider the matter seriously; suppose they have ten thousand British seamen in their employ, the detention of whom produces a war—is it not evident that in a few months a greater number than this of their own citizens may fall in the contest? Setting aside then the havoc that will be made of their towns, the vast expenses that they will incur, the loss of lives will be infinitely more distressing, than all the advantage they can possibly derive from detaining the mariners of their enemy. Add to this, that British seamen would be dangerous to them in case of war. Few men can so far divest themselves of their *amor patriæ* as not to have some leaning towards the place of their birth, where their friends and those they love still remain; they might therefore do their protector serious injury at the most critical moment. How much better to give up these seamen—will it be said by the Americans, we care little for the men, but we must resist the search: it may be answered, that the search would be very rare, were it certain that no British seamen could be found. Much may be lost and nothing gained by detaining these seamen: and the more the subject is considered, the more shall we be convinced of the propriety of a liberal and speedy arrangement.—The absence of foreigners would make no sensible diminution in the extent of American commerce, and the source of contention between Great Britain and the United States would be laid asleep.

NOTE XIV. p. 36.

I HAVE been frequently annoyed by an observation, which seems to gain ground with persons of sense and discernment, but which I conceive to be totally without foundation, that till Great Britain fall, America is secure. In

this assertion it is taken for granted, that the independence of the United States will survive that of Great Britain. Now I am of a very different opinion, for I think it may be easily proved, that the liberty of our mother country is placed on a much firmer basis than that of the American States, and that a continuation of the same ruinous policy adopted by Mr. Jefferson, will in four years more destroy their constitution. I begin with asserting that Great Britain is in no danger from the present war ; the time of invading her with any prospect of success is past. Every person knows, that the inhabitants of the British empire are soldiers to a man ; that the regular army is numerous and well disciplined, and what is an host in itself, the nation is convinced of the necessity of the war. Had the French effected a landing before the volunteer system attained its perfection, they might have done much mischief ; but even then they must have failed in their object—Buonaparte would not find it such an easy matter to bribe men of influence in England, as he has done on the continent of Europe. The British nobility, certainly the most deserving in the world, have not yet learned to barter their honour for gold ; nor does the army and navy contain a single officer capable of deserting the cause which he has sworn to defend. In comparing Great Britain with France, people are apt to be struck with the great conquests of the latter, and her numerous armies ; they look at her trampling upon the liberties of all Europe, and they tremble for England without a friend ; but they should remember that if France be strong on land, Great Britain is equally so at sea ; and that her navy is more likely to maintain its superiority than the armies of her enemy. The more that Buonaparte extends his dominions, the weaker he becomes, unless we are to suppose that the nations he deprives of their independence, and ruins by his exactions, become more attached to his person and government. It is contrary to rational logic to infer, that because the French have overrun the neighbouring nations, they will be able to keep them long in subjection. Their success has been owing hitherto more to their policy than their power, to the interested views and irresolute conduct of the governments over which they have triumphed ; but more especially to that scene of corruption and treachery, never equalled in any former age, which made their conquests in Germany, Prussia and Italy very easy. Their things will change ; repeated oppressions will rouse men of spirit and virtue to vindicate

the cause of their country. How much these may effect appears from the example of the inhabitants of Spain. How insignificant the French would be, had the people a few men of conduct and abilities to direct their just indignation. Such men will appear ; the present torpours that pervades the conquered nations will not always continue. The French empire therefore, in appearance strong, is in reality weak ; the present ruler may, by his singular talents, hold the discordant parts a little longer together ; he may be able to preserve it during his life, because he has no regard to any right human or divine, when they seem to stand in the way of his views ; but at his death the whole fabric will crumble. On the other hand, Great Britain depends not on the life of any individual ; her power is deep rooted, and has been growing for several centuries. With a constitution well defined, and subjects willing to obey, she governs entirely by the laws, unacquainted with the violence practised by her adversary. She calls upon her people to arm, not to gratify her ambition, or a foolish passion for empty glory, but to protect the dearest rights that men can enjoy ; to secure their freedom and independence. We are indeed told by many well meaning persons, that she must fall because her power depends upon commerce ; and to confirm this position they cite all the commercial nations of antiquity. It would lead me too far from my present purpose to enter minutely into the question, whether a nation be more independent that rests upon commerce or upon agriculture, though the result of such a discussion, when carefully made, would end much more in favour of commerce than is apprehended ; but in speaking of Great Britain, it is not necessary to examine this question, because she is not a commercial nation in the same sense with the states of Holland in modern time, or Tyre and Carthage in ancient. Her commerce rests upon an agricultural basis ; she unites the advantages of both ; her lands are the best cultivated in Europe, and she carries on the most extensive trade. In her hands commerce and agriculture mutually assist one another ; they contribute all their advantages and few of their evils. If the enemy therefore should succeed in curtailing her commerce, she is not vanquished, and he weakens himself in the attempt much more than he does her. I might proceed to mention several other advantages which Great Britain possesses over her adversary, and the many difficulties which a new and oppressive government like that of France has to encounter ; but I proceed

to shew that America is in much greater danger than Great Britain.

It was necessary to prove that Great Britain stood at least on as firm ground as France previous to our illustration of the danger of America.

The danger of America, though uniform in its nature, will be more immediately connected with the state of things in Europe.

- 1st. It may arise from the continuance of the present war.
2. From a peace taking place among the belligerent powers.
3. From a new system of things arising on the continent, of which there is a great probability.

4. From the humiliation of England, which God avert.

It ought to be premised, that I argue upon the presumption that the same system will be continued in America which has directed her government for these eight years past. I shall not speak at present of the weakness of the general government, the jarring interests of the different states, nor the two factions in which the inhabitants appear to be divided. But I do not omit them as unimportant, on the contrary they will increase the danger of the country and accelerate its issue. The position of America in respect to the powers at war is at present most perplexing—they are neither the friends of France nor of England and justly suspected by both. As the French have domineered over the continent of Europe, and deprived the British of many commercial advantages, the latter will look around for new friends in more happy climates, to replace those they have lost. It would have been natural for them to have looked to the United States, inhabited by their children, but there they have been repulsed; they find among them the same opposition that they have met with in Europe, with less fairness; indeed they are deprived of their seamen, the very sinews of war, by forged protections and base collusions, and their staple articles of trade refused admittance with more severity than they are from the ports of open enemies. It is not therefore in the States that they must open new sources of trade. They find nothing but enmity, where they might have expected friendship. The consequence of this is evident, Great Britain will find it her interest to nourish rivals in trade to the States; for this purpose she will cherish the government of the Brazils by every method she can devise. She will assist the States of Spanish America to throw off their allegiance to their mother country, should it be con-

quered. These immense countries will leave her little to regret for the loss of the trade to the United States, and all this may be accomplished in a very short time, even before the repeal of the interdicting laws, if they be continued till the causes which are said to have given rise to them are done away. Great Britain will also, in all probability, acknowledge the independence of St. Domingo, and supply herself with the cotton from that island and the Brazils, which she was wont to take from the southern States. Moreover the policy of America does more to ruin her trade than France and England together: it will be found that the repeal of her restrictive laws will not renew her trade to the same extent. The British Planters discovering, by sad experience, the ruinous consequence of depending upon America for provisions, will in future set apart more ground to raise them, and the American merchant will in vain offer his flour and pork for sale, after the inhabitants of the islands have learned to do without them, or to be satisfied with what they can procure from the British provinces, Brazil, and the Spanish main.

The consequence of these checks upon trade will exasperate the people of the United States against their rulers, for reducing them by their erroneous measures into such a dilemma, when the remedy is not to be procured. The country will be filled with discontent; discontent breeds faction, and the realm will dwindle into separate governments, which will be the more bitter enemies that they were once friends.

II. Should a peace take place among the belligerent powers, the danger of America will increase. It is evident that during the struggles that have agitated the old continent, this infant nation has paid no regard to any thing but its own interest; its policy has ever been to derive advantage from the quarrels of Europe, without much regard to justice or honour. That such has been the case even in regard to France, appears from the St. Domingo trade, so long persisted in after the rebellion of that Island against the mother country. But although individuals may have given cause of offence to France, we must confess that the administration has been sufficiently compliant. The Mandates of Bonaparte have been obeyed implicitly by the present rulers of America; they have indeed found it necessary to qualify and soften their mode of expression, but the Spirit has still been retained. It always happens, however, that when a nation loses sight of its independence and ceases to act on equal

terms, when it appears afraid to insist upon its just rights, and chuses rather to give up those that appear trifling than to contend, it is soon made to yield all its rights, or fight after its spirit is debased. This happened with America—the more she yields, the more is demanded. Does she concede one point to France, another kept in reserve is immediately brought forward. The conquerour of Europe will quarrel with America, because she will not go all the length that he wishes her. She has trampled upon her own constitution, in order to please him; but because she has not declared war against Great Britain, a measure which her ruler durst not hazard, this despot is offended and insults, her envoy. To be kicked and buffeted about even to give him money for lands of an indefinite or purposely of an ambiguous extent, or to give him money without even a shadow of an equivalent, were risks which the present administration were prepared to go, and which they have assumed—but this is not enough. Buonaparte demands them to declare war against England; they hesitate, he confiscates their goods; the non importation law, the Embargo itself is not enough, they must declare openly; they must obey his fiat without a murmur or qualification, and as they have not done this, destruction awaits them. That France would willingly contribute to the downfall of America, cannot admit of any doubt; it would be even good policy in her to check this growing republic, to prevent a navy from being formed, or a more vigorous general government: it would be good policy in her to assist in dismembering states which, united, might check her conquests and give valuable aid to her enemies. But as each of the particulars from which the danger of America arises, would supply materials for a long note, I must be short.

What motives can Great Britain have for treating America with more lenity than France? to the latter she has been compliant without acquiring her friendship, to the former she has been a snake in the grass; ever complaining, never satisfied. Instead of adopting a sincere spirit of conciliation, she has been at all times taking advantage of her distresses, to make new demands; she has refused redress for an insult, though offered on the fairest grounds; she has shut her ports to British manufactures; she has endeavoured to starve her remaining colonies, and she has in demanding an alteration of the maritime law, virtually joined herself with the enemies of the British empire.

She has even gone the length of rejecting a treaty, advantageous to herself, that she might be ready to catch at every advantage, and to come in for a share of the spoil on her subjugation. Great Britain, after such a long train of hostile measures, cannot have any strong motives to guarantee her independence. She can have no reasons sufficiently cogent as to risk a renewal of the war with France, should the despot wish to chastise America; on the contrary it will be as much the interest of Britain as of France, to dismember the government; because this will render it impossible, in any future war, for a general embargo or non importation law to be enacted. Moreover Great Britain will have other resources, and her West India islands will no longer depend upon supplies from the United States. A peace between France and England, after America had put an end to all friendly relations with the latter, would therefore be the prelude of her destruction. She would have nothing to depend upon but the moderation and justice of Buonaparte, virtues of which his conquests of Switzerland and Spain are terrible examples.

III. From a new system of things arising on the continent. Any change on the continent of Europe must now be for the advantage of Great Britain, and that some very important changes must soon happen, is I think demonstrable. In that case Great Britain will finish her European contest with honour, or it will require less vigilance. She will therefore have more leisure to attend to her relations with America, and discovering that she has been insulted, she may think it requisite to revenge her injuries; nor will she be prevented by any European state—Spain is irritated against the United States, France is jealous of their growing power. And let no one suppose that because Great Britain was unsuccessful in the revolutionary war, that she must still be so. Her plans would be very different, she would never seek for conquest; she would ruin American commerce, and prevent even a fishing-boat from plying along the coast. In fine, it would appear that America had made herself many enemies but no friends, many who desire to see her humbled, and who look upon her prosperity with an evil eye.

NOTE XV. p. 36.

On the American Government.

THE people are always in a ferment about elections; they have representatives, but the period for which they are elect-

ed is so short, that you may reckon many of the states, and the whole combined, one short removal from a pure democracy. Now any person, who has examined this form of government, will find that the tyranny exercised by the people, debase and corrupt as much as the sword of the despot. In a short time morals, religion and justice are gone, and neither the spirit, nor even the desire of liberty is found. Can any thing else be expected, when the government is directed by the passions of the people, and the vices and ambition of their demagogues. And these men, by keeping up empty forms and empty names, will rivet their chains upon the people, before they are aware. Shall I be told that corruption may be restrained by wife, upright and religious magistrates, to be chosen by the people : very fine---these qualifications are inimical to their promotion ; the people do not like moral principles, religious professions, &c. The mob, or as Spencer says, the blatant beast, will gather round a leader who will flatter its appetites, and not one who desires to keep it within bounds.

Him in a narrow place he overtooke,
 And fierce assailing forst him turne againe ;
 Sternly he turn'd again, when he him strooke
 With his sharpe Steele, and ran at him againe
 With open mouth, that seemed to containe
 A full good pecke within the utmost brim,
 All set with yron teeth in ravnges twaine,
 That terride his foes, and armed him
 Appearing like the mouth of Orcus grieffly grim.
 And therein were a thousand tongues empight
 Of fundry Kindes and fundry quality ;
 Some were of dogs, that barked day and night,
 And some of cats, that wawling still did cry,
 And some of beares, that groyn'd continually,
 And some of tygres, that did seeme to gren,
 And snar at all that ever passed by ;
 But most of them were tongues of mortal men,
 Which spake reproachfully, not caring where nor when.
 And them amongst were mingled here and there
 The tongues of serpents with three-forked stings,
 That spat out poison and gore, bloody gore,
 At all that came within his ravengings,
 And spake licentious words and hateful things
 Of good and bad alike, of low and hie ;
 Ne scels spared by a whit nor kings,
 But either blotted them with infamie,
 Or bit them with his banefull teeth of iniury.

Spencer's Fairy Queen, book 6, canto 12.

This beast will obey his keeper who pleases him with fops and strokes his back and fight, rob, murder, burn and steal in his cause. That there are many good laws and regulations in the United States will not be denied, but of what use are laws if not properly administered? To the men who rule the states at present, the following passage from Mr. Fox's history may be very properly applied.

“ The reign of Charles the Second forms one of the most singular, as well as of the most important periods of history. It is the era of good laws and bad government. The abolition of the court of wards, the repeal of the writ de heretico comburendo, the triennial parliament bill, the establishment of the rights of the house of commons in regard to impeachment, the expiration of the license act, and above all, the glorious statute of habeas corpus, have therefore induced a modern writer of great eminence to fix the year 1679 as the period at which our constitution had arrived at its greatest theoretical perfection, but he owns in a short note on the passage alluded to, that the times immediately following, were times of great practical oppression. What a field for meditation does this short observation from such a man, furnish! What reflections does it not suggest to a thinking mind, upon the inefficacy of human laws and the imperfection of human constitutions! We are called from the contemplation of the progress of our constitution, and our attention is fixed with the most minute accuracy to a particular point, when it is said to have risen to its utmost perfection. Here we are then at the best moment of the best constitution that human wisdom ever framed. What follows? A time of oppression and misery, not arising from external causes, such as war, pestilence or famine, nor even from any such alteration of the laws as might be supposed to impair this boasted perfection, but from a corrupt and wicked administration, which all the so much admired checks of our constitution were not able to prevent. How vain then, how idle, how presumptuous is the opinion that laws can do every thing! and how weak and pernicious the maxim founded upon it, that measures, not men, are to be attended to,”

NOTE XVI. p. 36.

On Baring's pamphlet and neutral rights.

THOSE who have written against the navigation laws, and argued for their relaxation, proceed upon the principle of

cold calculation, and give nothing to national honour or defence. If trade be every thing, and national honour nothing, then their arguments may be admitted. But these relaxations are always sure of protracting the war, and are the continual cause of embarrassments. The pamphlet published by Mr. Baring has obtained a degree of celebrity which I have no power to diminish, but the impression that the perusal of it left upon my mind, was the same as that which we feel in reading that the Dutch supplied Louis XIV. with military and naval stores, because the prices he paid yielded enormous profits, although they were employed in conquering and enslaving their country. In regard to the orders in council, I had doubts as to their expediency, but these doubts are shewn to have been ill founded by the recent accounts from the enemy; indeed men of all political parties now admit, that they have effected the end proposed. In condemning the orders in council, Mr. Baring takes a much wider field, and deprecates, with great severity, our policy towards the states, which he says has originated in partial views, is grossly unjust, and highly detrimental to ourselves.

In proving these different positions, he begins with endeavouring to weaken the statements of the patriotic authour of *War in Disguise*, and brings forward several reasons and facts to prove that the commerce of America with the colonies of the enemy is conducted bona fide. That a writer pretending to discuss a subject which few have an opportunity of understanding, or of calling in question the facts which he brings forward, should sometimes exaggerate and draw stronger inferences from his reasons than they seem to admit, may frequently be expected in political disputes, more especially when the authour is interested in the discussion. But that any person should make such a broad assertion, as that the commerce of America with the colonies of the enemy is conducted bona fide, requires a degree of boldness which few possess.

The Americans exclaim, and Mr. Baring very generously exclaims with them, What right have you to interrupt our trade with the colonies of your enemies. We are at peace with Spain, France and Holland, and surely we have the same right to trade with their colonies as with themselves, and to convey the produce of these colonies to any market that we please. Is it necessary for us, because these nations are enemies to the British, that we should also break up our friendship with them? Have they not as much power to regulate our communication with their colonies as with any of

their own ports ? And if we observe the stipulations agreed upon, it becomes a lawful trade, and is the greatest injustice and tyranny in the British to stop it.

The friend of Great Britain does not find much difficulty in overturning this reasoning. You have a right to trade as neutrals, he would say, with our enemy to as great an extent as before the war, and to that extent we never disturb you. But your trade with the colonies of the enemy is not of that description. It is not a mark of his friendship, but of our power. Were it not for our navy, you never would have obtained it, and the enemy makes use of you to escape from us. By your interference, the proceeds of the colonies become an effective branch of his forces. This we cannot suffer. His admitting you to trade with his colonies in time of war to a much greater extent than in time of peace, is legal between you and him, but between us and you it is a gross fraud, and out of this fraud no right can possibly flow. It is notorious that our enemies never open their colonies till they can no longer protect them, or keep a regular communication with them ; to trade, therefore, so as to supply the enemy, is a fraud, because it weakens and destroys our belligerent rights. I allow all that ever was allowed till the enemy had nothing left to allow or refuse. You may supply your home consumption by your direct trade with those colonies ; you may trade with such as were open to you before the war : I restrict, I abridge no legitimate right of American commerce.

This reasoning I hold to be unanswerable in point of justice. All the means which Great Britain has to attack and subdue her antagonist, and finally to prescribe peace safe and honourable, are all naval means. She has therefore a right, the sacred right of self-preservation, to use them in time of war as far as may be necessary : for surely she has a better right to exist than neutrals have to trade. The fairness of the rule of 1756 is allowed by Mr. Baring in the following passage :

“ If we had maintained and defended this doctrine boldly
 “ and fairly against all nations, good arguments in favour of
 “ it could not at least be wanting ; but when we have uni-
 “ formly relaxed it, and indeed forborne to claim it, can it
 “ be consistent either with magnanimity or good policy, to
 “ bring it forward now, merely because the only remaining
 “ neutral has a defenceless commerce ? If such cowardly in-
 “ justice is to be one of our resources in these trying times,

“when elevation of sentiment and of national character is more than ever wanted, the means and strength of this powerful empire are indeed strangely misunderstood.”

The candid admission in the beginning of this passage is a kind of sweetening to the severity of the conclusion. Here Mr. Baring admits that good arguments in favour of the rule of 1756 could not be wanting, but he soon after condemns this rule with the name of cowardly injustice. As soon as we attempt its application what inconsistency ! But if the rule was ever just in principle, no conduct of ours could alter this justice, and although the uncommon pressure of particular seasons might force us to acquiesce in the injustice of other nations, it is surely not inconsistent with virtue to repel this injustice as soon as it is in our power. The reason which this writer alleges for our bringing it forward merely because the only remaining neutral has a defenceless commerce, might well excite some indignation in reply ; but from this we shall abstain. The partial relaxations of this rule were never willingly admitted ; and the situation of the world is now very different from what it was in any former war. Before the war which ended in 1763, Great Britain was not possessed of the indisputable sovereignty of the seas, while there was a sort of equilibrium, she had it not in her power to enforce the principles of maritime law, however just. So long as France was able to take British colonies, or to obstruct British trade, or protect and convoy her own, she was not obliged to sell the produce of her colonies to neutrals to so great an extent as she has been under the necessity of doing ever since 1795. To France the assistance of neutrals is necessary, for without these she could draw no aid from her colonies ; besides, the present situation of affairs arises in a great measure out of the independence of America, for the rule here complained of was enforced against the Dutch and other neutral nations before that event. While the United States were the colonies of Great Britain, and during their revolution, France had fleets to protect her own colonies, and she had merchant ships to transport their rich products to Europe ; but since the independence of America circumstances have changed. France has not even a sloop or schooner employed in her colonial commerce ; she is reduced to absolute nullity by the British navy, as to all the resources which she once drew from her colonies. And is this triumph of the British navy to be marred by the interference of neutrals ? Will any person say that this service is not an

important one, that the British navy, by distressing, humbling and enfeebling her enemy does nothing ; that by putting a stop to all intercourse between the enemy and his colonies, which may prove perhaps ultimately decisive of the war, by its influence on the comparative force of the two nations, is of no avail ; that it hurts Great Britain herself, and that she ought to allow their communication to be restored. When the matter is stated in this way, its absurdity fully appears ; every pound received by France from her colonies, would be employed against Great Britain. Nor are we to forget that the British colonies thrive essentially by the exclusion of their rivals from the European markets, and the British commerce is even augmented by the circuitous and expensive supplies which France ultimately receives. Having thus seen the advantage resulting to Great Britain from the practice of this principle, let us reverse the matter, and suppose with Mr. Baring, that she ought to extinguish the rule. What follows ? First, let us ask of what use or efficacy is her navy in the prosecution of the war, so far as the colonies of her enemies are concerned ? America now independent, full of enterprise and capital, with more than a million tons of shipping, can buy in the island, store in the United States, and transport to neutral ports in Europe, convenient for the supply of France herself, every hoghead of sugar and every bag of coffee that can be furnished by the plantations, on such terms that the French colonies shall not feel the war. They shall not be annoyed by the British naval arms, but shall even flourish the more by their superiority, depending solely on neutrals ; they shall lose nothing by captures, because having sold their produce, they risk nothing ; while British produce is liable to capture, and if not captured to high war premiums. The French colonist would ultimately, if not immediately, command a price for his crops the more advantageous by reason of the cheap and safe navigation of the American vessels ; he would prosper in full peace, while the British colonist would feel the effects of war on his profits. His only market would be England, because he would be undersold on the continent. The seamen withdrawn from the French colonial commerce would be, as in fact they are, on board their men of war or in their armies ; and the resources of the colonies would be steadily and without diminution by capture, drawn by France into her own territory, and be employed to equip flotillas to carry armies of invasion against England.

These consequences do not alarm Mr. Baring. He calculates the profit which might accrue to Great Britain by admitting this circuitous trade to proceed without interruption. He tells us that the Americans come to us to purchase articles to be exchanged for produce with the colonies of the enemy, that their own profits are in a great measure laid out with us, and thus life and spirit are given to our manufactures. But if the same trade adds millions to the resources of the enemy, and enables him to continue the contest, when shall war be ended. Or if he is enabled to continue the war one or two years longer, surely the loss of treasure and blood for that short time, more than counterbalances the profit, though it were much greater than this writer states it to be.

Mr. Baring uniformly proves himself to be the diligent defender of America; he tells us that she never took any part in the extravagant pretensions of the northern powers, at whose courts she had even no accredited ministers, and that her complaints of the system of vexation and oppression practised towards her commerce since 1805, are but too well founded. Is he ignorant of the famous resolutions proposed to congress in 1794, by Mr. Madison, amounting, in effect, to a discontinuance of commerce between Great Britain and the states, in which he was assisted by Mr. Jefferson; and has he never seen Mr. Madison's pamphlet on the maritime rights of Great Britain, in which he maintains all the pretensions of the northern powers, or, in fact, that she has no right; that the ocean is free to all; that neutrals may trade as they please, and in fine, that free bottoms make free goods. What period would there be to a war between France and England, were commerce placed upon these principles? Is it not manifest that all the disadvantages would belong to Britain, and all the benefits to her enemy? How is she to maintain her independence without her navy? and how can she use this navy against the enemy, if she admit any free communication between him and his colonies, by means of neutrals? Is Mr. Baring ignorant that the ruling party in America have long endeavoured to interrupt the commerce that subsists between them and Great Britain? That the president is pledged by his own publications, not to make peace with England until concessions are admitted that will destroy her naval power? This man may proceed with money calculations, and he may, by figures, prove that Great Britain, with immense wealth and skill, even under every relaxation pleaded for, would still preserve her supe-

riority ; but can he prove that she would be able to maintain it long ? Would not other nations rival her in trade, oppressed as she would necessarily be with maintaining her fleet and army, to secure her independence ? Her commerce and manufactures would gradually decline, because other nations would sell cheaper ; this would happen gradually, but it would not be the less sure, though it might not be perceptible at first. But away with this cold calculation ; the question is not about navigation profits, it concerns our security and existence as a nation.

In speaking of American discontents, he wishes to prove that they have arisen from provocation on the part of our country, as bitter and irritable as ever was suffered by one state from another. The provocation, he says, was nothing less than a sudden general sweeping, by the cruizers of this country, of all American vessels that were sailing to France and its dependencies, in the course of their accustomed allowed trade in the year 1805, without any previous proclamation or notice. Alas, poor England ! thy most favoured children arraign thee for discovering a fraud and boldly punishing it. The farce of landing and instantly reloading the produce of the enemy, sometimes giving a bond which was never afterwards paid, having been discovered, the fraud was stopped. The people of America were irritated ; they were irritated by the loss they had actually sustained, and more at the discovery of their fraud. Some among them, however, admitted the justice of the captures, and never attempted to justify, as Mr. Baring has done, a species of trade which every body in America knew to be in a great measure a cloak to send home the colonial produce to the enemy. Besides, the people of America are always more enraged against British captures than against those of France and Spain, from the rule of calculation : France and Spain can take very few of their ships, for they have very few cruizers on the ocean ; the danger from them, therefore, cannot be very great ; but when British ships begin to capture, they tremble for all their ships—for where can they go that Britain cannot take them ?

This question is, however, laid asleep for the present, by the capture of all the enemy's colonies ; but I thought it right to enter my protest against the specious reasoning contained in Mr. Baring's pamphlet. He keeps every cause of dispute between Great Britain and America out of sight, except the capture of their vessels ; he does not mention their

pretensions about seamen, so hostile in their nature, and so dangerous to our independence. He does not say that we have endeavoured to conciliate them, but in vain ; that their avarice is insatiable ; that every thing must give way to their interest, or they are not to be satisfied.

This note is already long, but many interesting topics might be added. It might be shewn that as France has no occasion to send merchant ships to sea on account of the kindness of the Americans, she can employ every sailor aboard her fleet, and thus her naval force is doubled. And it might be asked, whether such an augmentation of naval power be of no disadvantage to Great Britain.

It might also be proved that the system of economy, adopted by America ; if it be beneficial to herself, (of which I have doubts) renders her incapable of preserving her neutrality. To preserve peace, we must be prepared for war. Without ships of war, she is obliged to submit to Bonaparte's decrees ; he knows that she can do nothing, and his tyrannical temper will not even allow her to bluster. Avarice will not suffer her to give up trading with France, nor to equip a squadron to maintain her respectability, and her miserable submissions are injurious to the interests of Great Britain ; those injuries are therefore repelled by the latter nation, and at this America is furious. In fine the defenceless commerce of America, is one of the principal causes of the present difficulties, not by inducing Great Britain to attack it, for no fleet which she is capable of furnishing would be formidable to the British ; but because it induces Bonaparte to have recourse to measures which he would not hazard, could America block up his ports.

Mr. Baring compares Great Britain to a Merchant, and mentions the dispute with America as founded upon an erroneous calculation. The comparison may be proved incorrect, and the dispute founded not upon calculation ; but upon a matter of primary importance ; “ Whether America shall be permitted to render our most formidable bulwark of defence nugatory.” Mr. Baring shews himself an able advocate for America ; but like all partizans, he keeps every thing out of sight that makes against him. What must convince every impartial man that America is in the wrong, is that British administrations of all political parties, have endeavoured to treat, but in vain—the States reject every condition, and will not even condescend to mention what they would have. To prove the great desire which the

British Ministry have uniformly shewn to treat with America ; I might begin with the offer of renewing Jay's treaty, and by detailing the diplomatic intercourse since that time, it would appear that the present Government of the United States are determined not to treat ; not to be satisfied—their rudeness to Mr. Jackson, and their contemptible figure in that transaction is too recent to require particular notice. The great talents of this ambassador, became a terror to the President and his officers ; finding themselves unequal in conversation, they had recourse to writing ; but their inferiority appearing still more conspicuous, and despairing of duping him as they had duped his predecessor, they broke off all intercourse.

It is to be lamented that a man of Mr. Baring's talents and influence, should prove himself so warm a partizan ; had the character of the Americans, especially of the dominant party, and their conduct since the French revolution been properly known in England, his reasonings would have had little weight. It is matter of joy that his opponents, if inferior in talents, will have the better cause ; and in confuting him, they will only have to prove the justice of punishing fraud.

Several of the remarks in this note are taken from a letter of the late Mr. Fisher Ames to one of his friends.—He was a great loser by the British captures in 1805, but his honest heart acknowledged their justice.—I am glad of an opportunity of testifying my respect for this virtuous and eloquent man, who was an honour to his Country.—I shall conclude this note with a couple of quotations from writers who will not be suspected of partiality to Great Britain.

Extract from a letter addressed by the Hon. Matthew Lyon, Member of Congress, to a Correspondent in Vermont.

IN answer to one of the questions you have put to me, I know of but little, if any good, Congress are doing by continuing their Session.—To another, I say, I can see no benefit from the rejection of the treaty made by Messrs. Munroe and Pinckney.—It might have saved us, had it been agreed to, from the embargo, which has been a curse to the nation ever since it was thought of. I know of no good to be expected from the quarrel between our secretary of state and Mr. Jackson. I see what I call a dangerous predilection in favour of Bonaparte ; and an unjustifiable zeal to keep open and widen the breach with England on the part of my old friends, the republicans.

The Commercial Report for January 1806, in the Monthly Magazine, contains the following remarks :

IN a former number of our Magazine, we stated the leading features of the dispute between this country and America, respecting the alledged unwarrantable capture of their vessels. We then indeavoured to exhibit the precise nature of the complaint ; and though we might, in our unbiassed opinion, have advocated the principles upon which the Americans pretended to regulate their commerce with the belligerent powers, yet we are aware that their practice is replete with fraud and collusion. That the Americans should have availed themselves of any opportunity to extend their trade is not surprizing, but that our Government should so long have tolerated this abuse, to the injury of our commerce, is a strong proof of the indulgence and lenity with which they have been treated, and of the unmixed desire in the British ministry to cherish and preserve the relations of amity and good faith between the two countries.

In the moral character of the American nation, however, there appears to be a radical defect. Their interest must be made the primum mobile of every regulation, or they can never be pleased. Their frauds and stratagems have been detected by Spain as well as by us, and a serious misunderstanding is stated to have taken place between them and that power ; but against the mother country their whole vengeance is directed, and a long article has appeared in the *National Intelligencer*, (the demi-official paper of the executive,) animadverting on the injuries received from this country, and insinuating the determination of the next congress to retaliate on us by levying heavy prohibitory duties on our manufactures imported, and to suspend all intercourse with us and our dependencies.

In the actual situation of Europe, in which every individual power has to wage a war, for existence, against the unprincipled and mad ambition of a military adventurer, the Americans ought, as a duty they owe to civil society and to the cause of liberty, which they affect to cherish, to make cheerful sacrifices to the common cause ; and they ought by a magnanimous conduct founded on principle, and not on the grovelling views of temporary advantage, to avail themselves of this opportunity of acquiring the esteem of foreign nations.

FINIS.