A LECTURE
ON THE ORIGIN AND GENERAL INFLUENCES OF THE
Wars of the French Revolution,
BEING THE CONCLUSION OF A COURSE OF LECTURES ON
MODERN HISTORY,
DELIVERED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN.

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TO THE

PROVOST

AND

SENIOR FELLOWS

OF

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN,

THE FOLLOWING LECTURE IS RESPECTFULLY

INSCRIBED BY THEIR

VERY OBEIDENT SERVANT,

GEORGE MILLER.
ADVERTISEMENT.

The Lecture now published is the conclusion of a series of eighty-five, successively delivered in eleven years. This course embraced the whole of modern history, commencing at the destruction of the western empire, in the latter part of the fifth century of the Christian æra, and extending to the present time.

The author is sensible of the awkwardness of publishing a concluding lecture, separately from the rest of the course; especially as it contains no retrospect of the general plan. To obviate the objection he must plead the desire of persons, to whose recommendation he owes every deference. It seemed to them, that the views, which it contains, might beneficially interest the minds, at least of the
students of the University; and, in their friendship for the author, they were desirous, that some specimen should be given to the public, which might diminish the hazard of a publication of considerable magnitude, by facilitating its reception. The most eligible specimen would undoubtedly have been one containing either a prospectus, or a recapitulation. Any other must suggest the recollection of the brick, which was so inadequately exhibited as a specimen of a house. The author, however, felt himself precluded from the use of either. When he began his course, he was urged forward by the necessity of discharging without delay the duty of an academic situation, and could not wait for that distinctness of conception, which in his progress he has since attained. Conscious, therefore, of the imperfection of his preparation, he judged it prudent
to confine himself, in his earlier lectures, to the common-places of the subject, that he might not pledge himself to an undertaking perhaps exceeding his powers. His plan he accordingly left tounfold itself as he proceeded, promising no more than seemed necessary for comprehending the bearing of each part, as it was introduced. A recapitulation might indeed seem more practicable, when the course had been completed, and the whole was before the author; but this he abandoned, in the despair of comprising within the limits of a lecture such a view of the entire subject, as should be sufficiently detailed to be interesting.

The principle of the plan may however be very briefly stated. It seemed to the author that the events of modern history, however various and apparently unconnected, are all reducible to the unity of
a great dramatic action, comprehending indeed a number of distinct, though corresponding facts, which all tend towards a common catastrophe. If such a unity of action could be established, it would, like the unity of the material system, evince a providential government of the world: and so far the view of history, contained in these lectures, is providential. But it is not anywhere maintained, that occasional interpositions have disturbed the regular operation of political causes. The view proposed to be taken is philosophical, and philosophy can be concerned only about regular operations.

Of the drama of modern history the last scene is now presented to the public. Its reception may determine, whether the whole shall be submitted to their inspection.

Dublin, April 23, 1811.
Gentlemen,

I have now conducted my examination of modern history to the commencement of that great struggle, which has agitated, during so many years, almost the whole civilized world, and has overthrown the ancient establishments of some of the fairest regions of Europe. Perhaps it might be more prudent to stop here: the scene of ruin is yet unfinished, and the final catastrophe is beyond the ken of mortal foresight. But yet I feel that the views, which I have presented to you, of the previous circumstances of the world, would be imperfect, if they were
not accompanied by some notices of the origin and character of the contest, in which the European drama has so sadly terminated. It belongs indeed to the consideration of the previous circumstances of Europe, to determine whether this contest arose necessarily out of those circumstances, and was but their direct and natural result; or was superinduced upon them by a cause extrinsic and adventitious, and was capable of being averted by the ordinary forbearance and moderation of governments. And, if it should appear, that this contest was indeed the genuine result of the preceding circumstances of Europe, it would also belong to the same enquiry, to investigate its general character and influence, however incapable we must at present be of conjecturing its ultimate effects.

And here I will freely acknowledge, that, in the heated inexperience of youth, I was myself one of those, who regarded the war with France as a wanton aggres-
sion of the British minister; the prophetic warnings of Burke appeared to me the ravings of a morbid imagination; and I believed the cause of genuine liberty to be sacrificed by a conspiracy of kings. Nor do I repent, that I was then so deceived in my opinion of the origin and nature of this contest. Separated as I was from all political influence, I could not by my error become instrumental to the misfortunes of my country; and I cannot regret that I indulged a merely speculative misconception, which consisted in thinking too favourably of the principles and conduct of a large portion of my species.

It is indeed not difficult to explain the origin of an error once so prevalent, and which has comprehended among its adherents, men of the most eminent talents, and the most distinguished situations. Independently of that general predilection for every struggle bearing the name of freedom, which is natural to the in-
habitants of a land of freedom, a special delusion spread its fascinating influence before the eyes of the public. The revolution of France was seen through the medium of the revolution of America. A revolution had been witnessed, which, without domestic contention, or disposition to offer violence to foreign states, had established a republic, that seemed to be reserved for the most glorious destinies. It was known too, that the revolution of America had given the impulse to the subversion of the ancient government of France; and that some of the most strenuous partisans of the recent revolution had been among the champions of American independence. But it was forgotten, that the American States were not the residuum of an exhausted government, tainted by all the evils, which had caused its dissolution; it was forgotten, that America was very imperfectly peopled, and therefore not agitated by mobs; that its government was very imperfectly
combined, and therefore not capable of acting offensively; and that it was removed so far from the scene of European contention, that it was exempted from the ordinary incentives to aggression. Nothing was considered, but the splendid promise of transplanting into Europe that freedom, which had so flourished beyond the Atlantic; and it was never imagined, that the tree of liberty, which had bloomed in the American forests, would in France be converted into a disgusting gibbet, stripped of its original honours, and serving only to deter from precipitate imitation, the too ardent admirers of revolution.

But the attention of the public was early solicited to the real nature of the French revolution by a voice, vehement indeed and wild in its solemn denunciations, yet by its very irregularities acquiring something of an unearthly character, which fitted it to rouse a nation from so dangerous a delusion. And it is most
curious, that this monitor should have been prepared in the bosom of that party, which so many causes conspired to render favourable to the struggles of the new republic; as if it had been designed, that a more impressive appeal should be made to the sounder part of the people, and that there should be no shadow of reason for suspecting its sincerity. He who, in a long public life, had been inseparably connected with the friends of freedom; he from whose lips the great leader of the modern whigs professed to have drawn his lessons of political wisdom; he who had uniformly and strenuously contended for the principles of liberty in the struggle of America; he it was, who tore himself from connexions, which had been identified with all his habits, and proclaimed, at once to the ministry and to the opposition, the perils of their dangerous vicinage. It was not a jealousy of the struggles of liberty; for his own life had been passed in such a struggle. It
was not an antipathy to the suggestions of an enlightened philosophy; for his own wisdom was reverenced even by the wise. It was the profound and searching penetration of an informed and reflecting mind, which pierced through the gaudy glare of republican innovation, stripped off the specious colouring, and exposed to public view the nakedness of the ruin which it concealed. Alarmed at the mighty mischief, which, with a prophet's eye, he beheld arising from the dissolution of the neighbouring government; and dreading that contagious communication, which might corrupt and destroy the constitution of his own; he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed.

The first declaration of the sentiments of Mr. Burke occurred so early as the beginning of the year 1790, when Mr. Fox had bestowed upon the French revolution some extravagant eulogies; in the same year he published his celebrat-
ed reflections on that interesting event; and early in the following one, when the discussion of a new form of government, designed for Canada, had introduced the consideration of general principles of policy, and Mr. Fox had again bestowed his commendations on the new principles of liberty, he renounced for ever the party with which he had so long acted. But though the minister applauded and supported the sentiments of Mr. Burke, he discovered no hostility against the French government; nor did the war commence between the two countries, until about two years had elapsed from that memorable separation. The operation of the solemn protestation of Mr. Burke was to produce, not hostility, but precaution; to rouse the government to the adoption of the means necessary for preserving the political health of the nation, and to rouse the people to the resolution necessary for giving support to the government.
Nor was this protestation of Mr. Burke a mere measure of precaution against the contagion of revolutionary principles; it also formed the important epoch, which marked the termination of the ancient system of the British parties. Mr. Burke, who had long acted under the auspices of the most respected leader of the whigs, drew with him, in his secession, the men who constituted the political strength of the party; and, in the same spirit in which Rome prepared for a perilous emergency, by investing her consuls with absolute discretion, these men, forgetting the distinctions of party, and anxious only that the commonwealth might receive no injury, devoted themselves to strengthen the authority of the minister.

But this dissolution of the party of the whigs, though immediately occasioned by the conduct of Mr. Burke, was an event arising naturally from the situation of the party. Enjoying, with little interruption, the possession of power du-
ring the reigns of William and Anne, and, during the two succeeding reigns, acquiring even an ascendancy over the throne itself, the whigs were long exempted from any temptation to pursue to an extreme those principles, which had effected the revolution. It was when the present king began the system of extricating the crown from this dependance, that the whigs, as a party, first found themselves permanently in opposition; their principles from this time accordingly assumed a bolder and more decided character; and, though the distinction between the new and the old whigs cannot be considered as yet beginning to exist, the party may be regarded as beginning at this time to receive the predisposition, out of which it was produced. The war of America, a war of freedom, found the party in this state, and excited their sentiments to the utmost degree of vehemence, which was at all reconcilable to the sobriety of their original
principles: this war too procured them a leader, ardent and enthusiastic, not shackled by the settled habits of ancient opinions, but eager, with the zeal of a proselyte, to push to their utmost application the principles, which he had so recently embraced. But, as the struggle of America was a struggle for rights acknowledged by the constitution, it presented no occasion for direct separation; the party, (1) though beginning to be heterogeneous, continued to act as a body; and the individuals were probably insensible of that incipient difference of sentiment, by which they were afterwards separated. It was the French revolution, which revealed to them the secret of their own disunion. That revolution had no analogy to the revolution of England, which could recommend it to a genuine whig; the new whigs indeed, who had learned the principles of the party from their highest excitement in the war of America, regarded a struggle for liberty, in any circumstances, as deserving their
warrnest approbation. That approbation they accordingly bestowed without reserve; the constitutional feelings of those who adhered to the original principles of the party, were alarmed and offended; and a schism was effected, which, while it added to the power of the minister, put an end to the existence of a party, that had been so long considerable.

Thus we see that long series of arrangements, which had prepared the balance of the British constitution, terminate at the crisis, in which the force of that constitution was to be brought to its trial. The tories and whigs were but the scaffoldings of the constitution. Such a distinction of parties might be necessary for framing a government; but that must be a defective government, which depends upon them for its permanent support. A popular constitution requires indeed that there should always be an opposition, eager to point out the errors of the administration, and to alarm the
jealousies of the public; but the maturity of such a constitution is inconsistent with the existence of two distinct sets of public men, influenced systematically by distinct principles of public conduct, and alternately prevailing in its management. From this time accordingly the great struggle of the parliament was a struggle for the support of the people, rather than for the combinations of a party; and the differences, which separated the administration and the opposition, were rather relative to individual measures, than to paramount principles of constitutional policy.

The minister, though strengthened by an accession, which at the same time so materially weakened his adversaries, manifested no disposition to engage in hostilities against the new government of France. Whatever may have been the feeling of many persons at that time, in regard to the conduct of our ministry, it has been since demonstrated by Dr.
Marsh, (*) in an argument as decisive as can be conceived applicable to a political question, that our government cautiously abstained from every interference, until the active aggressions of the French republic had rendered a longer forbearance impracticable, and indeed had begun the war by a formal declaration of hostility. Measures of precaution however were employed, to prevent the communication of the political contagion: and, even though no predisposition to receive the infection had existed in these countries, it would have become the wisdom of a statesman, to bar up all the approaches, by which it might be conveyed. A popular government must be in all cases liable to be influenced by the revolutionary agitations of a neighbouring nation. Its freedom of discussion would at once introduce to the public the doctrines of the revolution; and these doctrines would easily find adherents among the more zealous supporters of liberty. (*) But
against such neighbours as French revolutionists no precaution could have been excessive. Ever restless and intriguing; impelled to the subversion of their government rather by an impatience of their actual situation, than by a love of freedom; and more gratified by extending the influence, than by improving the happiness of their country; the French were not merely a nation in revolution, but a nation of revolutionary propagandists. All the passions of a busy and ambitious people being suddenly set loose from the restraints of government, the activity, which had been so long repressed, became a distempered extravagance, and the same vanity, which had rendered them the willing slaves of an usurping monarchy, rendered them at this time the unwearied missionaries of republican innovation. It was not within the contemplation of the French revolutionists, that their own country should become a republic, without setting a fa-
shion to every other, and at the same
time acquiring an ascendency propor-
tioned to the idea which they had so long
cherished, of the importance of the great
nation.

But the people of these countries had
manifested no inconsiderable predisposi-
tion, to receive, and to embrace the doc-
trines of revolution. To say nothing of
this part of the United Kingdom, in
which peculiar causes were operating to
the production of a peculiar result, the
more distinguished dissenters of England
had, without reserve or moderation, ex-
pressed their exultation at the arrival of a
period so hostile to establishments; vari-
ous societies had been industriously formed
for the propagation of revolutionary sen-
timents; and (‘) a direct communication
had been opened with the French conven-
tion by formal deputations, conveying
the most ardent congratulations of its
success, and promising a zealous imita-
tion of its proceedings. It has indeed
been maintained, that these revolutionists bore so small a proportion to the great mass of the British public, that the minister was not justified in disturbing the general tranquillity by any measures of alarm: and that they did bear a very small proportion to the entire community, became sufficiently manifest; when the loyalty of the great body of the people had been roused by the representations of the government. But I am so far from considering this as a proof of the inexpediency of employing such measures, that I am persuaded that the existence of such a perilous vicinage, as I have described, would have afforded a sufficient justification, though no indications of an incipient infection had proved the mischief to have been actually introduced. Fortunately however for the conviction of the public mind, indications sufficiently decisive did present themselves; the people became sensible of
their danger, when they saw that a portion of the community had been already tainted; and the government acquired from this circumstance a strength of support, which it could not have conciliated by speculative reasoning.

The French revolution, in the mean time, was advancing in that career of aggression, which appears to have been a law of its nature. As well might we suppose, that, in the combinations of the material world, a powerful principle of action should be suddenly developed, without exercising any influence on the surrounding substances, as that all the passions of a great central nation, active, vain, and accustomed to the gratifications of a domineering ambition, should be suddenly released from restraint, without making the most dangerous inroads on the security of the surrounding states. The necessary result of such a crisis had indeed been distinctly predicted by (1) two writers, one the great authority of the mo-
modern system of the military art, the other not less distinguished by his judicious views of the political economy of nations. Both have concurred in declaring, that a system which, throwing off the ordinary incumbrances, and disregarding the ordinary policy of government, should become a merely military organization, must necessarily prove destructive of the adjacent states, which should continue to maintain their former usages. The case which these writers have supposed, was that of France in an advanced period of the revolution; but the mischievous activity of this great convulsion displayed itself almost from the very commencement, and anticipated their predictions.

(" Before any external violence could have been pleaded as a pretext for encroachment, the infant energies of the revolution were tried upon the little district of Gallic territory, which was the ancient possession of the Roman pontiff. The emigrants who assembled on the frontier,
and the convention which was formed at Pilnitz by the emperor and the king of Prussia, were alleged as the provocations of a war declared against the former; but it was afterwards unequivocally ascertained, that this war had been the deliberate policy of the republican party of the French government, and that they regarded it as necessary for building up the fabric of their power. Successful in repelling the invasion of the allied powers, they turned their thoughts to new usurpations, and the defenceless territories of Savoy and Sardinia afforded additional instances of their regard for the resolution, by which all views of foreign aggrandizement had once been renounced. Notwithstanding the advantages which they had gained in the Netherlands, they did not yet venture to add those provinces to their own republic; but, while they affected to regard them as constituting an independent state, they made a direct attack upon the federal interests of the British government, by
opening the navigation of the Scheldt. At this time it was, that they passed by acclamation a decree, which placed them in irreconcileable hostility with every established government, by pledging them to the universal support of insurrection. Within a few weeks afterwards an embassador was sent to America, who was specially instructed to enlist the United States in a confederacy against Great Britain, which, in every respect, except measures merely precautionary, had observed the most exact neutrality. A nearer plan of hostility against our government was at the same time projected, by the invasion of the Dutch provinces, which, far from provoking the attack, had not even remonstrated against the violation of their command of the Scheldt, that had been deemed so essential to their greatness. When we look back upon this rapid succession of acts of hostility, so various in their objects, and yet crowded into so narrow a space of time, we must feel our-
selves unable to account for such conduct by any consideration of the ordinary operation of human passions. It appears to belong only to the active malignity of infernal agents, delighting in gratuitous evil; and it seems as if the very enormity of the conduct of the French nation had procured a sort of protection, from the difficulty of persuading a well-constituted mind, that such dispositions could have actuated beings of our species.

The general plan of the war, which thus appears to have been a direct result of the revolution, has been long ago delineated by Mr. Harper, a delegate in the American congress. Great Britain, he remarked, opposed barriers to the ambition of the French by sea, and Germany by land: their enterprises therefore had a twofold object; and, while Germany was to be reduced by their armies, a maritime coalition was to be formed against our naval power. The acquisition of the Dutch provinces was the first step towards the
formation of this coalition, and to this enterprise accordingly they speedily directed their attention; but it was to be completed by involving the American republic in the war, and employing all its resources. (8) With unremitting perseverance has this last plan been pursued, nor is it yet abandoned. The ancient jealousies of America are stimulated into fresh activity; the allurement of the commerce of the European continent is presented to the avidity of its traders; and the measures forced upon our government by the difficulties of an unexampled struggle, are artfully perverted into new occasions of dissension.

Fortunately however it has happened, that (9) another American has recently stood forward, to expose to his countrymen the treachery of French artifice, and the folly of yielding to its suggestions. Informed of the real character of the French government by actual and minute inspection, he has displayed it to
the world with a masculine eloquence, which reflects credit on the literary powers of the transatlantic republic: he has shown that the military despotism, now established in France, is necessarily and irreconcileably at variance with that commercial industry, which could not flourish without generating political independence; and he has most forcibly exhorted his fellow-citizens to renounce the delusive expectation of separate advantage, and to make a common cause with Great Britain against the destroyers of the earth. He seems indeed to be the Burke of America, (10) sent by providence in this period of the contest, to give a beginning to the effectual, because the maritime coalition, against the ravages of France; differing from his precursor in the sober energy of his statements; but differing from him as the historian differs from the prophet, because the lapse of twenty years had realized to his view the gloomy anticipations of alarmed wisdom.
Of the original plan of revolutionary ambition one part has been amply accomplished. The continental governments have successively sunk under its violences; and while Russia, in the extremity of the north, maintains but a doubtful independence, (11) the war of liberty has been driven, in the south, to the very frontier of Europe. But who can regard the war as wholly disastrous to the British Empire, who reflects that the other part, in which its interests were immediately concerned, has not only been frustrated, but has been transformed into the triumph of its greatness? (12) In the war of America the naval power of our government had been at one time overborne by the combination of our enemies; (12) and, at the commencement of the French revolution, the naval armament of France alone very considerably exceeded the maritime force of Great Britain. Had it been practicable for our government to continue in peace, until
the conquest of the United Provinces had reinforced the fleets of France, what would have been its situation! But, though war was declared on the same day against Great Britain and the Dutch States, the subjugation of these provinces was retarded, until lord Howe had given the first great blow to the naval strength of our enemy, in the memorable engagement of the first of June. That important victory was the pledge, as well as the omen, of our subsequent successes. Lord Duncan was then enabled to crush the efforts of our former allies, when forced into a hostile combination; and lord St. Vincent triumphed over the armament of another of the reluctant confederates of France. The scene of glory was closed by the hero, whose name has become the watch-word of the safety of his country. While a British fleet exists, the recollections of Aboukir and Trafalgar must inspire every bosom with congenial ardour, and preserve for ever present to
the mind his own heart-animating signal of battle.

Nor has the success of our government consisted only in the enjoyment of unassailable security, or in the splendor of an unexampled series of victory. The maritime colonies of our enemies have been everywhere added to our possessions. The dominion of the ocean, which the British government has acquired, rests on a basis proportioned to its high aspiring; for such are the extent, the variety, and the distance of its territories, that a mighty system of commerce might be conceived to be maintained among them, independently of every other nation. And the violence of our enemies, while it has driven our commerce from its old stations on the continent of Europe, has opened to it other opportunities of exertion beyond their limits. Forcing one of the courts of the southern peninsula into emigration, and trepanning the other by a shameless perfidy, they have sealed an alliance be-
tween us and the southern continent of America. Embarrassment may, and must attend the removal of commercial relations; and the trade of this new world cannot at once attain its maturity; but it is impossible to imagine, that countries so vast, and so improveable, should not speedily be found to afford abundant, and indefinitely encreasing opportunities of mercantile enterprise.

To attain objects of so great importance, it would have been consistent with the ancient and authorised policy of our government, to enter into such continental combinations, as, by distracting the attention of France, would facilitate our own naval successes. This was the principle of our connexion, first with Austria, and afterwards with Prussia; and its wisdom has been recognised by every statesman. The war, therefore, so far as our own government is concerned, has been not only successful in its issue, but regular in its policy. Another, however, and a very
important question, here arises; whether, by a rash adherence to this policy, we have not urged forward the continental governments to their ruin, and thus destroyed the balance, which it so nearly concerned us to maintain.

Reasoning as I now am, upon the consequences of events, and not upon the merits of ministers, I do not take into consideration, what result might, in the commencement of the struggle, have been with probability expected, or whether any reasonable expectation of success was forfeited by the mismanagement of the enterprise. The result is now before us: and my enquiry is not, whether the British minister could reasonably have hoped a more favourable issue, and was therefore justifiable in hazarding the experiment; nor whether he is chargeable with any misdirection of the force entrusted to him, which was fatal to the execution of the plan; but whether we have even now any reason for believing, that the calamities of
Europe have really been aggravated by the unsuccessful efforts, which have been exerted for its deliverance. That the governments of continental Europe have sunk in the struggle, is undeniable. But the true question for our consideration is, what would have been their situation, if they had been abandoned to themselves, and the British government had wholly withdrawn its attention from continental interests. And this is a question, which appears to me not to have yet received an adequate solution.

I know that it has been maintained by high authority, that if the surrounding powers had carefully adhered to a pacific system, those energies of the French, which have proved so destructive to other nations, would have been consumed at home in civil dissension, which must have rendered them incapable of disturbing the rest of Europe. This opinion however I have no hesitation in pronouncing unfounded; and it has indeed already received a satisfac-
tory refutation (14) in a recent number of the Quarterly Review. It is neither true, that the energies of the French would thus have been consumed in domestic dissension; nor can it be admitted, to be probable, that any degree of domestic dissension would have occurred, which would have incapacitated them for enterprises of foreign aggression.

The French revolution was, almost from its commencement, a system of officious interference in the policy of other states, and was very speedily characterised by actual usurpations, unequivocally denoting the insatiable spirit of encroachment, which had become the habit of the nation. It is indeed not improbable, that domestic dissension would in either case have marked the progress of the revolution: but it has been observed, in the publication to which I have just now alluded, that it was, in no trifling degree, the external danger, which produced the civil discord, the most atrocious excesses.
of domestic violence having been the direct consequences of reverses, sustained in the struggle against foreign enemies. In that great convulsion all the passions of this people were loosed from restraint; and we may therefore believe, that all would have eagerly sought their gratification. Among these passions we might naturally expect to find the love of individual pre-eminence, prompting to enterprises, which would involve the government in successive struggles, and the whole nation perhaps, in the most violent contention. This is the nature of man, and may be expected to influence, in a greater or less degree, every considerable revolution. But, beside the general nature of our species, there was also a French nature, formed and cherished by a great variety of causes, and rendered perhaps predominant over the common qualities of our kind. The new republicans, being the creatures of the ancient monarchy, had all been taught to regard the aggran-
disememt of the nation as the point of honour. To such a people foreign ambition was even a more powerful impulse, than the struggle for domestic pre-eminence. Though eager to burst from the restrictions of their former condition, they had not been prepared for the combinations of a popular government; they were therefore unfitted to take an interest in those connexions of party, which so mightily agitate governments resting on a balance of principles; and, in the whole progress of the revolution, we find but one solitary instance of an appeal to a principle of party, in the ideal accusation of projecting a federal republic, which was urged against the faction of Brissot. But every Frenchman could persuade himself, that he had an interest in those efforts of foreign ambition, which afforded gratification to the national vanity; and (15) every candidate for public distinction knew, that he could best command the attachment of
the multitude, by indulging this inveterate propensity.

And if it cannot be admitted, that the French would have suffered all their violence to employ itself in civil contentions, neither can we concede, that the result of these contentions would have been such a degree of exhaustion, as must have rendered them inoffensive and harmless. Against such a concession the well-known observation of Montesquieu is a formal protest. That writer, far from regarding, even civil wars as exhausting a nation, and rendering it inoffensive, considers the confusion and violence of such struggles as constituting the most alarming preparation of foreign conquest. And, though cases may be imagined, in which the maxim of this sententious writer may require to be modified, or abandoned, yet there were, in the case of the French nation, circumstances, which strengthened and enforced its application. In the civil war of the French revolution there were re-
tained no artificial distinctions, the remnants of pre-existing systems, which might have opposed impediments to the struggle of ability. All had been swept away in this extraordinary convulsion; the field was entirely cleared for every exertion of mental energy; and it is therefore reasonable to believe, that the conflict must, beyond any other, have terminated in the developement of all that power of mind, which existed any where in the nation. Nor is there any reason for imagining, that the contention could have continued so long, as to produce a general exhaustion and debility. The civil war of such a revolution could not have been the implacable and desperate contention of irreconcileable parties; because such a contention requires the existence of principles and interests, deeply cherished and vehemently pursued. It was a great chaotic mass, in which all principles and interests were confounded. A struggle indeed might naturally arise amidst the wild
tumult of this general disorder; but a struggle which would only continue, until the contending elements had discovered their affinities, and were ready to settle into some tranquil form of military usurpation.

These considerations, which have been adopted from the periodical publication already mentioned, tend to prove how vain was the persuasion, that the neutrality of the other governments of Europe would have disarmed the French revolution of its offensive character. It seems to have been an inevitable destiny, that the violence of such a convulsion should in some form be poured upon the surrounding nations; and its ravages would surely not have been moderated by the absence of every effort of resistance. But still the question recurs: what was the influence of this resistance? It cannot be supposed, that this great and deadly struggle should have been urged so long, without in some manner materially affect-
ing the catastrophe, though the scene of ruin might have been otherwise produced. This certainly cannot be supposed; and the nature of the influence thus exercised by this struggle is a curious subject of enquiry.

When we enquire into the general influences of the great struggle of Europe, its primary operation appears to have consisted in affording such a diversion to the revolutionary energies of France, as might permit these countries to erect and establish a maritime dominion, which should balance the continental empire, and maintain the independence and the hopes of mankind. This was its direct and principal effect. But it must have exercised a collateral and secondary influence on the continental governments themselves, devoted as they were to ruin; and must have left them in a situation different from that, in which they would otherwise have been placed. The difference appears to me to have consisted in this, that they
were subjugated by the sword, instead of having been rendered the victims of Jacobinical corruption. If we can imagine, that all the continental governments should have quietly waited the issue of the machinations of France, we know from the early proceedings in Avignon, and in Belgium, what would have been the result. The activity of French intrigue would have dispatched missionaries of insurrection into every country; the people would everywhere have been zealously encouraged to seek in revolution the remedy of all their grievances; and the great republic would have found itself bound by the ties of fraternity, to give assistance to oppressed humanity. The French revolution, instead of being, as it has been, a great principle of destructive violence, bearing down all opposition in its tremendous progress, would thus have been propagated over Europe by a successive contagion, corrupting the vital stamina of political order, and destroying the best
hopes of renovated health. The governments have fallen indeed: but the people have not been vitiated. The whole continent, though nearly mastered by France, has not been reduced into a wide range of Jacobinical insurrection. The moral nature of our species has not been degraded in the conflict; perhaps it has been even prepared for future improvement, by the revolting violence to which it has been exposed.

Another of the secondary influences of the continental struggle, and perhaps one more important than that which has been just now mentioned, is the influence which it has exercised upon the government of France itself. It has indeed been held by some distinguished men, that to foreign aggression should be attributed all those enormities, which have dishonoured the French revolution, and have built up the atrocious tyranny of the present government. In this opinion I cannot discover any probability, because I do not observe
any thing in the successive forms, exhibited by this great convulsion, different from those, which general principles might have prompted us to expect. It is in the natural progress of events, that the moderate reformers who began the work, should be set aside by those, whose plans were more daring and extensive; and, when innovation had been pushed to its utmost extreme of violence, and the nation had become sick of the extravagancies, into which it had been hurried, that a military despotism should unite the harassed factions in a system of hostility against the surrounding states. At the same time I freely admit, that the impressions made by the foreign enemies of France had a direct operation, in the actual production of the most considerable changes of the government. It is certain, that the successes gained by the allies in the year 1793, gave occasion to the ascendancy of the Jacobins; and the victories of Suvaroff, in the like manner gave, in the
year 1799, the favourable impulse, which weakened the power of the directory, and prepared the way for the advancement of him, who has wrought the catastrophe of this dreadful tragedy. In what then has consisted the influence of that external violence, which, though it cannot be considered as their cause, appears to have been directly concerned in the production of some of the most important changes of the revolution? To me it appears to have consisted in stimulating and hastening those changes, which must necessarily have occurred without it, but would not have occurred so soon. The war, considered as it related to the interior government of France, seems to me to have accelerated its processes, and to have precipitated its result. The unprincipled violence of the Jacobins would naturally have established itself upon the downfall of the republicans, as these had risen upon the ruin of the friends of limited monarchy: but the reverses of the war
brought it sooner into operation, and hastened the conviction of those, who had been influenced by the delusive theories of republican innovation. Again, a military usurpation was the euthanasia of that horrid anarchy of malignant passion, towards which it naturally and irresistibly tended: but another series of disasters hastened its extinction, and relieved a disgusted world. Nor are we destitute of an authenticated example of such a precipitation of political results. When our Saviour forewarned his disciples of the dreadful destruction, which awaited the capital of their country, he assured them, that for their sake those days of desolation should be shortened. \(^{16}\) The work of ruin, we accordingly find, was actually abridged by those intestine violences, which, to the astonishment of their conqueror, accelerated the submission of the Jews. Does it not seem, that what, we are assured, was then done, for protecting the infant hopes of the Christian church,
which must have perished in a protracted struggle, was again adopted into the arrangements of the divine providence, in this other interesting crisis, for the preservation of the moral order of the world? In each case the event appears to have been accelerated; in the one by domestic, in the other by foreign violence: in each case was involved an important interest of the general system of human society: and in the one we have the authority of revelation itself, for the gracious interposition of a merciful providence, in shortening the continuance of human trials.

These influences, we may perhaps venture to pronounce, that the war has already exercised on our own government, on the fallen kingdoms of the continent, and on the revolutionary agitations of France. But who shall penetrate the depths of future time, and discover the changes, which it is destined to operate on the general system of human society? If we can, without inexcusable rashness,
hazard any conjecture on such a subject, it must be because we have discovered some analogy, between the character of the new empire and some dominion of the ages which are past. But to which of these dominions can we assimilate the new-formed empire of France? Shall we compare its conscriptions and its confiscations to the empire of the Grecian conqueror, (17) who formed schemes of civilization as extensive as his enterprises of war, and gave being, and his own name, to a city, which he designed to be the emporium of an industrious world? Or can we discern any correspondence between its stern and unmitigated oppression, and (18) that dominion of equity, which the Roman arms established throughout the world, extending to the conquered nations the blessings of accumulated wisdom, and erecting an edifice of policy, which should long outlast their power? The French emperor has indeed displayed an anxiety to be regarded as a second Charlemagne. What are
his pretensions? If the aggrandisement of the French name be a sufficient pretension, his empire is wider than that of Charlemagne. But where do we find him anxiously endeavouring to cultivate the empire, which his sway controls; training his untutored subjects to the habits of social order, and inviting and encouraging literature to perfect, and to embellish the work of improvement? These are the superior glories of Charlemagne. To compare with them we see nothing but a code of laws (17) which, as far as we have yet been informed of its nature, appears to possess little pretensions, either of originality, or of utility; (18) a determined hostility to those commercial communications of mankind, which so closely combine the species, and so powerfully animate the individual; a vigilant and rigorous coercion of that freedom of discussion, which is the very health of a political constitution; (19) and successive injunctions of ignorance of those languages, which have conveyed to mo-
modern Europe the intellectual refinement of antiquity, and one of which should be hallowed, as preserving the original records of our religion. The system of his government has however the merit of simplicity. The only duty to be discharged by his subjects, is obedience; the only art to be practiced, is war.

If indeed we should compare the present empire of France to any of the former achievements of human ambition, we must search for an empire characterised by systematic violence, adverse to everything which refines and embellishes society, and hostile, above all, to that commercial industry, which, while it inspires sentiments of order and justice, is also the unfailing principle of civil independence. And has not the French emperor himself pointed out such a parallel? When, in his Egyptian expedition, he assumed the language of a follower of Mahomet, and even arrogated to himself the attributes of the prophetic character, has
he not led us to the true standard of comparison? The Ottoman dominion was, like his, a system of conquest, which no intellectual refinement decorated, no industry mitigated and improved: like his, it sought no other object than extended acquisition; and, like his, it depended for its stability, on the rude strength of military power. But if such be the true parallel of the French empire, it may suggest to us a notion of the future influence, which this empire may exercise on the general arrangements of the world. If the dominion of France be the Ottoman dominion of the nineteenth century, it may be expected to exercise an influence, similar to that which was, in the fifteenth, exercised by its prototype. When the Turkish conquerors had established their empire throughout the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, the ancient commerce of the world was driven into other channels: in the progress of improvement the time of more venturous and distant enter-
prise had then arrived; and the interruption of the established communications served only to propel into the ocean that commerce, which was then adequate to the daring attempt. May we not believe, that the time of a farther diffusion of the commercial energies of man is now again arrived; and that the emperor of France, when he is tearing away the bands, which have connected us with the continent of Europe, is, like his Ottoman precursors, but fulfilling the destiny of a comprehensive providence? Fortunately for us, the British empire is not a Venetian republic, shut up in a corner of the Adriatic. The ocean is ours, and we have asserted our dominion, not with the idle ceremony of a gaudy festival, but with the thunders of a host of ships. And though the ascendancy of France has disjoined us from that commercial republic on the continent of Europe, with which we heretofore supported the interests of commerce, and circulated its advantages,
yet, perhaps, it is not rashness to predict, that, notwithstanding the present unfa-
vourable appearances, the same ascen-
dancy may eventually connect us with the
great commercial republic of the transat-
lantic continent, and combine a maritime
confederacy, proportioned to the interests,
not of Europe, but of the world. The
American writer, who has so ably deli-
neated to his countrymen the fatal folly of
seeking commercial advantage, in a con-
nexion with systematic and unrelenting
violence, has held out the first hope of so
favourable an occurrence. I hail the omen,
and look with anxiety for its fulfilment.

How gratifying is such a prospect to all
the virtuous affections of our nature! The
empire of France is indeed a potent in-
strument of the Almighty's providence.
It has crushed a political system, which
had already lost its principles and its com-
_bination: (24) it has beaten down a spi-
rital dominion, which every protestant
must regard as an usurpation on religious
liberty, and an obstacle to religious improvement: and it has destroyed those commercial relations, which would have detained within a narrower sphere the energies of our government, and delayed the civilization of remoter regions. These are awful revolutions; and the power, by which they have been effected, must be regarded with that serious and solemn feeling, which belongs to the awakening visitations of heaven. But these are the revolutions of a destroying, not of a vivifying agency: they have swept away the impediments, which would have obstructed the growth of our nature; but violence, though powerful to destroy, can never regenerate. To furnish the principles of improvement to the future system of the world, appears to be the high destiny of our government, which retaining its political and moral energies amidst all the corruptions and the violences of a revolutionary period, and communicating with every region by a navy unparalleled in the
history of our species, seems exclusively qualified to become the grand organ of human order and happiness. It is here that the germs of future and extended improvement appear to have been deposited by a merciful providence. Here have been preserved the principles of that balanced policy, which, while it secures to humble industry the impartial protection of the law, provides for those aspirings of refined society, that exalt the powers of our nature: here too have been preserved, at least in comparative purity, those important principles of moral order, which can alone give efficacy and utility to political institutions: and here perhaps it will be found, that learning, a second time exiled from the continent of Europe, has again sought refuge, until returning tranquillity should again permit it to diffuse its influence. Near to that European continent, from which it has treasured the improvement of the ages that are past, and connected with every other region by
a maritime activity, which embraces the globe, it stands as the great power of the system now to be begun; prepared, and even necessitated, to extend to the remotest countries the benefits of that improvement, which European society had cherished, and prepared also to give back to the European continent itself the blessings which it had forfeited, enhanced by the moral influence of the example of regulated freedom. What unprejudiced mind can contemplate such a government, without feeling an interest in its stability? Who can consider himself as connected with such a government, and not at the same time consider himself, as directly participating in a mission of mercy to an afflicted world?

Here let me conclude this long and various survey. A new order of ages has begun, which may demand the examination of some enquirer of a remote futurity, and may yet more conspicuously manifest the attributes of the almighty
ruler. But, though the scenes, which are now beginning to unfold, seem to promise a wider comprehension of human interests, those, which have been closed upon our view, have displayed a unity and closeness of combination, which sufficiently establish the persuasion of a directing providence—When Newton concluded his immortal system of the material world, (25) he broke from his mechanical contemplations into an animated declaration of the wisdom and power of the being, by whom that universe had been framed. Shall this then not be thought the legitimate conclusion, to be inferred from the consideration of the movements of his moral creatures? Shall the arrangements of the planetary world evince his providence; and the arrangements of empires and of human society, of mind in all its various combinations, furnish no testimony of the wisdom and power of the great Creator? This is the only system, which I have laboured to establish; the system
of a God and his providence. I have endeavoured to show that, diversified and complicated as are the transactions of thirteen centuries, they admit of being reduced to one great system of action, the unity of which must prove the existence of a controlling governor, as the combination of the planetary system glorifies its Creator. In one respect indeed the view of the moral world discovers even a more glorious attestation of the attributes of God. The planet revolves for ever in its appointed orbit; and the noblest triumph of mechanical philosophy is to have ascertained, that its occasional perturbations are all compensated by counteracting causes, and its motion unalterable and undecaying. But man, weak and imperfect though he be, is still progressive: he does not move round for ever in one unvarying path of moral agency: the combinations of his history exhibit, not only the unity of the material system, but the continually advanc-
ing improvement, which belongs to being of a higher order.

And, in a crisis of such severe and general suffering, as that in which it has been our destiny to live, what reflection can be more consolatory, than that the calamities which we witness, and with which we are menaced, are not the wild ravages of ungoverned mortals, controuled and restrained by no superior nature, but, through their agency, the visitations of a gracious being, who even *in his wrath remembers mercy*? The great poet of antiquity, (26) in a passage which I have never read but with admiration, has portrayed in glowing colouring the radiant splendor, which, in a calm and moonlight night, bursts on the baffled gaze, and brings into a sudden day the rocks and promontories. It is thus that I would pour a light from heaven on the dark and troubled scene of human history. And, as the shepherd of the poet rejoiced at the glories, which struck his corporeal sight, so
might we exult at the removal of that dismal gloom, which must enfold all the concerns of this sublunar world, if no persuasion of a providential government should illuminate the prospect.

NOTES.

(1) The whigs appear to have been divided on the two questions, of the American war, and of a parliamentary reform. In regard to the former, the marquis of Rockingham had maintained the pretension of the British government in the declaratory act. In regard to the latter, Mr. Burke separated himself from Mr. Fox in the year 1782, and could only be induced to absent himself from the discussion. Adolphus's history of George 3. v. 3. p. 448.

(2) History of the Politics of Great Britain and France, by Herbert Marsh, D. D.


(4) Among these deputations the most remarkable is that, which was sent by the Constitutional Society of London. One of the deputies prefaced the address of the Society
with a speech, in which he assured the Convention, that innumerable societies, of the same sort, were forming themselves at that moment, in every part of England; that their object was to reform the abuses of government by the most simple means; that it would not be extraordinary, if, in a much less space of time than could be imagined, the French should send addresses of congratulation to a National Convention of England; and that other nations would soon follow the steps of the French in their career of improvement, and rising from their lethargy, would arm themselves for the purpose of claiming the rights of man, with that all-powerful voice which man could not resist. Gifford's Life of Mr. Pitt. vol. 3. p. 278. 8vo.

(5) This has been remarked by the American writer of a Letter on the Genius and Dispositions of the French Government, p. 10, 11. Guibert, he observes, in his Essai de Tactique, predicted, "that the continent would be speedily enslaved, should a nation, with the resources of France, break through the forms and trammels of the civil constitutions of the period; shake off fiscal solicitudes by a general bankruptcy; turn her attention exclusively to military affairs; and organize a regular plan of universal empire." And Sir James Stewart, he adds, supposes, in his Political Economy, b. 2. ch. 13. a case precisely similar, and concludes with the following reflections: "I ask, what combination, among the modern European princes, would carry on a successful war against such a people? What article would be wanting to their subsistence? And what country would defend themselves against the attack of such an enemy? Such a system of political economy,
I readily grant, is not likely to take place: but, if ever it did, would it not effectually dash to pieces the whole fabric of trade and industry, which has been forming for so many years? And would it not quickly oblige every other nation to adopt, as far as possible, a similar conduct, from a principle of self-preservation?"

(6) The invasion of the feudal rights, retained by the German States in Alsace, Franche Comté, Loraine, and the other provinces ceded to Louis the fourteenth, has not been mentioned; because it may be thought that a government, in an unforeseen situation, must possess a paramount right to simplify its arrangements. But it ought to be noticed, that, according to the account given by Mr. Coxe, the representations of the German States drew from the National Assembly of France only a vague and inadequate offer of indemnification in national property, for the rights abrogated in Alsace, while the claims relating to the other provinces were disregarded with a contemptuous silence. And it should also be observed, that, while this discussion was depending, the forcible occupation of Avignon, which, though transferred to the Roman See, had still maintained a nominal connexion with the empire, inflamed the indignation, and confirmed the apprehensions of the German States. The countries of Carpentras and Venaissin, of which Avignon was the capital, originally formed a part of Provence, in the midst of which they were situated, and were sold in the fourteenth century to the popes, by Joanna Queen of Naples, and Countess of Provence. This little district however, having been originally comprised in the Kingdom of Arles, was still considered as a fief of the German Em-
pire: the emperors, as liege lords, ratified the cession made by Joanna, and interposed their protection when it was seized by Louis the fourteenth, and his successor, in their disputes with the papal see; and, at the instance of the emperor, Louis the fifteenth suppressed a work written by M. de Montclair, asserting the right of the kings of France to Avignon and its territory. Coxe's History of the House of Austria, vol. 2. p. 704, 705.

(7) It is highly gratifying that we can trace the history of the conduct of the revolutionary government of France, in a series of American publications, which must be regarded as free at least from the prejudices and the animosities of our own parties. The first consists of the letters signed Pacificus, which were written in the year 1793, on the proclamation of neutrality. In one of these letters the aggressions of France are distinctly enumerated; and it is contended, that the decree, by which the national convention offered its assistance to every people disposed to a revolution, received from the conduct of that assembly a particular application to Great Britain. They were, in the year 1802, published together with the Federalist, and, in the preface, are ascribed to Mr. Hamilton. The next is the treatise on the dispute between the United States and France, addressed, in the year 1797, by Mr. Robert Goodloe Harper to his constituents of South Carolina. From this treatise we learn that Mr. Genet, the first minister sent by France to America, was instructed, in the year 1793, "to excite to the utmost the zeal of the Americans, and induce them, if possible, to make a common cause with France." He indeed
was recalled, in consequence of the indignation excited by his conduct; but what was begun by him, was zealously prosecuted by his successors; and was, in the year 1797, carried to the utmost degree of flagitiousness, which could characterise the conduct of a government. Of this consummation of insulting interference we are informed by the official correspondence laid before the American Congress in the year 1798; in which it is expressly stated, that the American envoys were required, as a preliminary condition for propitiating the government of France, to stipulate, not only for advancing a considerable loan to the public, but also for paying to the directory or ministers a bribe of about fifty thousand pounds sterling. The last in this transatlantic series of historical testimony is the letter, which has recently described the true genius and dispositions of the French government.

(8) The treaty of commerce concluded with the British government in the year 1794, was the first subject of the complaints of that of France. Various allegations were urged on this occasion; but the chief grievance was that the United States had not involved themselves in a contest with Great Britain, by maintaining those new rights of neutral commerce, which the northern powers of Europe had endeavoured to establish. It was at that time the object of the French government to induce the United States to form with it an alliance offensive and defensive, by offering to them an extension of privileges in the commerce of the West Indies. In the progress of the violences of that government, a new and more important subject of contention has since presented itself. The decrees of Berlin and of Milan, which
gave occasion to our own orders of council, have been issued for the manifest purpose of involving in hostility the two commercial nations; the vain expectation of enjoying the commerce of the continent of Europe has been employed to blind the traders of America; and every artifice has been used for persuading the Americans, that the British government is alone the obstacle to their entire gratification.

(9) The author of the letter on the genius and dispositions of the French government, already mentioned.

(10) In the advertisement, prefixed to this lecture, it has been mentioned, that occasional interpositions of the divine providence, disturbing the regular operation of political causes, have not been maintained in any part of the course. But the peculiar adaptation of individual agents to peculiar situations is a distinct consideration. The agent may have been formed by the divine providence for a special purpose; but yet, when introduced into the system, may act agreeably to the ordinary and general rules, which might be expected to direct the conduct of such a being in such circumstances.

(11) The triumphant issue of the operations of Lord Wellington has happily rendered it necessary to remark, that this lecture was read on the fourth day of April.

(12) In the year 1779 the combined fleet of France and Spain cruised in the British channel with an irresistible superiority, though the British fleet was still able to continue at sea: but, in the year 1781, such was the power of this united armament, that the British admiral found it necessary to retire into Torbay, and there await the attack of his enemies.
(13) "It appears from the report delivered to the National Convention by the marine minister, Moige, on the 23d of September, 1792, that even then not less than twenty-one ships of the line, thirty frigates, ten ships armed en flûte, and forty-two smaller ships of war were actually at sea. It appears further from the same report, that thirty-four ships of the line, in addition to the preceding, were in a state to be instantly commissioned, that nineteen more were capable of being refitted, that seven were building, of which three were ready to be launched, and that out of one-and-forty frigates, twenty-three were in such a state of forwardness, that they were capable of being put in immediate commission, beside six which were on the stocks. Such was the naval armament, and such were the preparations, which were made in France, for a still further augmentation of it, at a time when Great Britain had only sixteen thousand sailors and marines in pay, which were hardly sufficient to man even twelve ships of the line, with the proportionate number of frigates, sloops, and cutters." Marsh's history of the Politics of Great Britain and France, vol. 1. 188—190.

(14) No. VII. August, 1810, p. 240 &c. Literary Reviews have now become the vehicles of political essays, of which many are highly valuable. In the French revolution a newspaper was the great organ of political agitation. It seems to be at once creditable to the character, and salutary to the interest of a nation, that its policy should be discussed rather in those more deliberate and more informed publications.

(15) In the Review, which has been just quoted, it has been remarked, that Brissot, in his address to his constituents,
though he condemns the famous decree of the 19th of November, which proposed to encourage universal rebellion, is yet so far from disclaiming the principle itself, that he vehemently censures the anarchists, for not having better attended to it in their foreign policy, p. 243. Note.

(16) So striking was the operation of the causes, which shortened those days, that Titus himself confessed, that it was God who deprived the Jews of their fortresses. Joseph. de bello Iud. I. 6. c. 9. s. 1.

(17) In regard to the policy of Alexander it may be sufficient to quote the testimony of Dr. Robertson. "The wild sallies of passion," says this historian, "the indecent excesses of intemperance, and the ostentatious displays of vanity, too frequent in the conduct of this extraordinary man, have so degraded his character, that the pre-eminence of his merit, either as a conqueror, a politician, or a legislator, has seldom been justly estimated. The subject of my present enquiry (the historical disquisition concerning ancient India) leads me to consider his operations only in one light, but it will enable me to exhibit a striking view of the grandeur and extent of his plans."—"With such admirable discernment was the situation of it chosen, that Alexandria soon became the greatest trading city in the ancient world; and, notwithstanding many successive revolutions in empire, continued during eighteen centuries, to be the chief seat of commerce with India." p. 15. Lond. 1799.

(18) Burnet has told us, in his life of the famous lord chief justice Hale, the historian of the common law, that he often said, that the true grounds and reasons of law were so well delivered in the Digest, that a man never could understand
law as a science, so well as by seeking it there; and therefore lamented much, that it was so little studied in England. Quoted in Bever's history of the Legal Polity of the Roman State. Introd. p. 111. note. Lond. 1781, And Lord Holt has remarked, that the laws of all nations are doubtless raised out of the ruins of the civil law, as all governments are sprung out of the ruins of the Roman empire. 12 Mod. 482. To these professional testimonies may be added the philosophical attestation of Leibnitz, who has declared, that he knew nothing which approached so near to the method and precision of geometry, as the Roman law. Op. tom. 4. partis 3. p. 254. Gen. 1768.

(*) Of the commercial code, the author of the letter on the genius and dispositions of the French government, thus speaks, p. 216: "the provisions of this code descend to the most minute details, and are in many parts highly objectionable: they are, however, chiefly drawn from the *Ordonnance* of one thousand six hundred and sixty-eight, and have the merit of a better method, and greater perspicuity." The xxxiii No. of the Edinburgh Review has indeed pronounced an elaborate eulogy on the code of procedure in criminal cases, which seems to demand some attention, not however so much on account of the merit of the French system, as because it gives an unauthorised representation of the common law of England and Ireland, a subject on which a Scotch reviewer might have suspected that he was not sufficiently informed. But it may be collected even from this eulogy, that the French system of criminal procedure, while it affects to borrow from our government the liberal principles of its jurisprudence, is really a system of inqui-
atorial police extended over an empire. For this purpose
the Procureur Imperial is expressly held responsible to the
government, and is deemed "to deserve reproach, where-
soever there is reason to complain of frequent infractions of
the social order, in the place where his functions are
exercised." The office of the English grand jury is then
exercised, not by the principal proprietors of the district,
but by a chamber of judges; and, if a single member of this
chamber be adverse to the discharge of the accused person,
in a case of importance, he is referred to another court, that
the accusation may undergo another enquiry.

But the reviewer, not content with pointing out what ap-
ppeared to him to be meritorious in the French system, has,
in very unmeasured language, animadverted on the ancient
law of England. Perhaps, however, he may feel some de-
ference for the testimony, which has been given by Sir James
Mackintosh, in his eloquent discourse on the study of the
law of nature and nations. "As to the law of criminal pro-
ceeding," says this able writer, "my labour will be very
easy; for on that subject an English lawyer, if he were to
delineate the model of perfection, would find that, with few
exceptions, he had transcribed the institutions of his own
country." Yet it is of such institutions that this reviewer
has spoken, when he has talked of "the wretched laws of
a wretched age!"—A grand objection is that the criminal code
of England is unwritten law. Blackstone however might
have informed him, that the common law is therefore only
termed, in technical language, an unwritten law, because its
original institution and authority is not any where recorded,
as in an act of parliament; and that the legal customs, of
which it is composed, may be found, not only in the reports of judicial decisions, but in formal treatises of high and respected antiquity. Another objection is made to the grand jury, as uselessly subjecting a man to a double trial. The answer is that a man is so far from being tried at all by a grand jury, that this tribunal would not receive his defence, as not belonging to their jurisdiction; nor can the sentimental observation be admitted, that to an innocent man it is a blessing to be subjected to a public trial, rather than that a number of his fellow-citizens should determine, whether an accusation preferred against him were deserving of a serious enquiry. A third objection is that only one vague and general question, guilty or not guilty, is by the English law submitted to the jury. Here again Blackstone furnishes the reply, observing that the verdict may be either general, guilty or not guilty; or special, setting forth all the circumstances of the case, and praying the judgment of the court. The unanimity required of our juries is also a subject of reprehension: but it must at least be admitted, that it is a regulation favourable to the accused; and it is known that the hardship, which in theory it may seem to impose, is in practice materially mitigated.

In this comparison the reviewer has entirely overlooked the important principle of the independence of the judges, which certainly can form no part of the system of the French empire. He has indeed contended, that the French juries are at least as independent as our own. But has he forgotten, that, according to our law, the accused person may, in the first place, challenge the whole array of the sheriff; and that he enjoys afterwards the power of challenging, not only a
considerable, though a limited number, without assigning any reason, but as many more as he can assign any satisfactory reason for rejecting? The sheriff is indeed nominated by the crown, as well as the prefect of the French government. Every one however, who knows the working of our popular constitution, must be sensible, how effectually the appointment of sheriffs is, among us, controuled by the influence of the country-gentlemen, and what a practical impossibility it is, that such officers should be generally rendered the mere creatures of the court. In the case of special juries the reviewer is more particularly erroneous. The officer, who in this case takes the place of the sheriff, is strictly independent, or at least a deputy accountable only to an independent principal; and the jury is formed with the concurrence of the parties, out of the general list of the freeholders, which is only held by the officer, as he has received it from the sheriff.

The literary journal, on which these remarks have been made, has deserved well of the public, by exciting a very considerable degree of intellectual activity, and by furnishing several dissertations of very superior merit. This criticism, it must however be contended, is unworthy of the general spirit and character of the work.

(20) The letter on the genius and dispositions of the French government affords an abundant illustration of this statement, p. 209. &c. It may be sufficient here to quote from that work, the declaration made by the French ruler to a deputation of merchants at Hamburgh, that "he detested commerce and all its concerns." p. 219.

(21) The professors of the National Institute of France were enjoined by an imperial rescript, that none should at-
tain a greater knowledge of the Latin language, than should be sufficient for translating the commentaries of Caesar, nor of the Greek, than should be necessary for explaining the terms of science. An order has since been issued, that no person should be considered as disqualified for admission into learned societies, by his ignorance of the classical languages of antiquity; and that physicians should write their prescriptions in that of France. The first number of the American Review, recently published, has accordingly described the state of literature in France, as entirely sunk under the baleful influence of a jealous despotism, p. 138. That publication has indeed admitted, p. 135, that this influence has not yet been productive of any visible injury to the physical and mathematical classes of the Institute: but a philosophical English traveller, who has lately returned from the continent, has reported, that all learning is declining, that which at present subsists, being but the residue of the old stock.

(22) In an address to the Cheriffs, Imans, and Orators of the Mosque, Bonaparte enjoined them to inculcate into the minds of the people, that those who became his enemies, should find no refuge either in this world or in the next. "Is there a man so blind," says he, "as not to see, that all my operations are conducted by destiny? Instruct the inhabitants, that ever since the world has existed, it was written, that after having overcome the enemies of Islamism, and destroyed the cross, I should come from the furthest parts of the West to fulfil the task, which has been imposed upon me. Make them see, that in the second book of the Koran, in more than twenty passages, that which has happened, was foreseen, and that which shall take place, has also been ex-
plained: let those then, whom the fear of our arms alone prevents from pronouncing imprecations, now change their dispositions; for, in offering prayers to heaven against us, they solicit their own condemnation: let the true believers then present vows for our success. I could call to account each individual among you for the most secret sentiments of his heart; for I know every thing, even that which you never communicated to any person; and the day will come, when all the world shall witness, that, as I act in consequence of orders from above, human efforts are of no avail against me." Stephens's history of the Wars of the French Revolution. vol. 2. p. 401, 2. On this subject there is the following remarkable passage in the first number of the American Review, p. 164. "We observe that numerous dissertations have been warmly commended, and industriously circulated throughout the empire, the object of which is to show the beneficial influence, that the enterprise of Mahomet might have had upon the world, if accidental obstacles had not counteracted its natural tendency. The following was the prize-question of the Institute for the year 1809—To examine what was, during the three first ages of the Hegira, the influence of Mahometanism over the intellect, the manners, and the government of the nations, among whom it was established—To institute comparisons unfavourable to the christian system appears to have been the purport of nearly all the essays, to which this question gave birth."

(23) It is recorded in M'Artburs Financial and Political Facts, p. 263, that, in the first year of the present century, the British fleet consisted of 197 sail of the line, including those in commission, in ordinary, and building, besides 27
ships of fifty guns, 246 frigates, 315 sloops, fire-ships, &c., making a total of 815 ships and vessels of war.

(24) This hope is strengthened by the representations contained in the Political and Literary Review, lately commenced in the United States.

(25) On this subject we find some curious information in the Review, mentioned in the preceding note. It acquaints us (No. I. p. 159.) that an historical essay was lately published in Paris, "upon the temporal power of the popes, upon the abuse which they have made of their spiritual ministry, upon the wars which they have declared against sovereigns, and particularly against those who have enjoyed a preponderance in Italy." And it also informs us, p. 162, that the French critics speak of this work, as co-operating with the views of the government; and say, that "those plans which the genius of letters dared only to suggest in the age of philosophy, are now adopted, executed, and extended by the genius of victory." It adds, p. 163, that Bonaparte, in the replies which he made to some addresses on the occasion of his marriage, openly declared himself against the papal power, and even uttered severe invectives against the Roman Catholic religion in general. It appears too, p. 164, that, by the provisions of the new penal code, the French clergy are prohibited, under penalties extending to banishment, from having any intercourse, upon religious matters, with a foreign court or power, unless the sanction of the imperial minister, charged with the superintendence of public worship, should have been previously obtained.

(27) Iliad, b. 8. l. 551, &c. Of this beautiful passage perhaps the best translation is the humble one of Clarke, because it is literal. His *caelitus aperitur immensus aether* seems most nearly to express the idea of the original. Yet this too appears to be defective, the word *aσπερ*; signifying, not that which is immense, but that which the eye cannot follow. There was once a fashion of discovering in the poems of Homer the principles of all arts and sciences. Agreeably to this fashion, the word should be considered as referring to the magnificent *sounding-line* of Herschell (Phil. Trans. vol. 75. p. 245.) with which he has endeavoured to fathom the spaces beyond the *nebula* of the solar system. No English word corresponding to the Greek epithet, an attempt has been made, in the lecture, to express the idea indirectly by the epithet *baffled*, applied to the spectator. Heyne is of opinion, that the verse in which this term occurs, and the preceding, might be expunged, as not strictly belonging to the simile: *aliunde illati abesse jubeantur!*

FINIS.