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Examination of Chattellux

1788

A
CRITICAL EXAMINATION
OF THE
MARQUIS de CHATELLUX'S
TRAVELS,
IN
NORTH AMERICA,
IN A
LETTER

ADDRESSED TO THE

MARQUIS;

PRINCIPALLY INTENDED AS A REFUTA-
TION OF HIS OPINIONS CON-
CERNING THE
QUAKERS, THE NEGROES, THE PEOPLE,

AND

MANKIND.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

OF

J. P. BRISSOT DE WARVILLE,

WITH

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS


OF THE

AUTHOR.

Je suis toujours pour les perscutés.

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A
CRITICAL EXAMINATION
OF THE
MARQUIS DE CHATELLUX'S
TRAVELS
IN
NORTH-AMERICA.



S I R,

I TAKE the earliest opportunity of letting you know, how much I have suffered by the perusal of your travels, and I think it necessary to make this declaration public. I have a very cogent reason for so doing. They, in many places, contain errors, and, I will venture to say, a poison, which, under your name, will have a rapid circulation; and to which we cannot be too hasty in applying an antidote.

A poison! You may start at the expression; but I can neither suppress or soften it, as it is so precisely characteristic of your opinions respecting the Quakers, the Negroes, and the People.

In vilifying the Quakers, you may prevent the good effects of their pious example. In refusing the name of men to the Negroes, you give your sanction to the treating them like beasts of burthen, if not to the spilling of their blood; and you hinder the effects of that philosophical commotion, which will no doubt procure their general emancipation. In making the People contemptible, you invite their oppressors to rivet their chains. These are matters of great

importance.—They will justify me to the public, for having taken up my pen in so precipitate a manner; they will justify me, even in your eyes, for having used it against yourself: your reason will undoubtedly plead for me, in opposition to your feelings, and you will pardon me for having published truths, perhaps disagreeable ones for you, when I shall have convinced you, that they are of public utility, and not to be suppressed. *Amicus Plato sed magis amica veritas*. This should be the motto of every writer who has really the public good at heart.

I do not mean, in this place, to criticise your book throughout.—Let the journalists point out the *beauties* of your style.—My business is to obviate the mischievous tendency of your work, without paying any attention to the elegance of the language. I should, indeed, have been better pleased, if you had not shewn so much uneasiness about getting a bad supper, or so much pleasure from having made a good one; and could have dispensed with the exact detail you have given us of every dish; for it is not the journal of an Apicius, but that of a philosopher and statesman which we expect to read, when we see the name of the author of *La Felicité Publique** in the title page.—I should have been better pleased if your observations had not been confined to taverns, and if you had not sacrificed our American friends to the pleasure of making jests.—Alas! what will be the opinion of those whom you have thus offended, when they read your book—and how can we expect a friendly reception from them, when they find their secrets betrayed, and the unreserved effusions of the heart ridiculed by a man decorated with so many titles? What confidence will they now place in an obscure Frenchman? On his first approach, the American will exclaim—are you also come to spy out our follies, and publish them to Europe?

* An excellent treatise, (allowing for a few errors,) attributed to the MARQUIS de CHATELLU, and which I have commended in several of my writings.

It would have been satisfactory to have seen more penetration in your enquiries concerning the effects of the different political constitutions of America.— I could have wished for some account of the number of criminals; of the crimes which are most frequent; of the difference of morals in the cities, in the country, and in the newly settled parts; of the state of the finances, &c. and I should also have been better pleased, if, instead of railing at democracies, you had summed up grievances and well attested facts.— But this is not a proper place for the discussion of these interesting subjects.

The principal charges, I bring against you, may be reduced to three :

I. You have calumniated and ridiculed the respectable sect of Quakers.

II. You have vilified the Negroes.

III. You have vilified Mankind and the People.

These are the three general charges against you, which I now lay before the tribunal of the Public.— After having discussed them, I shall add some reflections on several other subjects you have treated of, which appear to me equally susceptible of censure.

In making this examination, I shall, first of all, quote your opinions and assertions, and then endeavour to refute them.

I begin with the article concerning the Quakers.

VINDICATION of the QUAKERS.

‘ Instead of their company, we had that of Mr. Benezet, an old Quaker, whose short stature, and low, *mean* figure, formed a *perfect* contrast to Mr. Pendleton’s. This Mr. Benezet may be looked on rather as a model of what the Quakers ought to be than as a specimen of what they are.—As his only object was the good of others, his charity and generosity made him greatly respected in those more happy times, when a citizen derived all his honor from his virtues. Now the din of arms has drowned the sighs of charity, and the love of our

‘ fellow creatures yields to patriotism. Yet Mr. Bene-
 ‘ zet still continues in the practice of doing good. He
 ‘ came to get some information from me, on the means
 ‘ lately found out in France, of restoring drowned per-
 ‘ sons to life. I promised, not only to send him an
 ‘ account of the methods used in those cases, when I
 ‘ returned to Newport, but also to procure him one
 ‘ of the boxes which our government has ordered to
 ‘ be placed at every sea-port town. We soon got bet-
 ‘ ter acquainted; and, speaking of the misfortunes of
 ‘ war, he said to me,—My Friend, I know thou art a
 ‘ man of letters, and a member of the French academy.
 ‘ Several good things have lately been written by men
 ‘ of letters; they have attacked errors and prejudices,
 ‘ and especially intolerance: Will not they try to
 ‘ give men a distaste for war, and make them live to-
 ‘ gether like friends and brethren? Thou art right,
 ‘ said I, in expecting something from the progress of
 ‘ philosophical knowledge. Several active hands are
 ‘ now at work upon the great edifice of public good;
 ‘ but it will be to no purpose for them to finish any
 ‘ part of it, while the foundation is wanting, and
 ‘ this foundation is, as thou hast said, a general
 ‘ peace. As to intolerance and persecution, it is true,
 ‘ that those two enemies of mankind are not yet suf-
 ‘ ficiently chained down; but let me whisper a word
 ‘ in thy ear, the full meaning of which thou wilt not
 ‘ perhaps comprehend, though thou art well ac-
 ‘ quainted with the French language. They are no
 ‘ longer *fashionable*; and, I should even think, they
 ‘ were nearly *out of date*, were it not for some little
 ‘ matters thou art unacquainted with: which is, that
 ‘ those who attack them are sometimes imprisoned,
 ‘ while their defenders are rewarded with livings of
 ‘ an hundred thousand livres a year. An hundred
 ‘ thousand livres a year! cries Benezet, why, with
 ‘ that they might build hospitals, and set up manu-
 ‘ factories; and, to be sure, that’s what they do with
 ‘ their money. No, my friend, said I, persecution
 ‘ must be paid for; and yet, I must say, the pay is

‘ but mean, and the highest price given by the richest
 ‘ persecutor, is no more than one thousand, or
 ‘ twelve hundred livres a year, to some satirical poets,
 ‘ or writers of journals, who are enemies to literature,
 ‘ and whose works are much read, tho’ they
 ‘ have but a dull sale. Friend, says the Quaker to
 ‘ me, this persecution is a strange thing; I can hardly
 ‘ believe what has happened to myself. My father
 ‘ was a Frenchman born, and so am I. It is
 ‘ now about sixty years since he was obliged to seek
 ‘ an asylum in England, carrying with him his children,
 ‘ the only treasures which he could save in his
 ‘ misfortunes. Justice, or what is called so in thy
 ‘ country, had him hung in effigy, because he explained
 ‘ the Gospel in a different way from your priests.
 ‘ The English clergy gave my father but little more
 ‘ satisfaction, so that he wished to get away
 ‘ from all hierarchy, and came to settle in this country,
 ‘ where I have lived very happily until the breaking
 ‘ out of the war. I have long since forgotten all the
 ‘ persecutions my family have undergone. I love thy
 ‘ nation, because it is a mild and a feeling one; and
 ‘ for thee, my friend, I know thou dost every thing
 ‘ in thy power to serve thy fellow creatures. When
 ‘ thou returnest to Europe, get thy brethren to assist
 ‘ thee:—and let me now recommend our friends in
 ‘ Rhode-Island to thy attention. He then named all
 ‘ the Quakers who live in that state, and are pretty
 ‘ numerous; and recommended them to my care. At
 ‘ parting, he asked leave to send me some pamphlets
 ‘ of his own *manufacturing*, written chiefly in
 ‘ defence of his sect. I assured him, *it would give
 ‘ me great pleasure to read them*; and he did not fail
 ‘ to send them next morning.

‘ Of whatever sect a man, glowing with zeal and
 ‘ love for his fellow creatures, may be, he is most
 ‘ undoubtedly a respectable being; but, I confess, I
 ‘ cannot bestow on this sect in general, the esteem
 ‘ which some individuals of it are entitled to. The
 ‘ law, which many of them follow, of not saying

' you, nor *fir*, is far from giving them an air of plainness
 ' or candor. It is perhaps to make up for this clown-
 ' ishness, that they often speak in a *whining, insinuat-*
 ' *ing* tone, which is perfectly *jesuitical*. Their con-
 ' duct too, is quite of a piece with their language.
 ' Concealing *their indifference for the public good*, un-
 ' der the appearance of religion, they are sparing
 ' of blood, it is true, and *especially of their own*; they
 ' are mere sharpers at *cheating* both parties out of
 ' their money, and that *without a blush*, or the least
 ' regard to what may be thought of them. It is a
 ' received maxim in trade, that they are not to be
 ' trusted. This opinion is a just one, and time will
 ' more and more shew the propriety of it.

' Indeed, nothing can be more dangerous than en-
 ' thusiasm in its decline; for hypocrisy is the only
 ' substitute that can be found for it. This monster,
 ' so well known in Europe, gains but too much ground
 ' in every religious sect.

' On Sunday, the 10th, I determined to *take a turn*
 ' *thro' the churches, and study the different modes of wor-*
 ' *ship*. Unfortunately for me, the several sects, who
 ' agree in nothing else, have fixed on the same hour for
 ' assembling their congregations; so that I could only go
 ' to the Quaker's meeting-house in the morning, and to
 ' the church of England in the afternoon. The Qua-
 ' ker's meeting is a square room, in every part of which,
 ' and parallel to the four walls, are benches and
 ' desks, so that they sit opposite to one another;
 ' without altar or pulpit to fix their attention. When
 ' they are met, some one of their elders makes an *ex-*
 ' *tempore* prayer, just what comes into his head; they
 ' are then silent, 'till some man or woman is inspired,
 ' and gets up to speak. Travellers must be believed
 ' on their words, let the account they give be ever
 ' so extraordinary. Like Ariosto, I shall relate pro-
 ' digies—*dirò maraviglia*. It is nevertheless true,
 ' that a woman *held her tongue* just as I came in. A
 ' man took her place, and spoke *like a blockhead on in-*
 ' *ternal grace, the illumination of the Spirit, and all the*

‘ other tenets of his sect, which he had over and over again, without attempting to explain any thing. He at length got to the end of his sermon, to the great joy of his brethren and sisters, who all appeared absent and tired out. After seven or eight minutes silence, an old man got on his knees, and retailed us out a very *insipid* prayer, after which they broke up the meeting.

‘ On leaving this gloomy and clownish meeting, the service of the church of England, with the music and ornaments, seemed like an *opera*. An handsome pulpit, placed before a fine organ, a well-dressed minister in the pulpit, reading, speaking, and singing, with a grace perfectly theatrical; the young women, from the pit and boxes, joining him with their melodious voices; a soft and agreeable singing, interrupted by some excellent airs on the organ; all this, compared to the worship of the Quakers, Anabaptists, and Presbyterians, seemed rather a little Paradise, than the road to Paradise. However, by reflecting on so many different sects, some of whom are rigid, and some trifling, but every one imperious and narrow, one is lead to believe, that all mankind read the great book of nature, as * *Montauciel* read his own; where, for “*vous etes un blanc bec*”—he always read, “*trompette blessée*.” It is a thousand to one that he guesses the meaning of a single line, as he cannot even spell; but should such an one come to you for assistance, give him none. You had better leave him to enjoy his mistake, than cut one another’s throats.’

This is the most violent attack in your travels against the Quakers. In other parts you have several things against them, but none worth mentioning.

Before entering into the particulars which the ex-

* *Montauciel* is the name of an ignorant soldier, one of the characters in the *Desferter*, a comic opera. He engages the *Desferter* to teach him to read. He gets a bit of paper in his hand, on which the words, *vous etes un blanc bec*, are written, and on spelling the letters, he makes out *trompette blessée*. The *Desferter* shews him his mistake, and the word *blanc bec* (*simpleton*) becomes the source of altercation.

amination of your satire requires, I shall make bold to ask you, Sir, what facts, books, or men, have authorised you to condemn this sect so hastily? Have you known a great number, or the generality of Quakers? Have you lived a long time in habits of intimacy with them? Can you form a judgment of them all, and know the worth of the whole society, from having been at one or two of their meetings? or from having conversed with one or two of them in a hasty manner? or from having been introduced to one who did not think fit to look at you? When you went into that religious meeting, where you formed a judgment of the discourse, or prayer which you heard, were you in a proper state of mind for the sincere investigation of truth? Had you no prejudices against the Quakers? and your theatrical knowledge too, which brought ridicule into your head, this ridicule which is so powerful an argument for a French Man; did not this same knowledge spread a veil over your mind—Have you not been prejudiced against the Quakers by Voltaire, who has by turns praised them, and endeavoured to make them appear ridiculous, though he knew but little of them? And indeed, who would not at first sight, regard your testimony as suspicious, and your judgment as partial, on considering your moral and religious opinions, your character of academician, soldier and man of quality, that three fold character, which this society so justly detest.

And why have you, in forming a judgment of them, abandoned those principles by which our judgment should ever be directed—We have no right to censure any one, unless we have either ourselves detected him violating the laws of honour and probity, or upon the authentic and impartial testimony of others on his crime. Vague reports ought never to have any weight.

To condemn a whole body of men at once, a society of long standing, to accuse them of cheating, of selfishness, and hypocrisy, requires a series of well

attested facts, the truth of which is of the greater consequence, as the charges are serious, and involve so many people in them.

Thus, should any one charge the Catholics with having been persecutors, they might prove it by their Autos-da-fé, their inquisition, Saint Bartholomew's day, the Irish massacre, &c. To prove that the Puritans of former times were persecutors, we need only mention the tragical scenes which were acted during the revolution of 1650 in England, and the persecutions they excited in the new world.—To prove the ambitious; intriguing and persecuting spirit of the Jesuits, we have only to refer to their unceasing manœuvres in England and France, the destruction of Port-Royal, and the many lettres de cachet, which they have made use of to destroy, in secret prisons, a crowd of victims, whose only fault was a different way of thinking—These are facts well attested.

But have you, Sir, any such facts to allege against the Quakers? not a single one—So far from that, you produce none but what are in their favour—For I shall now and then have the satisfaction of making use of your own words to refute you.

But it is because you bring no positive charge of any crime against the Quakers; it is because you judge them only by hear-say and vague reports, that I conclude you have no proof of the vices and crimes you reproach them with; and that your judgment of them is unjust.

I will not, however, confine myself to this general method of reasoning, but will follow you step by step— I believe your reflections on the Quakers may be reduced to three principle heads; they affect

Either their moral and private conduct,

Their religious tenets,

Or their civil principles—

I shall now proceed to shew how unjustly you have treated them in these three different respects.

Of the MORAL and PRIVATE CONDUCT of the QUAKERS.

I have been acquainted with many Quakers in Lon-

don—I have endeavoured to become acquainted with their principles, and have looked on it as my duty to pay them the following public tribute of esteem, in a work,* written at a time when I wished to serve my countrymen, by giving them a faithful account of that Island, which deserves our imitation, rather than our jealousy; in a work, wherein, as a writer of a foreign journal has well observed, my design was to introduce good principles in an English dress. †

‘ Simplicity, candor and honesty, characterized their words and actions; they were not full of professions, but sincere; they were not polished, but humane; they had no wit—none of that wit so essential in France, and which there supplies the place of every thing else; but they possessed good sense, sound judgments, upright hearts and honest souls; in a word, if I were to seek for society, it should be amongst the Quakers; if I sought for amusement, I would have recourse to my own countrymen—And their women too, I shall be asked, what can be said of them? They are just what women should be every where, faithful to their husbands, affectionate to their children, careful and frugal in their domestic economy, plain in their dress, § and above all, they are neither folicitous to please any other individual, nor to attract the public attention. As they make no outward shew, they pay a greater regard to the cultivation of their minds—This simplicity of manners is yet observable in some other countries; the Arabs, for example, even now, follow

* See Vol. 2nd. No. 4, Page 196, of the *Journal du Lycée de Londres, ou Tableau des Sciences & des Arts*, a Work published in England in 1784, by the Author of this book.

† See No. 11, of the *Correspondence Litteraire Secrette*, for 1785, a foreign Publication, which is not spoilt by the Pen of the Censor Royal, and contains many interesting anecdotes and striking Articles, favourable to the cause of humanity.

§ I should have added, well informed in the principles of morality and religion. I knew a young woman of this society, who possessed a wonderful solidity of thought, and firmness of character; I have seen few countenances in which morality was so strongly marked. It was owing in her, to an internal conviction; to that conviction, which is the effect of the most serious enquiry.

‘ the same wandering lives as the first Patriarchs. It
 ‘ cannot be too often repeated, that such manners as
 ‘ these are productive of domestic economy, the hap-
 ‘ piness of families, and public virtues—But *we* have
 ‘ renounced them, diseased unhappy wretches as we
 ‘ are, with all our civilization and politeness—And yet
 ‘ what man amongst us is happy, but he who has the
 ‘ courage to live as nature directs, as the good of
 ‘ past ages have lived, who are so politely ridiculed
 ‘ by the wits of the present day—*Si ad naturam vives,*
 ‘ says Seneca, *nunquam eris pauper, si ad opinionem*
 ‘ *nunquam dives*—If thy life is regulated by nature,
 ‘ says Seneca, thou wilt never be poor, if by the opi-
 ‘ nions of others, thou wilt never be rich.’

I have not the presumption to suppose that my single testimony will be preferred to yours—But how many others * could I bring in support of my own. I shall select one, which is striking and decisive; it is that of the sentimental author of the American farmer’s letters—You as well as myself, are personally acquainted with him, and you know too, that his candor, goodness of heart, and disposition, entitle him to our confidence; I am united to him by the tenderest ties of friendship, and a great similarity of sentiment; but, I mean not to be swayed by friendship, while I am considering the weight

* See l’ *Histoire de l’ Etablissement des Européens dans les Indes*, at the article *Pennsylvania*.

See also the translation of the *Pennsylvania Farmer’s* letters to the inhabitants of North-America; an excellent work (of a different nature from *St. John de Crevecoeur’s*) which was published the beginning of the troubles in America by Mr. Dickinson, who was a principal character in the revolution, and lately President of the Council of Pennsylvania. We owe the translation of this work to the celebrated Turgot, who had a high opinion of it: It was published at Paris in 1769, and although it contained many important political truths, yet no impression was made by it.

See further on this subject, the following works.

A small Pamphlet by Anthony Benezet, on the settlement of the Quakers in America. A Sermon preached by Dr. Priestly, on the abolition of the Slave trade.

Several of the articles in *Voltaire’s Questions on the Encyclopedia*.

Some considerations on the Test-Law of Pennsylvania, by an Author of great merit, who is no Quaker.

which is due to his testimony. He lived for a long time in America, and lived with Quakers; he has been intimate with them, has attended to, and maturely considered their behaviour in civil life, and his opinion of them is wholly different from yours†— With what warmth does he praise the simple and cordial hospitality he met with in their houses, and the peace and happiness which reigned there—“*Every thing there is done in silence, and with cheerfulness*.” How does he praise the good sense, the sagacity, the temperance, the softness and the education of their women. ‘ They are generally, says he, shining without being showy, solid without pedantry, the enemies of levity, trifles and affectation; from reading good books in their early youth, their conversation is more interesting than is often met with, and they acquire a foundation of solid learning, which has often surprised me—They are remarkable, not only for the simplicity of their dress, but also for the extreme neatness of their houses, and of every thing about them—Silence and modesty, a peculiar manner of ordering their servants and inferiors, an uniform, tranquil behaviour, seem to constitute the general character of these good people.’

And who has not read his interesting visit to the botanist Bartram, the affecting anecdote of the emancipation of Warner Mifflin’s Negro, and the account of his bold errand to general Howe? who has not eagerly seized on all those recitals which paint so well the very soul of the Quakers, and lay open their principles to us? What reader so frozen-hearted as not to be moved, affected, transported into America, in raptures with the patriarchal life? What reader but will indulge himself in these delightful reveries, and wish to become, like them, good, simple, and the child of nature? What reader, in a word, but has felt himself inclined to respect them as the most moral, edifying and pious, of all religious sects?

† See the American Farmer’s Letters, Vol. 1st. from page 137, to 197, and the anecdote in the Preface.

And you, Sir, wish to destroy this enchantment—By your silence you contradict all I have said. Cruel man! If it was an illusion, how could you wish to undeceive us? It was dear to us, as it served to increase the consolation of the good, and the remorse of the wicked—But no, it is no illusion—they are truths, they are facts, which you are combating; you who have seen America only in her camps, amidst the din of arms, and in one of those violent revolutions, where man, thrown out of his sphere, is no longer himself, and can neither form a right judgment of things, nor is he a proper subject for the judgment of others; you who have obtained your knowledge of America only by flying through it, by stopping at taverns, and perhaps now and then going to a ball, or tea-party; you, to contradict a native of America, a farmer who gives his opinion, after twenty-five years of observations, made at his leisure in the midst of peace, confidence and friendship!

And what are the weapons you make use of? European and national prejudices. You have no facts on your side, and this respectable man has many; they are well authenticated, and the names he mentions well known. He quotes a Benezet, a Mifflin, a Bartram, and you, with all your talking of hypocrites and cheats, you name nobody. How then can we give credit to your assertions?

In my opinion you deserve a very severe reproof for such conduct—When one author attacks the sentiments of another, he should quote him, name him, and appeal to the public decision: Nothing but the despicable character of our opponent can excuse such an omission—Now, you have published opinions and assertions, directly in contradiction to those of St. John de Crevecoeur, and you have not said a single syllable of him, nor of his book; a book too which has engaged the public attention, and yet you have read it.—You well know how much the author is esteemed in America, and you yourself have expressed your personal esteem for him. Since you attack, not merely

his opinions, but his narrations and his facts; common politeness, attention and respect for the public, did then, and still do, require, that you give your reasons for not mentioning him, and for differing from him in sentiment.

Who then shall we give credit to, concerning the Quakers? to St. John de Crevecœur, or to the Marquis de Chatellux? one praises, the other traduces them: these are questions I have often heard, and which you ought to have prevented; but by not mentioning this author's name, nor his book, you have thrown the public into a state of uncertainty on these points.

I know very well, that this treacherous, jesuitical silence, which Academicians and men of the world are so well acquainted with, is honored with the name of consideration and respect. The means of ruining a public character, by general remarks, or by not saying any thing at all of him, is a secret many are well acquainted with; but believe me, this cowardly practice of our literary aristocracy, in no-wise becomes you. The motto of every honest writer should be, *When I attack any one, I do it from motives of duty, and do it openly.*

The public cannot long remain in the state of uncertainty you have thrown them into, if they will but attend to the arguments I have already brought to controvert your opinions, and to those I shall hereafter produce. The difference in your manner of writing is against you. If I were even unacquainted with St. John de Crevecœur, if I had not been on the most intimate footing with him, I could give my judgment after having read over both your books; his is a work of the heart, your's shews that you have a great deal of wit; but republicans, pure moralists, such as the Quakers, must be judged by the heart; their reputation will receive no shock from all the art you have made use of to injure them.

I shall now begin to follow you step by step.

The law which you say, *many* of them observe, of saying neither *You*, nor *Sir*, is far from giving them

an *air* of simplicity and candor. This is not the custom of *many*, but of *all* the society.

You speak of an *air*, as if the Quakers assumed any *airs*; as if their plainness was but affectation. They are much above it; the plainness of their language consists in renouncing those empty forms, those ridiculous compliments and fashionable falsehoods which French politeness requires; it is on this plainness the Quakers value themselves; they do not tell a stranger that they are charmed to see him; they keep silence at the first interview, and wait for an opportunity of forming a judgment; they do not squeeze the hand of a man whom they despise; they do not bow to a fine suit of clothes, a cross, or a red or blue ribband; they do not pay court to a minister, who is detested by the nation—If they *thee* and *thou* every body, it is because they believe all men are equal; are not these sufficient reasons for a Philosopher?

The undaunted manner in which they have supported this custom at court, and at the bar; that boldness which has constrained those in authority to give way to them, will not even this entitle them to your praise? For admitting with you, that it is a matter of indifference to say *you* or *thou* to a single person, yet it must be of importance, to have a character, and to possess a degree of firmness, of that unshaken firmness, which is so hateful to oppressors, because they dread the consequences of it; and, it matters not, that this firmness appears in small things, and trifling circumstances; for there is no doubt, but it will be called forth with greater energy, on more important occasions. Now, the persecutions which the Quakers have undergone, for not giving up their *Thee* and *Thou*, shew a greatness of character, and of consequence a superiority over the rest of mankind, which they have ever sustained, when their civil or religious principles have been attacked by government. But after all, as to this custom of theirs, which you find so much fault with, let us see whether they or the men of the world are in the right: since *You* takes in several persons, why make use of it to one

only? adulation first invented this corrupt practice; and pride and baseness of soul have brought it into general use: The Quakers wish to restore the customs of propriety, and what objections can you make to them? must they limp because you are not strong enough to walk upright?

If our self-conceited literati, and would-be philosophers, had really any philosophy about them, would not they imitate the Quakers? Would they not renounce those mean ceremonies, which show the slavishness and falshood of mankind? Would they not instead of ridiculing the Quakers, endeavour, like them to exalt human nature, and compel the great to believe that the lowest of their fellow creatures is their equal: This was the conduct of Diogenes, the hero of our Academicians, whose example however they will not follow; Diogenes in this respect acted like a true Quaker, that is to say, like a wise man, who knew the dignity of man, and the insignificance of those distinctions which we meet with in civil life.

And I would be glad to know too, what meaning you affix to the word *candor*, which you say the Quakers make use of as a blind? To have *candor*, is to speak unreservedly from the very heart, which must be pure for such a purpose—To have *candor* is to speak what you think, and to pay the strictest attention to truth. This is the general character of the Quakers, and it is a character they have obtained by the sacrifice of their lives.

But you think very differently; for you charge them with a *whining, insinuating tone, which is perfectly jesuitical*; you say too, *that their conduct is quite of a piece*: Horrid and false comparison! what do we mean by a Jesuit? a deceiver, with the air of candor, an artful hypocrite, one who is ambitious and plotting, under the appearance of renouncing honors and riches; a tyrant with an air of softness, subjection and politeness, and one who pretends to be humane, and yet is wholly given to selfishness.

The Jesuits were inflamed with a desire of domineering over the consciences of men, that they might

rule kingdoms, open prisons by their nod, and bury alive their rivals and their enemies—this was *their* reason for affecting a *whining insinuating tone*, which hurts no one's vanity, but flatters and misleads it.

The Jesuits raged with the desire of making profelytes, they besieged the growing talents of the youth, and bent them to their own purposes; they over-reached great and small; they had spies at court, and at the bar; they had their puffers and partisans in pay. In short they were for attempting and subduing every thing.

I would ask any one, who knows any thing of the Quakers, who has lived ever so short a time amongst them, whether any part of this character suits this plain people? can they, who renounce all places and honors, be charged with the lust of power? can they, who have no ambition, be called plotters? should they be supposed deceitful, without any motives for being so? does not the whole world know, that they do not attempt to make profelytes! that they do not seek for praise, either by writing or flattery! every body knows that they detest intolerance, and, of consequence, those horrid methods which are practised on persons in confinement, those private tortures and inquisitions which the Jesuits made use of to overthrow the doctrine of the *efficacy of grace*. The Quakers have been often derided, mutilated, and imprisoned; they have never treated their enemies in such a manner; can the same be said of the Jesuits?

Is there any thing extraordinary in this softness of their manners? does it not naturally accompany their love of humanity, and principles of universal toleration? there is nothing in it characteristic of the insinuating sharper; his schemes are for the acquisition of power, riches, fame or titles; but the true Quaker seeks not for power, he is of all men the least desirous of wealth, he cares little for a name, and despises all marks of distinction.

But you are not satisfied with denying them all pretensions to plainness and candor; you are not

satisfied with comparing them to one of the most ambitious, plotting, and tyrannical sects that ever existed—but you will not even allow them to possess common honesty. You tell us, that during the American war, they cheated both parties out of their money, without a blush, and careless of what might be thought of their conduct.

And yet you bring no proof in support of so severe an accusation: an accusation which affects the whole society; which affects their Benezets and Missins: men whom you praise, and whom the lovers of virtue will admire. How could you, thus in a moment, endeavour to disgrace so many respectable characters? And even admitting, what I neither can nor will believe, till you prove it by well-attested facts—admitting, I say, that there were some Quakers who took advantage of the times, to sell at exorbitant prices, or, as you express it, to cheat both parties out of their money, was it well done in you, to throw the odium on the whole society? If any amongst them are culpable, name them; it is your duty to do so. You, yourself are culpable if you do not; for, indeed, by your silence, you involve both the innocent and guilty in the charge.

But as you never could have known the Quaker's methods of dealing; as you never could, nor ever will be able to prove, that they are all cheats, without exception, it follows that your assertions are downright defamation; for which you ought to make amends at the public tribunal, where you have unfairly traduced them. At this tribunal, I now impeach you. I, who have been well acquainted with some Quakers, and am fully convinced of the general probity of their society, and observing, that they are accused by a man of rank and quality, and member of several academies—considerations which might lead the public to doubt of the honesty of the Quakers, I summons you to produce your charges, and your proofs before the public; and if you are still silent, let me once more repeat it, I shall think myself authorized to treat your assertions as mere defamation.

This word will shock you, sir ; I use it with regret ; but I do not use it without having sufficiently attended to the meaning of it. A defamatory work, is one which is made public, in which an avowed or anonymous author, injures one or more persons, by accusing them, falsely, of crimes, meannesses or vices ; or, in a word, strives to injure their character. Now, do not you accuse the Quakers of being sharpers, cheats, hypocrites, and men careless of the public good ?

We will suppose the Quakers may have furnished the English, as well as the Americans, with provisions. Do you call that a crime ? You should recollect that the Quakers look on all men as their brethren, and that no one is their enemy, not even their persecutors. In this point of view, English and Americans were the same to them. The greatest part of them thought that England was carrying on an unjust war. But the Quakers did not look on the Hessians as partners in this act of injustice, they thought them equally entitled to their assistance with their American brethren.

According to my present sentiments, that the only justifiable war, is that which is carried on to resist oppression, and that the American war was of this kind, I must confess I should have been better pleased if the Quakers had joined the Americans, that they might the sooner have got rid of the destroyers of their country.

But since they have not done so, since they have scrupulously adhered to their principles, of not shedding blood, I cannot accuse them of any thing criminal ; and the less so, because their principles and conduct were known before hand, to both parties*.

And we will suppose also that they may have sold their goods at a high price to both parties. But do you call this cheating ? In discussing this charge, I should be

* The Author of this work, proposes, in a future publication on the the Quakers, to examine into the truth of this charge. And at the same time, to take notice of the fresh complaints, made against them, by M. Mazzei, Author of *Recherches sur les Etats Unis*, which he has engaged to do, in his Answer to this Writer, already published.

glad of well stated facts. But, as there are none, for you have not furnished me with any, I must suppose, that you have been led away, by the common prejudice, against the merchant who takes the benefit of circumstances, to sell at an advanced price.

When any trade is free, not in the hands of individuals, when the buyer is not forced to give whatever price may be demanded, there can be no cheating, not even if they sold at the most extravagant rates.

The natural consequence of a war, is to raise the price of goods very high, because produce is lessened, and goods become scarce. The seller is then no more culpable for raising the price on account of the scarcity, than the buyer would be for offering a small price in plentiful times. But the common people, who are used to fixed prices, and whose resources are diminished in time of war; this common people, who are then forced to buy every thing at a high price, exclaim that they are cheated. And I dare say, that a great many of our French officers, in their travels through the United States, have, as well as you, met with poor inns, and bad fare; and yet were obliged to pay a high price, for a mean lodging, and a wretched supper. These, I have no doubt, often thought themselves imposed upon, and looked upon all the American inn-keepers as cheats. And you, yourself, seem to insinuate as much in several places*. But you and your brother officers were all wrong; For you paid, first, for the scarcity of hands, and excessive price of labour; secondly, for the scarcity of provisions; thirdly, for the scarcity of travellers; and fourthly, for the scarcity of taverns; and, on these four different accounts, it is no wonder, if you paid four times as much as in France.

I do not mean to lay before you, in this place, all

* In one place amongst many others, when speaking of one BESSONET, (whom you mistake for a brother of BENEZE's,) you say, that he retained none of his Quaker principles, but that of selling at an extravagant price.

my opinions on high prices †. I shall only say, that this can never be called cheating, as long as the buyer knows the quality of the goods, and the conditions of sale: secondly where there are many sellers, the buyer is at liberty to purchase, or leave it alone.

The Quakers have the name of selling at high rates, I suppose, because their merchandise is always of a good quality. But since you are at liberty to provide yourself elsewhere, you cannot complain of their selling dear; and if you give them the preference, it must be because you esteem their goods, though of a higher price, yet of a superior quality, to those which are sold at a lower rate.

It is, besides, very well known, that the Quakers in general sell nearly at a fixed price. Now, such a custom admits of no cheating, which can only be practised by those who vary their charges, and who, by taking advantage of the ignorance and credulity of the purchaser, ask much more than the market price. These are the men who are to be mistrusted, and not the Quakers, who sell at a fixed rate.

There is then very little probability in your slanderous assertion, *that it is a received maxim in trade, that they are not to be trusted.*

But I maintain that it is a false assertion. I have heard quite a different account of them at London—a city, wherein, if they were much inclined to cheating and corruption, they would much sooner become cheats, and be corrupted, than at Philadelphia. Now, this is far from being the case, and it may be looked on as one of the greatest prodigies of the age, that they have preserved their virtue in such a sink of vice.

I dare say, you may have heard such an account in America. But would it not have been right for you to have traced out the foundation of this tale? Should you not have sought for its origin in the

† See my Sentiments on this subject, in the Chapter sur l'Etat civil des Juifs, in the second Volume of the Journal du Lycée ou Tableau des Sciences & des Arts en Angleterre. I have there said, that selling at a high price is often considered as a want of principle, at least, by ignorant people.

wickedness and envy* of others? Should not you yourself have been sure of the truth of it? And instead of only saying that the maxim is well founded, should you not have shown that it was so, by well-attested facts? Once more, sir; when a citizen is accused of a crime, the proofs and facts must be brought forward at the same time. Otherwise, an accusation is but calumny, and as such will your's be regarded, unless you particularise those heavy charges you accuse the Quakers with, and the whole society at once, for you have slandered them all indiscriminately.

RELIGIOUS TENETS of the QUAKERS.

I shall now go on to treat of the ridicule you throw on the Quakers, when speaking of their mode of worship and religious tenets; and here too, I shall follow you, step by step.

On Sunday the 10th, say you, I determined to take a turn thro' the churches, and study the different modes of worship.

It must be confessed, that your's was a laughable way of *studying*; to go and hear a single prayer or sermon, and catch at hazard few expressions, in a language and religion you were a stranger to. Since all sects have their peculiar idioms, and make use of common words in a different way from other people; the wit, who is for making so superficial a course of studies, runs a risk of understanding nothing, and of forming erroneous sentiments of every thing he hears.

But, what could you mean by taking this *strange turn through the churches*? Was it to become acquainted with their ceremonies? The Presbyterians have but few—and the Quakers none at all. Was it to become acquainted with the principles and spirit of each sect? This would have been a more reasonable

* They have been reproached, says Mr. St. John de Crevecoeur, vol. 1, page 169, with their fondness for trade; but such charges originate from envy, excited by their riches. The Quakers are for this reason the object of public envy in America, and consequently we need not be surprised at the many reports concerning them. Have we not seen, in the last centuries, the poor, proud and envious Christians accusing the Jews of the most horrid crimes, merely because they became rich by trade?

and important object: But let a man be ever so penetrating, how can he flatter himself with fully understanding, in a single hour, at a single opportunity, the principles and practice of any sect? The first is to be learnt from books, the second by frequent and long continued intercourse.

We are but too much addicted to this mania of judging of objects from superficial views, without going to the bottom of any thing. This is the case with respect to all the sciences. A man will suppose himself very knowing in natural philosophy, and quite a master of chymistry, when he has attended a few lectures. This error has been already much complained of; but it does and will keep its ground, because it is favorable to the quackery of teachers, and the laziness and vanity of scholars.

“Unfortunately, say you, the several sects, *who agree in nothing else*, have fixed on *the same hour* to assemble their congregations.”

How can you affirm, that the religious sects in England, and in the United States, do not agree in any one point; when, all, to bring but a single instance, look upon the Gospel as a divine book; when, all, except the Unitarians, regard Christ as the Son of God, and all admit the necessity of prayer, &c. You know too much to be ignorant of these facts; but you have sacrificed the truth, to the pitiful pleasure of making an antithesis. It is rather singular too, that for the accommodation of the curious, you would wish to subject all the sects to different hours, for the performance of their worship. Alas, why did not you make your *tour* of worships, as the *petits maitres* of Paris do their *tour* of play-houses? A song at the Italian—a scene at the French theatre—a dance at the Opera—and a turn at Vauxhall—they have seen every thing, and know every thing, for they have shewn themselves every where, and all in the space of two hours.

When you made use of this expression, if you had but recollected, that the man, whose soul is raised to God from a feeling sense of duty, has his attention

but little turned to strangers, but is wholly fixed on one object; if you had remembered too, the pernicious consequences, which, I shall hereafter show, attend this way of degrading religious subjects, treating them in a light manner, and putting them on a level with play-houses, you would not have formed a judgment so superficially of the Quakers, and Presbyterians, nor even of the members of the church of England.

If you had recollected too, that there is no distinction of sex in the sight of God, you would certainly have spared that sorry jest upon the women, which no one expected to see from the pen of an admirer of the fair sex, and an academician: "*Like Ariosto, I shall relate prodigies, dirò meraviglia, just as I entered, a woman held her tongue.*"

How could this trifling and hacknied piece of wit escape you, especially with all the air of importance with which you make the quotation? You who are so warm in the praise of our French ladies—have you, then, never been acquainted with any who knew how to be still, or whose conversation was agreeable? Have you never lived with English and American ladies? Have you not observed that they are modest and silent, never in haste to speak, although well-informed? Yes, well-informed, and well qualified to teach even men of learning and academicians. I shall mention but one—Mrs. Macaulay: Her history of the Stuarts is certainly more useful than all the French academy has ever produced.

And besides, why would you lessen the women? By undervaluing any one, you make him become despicable. The Quakers have done that justice to their women which we refused them. They have shewn they were not unworthy of it; for *Quakerism* has had its *Porcias*.

You seem determined to find fault with every thing the Quakers do, whether they speak or are silent. For you go on to say, "A man took the woman's place, and spoke like a block-head on internal grace, the illumination of the spirit, and all the other tenets

of his sect, which *he had over and over again*, but without explaining any thing.

I shall here, sir, make bold to ask you if you were sufficiently acquainted with the language of the sect, to understand this Quaker, and to form a judgment of his discourse? A foreigner may understand the eloquent Burke in the house of commons, or Miss Young at the theatre, without being always able to comprehend the preacher of any society. The Quakers, of all others, have a language of their own, which cannot be easily understood, without having read some of their books, such as Barclay's Apology, with a great deal of attention. Now, I should suspect, from a word you have made use of, that you were not perfectly acquainted with the idiom and doctrine of the Quakers. It is when you find fault with the preacher for not *explaining their religious tenets*. Most probably he was clear enough for his brethren who understood his language, while to you who did not comprehend it, he was obscure. Now on the same principles, what would you think of a man, who, having learned the Hindostan language, only in the grammar of Halhed, should tell us of a Bramin's speaking very stupidly about Vistnou? What would you think of a wit, who, from his ignorance of the new doctrine of magnetism, should call your *reflections on motion**, a collection of riddles? And what would you say, if an Englishman, ignorant of the many hundred revolutions which have happened in the Nomenclator of French chymistry, should call the *Oxigine* of Messrs. Fourcroy and Lavoisier, a stupid and obscure term?

It is no difficult matter to accuse a sect, or ridicule their tenets. I have seen some of those jesters, who could not even tell you the meaning of the technical terms which they had picked up—I have heard many of them quote the doctrines of Jansenius with a sneer,

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* A pamphlet of the Marquis de Chatellux's, published at the end of Mons. Bergasse's reflections on magnetism. This pamphlet has been generally complained of as obscure and unintelligible.

who would have been greatly puzzled if any one had asked them to explain the very first article.

The ignorant are led away by words, and I make no doubt, that most persons who read your book, and know nothing of the Quakers, will form their judgment of them, from the caricatura you have drawn; from these single words "*inward grace, illumination which proceeds from the spirit,*" and more especially from the beautiful turn about *saying over and over again*. They will exclaim—Where are these creatures from?—They are surely born in the last age—or inhabitants of some other world—poor ignorant mortals!

I know nothing of the discourse made by the Quaker you heard preach, but I will confess that the tenets he should have supported, the tenets of his sect, do not appear to me to be so *stupid* as they did to you. I shall now give a short account of them, not for your information, for you must certainly have read Benezet before you ridiculed him, but for those who have no other knowledge of the Quakers but what they get *from the stage*.

The Quakers believe in one almighty, eternal and unchangeable God.

They believe in the divinity and mission of Christ.

They believe that all men *may* be saved.

They *admit* of grace and universal light. That is to say, that God, of his grace, makes himself known, and discloses the truth, to all those who sincerely desire to know it, and seek after it.

They believe that this grace was given to Socrates, Epictetus and Seneca, and to all those ancient Philosophers, who joined the practice of virtue to their search after truth. By the inward light, which they follow as their guide, they mean the Holy Spirit.

Whoever, says Benezet*, retires seriously into himself, with a sincere desire to know, and to do his duty, will never fail to find there a sure guide, a ray from the fountain of light, which will enlighten his understand-

* See a short account of the People called Quakers; their rise, religious principles, and settlement in America, by Anthony Benezet.

ing, and teach him, with certainty, to distinguish good from evil. Those who are obedient to this light, this divine guide, whatever religion they profess, soon arrive at the enjoyment of purity, holiness, &c.

The Bible is the principal book which they read, or have recourse to, for council and direction. They cannot, however, says Benezet, regard it as the word of God, because this title belongs to Christ alone; because its contents admit of different interpretations, and because men are apt to think that nothing further is necessary to their salvation.

Concerning worship, they have neither ceremonies nor sacraments, because they say these terms are not found in the holy scriptures.

They do not believe in elementary baptism, nor the use of bread and wine, as a sacrament, to be essential; they look upon them as types and images; and think a good life is the certain way to salvation.

They believe in the necessity of prayer, but that it should always proceed from inspiration.

They keep meetings, because God has promised, that where two or three persons are gathered in his name, there he is in the midst of them.

They undertake not to ordain either priests, bishops or ministers, according to the hierarchy maintained in other Christian churches.

They think any man presumptuous who would pretend to the exclusive privilege of communion with God. Every believer may become a priest and minister. Every Quaker is a preacher, when he feels himself authorised thereto by divine inspiration. They therefore refuse paying tythes. It is, according to their principles, degrading religion, to make it a matter of commerce; it is disobeying the Supreme Being, who has said, *freely ye have received, freely give.*

For the same reason, they reject the science, called theology, as commonly taught in the schools, believing that it serves only to produce pride and disputation.

I shall in another place speak of their sentiments concerning war.

It is well known that they never swear, according

to the command of Jesus Christ, *swear not at all, but let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil.*

The internal police of this sect is very strict and rational. They have their monthly meetings, which are made up of the members of such meetings as lie contiguous; their quarterly meetings, which are composed of the several monthly meetings, which are nearest to each other; and in like manner, their yearly meetings, composed of the several adjacent quarterly meetings. If a brother behaves amiss, the elders caution him repeatedly, and get others to do the same. If he is irreclaimable, they lay his case before the monthly meeting, where it is judged. He may, if dissatisfied with their decision, appeal from this meeting to the quarterly meeting, where he has another hearing, and from thence, if still discontented, to the yearly meeting, where it is finally adjudged. They are careful to avoid law suits; if any Quaker is poor, or unfortunate, the society assists him.*

They look on it as a duty to contribute to general charities.

They hold no places of office in the magistracy; but in Pennsylvania they were for some time in those offices. Perceiving, however, that it was hardly possible to adhere to their principles, amongst the temptations that occurred there, they at length resolved to give them up entirely.

Such are the civil and religious tenets of the Quakers; and to their praise be it spoken, they could never be compelled to abandon them, even in those countries where they were without power, and persecuted; and they obliged no one to embrace them, where they had the power in their own hands. To prove this, I shall quote two striking passages, from Barclay and Penn, in their own words:—

“But of this excellent patience and sufferings, the witnesses of God, in scorn called *Quakers*, have gi-

* I was told, at London, of a Quaker Merchant, who was thrice relieved by his friends; but failing a fourth time, he was persuaded to decline trade, and had a pension settled on him.

ven a manifest proof : for so soon as God revealed his *truth* among them, without regard to any opposition whatsoever, or what they might meet with, they went up and down, as they were moved of the Lord, preaching and propagating the *truth* in market-places, highways, streets, and publick temples, though daily beaten, whipped, bruised, haled, and imprisoned therefore. And when there was any where a church or assembly gathered, they taught them to keep their meetings openly, and not to shut the door, nor do it by stealth, that all might know it, and those who would might enter. And as hereby all just occasion of fear of plotting against the government was fully removed, so this their courage and faithfulness in not giving over their meeting together (but more especially the presence and glory of God manifested in the meeting being terrible to the consciences of the persecutors) did so weary out the malice of their adversaries, that oftentimes they were forced to leave their work undone. For when they came to break up a meeting, they * were obliged to take every individual out by force, they not being free to give up their liberty by dissolving at their command: and when they were haled out, unless they were kept forth by violence, they presently returned peaceably to their place. Yea, when sometimes the magistrates have pulled down their meeting-houses, they have met the next day openly upon the rubbish; and so by innocency kept their possession and ground, being properly their own, and their right to meet and worship God, being not forfeited to any. So that when armed men have come

* During the reign of the infamous Charles II^d who made a mockery of every religious sect, and to procure money, persecuted and protected them all by turns; a most bloody persecution was excited against the Quakers. The King's guards, says Mrs. Macaulay, were set upon them; they were abused, wounded, and some were killed. Hays and Jenilt were arrested for offering money to the constables, who were carrying their friends to prison. They were each of them condemned to pay a fine of £500 Sterling, or suffer imprisonment. Penn and Mead, two respectable Quakers, were tried and fined forty marks, for having kept their hats on, &c. History of the Stuarts, Vol. 6, Page 309, of the Quarto Edition.

to dissolve them, it was impossible for them to do it, unless they had killed every one; for they stood so close together, that no force could move any one to stir, until violently pulled thence: so that when the malice of their opposers stirred them to take shovels, and throw the rubbish upon them, there they stood unmoved, being willing, if the Lord should so permit, to have been there buried alive, witnessing for him. As this patient but yet courageous way of suffering made the persecutors work very heavy and wearisome unto them, so the courage and patience of the sufferers, using no resistance, nor bringing any weapons to defend themselves, nor seeking any ways of revenge upon such occasions, did secretly smite the hearts of the persecutors, and made their chariot-wheels go on heavily. Thus, after much and many kind of sufferings, thus patiently borne, which to rehearse, would make a volume * of itself, which may in due time be published to the nations (for we have them upon record) a kind of *negative liberty* has been obtained; so that at present, for the most part, we meet together without disturbance from the magistrate. But on the contrary, most *Protestants*, when they have not the allowance and toleration of the magistrate, meet only in secret, and hide their testimony? † &c. †

Barclay relates their sufferings also in his spirited dedication to Charles II, in which he affirms, that no Quaker was ever discovered to have been concerned in the many plots laid against him; and finishes this singular dedication with the following bold expressions.

“Thou hast tasted of prosperity and adversity;

* Charles II, who trafficked in crimes, and invented them for the sake of imposing fines, made a law against Dissenter's Meetings of every kind. If the meeting consisted of five persons, each was fined five shillings for the first offence, ten for the second, &c. And it was enacted that if any doubt arose concerning the meaning of the Act, the Judges were always to decide against the defendants. And this was the Tyrant that Louis XIV. wished to invest with absolute power. Mrs. Macaulay's history, Vol. 6, Page 284, of the Quarto Edition.

† Barclay's Apology, Page 508.

thou knowest what it is to be banished thy native country ; to be over-ruled, as well as to rule, and to sit upon the throne ; and being *oppressed*, thou hast reason to know how *hateful* the *oppressor* is, both to God and man : If after all these warnings and advertisements thou dost not turn unto the Lord, with all thy heart ; but forget him who remembered thee in thy distress, and give up thyself to follow lust and vanity, surely great will be thy condemnation, &c.”

These passages, Sir, are a sufficient proof of the steadiness and constancy of the Quakers, in the midst of persecutions ; and the spirited language of Barclay to Charles the II^d, has always been maintained by them. The following passage will also show their toleration, in a country where they had the power in their own hands.

The immortal Penn, in the charter of privileges, which he granted to the inhabitants of Pennsylvania, on the 28th October 1701, inserted the following clause.

“ Because no people can be truly happy, tho’ under the greatest enjoyment of civil liberties, if abridged of the freedom of their consciences, as to their religious profession and worship : And almighty God being the only Lord of conscience, father of lights and spirits ; and the author, as well as the object of all divine knowledge, faith and worship, who only doth enlighten the minds, and persuade and convince the understandings of people, I do hereby grant and declare, that no person or persons, inhabiting in this province or territories, who shall confess and acknowledge one almighty God, the creator, upholder and ruler of the world ; and profess him or themselves obliged to live quietly under the civil government, shall be in any case molested or prejudiced, in his, or their person or estate, because of his or their conscientious persuasion or practice, nor be compelled to frequent or maintain any religious worship, place or ministry, contrary to his or their mind, or to do or suffer any other act or thing, contrary to their religious persuasion. And that all persons who also profess to be-

lieve in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, shall be capable (notwithstanding their other persuasions and practices in point of conscience and religion) to serve this government in any capacity, both legislatively and executively."

And now, sir, forget that you have written against the Quakers, lay aside your prejudices and witticisms, retire within, and after reading the account I have just given, ask yourself whether the tenets and worship of the Quakers are so very stupid as you would suppose them.

But you will say, what is the meaning of that mysterious farrago about inward grace, illumination and the spirit? I understand you, and might answer your question by referring to the belief and tenets of the Catholics and Protestants, whom your censure involves equally with the Quakers; but a philosopher, an academician, must be answered in a different manner, and I shall now attempt it.

The words illumination, inward grace, extacy, enthusiasm, express the same spiritual state of man, that state in which he is plunged, when absorbed, and entirely taken up in a profound meditation on his relation to God and man. Were you never in this situation? If not, I pity you; for it is certainly the highest source of happiness, I had almost said, of enjoyment on earth. I will not attempt to describe the effects of it—they are beyond description. Those delightful reveries in which the soul wanders, when escaped from the wretched coverings which confine her; that sublime and consolatory glimpse of things beyond herself, beyond the globe and in a better world, is fled and gone, when we attempt to describe it.

This state is to be arrived at, solely, by a perfect inward retirement, and a solitary * and innocent life; and

* By a remarkable peculiarity, it happens that enthusiasts and illuminated Persons are oftentimes found in despotic governments. The reason is plain, for men are there forced to live a solitary life; and when we are unhappy at home, we seek for a retreat elsewhere; when the earth is but a place of torment, the wretched look to heaven for relief, and become enthusiasts, because it is unsafe to be citizens. There are additional reasons for respecting enthusiasm.

can only be relished by those pure souls who are lifted above the vain pleasures and trifling objects of worldly ambition.

This state is the direct road to the knowledge of God, of real happiness, and of the proper objects of man's pursuit. It leads us naturally to the true means of obtaining it. These means are the public and social virtues. From whence it follows, that the man who is continually employed in self-meditation, becomes of course, good, tolerant, just and beneficent—for he endeavours to approach the Divinity, and to resemble him; and it is virtue alone that can fill up the intermediate space which separates them.

Illumination, inward grace, the holy spirit of the Quakers, is nothing else but this state of knowledge, which is to be attained by meditation. They never pray without meditating—they never preach without being inspired, which is always the fruit of meditation.

I have then proved to you, that the man who is continually employed in meditation on himself, on the Divinity, and on his own duty, will naturally become a virtuous man; and, of course, the illumination of the Quakers directs them naturally to virtue; which conclusion is supported by facts; of consequence their system is a respectable one, and making a jest of it, shews an ignorance of it's principles and effects—It is an offence against virtue.

It seems to me that these conclusions cannot be denied, however, I challenge you to do it.

I well know that our wits, even some of the celebrated ones, have been very ingenious in their sarcasms on this state of illumination. But what do sarcasms prove? What absurdity may not a wit be guilty of? What virtue is safe from their ridicule? Let us leave irony apart, and come to facts and reasoning—Turn over Voltaire from beginning to end, the man who has, above all others, brought into repute this rage of substituting ridicule for reasoning, and who has carried it even to the scaffold. In all his writings,

you will not find one solid argument against illumination :* His only weapons are puns and epigrams.

It is with regret I mention it, but these too, are the weapons most frequently made use of by the Count de Mirabeau, in the book which he has just published against the celebrated Lavater † and his followers, whom he calls the enlightened, and against illumination in general.

But there is a distinction to be made which has escaped this writer, and those who have wrote on the same subject before him, ‡ and which is daily escaping the vulgar who are so ready to condemn every thing above their reach—He has confounded the pretended, with the real enlightened man.

I agree that the pretended are the most numerous; for whenever there appears in the world characters strongly marked, who announce important truths and fix the attention of mankind, they are soon surrounded and followed by a crowd of intriguing persons, who take advantage of their discoveries, and who, aping their appearance, hope to dupe the credulous public, and too often are successful.

The real philosopher ought to make the most vigorous efforts to detect these infamous cheats; he ought to inveigh against hypocrisy and illumination, when made a trade of, but not against real illumination: For by ridiculing this last only, they are disappointed in their aims, they traduce what is respectable, and treat with respect, or pass over in silence, those things which should be condemned. They give encouragement to

* To do justice to Voltaire, it must be acknowledged, that he sometimes speaks well of the Quakers, though in a ludicrous manner. See the words Quakers, and Eglise primitive in the questions sur l' Encyclopedie.

† Comte de Mirabeau's Letter, on Messrs. Cagliostro & Lavater, Berlin, 1786.

‡ The famous Lord Shaftsbury has published a letter against enthusiasm. I have not read the Letter; but by sketches of it which I have seen, it appears that his principal design was to prevent the mischief threatened by some false prophets, who wished to spread desolation thro' the country, by subjecting the minds of the people. His letter should have been entitled, on *false* enthusiasm.

the hypocrite, who is put on a footing with the virtuous man, and finds a shelter under his protection.

But there is, in this case, an infallible method of distinguishing the false from the true. Whenever one of these enlightened persons has ambitious, interested, or worldly views, you may be certain that he is only a pretender to illumination, and you should never hesitate to detect the *cheat*.

Philosophy too, has been the instrument of cheating in the hands of the sophists. But as it would be absurd to throw on real philosophers that odium which belongs only to the cheats who have usurped this title to acquire riches or reputation, so it would be unjust to confound George Fox, Penn, Benezet and the rest of the true Quakers, with the false, if there are any, who, as you tell us, make use of this covering to conceal their vices and interested views. It would be unjust to confound the honest Lavater with the adventurers who make a trade of illumination and extasies.

What I now say, is equally applicable to the enlightened Catholics—I have no doubt but Fenelon was of this number—That sweet anointing virtue which runs through his letters, could only be produced by continued extasies—And who is there so devoid of reason and feeling as to say that Fenelon was a cheat or a fool?

Such a man would at once condemn almost every true philosopher, and especially Rousseau. Read this author's dialogues with himself; they seem to be written in another world: And a man who exists in this world only, and has never been beyond it, could not have written two words of them.

Were I to run over the catalogue of ancient and modern philosophers, there is scarce one of them who has not been enlightened, and consequently been looked upon as a fool by his cotemporaries; this was Plato's case; and did not Descartes appear as a mad-man, when, in the public church, and presence of the divinity, he consecrated himself by an oath to the defence of truth. And his pupil, the famous Malbranche, do not all his works bear the wonderful

stamp of illumination? He was the child, the man of meditation.

The example of these great men will be another proof, sir, of what I have already demonstrated, that this state, far from being dangerous to society, is on the contrary, favourable to virtue. For where shall we find a more disinterested character than Mallebranche, where a more sublime one than Rousseau, where one more beneficent, or more resembling the divinity, than Fenelon?

And let it be observed too, that this disinterestedness, this sublimity, this beneficence, were the natural fruits of that habit of spiritual contemplation, in which man becomes *ex-organised, and ex-humanised*, if I may use the expressions.

In forming a judgment of extraordinary men, I believe we do not pay a sufficient attention to their private characters; I do not mean, that this should always influence us with regard to their opinions; but it should at least teach us to be careful in passing our judgment, and above all things, not to blacken their characters: Their virtue should apologize for their mistakes, but genius can never be an excuse for vice.

I am further of opinion, that we are too apt to condemn whatever is foreign to us, and to our way of thinking. The courage of those who dare to strike out new paths, is not held in the estimation it deserves. The good consequences of enthusiasm, excited by new ideas, is not sufficiently felt.

Every kind of enthusiasm is attended with a movement, a displacing of the human mind, a flight beyond the ordinary bounds. This is the natural consequence of the elements of our spiritual principle, of its restless activity, of its curiosity to know what is true, and to enjoy the best. This active disposition, often leads the soul astray into errors and chimeras; but on the other hand, it often leads to the discovery of useful truths. To stop the course of enthusiasm then, by ridicule, is to limit the number of truths, and to circumscribe human perfection.

But further, the cause of tyranny is served by this kind of ridicule ; for since there are amongst these truths which have been, or may be discovered, some that might prove fatal to it ; it is the interest of tyrants to oppose that enthusiasm which causes them to be discovered, spread and adopted. Tyrants, by pursuing this system, would make man a mere machine. A Nero, were he now alive, would look with terror upon the present state of mens' minds. He would regard them with horror, agitated by a secret ferment, continually seeking to change their situation, tormented with the weight they feel, and endeavouring to free themselves from it. He would see, with horror, some launching into the regions of metaphysics, and there boldly hovering between heaven and earth ; others penetrated with a sense of the dignity of *man*, are shocked at the attempts of individuals, to degrade it, all moving with the same enthusiasm, boldly maintaining their doctrines, and giving rise to discussions which tend to the public improvement.

As tyranny is continually obstructing the progress of knowledge, the simple and obscure individual who resists it, must have a support, and none so certain as enthusiasm—Armed with the inward conviction that he is the defender of truth, raised above all fear, because he is continually raised above all earthly things ; the enthusiast gives a shock to the mind, while he himself remains immovable.*

His existence is a real benefit to the community that possesses him ; he in time makes them partakers of his exalted state. And indeed, enthusiasm, transporting the minds of men into a more exalted sphere, habituates them to a certain elevation, which they preserve when they descend into the common circle of things. The en-

* Do you think, sir, that truth would long maintain it's ground against tyranny, in a person of an indifferent turn of mind ? If Phalaris had ordered a Geometrician to say that two and two made five, he would certainly have been obeyed. But instead of Geometry, let us suppose the matter in question, to have been of a nature, more closely connected with the dignity of man, and more susceptible of enthusiasm, the tyrant would then have found his mistake.

enthusiast, the enlightened man, have not the same language nor the same physiognomy as common men. Theirs is an heavenly language, a noble countenance, which most forcibly electrifies those who look upon it. Observe the man who has frequent communion with himself and with his God—Serenity reigns on his visage and happiness in his life; there is a something commanding in his looks, which seems to make you feel your inferiority—In his presence vanity shrinks, vice blushes, and feeble virtue grows strong. Thus, the real and virtuous enthusiast, governs a whole community by his presence, and by a firm and steady *resolution*.

You, sir, who have studied the secrets of magnetism, and who have boldly ranked yourself amongst its defenders, in spite of the academic confederacy, you must be well acquainted with the singular effects of this *resolution*, this beneficent enthusiasm, in which the whole system of magnetism consists. Be no longer, then, the enemy of enthusiasts and enlightened persons; make a jest of them no longer. I have but one word more to say on this head: If the progress of George Fox and William Penn had been checked by ridicule, what a misfortune would it have been for mankind! The American Indians would still be massacred; the Negroes would still be slaves; the principles of equality and their consequence, democracy, would not have been so well known, and the American revolution would not have been effected: And all this is owing to the spirit of illumination and enthusiasm.

No longer vilify the worship of the Quakers, because you think it gloomy and clownish. It is simple, and of consequence more respectful to the Deity. It turns the minds of men from idolatry, and by confining them to a state of meditation, fixes their serious attention on the supreme being, which is of much greater importance than singing his praises by rote.

No longer speak so highly of the Church of England's mode of worship, for the resemblance you saw in it to an opera; for the fine pulpit, beautiful organ, handsome minister, and elegant women; or for the

agreeable sonatas you heard sung there. Good heavens! compare a church to a playhouse; and the ejaculations of the devout man to the Divinity, to Italian songs! How could you descend to such puerile and indecent comparisons? It is excusable in a child to be captivated by fine play-things, but how mean an opinion must we entertain of the judgment and metaphysics of a man grown, an academician too, who calls himself a philosopher, to see him looking after and admiring nothing else in divine worship, but the dress of the ladies and the elegant theatrical grace of a surplused Petit-maitre. For what must be your idea of the Divinity, if you suppose that the prayers and homage of a handsome minister and well-dressed women, are more acceptable to him, than those of virtuous men, with plain clothes; or that charming songs are more acceptable than good works? At any rate, this sensual taste, can only belong to the indolent and voluptuous deities of Epicurus, but the God of the philosopher is the source of all truth and virtue. Does he not receive a more acceptable homage from those who seek truth by meditation, and practise virtue, than from singing and dancing. And is it not uttering blasphemy against him, if it were possible to do so, thus to suppose he can be worshipped by stage-players and buffoons?

I by no means charge you with making such conclusions, but would-be-wits, and weak minds, will draw them from your jests—How diverted they will be with your curious quotation from the *Deserter*, and that comparison between the ignorant sectary and Montauciel, who finds in his book, words that were never there. But this is the true academic turn of mind.—Unhappy disposition, which gives us puns and jests for reasons, which lessens every thing that is great * by the mere touch, which shrivels up the soul,

* This disposition is to be met with, in many parts of your travels. Another passage of the same kind is quoted, when you are speaking of the Negroes. I have just laid my hands on a third; it is where you are describing the famous natural Bridge, in which you see nothing *but nature endeavouring to imitate art*. This is giving much the same idea of nature, as the Poet, who in describing the sublime Meteors of the Alps, tells us

shortens the sight, and disfigures every object! I must again lament that the author of la Felicité publique, should be corrupted by this epidemic *rage* for wit.

And you suppose, then, that you have proved to a demonstration, that all religious sects are in an error, by comparing them to Montauciel, who could not spell, and by saying, that it was a million to one, that he guessed right.

Which is as much as to say, that *because* Montauciel, who did not know his letters, could not read, so we have no method of becoming versed in the sciences; *and consequently*, that we are not possessed of reason, inward feeling or conscience, those three guides of knowledge and conduct. That, in religious matters, it is a million to one, that the truth is yet concealed, that the true religion is yet unknown, and like to be so, for there is a million of chances against it. Now is such a system as this defensible? Do you suppose that there is no such thing as a religious truth? such a supposition would make the greatest part of mankind unhappy, and place oppressors wholly at their ease.

Is there any more appearance of reason, in your traducing the Quakers, by charging them with bloody disputes, and by saying that it is better to leave them in their error than to go to cutting throats with them? How is this? do the Quakers endeavour to convince or gain over any one? And do they, when resisted, wield the sword, or light the faggot? You do not believe it; or if you did, history would undeceive you, and yet, when casting your jokes on all the sects, you charge them as well as the others, with this enormity.

There appears throughout this paragraph, an air of ridiculing every religious sect, as well as of the

that the clouds rose like the curtain at the Theatre. And this to be sure is wit! We cannot lessen or degrade Nature more than by comparing her operations to the feeble works of men. We cannot more certainly destroy the interesting effect, produced in feeling minds, by the sight of a fine landscape, a magnificent sky, or a frightful cataract, than by comparing them to the productions of art.

worship of the Deity, which weak minds will extend to the Deity himself. Oh sir, blame not a society for any thing but for their intolerance, and for professing principles which produce hatred: But let us commend them for resembling one another in believing in God, and in the necessity of divine worship.

Philosophers, by being too warm in their opposition to certain religious prejudices, have not yet sufficiently considered the extensive influence which a belief in God and a future state, would have on political constitutions: He who believes in God, can fear nobody: He who believes in God, will speak the truth boldly, he will despise torments and death itself: He who believes in God, will love and cherish all mankind, he will, if possible, revenge them when oppressed: He who believes in God, may become a Cato, a Sidney, a Benezet, the greatest and most respectable of human beings, but he can never become a Cæsar or a Sejanus.

How strong is man when supported, on one hand by the truth, and on the other by the Deity! He is then irresistible—Power vanishes before him, and the sword menaces in vain †.

You smile—but look at the Quakers; *defenceless* they have triumphed over their armed persecutors—and these are the fruits of enthusiasm.

F

† The History of England abounds with facts, in support of this assertion. I shall quote but one. Towards the latter part of the reign, or rather the oppressive government, of Charles II. the sect of independents appeared, who gave out, that this Prince ought to be dethroned, because he had violated his promise made to the nation, who had given him the Crown; had pillaged them in every way he could devise; had protected the Papists, persecuted the Protestants; received a pension from France, &c. These complaints were well founded, but Charles chose rather to send a regiment of men against these sectarians, than to change his own conduct. They fought like Enthusiasts, and Desperadoes; part of them were killed outright, and the remainder taken prisoners.—Their leaders were executed according to custom; the others were promised pardon, on condition of their crying, *God save the King*. About fifty men remained, and not one of them would condescend to do so. They said they would rather die than tell an untruth, or bless a man, whom they detested—and they did die. History of the Stuarts, by Mrs. Macaulay, Vol. 6, Quarto Edition.

On the POLITICAL PRINCIPLES of the QUAKERS.

Have you been more successful or just, sir, in your attack upon the political or civil principles of the Quakers? I think not. One of them claims the favour and encouragement of all sovereigns. They are every where respectful and obedient to government, and never revolt, or have recourse to arms, whatever impositions they suffer. You do not reproach them for this principle of forbearance, which, perhaps singly, prevents crowds of virtuous, but brave men, from embracing their system; but you are offended, because in consequence of it, they proscribe war, and that military art you so ardently admire.

“ Concealing, say you, their indifference for *the public good*, under the appearance of religion, they are sparing of blood, *especially their own, &c.*”

Thus, sir, you misapply words, which ill understood, beget absurd and bloody contests. If the disputes of princes, or the respective national pretensions, often supported with the unnecessary effusion of blood, constitute what you denominate public good; it must be confessed that the Quakers are indifferent to such follies, and refuse to contribute to them. But in respect to the general benefit of society, that is to say, the relief of distressed individuals, the assistance of the indigent, zeal and liberality in the promotion of useful institutions, the Quakers, far from being indifferent, are among the first to comfort and assist the unfortunate. For proof, I oppose you to yourself, I quote you for all you allow them to have done for the public good at Philadelphia, where they have principally planned and supported many useful and necessary institutions. For, notwithstanding they discourage public spectacles, you will allow that they may promote the welfare of their fellow-citizens, without entertaining them with an opera or a stage play. I quote that Benezet, whom you cannot but esteem, that Mifflin, of whom M. St. John de Crevecoeur gives us such an amiable character, that Fothergill, whose life was one continued scene of great and

good actions, in a word, I quote their general emancipation of the Negroes. Where shall we meet with such another sublime instance of regard for the public good! Can you suppose that the restoration of millions of wretched beings to life, to virtue, and to society; and the abolition of the most detestable trade that ever was undertaken, a trade in human blood! Can you suppose, I say, that these are objects of less importance to the public welfare than the massacre of thousands of Englishmen out of patriotism?

Confess, sir, that this kind of public spirit deserves the preference, and no doubt you will be convinced upon serious reflection, that the Quakers have shewn themselves friends to the public good, by taking no part as a body in the civil commotions which have laid waste and dismembered the British empire in the last and present centuries. What! would you blame them because they did not pray for the success of that tyrant Charles II, uncorrected by the misfortunes of his father, whose wars only served him for a pretence to rob his subjects of money to lavish upon his mistresses? For the ambitious William, who cast the first link of that oppressive chain of national debt, whose weight becomes at present too heavy to be borne? For Ann successively governed by ambitious or obscure favorites, uninformed, intriguing, and a stranger to her subjects? For the absurd dispute about the Spanish succession, or that of the empire no less absurd and expensive? In short, would you blame them for not having joined with Clive to assassinate Nabobs, who had been the benefactors of his country, with Verelst, to hurry three millions of Indians into eternity by the cruel death of famine, with Hastings, to exterminate a hundred thousand Rohillas; in short, with all the ravages of India, to rob, fetter, massacre the most mild, virtuous and friendly people upon earth.

If this mass of national enormities, is what you call public good, it is not only a virtue not to stain our hands with it; it is a duty to avoid it—confess, sir, that such public good is merely that of a few individuals, of the ministry, of the military, who for

amusement or promotion, charitably set people to cut each other's throats. But such public good is a general evil, an evil for all nations, and especially to the people, who are always oppressed, whether conquering or conquered. Let us then commend the Quakers for their indifference to such nominal public good; let us commend them for weeping over its calamitous consequences, though they never contribute to them, and thus uniting religion and humanity.

They are sparing of blood—so much the better—Are there not enough who lavish it? Are not a million of bayonets at our breasts from one end of Europe to the other, sufficient? Are there not murderers enough? Must it be counted a crime in the Quakers, not to be found in this list of destroyers of the human race.

These enlightened men, fully convinced that the basis of universal happiness is universal peace, and that war must be utterly renounced to introduce it. Convinced that preaching would be ineffectual, if not seconded by example, and that princes would find the means of perpetuating war as long as men could be hired to cut each others throats, determined never to use arms or contribute to the support of any war. They have been robbed, imprisoned, tortured, martyred; they endured it all, and at length, overcome by their constancy, tyranny has exempted them from military services, and is obliged to use force in obtaining contributions from them. And indeed what should the Quakers pay for? To hire soldiers? They would there were none. Priests? they do not want any; they are all priests. Magistrates? they need none, they have no law-suits.

What would become of our heroes, if every sect had imbibed this anti-military spirit; if all anathematized war; if no Automaton would suffer himself to be trained up for the infernal task of murdering his brother?—What would become of the ambition of conquerors, if all men, turned Quakers, should firmly, and with one consent, refuse to second their pretensions with a musket? O then! if we love the public

good, let us pray that this exalted sect may increase and spread over the earth, or at least, that its humane principles may be every where received, then would that peace become universal*, which the Quakers have already realised, in those countries where they are most numerous. Let the ambitious who sigh for ribbands and crosses, detest this idea; let them ridicule us, suspect us of cowardice, and proclaim to the world, that we are sparing of our own blood; it is better to be ridiculous, if this is so, than to become the murderers of our brethren.

It is thus, sir, you are pleased to banter the Quakers; you say they shun war, particularly *to spare their own blood*; as if the Quaker, who uses no weapons of defence, were not more exposed to danger than he who carries them and defends himself; as if the angry savage would respect his scalp, or the European conqueror his existence.

No, the Quakers do not avoid fighting to spare their own blood, but to spare that of their fellowmen. Can you doubt it, you who have seen them during the late war boldly venturing to succour their brethren, their countrymen, their enemies themselves?

If you still doubt their courage, look back to the persecutions they have suffered, read their martyrology; behold them tranquil and serene in dungeons, undaunted before their judges, mounting the gallows without terror; behold even their women, possessed of equal resolution, braving torture and defying the executioner†. Such courage, sir, is very different from

* Men who are prejudiced or interested in the existence of reigning evils, stigmatise those who preach the doctrine of universal peace, and oppose war with the title of *declaimers*. Notwithstanding, the world improves under their sermons, in the act of ridiculing them. Let the partisans for war, inform us, whether the passion for it is so general, so unbridled in the present age, as it was, for instance, in the time of the crusades. War is no longer a raging fever, it is a mere matter of speculation. Now to have changed the rage to computation, is a great step gained; and we have only to prove that war is a bad speculation for *all parties*. To whom is this change of ideas owing, if not to the philosophers who are called declaimers? The word declaimer, like that of *visionary* is used to turn the man of genius into ridicule, who speaks highly of the rights of men, and boldly opposes those errors which the world agreed to laugh at, and continue.

† I will relate one instance—Mary Dyar, one of those persons who returned to Boston, after their unjust banishment upon pain of death, when the

that of the soldier in the day of battle, chiefly inspired by the adventitious circumstances which surround him, and possess every faculty of his soul. The confused discharge of musketry, and the report of cannon, sounds which banish all reflection, the necessity to kill or be killed, the chance of escape, the looks of his comrades and of his general, the hope of laurels, and crosses, every thing supports, every thing animates, and impels him to what is called heroism; but all this is foreign to it.

How different is the fortitude of the individual, who ascends the scaffold a martyr to his religious or political opinions! every thing around is against him, or at least indifferent; the image of certain death before him, and the apparatus of his execution. He has no escape, no honors, no ribbands to expect—death advances, and he meets him without terror.

Behold the man of true courage! behold the hero! His courage is innate, it springs from his own breast; he dies alone, sensible of the approach of death. Such were Ruffel, Sydney, Barnevelt, De Witt, &c. and all those Quakers who have suffered imprisonment and death in defence of their faith. Now will you venture to make a jest of their courage, their singularities, or the plainness of their language?

If the witty, following your example, cannot be satisfied without disparaging this respectable sect by

sentence was passed upon her, undauntedly replied, "the will of the Lord be done;" whereupon, the judge ordered her to be taken away, and she answered again, "yea, joyfully I go." At the foot of the ladder, where her two companions suffered martyrdom, she cried out, "this is to me an hour of the greatest joy; no-body can conceive the sweet and refreshing influences of the Lord's spirit, which I now feel." Ready to meet her dissolution, she was respited and taken back to prison, from whence she wrote a letter to the general court, charging them with the guilt of innocent blood, in which she said she looked upon their mercy as cruelty. She was banished a second time, but returning to Boston, was again condemned to die—When the judge repeated her sentence, she said, "this is no more than what thou saidst before." I am come to warn you to repeal your unrighteous laws: If thou condemnest me, the Lord will send others of his servants to witness against them. A pardon was offered her if she would go away and desist from preaching; she refused to do so, and suffered death.

See the before quoted article upon the Quakers, in my journal.

their sarcastic sneers—I repeat what I have said elsewhere, I will forgive them their epigrams, if they can lay on their death-beds, with a descendant of the celebrated Penn, “ I never did a wicked thing knowingly.” I will forgive them, if they can quit life and its enjoyments in the bloom of youth without regret, if they have the resolution, like most Quakers, to comfort their weeping friends—I will forgive them, if they practised through life, the meekness, probity, and other good qualities of the Quakers. Though they may appear ridiculous in the eyes of a Frenchman, and their language may seem emphatic, and enigmatical, even though they should hold immaterial errors, or insist too strenuously upon minutæ; what matter if they are virtuous? Let us shun their weaknesses, but imitate their good qualities, or if we cannot accomplish both, let us sacrifice our vanity to virtue, and be very careful how we blame. Hitherto, the Quakers have been represented in a ridiculous point of view; both at Paris and London, they have been indecently exhibited upon the stage. An Aristophanes, has been found to sacrifice Socrates to the public. Let the public lay aside their prejudices, let them study, let them scrutinize the Quakers, they will find their doctrines plain, their morals pure, and the simplicity of their manners perfectly consistent; they will find energy and sublimity in their character, in the midst of general seduction and the most shocking depravity. Even selfishness, that universal poison, is a vice unknown to the true Quaker. All Quakers are his friends; his brethren—he rejoices in their joy, he weeps for their misfortunes, he supports them in their distress; his friendship extends to the whole human race, it is his family, and he delights in doing good to all its members. May such principles spread and be imitated, and practised by all. But they will find no imitators until men shall boldly adopt the simplicity of the Quakers, for *luxury cannot be humane*. The income of a Cræsus will always be exceeded by his expences; the man who sacrifices to pleasure, rarely enjoys the luxury of doing good.

Three great vices, or rather crimes, have introduced all the evils that afflict the earth; such as despotism, war, and public or private injustice: They are ambition, covetousness, and luxury—Are not the Quakers, who renounce power, free from Ambition? What object could inspire covetousness amongst people who despise luxury*? This then is the sect for those States which would banish despotism, and all other political crimes. It is the sect for republics; § It is the sect for monarchies; In a word, it is the sect for humanity. Since if Quakerism were universal, all mankind would form but one loving and harmonious family.

And yet this is the people you calumniate! but I am not surpris'd at it; the Quakers detest the military art, and you are a soldier. They undervalue what we call wit, and you have displayed your pretensions to it; you are a member of the royal academy! They preach equality of men and ranks, and you are a man of quality †.

While I was concluding this article, in defence of the Quakers, and when it was almost printed off, a Pennsylvanian, who sincerely esteems, because he is well acquainted with them, and who is much concerned at your reflections upon them, sent me the following observations—I shall translate them in their own simple strength, without a comment; they alone would have been sufficient to refute your assertions.

“The reputation of this sect is founded upon a mul-

* *Si luxuriæ temperares, avaritiâ non timeres*, said Tacitus.

† Doctor Franklin, in his observations on population, published in 1751, justly observes, that those sects which unite regularity and economy with simplicity of manners, increase the most rapidly, because they furnish them with the means of providing for a numerous offspring. This is the reason why the Quakers are so numerous in Pennsylvania.

‡ Will it be believed, that these observations upon the Quakers, as well as those upon the Negroes, to be remarked directly, are particularly noticed in the *Journal de Paris*, May 21. 1786, as two excellent passages. I must say, to the credit of its respectable compiler, Mr. Sautreau, that this article cannot have proceeded from his pen. He is too well acquainted with history, and is besides a man of too much veracity, to have written such a panegyric. Nothing but ignorance, or the most abject flattery, could have induced any person to praise so many things, that deserve nothing but blame.

of claims upon an austerity of manners, and steadiness of principle, unequalled by any other, and particularly upon the good they have done within this century in America.”

“ The British act of Parliament, which allows the simple affirmation of the Quakers in civil cases, exempting them from the oath which is required of all other sects, is the fullest eulogium upon their principles, their morals, and their constancy.”

“ Upon an attentive examination of the constitutions of their churches, schools, hospitals and other charitable institutions, there appears a degree of philanthropy that should disarm envy and ridicule.”

“ What father, acquainted with their manner of educating the youth, would not prefer it to that of every other sect.”

“ I know of no sect, which has so many intelligent, and even learned members of both sexes. The enfranchisement of the Negroes, now a part of their religious discipline, is one of the noblest monuments ever erected to humanity.”

“ Beneficence, a general characteristic of the Quakers, shone with peculiar lustre in the good John Fothergill, who spent his life in healing the sick, in assisting and comforting the miserable. This was the first man who thought of teaching the wretched inhabitants of the coast of Guinea to plant the sugar-cane, instead of cultivating it for the whites in a strange land. *”

G

* The following Anecdotes will exhibit the character of this benefactor of mankind. He had a friend at London, who depended upon a small curacy of fifty guineas a year, for the support of a wife and numerous family. The mother and five children were seized at once by an epidemic distemper. In this distressing situation, the Curate would not apply to Fothergill, because he had nothing to see him with. Mentioning his situation to one of his friends, he offered to pay the fees. They went together to the Doctor, who refused a fee, but visited the distressed family, till he had effected a cure.

The Curate knew not how to express his gratitude; but what was his surprize, when Fothergill, instead of receiving any pecuniary compensation, presented him with ten guineas, and desired him to apply to him when he wanted more.

The other Anecdote, concerning the School at Ackworth, it is too

“ But surely calumny should cease to persecute the Quakers, at the appearance of Anthony Benezet, whose whole life was consecrated to the service of his fellow creatures; humble, plain, unostentatious, regardless of ridicule, danger, or prejudice, he was continually employed in serving others, rarely himself.”

“ He died universally regretted, in 1784. The citizens of Philadelphia attended his funeral; and upwards of four hundred Negroes, who owed him their liberty, and whom he had instructed himself, bedewed his coffin with their tears. This benefactor of the blacks, desirous to serve them even after his death, left his whole fortune for the support of the schools he had established for their instruction, with a view to make them more worthy of that freedom which had been granted them by the excellent law of 1780.”

“ It is also to his zeal in part, that we are indebted for the existence of the society lately instituted for facilitating the manumission of the blacks, and protecting those who are, or may become free.”

You knew, Sir, you conversed with this wonderful person, this angelic benefactor of mankind, and yet you ventured to traduce the Quakers! Did not his spirit confuse your imagination, while your pen was falsifying his brethren, those whom he cherished and led by the hand; did not your own heart ask you, can Benezet belong to a band of rogues and hypocrites? Is it possible that his noble reply on your telling him of our rich livings, of an hundred thou-

long to relate here; but I will give the outlines of it. This foundation is now very flourishing. Fothergill set a subscription on foot, and was himself a principal subscriber, for the purchase of the land, the buildings, and eighty acres of ground for its support. There are now three hundred Scholars upon this foundation; all properly boarded, clothed and educated, for the several professions they are intended to follow. They are taught morality, decency, regularity, subordination to their superiors, forbearance towards each other, and especially that habit of silence and meditation so much recommended in the ancient schools of philosophy, and which are absolutely necessary for the attainment of real science. See the life of Fothergill, by the Doctors, Hird and Elliot.

and livres a year “ that would build a great many hospitals.” Is it possible I say that this itself could not disarm your rigor? It does not indicate the warm benevolence of one man only, it breathes the spirit of his brethren. Such fervency is not to be found in a declining sect; it no longer inspires it. Benezet could not have been the member of a corrupted body. His fervent charity would form too striking a contrast to the selfishness of hypocrisy.

VINDICATION of the NEGROES.

First let me repeat your longest section relative to that people.

‘ Below this class of inhabitants, (the whites of no
 ‘ property, in Virginia,) we must rank the Negroes,
 ‘ who would be still more to be pitied, if their *natural*
 ‘ *insensibility did not in some measure alleviate the*
 ‘ *wretchedness inseparable from slavery.* Seeing them
 ‘ ill lodged, ill clothed, and often overcome with labour,
 ‘ I concluded that their treatment had been as
 ‘ rigorous as it is elsewhere. Notwithstanding I have
 ‘ been assured that it is very mild, compared to what
 ‘ they suffer in the Sugar Colonies. And indeed one
 ‘ does not hear *habitually*, as at Jamaica and St. Domingo,
 ‘ the sound of whips, and the outcries of the
 ‘ wretched beings, whose bodies are torn piece meal
 ‘ by their strokes. It is because the people of Virginia
 ‘ are commonly milder than those of the Sugar Colonies,
 ‘ which consist chiefly of rapacious men, eager to amass
 ‘ fortunes, as soon as possible, and return to Europe.
 ‘ The produce of their labours being also less valuable,
 ‘ their tasks are not so rigorously exacted, and in justice
 ‘ to both, it must be allowed that the Negroes themselves
 ‘ are less treacherous and thievish, than they
 ‘ are in the Islands: for the propagation of the black
 ‘ species being very considerable here, most of them
 ‘ are born in the country, and it is remarked that
 ‘ these are in general *less depraved* than those imported
 ‘ from Africa. Besides, we must do the Virginians
 ‘ the justice to remark, that many of them treat

‘ their Negroes with a great deal of humanity, and
 ‘ what is still more to their honor, they appear sorry
 ‘ there are any among them, and are forever talking
 ‘ of abolishing slavery, and falling upon some other
 ‘ mode of improving their lands, &c.

‘ However this may be, it is fortunate that differ-
 ‘ ent motives concur to deter mankind from exercis-
 ‘ ing such tyranny, at least upon their own species, if
 ‘ we cannot say, strictly speaking, *their equals*; for the
 ‘ more we observe the Negroes, the more we are con-
 ‘ vinced that the difference between us *does not lie in*
 ‘ *the colour alone*, &c.

‘ Enough upon this subject, which has not escaped
 ‘ the attention of the politicians and philosophers of
 ‘ the present age: I have only to apologize for
 ‘ treating it without declamation; but I have al-
 ‘ ways thought, that eloquence can only influence
 ‘ the resolutions of the moment, and that every thing
 ‘ which requires time, must be the work of reason.
 ‘ And besides, it will be an easy matter to add ten or
 ‘ twelve pages to these few reflections, which may
 ‘ be considered as a concert composed only of prin-
 ‘ cipal parts, *con corni ad libitum*.’

Upon reading this passage attentively, I was sur-
 prised to find it contain a singular mixture of contra-
 dictory principles, and in the same breath, the senti-
 ments of a philosopher and of a colonist; of an ad-
 vocate for the Negroes, and of their enemy.

It is evident that as a philosopher, and a friend to
 humanity, you are inclined to alleviate the lot of the
 Negroes, and commend those who do so; but this
 tenderness itself conceals a subtle venom that ought
 to be exposed. For you only bestow your pity upon the
 Negroes, while you owe them, if you are a philoso-
 pher, vindication and defence; you wish their
 masters to be humane; they ought to be just. Instead
 of praising such humanity, you ought to have blamed
 them for stopping there, in short, such a contempt
 for the Negroes pervades this whole article, as will
 necessarily encourage their tormentors to rivet their

chains. Is not this contempt observable, for instance, in the very first period?

“Below this class of inhabitants (the meanest whites of Virginia) we must rank the Negroes, who would be still more to be pitied, if their *natural insensibility did not in some measure alleviate the wretchedness inseparable from slavery.*”

And who told you, Sir, that nature had created the Negroes with less feeling than other men? do you judge so because they have vegetated for three centuries in European fetters, and at this day have not *altogether* shaken off the horrid yoke? But do not their frequent risings, and the cruelties they from time to time retaliate upon their masters, give the lie to this natural insensibility? for an insensible being has no resentment. If he does not feel, how should he remember? Do you think the wretched Indians, who, since the discovery of the new world, are buried in the mines of Peru, are also naturally insensible, because they suffer patiently?

You calumniate nature in making her grant favours to particulars; in giving her a system of inequality among her offspring. All men are cast in the same mould—The varieties which distinguish individuals, are the sports of chance, or the result of different circumstances; but the black comes into the world with as much sensibility as the white, the Peruvian, as the European.

What then degrades this natural and moral sensibility? The greater or less privation of liberty; in proportion as man loses it, he loses the powers of sensation; he loses the man; he sickens or becomes a brute. It is slavery alone which can reduce a man to a level with the brute creation, and sometimes deprives him of all sensibility; but you blame nature, that kind parent, who would have us all equal, free and happy, for the crime of social barbarity, and you pass by this crime, to extenuate another, to extenuate the horrid torments of slavery! Not satisfied with violating nature, by abusing her offspring, even in her name, you encourage slave-holders to torment them.

Do you not arm their tyrants, when you tell them, the insensibility of the Negroes alleviates their torments?

What! because greatness of soul raised Sidney above the terrors of death, the infernal Jefferies * who caused his execution, was less guilty! because the Quakers appeared insensible to insults, blows, or punishments, they are less to be pitied, and it was right to martyr them! A dangerous notion, whose consequences I am sure you would disapprove. If this insensibility with which you reproach the Negroes mitigated the cruelty of their masters; it were well: but their tormentors do not wish them not to feel; they would have them all feeling, for the pleasure of torturing them; and their punishments are increased in proportion to their insensibility.

“Seeing the Negroes, say you, “ill lodged, ill clothed, and often overcome with labour, I concluded that their treatment had been as rigorous as it is elsewhere. Notwithstanding I have been assured that it is very mild, compared to what they suffer in the Sugar Colonies.”

Why this comparison, which seems to insinuate a justification of the Virginians? does a misfortune cease to be such, because there is a greater elsewhere? Was Cartouche less detestable because Brinvilliers had existed before him? Let us not weaken by comparisons the idea of criminality, nor lessen the attention due to the miserable, this were to countenance the crime. The Negroes are ill lodged, ill clothed, oppressed with labour in Virginia: this is the fact, this is the offence. It matters not whether they are worse treated elsewhere; in whatever degree they are so in Virginia, it is still outrage and injustice.

And again, why are the Negroes of Virginia less

* This Jefferies was the most infamous Chief Justice that ever existed in England. Charles II. and James II. well acquainted with his talents for chicanery, his debauchery and blood-thirstiness, his baseness and his crimes, made use of him to exterminate, with the sword of law, all those worthy men who defended the constitution from their tyranny.

I often quote the History of England; unhappily for us it is too little known in France.

cruelly treated? Humanity is not the motive, it is because covetousness cannot obtain so much from their labours, as in the Sugar Islands. Was it otherwise, they would be sacrificed to it here, as well as there; how can we praise such forced humanity? how, on the contrary, not give vent to all the indignation, which must naturally arise in every feeling mind?

“ And to do justice to both, you add, if the Virginians are not so severe, it is because the Negroes themselves are less treacherous and thievish than in the islands, because the propagation of the black species being very considerable here, most of the Negroes are born in the country, and it is remarked, that these are in general less depraved than those imported from Africa.”

Here is a strange confusion of causes and effects, and a strange abuse of words. First let us clear up the facts. Here are some valuable ones for the cause of the Negroes.

You say they are not so thievish in Virginia, propagate faster, and are less depraved: Why? Because they are less cruelly treated—Here is the cause and the effect, you have mistaken one for the other.

We must conclude from this fact, that if the Virginians were no longer severe, and should treat the blacks like fellow-creatures, they would not be more vicious than their white servants.

The degree of oppression is the measure of what is improperly called the viciousness of the slaves.—The more cruel their tyrants, the more treacherous, villainous and cruel are the slaves in return—Can we wonder that Macronius should assassinate his master Tiberius? This viciousness is a punishment that heaven inflicts upon tyranny.

Can the efforts of a slave for the recovery of his liberty, be denominated vicious or criminal? From the moment you violate the laws of nature, in regard to them, why should not they shake them off in their relative duties to you? You rob them of their liberty, and you would not have them steal your gold! You whip and cruelly torment them, and expect them not

to struggle for deliverance ! You assassinate them every day, and expect them not to assassinate you once ! You call your outrages, rights, and the courage which repulses them, a crime ! What a confusion of ideas ! what horrid logic !

And you, sir, a humane philosopher ! are accessory to this injustice, by describing the blacks in the style of a dealer in human flesh ! You call what are no more than natural consequences of the compression of the spring of liberty—treachery, theft and depravation*. But can a natural consequence be criminal ? Remove the cause, or is it not the only crime ?

For my part, sir, I firmly believe, that the barbarities committed by the Negroes, not merely against their masters, but even against others, will be attributed at the bar of eternal justice, to the slave-holders, and those infamous persons employed in the Guinea trade. I firmly believe, that no human justice has the right of putting a Negro slave to death for any crime whatever, because not being free, he is not *sui juris*, and should be regarded as a child or an idiot, being almost always under the lash. I believe that the real criminal, the cause of the crime, is the man who first seized him, sold him, or enslaved him—And if ever I should fall under the knife of an unhappy runaway, I would not resent it upon him, but upon those white men who keep blacks in slavery. I would tell them, your cruelty towards your Negroes, has endangered my life—they execrate you, they take me for a tyrant because I am white like you, and the vengeance due to your crimes has fallen upon me.

God forbid, however, that I should undertake to encourage the blacks to take up arms against their

* Most authors who have not deeply studied the rights of men, fall into this error. I have remarked elsewhere [Vol. II. of the *Journ. du Lycée*, no. 4, page 222.] that a writer, who notwithstanding, deserves our esteem, for having written against the despotism of the Turkish government, has suffered himself to be drawn into it. M. le Baron de Tott says, that the Moldavians are thievish, mean, and faithless. To translate these words into the language of truth, we must say, the Turks, the masters of the Moldavians, are unjust, robbers, villains, and tyrants; and that the Moldavians revenge themselves by opposing deceit to oppression, &c. Thus, the people are almost every where wrongfully accused.

masters ! God forbid, however, that I should undertake to justify the excesses to which their resentments have sometimes hurried them, and which have often fallen on persons who were not accessory to their wretchedness ! The slavery under which they groan, must be abolished by peaceable means ; and thanks to the active spirit of benevolence which animates the Quakers, the pious undertaking is already begun. In most of the United States of America, the yoke has been taken from their necks ; in others the Guinea-trade has been prohibited. Societies have been formed both at Paris and London, to collect and circulate information upon this interesting subject, to induce the European governments to put a stop to the Negro trade, and provide for their gradual emancipation in the West-India islands : No doubt success will crown their views, and the friends of liberty will enjoy the satisfaction of communicating its blessings to the blacks.

But the blacks must wait for the happy moment that shall restore them to civil life, in silence and in peace ; they must rely upon the unwearied diligence and zeal of the numerous writers who advocate their cause, and the efforts of the humane to second their endeavours ; they must strive to justify and support the arguments that are adduced in their favour, by displaying virtue in the very bosom of slavery ; they must endeavour, in a word, to render themselves worthy of liberty, that they may know how to use it when it shall be restored to them ; for liberty itself is sometimes a burthen, when slavery has stupified the soul.

Such blacks, therefore, as are so inconsiderate as to be concerned in insurrections, are guilty of retarding the execution of the general plan for their emancipation ; for the question is not, at the present day, whether a million of slaves ought to be set at liberty, but whether they can when free, be put into a capacity of providing for the subsistence of themselves and their families. Insurrections, far from effecting this purpose, would destroy the means. Regard, therefore, to their own interests, if there were no

other motive, should therefore engage the blacks to patient submission, and no doubt but they will yield it, if their masters and the ministers of the gospel in particular, to whom the task of comforting and instructing them, is committed, endeavour to prepare them for approaching freedom.

You sir, have adopted the vulgar notion, that the Negroes born in Virginia, are less depraved than those imported from Africa. You call the firmness which is common in the early stages of their slavery, *greater degeneracy*; they are depraved, that is, in your language—they are wicked and treacherous to those who have purchased them, or brought them from their own country—But in my mind, they are not depraved, because the acts of violence their genius inspires them to revenge themselves upon their tyrants, are justified by the rights of nature.

And why are those imported, more wicked in your opinion? In mine, more quick, more ardent in their resentments? because, not having forgotten their former situation, they feel their loss the more sensibly; and having strong ideas, their resolutions are more firm and their actions more violent, they not having yet contracted the habits of slavery.

They soon fall into that degree of apathy and insensibility, which you unjustly believe to be natural to them; that is, in your language, they become less depraved; but I would say that their depravity begins with this apathy and weakness—For depravity is the loss of nature, and the want of those virtues inherent in man, courage and the love of liberty. Our readers may judge from this article, how strangely writers have wrested words to condemn these unhappy Negroes, and the unfortunate in general.

I do not, however, pretend to say, that the Negroes of Africa are all good, or even that many of them are not depraved. But is this fact to be imputed to them as a *personal* crime? Ought you not rather to have ascribed it to the foreign source by which they are corrupted. Alike in them and in the whites,

the depravity of man is a consequence of his wretchedness, and the usurpation of his rights. Wherever he is free and at ease, he is good; wherever the contrary, he is wicked. Neither his nature nor the climate corrupt him, but the government of his country. Now that of the Negroes is almost universally despotic, such as must necessarily debase and corrupt the Negro.

How much is the depravity, occasioned by the government of his country, encreased by his second slavery, far worse than the first—for he is no longer among friends in his native land—surrounded by the pleasing scenes of his childhood, he is among monsters who are going to live by, and trade in his blood, and has nothing before his eyes but death, or oppression equivalent to an endless punishment.

How is it possible such horrid prospects should not fire his soul? How, if chance should present him with arms and liberty, should he resist using them, to put an end to his own existence, or that of his tormentors? What white man would be less cruel in his situation? Truly I think myself of a humane disposition, that I love my fellow-creatures and detest the effusion of blood; but if ever a villain, white or black, should snatch me from my freedom, my family, and my friends; should overwhelm me with outrages and blows, to gratify his caprice, should extend his barbarities to my wife and children—My blood boils at the thought—perhaps in a transport of revenge * * * * *. If such vengeance would be lawful in me, what makes the Negro more guilty? Why should that be called wickedness and depravity in him, which would be stiled virtue in me, in you, in every white man? Are not my rights the same as his? Is not nature our common parent? God his father as well as mine? His conscience an infallible guide as well as mine? Let us then no longer make other laws for the blacks than those we are bound by ourselves, since Heaven has placed them on a level with us, has made them like us, since they are our brethren and our fellow-creatures.

Here you stop me, you say that *the Negro is not our fellow-creature, that he is below the white.*

How could so shocking an opinion escape the pen of a member of the Royal Academy, a writer who would be thought a friend of mankind!

Do not you see the tormentors of St. Domingo, avail themselves of it already, redoubling their strokes, and regarding their slaves as mere machines, like the Cartesians do the brutes? They are not our fellow-creatures will they say: a philosopher of Paris has proved it.

What! the blacks not our equals! Have not they eyes, ears, a shape, and organs like ours? Does nature follow another order, other laws for them?—Have not they speech, that peculiar characteristic of humanity? But then the colour! What of that? Are the pale white Albinos, the olive or copper coloured Indians also of different species! Who does not know that colour is accidental. They are not our equals! Have not they the same faculties—reason, memory, imagination? Yes, you reply, but they have written no books. Who told you so? Who told you there were no learned blacks? And supposing it were so, if none but authors are men, the whole human race is different from us.

Shall I tell you why there are no authors or men of learning among the Negroes? What has made you what you are? Education and circumstances!—Now where are the Negroes favoured by either? Consider them wherever they are to be found—In Africa, wretchedly enslaved by domestic tyrants; in our islands perpetual martyrs; in the southern United States, the meanest of slaves; in the northern, domestics; in Europe, universally contemned, every where proscribed, like the Jews; in a word, every where in a state of debasement.

I have been told that there are blacks of property, in the northern parts of America; but these, like the other settlers, are no more than sensible farmers or traders—There are no authors among them, because there are few rich and idle people in America*.

* There was however, a Negro author at London, whose productions are not without merit, and were lately published in two volumes—His name was Ignatius Sancho—He wrote in the manner of Sterne.

What spring of action could raise a Negro from his debased condition? the road to glory and honor is impassible to him: What then should he write for? Besides, the blacks have reason to detest the sciences, for their oppressors cultivate them but they do not make them better.

Shall we say that the Indians or Arabs are not our equals, because they despise both our arts and our sciences? or the Quakers, because they neither respect academies nor wits?

In short, if you will deny the Negroes souls, energy, sensibility, gratitude or beneficence, I oppose you to yourself, I might quote your own anecdote of Mr. Langdon's Negro, and abundance of other well known facts in favour of the blacks. You may find some striking ones in the Abbé Raynals' philosophical history. One of them would have been sufficient. The Negroe who killed himself when his master who had injured him was in his power, was superior to Epictetus, and the existence of a single Negro of so sublime a character, ennobles all his kind.

But how could you judge whether the blacks were different from the whites, who saw them only in a state of slavery and wretchedness? Do we estimate beauty by the figure of a Laplander? magnanimity by the soul of a courtier? or intelligence by the stupidity of an Esquimaux?

If the traces of humanity were so much weakened and effaced in the Negroes, that you did not recognize them, I conclude not that they do not belong to our species, but that they must have been cruelly tormented to reduce them to this state of degeneracy. I do not conclude that they are not men, but that the Europeans who kidnap the blacks, are not worthy of the name.

You consider what precautions it may be necessary to take to avoid the danger which might attend a general emancipation of the Negroes.

I shall not now enter into a discussion of this nice question, but reserve it for another work: yet I must say in a word, that the Negroes will never be our

friends, will never be men, until they are possessed of all our rights, until we are upon an equality. Civil liberty is the boundary between good and evil, order and disorder, happiness and misery, ignorance and knowledge. If we would make the Negroes worthy of us, we must raise them to our level by giving them this liberty.

Thus, the chief inconvenience you expect will follow the emancipation of the Negroes, may be avoided; that although free, they will remain a distinct species, a distinct and dangerous body.

This objection will vanish when we intermix with them, and boldly efface every distinction. Unless this is the case, I foresee torrents of blood spilt and the earth disputed between the whites and blacks, as America was between the Europeans and Savages.

Perhaps, and it is no extravagant idea—perhaps it might be more prudent, more humane, to send the blacks back again to their native country, settle them there, encourage their industry, and assist them to form connections with Europe and America. The celebrated doctor Fothergill conceived this plan, and the society for the abolition of slavery, at London, have carried it into execution at Sierra Leona. Time and perseverance, will discover the policy and utility of this settlement. If it should succeed, the blacks will quit America insensibly, and Sierra Leona become the centre from whence general civilization will spread over all Africa.

Perhaps, sir, you will place these thoughts upon the Negroes with those declamations you are pleased to ridicule; But what is the epithet of declaimer to me, if I am right, if I make an impression upon my readers, if I dart remorse into the breast of a single slaveholder; in a word, if I contribute to accelerate the general impulse toward liberty.

You disapprove the application of eloquence to this subject; you think nothing can affect it but the exertions of cool reason. What is eloquence but the language of reason and sensibility? When man is oppressed, he struggles, he complains, he moves our passions, and bears down all opposition. Such eloquence

can perform wonders, and should be employed by those who undertake to plead the cause of the unfortunate who spend their days in continual agony, or he will make no impression—I do not conceive how any man can display wit instead of feeling, upon this distracting subject, amuse with an antithesis, instead of forcible reasoning, and only dazzle where he ought to warn. I have no conception how a sensible and thinking being, can see a fellow-creature tortured and torn to pieces, perhaps his poor wife bathed in tears, with a wretched infant sucking her shriveled breast at his side ; I say I have no conception how he can behold such a sight, with indifference ; how, unagonized and unconvulsed with rage and indignation, he can have the barbarity to descend to jesting ! Notwithstanding, your observations upon the Negroes, conclude with a jest.

“ It will be an easy matter, say you, to add ten or twelve pages to these few reflections, which may be considered as a concert, composed only of principal parts, “ *con corni ad libitum.*”

I hope there is nothing cruel, because there is nothing studied in this connection, this inconsiderate manner : but how could such a comparison come into the head of a man of feeling ? It is the sad effect of wit, as I said before ; it contracts the soul. Ever glancing over agreeable objects, it is unfeeling when intruded upon by wretchedness—uneasy to obliterate the shocking idea, and elude the groans of nature, it rids itself of both by a jest. The humane Benezet would never have connected this idea of harmony with the sound of a Negro driver’s whip.

Having proved that you have wronged the Quakers and the Negroes, I shall proceed to shew that you have equally injured mankind and the people.

VINDICATION of MANKIND, and of the PEOPLE.

I might quote several passages on this subject, but the following, which is one of the most striking, will be sufficient. After giving a description of an Irish-

man, who had treated you with a *good dinner*, you proceed.

‘ He was polite and attentive, and his wife, a delicate, pretty woman, had nothing of the peasant in her air or manners; for the Virginian, though in the midst of the woods, and cares of a country life, bears no resemblance to the European Peasant—He is universally a free man, who has his share in the government, and *possesses some Negro slaves*; so that he enjoys the double title of Citizen and Master; in which respect he is quite on a footing with the generality of those who composed that order which was called the People in the ancient republics, a People very different from those of the present day; but who have been very improperly confounded in all those *trifling declamations*, wherein our *would-be philosophical* writers, by not making a proper distinction between ancient and modern times, have mistaken the word People for Mankind in general; and have really been liberal in their praises to tyrants, when they meant to defend the cause of humanity: numberless are the opinions which require correction! numberless are the words, whose proper meaning is yet undefined! The favourite phrase of the dignity of man, has long been made use of; and yet this *dignity of man is merely comparative*; if applied to individuals, it depends on the rank they hold in life. Thus, the inferior station of the common people, gives dignity to the nobility, that of the slave to the freeman, and that of the blacks to the whites.

‘ If we apply it in a general sense, it will make men tyrannical and cruel to the animal creation; and thus, by destroying universal beneficence, will counteract the order and designs of nature—On what foundation then shall reason, freed from sophistry and declamation, fix her seat? On an equality of rights, on the general good, which is to predominate over every thing else; on the good of individuals as united with the good of the whole; and on that order in society, as absolutely necessary as the symmetry of a

‘ bee-hive, &c.—If these sentiments are unfavourable
 ‘ to eloquence, we shall lose nothing by it; for a good
 ‘ system of morality is certainly preferable to an ele-
 ‘ gant one †.’

And so, sir, you think the people of the present day, are a very different set of beings from the people of old times, and of consequence, more disposed to and fit for slavery—And you blame our philosophers too, for putting the people of our day more on a level with those of antiquity, and for asserting, that the only difference between them, is owing to the government they live under—Your conclusions, though not avowed, are, that the people of the present day are to be kept in a state of the severest thralldom—for you assert that their vices and follies are more numerous, and that their depravity is irremediable.

Now, I maintain, that these sentiments are false and detrimental to the people, whom you have thus traduced. You have already had my creed on this head. I believe that men receive their character, almost entirely from the nature of the government they live under—And that liberty exalts, while the want of it hastens their degeneracy. I believe that the ignorant Barbarian slave, who receives his existence on the banks of the Bosphorus, would have been an enlightened republican, had he been born at Philadelphia. I shall not affront you by bringing proofs in support of my assertions: They are proved by the history of every nation in the world, and who can be supposed better acquainted with history than the author of *la Felicité Publique*?

We may conclude then, that there is no more natural distinction between the ancients and moderns, than there is between the whites and the blacks; and that those which do exist, are merely accidental—Transport the government of Athens to Constantinople, and those very Turks who now

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† Voyage en Amerique, Vol. 2, Page 46. The mine is prepared, the combustibles are all ready, nothing but the spark is wanting.

appear so like barbarians, would equal the Athenians in valour, patriotism and knowledge. Liberty would animate these machines.

Cease then to vilify the people of the present day; drive them not to a state of desperation; but rather try to encourage them, by showing them that their state of degradation is owing to a cause which may be removed; and that when it is, they will become men.

I must confess, I do not rightly understand your meaning, when you say, that the defenders of the People of our days, have been liberal of their praises to tyrants; this is saying, that Locke, Sidney, Price, Rousseau, Helvetius and Raynal, have commended them; for these writers too, have unfortunately been of opinion, that the People of modern times will be quite on a footing with the ancients, when they shall be placed in the same situation.

But I can clearly see, that your system is far more favourable to the real oppressors of mankind; for by teaching them to consider the people of the present times as unworthy of liberty, and incapable of enjoying it; that the people, and mankind in general are daily degenerating, and will continue to do so, even if the cause of their degeneracy were removed—I say, by teaching such pretended truths as these, you encourage their oppressors to continue their ferocity.

But your system is utterly false; the revolution of America has clearly proved it to be so: for the chief actors of this revolution, are the descendants of Englishmen, (who were oppressed by the Stuarts,) or of German slaves.

You think to exalt the Americans by putting them on a level with the Greeks and Romans: for my part, I think them vastly superior to those ancient nations; But I do not mean to prove my assertion at present—I shall now content myself with just mentioning my sentiments on this head; and on a future occasion demonstrate, that the men of the present age, so far from having degenerated, will be superior to their predecessors, when placed in a more favourable situation.

After having decried the people of the present age, you go on to vilify mankind, and the dignity of man, which you look upon as merely comparative, and of course, you reckon up the different degrees of the dignity of man. According to your ideas on this subject, we have one or two hundred kinds of dignity in Europe, such as the dignity of a Duke, of a Baron, of a Marquis, of a Bailly, &c. &c. What abuse of words! and what an abominable system is here concealed—How can you, who are a philosopher, believe in the *natural dignity* of a nobleman above a plebeian, of a freeman above a slave, or of a white-man above a black? How could it escape you, that these different degrees of dignities, were but so many degrees of injustice and usurpation? How could you maintain the first, after having read in the different constitutions of America, *that all men are born free, equal, and independent*†; and after having offered to shed your blood in defence of such principles? You will scarcely maintain that they are not universally true; for surely no magic can make any principle true, on the banks of the Delaware, and false on the Seine—I know that these prejudices about distinctions still subsist in Europe; but how very unbecoming is it for a philosopher to be led away by prejudices, and to go so far, as to add new force to them by his writings.

And how could you make mention of the names of Plebeian and Patrician—those fatal distinctions, which brought on all the misfortunes and commotions of the Roman republic; distinctions, which involved Rome in perpetual wars, that were favourable to aristocratic power; which inspired her with the lust of conquest, and hurried her on to a despotic government? If Rome had been acquainted with, and had adopted that natural and sacred equality which the Americans have made one of the pillars of their

† Rumbold had declared on the Scaffold, in 1684, before the time of the American Legislators, that unless providence had created some men, with saddles on their backs, and others with boots and spurs to ride them, he would never believe in an inequality. Mrs. Macaulay's history. Vol. 7.

constitutions, her existence would certainly have been of a much longer duration. It was with a view to these principles, that I just now said, the Americans were superior to the Romans.

The dignity of the freeman, compared with that of the slave, has at first sight, something more plausible in it; and yet it is a mere chimera: For by nature they both possess an equal degree of dignity; their natural rights are the same—Slavery may deprive a man of the use of his rights and dignity, but it cannot deprive him of his title to them. The freeman should esteem himself happy in being so, but he should at the same time, sympathize with his fellow-creatures who are in slavery, and not entertain any ideas of self-superiority. The mean slave who glories in his situation, is the only proper object of contempt.

But what can you mean by that strange kind of dignity which you have invented to raise the whites above the blacks? What title is there to be found for this dignity and superiority? What author has mentioned it? Have not the blacks on the coast of Guinea, who are robbed of their gold dust, their gums, and their children, by European pilferers, as good a reason for arrogating to themselves a dignity and a superiority over the whites?

Away, sir, with these contracted ideas of dignity and inequality; they are far more likely than that general or specific dignity which you find fault with, to inspire men with sentiments of tyranny and cruelty towards their fellow-creatures. They answer no other end, but that of perpetuating continental, national, civil and personal animosities; and of rendering the earth the scene of eternal discord and blood-shed. For the antiquity of this inequality, can be of no force in depriving us of our rights or of our sentiments. It prevents no one from being sensible, that he is, by birth, equal to the man who enjoys the most elevated station; it prevents no one from detesting, according to his feelings, the man who violates this equality, by ruining or debasing his fellow-creatures.

This is no new doctrine—Rouffeau had taught it, and Locke and Sidney had taught it before him: It was their opinion alfo, that the wars and crimes of mankind were owing to this inequality, this comparative dignity which you are fo liberal in your praifes of, which you cherish and deify, under the appellation of order and fymetry—you, the noble champion for equality amongst the Americans! And yet, you who have drawn your fword in fupport of the dignity of men, are ignorant of the meaning of the term! read over, once more, the firft fection of the confitution of Pennfylvania; you will there find a clear and fublime definition of this term, which now appears to you fo obfcure and indeterminate; and which you blame the philofophers for having made an improper ufe of.

The dignity of man confifts in his liberty, in his equality of rights, in his independence, in the power he poffeffes, of being fubject to no laws, but thofe which are made by his own confent; in the *controul* which he exercifes over thofe to whom he has delegated authority. The dignity of man confifts, moreover, in the perfect developement of his moral and intellectual faculties, in his efforts to difcover, and promulgate truth—It confifts, in a word, in *great ideas*, in a *fteady and determined refolution*. The mere man of the world, who is from his very infancy furrrounded by narrow prejudices, and appearances, which he is continually obliged to give up to, who is always converfant with men of confined fentiments, and void of refolution; the mere man of the world, I fay, poffeffes not this dignity; I do not mean to affirm that this principle has not been implanted in his breaft, or that it cannot expand itfelf when a favourable opportunity offers; but when fuppreffed, it languifhes and withers—It is revived by meditation, by the electrifying power of vigorous minds, by holding converfe with the mighty dead, by continually ftudying thofe histories, which afford the noble fpectacle of an individual oppofing a tyrant. All thefe

supports afforded to man, fill his mind with exalted sentiments, impel him to the pursuit of noble objects, and determine him boldly to resolve on performing every thing that is good and sublime. Having thus explained to you the theory of what I mean by the dignity of man, I shall shew you, by a few examples, where it has been realized.—A Hampden, suffering imprisonment, rather than pay an illegal tax; A Sidney, ascending the scaffold * with composure; A Locke, unfolding his ideas on civil government; A Rousseau, writing his social contract; A Franklin, undergoing his examination with wisdom and firmness, before the British Parliament; A Warren, breathing his last in the cause of liberty, at Bunker's Hill; A Burke, prosecuting the destroyer of the Rockillas and the Tyrant of the Indies—These are great examples, and illustrious monuments, of the dignity of man; if you cannot perceive it in such examples, I pity you—There are those who will readily discover it, men, who have not lost the sense of their primitive greatness, and of their rights. The English nation, but more certainly the Americans, will easily discover it; numbers of them undoubtedly will sigh on reading this inconsiderate attack of yours against the dignity of man: They will naturally enquire, why you went to America, since you do not believe in the dignity of man; since you are only for comparative dignities, which they are either unacquainted with, or hold in contempt; and finally, since you are for an inequality of rank, which they have excluded, from a belief of their being the source of all political evils.

This is not the only passage, wherein you discover your contempt for the People; it is manifest elsewhere. For instance, you describe the People of Pennsylvania, as being more inclined to anarchy, than democracy. I shall not now attempt to discuss the motives which dictated this reflection upon the inha-

* I have frequently quoted this celebrated writer; to form a just idea of his merits, it will be necessary to study his works with care, and to read Mrs. Macaulay's account of his death.

bitants of Pennsylvania, who appear to me, to have in part realized the idea of as perfect a democracy, as it is possible to conceive, although perhaps it is too refined for the present state of things. This is certain, that the word anarchy, has been heretofore greatly abused. But I reserve my sentiments on this abuse of words, for another work.

I have finished the unpleasing task I imposed upon myself, in the beginning of this letter. I think I have proved, that you have calumniated the Quakers, the Negroes, the People and Mankind.

I ought perhaps to extend my observations to the other numerous errors contained in your travels; they must be dangerous under the sanction of your name. None of them are uninteresting: but I was not made for a critic, it is too painful an occupation for me. I shall therefore confine myself to a few remarks upon some of your sentiments, and such anecdotes as appeared most striking.

To begin with your opinion on the art of war. You have principally applied yourself to a description of the different engagements which have effected the American revolution. You think these descriptions useful for military men, that they will be particularly so to those of America; and by the complaisance with which you treat the subject, we perceive that it is your favourite art, and that you believe it very necessary to society, especially in a republic.

I am entirely of a different opinion, and independent of the uncertainty, and inutility of such descriptions, * I seriously believe that the military art tends to the advancement of aristocracy, and consequently ought to be banished from republics. I will not enter into those declamations, with which philosophers are reproached, when they write upon it, and shall advance nothing but well attested facts.

* Marshal Villars held such plans and descriptions very cheap. To form a perfect judgment, he would say, we must see with our own eyes. On being advised at court, to overflow the country, to secure the fort of Kell, he expressed himself as follows: *It looks very well upon paper, where we may lay what we please under water with a stroke of the trust.* *Vie du Maréchal de Villars*, Vol. 1.

The moment you make war a profession, you constitute a body of men who are constantly engaged in it, study it, teach it, and consequently forsake commerce and agriculture; they must therefore be maintained by their fellow citizens.

Those who possess this art, will employ it to acquire fame or wealth, they consequently desire, and foment hostilities: but republics ought to shun war, and especially the spirit of it.

If this art is not employed abroad, it will be at home.

As the military form a distinct body, they think themselves superior to their fellow-citizens, especially those who are peaceable. Prejudices encrease; it renders some insolent, and debases others.

The military art diminishes true courage. It is to nations what fencing is to individuals. It supplies the place of true courage, but does not inspire it. Now republics must defend themselves from foreign attacks with courage.

When men shall be thoroughly inspired with the love of liberty, and accustomed to exercise it in its full extent, they will possess a spirit no military art can subdue. The man who exclaims *I will die or be free*, has no master; the nation that repeats it, is no longer enslaved. A conqueror might massacre them all, but he could not make himself master of a single individual. Such courage does not need the support of art or fortifications*. It can support itself.

The real strength of a republic, depends upon the insuperable attachment of its members to liberty and their rights. Possessing this, the republican repels every attack, he soon learns this military art, he harasses and overcomes all his enemies: Witness many of the American generals, whose virtues and abilities you acknowledge. The greatest part of them had never handled a musquet; they had been merchants, far-

* See an excellent letter of Mr. de la Clos, upon the boasted utility of fortifications, addressed to the academy, on occasion of the eulogium of Vauban.

mers, physicians, book-sellers. Witness Warren, Knox, Morgan, Greene, and the infamous Arnold, whose talents should have ornamented the soul of a patriot. And no wonder that republicans so speedily acquire military skill. The preservation of their liberties engages every faculty; a more powerful incentive than the pay of mercenaries, or even the distinctions of European armies. This is the reason that one or two years experience, and two or three defeats, instruct republicans more than twenty or thirty years spent in the service of other governments†.

Animated by the love of liberty, republican soldiers are more patient, and bear fatigue better than hired troops. Witness your own commendations of the American soldiers, who always fought bravely, although ill paid, ill provided for, ill clothed, and unaccustomed to the business. You allow that they soon learned to serve the artillery, that their barracks were of the best construction, that they were brave, &c. &c. &c. What produced these wonders? The love of liberty. While they preserve it, they will have nothing to fear, and the military art will be useless to them.

They will do well to remember the battles you describe, not to study the plans or circumstances of them, but as splendid monuments erected to liberty. If they are ever obliged to reassume their arms, the same genius will inspire them without this study.

In a word, every individual of a republic, should be brave, should be a soldier, by birth the defender of his country; but none should be so by profession.

Republics have no more need of standing armies, than of magistrates, or representatives for life; which introduce war and corruption, with despotism in their train.

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† While we praise the Americans for their gallant defence of liberty; we must not forget to pay the same tribute to the patriotic ardour of our own countrymen.

You, Sir, no doubt think differently, you love war, and boast that it is the passion of our countrymen: *We love war*, you cry with an air of triumph; so much the worse; I see no reason to boast of disease: The real prosperity of France will depend upon the abatement of this passion for war.

You also compliment us on another account, less fatal perhaps, but of dangerous influence upon our manners and constitutions; I mean the taste for ridicule, for which you are a warm advocate, and lavish it upon every thing: You think good epigrams are made no where but in France, and a Frenchman never suffers himself to be outdone in this point, so much the worse; Asia has produced the best fabulists.

All our great wits have repeated from Horace, that ridicule is an excellent weapon. *Ridiculum acre magnas plerumque fecat res.* But Horace wrote under Augustus—Let me give you my reasons for hating and proscribing ridicule:

Ridicule accustoms us to laugh at abuses, which ought to excite indignation; it produces nothing but a volatile sensation, which passes off without any durable exertions to remove the evil: The epigram is soon forgotten, but the complaint remains.

It is otherwise with a grave people, accustomed to reflection in forming a judgment of things: When a writer has demonstrated to such a people, the existence and effects of a public evil; convinced and alarmed, they interest themselves in it, and the government perceives and corrects its error†.

To reform a people therefore, they must be reclaimed from the rage for ridicule, and brought back to cool reasoning. Ridicule is a rattle to amuse children.

† To perceive the difference between the effects of ridicule and rational enthusiasm, we need only compare the times of *la Ligue* and *la Fronde*, in our own country, with the revolutions of 1650 and 1688. in England. Our satires were excellent. *La Menippée* appeared, and Blot and Marigny entertained all France, at the expence of Mazarine: but Mazarine maintained his ground. The English less facetious, obtained the famous *Bill of Rights* which secured personal liberty, the freedom of the press, the right of representation, &c.

What is a nation in a state of infancy? Nothing: For shame, let us no longer compliment ourselves upon our songs and our ballads.

You seem to regret that the taste for these things abates, that we are no longer so jocose, so epigrammatic. This is to regret that the empire of reason has commenced.

You regret that our conversation begins to grow dull from being too rational; for you think we are the only people who know how to converse. Why this insult to all nations and to truth? Can it be said that we know how to converse in France, where it is customary to listen to nothing, and men of parts especially, thinking themselves above instruction, indulge their own ideas, without attending to yours? What is conversation? It ought to be a means of connecting mankind, of informing the judgment and humanizing the heart. But are these the objects of a French conversation? Do we instruct, nay do we even amuse one another? We merely glance upon our subjects. From the weather to a criticism upon the opera, from the opera to a battle, from the battle to a cap, &c. If you regret that this sublime style of amusing and instructive conversation declines, you must pardon me for not joining you. But do not think me less a friend to my countrymen than yourself, who appear to flatter them. I believe that they possess the seeds of every virtue, and that their expansion depends upon themselves; while you give them nothing but the art of punning:* which of us honors them most? In like manner intending to compliment our French women you traduce them in the following description; † ‘not a motion without grace, no grace without expression—The wish to please perfects and perpetuates the means of pleasing, and nature is rather assisted than thwarted by art, *not being abandoned to the*

* It is apparently to prove yourself a good Frenchman, that you have dealt out puns and witticisms with such a liberal hand; informing us for instance that our Physicians are no Grecians; that Simitiere (which for the sake of a pun, you misspell Cimetiére) is rather the name of a Doctor than a Painter; and describe a conversation with the popular chief, Adams, in the contemptuous light of private affligation. &c.

† Vol. 2, Page 97.

' cares of domestic life, nor wasted by continual childbearing.' That is to say plainly, that you compliment our countrywomen, upon being no longer good mothers or good housewives, and not scrupling to destroy their posterity for the sake of preserving an elegant shape, and pleasing their unmarried gallants. Shocking thought! what must the Americans think of our morals and of our women, at least in Paris (for this is only a view of the capital) when they read your travels, should any of them be weak enough to be seduced by this licentious language, or tempted to sacrifice to the same desires? Heaven preserve those republicans from such depravity!

Perhaps, and it is to be hoped, that the satires upon the Americans, and their chaste partners, with which your book abounds, will operate as an antidote to the pleasing venom it contains. Satires, you will say. Yes, cast your eye over the following list, which comprehends but a very small part of them.

You represent the American women, as being little accustomed to give themselves any trouble, and indifferent about every thing, except sipping their tea, and keeping the house clean. Let the reader compare this picture, with that of their virtues, drawn by St. John de Creveœur, who has lived so long in America, and he may judge how much you wrong them.

Your informing them in another place, that you did not think any of them handsome, or that they danced ill, is a piece of rudeness that French urbanity should have forbidden.

But your satiric vein flows most freely, when you bring an old or homely woman upon the stage. With what glaring colours you paint Mrs.—and the lady you openly expose by a sarcasm, upon her taste for liberty, not even suppressing the initials of her name, lest the blow should miss: Could you suppose that such affected mystery could conceal her in a city of but twenty thousand inhabitants, in which the circle of ladies who use white and red, must be very contracted.

You praise none of them, except it is for imitating the levity and frivolousness of our French women, or because she intends to introduce the fashions at Philadelphia, and produce a revolution in the taste of the toilette, of greater importance you say, than that already effected in politics.

You treat the men with as little ceremony: you charge them openly with formality, pedantry, ingratitude, hypocrisy, and even roguery. Their slightest defects could not escape your observing eye. Here a scholar addresses you in French, and you do not answer him in English, not to rob him of *the pleasure of displaying what he knows*. There you ridicule the director of a ball, upon the solemn air, with which he exercises his office; or a respectable governor, to whom you give all the pedantry of a republican, a Barneveldt, or a Heinsius. Heaven grant our petit maitres such pedantry and such virtues, and they will at least resemble men. In another place, you sow the seeds of discord between the different citizens, by representing, that some of the Americans call the Dutch *thick-skulls*, and make them the butt of their ridicule.

Thus perhaps your book will give rise to jealousy and ill-will.

Nor must I forget the ridicule you cast upon some of those religious republicans for saying *grace*.

Why make a jest of religion, before people who reverence it? Recollect, that the settlement of America was owing to religious enthusiasm, which has given her the character of firmness that still exists, and to which her present liberty is to be ascribed. Recollect, that the Atheists sided with Charles II. † and flattered him; while the Puritans did honour to human nature, but their voluntary exile.

What must we think of those dissolute princi-

* I do not mean to infer however that all Atheists are partisans of despotism.

ciples, which you endeavour to excuse, by apologizing for yourself, in the affair of the American Girl, a tale you should have suppressed in respect to morality, and the peace of the unhappy woman. But the pen drops from my hand, and I can follow you no longer, for it seems to me that your epigrammatic conceits have caused you to forget the respect due to strangers, to allies, to friends, to good people who gave you a friendly welcome, and vied with each other to entertain you.

If your travels contained information, let them be made public: But must it be published to the whole universe if you chanced to meet with an inkeeper who had lost an eye or was hump-backed? Have you forgotten that every thing which may tend to humble an individual unnecessarily and undeservedly, ought to be concealed, and this is always the case with natural defects? that silence is a duty in strangers, whose *ridicule* may make a lasting impression? Have you forgotten the respect that every writer owes to his readers? Can the faults or vices of private individuals interest the public? or the intelligence that such a one loves grog, is very tedious, or a great boaster? and that such a woman is old or ugly, &c. ? What conclusions can be drawn from such wretched anecdotes? Shall we conclude like the German, who described all the women of Blois to be red haired and ill-tempered, because his hostess was so.

If such circumstances cannot be generalized they are not worth notice: for every private fact, which will not admit of general inferences relating to history, manners or customs, is useless, and ought to be suppressed. Before a traveller publishes his observations, he ought to be fully impressed with the thought which Phedrus has expressed in the following adage, *nisi utile est quod facimus stulta est gloria*: Thus after riding over a vast extent of country,* and seeing

* This appears to have been the sole object of your Travels. You say no less yourself, Vol II. page 1. *True to the resolution I had formed in my*

a great many men and a great many things. To form an interesting picture of them, we must represent what may be useful to the public. § On this principle two thirds of your travels might be retrenched, and the remainder would be less imperfect. In justice to such of my countrymen who have read your travels I must say, that your book has made the same impressions upon them that it has upon myself, and no doubt the Americans will be pleased to hear it: I therefore protest in their names against those inferences, which might be drawn from it upon our national character. The Americans may believe me when I assure them that many of the brave Frenchmen who have defended their cause, have the highest esteem for their constitutions, their manners and their customs; that they are generally esteemed in France; and that our different habits have not prevented us from perceiving the full value of their simplicity and innocence. They may rest assured, that many of our countrymen who may have the satisfaction of visiting them in future, will be very capable of studying their constitution, and improving by their manners, without betraying the confidence of hospitality.

Perhaps, sir, you will complain of the severity of my censure, and the apparent harshness of this examination. It is severe I allow: but such is my disposition that I can neither disguise* my feelings nor express them with indifference.

child-hood to neglect no opportunity of seeing as much of the world as I possibly could. &c.

§ Travellers are not so cautious as they should be, in the publishing their observations: For one that is just, there are often one hundred false. Indeed, it is impossible to examine a nation at a single glance. Long acquaintance is necessary to qualify for a faithful description. To catch a feature in riding post, is to run a risk of drawing a portrait without a trace of the original.

* I do not love disguises even in delicate points—There are some authors who have gained the reputation of boldness, by slipping a few political truths into their works, which have escaped censure, by passing unobserved. But it seems to me that these direct methods betray their pusillanimity, and are at once a disgrace to the writer, who sacrifices truth to fear, the age and the country, which are thought not to be ripe enough to have it, and the administration, which has not virtue enough to suffer it; they tend to inspire other writers with timidity; and the

I know that severity is reckoned a sort of crime among us in the present age, wherein false politeness is substituted in the place of honest freedom, that is to say a shadow for the substance. I must therefore justify my bluntness. It may possibly tend to remove those prejudices which discourage the investigation and retard the progress of truth in our country.

When one writer has attacked another with warmth, we are apt to exclaim: Why so severe? He might have been treated with decency at least.

This national dislike to severity is a proof that vice preponderates and *character is lost*. Every individual capitulates more or less with the duties of his station, and barter his moral obligations for titles or pensions, and every one, conscious of his own misconduct, and recognizing some features of himself in the portrait of the weak or the guilty man, exposed to public view, inclines to indulgence, because he stands in need of it himself; and joins to persecute the nervous writer because he is a stranger to the spirit by which he is actuated; for innocence itself is an offence to the guilty.

I make no doubt that when Cicero uttered his thundering orations against Catiline, there were some senators weak enough to advise him to moderation; perhaps in the pusillanimous adage, *we must not give offence*. False maxim! Gentleness has ever been the ruin of individuals as well as communities. Bad men have made but too much advantage of the indulgence of virtue: For which reason I think that a virtuous man ought to be uniformly severe, that his character should be strongly marked, and boldly expressed, that he should never weaken his sentiments, or affect a dangerous moderation: truth demands, and the general good requires it.

Writers, above all men, should observe this line of conduct, to render themselves worthy of the task of instructing mankind; for how can they expect the confidence of their fellow-citizens, if they condescend

effect of recent and striking facts is destroyed by these means. In the present age, when Rousseau, Price, and Helvetius are in every body's hands, there is no necessity for disguising truths which shine in every page of their writings.

to accommodate their principles to circumstances, or compromise with the enemies of the community? They cannot, their influence is justly forfeited. It is said they only play their parts, and the wicked remain as before.

This decided character, now quite lost among our writers, was universal, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The civil dissensions, which then divided the citizens into parties, and impressed them with peculiar characters, influenced the writers of those times: Each was attached to a party, and treated its opponents with rigor. And this was not without its use: for the apprehension of a severe censure, obliged them to be just and accurate. The present gentleness of censure, has been the ruin of science.

In this respect I confess myself much better pleased with the manner in which Saumaise and Petau, Bayle and Jurieu, treated each other, than with the inoffensive *fatires* and hypocritical compliments, so common in our academies, and modern pamphlets.

It may be objected that abuse proves nothing. I grant it; but it serves to unmask a character. What is proved by our perfidious compliments, our cutting-ironies, and our *Italics* especially? Mere malice without any of that frankness which might palliate its malignity.

Besides, abuse is too often applied to that boldness of feature, wherein the man of virtue is obliged to paint the villain. What! shall Locke or Sidney, refuting the doctrines of the detestable Filmer, be required to treat him with delicacy and tenderness? No: living or dead, let infamy brand the villain.

Such a character as these two great men possessed, can never be concealed; it will appear in the physiognomy, the gestures, the speech, the writings of its possessor. Men of cooler tempers, strive to discourage it, by starting difficulties in its way, and the friends of the party second their endeavours from prudential considerations; but if it is deeply rooted, opposition only forces it to expand itself, which is a happiness for the public, as well as for the individual who is so strongly organized. He possesses in himself an

ample recompense for every inconvenience to which it may subject him. Such a one, like the philosophers of antiquity, ought to consult his secret genius upon every occasion. It is the nymph of Numa, the demon of Socrates, and the spiritual light of the Quakers. He ought to listen to it, with unceasing attention, and speak when it inspires.* Its inspirations never deceive those whose primary object is the public good, nor can they fail of general utility.

With such a character, it is impossible to be a cool spectator of scenes that shock every feeling of humanity, or remain unmoved at the sight of general calamity and injustice.

The generality of our writers preserve their moderation amidst these shocking scenes: They treat even criminals and oppressors, with civility and tenderness, because they have neither spirit, nor character. † Shall I tell you the reason of this? Independent of other general causes, it may be attributed to their way of life. Consider how a great character is formed, and then cast your eye upon the life of one of our writers.

A nervous character, is the result of a natural elevation of sentiment, an habitual indignation at the sight

* Great men who are invariably animated by a spirit of this kind, have always had cause to repent, when they have neglected to pay implicit obedience to its impulses. Hampden, the friend of Sidney, being accused of the same crime, at first chose to share his fate; but impelled by the pressing sollicitations of his friends, he consented to cast himself upon the king's mercy, and saved his life at the expence of a punishment worse than death itself: for he reproached himself for his weakness, all the rest of his life, and at last put an end to his misery by suicide.

† Notwithstanding, we must do justice to some late writers who have boldly defended the rights of mankind. This generous zeal has penetrated even to the bar, and the present year has given rise to spirited memorials, in favour of oppressed innocence. Their authors not confining themselves to the defence of their clients, have extended their observations to general liberty, the social compact, the duties of government, the faults of ministers and the misconduct of inferiors, who are always more obdurate and oppressive, than their masters. Some of the most remarkable of these memorials are those of M. Thilorier, that just published by M. Lacroix, in favour of the unfortunate Comte de Sanvis, and those in particular, written by my resolute and intrepid friend, M. Bergasse, against the villains who have so long persecuted M. Korermann.

of oppression, and frequent meditation, which tends to preserve the soul from the external causes of general lethargy and decay; in a word, it is the result of a man's constant communion with his own heart or with superior objects.

But how rare are these habits! can such meditation be enjoyed amidst the hurry and dissipation of a metropolis: yet here our geniuses are sent to receive that polish which is often fatal to every bold and original quality. Here they connect themselves in societies, communicate indiscriminately with each other, or with men of weaker minds, and thus debase themselves. Interest or habit, accustom them to praise whatever they meet with in these societies, and so the public is deceived. Is it worth while to undeceive it? All must live---and to live in peace, must avoid giving offence. Upon this principle, liberty, character, and independence, are soon lost, and the cause of truth is served only as it suits convenience.

Perhaps you will say that all this has been in print twenty times before---granted; it has been twenty times true, is now so for the twenty-first time, and is still necessary to be repeated, for the evil remains unreformed. It may also be affirmed, that truth, virtue and reformation, are only to be expected from the man who devotes himself to solitude and obscurity. Elevated ideas, bold resolutions, in a word, great characters are formed in solitude; and what can be expected from such a man, but severity of censure, which, notwithstanding, is by no means incompatible with kindness or urbanity. Authors should be friendly when they meet; should cherish and assist each other in cases of necessity, and bestow their applauses when merited; but they should also openly, candidly and vigorously, oppose each other, when wrong. Thus Price and Priestly, Kirwan and Cavendish, now treat each other in England. They are friends as far as is consistent with truth. Thus the patriot Jebb, treated the celebrated Charles Fox. Although intimately connected with him in private life, he warmly opposed him in his writings, and in all public assemblies.

These are the examples I proposed to myself for imitation. Whenever opportunity offered, I have paid a just tribute of esteem to your useful treatise de la Felicité Publique; I cannot therefore be suspected of prejudice in this reply to your satires upon the Quakers, the Negroes, and the dignity of man. They excited concern and indignation in my breast: I have expressed what I felt; if the warmth of my feelings has sometimes hurried me too far, ascribe it to the importance of the object; but do not suspect me of a wish to offend you: it always was and always will be far from my intention.

Notwithstanding, I have freely censured such parts of your travels as appeared to me to deserve blame, or lead to destructive consequences, I am not the less inclined to do justice to your interesting enquiries, and your just encomiums upon those celebrated characters who have contributed to restore the freedom of America. Is there a single Frenchman, or American, who will not review with satisfaction the portraits of Washington†; the learned Jefferson, and that gallant youth whom you so justly describe as the hope of our nation, *spes altera Romæ*, whose name will never be separated from that of his friend and father Washington, in the annals of the United States. These passages and some others almost equally interesting which relate to the American generals, together with your anecdotes of the revolution, stripped of the idle tales, scandalous stories, epigrams, puns, and mistaken notions, would form a volume of valuable materials for the history of the United States. No doubt the friends of liberty and humanity will join me in encouraging you to present them with such a work: *Ex fumo dare lucem*—this is now incumbent upon you, and would be useful to the public, as well as honorable to yourself.

PARIS, July 1st, 1786.

† Yet I am sorry to remark, even in this passage, something so studied and formal, that it must damp the enthusiasm which it ought to inspire.

P O S T C R I P T.

I H A D just finished this letter, when a friend handed me the review of your travels, which appeared in the *Mercuré* of the first of July.

The following passage in which the Quakers are mentioned, struck me particularly : “ A conversation with *one* Mr. Benezet leads the author to speak of the Quakers. Some think he has not done them justice. We also doubt whether his reproaches may be generally deserved by them. The religious principles of *these people* do not inspire them with bad morals, besides it appears improbable that theirs should differ from those of their fellow-citizens, &c. &c.”

I do not know the writer of this article. Whoever he was, it is astonishing that he should take the liberty to speak in this contemptuous style of Mr. Benezet and the Quakers. He could not be ignorant that the article *one* before a proper name is never so applied in our language but to men of contemptible characters : he could not be ignorant, that the expression *those people*, is insulting, and blends a body of valuable men with what we call the vulgar : If he was not ignorant, how dared this journalist to make use of such expressions, to describe an individual and a society who are equally respectable ? Where is the man in all Europe, of whatever rank or birth, who is equal to Benezet ? who is not obliged to respect him ? How long will authors suffer themselves to be shackled by the prejudices of society ? Will they never perceive that nature has created all men equal—that wisdom and virtue are the only real criterion of superiority ? Now who was more virtuous than Benezet ? who more useful to society, to mankind ? What author, what great man, will ever be followed to his grave by four hundred Negroes, snatched, by his own assiduity, his own generosity, from ignorance, wretchedness, and slavery ? Who, then, has a right to speak haughtily of this benefactor of men ?

With respect to the Quakers, after having considered the abstract here given, of their religious, moral

and political principles, it must excite indignation, to hear them described under the contemptuous appellation of *those people*. Shall nothing be honored but titles, rank, or splendor? and will authors always conspire with the favourers of aristocracy, to place the modest and simple virtues below titles, to which they are infinitely superior? On looking over what you say against the Quakers, I see with concern that you have not only used a like expression of contempt yourself when speaking of Benezet, but that you have even affected to *thee* and *thou* him in conversation. Permit me to make a remark upon this subject, which escaped me before: It is a principle of the Quakers, to reject those ceremonious expressions, which have been invented by vanity or meanness. They cannot see any *natural* difference in their fellow-creatures, sufficient to authorize a distinction in their address or deportment toward each other. The practice of saying *you* to a single person, appears to them false and absurd. Whether they are right or wrong, in this respect, it is equally certain, that plain language cannot be rude in them. They use it among themselves, whatever relation they bear to each other: they use it to every body. But it does not follow, that those who are not of their sect, who have not their principles, or way of thinking, should speak in the same style to them. It would not only be very impolite to do so, but a misplaced familiarity: yet plain language is not a mark of familiarity in the Quakers. Without departing from their *thee* and *thou*, they are careful to acknowledge the respect due to merit, to age, and to authority; and are decently reserved in their address to strangers. They know what good breeding requires, and are pleased with respectful treatment as well as the rest of the world: for they are at no loss to account for the affected plainness of those whose manners and principles are not consistent with such behaviour. It must appear to them either a misplaced familiarity or the mistake of ignorance, which being unable to comprehend the motive of their customs, thinks to

flatter them by a conformity to one of the least importance. Or indeed (as is most commonly the case) from that contracted self-love which is mortified by such bluntness, although it is universal and without respect of persons. In a word, they are sensible that plainness of speech is not contemptuous in them, but that it is so in other people, unless dictated by friendship or consanguinity. There is another absurdity, sir, in this review: its author doubts the justice of your charges against the Quakers, because, says he, *their religious principles do not inspire them with bad morals*. As if any religious principles inspired bad morals!—as if all the members of a sect must necessarily be honest men, because its principles are good!—as if there had never been any Protestant or Catholic rogues, because Protestant or Catholic principles do not inculcate roguery! Contemptible argument! weak defence! only calculated to confirm the public in the idea you give of the Quakers, which it is evident that the fawning or cowardly author of this article did not dare to oppose.

Such criticism is a disgrace to the man who undertakes to give the public the true character of a book. He should be perfectly master of the subject it is written upon. And, to return to the Quakers: if this writer must give his opinion between you, he should have been well acquainted with Barclay's Apology, and every other publication in their favour, but especially the letters of M. St. John de Crevecoeur; or if he had never read them, he might have confessed his ignorance, and kept his judgment to himself.

If I were inclined to discuss most of the other articles in this review, it would be easy to demonstrate that almost all of them are stamped with the same marks of frivolousness, ignorance, and adulation.

Every thing is praised down to the very table of contents, perhaps, because your dinners and suppers are faithfully registered there, and not a single fact is criticised, not a single idea*.

* I am astonished that he should suffer your contemptuous expressions

We must both agree, that people of quality and men of established reputation have a sad privilege in France ; it is that of receiving nothing but incense. As criticism is never wholly free with respect to them, this incense is never pure ; and the disgrace of their works, so pompously announced, shews them sooner or later, that encomiums obtained from meanness, by *prudential* considerations, will not entitle them to the esteem of their own age, much less to descend to posterity.

I must give you one instance, sir, of the pusillanimity of writers of the lower class towards privileged authors : it relates to yourself.

I was lately in company, when the conversation turning upon your travels, an author related, that not long since he could not help conceiting you frowned upon him, at table, and asked the person who sat next him, what could be the reason of it, who answered, M. Le Marquis de Chastellux believes you to be the author of the article against his travels, in the *Correspondence Littéraire Secrete* : he has been told that you write for it. For Heaven's sake undeceive him directly ; I have no hand in it ; I did not write that article. Why need you deny it so warmly ? replied I ; the work may deserve criticism. That may be, rejoins my gentleman ; but I would not attack M. de Chastellux ;

so liberally, and often unjustly bestowed, to pass entirely unnoticed. For instance, I meet with the word 'babblers,' in three different places, and it is misapplied in them all. A brave hatter is stigmatized with it, who had forsaken every thing to defend the liberties of his country, and after travelling four hundred miles on foot to join the American forces, had distinguished himself by a gallant action. He relates it to you very ingenuously, and you reward his civility with the opprobrious epithets of babblers and braggart. It is applied in another place to a respectable officer, who had taken care of a poor old man that was bitten by a mad dog, and whose good qualities might have apologized for the failing if he had been guilty of it, which does not appear to have been the case. And lastly, you apply it to the good woman who sheltered the unhappy girl, whose story ought not to have been exposed to the world, although this babblers, as you call her, had prudence enough to answer your enquiries by replying that it would be too tedious to relate. How many more such remarks might I have made ! But they were necessarily sacrificed to the important truths which I had pledged myself to defend.

he has the ear of M. de Montesquieu, who is in favour with Monsieur the King's brother: it would be the ruin of me; I have a wife and children to provide for. Well, sir, replied I, I am a father and a husband as well as you, but I will criticise these travels, and that openly: for I have too good an opinion of M. le Marquis de Chatellux not to believe, that if I should be persecuted for it (which but to suppose, were absurd and injurious to the persons you mention) he would himself be the first to defend me. Indeed it appears to me, that every judicious man, who regards his own interest, should be of the opinion of Lycurgus upon public discussions. This passage of Plutarch is so striking, and you are so great a lover of antiquity, that I am tempted to transcribe it entire.

“ The Spartan legislator, carefully strewed the
 “ seeds of ambition and jealousy among the citizens
 “ of his commonwealth, to whom the administration
 “ of the public affairs was entrusted, as an incentive
 “ to virtue—choosing that such men should always
 “ have something to canvass and controvert,
 “ among themselves; being convinced that the
 “ sluggish, unmanly courtesy, with which men
 “ mutually concede to, and pardon one another, is
 “ falsely called harmony: and some think that Homer
 “ must have been of this opinion, or he would
 “ never have made Agamemnon pleased to see Ulysses
 “ and Achilles quarrelling, if he had not thought
 “ that strife and emulation among the principal men,
 “ caused them to have a watchful eye upon each
 “ other, and tended to the public advantage.” &c. &c.
Plutarch's Life of Agesilaus.

PARIS, July 20, 1786.