A

LETTER

FROM

Paris,

TO GEORGE PETRE, ESQ.

BY THE

REVEREND JOHN CHETWODE EUSTACE.

SIXTH EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. MAWMAN, 39, LUDGATE STREET.

1814.

BARNARD AND FARLEY,
Skinner Street, London.

During the Month of June last, Lord Carrington was so very obliging as to invite the Author of the following pages to accompany him in an excursion to Paris; this kind Invitation was conveyed in Terms too flattering to be refused. The Reflections now communicated to the Public were made during the Excursion; and were addressed to an intimate Friend who had requested some Account of the French Capital. Mr. Eustace cannot close this short Notice, without begging Lord Carrington to accept his cordial Acknowledgments for the constant Attention with which his Lordship was pleased to honor him during this little Tour. The Earl of

Essex will permit the Author to join his Name to that of his noble Friend, and to record his Politeness and good Humour on the same Occasion.

August, 1814.

A

LETTER FROM PARIS.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In compliance with your request at our last interview, I will now give you an account of the principal observations which I have been induced to make, during my progress through the northern provinces of France, and my stay in the capital. The subject is extensive, and, I fear, that to do it justice more leisure, than I can command, is necessary. To such reflections, however, as I have made, you have a right, and I will proceed to state them simply, and in the order in which they occurred.

France, during the space of twenty-four years, has passed through all the gradations of revolution and rebellion, of civil and external war, of anarchy and despotism, of republican and

military government. In the progress of revolutionary madness, a plan was formed the most daring and the most sacrilegious ever conceived, of annihilating all the institutions of thirty million of people; of suppressing all that had previously existed, and replacing the whole religious and civil system, by new and unauthorized whims and theories. Thus an attempt was made to strike out one link in the chain of generations, to separate man from his God and his ancestors, to deprive him of all the lights of history, and all the benefits of experience, and to let him loose upon himself and his fellow creatures, untutored, undisciplined, without any guide but passion, any impulse but interest. In order to realize this project of gigantic atheism, France was first detached from the European republic; the associated *firm* of Christian and civilized states; its religious institutions, its universities, schools, and academies, its abbies and hospitals were suppressed; its parliaments and courts of justice, its customs and its laws were abolished; its armies were dissolved, reorganized, new modelled, new named; its banners, which had so often led its le-

gions to victory, and had waved with honor in every quarter of the globe, were trampled upon, and its *oriflamme*, the proud standard of its monarchs, the object of the love and the adoration of every French soldier, announcing by the lilies of gold on the argent field, the honor, the gentleness and the gallantry of the monarch and of his knights, the *oriflamme* was consigned to revolutionary fire, and succeeded by the tawdry tricolor of the republic, and the rapacious eagle of the empire. This system of complete disorganization was carried on through every period and by every party that succeeded each other during the whole revolution; sometimes indeed with less publicity, but always with equal art and perseverance. To trace the effects of such a system operating for a considerable time on a country of such extent and population, is part of the occupation of a traveller, who looks beyond mere amusement, and endeavours to turn the excursion of the season to some permanent advantage. With this object in view, you will peruse the following observations.

The scenery of France, as that of the continent in general, is upon a larger scale than the scenery of England. The vales spread wider: the hills form more extensive swells; there are no hedges or divisions; and the trees are either collected in clumps and masses round the villages, or form large woods and forests that sweep over hills and dales, and sometimes shade the whole horizon with a dark border. The roads are generally lined either with fruit trees, or lofty elms, sometimes in double and triple rows. These rows, however, as there are no fences, do not obstruct the view; and the eye may generally range over an immense tract of plains and hills, of wood and tillage, and not unfrequently expatiate over an ocean of corn waving for miles around without interruption, and presenting no other variety than the tints which its own motion and the passing clouds cast over it. Cultivation, if we except the neighbourhood of Paris, seems to have been carried on everywhere with the utmost vigor; and not a spot of earth appears to have escaped the vigilance and

the industry of the husbandman.* Roads wide, straight, generally paved in the middle, and always excellent, intersect this scene of fertility, and conduct the traveller from post to post with ease and rapidity.

The towns are generally well-built, and far superior to our country towns in stateliness and solidity. Some contain magnificent monuments of the grandeur of ancient France. Such is the church of St. Wulfrid at Abbeville; the celebrated cathedral of Amiens; and the stables of the chateau at Chantilly. The front of the first, with its two towers, numberless niches and statues, with all their accompaniments of fretwork and carving, affords a most beautiful specimen of Gothic architecture in its richest style. The second, owing to the zeal and the good disposition of the people of Amiens, has

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* I speak here not of the real but of the apparent cultivation. I suspect that our English farmers would discover much bad husbandry: the breed of cattle, of sheep, of swine, is most strikingly bad; and the quantity of stock very small indeed. An observation which, however, I do not mean to extend beyond the country between Calais and Paris.

survived the storms of atheistic fanaticism, and still retains all its original perfection, and all the beauty of holiness. The third, erected in the time of Lewis the Fourteenth, exhibits in its magnitude, its proportion, and its decorations, all the stateliness and the majesty of that triumphant æra of French history.

So far the picture is pleasing; but its colors will lose much of their brilliancy when I inform you, that the villages and towns are crowded with beggars, and that whenever you stop, your carriage is instantly surrounded with a groupe of objects the most miserable and disgusting. In a country where the poor and the distressed are abandoned to the charity of individuals, the number of mendicants must be greater than in one where public provision is made for the suffering class: *this* is true; yet the number, who in France fall under that denomination, seems to me far beyond the usual proportion, especially as idleness in a country so well cultivated, can scarcely be the cause of such poverty; nor is it a mere pretence employed to extort donations, as the haggard looks, the nakedness, and oftentimes the ulcers and the

deformities of the claimants too clearly prove its reality. In truth, there is great poverty in France; and however fertile the soil, a very small portion of its produce seems to fall to the lot of the common people.

But, besides this poverty, there is also a great appearance of depopulation. The signs of this depopulation, are the ruinous state of many, or rather most, of the towns. The bustle and activity of life seems confined to the market-place, and its immediate vicinity; the more remote streets, and the skirts of the towns, are scarcely, and at best very thinly, inhabited. Most of the large houses seem abandoned, and in a state of dilapidation; while the convents, the colleges, and other pious establishments, untenanted and in ruin, seem as if abandoned to the shades of their former possessors, and left to reproach the present, and to menace the future generation. The chateaus have in many places shared the fate of their contemporary abbies; and like them, have been destroyed, or left to moulder in gradual decay. The villages, formerly enlivened by the presence of their lords, whether laymen or monks, and enriched by their ex-

penditure, now pine in want and silence; the cottages are ill-repaired; the employment of the peasants is irregular, and consequently their maintenance is precarious. The conscription came to fill up the measure of their sufferings, and to complete the depopulation of the country; and when you are informed, that in the space of two years, one million five hundred thousand men were levied in France, or sent from her frontiers, you will not be surprised at her present depopulation.

You will naturally ask, how the country can be so well cultivated, if the population be so much diminished? The question is natural, but not difficult to answer. The farmers assure you, that the operations of agriculture are carried on by old men, women, and children; and few, indeed, of any other description are to be seen, either in the fields, on the roads, or in public places. These exertions, premature in boys, and misplaced in women, must not only check the growth of the rising generation, but eventually degrade the sex, whose virtues are principally domestic, and whose charms shed their best influence around the

fire-side, and give to home all its attractions. Add to this evil, another of equal magnitude; employment of children in their infancy, by calling them away from home, withdraws them from the control, and deprives them of the instructions and the example of their mothers, instructions and example of all others the most important, because to them the infant owes the first ideas of decency, the first emotions of piety, the sentiments and the manners that raise the citizen above the savage, the Christian above the barbarian. To deprive children, therefore, of this early tuition, and to let them loose unrestrained in the fields, is to abandon them to the innate corruption of their own hearts, and to fit them beforehand for guilt and profligacy. Accordingly, vice and ferocity seem imprinted on the countenances of many of the rising generation; and have effaced those features of joy and good humour, and that merry grimace, which was supposed to characterize even the infants of ancient France.

You are now probably prepared to hear without astonishment, that there are supposed to

be at present twelve women to one effective man.

The country by no means improves as you approach Paris. The post next to it is St. Denis, a little town remarkable for two churches, the one a very handsome modern structure, the other the ancient and venerable abbey, which gave its name to the town that gradually rose around it, and flourished under its patronage. It was founded in honor of the martyred bishop Dionysius the apostle of Gaul, by Dagobert, a prince of the Merovingian race; and was thus almost coeval with the monarchy. Its abbots distinguished themselves by their talents and their integrity, during many an eventful year; and so interwoven was its history with that of the country, that the annals of St. Denis became the records of France. It was honored in a particular manner by the royal family, and was from its foundation the mausoleum of the sovereigns of France. It was at an early period burned by the Normans in one of their predatory inroads, but restored with increased magnificence, and sometime after rebuilt in its present form by Suger, the celebrated abbot, who govern-

ed France as regent in the absence of St. Lewis. Its decorations, as may easily be supposed, were worthy its antiquity and high destination; and fretted vaults, and storied windows, and rich shrines, and marble altars, combined their influence to heighten its majesty, and to awe and delight the spectator. It was served by a numerous fraternity of learned and holy monks; fumes of incense ascended daily from its altars; and morning, noon, and night, the tones of the organ, and the notes of the choir, echoed from its vaults. Such was St. Denis in its glory; and such I beheld it in the year 1790.

In 1802, I revisited it. The ruins of the abbey strewed the ground. The church stood stript and profaned; the wind roared through the unglazed windows, and murmured round the vaults; the rain dropt from the roof, and deluged the pavement; the royal dead had been torn from the repositories of departed greatness; the bones of heroes had been made the play-things of children, and the dust of monarchs had been scattered to the wind. The clock alone remained in the tower, tolling every

quarter, as if to measure the time permitted to *the abomination of desolation*, and to record each repeated act of sacrilege and impiety.

The inhabitants of the town made representations to Buonaparte on the subject, and were flattered with hopes and promises. Still, however, reparations were neglected, and the progress of ruin was rapid. At length, the Emperor undertook what the First Consul had neglected; St. Denis was destined to receive the ashes of the imperial dynasty; and orders were issued to render it worthy in every respect of the honors that awaited it. The royal vaults were cleared, repaired, and in many respects considerably improved. The subterraneous chapels were re-established and three of them fitted up with exquisite taste and devoted to the memory of the preceding dynasties. In these chapels, prayers were daily offered up for the repose of the Merovingian, Carlovingian, and Capetian princes.*

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* The altars (called *Autels expiatoires*) were afterwards removed by order of Buonaparte, in consequence, it is said,

The reparation is continued under the royal auspices; and excepting the stained windows, the loss of which is irreparable, the church of

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of an academical squabble. An author well known for his talents, his eloquence, and his honorable attachment to religion, was chosen a member of the *Institut*. The new member is obliged by custom to pronounce, on his admittance, the funeral oration, or rather the panegyric of his deceased predecessor; a task of great delicacy always, and sometimes of considerable difficulty. It was peculiarly so, it seems, on the present occasion. The deceased academician had indulged himself in some philosophic invectives against Christianity; and his successor thought himself obliged to notice and condemn his conduct in this respect. The president of the *Institut*, to whom it is customary to communicate the discourses to be delivered on such occasions, refused his sanction. Chateaubriand was too spirited to consent to any omission; and in the course of the altercation that ensued, employed the following remarkable expression, *Si on me reproche comme un crime d'avoir loué les Bourbons, je me refugierai sous les autels expiatoires de St. Denis.* The dispute was communicated to *Buonaparte*, who, with apparent indifference, merely exclaimed, *Chateaubriand a tort.* The expiatory altars disappeared shortly after.

St. Denis will probably resume, ere long, its ancient majesty.

The road from St. Denis to Paris is over a sandy plain, which, from its solitude and neglected cultivation, appears far remote from a populous capital. Mont Martre (Mons Martis, Mons Martyrum) rises on the right of the traveller, who enters by the Porte St. *Denis*. This hill is of no great elevation, and no beauty; it is neither shaded by groves, nor adorned with villas. Seven or eight windmills rise on its ridge, and whisk round as if engaged in a contest of rapidity. Windmills when single, and rising above a skreen of wood, or near the spire of a village, please the eye, because they contrast with the stillness of the scene, and give animation to the picture; but when presented full length, and drawn up in regiments in the immediate neighbourhood of a great city, they form a very graceless and unpromising accompaniment. In the suburbs of Paris, the streets are well built and wide; but they are thinly inhabited, and silent; very different in this respect from the glow of life, the motion, the

fermentation that pervade the vicinity of London, and spread so widely over the whole surrounding country.

We crossed the Boulevards, and entered by the Porte St. Denis, a triumphal arch, erected in honor of Lewis the Fourteenth; it derives more dignity from its mass than grace or beauty from its ornaments and proportions. We then entered a long narrow street, with high houses on each side, a stream of black mire in the middle, and stench and noisomeness all around. Such, indeed, are the streets of Paris in general, narrow, dark, and disgusting. Of this city, I will now endeavour to give you a general idea.

Paris stands upon the Seine, which divides it into two parts nearly equal, and forms three islands in its windings. The breadth of the river may be about that of the Thames at Richmond; though it appears wider, because the stone quays that border it are raised at a considerable distance from the bed of the river. The length of the town, that is, its extent along the river, may be about four miles and a half; its breadth, from the Barrieres St. Denis

to the Barrieres St. Jacques, about three miles and a half. The new walls, or those erected a little before the revolution, enclose a very considerable space of ground, uninhabited, and sometimes under tillage; hence the real extent of the city is very different from its apparent magnitude.

The *Fauxbourgs* are in general very thinly inhabited, and that of St. Marcel, St. Jacques. St. Antoine, St. Germain, are nearly deserted, By *fauxbourgs* you are to understand, not the suburbs, or the streets out of the walls, but the space enclosed between the ancient ramparts, now called *Boulevards*, and the new wall, or later circumference. This depopulation may be occasioned principally by the exile or the impoverishment of the higher classes, and by the suppression of colleges, and ecclesiastical establishments, the two great sources which fed and enriched the inhabitants of the exterior quarters of Paris; and in former times gave them a great appearance of life and prosperity. Notwithstanding the filthy and disgusting appearance of the streets, there are

many handsome edifices, some fine streets, and one of the twelve districts, into which the city is divided, is splendid in a degree rarely equalled. The quarter to which I allude, is that which embraces the Louvre and the Tuilleries, with all their accompaniments, and thus includes nearly all the beauty and all the magnificence of Paris. Every town has its particular and characteristic feature; and the royal palace with its superb vicinity, forms very appropriately the principal feature of the capital of so ancient and so glorious a monarchy. The traveller who enters Paris by the *Barrieres de Neuilly*, which stand on an eminence, and look down upon the scene to which I allude, will behold it to the greatest advantage. As he descends through a long and straight avenue, he crosses first the Champs Elysees, a grove of trees neither lofty nor spreading, but pretty and refreshing from their numbers; then the Place Louis Quinze (de la Concorde) bounded on the right by the quay and river, on the left by two long and lofty edifices fronted with very handsome Corinthian colonnades; and in front, by the

terrace and gate of the gardens of the Tuilleries. The centre of the Place Louis Quinze,* exhibits one of the noblest views in Paris, terminating in front in the palace of the Tuilleries, seen through the grand alley; behind, in the triumphal arch and Barrieres de Neuilly, through the perspective of a long avenue; while on the one side the Rue Royale, a short but wide and noble street, terminates in the new church of the Madelaine;† and on the other side, the eye glancing over the new bridge, *de Louis Seize*,† rests on the graceful colonnade that forms the facade of the palace of the *Corps Legislatif*. This colonnade is supported by a bold flight of steps, consists of twelve Corinthian columns, is surmounted by a well proportioned pediment, and is, perhaps, on the whole, of all modern edifices, that which borders nearest in appearance and effect upon the *antique*. It would have been considerably improved, had its pil-

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* De la Concorde, began before the revolution.

† Temple de la Gloire, Eglise de la Madelaine, begun before the revolution, then taken down, then restored, and yet unfinished and suspended.

lars been fluted and more massive, and had the stone of which it is built been of a softer white. To these petty defects we may add one more essential; which is, that the whole is a mere theatrical decoration of no depth, and not the least utility; very different from similar embellishments in ancient times, when they always graced the principal, perhaps sole, entrance into a curia or a temple, and not only pleased the eye, but elevated the minds of those who entered in, and raised them to a level with the destination of the edifice.

Through the middle alley of the Tuilleries, (a noble garden formed principally of fine spreading elms, limes, and horse chestnut-trees, and surrounded with a terrace,) we come to the front of the Palace. I have in another work* spoken of this edifice, admired its extent and its symmetry, but censured the divisions and interruptions of style and manner, that by breaking it into such a variety of parts, diminish its effect and deprive it of all the advantages of its immense magnitude.

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* Classical Tour through Italy.

You pass through the pillared vestibule, and then enter the noble court of the *Louvre*. In front an iron rail, formed of spears with gilt points encloses the space nearest the Tuilleries, and extends across the square. Close to the middle entrance of this rail, rises a triumphal arch erected by Bonaparte; its materials are beautiful marble; its form is the same as that of Constantine; its decorations are pretty; but it is small in size, and misplaced in situation. A triumphal arch should cross a street or a high road, and form a gateway to a city or to a grand square. Here it stands in the court of a palace, and seems rather to encumber than to ornament the space it covers.

On the top of this arch, are placed the four celebrated bronze horses, taken from the Piazza di San Marco, at Venice. Instead of standing insulated, as they did originally, they are harnessed to a triumphal car, and held on each side by two figures of victory. These figures and the car are gilt, and by their splendor and position quite eclipse the matchless horses.

On the right, as you advance towards the triumphal arch, extends the edifice which forms a communication between the Tuilleries and the Louvre, and now contains the celebrated gallery of pictures. Its architecture is in part the same as that of the pavilions of the Tuilleries, without the attic, but disfigured by numberless pediments alternately triangular and curvilinear. Towards the middle, the style changes, and instead of the single Corinthian, three different and whimsical composite forms are introduced to the great detriment of the architectural appearance. Bonaparte laudably wishing to complete the square, began the communication on the opposite side; and had erected more than a third of it, at the period of his dethronement The work is still carried on, and will, it is to be hoped, be completed in the space of a year or two; when finished, it will form, by the union of the two palaces, and by the simplicity and openness of the design, which counterbalance so many defects, the noblest royal residence in Europe.

The Louvre is a square edifice of very pretty architecture, though rather minute in the inward court and square. The front which it presents to the river, is plain and noble. The eastern front is the famous colonnade, the pride of French architecture, and the noblest monument of the era of Louis the Fourteenth. It is of the Corinthian order, of considerable elevation and length, and indisputably of grand and majestic appearance. Yet it is liable to much criticism. The substruction on which it stands is too high in proportion to the elevation of the colonnade. The pillars are coupled; a circumstance which destroys the proportion between the pillars and the intercolumniations. The shafts are too thin for their length; and in fine the heavy masses at the ends and in the centre, under the pediment, throw a gloom and a clumsiness over the whole fabric.*

In the neighbourhood of the *Louvre*, is the

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* I have elsewhere observed that the elevation of the colonnade of the *Louvre* from the ground to the top of the

Palais Royal, the residence of the Duke of Orleans, of neat but very plain architecture. The gardens were turned into a handsome square by the late Duke, and became one of the grand theatres of revolutionary madness, as well as of dissipation and libertinism. The first has evaporated, but the two latter seem inherent in the very materials of the place, and long likely to haunt its impure recesses, and to infect the very air that breathes over it.

Buonaparte detached the garden and palace of the Tuilleries, by destroying the riding-school and several houses that encumbered the north side of the garden, and building the *Rue de Rivoli*, which runs the whole length, and borders the street with a row of handsome arcades. From the northern gate of the garden, and across the *Rue de Rivoli*, he has opened a wide street to the *Place Vendome*, and thence again to the *Boulevards*.

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pediment is *said* to be one hundred and twenty-five feet, an elevation equalled by the *bronze* canopy that covers the altar of St. Peter's.

Thus the column which Napoleon erected in the centre of the *Place Vendome*, stands displayed on both sides, and is seen to great advantage from a considerable distance. The column is of the same form, elevation, and proportion, as the celebrated Columna Trajana at Rome; the only difference between them is in favor of the former, as it is entirely covered from the ground to the summit with brass furnished by the artillery taken from the Austrians. The figures that wind in a spiral line from the base to the capital, represent the events of the Austrian campaigns, and are executed in a bold and vigorous style. The deformities of modern dress, so ill calculated for representation, are oftentimes very skilfully connected in the masses, and almost lost in the crowd and bustle of the action. The statue of Napoleon, which like that of Trajan, crowned the summit of his column, is replaced by the white flag; whether a more majestic and appropriate termination be intended, I have not been informed. The *Place Vendome*, though of regular architecture and form, does not, however, either in

size or beauty correspond with so noble a decoration; and the appearance and accompaniments of the Place de la Concorde, would have been better adapted to the majesty of the column.

One of the best views, perhaps the noblest of Paris, is that from the *Pont Royale*, whence the traveller sees displayed on his right, a well-built and regular quay, with the *Palais des Arts (College Mazarin)* and the *Hotel des Monnoies;* and on his left, the Gallery of the *Louvre* in its full length. In front he has the new bridge, called the *Pont des Arts;* the Pont Neuf, the river there diverging into two branches lined with noble quays; and the venerable towers of Notre Dame, rising in the midst of its island.

The Palais du Luxembourg, now *Palais du Senat*, or *des Pairs*, is a bold, regular, and majestic, but heavy edifice, erected by Mary of Medicis on the plan of the *Palazzo Pitti* of Florence, as a memorial of her distant country. Its beauty arises from its simplicity and mass; its deformity, from the rustic style, which pervades the

whole. The interior has been repaired and improved; and the staircase leading to the hall of the Senate, although a feeble imitation of that of the Vatican, is very majestic. The garden behind it, now enlarged and extended to the Observatory, is as anciently, public, and though inferior to that of the Tuilleries, yet beautiful, and a great embellishment to that quarter of Paris.

The Palace of the Legion of Honor, once of the Prince of Salm (who was put to death during the revolution), is remarkable for its court, formed of a very handsome Ionic colonnade, and though not extensive or elevated, may be considered as one of the principal ornaments of this city.

In churches, notwithstanding the devastations of the revolution, and the treacherous indifference of Napoleon's government, Paris is still rich; and though Notre Dame is inferior to Westminster, and Sainte Genevieve, to St. Paul's; though the portico of St. Martin's, St. George's, Bloomsbury, and St. George's, Hanover Square, are more simple and correct than any similar decoration in the French capital;

yet, not only the two churches which I have mentioned, but St. Roch, St. Sulpice, St. Eustache, and that of the Invalids, are most noble edifices, and far superior in magnitude to all the churches in London, with the exception of St. Paul's and Westminster. In interior decorations and splendor, even these sink into insignificance compared with the Parisian temples. The superiority of the latter in this respect, is to be ascribed, not only to the more majestic character of the predominant religion, and to the more active piety of its votaries, but to the prevalency of a purer taste, which proscribes pews and skreens, and central pulpits, with every contrivance to encumber the pavement and to obstruct the general view; and which at the same time requires, that the interior of churches should be embellished with as much care and attention as other public edifices, and that the table of the Lord should be graced with as much decency, as an ordinary sideboard. I have said, notwithstanding the devastations of the revolution; previous to that explosion of national phrenzy, there were in

Paris two hundred and twenty-two churches, of which forty-five were parochial; of these there remain twelve parochial and twenty-seven *succursal* or minor parish churches, in all thirty-nine churches for public or parochial service. The others have either been demolished, or turned into manufactories, schools, or granaries. The greater part of those which remained, were pillaged, stript of all their marble, brass, statues, paintings, and even altars and pulpits. The painted windows were not often spared, and the lead and copper of the roof not unfrequently carried off. Thus they were all reduced to a lamentable state of degradation, nakedness, and gradual decay; and in that state, they remained till the religion of the nation once more became that of the state: and Christianity reassumed its external honors. The attention of government was then directed to the preservation of the churches; but as Napoleon acted more from political than religious motives, and confined his liberality within the narrowest bounds of strict necessity, the work of restoration proceeded slowly; and many or rather most

churches still exhibit the traces of revolutionary profanation.

In Notre Dame itself, though the cathedral of the capital, and the stage of the pompous ceremony of the coronation, the reparations and embellishments were confined principally to the conspicuous parts, the nave and the chancel; while the lateral chapels still remain stripped, and encumbered with the ruins of their tombs and altars. St. Sulpice and St. Roch, are in the same state of dilapidation; and if these two churches, the noblest ornaments of Paris, and situated in its most populous and opulent quarters, have been thus neglected by government, it will be inferred that others more remote, and less dignified, attracted but little of its attention. The zeal of the faithful might be supposed to anticipate the tardiness of imperial bounty, and public piety was not deficient: but the people were impoverished; property had passed into other hands; and the new nobles and proprietors were not often under the active influence of religious feelings.

From the destruction of churches which has taken place in the capital, the reader may collect what ravages have been made in the provinces, and in all the territory of France; how many sacred edifices have been levelled in the dust; how many tombs have been profaned; and how many monuments intimately connected with the progress of its arts, with the memory of its heroes, and with the feelings of its inhabitants, have been swept away from its surface, and lost for ever to posterity.

Complaints have been made, and justly, both by the antiquary and the Christian, of the ruins which the reformation spread over the surface of England, and the fall of so many stately abbies, the monuments both of the piety and the skill of our ancestors has been lamented by Protestants as well as by Catholics, as an irreparable misfortune. Yet how confined the scene of devastation which England has to deplore, when compared to that vast range of havoc which France must for ever bewail! In England the cathedrals were *all* respected, their number was even augmented: some of the abbey churches were spared; the two univer-

sities and all the great schools, most of the hospitals and many collegiate churches were preserved; and though the sentence of confiscation was general, the rapacity of the court was partial, and restrained probably by public opinion, it extended itself only to those parts of the ecclesiastical establishment which had lost their popularity. In France, of one hundred and thirty bishoprics, fifty only have been retained; of the cathedrals attached to suppressed bishoprics, some have been demolished, and others deprived of the income necessary to support such extensive edifices, have been abandoned to silent decay. The number of the former I have not ascertained, but among them is Liege, the seat of a prince bishop and of a noble chapter, Boulogne and Cambray. The ashes of Fenelon reposed in the latter, and a name so dear to religion, humanity, and literature, might in other times, and other countries have been a sufficient cause of exemption from the fatal sentence. In France also the abbies, collegiate churches, universities, colleges, hospitals, and convents, were all condemned without exception, and few, very few have had the good

fortune to escape the general proscription.—Hence the towns here have lost much of their magnificence, and of the splendid exhibition produced by spires, and towers, and domes rising in clusters, or shewing themselves singly and successively through the long avenues that usually lead to French cities; and hence also the solitude that pervades the quarters formerly adorned with churches and colleges; a solitude visible, not only in provincial towns, but even in the capital itself.

Churches in all cities are the most remarkable edifices, as they present the history of the art, and not unfrequently display some portion of the taste and even of the manners of the age in which they were erected. But in Paris they have an additional interest, as they exhibit not only the taste of the age, but the influence of national character on the arts.

The gothic churches, such as Notre Dame in the simpler, the Sainte Chapelle in the ornamental style, St. Germain, St. Etienne du Mont, of a mixed taste, are very different from Gothic cathedrals in England and in Germany, and exhibit singularities which seem to have arisen

from the national partiality to light and airy ornaments. But this peculiarity is more striking in edifices of a more modern date: for while at the restoration of the arts most nations either contented themselves with Italian models, or, guided by Italian masters, aimed at a distant and humble imitation of ancient monuments, the French adopted indeed the principles of the Italian school, but conceived it easy to excel that school, and even the ancients themselves in the application of those principles.

Unfortunately all attempts to excel, and to invent, even though encouraged by royal patronage, (as in the time of Louis the Fourteenth,) have hitherto terminated in deformities, as offensive to the eye in architecture as the dresses of the same epoch are to the purer taste of modern times in fashion.

In the preposterous arrangement of stories upon stories, in the slenderness of the pillar, in the elevation of the pedestal, in the double columns, the increase of intercolumniation, in the irregularity of the entablature, and the interruption of the line, in the elevation and twisted

forms of the pediment, and in all the defects of the modern Italians, the French have surpassed their masters.

These defects disfigure most of the public edifices, and particularly the churches in Paris, and deprive the vast monuments of the royal æra of Louis the Fourteenth, of the majestic graces which must naturally result from their magnitude.

A more correct taste began to diffuse itself among the French architects towards the close of the reign of Louis the Fifteenth, and continued to make a rapid progress after the accession of his successor, till it was suspended by the agitations of the revolution. This purer taste revived under the influence of Bonaparte and seems likely to improve and spread very generally under the sway of the Bourbons, the natural patrons of the arts, and the friends of architectural magnificence.

The principal edifices erected in this better and more ancient style are the colonnades that border the Place Louis Quinze; the Hotel de

Salm; the New Madelaine; the church called de Rouille; St. Genevieve; the front of the Palace of the Corps Legislatif; and the Triumphal Arch. Most, if not all these edifices have some of the defects of the former style, but they are exempt from many of them, and are undoubtedly much nearer to the more simple and correct forms of antiquity. I have in another work criticised the defects of St. Genevieve—I will now point out some of its beauties, and in the first place do justice to the simplicity of its exterior, free from useless decorations, and not even interrupted by windows; and in the next, mention with due approbation the suppression of arcades in the interior, and the revival of pillars with their regular entablature instead of arches. The alarm produced by the sinking of the dome occasioned some alteration in the original plan, and obliged the architects now employed in the completion of the work, to convert the twelve pillars on which the dome rested, into four massive buttresses, like those in St. Paul's; an alteration by

no means favorable to the general effect, though managed with the utmost skill. Yet the appearance of the whole still remains light and pleasing.

The vaults under this church, destined to hold so many modern *heroes* and *sages*, are skilfully contrived, and very different from most other vaults, are neither dark, nor damp, nor gloomy. They consist of galleries lined with cells; in these cells, all nearly of the same size, the bodies are deposited each in a stone sarcophagus of exactly the same size and form. The inscriptions are in French, relating merely the name, the dignity, and the age of the deceased; no religious feeling is expressed on the tombs; but over the door of each cell the cypher XP, and the letters A and Ω, marks of faith and hope so often observable in the Roman catacombs, indicate that the bodies reposing within await a glorious resurrection. Yet it would be more consoling to see this *signet of immortality* marked on every sarcophagus; he that dying *thinketh on heaven's bliss*, must surely wish to have *a signal of that*

hope marked on his tomb. Its absence seems to imply that when *he died, he made no sign.*

Sed nox atra caput tristi circumvolat umbra.

The bridges at Paris, owing to the elevation of the quays above the river, have little ascent, and are therefore very convenient, but in beauty they are far inferior to the bridges of Rome and Florence, and in magnitude and grandeur they sink into insignificance when compared to the stupendous masses of Blackfriars and Westminster. Of these bridges two are iron, as useful and as graceless as may be expected from such materials.

In fountains, when compared to Rome, Paris is poor indeed, but compared to London, rich and magnificent. The Fontaine de Grenelle presents a rich and stately front, though in a very confined situation, and with no exuberance of water. That of the *Ecole de Medicine* falling in a sheet from a vault supported by four Doric columns, is, though on a small scale, new and not unpleasing to the eye. The *Fontaine des Innocens* pours a considerable volume of

water into four capacious basins; its decorations and form are admired for their grace and proportions; but it has not sufficient mass and dignity.

The new fountain on the Boulevard St. Martin, is the noblest ornament of the kind in this capital, and derives a considerable degree of beauty from its magnitude, its form, its materials, and its decorations. The form is circular, the ornaments are lions, the materials are granite and bronze, and the quantity of water is abundant. The trees that line the Boulevards are a very pleasing accompaniment. I am inclined to object to lions, and indeed to any animals introduced as *active* decorations in fountains. The idea of a stream rushing from the mouth of an animal is not natural, and if it were natural, it is not pleasing. All the embellishments and even all the accompaniments of a fountain ought to breathe freshness, purity, and cleanliness. The water should appear as if bursting from its source, and either rush from a rock, bubble up in the midst of a basin, or spring in the center of a vase,

and fall in sheets all over its edges. Water spouting from tubes, or squirted into the air from syringes, or flowing from fishes, beasts, and tritons, may perhaps for a moment amuse the eye, but cannot surely gratify the taste of the intelligent spectator.

When the beauty and the utility of fountains are considered, it cannot but appear surprising that the British Capital should be destitute of such decorations, especially as the torrents that now roll under its pavements, and so frequently burst their pipes for want of a vent, supply a superabundance of water.

How beautiful would the gleaming of a sheet of falling water appear through the shrubberies of Grosvenor square! and how much more appropriate than the pony and its pigmy rider, imprisoned in the middle of the pool of St. James's! The truth is, that in no city has less been given to ornament than in London; its beauties are the result of convenience, and its wide streets, its flags, and its squares, owe their origin, not to the taste but to the con-

venience of the inhabitants. Hence, an abundant supply of water has been carefully provided; but the purposes of utility being thus attained, public attention was withdrawn from the object. At present, however, when plans of embellishment occupy government, and when, if report be true, very considerable improvements are to be made, it is to be hoped that fountains will not be forgotten, and that the play of waters will add to the freshness of the squares, and to the cleanliness of the streets already so conspicuous.

You will of course expect some observations on the two celebrated collections of statues and of pictures, which are supposed to render Paris the seat of the arts, and to give it a superiority over Rome itself, with all its antiquities and all its glories. The subject is too extensive for a letter; we must therefore confine ourselves to a few observations.

The collections occupy part of the ground floor of the old *Louvre*, and the whole of the new *Louvre*, or the gallery of communication be-

tween the Tuilleries and the former palace. The lower halls are consecrated to the statues, and are seven in number, including the vestibule; some are paved with marble, and the ceilings of all are painted: their magnitude is not striking with the exception of the hall, which was opened, and furnished the latest, called the *Salle des Fleuves.*

These halls contain more than three hundred statues, almost all ancient, most excellent in their kind, and some considered as the masterpieces of the art, and the greatest efforts of Grecian talent. Such an assemblage is, without doubt striking, and must, we should naturally imagine, excite the greatest admiration and delight. Yet, unfortunately, there are circumstances which, if I may judge from my own feelings, and the feelings of many foreign, and even some French spectators, diminish both our pleasure and our astonishment at such an extraordinary exhibition. In the first place, the halls are not embellished in such a style of magnificence as becomes the combination of wonders which they contain; in the next place they are

too gloomy; and in the third, the arrangement is extremely defective.

Sculpture and architecture are sister arts; they ought to be inseparable; the living forms of the former are made to grace and enliven the palaces and the temples of the latter. Besides, the emperors of Rome and the deities of Greece sat enthroned under columns, or stood enshrined in the midst of marble porticoes; a flood of light burst from the domes over their heads, and all the colors of marble gleamed from the pavement and played round their pedestals. Thus encircled with light, and glory, and beauty, they appeared in ancient Athens and in modern Rome, each, according to its dignity, in its niche of honor, or in its separate temple, high above the crowd, and distinguished as much by its site as by its excellence.

How degraded are the captive gods and emperors, the imprisoned heroes and sages of the Louvre! The floors are flagged, the walls are plastered, the ceilings arched, the windows rare; a few scanty beams just glare on the lifeless forms, as if to shew the paleness of the

marble, and the confusion in which gods and animals, heroes and vases, historical beings and mythological fables crowd around.

The Laocoon and the Apollo of Belvidere, it is true, occupy the most distinguished place, each in its particular hall; but the way to the latter is obstructed by a whole line of minor forms; and in his haste to contemplate the matchless groupe of the former, the spectator stumbles upon the Venus of Medicis!

It would be absurd to say, that France is deficient in artists, or that her artists are all deficient in taste; but it may happen that in France, as well as in many other countries, the best artists are not always the most favored; and that it is much easier to sovereigns to give employment, than to endow those whom it employs with judgment and abilities.

Statues, like pictures, one would imagine, ought to be arranged so as to form the history of the art; so as to lead the spectator from the first efforts of untutored nature, to the bold outline of the Egyptians, to the full, the breathing perfection of the Greeks.

Vases might precede the forms of animals, animals might lead to men, to heroes, to sages, and to gods. Altars and tripods might be placed before the divinities to which they are sacred; and the few grand master-pieces might stand each in the center of its own temple, and be allowed to engross the admiration of those who entered its sanctuary. If the classics furnish any reference or elucidation, it might be inscribed in marble tablets on the walls; and Virgil and Homer might be employed in developing the design of the sculptor, or the sculptor become the commentator of Virgil and Homer.

From the Halls of Statues a most magnificent flight of stone steps, adorned by marble pillars, leads to the gallery of pictures. The spectator ascends with a pleasure that increases as he passes the noble saloon serving as an antichamber to the museum; but when he stands at its entrance, and beholds a gallery of fourteen hundred feet extending in immeasurable perspective before him, he starts with surprise and admiration. The variety of tints that line the

sides, the splendid glow of the gilding above, the blaze that breaks through the lateral windows, and the tempered lights that fall from the roof mingle together in the perspective, and form a most singular and fascinating combination of light and shade, of splendor and obscurity.

The pictures are arranged according to the schools; and the schools are divided by marble pillars. Of these divisions some are lighted from above, while others are exposed to the glare of cross lights from the lateral windows; a defect which I believe is to be remedied. The French school comes first in place, and from it the spectator passes to the Dutch, the German, and the Italian schools. Little can be objected to this arrangement; but the impartial critic may be disposed to complain, when he finds Claude Lorrain, a German by birth, and an Italian by education ranked among French painters; when he sees the composition of modern artists, whose names are little known, and whose title to fame is not certainly yet established, placed on a line with the acknow-

ledged masters of the art; and when he discovers the glare and contortion of David's figures staring on the very walls that display the calmness and the repose of Poussin's scenery. In truth the former artist, to the national defects of glitter, bustle, and contortion, has superadded the absurdity of degrading Greek and Roman heroes into revolutionary assassins, and converting the sternness of Brutus and of Cato into the infernal grin of Marat and Robespierre.

To complain of the number of pictures in a gallery would be unreasonable; yet we may be permitted to observe, that many splendid objects when united eclipse each other; and that master-pieces, placed in contact, must necessarily dazzle the eye and divide the attention. Paintings, therefore, which are confessedly the first specimens of the art, ought to be placed separate, each in its own apartment, under the influence of a light peculiarly its own, and with all its appropriate accompaniments.*

* Several even of the first-rate pictures are said to have been damaged, not only by the removal, but by the repare-

Having thus spoken with due admiration of this astonishing collection, I must particularly as a stranger mention with becoming applause and acknowledgment, the very liberal regulations which open it on stated occasions to the French public, and at all times (Sunday only excepted) to foreigners. No apprehension seems to be entertained of mischief, either from design or negligence, or awkwardness, and little or no superintendency is employed to prevent it: these treasures of ancient and modern art are trusted without diffidence to the taste and the honor of the public.*

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tion and ill-judged process of cleansing and *recoloring*. This charge I do not take upon myself to substantiate; but the glare of varnish is certainly very observable, and I conceive, very detrimental to the appearance of the pictures.

* The number of pictures exceeds twelve hundred; it might be reduced, and many articles excluded without any detriment to the perfection of the museum. Notwithstanding the greatness of the number, I doubt whether England does not possess an equal, if not a greater number of master-pieces. In the compositions of Claude Loraine, Salvator Rosa, Poussin, and Rembrandt, England is unrivalled.

After all when the first transports of admiration subside, it is impossible not to feel an indignant swell at the rapacious insolence, that has thus robbed half Europe of its best, its dearest treasures, and sacrilegiously torn from churches and altars, the noble furniture with which the piety of artists and the opulence of sovereigns had adorned them. To sanction or even to excuse such lawless rapacity by the conduct of the Romans is too absurd; for in the first place, the laws of war were then very different from those prescribed by universal consent to Christian nations. The Greeks were accustomed to enslave their captives. The Romans, more generous, allowed them their personal liberty. To their property they had a right then admitted by all. But in the second place, the Romans never had recourse to dissimulation; they never entered a country as friends and treated it as enemies; their hostility was open: their war was announced. In the third place, they did not plunder the Greeks by any act of government; they did not oblige them by articles of peace to surrender their sta-

tues and pictures, or to strip their temples and their porticos. Hence Greece was rich in bronze and marble, even at the period of the Gothic invasion led by Alaric, in the reign of Arcadius (an. dom. 395.) In the fourth place, at the time when the Roman emperors abused their power to usurp the public property of Greece, they in return opened roads, raised aqueducts, built temples, and adorned her cities with porticos, theatres, and thermæ. When the French confer such important benefits upon the countries, which they have plundered, the world may, perhaps, be disposed to excuse their rapacity in minor articles. In fine, the vices of the Greeks and Romans are not to be set up as precedents for imitation, nor is the conduct of Christian governments to be moulded upon the policy of pagan nations. Unfortunately for its own happiness, and for the peace of the world, the French government, under all its revolutionary forms, took the Romans, when debased by imperial despotism, for their pattern; and nobly imitated or rather surpassed the original in cruelty, pride, and insolence.

But to wave the consideration of the morality of this act of rapine, it may be doubted whether instead of promoting the arts, it does not retard theirprogress: for though the vanity of the nation was likely to be gratified by the measure, when it was first in contemplation, yet the French artists protested against it; and, if I mistake not, presented a memorial to the Directory, to prevent its execution. Much, indeed, might have been said by them, and many weighty arguments produced in support of their reclamation. For if success depend upon genius, and genius be awakened and brought into action by circumstances; if a certain agitation of mind, a fermentation of thought, an earnestness of effort, or in one word, if enthusiasm be as essential in painting and sculpture, as it undoubtedly is in poetry and eloquence, the sole question then will be whether Paris or Rome is most likely to produce in the mind this creative power, this *vivida vis*, the very soul and source of excellence. To enter into a formal comparison between these capitals would be absurd; as in the former there is not one object to excite emo-

tion, not one monument to awaken recollection, no scene to enchant the eye, no awful form to swell the imagination; while the latter teems with the images of the past, and the wonders of the present, exhibiting the grand or the beautiful at every step, and keeping the stronger, and more effective emotions of the mind, its admiration, delight, and melancholy, in constant action.

Veuve du peuple Roi, Reine encore du monde.
DE LILLE.

But independent of this consideration, as long as the *Camere di Raffaello* remain in Rome; and that will be as long as Rome exists, so long the painter will consider it as the school of the art; and so long must those who profess, and those who admire that art, flock to the Vatican as to its sanctuary. All the pictures in the gallery of Paris united, do not equal the skill, the variety, the invention, the execution, the forms, the groupes, the lights, the shades, that breathe, and live, and move, and flit over those wonderful walls,

and set the painter's soul on fire as he contemplates. When from this scene of wonders the young artist returns to the gallery of Paris, is his enthusiasm likely to be excited by the exhibition? Regret rather than enthusiasm must be his predominant feeling; regret that so many master-pieces were torn from their native sites, detached from the scenery which they present, and withdrawn from the sun that can alone awaken all their beauties.

We do not, indeed, discover that the possession of so many master-pieces has had, as yet at least, any very perceptible effect on the taste of the public, or the execution of the artists. Are the faces of David's figures less atrocious? are his colors more natural now, when the angelic countenances of Guido smile upon him, and the divine lights of Raffaelle rise around him every morning, than they were when he sat in the pandemonium of the Convention, and saw himself surrounded with the demons of the place?

In fine, it will be admitted that the locality is intimately connected with the effect, and

consequently with the beauty of a picture, and that the very best light in which it can be placed, is and must be that for which the painter himself designed it; and widely different indeed are the emotions produced by the celebrated crucifixion of *Rubens*, when seen in the confusion of the Louvre, and under the glare of a window in front, and when contemplated singly over the high altar, and through the holy gloom of the cathedral of Antwerp. Thus we are authorized, as well by the love of the arts themselves, as by a principle of justice to deplore not only the rapacity that displaced these master-pieces, but the indulgence that allowed them to remain thus in exile and in durance. We may admire the moderation of the allies, and future ages and generations will applaud the generous and benevolent motives which influenced their conduct at the capture of Paris; yet justice seemed to demand that France should have been compelled to resign her plunder, as well as her conquests; and that her rapacity, if not punished, at least, should not be rewarded. I am aware that this

act of generosity, apparently so misplaced and unaccountable, is generally ascribed to the intervention of Louis the Eighteenth, and to the delicate regard which the allied sovereigns were disposed to pay to the feelings of that virtuous and long suffering monarch. Every generous heart must share this feeling; and under its influence, justice itself may be disposed to wave its claims: but it ought to be published to the world as the sole justification of a concession otherwise unwarrantable, and at the same time held out to the French nation as a motive of grateful attachment to a prince, whose reign commenced by so signal a benefit.

As you have heard much of the embellishments of Paris, and the great improvements made in its appearance by Napoleon, you may perhaps be desirous of knowing exactly to what degree the French may be indebted to that chief, and whether as some admiring visitants have represented, he has really raised it above the splendor of modern Rome, and placed it upon a level with the Eternal city. I have already given you some account of the principal

edifices, and have drawn from them a conclusion not so favorable; I will now inform you of the improvements made by Napoleon. Of the thirteen bridges that cross the Seine, three, one of stone and two of iron, were built by Bonaparte; he erected the pillar in the *Place Vendome*, the portico of the *Corps Legislatif*, the triumphal arch in the Court of the Carousal, and part of the new wing of the *Louvre*, the Fountains of the Fauxbourg St. Martin, and of the *Ecole de Medicine;* he completed the palace of the old *Louvre*, raised the new staircase of the gallery, improved and embellished the Luxembourg, ordered the outside of several palaces to be cleaned and repaired, and the dome of the Invalids to be gilt; he had commenced a triumphal arch at the *Barrières de Rouille*, which from its magnitude was to have surpassed every similar edifice, and to have announced to future generations his triumph over Russia and Europe. This latter fabric, which had already attained a considerable elevation, and formed a conspicuous object from the Tuilleries, the banks of

the Seine, and all their vicinity, now stands an unfinished monument of disappointed pride and baffled ambition. The projects of Napoleon extended still further, and exceeded even his means of execution great as they were; one of these gigantic projects was to have opened a new street spacious and straight, from the front or colonnade of the Louvre through the whole length of Paris, to a new square on the site of the Arsenal, there to terminate in a fountain formed of an immense elephant in brass.

When to these edifices we add the improvements made by opening some new squares, or rather by clearing and enlarging old ones, we shall have summed up the catalogue of the embellishments which Paris owes to Napoleon. It is only justice to acknowledge that he has done much; especially when we consider that his reign did not exceed the space of fourteen years, and that his attention might very naturally be diverted from the embellishments of the capital by the extensive range of his foreign relations, and by the tremendous wars in which he was constantly engaged. But on the other

hand, it must be admitted that the far greater part of these edifices were erected for ostentation, and with little regard to utility, to perpetuate his own achievements, and to interweave his fame with the beauty of the metropolis.* In so doing his policy may have been prudent, and his vanity pardonable, and not without many an illustrious precedent: yet he would have gained in both these respects, had he looked more to public advantage. What in fact becomes of his portico, his arch, and his superb pillar when compared with the hospital and church of the Invalids, that prodigious mass of useful magnificence, that regal portal,

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* There is scarce a spot in the interior furniture of the Tuilleries, or in the decorations of the vault of the gallery, or in the edifices newly erected, or in the old ones repaired, where an N, or a bee, or an eagle, or a thunderbolt, or the words *Jena, Austerlitz, Marengo,* &c. &c. are not discoverable. Such remembrances cannot be agreeable to the present royal inhabitants of the palaces, nor pleasant to their well-wishers: yet to erase them would be difficult, and to attempt it might give them more importance than they deserve.

and that dome truly triumphal! When to this observation I add that Louis the Fourteenth opened eighty new streets, erected more than thirty churches, built two squares, four bridges, five gates, fifteen fountains, raised the observatory, and finished the Louvre; it may perhaps appear doubtful whether Bonaparte, had he even reigned so long, would have equalled the magnificence of that monarch.

The grand scheme of improvement formed at this period, continued under the influence of Louis the Fifteenth. The *Palais Bourbon*, the *Place Louis Quinze*, with its colonnades, the *Champs Elysées*, the *Ecole de Chirurgie*, the *Ecole Militaire*, and the *Nouvelle Ste. Genevieve, or the Pantheon*, were all begun and mostly finished, under the latter Prince.

Louis the Sixteenth, though his reign, from its beginning, was an uninterrupted scene of agitation, not only continued the public works which his ancestors had commenced, but opened several new streets upon a wider and more airy scale, erected several new churches and hospitals, rebuilt the *Palais de Justice*, most of

the theatres, and begun the *Pont Louis Seize*, and the new *Madelaine**, when the Revolution closed his reign, and, for some time, checked the career of improvement.

It ought to be observed that the spirit of improvement was in constant activity under the Bourbons, and it is probable that, had not the Revolution intervened, Paris would have received a much greater degree of embellishment from the regular attention of government to that object, than that bestowed upon it during the short and feverish reign of *Bonaparte*.

But it is to be regretted, that while so much attention has been paid to works of parade, and to external appearance, no care should have been taken of the far more important concerns of cleanliness and convenience. The sewers are still allowed to roll a black torrent of filth, stench, and infection, through

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* The *Pont Louis Seize* has been since finished; the *Madelaine* was destined by Bonaparte to be the Temple of Glory, but still remains unfinished.

the middle of every street, and the foot passengers, without the advantage of flags, or the protection of posts, are still exposed to danger and accident.

The impartial observer who considers convenience and salubrity as the first qualities that any residence can possess, will deem glare and magnificence as poor compensations for their absence, and indulge a hope that the benevolent sovereign who now fills the throne of France, will prefer the useful to the shewy, and endeavor to give to Paris some of the conveniencies of London, with which he is so well acquainted. An interchange of advantages, and even a rivality in magnificence, would be of great use to both Capitals, and induce them to borrow from each other that in which each is deficient, comfort at Paris, and show in London.

But I have dwelt, perhaps, too long upon the material part of Paris, its edifices and its appearances; you look to a more important object, and are impatient to hear something about the manners and the character of the modern Parisians.

Has the Revolution altered their ancient ha-

bits, or are they still the same good-humored and lively people, proud of themselves, and indulgent to others, content with the amusement of the day, with little foresight or retrospect, polite and attentive, always desirous to please, and not unfrequently very pleasing?---Alas! no, my friend---so many deeds of blood, so many scenes of misery, so many years of military oppression, and such a familiarity with injustice and slaughter, must be supposed not only to have checked the native sprightliness of the race, but to have instilled into it a considerable portion of gloom and ferocity.

The national character had, indeed, even in the best periods of French history, been suspected of some latent propensity to cruelty, and an impartial perusal of their annals, might tend rather to corroborate than to weaken this suspicion. But, without any reference to the events of earlier ages, or even any recurrence to the two last centuries, it must be admitted that the circumstances in which the French nation has been placed ever since the commencement of the Revolution, cannot but tend to deteriorate

the public character, and gradually *dis*civilize the nation.

In the first place, the suppression of schools and colleges, at an early period of the Revolution, and the suspension of all Christian instruction which followed, and was continued for several years, left a considerable portion of the rising generation either without any education at all, or confined them to the chance of domestic example and information, oftentimes neglected, and generally imperfect.

In the next place, the total neglect of all public worship, and the blasphemies written, spoken, and disseminated in the most public and insulting manner, must have made upon the young and untutored minds of many, a most unfavourable impression; while the notorious contempt of all moral feeling and restraint, avowed by the government, and all its agents, must have spread corruption very generally over the country, and tainted the minds of youth with early and incorrigible vice.

Bonaparte, in restoring the public profession of the Christian and Catholic religion, after all

rather tolerated than encouraged its admission into the Lyceums and *Instituts*, which he established in the place of schools and colleges.

Military tactics was the science there taught, enterprise and obedience was the spirit there encouraged; and christian instruction was treated as a subaltern, and probably a very insignificant part of youthful instruction. A military impulse had indeed been given to the nation in the very earliest stages of the revolution, and the republican motto, *peace to the cottage, and war to the castle*, had opened every country in Europe to the arms and the rapacity of the French soldier. But the military system received its full perfection from the genius of *Bonaparte;* he interwove it into all the institutions of the country, into all the offices of life, into all the operations of government, and even into all the intercourse of society. Prints and pictures, songs and stories, shews, exhibitions, and amusements, all were employed as vehicles of this spirit; and it would have been wonderful indeed, if accompanied by so many victories abroad, and by so

many pageants at home, it had not become the prevailing taste of the nation; and if France itself had not been converted into a camp, and every child a soldier.

Now what was the spirit of the French army under Napoleon; a spirit of atheism and vice almost incredible. The French soldier was taught to adore his emperor and to obey his officers, and this was his only creed, his only duty: beyond this he was abandoned to his own discretion, that is to his passions and to his ignorance; and encouraged to give every appetite its full play. Hence those scenes of rapine, lust, and cruelty, exhibited in Spain and Portugal, and all the accumulated woes of unhappy Germany. I shall be told without doubt by the panegyrists of Napoleon, that soldiers of all nations are disorderly and vicious, and that the British army itself has left some memorials of its lawless spirit at Badajoz and St. Sebastian. But if armies, formed of individuals, whose minds, in general at least, have been seasoned by christian instruction, and whose consciences, however defiled, are yet alive to

the distinction between right and wrong, and awake to the pangs of remorse, and the terrors of divine vengeance; if armies acting under officers of principle, honour, and humanity, and kept in constant check, not only by the authority of their superiors, but by the more powerful influence of the opinion and the estimation of their Christian countrymen, are yet so depraved and so mischievous, so apt to indulge foul passions, and to perpetrate deeds of cruelty, what must an army be, when free from all these wholesome restraints, when ignorant and regardless of virtue and of vice, without fear of God, without respect for themselves or their fellow-creatures, without one thought or one wish beyond the moment, and scoffing alike at the hopes and the terrors of immortality.

Such an army is a confederacy of banditti, a legion of demons, let loose upon the creation to disfigure and to destroy its beauties. Now, into this school of wickedness every youth in France was compelled to enter; and it is easy to imagine the deep, the indelible impression which the blasphemies, and the

crimes of so many thousand fiends, must make upon the minds of boys of seventeen. The previous instructions, even of pious parents, cannot be supposed to resist, for any time, the deadly influence of such conversation and example; while if the mind be not fortified by holy lessons, but, on the contrary, present a mere blank to its action, rapid indeed will be the work of perdition, and deep and lasting its impression.

When it is considered how often the ranks of the French army have been thinned and filled up again, and how often swept totally away and renewed, it will be easy to form an idea of the prodigious multitudes that must have passed through it, and consequently how far its influence must have extended, and to what degree its spirit and character must have become the spirit and the character of the nation itself. In truth, few among the younger part of the community can possibly have escaped the contagion; and it will not be exaggeration to say, that in no country has atheism, perfect, practical atheism, made such an awful progress as in France, and nowhere more completely debased

the human mind, and deprived it of every semblance of virtue, every spark of worth and generosity.

It has been asserted by a late eloquent but paradoxical writer, that fanaticism, though a sanguinary, is yet a grand and powerful passion, that raises the mind far above its usual level, inspires it with a contempt of danger and of death, and gives it, in all its pursuits, a prodigious strength and impetuosity; while irreligion, on the contrary, contracts the soul, wraps it up in selfish affections, unmans its energies, confines its views to the ease of the moment, and concentrates all happiness, and all utility, in that vile focus *Self**. Thus, it detaches man from his fellow men, from his friends, and from his country, makes him indifferent to the welfare of his whole species, and turns him into a solitary, ferocious monster, who would sacrifice the whole intellectual world to one moment's pleasure, and to avoid one moment's pain, would unhinge the whole system of the Universe.

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* Rousseau.

When calculating the extent of the mischiefs resulting from the influence of the military spirit in France, you must bear in mind that the army in this country bears no proportion to that in England, or indeed in any other country in Europe. I do not, I believe, exceed the bounds of truth, when I calculate the French force under Bonaparte at one million of men; and when to this number we add the military schools directly connected with it, and the seminaries, lyceums, and academies, in which military uniforms were worn, and military discipline was established, we may carry the sum total of persons acting under the influence of the army, and animated with its spirit, to three millions: and when it is recollected that this enormous number includes all the youth, the vigor and the activity of the nation, we may form perhaps an adequate idea of the ascendency of its conduct and opinions over the mass of the nation, and the tremendous degree in which it may promote or obstruct their virtue and happiness.

I will here observe incidentally that the evils

which this immense mass of unprincipled agents, let loose upon Europe, has produced, have not been yet fully ascertained, and that while we see and deplore the desolation of provinces, the destruction of cities, and all the public and much of the private misery inflicted upon the unhappy regions which the destroying host has traversed, we do not notice the moral and more permanent evils inflicted upon the whole species by the corruption of youth, and the propagation of atheism; evils of enormous magnitude, subversive of the peace of the present age, and calculated to check the increase and to disturb the tranquillity of future generations.

After this statement of the numbers, the influence, and the principles of the French army, you will not be surprised to hear that the national character is considerably impaired, that the levity and the frivolity, and, I add with regret, the good nature of the nation have given way to a clouded aspect, rough manners, and a ferocious demeanour.

The youth, accustomed to the guilt and the bustle of warfare, seem impatient under the

weight of reflection, and harassed with the dead calm of peace. They want a greater stimulus to rouse their feelings, and they sicken at the insipidity and the tameness of plays, visits, and conversation. The life of a citizen has no charms for them, and I am convinced that the French army would rush to war with delight, merely to shake off the intolerable load of still life; the *ennui* and *desœuvrement* that devour them.

After a statement so unfavourable of public feeling, you will naturally expect a gloomy picture of the state of religion, and a severe censure of the anti-christian feelings of the French nation. But the accounts which we have received upon this subject for some years past, were so exaggerated, that my observations may produce the same effect upon your mind, as they did upon my own, and tend rather to console than to afflict the benevolent Christian. It is to be remembered that the present generation in France, has heard words of blasphemy and witnessed deeds of sacrilege and profanation, that would terrify an English free-thinker, and almost make a demon tremble; that the

republican government employed successively the various means of violence, art, and seduction, against Christianity; that the First Consul treated it with contempt; and that the Emperor, with every mark of public respect, hated and undermined it; when to these hostile causes we superadd the pernicious influence of the army, we shall have cause to wonder, not that religion should have fallen, but that it exists; and you, and every friend of virtue and of truth, will rejoice when I add, that Christianity has not only survived the most dreadful assault ever made upon it, but that it has triumphed, as its divine author promised, *over the gates of hell and over all the power of the enemy.*

As Paris has been at all times the grand theatre where every party and every faction has acted, and as it is the very focus where the fashion and the opinion of the day exercise all their powers, we may take from it the data by which we are to judge, in a certain degree, of the general dispositions of the nation at large. In our inferences, however, we must remem-

ber, that as the capital was the very seat and residence of the philosophic cabal, and as it is at the same time, in a more particular manner, the resort of vice and folly, the influence of the former, and the corruption of the latter, must be more sensibly felt there than in the retirement and tranquillity of the country.

In Paris there are thirty-nine parochial and *succursal* churches.* In these churches there is solemn service twice, that is, at eight and ten o'clock in the morning, and evening service at three and five, every Sunday and holiday; besides, low masses every hour from six to twelve. On the week days, there are low masses only. Now, in all these churches, and at all these services, there are congregations more or less numerous according to the hour, but sometimes crowded, and in general very respectable. Even on week days,

* By succursal churches are meant those which are devoted to parochial service, but subservient to the parish church: to which, however, they are not inferior in size and decoration; most of them belonged to suppressed convents and abbeys.

the churches are not deserted: pious Christians may be seen on their knees at all hours; and the ancient and affecting custom of the Catholic church, so much recommended by Erasmus, is not yet forgotten or neglected even in this profaned capital.

I perceived no want of devotion, no indecent levity, no misplaced conversation: all those who attend, can attend only from a religious motive, in a country where hypocrisy would be useless, and where religion is accompanied by no distinction or reward.

It has been observed, that the greater part of the congregation is female; this observation, though peculiarly applicable to Paris, and, indeed, to France in general, on account of the havoc made by the late wars and the revolutionary massacres amongst the males, may, perhaps, be extended to most countries. The female heart is more tender, more grateful, more delicate, and at the same time more exempt from impure and turbulent passions: it is therefore more open to the influence of devotion, and a fitter receptacle for the spirit of grace than

that of men: the sex is also more exposed to domestic chagrin, and more liable to those cares and anxieties that corrode the heart and prey upon it in secret, and which nothing but the internal visitations of the spirit of comfort can remove. It is natural, therefore, that in all countries the congregations should consist of a majority of females, and that those who are the most regular in the practice of the duties should be most assiduous in attendance at the services of religion. But though the great majority be women, there is yet a considerable number of men; though the absence of many may be ascribed to reasons very different from irreligion or indifference. Sunday is a day of levees and reviews: the military are in motion from an early hour; and the National Guard is called out. This guard is composed of the best and most reputable citizens, and consists of at least thirty thousand men, most of whom are thus prevented from attendance upon divine service. This evil ought to be remedied not only in France, but in every other country into which it has been introduced, as destructive of the

repose of the Sabbath, and absolutely incompatible with the exercise of adoration essential to its observance.*

It has been stated by some of the newspapers in England, that Protestantism has made considerable progress in France, and that Protestant churches are common both in Paris and in the country towns. This statement is inaccurate. In Paris there are only three Protestant temples, for so they are called, and those are of no magnitude, nor can their congregations be numerous. In the northern provinces there are no Protestants; and even in the two southern provinces, where they were formerly most numerous, they do not, I believe, increase. The truth is, that the only religious contest now carried on in France, is not between Catholics and Protes-

* The government has interfered lately, and endeavoured to enforce this Christian duty by authority. Some reclamations were made, not so much against the observance, as some persons misconceived it to be, as against the right of the police to prescribe a penalty where the legislature had enacted no law.

tants but between Christians and unbelievers. The Catholic religion has a peculiar hold upon the feelings of a Frenchman; it is interwoven with the whole history of the nation; it combines its influence with the glory of the French arms, with the charms of French literature, with the fame of French heroes, and with the virtues of French worthies. If a Frenchman is a Christian he must naturally be a Catholic; he considers the two appellations as synonimous, and takes or rejects the system on the whole and without distinction.

Yet it must be acknowledged that the appearances of religion are very different now from what they were before and even at the beginning of the revolution. At that period the arts of seduction and the sophisms of *reasoning pride* had produced little or no effect upon the great body of the nation; the court, the nobility, the rich, the idle, the gay, were half philosophers for want of virtue and reflection; their opinions and example influenced their own circle, and prescribed the fashion to those who moved in it. Resistance to the fashion was pu-

nished with ridicule, and ridicule to that airy race was the blast of death. But the industrious citizen, the laborious mechanic, the farmer, the countryman, the middling class of society, that class which every-where forms the strength and the very soul of a nation were pious and sincere, devoutly attached to the religion of their ancestors, and sedulous in its observance. I never entered a parish church at Paris, during the period to which I allude, in time of service on a Sunday without delight and edification. The whole capacity of these noble edifices was filled from the portal to the rails of the altar, with an immense crowd intermingled together without distinction, joining with one accord in the service, and chaunting as if with one voice, *the prayer of mercy, the song of joy, the hymn of adoration.**

* Kyria elaison, Alleluia, Hosanna. Two of these sacred forms are common to most languages; with the Greek of the first, and the Latin of the other parts of the service, the *ear* will not quarrel. It is unnecessary to inform *you*, but it will be gratifying to our Protestant friends to hear,

It is impossible for the man who has any thing Christian in his mind, any thing human in his heart, to behold his fellow creatures thus arrayed before the Eternal, thus united in attitude and words of worship, holy and solemn, and not to melt at the sight, and not to feel every sound vibrate in his heart.

From these last observations you will conclude, that the attempt to dischristianize France has failed; but you will perceive at the same time, that it has produced much mischief, and that it has impaired the faith and tainted the morals of millions, in a degree most lamentable and alarming. The influence of time, zeal, and discretion united, is necessary to remove this evil, and to restore France to its Christian honors, to its internal comfort, and to its external reputation and place among Christian nations. It still

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that before the Nicene creed, a priest reads from the pulpit the epistle, gospel, and certain appointed prayers, and then makes a sermon, all in French, *yes, all in French,* and that the simple and the illiterate have the *whole in French* in their prayer-books.

owes an *amende honorable* to God and to mankind, for the blasphemies uttered against the common Father, and the outrages committed against the common nature of us all. It is the first, the only nation that ever applauded blasphemy; it is the first, the only nation that ever proclaimed atheism. These are crimes that far exceed the ordinary measure of national guilt, and border upon the rage of despairing demons. The Christian Sovereign who now occupies the throne of St. Louis, will not, cannot permit such a sin to hang unattoned over the destinies of his people, and to cast a stain on the annals of his kingdom. Let France make the atonement as public as the crime, and as England commemorates one bloody deed by a day of humiliation and mourning: so let the present legislature of France stamp on their records their shame, and their sorrow for the unexampled crime, and appoint a day of deep national humiliation to transmit the atonement as well as the guilt to posterity.*

* Of the means to be employed in the restoration of Christian knowledge, next to a close and persevering attention to the instruction of the rising generation, I may ven-

But you are probably impatient to come to another subject; and attached as you must be to civil liberty, not only by the general feelings of an Englishman, but by an hereditary ardor in that sacred cause, you must long to know whether the French nation is capable of appreciating and likely to enjoy the blessings of a free constitution; or whether still unworthy of that manly distinction, it is to be bridled by the arts of a skilful court, or lashed into submission by a military despot. A few previous reflections as usual, may enable us to decide upon this

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ture to propose the introduction of lectures and hymns in the vulgar tongue, before, or after, or during divine service, or at some regular and stated hour, particularly during the evening. While lessons instruct, hymns animate and warm, and both, particularly when united with the pomp and the majesty of the Catholic ritual, are admirably calculated to inspire a generous and ardent spirit of Christian devotion. To this I must add, that it would become the *Police* to suppress the sale of impure and infamous books and pictures, carried on principally in the Palais Royal, to the great disgrace of the government, and, indeed, of the country. In England, the law is severe upon this point, but if it were not, the sense of decency would serve instead of law, and public indignation would instantly repress the disorder.

point. One, and that not the least, of the many evils of the French revolution, is the disrepute into which it has brought the cause and even the name of liberty; the very words, civil rights, constitution, independence, alarm cautious and timid minds, and bring with them suspicions, dark designs, and apprehensions of anarchy and bloodshed. Yet though debased by vulgarity, though made the by-words of faction, and what is still worse, though converted into the bloody instruments of ambition, the tools of slavery and oppression; yet these words express the greatest blessings that man can enjoy on this side of the grave; they will always sound sweet in the ear of an Englishman, and be cherished by every generous and manly heart. Whatever can contribute to propagate these blessings, and to render them as common to mankind as the breath of heaven that enlivens our hearts, and the light that gladdens our eyes, will acquire value, and the effervescence, and the jealousies, and even the excesses that sometimes precede the birth of liberty, and usher a free constitution into the world, will be lamented,

pitied, and forgiven. With such dispositions, some of our greatest statesmen, I remember well, were disposed to hail even the French revolution; and though it assumed at a very early period indeed, a livid and foreboding aspect; yet, notwithstanding the prophetic visions of Burke, and his tremendous denunciations of *woes approaching*, the young and the ardent looked forward with confidence, and, in spite of the terrors of the convulsion, anticipated a prosperous result. Not only Fox, whose feelings always just and generous, sometimes burst forth in language warm and intemperate, but Pitt himself, then in the vigor of life, and in the full possession of his mighty powers, expressed himself in terms not of hope only, but almost of exultation.*

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* 1790, Feb. 9.—Mr. Pitt said, the present convulsions in France must, sooner or later, terminate in general harmony and regular order; and notwithstanding that the fortunate arrangements of such a situation might make her more formidable, it might also render her less obnoxious as a neighbour. He hoped that he might rather wish as an En-

What interference of mischievous causes disappointed these generous hopes, and produced the subsequent agonies of France and of Europe, it is not my province to inquire; but I must indulge myself in one observation, which though not publicly made as I recollect, cannot have escaped any thinking man who knew France at the time, and observed the commencement of its struggles.

The French revolution took place in a coun-

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glishman for that, respecting the accomplishment of which he felt himself interested as a man, for the restoration of tranquillity in France, though it appeared to him as distant. Whenever the situation of France should become restored, it would prove freedom rightly understood, freedom resulting from good order and good government; and, thus circumstanced, France would stand forward as one of the most brilliant powers in Europe; she would enjoy that just kind of liberty which he venerated, and the invaluable existence of which it was his duty as an Englishman particularly to cherish; nor could he under this predicament regard with envious eyes an approximation in neighbouring states of those sentiments which were the characteristic features of every British subject.

try where there was no public virtue and no public opinion; its chiefs were without either principle or experience; its promoters and instruments were the most depraved and worthless of the species; its primary object and aim was destruction, the total ruin of the religion and government of the country; the establishment of a better order or indeed of any order at all, was only a secondary object, an after thought to be realized, or not, as the convenience or the passions of the prime agents might require*. To this we must add that the number of schools and universities was great in France, that education was cheap, that almost every boy that gave any indications of capacity, was taken up by some ecclesiastical patron, and carried through his studies gratis;

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* Whoever recollects the state of the French court, its intrigues, and its prodigality; whoever remembers the names of Syeys, Mirabeau, Barnave, and whoever has heard of Marat, Robespierre, Danton, and of the jacobins, and the achievements of the Marseillois, will easily admit the above statement.

that when educated, the church was the only profession that promised preferment, and that disinclined to a state accompanied by so many privations, they were thrown on the world at large, and obliged to exert their utmost ingenuity for a maintenance.

This class was numerous, particularly in the latter times; they formed that singular body called *litterateurs*, men of letters, but of nothing else, without either property or profession.—That such a class should be ready to list in any party, and support any opinion; that they should sell their pen and their tongue to the highest bidder was natural. They paid their court to the philosophers as the most powerful party, and as they adopted their principles for convenience, they generally acted up to them, and were like their masters, unprincipled and vicious. This class very naturally hated a church from which their vices had excluded them; they envied riches, which they could not obtain, and detested a government which excluded them from its honors and its employments.*

* As roturiers or not noble.

This dangerous class, that combined the will with the means of mischief, was very numerous in France, ever active and vigilant, and always ready to court the multitude, and to work their way to public notice.

In Paris they abounded, and half the crimes that stained this ill-fated capital were committed by their suggestion. They formed a considerable body in the national assembly, and almost exclusively composed the convention, the municipality of Paris, and the cruel tribunals that sent so many hundred victims to the guillotine. It is not my intention to revive names that ought to be consigned with their incredible guilt to eternal oblivion; or to call up from their bloody graves spectres that scared the world with their crimes, and covered the country which Providence had delivered up for a time to their fury, with blood and ruin. Suffice it to say, that driven on by them, France in the space of ten years, ran the career of ten centuries, and tried all the extremes of folly, of guilt, and of suffering. How far the temper of the

nation may be improved by such a course of dire experiments, and how far fitted for the calm and temperate enjoyment of a free constitution, it is difficult to say; but some symptoms there are extremely favourable to such a happy termination.

In the first place that class which I have just described, of literary adventurers, so well calculated by their talents and their vices for the purposes of revolution, has been considerably reduced, by the suppression of universities and religious bodies, and by the scanty means of education supplied by the new establishments, where such branches of knowledge only as are connected with military objects, are encouraged. Information without doubt is justly considered as a blessing; its diffusion is connected with the action of mind, with the improvement of intellect, and consequently with the best interests of society. But the market must not in this respect be overstocked: men of talents must find honourable employment, or they will too often be tempted to misapply their talents, and turn that which they find

useless to themselves into an instrument of mischief to others.

The nature of a free and representative government, such as is, or we must hope, will shortly be established in France, not only encourages but demands the exertion of abilities; the public career is open to all; places, honors, distinctions are held forth as incentives to exertion, and are the reward of the successful candidate.

By restoring the influence of Christianity, and again uniting religious instruction with the rudiments of science, a virtuous direction will be given to the minds of the rising generation, and that abuse of talent which has occasioned so much evil be prevented. At all events, to inculcate virtue is the first, to diffuse knowledge is the second duty of government.

In the next place, if ever a nation has had an opportunity of improving by experience, France is that nation; and if much suffering adds to the effect of experience, and renders the lesson more impressive, this also France has undergone to the full pitch of human bearing. It is scarcely pos-

sible to conceive that a nation so severely tutored, should soon forget the chastisement, and voluntarily expose itself to a return of the calamities from which it has scarcely escaped. These, it must be admitted, are rather presumptions in favor of general tranquillity, than indications of any particular form of government; but if nothing disturbs that tranquillity, and the sovereign and the subject remain as they now seem to be, well disposed towards each other, the French constitution, possessing as it already does, all the principles, and most of the forms of freedom, must gradually acquire a greater degree of perfection, as its theory is resolved into practice, and adapted to the habits and the manners of the people.

Whether a greater infusion of royal influence may not be necessary here than in England, is a question, which considering the short space of time that I have had for observation, it would be presumptuous to determine.

Yet he who sees two public gardens, six theatres, and a thousand coffee-houses, crowded every evening, will be tempted to suspect that

a people so frivolous, so fond of amusement, and so occupied with the pastime of the moment, are not ripe for the full exercise of constitutional liberty, nor, perhaps, very sensible of its value, or interested in its attainment. This suspicion is confirmed by the readiness with which the nation submitted to every successful faction, and the zeal with which they supported every new form of government; the facility with which they committed massacres, and condemned their authors; the indifference with which they suppressed and restored the religion of their ancestors; the courage with which they one day fought for a tyrant whom they dethroned the next; and the spirit with which they first opposed their invaders, and then welcomed them, Nihil unquam. Tam dispar sibi. It will be said, that these instances of guilty levity are to be imputed only to the factions engaged in the contest, and that the great body of the nation had little or no share either in the struggle or in the result. But nations must be deemed accountable, in some degree for the acts of their respective governments, especially

if that government be of their own creation, and if they have arms in their hands to support or resist it according to its merits. *Vel pro me vel contra me* was the noble form with which Trajan delivered the sword, the mark of his office, to the prefect of the prætorian guards, and the same is the tacit compact between a free people and its government. When the convention proclaimed atheism, every arm ought to have been raised, every sword drawn; and one universal shout of reprobation should have resounded from the Pyrenees to the Rhine, from the Alps to the ocean.

But, notwithstanding these unfavorable presumptions, I will venture still to hope that France may be free, and I will observe in its favor, that it has never yet had a fair trial, and that while the name and the trappings of liberty were constantly employed, the substance and the reality was as constantly withheld. Let us trust that the trial will at length be made fairly and honorably; and never surely were circumstances more favorable to such a trial. The present monarch, with the hereditary benevolence of the Bourbons, in know-

ledge and abilities equals most, and in experience, that best of acquirements, surpasses all his predecessors and all his contemporaries.

> Multorum providus urbes
> Et mores hominum inspexit latumque per æquor
> Dum sibi dum sociis reditum parat, aspera multa
> Pertulit, adversis rerum immersabilis undis.

He has beheld the dire catastrophe to which unlimited power may lead even an innocent, and most benevolent sovereign; he has seen the play of a free government, the prosperity which accompanies its influence, the security which environs the prince, the confidence that animates the people, and the felicity, and the joy, and the sunshine, that liberty diffuses on all sides. These blessings he must, he does wish to communicate to his people, and they will in time become worthy of receiving, capable of enjoying them. Liberty is the best instructress; she prepares the mind for the exercise of the rights which she confers; her manly institutions not only give energy, but teach order, and inspire at the same time a spirit of independence and of submission.

But the process will be both slow and difficult; many a year must elapse, and, indeed, a new generation arise, before France can be supposed to enjoy all the blessings of a free and settled constitution.

A constitution is not as the revolutionary politicians of France, in their infantine simplicity, seem to have imagined, the work of a day, or the result of metaphysical meditations; it is the growth of ages, and the offspring of experience. It should rest on the ancient institutions and customs of a nation, and be adapted to their feelings and even to their prejudices: time only can discover its defects, and lead to the remedies; and time also will facilitate its motions, and remove the obstructions which must inevitably occur in the play of a machine so complicated. What the component parts of a good constitution may be, it is difficult to determine, but that a representative body is essential to it, is unquestionable: and it is satisfactory to know, that its most substantial and component parts are included in the late sketch accepted by the king of France. I have called

it a *sketch*, because it is extremely defective; to give it perfection depends upon the magnanimity and the wisdom of Louis the Eighteenth. The obstacles which he will meet with it, will arise not from the army; for though discontented and ferocious, they are broken and divided, commanded by officers who are loyal, and checked by the national guards; nor from the people, who are decidedly for the Bourbons, and manifest their attachment unequivocally and unanimously;* nor from the remains of republican and revolutionary spirit, which though still existing is partial, and may be repressed and pardoned; but

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* The temper of the people of France always manifests itself most conspicuously in the theatres; and there whenever any application can be made to the sufferings or restoration of the Bourbons, the applause is loud and universal. The celebrated lines in Athalia

Oui, nous jurons ici pour nous, pour tous nos freres
De retablir Joas au trone de ses peres.

was accompanied by shouts so loud, so continued, so enthusiastic, as to electrify even foreigners, and force them to join the shout, and even to share the general feeling.

from the influence of the old aristocratic party, whose unqualified attachment to the ancient government, may betray them into rash and pernicious attempts to restore it. To check the blind and intemperate zeal of this party, and to close his ears to their artful and repeated insinuations, is alike the duty and the interest of the monarch. Arbitrary power is below his ambition: the confidence and the affection of his people are his pride and his glory, and if preserved will fill up the measure both of his greatness and of his happiness. Meantime he will, no doubt, without regard to party, without reference to the past, impress into his councils all the genius, all the information, and above all, all the virtues of the country, and thus form around the throne a circle not to be forced by faction, force, or intrigue.

After this general view of Paris, its edifices, population, and manners, we may be allowed to ask, what has been the result of this tremendous revolution? what have been its benefits? has it improved the literature of France? has it produced one single historian, one poet, one

sound philosopher? No: literature is on the decline; its utility is disputed; the dry sciences have usurped its place; and the language itself tends to barbarism. Has it improved even military tactics? No: the art of war consists in carrying a post, or gaining a battle with the least possible bloodshed. Was this the art of the French generals, and above all, of Napoleon? They gained their end by numbers, by bloody sacrifices, by a prodigality of carnage. Has it ameliorated the manners, and improved the principles of the nation? No; it corrupted their morals, and perverted their principles; had it lasted one generation more, France would have been inhabited by monsters, and Europe would have been compelled to wage against it a war of extermination. What then has it produced? It has deluged Europe with blood, and covered France with ruins and with graves.

But to pass from this appalling image: I know not, my dear George, whether the account which I have given of Paris will induce you to visit it. Yet it has many attractions for the man of taste, and too many allurements for the