

THE Chartist Circular.

"FOR A NATION TO LOVE LIBERTY, IT IS SUFFICIENT THAT SHE KNOWS IT: AND TO BE FREE, IT IS SUFFICIENT THAT SHE WILLS IT."
M. De La Fayette.

Universal Suffrage. Annual Parliaments, Vote by Ballot, No Property Qualifications, Payment of Members, & Electoral Districts.

No. 19.

GLASGOW, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1840.

PRICE ONE-HALFPENNY.

The Spirit of Revolution.

While all things around us are in a state of commotion, and pregnant with great events—events, the consequences of which, upon human society, my never be fully developed in time—are we, or ought we, to stand by indifferent spectators—can we do so and hold ourselves not grossly guilty of an awful dereliction of duty; we can not, we ought to be at the post of duty in the grand movement visible among the nations, and more so in the stupendous movement going forward in our own country. It is our duty to look *backward* in order to ascertain how far forward we have moved, and *forward* to see what is coming, and see if we are prepared to meet the storm that is gathering over us; and we must look *around* us, that we may behold what is taking place on the earth, and know and discern the signs of the times.

When we revert to the past, we see that wars have desolated Europe and the world, and we may see that these have passed away; but we will see also that the peace and the repose of nations have vanished like a dream, and that now, nothing but a scene of agitation, turmoil and confusion, is presented to our view. The striking feature of the present is moral reformation, political amelioration, and religious changes—the vast creation of unfettered *minds*, bursting its fetters, and the boundary of its narrow prison house, where it had lain slumbering for ages; the immortal spirit of man has, and is in a most extraordinary manner coming forth to the light and liberty of heaven. It walks abroad inquisitive and restless, searching into abuses in Church and in State, with an eagle's eye, detecting and dragging into light, long long-hidden impostures, and denouncing them as the impositions of priestcraft and usurped power, unworthy to be tolerated, far less continued, for another day. At its inspiring breath, people, after the torpor of centuries, aroused themselves and endeavoured, by sweeping reforms, to make up for their past supineness. Vast changes were effected with wonderful rapidity—vital measures were carried, which, a few years before, were never dreamed of; or, if dreamed of, were treated as the visionary dreams of an enthusiast; one change was no sooner effected, than another was attempted—and the chariot of Reform was urged onward, threatening destruction to every object that opposed its impetuous course. All reverence for antiquity was thrown aside, and the utilitarian spirit of the times thought only of preserving what was useful, and adapted to the wants of the present day. But these changes, and this innovating spirit, gave alarm to all who had any interest in upholding the existing institutions. A prodigious outcry was raised, and a vain attempt made to arrest or impede the progress of Reform, which they perceived was fraught with ruin to themselves. It was a vain design. As well might they contend with the waves of the ocean, as strive to prevent the purposes of the Almighty from being carried into effect. Viewing the signs of the times—most awful to them whose desires and treasures were all selfish—they were filled with alarm, they apprehended revolution and the loss of all their possessions; they saw that the constitution in Church and State was threatened with subversion, and daily the changes were rung on the dark designs of the Popish plots, and destructive measures of Reformers. The fact was, that the good old state of things was quietly vanishing to their great regret. Hence arose their wailing and denouncement of Reform, as big with ruin and destruction to all our institutions. They were obliged to confess that a great revolution had taken place in the human mind; but such was the obliquity of their visions, they could not see that any benefit had arisen from the change. The amelioration of the great family of man, through the extended diffusion of the blessings of liberty, was nothing in their eyes, nothing in their narrow views.

Blinded with bigotry, accustomed to intolerance, and wedded to ancient systems, innovation on these is to them the very essence of evil—the antique, however contrary to the laws of nature and of nature's God, the very height of excellence; the wisdom of our

ancestors can never be surpassed; our institutions were perfect and immaculate, our glorious constitution in Church and State, under which we had prospered, (meaning those who fattened on plunder) and attained the height of power and glory, was the very paragon of constitutions; thus making an idol of the abuses of the constitution, these fools fall down and worship it, and even go so far as to render to these that glory which is due to God alone. Much was at stake with them, and mighty were the efforts made by them, to retain their usurped power, to protect their robberies and preserve their power; nor were those efforts altogether in vain in staying the spirit of Reform. The political excitement that had been awakened by their resistance, after burning awhile with awful intensity, naturally died away; it could not be expected that that energy should continue for ever, some were satisfied with the measure of improvement obtained.

Such, however, was not the case with the masses; they were quite dissatisfied with such a modicum. Few, few of the benefits that were expected from the nostrum of absurdities were, or could, in the nature of things, be realized; disappointment trod on the heels of hope, and, after such brilliant reveries of humbug, it was sad to awake to the awful reality of the truth—disappointment begot disgust—disgust, apathy. The old state physicians, religious doctors, and quack political economists who had their gain by keeping up the craft of delusion and injustice, watched the sickened patients, and seizing the critical moment when men were disgusted with the fruits of the so-called reform, they jumped with joyful alacrity, and all interested united and administered a large doze of gold. It had a soporific effect—the fever for reform, through the influence of the doze, was allayed. Encouraged by success, they from time to time repeated the doze. Thus, by the most iniquitous means, a clog was put upon the chariot wheels of a holy cause, and they were made to move heavily along. A barrier was thus thrown across the stream of liberty, and its seeming progress stopped—the obstruction is but momentary in its duration—the stream recoils, and, to human observation, seems seeking a backward course; but mark it, its force is hourly augmenting, its weight is accumulating, until risen in its strength, the mighty waters will break through the opposing barriers of interested factions, lay and clerical—will sweep away every obstacle that attempts to thwart their onward progress. That the course of public opinion received a check, no man, with his eyes open, needs to be told. We see the old advocates of reform often uniting with their political opponents to oppose its progress, and there seemed to be a reaction, but it was only in appearance. Public dissatisfaction is daily deepening—the floods of discontent are hourly increasing—the apathetic are kindling—the religious are reflecting, and national indignation at the present state of things is rising higher and higher, and will go on augmenting, until it burst forth, lifting its voice like thunder, sweeping away cabinets and oppositions, and carrying destruction to all the old systems of absurdity. This will be the natural result of such infatuated opposition to the national will, and oppose it as the supporters of corruption may, the people, and the people's Charter, will ultimately triumph.

American Declaration of Independence.

For some time after the commencement of the American Revolution the war was carried on by the colonists solely for the redress of grievances, and to obtain the repeal of certain obnoxious acts. The King was still acknowledged as sovereign, and prayed for as usual in public worship; and as lately as June, 1775, a fast was proclaimed by congress, one motive of which was to beseech the almighty "to bless our rightful sovereign King George the Third, and to inspire him with wisdom." A very different sentiment had now begun to actuate the entire community. The relation of the colonies with the parent state had become matter of general and thorough discussion, and the theoretic views which were engendered by the popular agitation of such a subject were deepened by the every-day occurrences of the war. Numerous publications of great talent and universal circulation contrib-

ed to mature the political views of the nation at large till they harmonized with those of the few independent minds which had commanded a more extended political horizon than the rest of their countrymen, and anticipated the now general impression that America ought to declare herself a free and independent state, and sever for ever her unprofitable connection with Great Britain. The congress, constituted upon the most comprehensive principles of representation, may be considered as the index of the movements of the American mind; and from them originated the ever memorable measure, which in one hour "called a new world into existence," by erecting the colony of a distant isle of the ocean into an independent state. On the motion of Richard Henry Lee, one of the representatives of Virginia, they passed their celebrated declaration of independence. It was as follows:—

"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its power in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.—Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established, should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right—it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter the former system of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain, is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object, the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

"He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

"He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

"He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature—a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

"He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

"He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasion on the rights of the people.

"He has refused, for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining in the meantime exposed to all the danger of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

"He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these states, for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

"He has obstructed the administration of justice, by

refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

"He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices and the amount and payment of their salaries.

"He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

"He has kept among us, in time of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

"He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

"He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws, giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation;

"For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

"For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

"For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

"For imposing taxes upon us without our consent;

"For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury;

"For transporting us beyond the seas to be tried for pretended offences;

"For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighbouring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies;

"For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the form of our governments;

"For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

"He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

"He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

"He is, at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny already begun, with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

"He has constrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

"He has excited domestic insurrections among us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

"In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury.—A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

"Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of the attempts made by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind—enemies in war, in peace, friends.

"We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name, and by authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown; and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do all other acts and things which independent states may, of right, do. And, for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour."

As General Washington was at head-quarters, when this great resolution passed the Congress, his signature is not affixed to this declaration. On receiving intelligence of it, he wrote as follows to the president:—

"I perceive that Congress have been employed in deliberating on measures of the most interesting nature. It is certain that it is not with us to determine in many instances what consequences will flow from our councils; but yet it behoves us to adopt such, as, under the smiles of a gracious and all-kind Providence, will be most likely to promote our happiness. I trust the late

decisive part they have taken is calculated for that end, and will secure us that freedom and those privileges which have been, and are refused to us, contrary to the voice of nature and the British constitution. Agreeable to the request of Congress, I caused 'The Declaration' to be proclaimed before all the army under my immediate command, and have the pleasure to inform them that the measure seemed to have their most hearty assent, the expressions and behaviour both of officers and men testifying their warmest approbation of it."

The Defender.—An Irish Tale of 1797.

(Concluded from our last.)

Little Martin had erred in thinking that the place of his father's punishment was to be the yard of the barracks of the town, towards which he raced. In about the middle of the main street, and where it was spacious, stood the jail, surmounted by the court-house, the united buildings falling back some distance from the line of ordinary houses at either side, and allowing an open space before them. On one side of this space, upon the morning we are speaking of, stood a triangle, on the other, a gallows. A line of soldiers was drawn up before both, and within their line appeared some officers, grouped with loyal citizens of distinction; and without it, in the street, a crowd of the common people, of whom the countenances of some evinced compassion for what was going on at the triangle or at the gallows; while those of others grew pale in terror on their own account, perhaps a few among them looked on with scowls of indignation, or of longing vengeance. For, as we pause before this remarkable spot, neither the triangle nor the gallows is idle; nor, indeed, have they been so during the whole morning; for, above, in the court-house, sits an almost permanent court-martial, which can quite conveniently send off to the noose or the lash, as the case may require, without much loss of time, a convicted "Defender."

Two peasants descend together, well guarded from the court-house, the flight of steps which lead most immediately to the more important piece of mechanism erected for the fulfilment of the edicts of martial law; they had come in from the country tied on a common car about half an hour before. They stand on two ladders under the gallows. In a twinkling, the steady swinging ropes are adjusted round their necks, and, hand in hand, they direct their eyes amid the low wailings of the crowd, whose looks are fixed in the same direction, towards an open window in a house of the street immediately opposite the jail. At that open window appears a man stricken in years, wearing a portion of an ecclesiastical dress; his features seemed troubled, his eyes are red, his lips move in a murmured prayer, he extends his arms toward the doomed men—at a distance of perhaps forty yards; the rebels' eyes catch his, and their lips also move rapidly, and the next instant they are turned off the ladders. This circumstance asks a word of explanation. It was not, during this season of excitement, the etiquette always to allow rebels to be attended, in their last moments, by a clergyman of their own persuasion; an old priest endeavoured, as well as he could, to remedy the deficiency; he craved, and obtained permission of a friend to stand at a window in his house, conveniently facing the jail, as the sufferers were led forth to be hanged; they had previously got a whisper of his intention; when he extended his arms, they knew they were to join him in prayer, and they did so; and thus martial law became half-cheated of a portion of the full measure of its awarded punishment.

The bodies of the two peasants had not yet done struggling, when another man was guarded down from the court-house; but, as he was only on his way to the triangle the gallows did not require to be cleared for his accommodation. We have lately spoken of a little tailor, upon whose endurance of the lash, with a good many lives at stake, young Martin Doyle placed a very slender reliance; and this was another little tailor, and now in precisely the same position that Micky Glennan must have held, had his Majesty's troops succeeded in catching him the previous evening. But very different were the minds and hearts of the two little men. The individual before us was known to be possessed of information which, if fully imparted, would lay bare the whole conspiracy of defenderism in the district; and, in order to argue him into confession, he had received five hundred lashes a few days before, but without effect. Upon this morning, having been again confronted with his judges, he was still contumacious; and he is now marched down from them to be tied up again; and he is tied up again; and, with scarce a loud cry, he undergoes five hundred lashes more, only praying for a drop of water, which is denied him. We will give a sentence more to this obstinate little fellow. Strange to say, he did not die under the lash; and, what is quite as strange, having been found proof against the triangle, he was not turned over to the gallows; for we saw him alive and well, twenty years at least after the year 1797; nay, and, with a great concourse of other people, of all political parties, we attended at his funeral; and his name was and is invested with heroism among the humble classes of his native place. We subjoin it for the curious in those matters—Dooly. Had he been a citizen of an older town, old Rome, and had he thus borne to be tortured in one of the streets of old Carthage, what would classic history now say of him!

The people knew that little Dooly had been flogged a few days before—indeed, had they been ignorant of the fact, his unhealed back might, now have proclaimed it—and they therefore looked on at his present punishment with feelings of great commiseration; groans and lamentations—which called forth frowning glances of reprobation from the loyal gentlemen, civil and military, standing near the triangle—often escaping them. Now and then the flogger would be commanded to desist for a moment, in order that some authorized person might reiterate to Dooly the prudent recommendation to save his back, by turning informer; and when the stubborn little Defender only gave his invariable answer of—"Let me die asy—let me die asy, in the name of God;"—and when, in consequence of his pertinacity, the big-drummer's lash again descended upon his puny carcass with redoubled vigour, the cries of the spectators outside the line of soldiers, became quite too loud for the ears of loyalty. One man amongst them, in particular, aroused the angry notice of his superiors. He was taller by a head than any of his neighbours in the crowd; he had arrived hastily amongst them, running at his utmost speed; he was greatly agitated, though he seemed to make efforts to stand quietly and observantly; he was without waistcoat, coat or hat, and dripping with wet and covered with mire; and this person it was who, as Dooly silently cringed under a good blow, dared to call out—"Huth! can't ye hang the poor crature, to put him out o' pain? Ay! strhing him up at once, if there's a man's heart among ye!—upon which he was sternly commanded to stand back and hold his tongue, at the risk of being dragged from where he was, and thrust into the jail.

"Huth! huth!" laughed the offender, "ye would not let me stir out of where I am, for a hatful o' goold this mornin'; stir out of it to go backwards, I mane."

A new incident appealed to the sympathies of the lookers on. When Dooly had nearly received his day's punishment, a second candidate for the triangle was led down the court-house steps. His appearance called forth a burst of lament from the crowd; and—"God of glory!" cried the man who had before spoken, while his eyes stared, and his teeth set hard. The rebel now to be flogged was tall, old, white-haired, and stooping from feebleness. His bleared blue eyes wandered vaguely around—his white lips moved rapidly—his hands were clasped. His guards stationed him behind Dooly, at a point from which, for his edification and the King's expected advantage, he might fully observe what was in store for himself, under a certain proviso. The moment they allowed him to stand still, the old man fell on his knees, fixed his roving eyes, as it was hoped he would have done, on Dooly's back; then clasping his hands tighter, and glancing upwards for a moment, his lips moved more quickly than before.

Dooly was taken down from the triangle, and borne, fainting, between two soldiers, into the jail. A fresh big-drummer, wielding a fresh instrument of torture, approached the kneeling old man, slapped him on the shoulder, and cried, "Strip!" The official was a black, of unlovely aspect, and his own shining, sooty, muscular arms and body were bared for his proposed task.

"Yes, Doyle, strip!" repeated another official, a gentleman of the civic corps; "or else change your mind, and give the information demanded of you."

"Yis, avich, yis—yis, your honour, yis!" answered old Martin Doyle, rising with difficulty. "Strip I will by all manes; only I'd ask again what I asked above in the court-house—couldn't I see aforehand, young Masther Insign Abercromby, for the love of God?"

The gentleman who had addressed him exchanged smiles with the friends around him, and all shrugged their shoulders; the big black imitated them, and the former spokesman resumed.

"You positively refuse, then, to declare your knowledge of where Martin Doyle, the younger, may at present be found?"

"Avoch," was the old man's reply.

"In that case, go on," said a sergeant of yeomanry who had accompanied him down to the court-house, nodding to the black.

"Come, old chap," commanded that important individual, tearing open the buttons of the old miller's white coat.

"Here, then, in the name o' God!" said old Martin, beginning to undress.

"Stand back, there!" roared a sentinel, who confronted the crowd outside the line of the soldiers—"Stand back, or I will run my bayonet through you!"

"Huth, man alive!" cried little Martin in reply, his voice good-naturedly toned, though, as will be seen, his actions proved none of the gentlest. "Huth, man alive! stand back yourself. I don't mane to hurt you, but I'm wantin' inside, there." He kicked up the musket; wrestled it with little effort from the sentinel's grasp; twirled him aside among the people; pitched it forward into the space before the jail, where it rang sharply on the pavement; pushed through the soldiers before him, with perfectly erect figure, and quiet, though prodigious strides; gained his father's side; put his arms round him; extended widely his gigantic limbs; and said, in a mild but firm voice—"Nobody is to touch this ould man; nobody has a need to touch him; nobody has a right to touch him;—all ye want of him is to make him tell where his son is to be found, and I can tell ye without botherin' him; he is to be found here—here where I stand. I am his son; I am the Martin Doyle that ye called the younger, just now; so tie me up; lash me as long as it plases ye,