

A

LETTER

TO

THOMAS PAINE,

IN ANSWER TO HIS SCURRILOUS EPISTLE ADDRESSED TO OUR
LATE WORTHY PRESIDENT WASHINGTON;

AND CONTAINING

COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS ON HIS LIFE, POLITICAL AND
DEISTICAL WRITINGS, &c. &c.

INTENDED AS AN ALARM TO THE GOOD PEOPLE OF
THESE STATES, FROM BEING LED ASTRAY
BY THE SOPHISTICAL REASONINGS
OF MR. PAINE.

BY AN AMERICAN CITIZEN,

In whose heart the *Amor Patriæ* holds the highest place.

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1797.

A LETTER

TO

THOMAS PAINE.

S I R,

“AS censure is but awkwardly softened by apology, I shall offer you none for writing this letter.” The eventful crisis to which those disorganizing and infidel principles which you glory in propagating, have brought the affairs both of France and America, render the undertaking both warrantable and necessary.

There was a time, when the people of the United States had a high veneration for Thomas Paine. The pamphlets which you heaped upon this country, in the time of the American war, however extravagant and ridiculous, had a considerable effect in effecting the independence of this country, for this assistance we willingly give you credit, on the same footing as we would comply with the principles of the old adage, “to give the devil his due.”

At the period when all America was animated with a just resentment at the arbitrary and tyrannical measures of the court of Great Britain, and had actually, and justly, taken up arms against that insolent power, they were, as is very natural to suppose, glad of any assistance, coming from whatever quarter, that would aid them in the great object they had in view.

Among an enlightened people, the press has a powerful effect, in controuling political sentiments, and among a people where there are very few but can read a news-paper; superficial pieces, containing some flashes of wit, pointing at particular subjects of existing commotions, were perfectly well calculated to attract the attention of the multitude—availing yourself of a junction of favourable circumstances, your superficial and grub-street genius was brought into activity, and an eclat given to your literary performances, more than ten degrees beyond what their intrinsic worth ever merited.

Having by these means obtruded yourself upon public notice, you have become intoxicated with vanity. Not a piece comes from you,
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but Tom Paine is the hero of the story. Having, in various of your pieces, arrogantly attributed to yourself almost the exclusive merit of the American revolution, yet not content with those plagiarist flowers with which you have adorned your political nosegay, you have of late assumed to yourself the exclusive honour of completely overturning the christian system. From your exalted eminence, (like the master whom you faithfully serve) you look down with the sublimest satisfaction, on seeing Kings and Priests, Prophets and Apostles, nay, the Saviour of the world prostrate at your feet. Bless me, what a man!

It is storied of Alexander, that when he had conquered the world, he wept that there was not another world to conquer. But had that ancient hero of chivalry, been possessed of the pregnant genius of our modern hero of politics and divinity, he might have saved the effusion of all his tears, for, instead of weeping for another world to conquer, he should have conquered the same world over again; for our hero of politics, having, by a dash of his pen, conquered the despotic monarchies of England and France, has proclaimed war against the Republic of the United States, and intends if possible, to make George the third, and Washington the first, share the fate of Louis the sixteenth.

When one peruses the variety of your dashing works, it is laughable above all other things, to see your consistency and your honesty; your genius is properly compared to the atoms of Epicurus which were in an eternal, accidental and opposite motion. Having early committed yourself to the world as a Republican, you had sense enough to know, that leaving that ground, and becoming an advocate for monarchy, would make your political character appear so notoriously ridiculous, that no description of people would regard you: but in your various Republican pieces, you have advocated sentiments, that are far more irreconcilably opposite, than the present constitution of England and France.

In your "Common Sense," and "Rights of Man," you are evidently an advocate for a single legislature. In your Dissertation on first principles of government, you directly oppose that form of government, and plead earnestly for two houses. In the first of these books we discover such profound political penetration, in regard to choosing a president by lot, your observation on a navy, and of a public debt, as really attract our wonder and admiration.

But, if our wonder is started here, our admiration is carried to its ne plus ultra, on comparing the arguments which you adduce from the sole authority of scripture against monarchy, with your extraordinary performances, called "The Age of Reason," (rather the age of folly.) In the former you frequently call the Bible "the word of God," in the latter you say "we ought to feel shame at calling the Bible the word of God." These passages of your ranting brain, compared together, leave us no other alternative, but either to pronounce you a shameful impostor, or an infamous liar. They necessarily oblige us to the adoption of both.

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Having arrogated to yourself, tho' very unjustly, the fame of changing the American system of politics, you thirsted after the honour of having it said, that you changed their sentiments of religion. And were you so vain, as to think that a man so profoundly ignorant of religion in general, as you evidently are, could convert a nation of enlightened christians, and make them change their Bible, the word of eternal life, for the scurrilous nonsense of your Age of Reason? No, Sir, had the People of America been disposed to change their Religion, they had little need of your assistance, unless it had been better, for while the best informed deists of this country, are proud of quoting the production of a Hume, or Voltaire, they are ashamed to mention the name of a Paine in support of the subject. In this instance I trust you have missed your aim, while you have fully discovered the cloven-foot of your evil intentions.

Republican as I am in principle, and a revelationist by profession, rejoicing as I ever have, both at the American, and French revolutions, I nevertheless view the Atheistical and murderous principle of the most distinguished men, who conducted the French revolution, with the most superlative detestation. As to yourself, though you deny that you are an Atheist, or that you approved of the murderous system that will cast an eternal reproach on the French revolution, yet, many of your doctrines both political and religious, lead directly thereto.

As to your notions of religion, you deny that we have any knowledge of a God, or of a future state, but what our reason teaches us; and if your notions are true, what is the amount of all our knowledge of these infinitely important subjects? As to a future state of existence, our reason, so far from teaching, is entirely against it. Every appearance in nature from which our reason can judge, bespeaks that when man dies there is an end of him; with respect to an hereafter, reason alone is as silent as the grave itself. The natural immortality of the soul is no more a doctrine of reason, than the Scripture doctrine of the resurrection. After all the laborious researches of mankind, from the creation of the world to this day, on the subject of the natural immortality of the soul, after you have had an opportunity of examining all that the philosophers of ancient and modern times have had to say on this most momentous subject, I find the most powerful reason which you can give, is, "that a Caterpillar changes to a Butterfly," which is about as much of a proof, as the circumstances of wheat's changing to druck, is a proof that the moon is made of green cheese.

But, though reason alone is wholly silent as to teaching a future state of existence, yet I am ready to allow, yea to affirm, that it teaches the existence of a God. But even this cannot be satisfactorily proved from the common principles which Deists lay down, nor from those which you have advanced in your Age of Reason; for the argument that nothing can exist without a cause, does not remove the objection of the Atheist; who immediately enquires, if nothing can exist without a cause,

cause, how came the first cause to exist? and this objection appears unanswerable. I therefore argue the existence of a God, when revelation is out of the question; not merely by stating the necessity of a cause for all things, but by contemplating those evident marks of design which appear both in animate and inanimate existence. These evidences of design plainly demonstrate the existence of a Supreme intelligent Being; but the reason, judging from these evidences, discovers his existence, yet it is wholly incompetent to a discovery of what is called his moral attributes.

In the first part of your *Age of Reason*, I find you proposing the following questions, viz.

“But if objects for gratitude and admiration are our desire, do they not present themselves every hour to our eyes? Do we not see a fair creation prepared to receive us the instant we are born?—a world, furnished to our hands, that costs us nothing? Is it we that light up the sun, —that pour down the rain—and fill the earth with abundance?”

These questions will do for those who are content to view things only on the bright side, (which I find, by the bye, you are, in some instances, far from being willing to do); but the impartial observer, with equal reason, will contrast with yours the following questions, viz.

Do we not, the moment we see an infant born, hear him begin to cry?—sad forboding of a life of sorrow which is to succeed! Do we not, if his life is spared, find that, in his progress through life, he is beset with innumerable evils, which cause him pain and grief? Do not disorders of the brain frequently bring on the most excruciating pains? Is he not frequently visited with poverty and disgrace?—Not only doomed to these evils himself, is he not called to the view of scenes the most distressing—a child gasping in his arms; or a darling wife expiring at his bosom? Is he not in the world as frequently called to the house of mourning as to the house of feasting?—to the mournings of a funeral, as to the festivity of a marriage? And are there not more graves in the world than palaces? And is not the grave, after a short life of trouble, the house appointed for all living?

As you will not deny the proper application of these questions, may I not be permitted to ask, by what criterion, in all the phœnomina of nature, are we to determine the moral attributes of the Deity? seeing it is a question hard to be solved, whether, taking the whole of man's existence into view, in this visible system, evil or good really preponderates.

From these few hints we may easily see the absurdity of supposing natural religion adequate to the formation of the moral character of mankind. You say, “the moral duty of man consists in imitating the moral goodness of God.” Here you beg the question; for your religion can never prove that God is a being so essentially made up of moral goodness, as to render it warrantable for us to imitate his works. This doctrine, that the moral duty of man consists in imitating the works of God, is pregnant with the most dreadful consequences that can be conceived for by the same rule that we are led to imitate the good which he confers, we shall be led to imitate the evils which he inflicts; and what would that be,

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be, but to open the flood-gate for the introduction of all the horrors with which the ancient pagan religion was replete? Famine, wars, assassinations, and miseries of every kind, would be the natural effect.*

The ancient pagans, whom you ignorantly call a moral people, justified all these enormities, from the principle of imitating the works of God. Among innumerable evidences of this, the most striking one is that of human sacrifices.

They, observing that it was the character of the Deity to inflict death upon mankind, thought to appease his anger and gain his good will would be to imitate him in this respect. Accordingly, the custom of offering up human beings in sacrifice was universally adopted by all the nations in the world, except the Jews; and so universal was this practice among all the heathen nations, that even some of the most vicious Jewish kings, who partly relapsed into heathenism, appear, in some instances, to have imitated the horrid example.

The brevity which I study in this letter will not admit of giving circumstantial details of this horrid practice; every person who has any acquaintance with history, knows the thing to be a fact. In general the victims were slaves; but on extraordinary occasions, young men and women of the first families were sacrificed. This practice was equally carried on among the civilized, as among the savage nations. The modern Mexicans sacrificed, at one time, no less than sixty thousand souls.

Not only the practice of offering human sacrifices, and the destruction of the human race, by wars and murder in general, was justified by the example of the Supreme Being, but every practice which degrades the human species, and levels them with the brutes, was practised under the same pretence. Prostitution, even in their temples, was a common thing. Among some nations, it was an essential article of religion, that every woman should, once in her life, prostitute herself to a stranger.

To say that these nations believed in two, or a great number of independent principles, or Gods, some good and others evil, and that these practices were in imitation of the evil principle, gives nothing in favour of natural religion, but only confirms us in the opinion of its total insufficiency, as a guide to the practice of moral virtue, or to any proper idea of the Supreme Being, or the future destination of man.

In plain terms, all that natural religion teaches an attentive mind, is, that there is an intelligent cause for all things, both good and evil; that we are the production of this cause, sharing at present both good and evil; but, that the evil of death will shortly take us out of existence, where we shall be as though we had not been—where the good and the bad will share exactly alike.

This, Sir, is the gloomy, but true picture of that religion which you are most industriously endeavouring to propagate in this country. This is the religion which you wish us to embrace, in exchange for that glo-

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* I believe that all the evil which the Deity inflicts on his creatures, will finally be subservient to the happiness of the intelligent system. In this view of things the Deity inflicts no real evil: But it is far otherwise with man.

rious system which "has brought life and immortality to light;"—a system which gives the most satisfactory account of the existence and attributes of the Deity;—of the design and final result of evil, both moral and natural; making plain our duty before us; expressly promising the reward of every virtue, and positively threatening the punishment of every vice; ever suspending our happiness, on the condition of intentional rectitude; giving us the utmost encouragement for persevering in the cause of virtue, holding out every thing to deter us from a course of vice;—a religion calculated to afford the greatest consolation through life, and holding up, as an object of holy ambition, a crown of immortal glory beyond the grave;—a religion that teaches us, on the most infallible authority, that when we, with all our near and dear connections, are laid in the silent grave, it is in certain prospect of a resurrection to an eternal happy life, where we shall meet with our dear friends and relatives, whom death has separated for a time, adorned in all the glory of unceasing, immortal bliss and beauty.†

Here, did the limits of my design admit, I would cheerfully enter on the subject of demonstrating, that the Bible, which fully warrants the preceding sentiments, is a book of really divine and infallible authority; but this being a thing already done to your hands by others, I shall only observe, that after having put forth all your might on the subject, you are unable to produce one objection against the bible, that need, for one moment, disturb the feelings of a man of sense. You have a tolerable genius for wit, and a good one for a blackguard; but, candidly speaking, after a careful perusal of all your writings, I have never been able to discover you to be a man of knowledge sufficient to warrant that important idea, which you never fail to inform us you have, of your own literary merit.

I cannot dismiss this part of the subject without observing in the two parts of the Age of Reason, your old practice of contradicting yourself. In the first, you tell us that the morality which Christ preached was excellent. In the second part you say, that wherever it exceeds heathen morality, it is mean and ridiculous. Loving of enemies, you say, is offering a premium for crimes, and of course a bad doctrine. I think your memory must be as treacherous as your heart is vicious.

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† I have often been disgusted at Mr. Paine's illiberal and unmanly manner of writing. It is his invariable practice, to give out his sentiments in the most Sovereign dictatorial style, and treating with affected insolent contempt every argument, however conclusive, that is urged against him.—The doctrine of the resurrection, he says, "is so far from being an evidence of immortality to him, that it is an argument against it, for if he has once died in this body, the probability is, that he shall die again."

This remark is childish and absurd: The same authority which declares that the dead shall arise, declares likewise, that they shall never die again. (Luke xx 36) Neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

The whole volume of nature affords neither evidence, nor probability, of a future state. This volume teaches nothing inconsistent with the old epicurean maxim, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." The volume of the Bible teaches the doctrine of a future eternal state of existence, with that demonstrative certainty which is sufficient for the satisfaction of every rational man.

The revelation of a future life, which is evidently the grand end and design of the bible, is of infinitely more importance to such dying mortals as we all are, than all other topics, put them all together, that ever employed the genius of man. What are the circumstances of a few uncertain years, compared to that state of existence which shall never have an end? What are the ruins and revolutions of Empires which history unfolds, to the wonders of that universal revolution which the bible, with such majestic grandeur, fully reveals and unfolds. What is the dunghill story of a caterpillar's changing to a butterfly, as to a proof of an hereafter, compared with the solemn declaration, positively confirmed by a divine interposition, no less miraculous than the resurrection of its author from the dead.

“Marvel not at this, that the hour when all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.”

I am fully of the opinion, that no mortal man would have ever had the most distant idea of a God, or of a future state, had it not been for divine revelation. I am confirmed in this opinion both from history and observation. It is certain that no nation of people had so proper an idea of the true God, and of a future state, as the Jews. It is equally certain, that all the nations in the neighbourhood of Judea, where they naturally learnt more or less of the Jewish doctrine, had the strongest sense of religion, and were the most civilized people. In proportion as you recede from the Jewish nation, you find the people growing more and more uncivilized, until you find them immerged in the deep gloom of savage ignorance. The Deity, knowing that the ordinary powers with which he had endowed his creature man, were incapable of discovering his existence, merely from the appearance of his ordinary works, has, in certain instances, inverted the general course of things, as the most proper way to convince mankind, that the whole course of nature was under the controul of a Being who was infinite in all his attributes. This inversion of the ordinary course of nature is what we call a Miracle. But the existence of miracles you refuse to believe, though attested by a million of evidences. You are so excellent a logician, and so candid a man, that if a million of men inform you of a miracle, and one man contradicts it, his single evidence must preponderate against the whole; and what increases our astonishment here, is, that in this respect, Hume is almost as ridiculous as you. I will not disgrace my page by attempting to reason against such sottishness: but proceed to observe, that the proof of the existence of one real miracle, is of sufficient authority to warrant the belief of the whole system of Divine Revelation. And what better evidence can we possibly have of the existence of miracles than we really have. For instance; I know not of a fact in all history that is better attested than the resurrection of Christ. In proportion to the importance of an historical fact, will always be the scrutinizing researches respecting its authenticity. And as all unbelievers, from the time the fact happened to this day, have exerted themselves to
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the utmost to weaken the evidences of the fact, it is curious to find, that after you, with all their assistance, have tugged and sweat at the business, are evidently unable to produce a single circumstance as objectionable, but what rather serves to strengthen than to weaken the evidences. The non-essential variation in the different accounts, which your extreme prejudice would magnify into insurmountable objections, are strong corroborations of its reality and truth. If the writers of the account of the resurrection were impostors, why did they not tell their stories exactly alike? Or if they wrote without any knowledge of each other, how could they contrive a lie so nearly alike? Surely this would be as great a miracle as the resurrection itself. What had they to induce them to tell such a lie? Was it riches? no. "Silver and gold have I none." Was it popularity or the good will of men? no. "Ye shall be hated of all men, for my name's sake." Was it power? no. "My kingdom is not of this world." Was it ease and security? no. "Behold I send you forth as sheep among wolves." Was it long life? no. "The time cometh when whosoever shall kill you, shall think he doeth God service."

The resurrection of Christ was not only attested by several hundred witnesses, (you say with your usual confidence, which shows how much you are to be depended on by not more than eight or nine) by the eleven of his disciples, who saw and conversed with him at different times, for the space of forty days,* but was believed by the best informed of his enemies, and even his very murderers. Of all men living, who was not an eye witness to the resurrection of Christ, we may naturally suppose Pilate, to be the best judge, who at the same time was interested in suppressing the belief of the fact. He had been well acquainted with the whole history of Christ, particularly of his miracles. It was he who gave orders for his execution. It was he, who being strictly intent to guard against any deception, or any trick of his disciples, apparently to fulfil the public prediction of Christ, respecting his own resurrection, gave positive orders both for setting a watch, and for securing the sepulchre: Yet the evidences of the resurrection, were so notorious, so unanswerably attested, that Pilate himself believed it. He wrote a letter, shortly after the transaction, to Tiberius the Emperor of Rome, informing him particularly of the wonderful miracle and resurrection of Christ. Upon which the Emperor made a report of it to the Senate. (See the History of Rome abridged by Dr. Goldsmith, page 218.)

Are the philosophers of Paris better judges of this affair, than Pilate who was personally acquainted with Christ, had seen his miracles, seen him expire on the cross, was living in Jerusalem in the time of his resurrection, and perfectly well acquainted with all the circumstances of the transaction. Is Thomas Paine possessed of better evidence of this affair than

* Mr. Paine likewise says, that the whole space of time from the crucifixion to the ascension of Christ, was apparently not more than three or four days. Compare the assertion of this excellent divine, with (Acts, Chap. 1. verse 3.) "To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days."

that Pilate. If he is, it is needless to go so far back into antiquity for miracles to justify the doctrine of a divine interpolation, for here is a miracle before our eyes.

O ye Deists! of all men you are the most unreasonable. You talk much of the superstition and bigotry of christians. But if you are not superstitious, you are of all men the greatest bigots. You are so bigotted to your doctrines, that you lay it down as a kind of maxim that the testimony of one Deist is of more weight than the testimony of a million christians. Who can reason with such fots. You are arrogant in the extreme. You may with more reason tell us that Julius Cæsar never existed, than that Christ never existed.* You may with much more reason tell us that he never was assassinated by Brutus and others, than that Christ was not crucified. You may with as much reason reduce all ancient history to a total blank, as to deny that Christ actually arose from the dead. It is because you hate the doctrine of christianity that you refuse to believe it. The loving of enemies is a hateful doctrine to modern philosophers. Their pride and haughtiness is much easier gratified by answering an affront with the sword or the Guillotine, than by forgiving an injury. But wretched will ever be the condition of that people who are ruled by such philosophers. The forgiveness of an injury settles a difference at once; but there is no end to retaliation. Under the influence of this hellish principle of retaliation, the world has ever groaned in wretchedness and despair. Was this doctrine of loving our enemies, which implies no more than the forgiveness of injuries, but once universally obeyed, what a happy world would this be. This and this only, can lay the foundation for true republicanism. Here, and here only, will the rights of man be in any sense secure. This single sentence comprised in three words "love your enemies," is of infinitely more worth both in the moral and political world, than as many volumes of your "Rights of Man," as can be piled between the heavens and earth.†

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* Volney and Lequinio, two philosophers of France, are so ignorant as to deny that such a person as Christ ever existed.

† The book of Job is generally allowed to be the most ancient book that is now extant. In this book we find the following remarkable vindication of the natural equality and rights of mankind. We here had a true republican, rebuking and vindicating the natural rights of mankind, from this weighty and solemn declaration, that the Deity took cognizance of all his works, and would punish every act of usurpation and oppression. (Job xxxi) "If I did despise the cause of my manservant, or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up, and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?"

How infinitely preferable is the authority of divine revelation towards supporting the rights of man, the order and happiness of society, to Mr. Paine's mathematical religion. Let common-sense judge which is the best plan of morality; that which is contained in these few words of our Saviour, "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them," or any thing that can be learnt by peeping through a telescope at the satellites of Jupiter. O! Americans, beware of jacobin politics, and jacobin religion.

Whenever Mr. Paine speaks of the natural rights of mankind to an equal representation, he speaks in such a manner as would make one suppose that he conceived himself to be the first man who ever made a discovery of these natural rights, when the fact is, that he has not advanced a single idea upon the subject that is truly original. These nat-

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From the ignorance and pride of a Deist, naturally arises a charge of monstrous ingratitude. His ingratitude consists in refusing to give credit to divine revelation, for what he has evidently borrowed from that source. All his ideas of a God or of a future state, are evidently borrowed from the doctrines of the bible. For though the existence of a Deity is confirmed by reasoning on those evidences of design in the visible creation, yet there is no appearance in nature, that will justify the opinion that ever our ideas would have arrived to that degree of abstract refinement necessary for this discovery, without the original aid of divine revelation. The christian who expects a future eternal state of happiness in heaven; the Mahometan who expects a future state resembling a terrestrial paradise; the deist who expects a future state, of and where he knows not what; the poor negro who expects to return to his native Africa when he dies; the wandering Indian, who expects to meet his wife and dog in some happy abode beyond the western mountains; are all equally dependent for their discoveries, on divine revelation: The different modes and degrees of their belief, resulting in general from circumstances in their natures adventitious. Wherever we perceive the least notion of a God, or of a future state, wherever we perceive the least notion of moral virtue; there we see something of divine revelation.

As much as I dread the extraordinary calamities with which the nations of the earth are frequently visited; as much as I detest every form of government which is not founded on the will of a free people; yet I solemnly declare that I dread the general introduction of your infidel principles, more than I do the pestilence of a plague or an oriental despotism.

The innocence of the American character was formerly your almost constant theme. From what source did this innocence arise, from Deism or Christianity? not from Deism certainly; for a Deist was then so rare that he was esteemed a monster in nature. He was ashamed to show his head,

tural rights were contemplated by thousands in ancient Greece and Rome, and vindicated by a multitude of writers from Plato to Voltaire. It is true, other republicans, and other infidels have had more modesty and prudence than Mr. Paine. He is distinguished from other republicans, and other infidels, more by his rashness and impudence, than by any extraordinary reasoning. He speaks of himself as of a great adept in science, when he has ever discovered himself to be a mere smatterer.

Let the following queries and observations be attended to by the candid reader (*viz.*) A right to a choice of government must be derived either from property or intellectual ability: To say that this right is derived from property is attended with many absurdities. It is attaching rights to dead matter, and is in fact the very foundation of all aristocratic governments. If this right is derived from intellectual ability, on what principle is it confined to males, to the exclusion of females. Is not this exclusion of one half the species in Republics; just as arbitrary as the exclusion of all the men in absolute monarchies. If it is intellectual ability, why is it confined to age? There are many males under twenty-one who possess more intellectual ability than many who are over that age. Is not the exclusion of these as arbitrary as to exclude any other. About two thirds of the species are by these rules excluded from any choice in the government. On what principle is this exclusion? on that of expediency. This is the monarch's plea for excluding the men. On that of necessity, this is the monarch's plea likewise. Is not society so imperfect as to be driven to the absolute necessity of arbitrary rules in many instances. Is not government in the freest Republics a discretionary thing, under the controul of a few men of superior attainments, while not one in twenty has a really independent choice.

head, and you among the rest. It was a strict attachment to the christian religion. Happy had it been for France had there been the like attachment during her revolution. The scaffolds would not in that case have streamed with torrents of innocent blood. Thousands of prisoners would not have been massacred without a trial. The unfortunate cities of Toulon, of Lyons, and of Nantz, would not have been depopulated by indiscriminate butcheries. Thousands of women and children, (my soul shudders at the thought). Thousands of women I say, with their wishful infants at their breasts, would not have been plunged into a watery grave. Young men and women would not have been stript naked, and tied face to face, then plunged into the sea, patriotically called republican marriage. Philippi would not have come into the jacobin society with the heads of his father and mother, boasting that he had cut them off as a proof of his patriotism. Thomas Paine would not have been imprisoned in the Luxemburg, and saved from the scaffold by nothing but the respect which even the Parisian savages had for America.

These are traits in the human character, which the most acute philosopher can never investigate. Light and darkness are not more irreconcilably opposite than some of the intellectual powers which constitute an individual capacity. How astonishing is it, that you who had so frequently boasted of "the innocence of the American character," whose christianity was highly respected; who had been so liberally rewarded and treated, by this nation of christians. How astonishing, I say, is it, that in the midst of all the horrors that were exercised by the infidels of France, yourself taken in among the number of the accused, and menaced with the ghastly edge of the Guillotine; a recent and strong remembrance of the morality and kindness of your "beloved America" should take that opportunity for spreading those detestable principles which are contained in your monstrous production called the Age of Reason. Was it because, seeing all your ambitious projects blasted by the prospect of your imprisonment and impending fate in France, the rancour of envy was stirred in your breast, and you wished to make the happy people of this country as wretched as yourself? Was it with you as it was with the Devil, who being cast out of heaven down to hell, could not endure the light of so much happiness in the garden of Eden. It is utterly impossible on principles of fair reasoning, and that in the full exercise of charity, to conceive of any worthy motive which could excite you to the undertaking.

The belief of a God is of no practical use when revelation is denied. There is no vice however monstrous, but what has been vindicated by modern unbelievers. Marriage, the great bond and foundation of all society, is almost wholly disregarded by them. And a law equivalent to an unlimited community of women was actually passed by the national convention, founded on this maxim, that "whatever will effects, will may change," that is, a man and woman may agree to live together as long as they will, and then if they will may part. Deism saps the very foundation of all morality whatever. It encourages every thing that is congenial to the natural depravity of mankind. Lust, revenge, and every thing destructive to the happiness of society is encouraged by
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this impious system. Even those deists who are the most ostentatiously fond of extolling their own virtues, have disgraced their lives, as well as their religion, by shameful immoralities; Rousseau, in his younger years was a thief, in his middle age an adulterer, Franklin, the best man among them, was a whoremaster, and Tom Paine is a drunkard.

Dismissing the subject of your moral principles, we will attend for a while to your present political character in particular, as we find it exemplified in your late letter to the President of the United States. Here we find not only your political creed, but the moral temper of your heart. Here we find in open day, the baseness of an infidel, the odiousness of an incendiary, and the impudence of a mercenary assassin. Nothing could induce the writer of this letter to pay any attention to such despicable scurrility, but an apprehension that there are yet numbers of people in this country, who are profligate and unprincipled enough to give some credit to your impious lies. The number of those, however, I can assure you from certain knowledge, are daily decreasing; and you soon will have no credit but among the most despicable characters.

It seems the ground of this wondrous performance is the silence which the President preserved during your imprisonment in Paris. That is, you was imprisoned by those who exercised the powers of government in France. And Gen. Washington did not interfere in the internal affairs of France so much as to try to get you out. And what then. Is it an evidence that he is an enemy to France because he would not interfere in her internal affairs? O no! It is an evidence that he is ungrateful to you. Be it so. Perhaps he had better be ungrateful to you than to all France. Or perhaps there was less danger in provoking you, than in provoking the whole power of that nation. You were imprisoned by the government of France on the accusation of being a traitor to the Republic. What evidence had Mr. Washington that the accusation was false. Why, he was acquainted with your character. Very well, this acquaintance led him to know that you were not a man of sufficient stability or morality to be one that should exercise the powers of government. He knew, with the rest of the Americans, that though you might answer a considerable purpose, as a tool to demolish a government, that you were a most miserable tool to build one up.* Congress, in the time of the American war, conferred upon you the office of Secretary to foreign affairs, but it seems you soon lost their confidence, and the post, which you but a short time enjoyed. Judging from these and other circumstances, it seems a thing not impossible for you to be a traitor. But candidly speaking, I am far from thinking it any evidence of a man's being a traitor because he fell under accusation in France; for during their revolution there has been no such thing as a traitor, or a patriot. There has been no standard by which to determine the difference between

* Mr. Paine was a principal agent in composing the French constitution of 1793. This anarchical code contained the following article, (viz.) "When the government violates the rights of the people, insurrection is to the people, and each portion of the people, the most sacred of rights, and the most indispensable of duties." This article is sufficient proof, without any other evidence, that the barbarities which have been exercised in France, were either ordered or approved by the men who exercised the powers of government.

between patriotism and treason ; for what has been called patriotism one day, has frequently been called treason the next. But be this therefore as it may, you were imprisoned on the accusation of being a traitor, and let the accusation be as false as it may be, it would have been arrogance in Mr. Washington, to have told the convention you were not, or even to have interfered in the business in any shape whatever. You were one of the convention who had exercised the powers of government in France, and notwithstanding your quibbles upon the subject, were properly and necessarily considered by the American government, as a French citizen.

Gen. Washington is not, I trust, so much of a Frenchman in politics, as to interfere in the internal affairs of France. This practice of interfering in the internal affairs of foreign independent nations, seems in a great measure peculiar to the French. Since the revolution there has been no less than three diplomatic characters sent from France to this country, and their multiplied intrigues has made them appear more like incendiaries, than like the ambassadors of a friendly nation. The President, who was obliged to exercise all his vigilance to counteract the effects of these intrigues, would have acted a very inconsistent part had he authorised either Morris, or Munroe to interfere in any degree in the internal affairs of France. He knew his place and his duty too well, for to act any thing of the kind. His faithfulness to his duty and to his country, is what you call treachery and ingratitude to you ; but this impartial world will judge who has been the most ungrateful and treacherous to each other, the President to you, or you to the President. He has never done you any harm, neither has he in any sense been ungrateful to you. He has in this instance acted the part of a wise and prudent man. His feelings were on the rack to prevent the horrid tragedies that were acting in France. There were multitudes of innocent people, who were not only imprisoned but murdered in France. Several of these he numbered among his particular friends. These might cast a wishful eye to the President, when they found themselves in the hands of the executioner ; but alas ! it was out of his power to help them. Louis had manifested a particular friendship for the President, and was more entitled to his and his country's gratitude, than any man in France. This unfortunate man, whose only crime was the misfortune of being born an hereditary King, a principle which the folly of his countrymen had established for ages, and a short time before his execution had voluntarily sworn to maintain, might, in the trying hour of his execution, have said, " Mr. Washington, when I saw your country engaged in a contest with Great-Britain, and in danger of being crushed and enslaved by that overbearing and insolent power, I sent both my fleets and my armies to your assistance. Having assisted the citizens of America in establishing their liberties and their independence, and finding that the people of France were desirous of having a free constitution like yours ; I voluntarily accepted such a constitution, and the people took a solemn oath to maintain it. They voluntarily confided the executive power to me, and declared it hereditary in my family. In direct contradiction to their oaths, they have not only

suspended

suspended my power, but after inflicting every indignity more bitter than death upon me, have passed a decree that in a few hours I shall ascend the scaffold, bound in the most indignant manner, and have my head severed from my body, by the cruel blade of the guillotine. Is there no assistance which you can afford your friend in this distressing hour?

Though I say the President has not been treacherous nor ungrateful to you in any sense, but doubtless wished you both liberty and happiness, yet I say that you have been both treacherous and ungrateful to him in the extreme. The friendly notice which he has taken of you, has been like that of a man who took a serpent in his bosom, to sting him to death. O thou monster of ingratitude! "Is this thy kindness to thy friend?"—Hear the audacious accusations which you bring against a man, whom you so lately extolled for his "eminent virtues." He is called by your slanderous tongue both a traitor, a hypocrite, and a colleague of Robespierre in projects, and compared to an old woman in military capacities."

Your slanders in general are so despicable, that they may safely be left to have their course. I shall however just notice what you say of the President's conduct in regard to the Treaty, and likewise in regard to his military character.

After a number of the most illiberal and gross misrepresentations respecting the transaction of the President in regard to the Treaty, you say, "the Treaty with France says, that neutral ships make neutral property, and thereby gives protection to English property on board American ships; and Jay's Treaty delivers up French property; on board American ships, to be seized by the English. It is too paltry to talk of faith, of national honour, and of the preservation of treaties, when such a barefaced treachery as this, flares the world in the face."

There are two things which all the civilized world have agreed to observe, in order to regulate the principles of commerce. One is a compendium of principles, which some of the wisest men in different nations, have digested and compiled, and are called the law of nations. The others are particular stipulations which two different nations agree to observe towards each other, and these stipulations, compiled together, are called a Treaty. When no Treaty exists, the law of nations is ever the criterion to determine any dispute about the right or nature of commerce. When a Treaty exists, commerce is regulated by that Treaty, and the law of nations is superseded in every instance when the subject is expressly stipulated in the Treaty.—Applying these preliminary remarks, we shall see the stupidity of your violent and dogmatical conclusion.

The law of nations, as explained by all the learned civilians (particularly Puffendorf and Vattel) declares enemies goods found on board neutral vessels, to be lawful prize. France and America in their Treaty of Commerce, reciprocally agreed in opposition to this article of the law of nations, to make free ships make free goods. They both had their interested views for doing this, but the very article in the Treaty which makes this provision, presupposes that either party had a right to consent to that article or not, as they should think proper, seeing the law of nations fully warranted them to reject it if they thought proper.

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In the Treaty between the United States and Great Britain, this matter is rested on the principles of the law of nations, but it is false to say that "Jay's Treaty delivers up French property on board American ships, to be seized by the English." It is the law of nations that makes this delivery. It was exercised in its fullest extent before the Treaty, and the Treaty does no more than acknowledge a right founded on the generally received principles of the law of nations. As this was a right which Great Britain was disposed to retain, it was wise to have it expressly mentioned, to prevent any dispute afterwards upon the subject. The Treaty however makes provision, that at the end of two years, commissioners should be appointed to report upon the article of free ships making free goods.

Another instance of entire misrepresentation, you have exhibited in commenting on the expression "other articles," in the treaty. You say, that "other articles, are all other articles," and that "none but an ignoramus, or something worse, would have put such a phrase into a Treaty." In another place you call it "the sweeping phrase," giving a right to the English of indiscriminately seizing all articles bound to a French port.

In order to judge of your candour, it will be proper to insert the passage in the Treaty, in which this expression is contained—
 "Whereas the difficulty of agreeing on the precise cases in which provision and other articles not generally contraband may be regarded as such, render it expedient to provide against the inconveniences and misunderstandings which might thence arise, it is further agreed, that whenever such articles so becoming contraband, according to the existing laws of nations, shall for that reason be seized; the same shall not be confiscated, but the owner thereof shall be speedily and compleatly indemnified."

It is here expressly said that no articles are liable to be seized, but such as "become contraband according to the existing laws of nations." Here your terrible "sweeping phrase," has nothing more than a plain definite meaning. The "other articles," are such articles as "become contraband according to the existing laws of nations," and the security for the payment of these articles, is a point fairly gained by this article of the Treaty. Who now is the "ignoramus," John Jay or Tom Paine.

You call the Treaty, "a Treaty of surrender," but are unable to produce a single article to justify the assertion. You say it is a counter Treaty, to our Treaty with France, and at the same time, say that by virtue of the second article of that Treaty, all the concessions made by Jay's Treaty to England became common to France, and may be exercised by her as a matter of right. Then you are certainly either ignorant, or inconsistent, and perhaps both.

There never perhaps was a Treaty negotiated between two powers that has been the subject of so much animadversion, as that lately negotiated by Mr. Jay. No stone has been left unturned to represent it in all the most odious colours that party spirited ingenuity could invent; and notwithstanding all the most plausible objections which have repeatedly been brought against it, have repeatedly been amply and unanswerably refuted, yet still the rage continues. There is nothing in the Treaty of the nature of an alliance, nothing (as it is expressly declar-

ed in the Treaty) that can militate against prior Treaties, and engagements: No concession made to England but what was already made by the laws of nations; but on the contrary, many privileges gained to the United States, which before they were legally deprived of.* The fact is, it has been the fixed policy of France, and of her agents in this country, from the commencement of the present war, to draw this country into the contest. I take part with her against England. The Treaty has completed their disappointment, and it seems they are very angry; it is this, and not the defects of the Treaty, that has made the unusual clamour, and it now only remains to enquire whether it was the policy of this country, to have taken part with France in the present unusually calamitous contest. That it was our duty is not in general pretended.

Among all your writings, I never have noticed a phrase which I think is better expressed, and with more truth than this, viz. "War is the Pharo table of kings, and nations the dupes of the game." It is this practice of national robberies and butcheries, carried on under the pretext of "just and necessary wars," which has made monarchical governments ever appear hateful to me. There never yet was a war that both parties were not ready to plead that it was "just and necessary."

As war and plunder has ever been too much the trade of all the old governments in Europe, every honest republican has fondly indulged a hope, that, on a change of the old system of government, the condition of mankind in this respect would be greatly changed for the better. For this reason, the breast of every true republican in America, glowed with an almost enthusiastic ardour, on hearing that their powerful ally, the nation of France, had changed their old system of despotism for a free representative government. Now, said they, we shall soon see liberty, peace and happiness in Europe, but alas! how soon were these fond wishes and expectations nipt as it were in the bud. The scene in France has been like that of a bright and beautiful

* Among the number of these advantages, may be reckoned the regulation of our trade with the British East and West India settlements. The British West India colonies, are far the most flourishing part of the West Indies. The trade to those islands is of more consequence to the United States, than all the other West India islands, put them all together. This trade, prior to the treaty, was almost totally prohibited in American bottoms. It is now placed on a liberal footing.

Our trade with the British European territories, is of far more importance, than that with any other nation. Mr. Jefferson in a former statement, computed a balance to a considerable amount against us, in our trade with Great Britain. How great he stated the balance to be, I do not recollect, but the balance must be very great in order to make this trade a detriment to the United States. The people of America are generally clothed with British manufactures, and so long as we can buy those manufactures cheaper than we can manufacture ourselves, so long the trade will be profitable to America, and this will be the case for at least half a century. Where land is plenty and cheap, agriculture is far more profitable than manufactories. In common times we cannot make cloathing so cheap by twenty-five per cent. as we can purchase it of the British. As the price of labour now is, we cannot by seventy-five per cent. Whatever price it costs us to manufacture our cloathing more than the price we pay the British, is clear gain to us—Supposing the people of the United States to be in number four millions, and on an average to consume three dollars worth of British manufactured cloathing per annum, this would make the whole sum expended for this article, twelve million dollars. If these people by being employed in agriculture can raise produce, that will sell for eight teen million dollars, while in manufacturing they could not earn more than twelve, it is evident that there is a clear gain of six million dollars.

ful morning, when the sun has arose in all its majesty and glory, to illuminate the extended and benighted world, but while the enraptured eye was contemplating the delightful scene, it was overwhelmed by a dark tempestuous cloud, a cloud pregnant with all the storms of elemental strife. To the dawn of liberty in that country there soon succeeded such a system of despotism, horror, and confusion, as is beyond the power of man to describe. In America, where in general a love of order and humanity was inseparably connected with a love of liberty, these enormities were beheld with the most extreme concern, and every friend to his country, thought himself bound in duty to use every effort to stop the progress of the same dreadful system, which at times seemed to threaten the liberty and tranquility of their country. A grossly mistaken notion has induced many shallow-headed people to think that the only way to support the character of true republicanism, was by imitating all the Frenchified manœuvres of their revolution. Accordingly in France, in order to carry on their revolution, they instituted a society of people called the Jacobin society, whatever might be the original motives of this society, yet an impartial observer who should review the principles and conduct of the men who composed it, instead of believing them raised up for the purpose of reforming society, would be tempted to believe that hell itself had vomited forth her most execrable monsters, for the scourge of the human race. Yet, notwithstanding the dreadful example set by the popular societies of France, they were immediately established in this country; as if we could not be a free people without imitating the horrors of French anarchy. Happily the Jacobin societies of France have, by an order of their government, been suppressed, which has brought the popular societies of this country into disgrace, and perhaps prevented a flood of misery. The nation of France having waded through oceans of blood, appears at length to have assumed a form of some stability. Their constitution appears to be good, but still the administration deceives the hope of every honest republican; the extraordinary success which has attended their armies, has been attended with symptoms by no means favourable to true republicanism. The tone of sovereignty which the government in many instances assumes over other nations, must move the indignation of every friend of independence. The enormous contributions which are exacted of the unhappy inhabitants of the conquered countries, is a thing extremely arbitrary, and not very common among a civilized people. To see a conquering army then wringing from the hands of the wretched, whom the fortune of war has put into their power, is a sight, by no means calculated to strengthen our faith in the doctrine which the French have constantly preached up, that of giving freedom and happiness to the world. The unusual degree of severity with which the unhappy emigrants are treated, by no means bespeaks a system that is founded on the modern improved principles of humanity. To see these unhappy people deprived of the rights of existence in every country where France can effect it by her influence or her power; to see the unfortunate fugitives, if accidentally shipwrecked on the coast, carried to the place of execution, and inhumanly shot, as has been the

case in many instances is calculated to draw a tear for their hapless fate, and to curse the despotic principles by which they are murdered.

If the world is to form an opinion of republicanism by what has been acted in France, since that nation has been called a Republic, they will see but little to induce them to become Republicans. But if they are to judge from what has been acted in America since their revolution, their judgment must inevitably preponderate in favour of a Republican government. America has ever pursued a system of peace, she wishes to be at peace with the whole world, and to do justice to all. Her interest and her character depends upon pursuing pacific measures. Her character depends upon it in order to justify the republican maxim, that "war is the trade of Monarchies, and peace the element of a Republic." If she appealed to arms to resent every affront, she would act just like all the old despotic governments, and where would be her superiority? War is attended with the same calamities in a Republic as in a Monarchy. Poverty and death are no easier borne in a Republic than in a Monarchy. The smart from the keen edge of the dagger is not in the least abated by coming from the hands of a Republican.

America by entering into a war with Great-Britain, could see no advantage she was likely to gain even in case of the best success. Had she entered into the war all her business would have been deranged, her commerce entirely ruined, her national debt doubled, and poverty again staring the country in the face. As we could propose no benefit to ourselves, in going to war, so we can see no benefit which it could be to France.--- France has already a sufficient number of soldiers to be a match for half Europe,* she wants no assistance except by sea, and there we are totally unable to grant any assistance. As to what you assert that it was our duty to go to war, after our commerce was made war upon, it is proper to answer, that the government in this case pursued the measure which wisdom and the experience of mankind in all ages, have pronounced to be the best, which was first to try the peaceable method of negotiation; they did this, and compleat indemnification has been obtained without entering into the horrors of a war. But had even this method failed, it is not certain that wisdom would have called for a war, unless our losses had been yet greater. A single campaign would have been five times as great a loss to the country, as all the British spoliations. Going to war either for indemnification or for revenge, is much like going to law and spending a million of money in order to recover a thousand pounds; or like throwing away a thousand lives to avenge the death of an individual; nine tenths of the wars that have been in the world have answered to this description.

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* I have heard people say that the French cabinet must contain the most extraordinary abilities, or they never could carry on such a war: But we can have no great idea of the wisdom of a cabinet which has been almost as fluctuating as the waves of the sea. It is the enthusiasm of the people. The revolutionary doctrine which they were taught, of equality in life, and annihilation at death has made them excellent soldiers, while near one half of the property in the nation, by an arbitrary confiscation, furnished an ample resource for defraying the extraordinary expences of the war. The same causes would produce the same effects in any country.

Whenever it has answered your purpose to overthrow monarchical principles, you have affected to be a great advocate for peace, but you have now undertaken a different job, and so of course you have commenced an advocate for war. You are now endeavouring to disturb the happiest and most rational government in the world. You are the most inconsistent man I have ever attended to. You have no polar star to guide your actions. Had you died (as you ought to have done) after you had written your Rights of Man, you would have died with honour. America would have remembered your name with affection, but she now despises you; you by living in France, have got tainted with French principles, and that has been your undoing. There is a constitutional difference between a Frenchman and an American. An American thinks before he speaks, and considers the consequences before he acts. A Frenchman speaks before he thinks, and acts with little regard to the consequences of his actions. He is impetuous in his temper, and capricious in his humour. No man is better pleased at seeing their independence honourably established, and a free government of their own choosing adopted, so far I heartily rejoice at their success, and at the defeat of the coalesced powers: But I cannot rejoice at that passion for war and conquest which evidently shows itself in France. It is a sign the nation is not yet regenerated. When I see their immense armies ravaging the finest part of Europe, laying whole districts under arbitrary contribution, robbing the poor Pope of his pictures, &c. it crowds in my memory oftener than I wish, the history of Alexander, that great butcher of the human race, and that murderous system which has ever been patronised by Kings, and which the principles of true republicanism will ever directly oppose.

No man more heartily wishes than I do to see a perfectly friendly understanding between this country and France; that our existing engagements to that country may be punctually fulfilled; still I am not over fond of what is called their fraternal hug. France is too volatile and capricious a gallant for the plain and modest dame America. As I wish for no nearer political connection with France, still less do I wish for any such connection with England. Every friend to the independence of America, cannot but wish to be extricated from the violent and capricious intrigues of these two rival powers. I heartily wish that every agent of foreign influence, whether French or English, was exterminated from this country. This influence is a plague to America. It is a thorn in the flesh of government; and the most watchful vigilance is requisite, in order to prevent the baneful consequences. Shall we be bandied eternally between these two haughty nations? God forbid. Let France and England fight their own battles. It would be the height of folly and madness for America to meddle with the dispute. A rooted prejudice has existed between those two nations* this thousand years; and if my memory serves, one of their first general wars originated in a dispute between some English and French sailors, who coming very thirsty to a spring of water, quarrelled upon the question who should drink first. As was the origin, so has been the progress. Almost all their subsequent

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* England and France have been at war with each other no less than two and twenty times since the Norman conquest.

wars have been equally needless and ridiculous. This national prejudice is foolish and childish in the extreme. A philosopher ought to be ashamed to encourage or patronize it. It is quite as ridiculous as the prejudice which two old women of my acquaintance have retained towards each other this twenty years, because their two little sons, at that distance of time, had a dispute about an apple. A revolution in the government of France has no effect in lessening this prejudice, but rather seems to heighten it. Both nations continue their rancour. Sad disappointment to honest republicans! The true republican wishes to see in every nation, the tranquil enjoyment of liberty and property. To this their eager hopes have aspired; but they yet see but a miserable prospect of a realization of their hopes. The honest friends of liberty in America, predicted that France would set so fair an example of liberty as to excite all the surrounding nations to copy their example, and shake off the fetters of despotism: but instead of this, France has set so shocking an example as will, in all probability, retard the progress of the liberty of Europe for at least half a century. Despotic kings will never want for arguments, drawn from the example of France, to justify their despotism. The ignorance and tyranny of the french reformers will have a more fatal effect in rivetting the chains of Europe, than all the efforts of the coaliced powers. For this every honest patriot and friend of liberty mourns almost in silent despair. Had France set the example which America has done, it seems probable to me, that your prediction, that in seven years there would not be a crowned head in any of the enlightened nations of Europe, would have been realized. Why, then, has that government, which has set so fair an example, become the object of your abuse? Why has that excellent man, whose virtue, and whose heroic love of liberty, has been unanimously acknowledged through the world, become the mark of your greatest spite? Why have you directed your envenomed arrows in the gall of deadliest venom, and shot them with the most malignant fury at his unspottedly virtuous and benevolent heart? Read but his farewell address to the inhabitants of America, and blush—blush—with the utmost confusion, at your feeble and insidious attempt!

In speaking of the military character of General Washington, you discover your ignorance and stupidity in a most striking point of view indeed. So depicable is your wit, that you are not ashamed to suggest a comparison between General Washington and an old woman; alleging, that the method by which he carried on the war, might as well have been done by old Mrs. Thomson as by him. And why is it that you here act so low-lived a part? You say the Indian system of war was wrong for America, and that because there was not Indian men to support it. You have probably forgot how much you expected upon the resources and ability of America to continue the war any length of time, in your Common Sense and other pieces. But the General was not contemplating, or, in other words, he was not so furious for the slaughter of the human race as Jourdan and Buonaparté. He did not choose to risk the liberties of his country to the fate of a single battle; especially when the British had, as was always the case, a much larger army, and incomparably

parably better disciplined and furnished. Instead of risking a battle, which, if lost, would infallibly ruin the country, he chose, by political manœuvres, to waste away their strength, and to entrap them, as he eventually did. This is the great error, or crime, of Mr. Washington, Go, thou idiot, and visit the tombs of Pompey and Cælius! there hear their mouldering urns lament the dire necessity to which they were reduced, of suspending the liberties of Rome upon the fate of a battle. There is the dreadful fulfilment of what these ancient heroes predicted while living, who said would have avoided the dreadful trial, not from cowardice, but prudence, but whose judgments were overruled by the clamours of rash and ignorant men, whose example you eagerly copy, in rashly dabbling into those matters for which nature never gave you any proper qualifications.

You say, "that Mr. Washington had the nominal rank of Commander in Chief, but was not so in fact; he had in reality only a separate command. He had no control over, or direction of the army to the northward, under Gates, that captured Burgoyne; nor of that to the south, under Green, that recovered the Southern States."

These assertions of yours are not true. In the beginning of the war, Congress did not think it prudent to leave the whole direction of the armies to Mr. Washington; accordingly they retained the power of planning the several campaigns and expeditions themselves; but they soon found that their limiting the power of the Commander in Chief was attended with disadvantageous consequences, and accordingly they gave up the whole military plan of the war to the direction of Mr. Washington. He planned the expedition which captured Burgoyne, and that which recovered the Southern States. His political prudence directed the whole plan which issued in the capture of Cornwallis, which completely established the independence of America.

When it is considered that General Washington, as Commander in Chief, conducted his country through an arduous conflict of seven years war, with the most powerful nation at that time on earth; and the independence of the country is completely and honourably established, as to become the admiration of the world. When an impartial tribunal of the world shall compare the American and French Revolutions together, in particular as to the moral character of each, it will then be decided whether that extraordinary man, considered in his military or political capacity, has merited that low-lived abuse, which the government of France has, in all probability, hired you to make upon his irreproachable character.

I shall conclude this letter with some miscellaneous observations. In speaking of American affairs, you frequently mention the "Washington faction." There is not a reasonable man in America that will support the person. No man ever called it a moral conflict, or a contest of party and faction, then General Washington lived. His conduct has been to be impartial. Even those in America who disapprove of his conduct in regard to the British treaty, have never imputed any bad intentions, nor had the impudence to call him the leader of a faction. You speak of the internal distraction in America, caused by Mr. Wash-

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ton's administration. The accusation is false. It is foreign intrigues that have unhappily divided the people of America;—the detestable intrigues kept up by the English and French in this country; and you, like a faithful tool of faction, are eagerly fanning the flames of discord. As a resident in France, what business had you to be dabbling in American politics. Had you forgot what you said of Burke, that his attack on the French Revolution could not be justified on the score of manners. If you have, I hope you will remember that the writer of this letter says, that your brutal attack on the President and Constitution of the United States, cannot be justified, neither on the score of manners, morality, or common sense.

It is true, the inhabitants of this country have got unhappily divided, but "internal distractions" are not yet known in America. France is the place for distraction—the place for propagating the seeds of that dreadful evil. The mania has strongly infected your brain, and the Beclum of Luxembourg has had no effect towards curing you. Strongly impregnated with the seeds of insanity, you have vomited them forth, with all their loathsome qualities, on this once happy shore. Our utmost gratitude is due to the serene temper and uncommon firmness of a Washington, for making so manful a stand against the all spoliative effects of Gallic philosophical maniacs.

Party and faction are the bane of human tranquillity and happiness; and where there is not energy enough in the government to give a reasonable check, the consequence is often fatal. No country labours under a more terrible and afflicting despotism, than one whose government does not possess energy sufficient to curb the licentiousness of faction. Every page of ancient and modern history confirms this assertion. True liberty consists in doing whatever is not injurious to the rights of another; but go one step beyond this, and we are involved in all the horrors of anarchical despotism. That licentious liberty which poetry paints as a Goddess, history paints as a cannibal. There is no one instance in which people display more stupidity, than in showing a greater attachment to names than to things. The word Republic will serve with some people as a substitute for a deprivation of almost every other enjoyment. France, at the expence of a million of innocent lives, which have been mowed down by the hands of assassins, has obtained the name of a Republic. A dreadful price this, to purchase a combination of eight letters. Surely so precious a price ought to purchase something of substantial value. As we laugh at all titles in this country, so we contend not for names but things. We think it not worth while to contend whether a month shall be called January or Pluviose, or whether a man shall wear a buff cap, or a hat with a tri-coloured cockade. If we are to be enslaved or murdered, we care but little whether it is by a King or a freedom, by a Louis or a Marat. We had as lieve be devoured by the jaws of a lion, as to be gnawed to death by rats and mice.

France, in the time of Robespierre, was a republic; but there was not so despotic a government on this side of the infernal world. There are other republics in the world, that are as tyrannical as an oriental despotism. Some of the warmest and most Frenchified republicans in
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the Southern States of America, keep up a system of despotism over some hundreds of the unhappy Africans, which is scarcely to be paralleled in the regions of Algiers. In your Rights of Man, you are constantly appealing to the example of your "beloved America," to justify your doctrines; but now it seems that they too have proved perverse. Poor man, where will you go now for an example—to France? I hope they will not again put you in the Luxembourg; but I will bet a million to one, that they never prove to be better republicans than the people of America. If republicanism will not do in America—if Mr. Washington and La Fayette are not true republicans, you may put up your pen, and call your Rights of Man a visionary farce. You may cloath yourself in sackcloth, and cry alas! for the depravity of man! Alas! for my Age of Reason!

The clergy and moral people in this country in general, will not believe that infidelity is an essential article incorporated into French politics. They say it is only a few such ignorant heads as yours, that are so bewildered as to patronize infidelity. They will not believe that it is as settled a plan of French politics to overthrow christianity, as it is to overthrow ancient principles of government; much less will they believe that a great part of the leading characters are absolute atheists. The pulpits of this country have resounded with importunities for the success of the French revolution!—fatal prayer to the clergy, if hearkened to! They have fondly imagined that it was opening the door for the general spread and success of christianity.* They were hardly made to believe that you were the author of the Age of Reason. They were surprised to find that you had the same enmity to them that you had to Kings. The struggle which America saw France engaged in with the conated powers, irresistably excited their sympathetic feelings. This sympathy, which in that instance was really laudable and generous, has nevertheless, by being extended too far, made many honest Americans the dupes and slaves of French politics. As if they could not be true republicans, and real friends to France, without patronizing all their strange, whimsical, and impious notions; as if they could not be real friends to the real liberties and prosperity of that people, without imitating their disorganizing politics, their impious morals, or their puerile distinction of tri-coloured cockades, their Floreals and Thermidors.

If any should take occasion to say that the writer of this letter is an advocate for too much power, or an enemy to the French revolution, considered as a remove from a monarchy to a republic, he takes this opportunity publicly to deny the charge, and to declare that he detests every form of government that is not founded on the principles of equal representation. He, in the calm retreat of a country life, remote from political cabals, cast his eye on a pamphlet entitled, "Thomas Paine to
George

* The French constitution, it is true, admits the rights of conscience, and the free exercise of religious worship. But this is not peculiar to France. We hear of no persecution for religion at present in any part of Europe. The Age of Infidelity has succeeded the Age of Persecution. When the leading characters of a nation patronize infidelity, it is far more fatal to the interests of religion than even the Popish Inquisition. The humour now is not to persecute for religion, but to laugh at and deride it. No persecution is

George Washington." The contents excited within him the sensibility of an injured man. He instantly took up his pen, and wrote the preceding pages, which he now commits to their fate in the world. Whether you ever see them or not, they are offered as a small tribute of respect and gratitude to that excellent man, who is now retiring from the scenes of public life, accompanied with the warmest thanks, and most unequivocal approbation, not only of all the respective governments in America, but of millions of people, whose warmest affections are better expressed by the starting tear, involuntarily flowing from each wistful eye, on the affecting thought, that General Washington, the father and friend of his country, retires from public life, and that we are to be blest with his presence no more.

