

AN  
ENQUIRY  
RELATIVE TO THE  
MORAL & POLITICAL IMPROVEMENT  
OF THE  
*HUMAN SPECIES.*

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AN ORATION,  
DELIVERED IN THE  
*CITY OF NEW-YORK*  
ON  
THE FOURTH OF JULY,  
BEING THE TWENTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF  
*AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.*

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BY  
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## ARGUMENT.

1. A Sketch of the American Revolution, and of the Consequences which have resulted from it.
2. Remarks on the Political Apostacy which has appeared in this Country.
3. The Primary Objects of Political Association, and the Author's Opinion on the best Mode of Organization to attain those Objects.
4. An Enquiry into the Effects of this important Revolution upon the moral, scientific, and political Condition of the Human Species.

# ORATION.

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[It is hoped the readers of the following production will glance over with a less critical eye any inaccuracies they may perceive, on account of the *peculiar situation* of the Author. He to whom Nature has become a blank, from the total loss of sight, cannot be supposed to be in a habit of committing his ideas to paper with that nice precision, elegance, regularity, or method, which they can command who have never been visited with this greatest of all human misfortunes. The ideas, however, in this Address will be found strong and vigorous, and frequently original—a proof that loss of sight does by no means impair the energy of the contemplative faculties of man :

“ So much the rather, thou CELESTIAL LIGHT,

“ Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers

“ Irradiate———.”

MILTON.]

*Editor.*

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FRIENDS & FELLOW-CITIZENS,

**P**ERMIT me to solicit your attention, and the indulgence of your candour, while I attempt to develop some of those important principles which are connected with the nature of this anniversary—the establishment of our independence, and the ground of hope to all the oppressed and unfortunate nations of the earth.

The period is at length arrived when man is about to take cognizance of the dearest interests of his species. His intellectual powers are excited to action upon an elevated scale, comprehending an indefinite extent of human felicity. Reason has determined to examine with a scrutinizing eye the nature

of every principle which can be employed for the productive benefit of the species; or which, on the other hand, can possibly operate destructively to the happiness of man. The philosophers, the patriots, the philanthropists of all countries are combining the wishes of their hearts and the efforts of their minds to meliorate the condition of the human race; and, so enrapturing is the object that lies before them, that while they view, even at a distance, its accomplishment, the benevolent sensations which animate their hearts add to the mind new energy of thought, and bestow upon intellect a peculiar force of beneficial operations. They behold, in the progressive movements of intellectual power, the certain ruin, the inevitable destruction of those pernicious systems of error and superstition, of civil and religious despotism, which have so long desolated the world and degraded the character of man. It is not difficult to discern the effects of applying the energy of human intellect to that ancient order of things now crumbling into dust by the powerful exertions which are opposed to its iniquitous principles.

The grand object of all civil and religious tyrants, those privileged impostors of the

world, has been to suppress all the elevated operations of the mind, to kill the energy of thought, and through this channel to subjugate the whole earth for their own special emolument. When men are kept in a total ignorance of their rights by those whom they are taught to revere as beings of a higher order, it is not to be expected that they will be capable of that activity by which alone their privileges are to be regained. Slavery and fear have rendered them torpid and senseless, without acquiring knowledge sufficient to exercise a holy indignation against their oppressors.

Retrospectively examining the condition of man, we behold the most fruitful sources of human degradation and calamity. In all the ancient world, Man, every where bending beneath the weight of a compound despotism, seems almost to have lost the erect attitude assigned to him by the power of Nature, and to grovel upon the earth the miserable victim of ignorance and tyranny. In those regions of slavery and wretchedness all the advantages, all the enjoyments, which would have resulted from a cultivated understanding and the establishment of liberty, are concealed from the view of the human eye; and the philanthropic mind is

compelled to contemplate a scene of ruin and distress capable of being exhibited only by the royal butchers and ecclesiastical impostors of the world.

The extent of this mischief, and the pressure of these misfortunes, are not distinctly perceived or realized by the American citizens, enjoying all the bounties of nature and the blessings of a free government, excluded from the double despotism of church and state, and disposing at will the fruits of their industry for the cultivation of their minds, or other purposes, suited to the acquisition of that moral happiness, for the attainment of which man every where exhibits such strong desires.

To all the enjoyments which can possibly result from the possession of his faculties, Man is justly entitled by the laws and constitution of Nature; but which, in all ages, he has been shamefully deprived of by the Tyrants of the earth, who have never had any other object in view than that of robbing him of his just rights, for the purpose of carrying into effect their own nefarious intentions.

It is impossible at this time, nor is it necessary, to carry the mind over the vast regions of the ancient world, in order to exhi-

bit the terrible spectacle resulting from those political and religious institutions which have served only to degrade and corrupt the species, and which have robbed man of the brightest ornaments of his character. The earth for ages past has drank the blood of innocent beings, and this blood is justly chargeable to the crimes of Priests and Tyrants of detestable memory. Not a spot of this fair creation has been exempt from their ravages; and their names will descend to posterity covered with that odium which will ever attach itself to such criminal transactions.

The powers of Man, however, in the progress of their improvement, were destined to give to the species a melioration of their unfortunate condition. It is the energy of Intellect that has taken cognizance of the rights of human nature; and it is this alone which can correct the errors of ancient systems and renovate the world. The present state of the human mind affords good ground to hope that all retrograde motion in human concerns is already excluded from the catalogue of probable events; and we look forward to a new order of things, comprehending the most beneficial exertion of our rational faculties, and an unprecedented diffusion of human felicity.

Among all the events recorded in history, the most important is that of the American Revolution, by which the cord that bound us to the corrupt government of Britain was severed for ever. It is not necessary at this time to disclose in detail the historical facts productive of this astonishing event: they are still fresh in every American mind; and it is most ardently to be hoped that they will never be forgotten. They evince in the British cabinet the most unequivocal design to establish tyranny and despotism in the New World: but, by protruding the schemes of domination beyond the point of suffering sensibility among the people of this country, the malignant and destructive intention was destroyed, and the objects on whom this wicked plan was intended to operate avenged themselves upon the heads of the projectors.

The corrupt designs of Britain to enslave America being distinctly perceived, it was all that was necessary to excite the citizens of this country to vigorous action in defence of their liberties. They were roused by a sudden impulse, the effects of which circulated with the rapidity of electrical fire. They said with a mighty voice, a voice that shall one day sound dreadful in the ears of

every tyrant on earth, "We are not born to be enslaved by the corrupt governments of the trans-Atlantic world." Lamenting the necessity of war, and appealing to "the Supreme Judge of the Universe for the rectitude of their intentions," they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honour," for the defence of their dearest rights, and the security of their most important privileges. They armed with alacrity, and exhibited the most unexampled efforts. They shed their blood and dissipated their treasure in the glorious contest, and Liberty was triumphant in this Western world.

In regard to the consequences which will eventually result from this important revolution, it is impossible to make any accurate calculation. But we already behold some of the effects which have flowed from this political contest. We behold them in the operations of the human mind—in the energy which has been displayed by the intellectual powers of man, and the consequent gradual decay of superstition and fanaticism—in the progressive and extensive improvements exhibited in the American country—in the cultivation of science, the discovery and application of principles, the

more general diffusion of knowledge, and the melioration of that unfortunate condition to which man by the tyrants of the earth has been devoted—in the French Revolution, an event of the most astonishing nature, and extremely dissimilar to anything recorded in the page of ancient history, but which presents to afflicted humanity the consoling hope of sufferings alleviated or wholly destroyed.

It is true that the philosophers and philanthropists of France, by their writings and dissemination of general principles, had been gradually preparing the way; and, when the contest between America and Britain commenced, the court of Versailles obeyed the sentiments of the nation without intending to gratify them.

In addition to the previous preparations for this beneficial event, the impulse received by the French army in this country was transferred to the centre of France, and despotism received a shock destructive to its very existence; and communicated with a new energy, resulting from a combination of operating causes, and especially the suffering sensibility of a magnanimous nation. The throne of the tyrant, and the instrument of tyranny, the Bastile, felt the just

resentment of an injured people. They commanded them to be demolished, and they were seen no more. They spake, and a new order of things presented itself to view.

In vain have the despots of the earth combined to strangle in its birth the child of Freedom. Liberty is impelled to action by a righteous zeal unknown to the slaves of kings. She walks erect in conscious dignity, and defies the insulting powers of her enemies. She moves with an energy divine, and proclaims happiness to the human species.

Nothing but the ardour and force attached to the cause of liberty would have sustained France in the perilous hour of her distress, convulsed as she was internally, and laboring under an unparalleled weight of despotic malignity, resulting from the combined intentions of the corrupt courts of Europe. It is not difficult to discover the motives of action in the profligate despots of the Old World: but it is lamentable and astonishing to observe a similar spirit actuating the minds and influencing the wishes of some of our American citizens. Whence this political apostacy, this dereliction of good principles in our own country? "It is

“not,” says an excellent writer, “because good principles have been violated that they are to be abandoned.” Humanity deplures the cruel excesses which are attached to great and important revolutions : but the enemies of Freedom have charged these excesses to the wrong side of the account. They cannot, with justice, be charged to the true spirit of Liberty ; but to that wicked Despotism which opposes the righteous progress of general emancipation. If human nature, in the fervour of its anxiety to obtain the privileges of which it had been unjustly deprived, should exhibit a degree of resentment towards its oppressors, it is to be considered as a natural result of that **WEIGHT OF OPPRESSION** under which man has groaned for so many ages.

When the condition of France previous to the Revolution is considered, and the objects to be obtained and the means to be made use of for this purpose are brought into the calculation, the events to be deplored are not so numerous as might have been expected. But admitting them to be more numerous and shocking than the highest statement represents, this can produce no serious influence on the mind of

the philanthropist, sincerely attached to the liberty and happiness of man.

There is no price too great to pay for such inestimable blessings. The American citizen, who relinquishes his attachment to the cause of liberty on this account, knows not how to distinguish between primary principles and the vicious actions of a turbulent individual; between political truth and the sinister machinations of a party. It is not an uncharitable conjecture to suppose that those who indulge such violent resentments against the French nation, on account of the EXCESSES of the revolution, are influenced by other sentiments than those which are purely humane and benevolent; and that some secret attachment to the British system of government has united itself with their political opinions. Nor is this a mere conjecture; since it is evident that those who feel the strongest attachment to the French Revolution are the most decidedly opposed to those measures of our own government resembling the British schemes of policy; while, on the other hand, those who advocate those measures are not observed to speak with much affection relative to the true interests of France.

The virtuous citizen, attached to the in-

terests of mankind, will admit with reluctance the political opinion that nations are incapable of governing themselves: but this opinion is indulged by some in our own country, who were not inconsiderable actors in our revolution.

It is not our wish to criminate the intentions of man; therefore it is perhaps more charitable to call these *errors of judgment*, resulting from a wish to maintain a beneficial stability in government. But, from the experience of future ages, the necessary data will be discovered on which a decision of this kind must ultimately depend. In the mean time it is the duty of every enlightened citizen to apply the force of his genius to the discovery and application of those fundamental principles which are connected with the true interests and the progressive improvement of the human species.

The political associations hitherto established in the world have had no just regard to the improvement of the active powers of man. They have served only to bury and suppress the operation of all his talents; they have not regarded essentially any of the primary objects for which civil institutions are necessary; and they have established

those vicious and injurious principles which have caused ruinous and destructive inequalities, degrading to the very existence of intellectual power, while the true interests of society have been concealed from the view of the multitude.

The primary and fundamental objects of all civil and political institutions are the preservation of personal and individual existence—the establishment of Liberty on its true basis, the principles of Equality—the security of the fruits of man's industry, and of his pursuit of happiness in every possible way, not inconsistent with the welfare of any member of the community—and also the free exercise of the mental faculties in the discovery, disclosure, and propagation of important truths.

These objects being essentially important in every associated body of men, the more perfectly a civil constitution secures and establishes them, the nearer it approaches the true point of political truth and perfection. Every code of fundamental laws, which departs from the actual attainment of the objects before-mentioned, infringes upon the real liberty and happiness of every member of the community.

To develop a plan which would secure

to man all the improvements, and every enjoyment of which his nature is susceptible, is extremely difficult. The decisions of the strongest minds on this subject have been extremely different; and the intellect of man is now anxiously enquiring into the best mode of organizing a civil or political constitution. The enquiry is important, and deserves the most serious attention.

The political philosophers and the reflecting men of all countries are solicited to devote their talents to this useful and benevolent enquiry. It is not to be presumed that in any country man has arrived at perfection in political science. It is true that many important and fundamental principles have been discovered and applied to the melioration of the human condition: but much remains yet to be done to complete the work of human happiness.

The American Constitutions are, undoubtedly, more perfect than any others that ever were formed, the effects of which have been fully experienced. But will any one dare to say that there is no room left for improvement? Will prejudice here step in with her usual tenacity of opinion, and bar the door for ever against all future progressive arrangements? Have we not seen

what blind attachment was bestowed for many ages upon the British government? And shall Americans at this time exhibit similar imbecility and prejudice, by proclaiming impossibility of improvement in the primary arrangements of our political institutions? \*

It ought to be perceived by reflecting men, that scientific improvements are in their own nature indefinite; and that the discovery of principles, and the methods of application, move on in an endless progression. That fondness which every parent feels for his own offspring is perhaps one cause why some American citizens admit with reluctance the possibility of further improvements in the fundamental arrangements of our government. But attachment and truth are different things; and a thousand causes may operate to attach the human mind to a mis-shapen and imperfect object. Nothing herein asserted is intended to depreciate the merits of those who formed the American constitutions, or to diminish the beneficial effects resulting from their establishment. But it is a duty which we owe to ourselves, to our posterity, and to all human nature in future ages, to examine with a scrutinizing eye the nature and con-

struction of our fundamental institutions ; and to enquire with candour whether there be any defect, any opportunity of beneficial alterations.

It seems to be an opinion pretty generally prevalent, that the exercise of the legislative power ought to be entrusted to different branches, and that it is unsafe to suffer it to be exercised by one body alone. This may be a solemn and important truth : but the candid political enquirer ought certainly to be permitted to doubt it. On this question no prejudices should be indulged. The grand object is Liberty, and the establishment of Equal Rights ; and that government which will best secure these blessings is the best government.

The first thought that occurs in this enquiry is, From what source did this principle in government proceed ? It is interwoven into all the American constitutions ; and it is not difficult to perceive that it had its origin in the construction of the British government, and certainly deserves no additional respect on this account. President, Senate, and House of Representatives, are the legitimate offspring of King, Lords, and Commons. It was the nature and construction of the one government that

suggested the idea of a similar arrangement in the other. But this distribution of powers is not to be rejected on this account. If it is a righteous distribution, it is of little consequence whence it originated. But the investigation and discussion of this subject rests upon the nature of the case, and the enquiry extends itself on the grounds of political truth and general utility, having reference to the distribution of legislative powers only, without including the organic arrangements necessary to the executive and judiciary departments. Would not one branch in the legislature, if it were equally numerous with both branches, probably possess as much wisdom, as extensive a knowledge of the interests of the country, as much prudence and discretion, as if it were divided into two houses? Does the division augment either the wisdom or the integrity of the members? Does it make them more patriotic in their intentions, more faithful to their constituents, or more acute in the examination of interesting political subjects? Are they inspired by this division with a knowledge of legislation, of which they otherwise must have been destitute? Does this confer upon them any new moral or mental powers by which the

welfare of the country would be better secured and protected? Does this method of legislating subjugate the pride and tranquilize the passions of the human heart? Will this method exclude more effectually the sinister motives and injurious schemes to which man is too frequently disposed to yield his assent? But it is contended that this arrangement and this mode of legislation prevent that precipitancy which a single body would be apt to indulge. This objection is perhaps not substantiated by very satisfactory evidence, and goes upon the principle that a single body is necessarily tumultuous and passionate, while separate bodies could move with order and philosophic tranquility.

It is difficult to perceive how this should be the result, unless the division conferred upon the members a greater portion of knowledge, a higher share of integrity, or a more effectual command of their temper and their passions. If the talents and the virtue of the members were exactly the same in the two cases under consideration, it is not easy to discover any benefits which could result from this separation; on the contrary, these different branches necessarily excite the pride and the obstinacy of the

members, and they frequently become opposed to each other for no other reason than that of shewing that they have the power of doing so. The protraction resulting from this circumstance answers no other purpose than that of increasing the expenditure of the public money. But it will perhaps be said that the experiment has been tried, and the knowledge derived from it substantiates the opinion of a complex method of legislation. It is not true to say, that the experiment has been fairly and extensively made; some partial experiments only have been made by some of the American States and by the French nation; but not of sufficient duration to form a final decision on so interesting a question. Besides, these experiments were not made at those times and under those circumstances that ought to preclude the propriety of obtaining further information on this subject. The distressing period of a revolution is not the time of making a fair experiment relative to the effects of any given specific organization of a political constitution. Let the experiment be made in days of peace and public tranquility, by an enlightened and free nation, and for a considerable length of time; and if the information resulting from such a trial

militated against a simple mode of legislation, the enquiry and the contest ought to be instantly relinquished by every friend to humanity. But till this period arrives it will not be thought unreasonable or useless to entertain some doubts relative to a final decision on this important subject. If the subject in the point of view in which it has been hitherto considered appears to be problematical, it becomes more capable of a positive decision, when the enquiry is made whether the executive branch of government ought to have any share in legislation? It seems to be reposing too much confidence in the wisdom and opinion of one man, when that opinion is permitted to oppose itself to a majority of both the other branches of the legislature. If after a bill has undergone a fair and full discussion in the two principal branches of the legislature, it is to be defeated by the negative voice of the executive alone, it is declaring in positive terms that the executive possesses more talents and virtue than all those members by whom the bill was passed, and gives to the executive a despotic influence degrading to the dignity and information of a free people. It would perhaps be more consistent with the interest, honour and in-

formation of a cultivated and enlightened nation to deprive the executive of all legislative influence or authority whatever, and trust to the general will and real knowledge of the majority of the nation. But on these points an obstinate tenacity of opinion does not at the present day become the true philanthropist or friend of man in any country. Science is every where extending itself, and further experience will teach mankind the true ground of decision relative to this, and many other subjects, essentially interesting to the human race. Having disclosed the foregoing reflections, it now becomes our duty to enquire how the American revolution will probably affect the moral, scientific and political condition of the human species?—The hopes of man all centre in the power and activity of intellect, and to this fundamental source every specific amelioration must be attributed. The despotism of kings and priests trembles only when it is approached by the vigorous power of thought, and the efforts of a philosophic mind.

Tyrants oppose to each other the armies which they have subjugated to their will, but tyranny feels no shock: the power of the tyrant is not diminished, principles are

not discovered, moral enquiry is excluded from the attention of all parties; and scenes of carnage, and peace, alternately distress and tranquilize the world, without its becoming either wiser or better. The cruel ravages and intentions of all despotic government bear no relation to any thing but the pride of the tyrant, or the misery of the subject: but the intellectual world in its exertions is productive of consequences totally different, and bearing an immediate reference to the moral happiness and progressive improvement of the human species. All the shackles which civil and ecclesiastical tyrants have hitherto formed for the human mind have not been able totally to suppress its operations! some sparks of genius have been emitted from amidst the general darkness, in which the world has been enveloped, and the accumulation of science was gradually extending itself, while it was unperceived by those, whose ruin and just disgrace it was destined to effectuate. It was the developement of some few fundamental truths by strong and benevolent minds, that established the basis on which must be erected the future dignity, improvement, and happiness of the species. But the efforts of individual philosophers and philan-

thropists were destined to be aided by events which, in one point of view, are to be considered as the effects of their labours, and in another as operating causes, producing new energy of intellect, productive of the most extensive benefits, and pointing to a new era of moral happiness.

While tyrants viewed with astonishment the struggles of the new world, for the establishment of liberty, and while they perceived in this event nothing more than some immediate political consequences, the discerning philosopher made his calculation of effects upon a more extensive and comprehensive view of the subject—he discovered the inevitable ruin and universal destruction of those unnatural institutions and corrupt principles which have so long disgraced the character of man, and robbed him of his highest happiness. It was these corrupt institutions, which made a renovation in the moral condition of man extremely necessary. The ignorance, the deception, and the crimes of priests had corrupted and brutalized all human nature; and in order the more effectually to accomplish their wicked designs, they pretended to hold a high and

social intercourse with celestial powers, and to receive immediately from them the mandates by which man was to be directed in his conduct. These mandates were frequently inconsistent with social and natural morality! The consequence was that when these religious impostors had effectually established their supernatural scheme with dogmas and principles of a very extraordinary and awful nature, human virtue was considered of but little consequence, and the moral condition of man became truly deplorable.

The reign of this moral despotism has been, if possible, more destructive to the human mind than the influence of civil tyranny. The latter being now considered by enlightened men as essentially erroneous and destructive, the former of course will be subjected to a severe examination by the active operations of the human mind. It is not to be presumed, that men will long remain ignorant of their moral condition in nature, after being instructed in the principles of civil science. The moral condition of man will be as essentially renovated by the American revolution as his civil condition; and certainly it is equally necessary, and equally important that this should be

done. The science of morality is of all sciences the most necessary to the happiness of man; and it is totally impossible that he should reason well on this interesting subject, while he is bound by the strong cords of superstition, and insulted by the unnatural religions, which the holy impostors of the world have exhibited to his view. Nor is it possible that the human heart should be cordially attached to the practice of social virtue while it is under the destructive influence of a cruel and ferocious fanaticism. But awakened by the energy of thought, inspired by the American revolution, man will find it consistent with his inclination and his interest to examine all the moral relations of his nature, to calculate with accuracy the effects of his own moral energies; and to relinquish with elevated satisfaction, those supernatural schemes of superstition which have circumscribed the sphere of beneficial activity, for which Nature designed him. To overthrow those systems of error and imposition which have so long corrupted the morality of the human heart, it is only necessary that man should take cognizance of their absurdity. When once he shall engage in a candid enquiry on this subject, and perceive that he is situated

in a world of unnatural representations ; he will return with cordiality to the dictates of pure reason, and the clear deductions of an uncorrupted understanding. A system of ethics out of the order of nature cannot for many ages obtain credence amongst a free and enlightened people. It is ignorance that is tenacious of superstitious systems of religion, and interest and bigotry step in to retard the progressive dissemination of the principles of natural morality. The corrupt governments of the ancient world are calculated to suppress all useful enquiries relative to the moral improvement of the species—church and state formed a villainous copartnership to rob man of all the moral excellencies of his character, and to blind his understanding that he should not see the real principles which are connected with the attainment of the most exalted felicity. But the charm is broken, the clouds of mysticism are dispersing, and the bright rays of truth are about to illuminate the world.

The scientific condition of the human race will not be less beneficially affected by the important revolution now under consideration. The very nature of man's individual existence so essentially circumscribes the extent of his mental activity, that when

the unnatural obstacles of despotism are super added, he becomes weak and incapable of elevated conceptions; but we know not the extent of his energies under a system of moral and political liberty. And altho' weak by nature, his researches would be inconceivably useful, important and extensive, if he were not retarded in his progress by civil and religious despotism, and by their fears and distressing apprehensions which are interwoven with all unnatural and fanatic establishments.

The pernicious effects of such cruel institutions have been constantly diminishing since the commencement of the American revolution, and their decrease and final destruction will be essentially accelerated by the revolution of France, and by many other revolutions, which will probably be consequential upon that important event. The hopes of all good men are revived by a view of the present condition of the world; and France in the Old World will be the first-born among many republics, destined to diffuse science and happiness over the Eastern hemisphere. When man shall have no fears relative to the investigation of knowledge, and no obstacle to obstruct the beneficial activity of his faculties, he will subject

the whole mundane system of existence to the energetic examination of his intellectual powers. All the relations of nature will be the subject of his enquiry ; and the laws and principles of universal existence will alone circumscribe the extent of his mental acquirements.

The discoveries thus made by the force of his understanding will be applied to the practical concerns of life ; a new train of consequences will appear to dissipate the ignorance and alleviate the misfortunes of associated existence—while that ancient order of things so long the cause of human misery will be found gradually to disappear, and the whole world will assume a new aspect, cheering to the heart, and animating to the mind, of every intelligent being. Say not that these are the dreams of delirium—the anticipation of unreasonable desires—No ! the ground of such expectation is already established by the progressive improvements already made. Future generations will rise up, and in reading the history of past ages will declare the whole to be fabulous, because in their view no such degraded state of society could ever have existed.

To point out the vast variety of subjects

on which the human mind will operate to enlarge the compass of knowledge, would exceed the bounds of this inquiry ; but it ought to be observed, that man, relinquishing the pursuits connected with fiction and fanaticism, will take nature and her laws as the real basis of all his reasoning ; and by protruding the power of intellect into this extensive field of real and important truths, he will be enabled to develop the primary principles by which all existence is influenced and governed.

In regard to the political alterations and improvements among the human species the most animating prospect is exhibited to view. Nations begin to assume their natural dignity and force, and are about to declare eternal war against that detestable race of tyrants, so long the privileged—murderers and robbers of the earth. The despotic governments of the old world are tumbling into ruin : Reason has said with a mighty voice—they shall exist no longer.—She proclaims liberty to the whole earth, and she has pledged her strength and her reputation for the accomplishment of the object. The liberty of nations will be founded on its only true basis the equal rights of man : and when this liberty shall

have extended itself into every part of the globe, those national prejudices and animosities, which have so long disturbed the peace of society, will be destroyed, and a social and friendly intercourse will mutually influence the conduct of nations. That savage ferocity, which for so many ages has stained the page of history, and covered the earth with human gore, will gradually diminish and finally disappear. Philanthropic affection will begin to animate the hearts of all people, and a civility of intercourse will be reckoned among the most powerful causes of ameliorating the condition of man.

Among those causes of human improvement, (says the celebrated Condorcet) that are of most importance to the general welfare, must be included, the total annihilation of the prejudices which have established between the sexes an inequality of rights, fatal even to the party which it favours. In vain might we search for motives by which to justify this principle, in difference of physical organization, of intellect, or of moral sensibility. It had at first no other origin but abuse of strength, and all the attempts which have since been made to support it are idle sophisms.

“ The people being now enlightened, and

having resumed the right of disposing for themselves of their blood and their treasure, will learn by degrees to regard war as the most dreadful of all calamities, the most terrible of all crimes. The first wars that will be superceded, will be those into which the usurpers of sovereignty have hitherto drawn their subjects for the maintenance of rights pretendedly hereditary.—Nations will know, that they cannot become conquerors without losing their freedom; that perpetual confederations are the only means of maintaining their independence; that their object should be security, and not power. By degrees, commercial prejudices will die away; a false mercantile interest will lose the terrible power of imbruing the earth with blood, and of ruining nations under the idea of enriching them. As the people of different countries will at last be drawn into closer intimacy, by the principles of politics and morality, as each, for his own advantage, will invite foreigners to an equal participation of the benefits which it may have derived either from nature, or its own industry, all the causes which produce envious, and perpetual national animosities, will one by one disappear, and will no more furnish to warlike insanity, either fuel or pretext.”

The nations of the earth having learned by experience the fatal consequences, that are connected with this warlike and ferocious disposition will turn from these horrid scenes with emotions of disgust, and seek in the establishment of peace that tranquility of which for so many ages they have been unjustly deprived.

The human mind relieved at length from the pressure of innumerable misfortunes will discover in the constitution of nature those principles on which its real happiness must be ultimately founded. When this period of peace and national happiness shall arrive, the writings of the philologists and philanthropists of the present day will be found to bear a strong relation to the progressive improvement and real welfare of the human species; and although ignorant, from her dark and gloomy abodes, may hurl her envenomed darts, yet the names of Paine, Volney, Barlow, Condorcet, and Godwin will be revered by posterity, and these men will be ranked among the greatest benefactors of the human race. The time is undoubtedly approaching when the dreams of fanaticism, the crimes of superstition, and the detestable actions of civil tyrants, will disappear forever; when man,

elevated to the true point of natural dignity, shall develope from the system of nature, the fundamental principles of his real felicity, when truth alone shall be the object of intellectual power, and social-virtue the object of the human heart, and when the benevolent effects of reason, science, and true philotophy shall extend over the face of the whole earth, and render happy the great family of mankind !

FINIS,