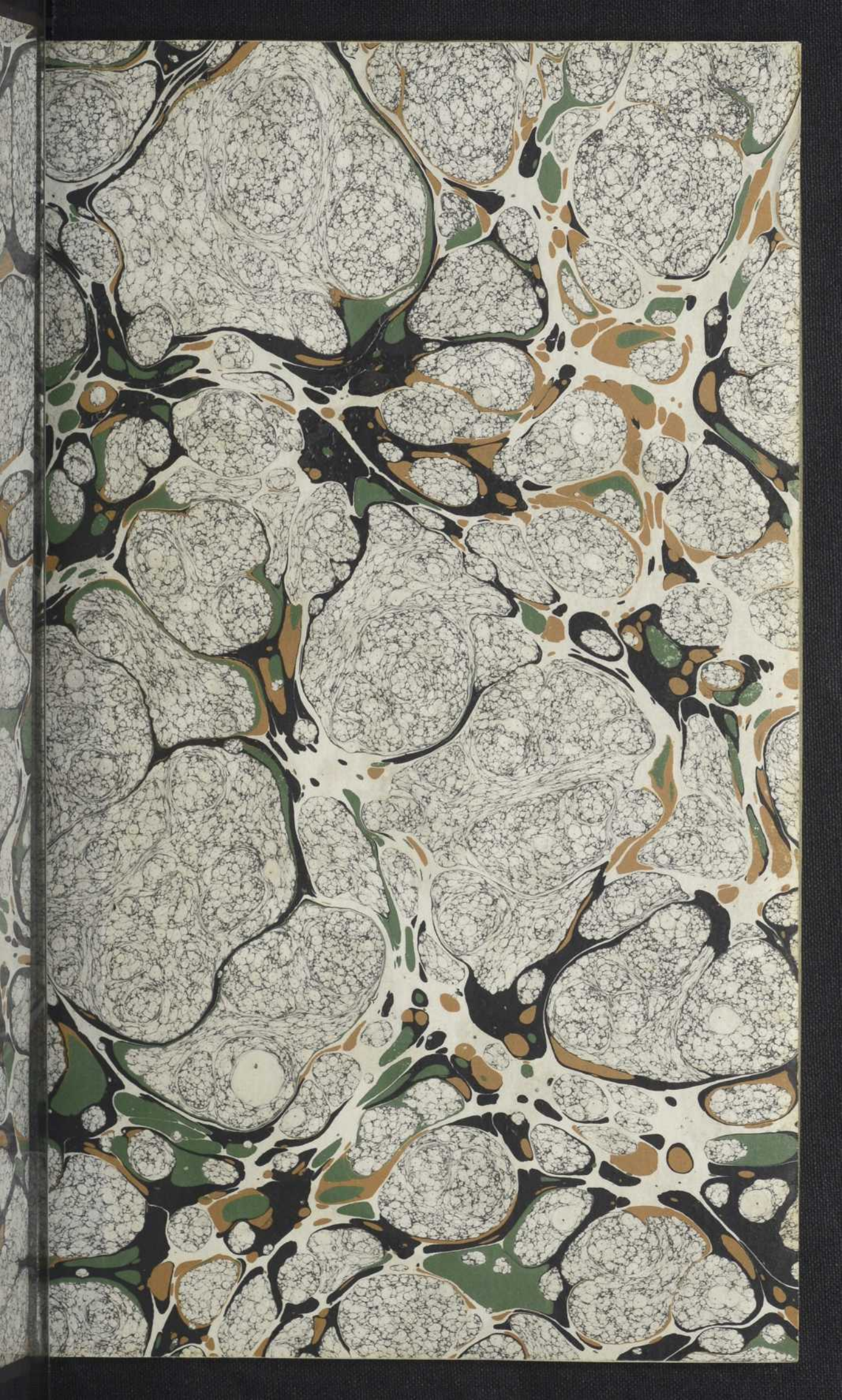

To Mrs. Mary Brown of Prospect Bank
at Hastards Gift 29th March 1830

(4)

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

North-Britiſh Society,

IN

HALIFAX, NOVA-SCOTIA,

AT THEIR

ANNIVERSARY MEETING

ON THE

30th of November, 1790.

BY ANDREW BROWN, D.D.

HALIFAX:

PRINTED BY JOHN HOWE, IN BARRINGTON STREET.

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1791

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Adam Fife

AT a Meeting of the *North-Britiſh Society*, in *Halifax*, *Nova-Scotia*, on Saturday the 4th Day of December, 1790,

Agreed, That the Thanks of the Society be given to the Reverend Dr. *Brown*, for the Diſcourſe delivered by him on the 30th of November, before the Society; and that he be deſired to deliver a Copy of the ſame to the Society to be printed.

WILLIAM SMITH, *Sec'ry.*

TO THE

President, Vice-President and Members

OF EACH OF THE

NATIONAL SOCIETIES

ESTABLISHED IN HALIFAX,

THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSE,

CONTAINING

Hints and Obſervations ſuppoſed to be applicable to them all,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

NORTH-BRITISH SOCIETY

On the 30th of November,

AND PRINTED AT THEIR DESIRE,

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

North-Britiſh Society.

PSALM cxxxvii. 5, 6.

If I forget thee, O Jeruſalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

COUNTRYMEN and Friends, this is a day of national commemoration, and theſe pathetic effuſions of the Iſraelitiſh captives, as they wept by the rivers of Babylon and hanged their harps upon the willows, may be taken to expreſs our preſent feelings with reſpect to the land of our nativity, and our kindred and connections there. To day the ſluices of the heart are open, and memory recurs to years that are paſt, and to places that are diſtant. In the mind's eye we ſee our cradle and the ſeats of our youth, and feel, at every pulſe, the intereſt we ſtill take in the fortunes of our friends and the aſhes of our fathers.

THE aſſociations of ideas, on which are founded many of the inſtitutions of civil life, though ſlight and caſual in themſelves, are, nevertheleſs, boundleſs in their extent and wonderful in their operation. This day is marked in the Calendar with the name, and is, by the rubric, conſecrated to the memory of Andrew the Apoſtle. In our minds it is connected with the ſentiments of patriotiſm, and with the regards we owe to the country in which we opened our eyes upon the light, and enjoyed the firſt bleſſings of exiſtence. A rapid glance at the page of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, will at once explain the origin of this aſſociation, and introduce the proper ſubject of the preſent diſcourſe.

IN

In the infancy of the Church, the piety of Chriſtians aſſigned ſeparate and ſucceſſive feſtivals to the glorious college of Apoſtles, and to the noble army of Martyrs. Theſe unrivalled Champions of the Croſs, ſpent their lives in propagating the faith, and having reſiſted unto blood the fury of perſecution, ſealed the ſincerity of their profeſſion by confeſſing Jeſus in the extremity of torture, and adoring him on the utmoſt verge of the viſible world. To perpetuate the memory of their holy race and happy reward, particular days, diſtinguiſhed by their birth, their call or their martyrdom, were ſet apart for the annual recollection of the leading incidents of their lives. On theſe ſolemn occaſions, the time, the place, and the manner of their converſion was ſpecified and explained. The ſtedfaſtneſs of their faith, from this period, received its juſt atteſtation. The zeal of their miniſtry, their aſſiduity in doing good, their excellent gifts and admirable graces, were anxiouſly recorded, and ſcrupulouſly confirmed by infallible proofs. Blameleſs in their lives and bleſſed in their death, they were propoſed as models for the imitation of the faithful; and fervent prayers were offered to the Almighty, that their ſpirit and virtues might deſcend to their ſucceſſors, to adorn the triumphs of the Goſpel, and warm a believing world with the piety and benevolence of Jeſus.

When Chriſtianity became the religion of the empire, the merits of its founders were not forgotten, nor were their cuſtomary honours ungraciouſly withheld. As their feſtivals returned, clergy and laity ſuſpended their ordinary labours, and repaired in crowds to countenance an inſtitution, ſo rational in itſelf, and ſo well adapted to promote the intereſts of religion and virtue.

But no ordinance, however pure or pious it may be, is exempted from abuſe. The Church became the proprietor and miſtreſs of the Saints; and it was unhappily believed that her bulwarks were ſtrengthened, as her treaſury was enriched, by their increaſe. In conſequence of this idea, they were multiplied beyond meaſure, and exalted above their higheſt deſerts. When hiſtory and tradition failed, fictitious legends were ſhamefully obtruded upon a ſimple and credulous people. In the anniverſary orations, the Genius of the cloiſter found ample ſcope to diſplay itſelf; hyperboles of praiſe were heaped upon each other; and truth and taſte were equally violated in the panegyrics of the Saints. From conſidering and magnifying their good deeds on earth, the heated mind was tranſported to the contemplation of their heavenly glory. Thus wound up, the vehemence of oratory burſt into an im-

paſſioned

paſſioned addreſs to the ſpirit before the throne. The eyes of the congregation followed thoſe of the preacher; their imaginations were moved and agitated; and, in the deluſion of the moment, they believed that God had ſent down his Saints to viſit and defend them. As this idea grew with the growing errors of the times, the devotional parts of the ſervice, that had originally been directed to the Almighty, were intercepted by the Saint. Religious honours were paid to him; and, in caſes of emergency, public prayers were offered in his name. Thus, in proceſs of time, through prieſtcraft operating upon ignorance, this inſtitution, introduced into the Church to immortalize the memory of the witneſſes of Jeſus, and to animate Chriſtians in ſucceeding ages to follow their example, became the pregnant ſource of ſuperſtition and idolatry.

The popular and claſſical notion that individuals, and tribes, and nations, have a tutelary ſpirit, a peculiar ſuperintendant, appears from its antiquity and extent to be congenial to the human mind. In the blindneſs of ſelf-love, mankind have even cheriſhed the belief that their voice might determine the nomination of heaven to offices of this nature. Hence they have always been ſolicitous to eſtabliſh an advocate of their own ſelection at the throne of God. In the times of Heatheniſm, the choice of prieſts and people generally fell on ſome illuſtrious ſhade of their own nation, endeared to them by birth, attached to them by patriotiſm, and ſtimulated to continual exertions in their favour by the poſthumous honours that were paid him in his country.

In the dark and barbarous ages which followed the fall of the Roman empire, this infatuation again aroſe, and pervaded the kingdoms of Europe. It was encouraged by the policy of the Church, and ſupplied from the evangelical roll of ſaints and worthies, which afforded an abundant latitude of choice. During the reign of ſuperſtition and impoſture, this deluſion running wild, the local deities of Pagan mythology were revived, in more ſubſtantial forms, in the Chriſtian world. At the period to which I now refer, no aſſociation was formed, no enterprize projected, without committing it to the ſuperintendence of ſome Saint in heaven. Every temple, every village, every city and every kingdom had its celeſtial Patron. In this intereſting article, Kings and Princes made the choice for their ſubjects, or devoutly acquieſced in the *infallible* nomination of the common Father of Chriſtendom. The country, the government, and the people, were ſolemnly conſigned to the protection of their tutelary Saint. His croſs quartered their arms, and diſtinguiſhed their

banners

banners and their ſhields. His ſhadowy aid was beſought in action and in difficulty. When the Captains of the hoſt gave the ſignal to cloſe, and the impatient champion ſingled out his antagoniſt, he invoked the Saint of his fathers, and in the frenzy of the times the armies of heaven were ſuppoſed to march under hoſtile ſtandards to fight the battles of the earth.

In the general diſtribution of the nations, the care of Scotland was committed to St. Andrew. His apoſtolical life was ſpent on the mountains of Scythia; and I have neither diſcovered, nor been very ſolicitous to enquire, upon what peculiar merit, or what principle of appropriation, *that* province was aſſigned to him. It is of more importance to obſerve, that in conſequence of the canonization and local inveſtiture of theſe holy perſons, the orations delivered on their feſtivals aſſumed a new form. The hiſtory and heroic atchievements of the people, which they patroniſed, came to be interwoven with the purer triumphs of their apoſtolical ſanctity. Immediate advantage was taken of this revolution, and in artful hands a religious deluſion ſerved as an engine of politics. The hoſtile paſſions were kindled, and the thirſt of blood was inflamed, before the croſs of peace and reconciliation. The paſſive virtues of the Chriſtian were forgotten; and the very commemorations of the Saints were made to propagate a rage for military enterprize. In every other reſpect the devotions of the day were illiberal and degrading. The adoring nations lifted not their voice to the majeſty in the heavens. Their prayers were preferred to a departed mortal; and in our country "St. Andrew hear us; St. Andrew help us; St. "Andrew intercede for us," was the general cry.

Delivered at the reformation from the yoke of ſuperſtition, our Church ordained, in the purity and ſimplicity of her worſhip, that the days of the Saints, as formerly ſolemnized, having neither countenance nor warrant in the ſcriptures, and being ever liable to abuſe, ſhould ceaſe to be obſerved as religious feſtivals. This was conceded; but the traces of immemorial uſage could not be obliterated in a day. The public offices, and commercial companies for the negociation of exchange, ſtill note the letter of the calendar, and aſſert the annual intermiſſion from buſineſs which had heretofore been enjoyed upon the holidays of the Church. Different inſtitutions and orders within the realm make the nominal feſtival of their Saint the day of their anniverſary meeting; and national Societies abroad ſelect it as a fit occaſion for an annual entertainment, accompanied ſometimes with a religious obſervance and a public contribution.

You

You have now adopted this laudable cuſtom, and, as a charitable Aſſociation, you have done well to conſecrate your national attachments at the altar of Religion, and to preſent yourſelves before God, as the almoners of his bounty to your poorer and leſs fortunate countrymen.

To me you have intruſted the flattering office of improving your firſt religious anniverſary; and in preparing a diſcourſe for it, I have conſidered what would be due to you, to thoſe who hear me, and to the place where we are met. Inſtead, therefore, of deluding your curioſity with an apocryphal biography of our Saint, or inſulting your underſtanding with an invidious eulogium of our country, I have determined to call your attention, 1ſt. To the objections that are commonly made to inſtitutions of this nature; and 2dly. To the purpoſes to which this of ours may be rendered ſubſervient in the preſent ſtate of the community; taking the liberty to ſuggeſt ſome new hints for your future conſideration.

I. I am firſt to call your attention to the objections that are commonly made to inſtitutions of this nature.

The objectors to private aſſociations of every deſcription, commonly alledge, that they tend to circumſcribe the ſocial virtues of charity and mercy, which Chriſtianity requires to be univerſal and unbounded: that they perpetuate narrow prejudices and national diſtinctions, and keep the members of a new community from uniting together and becoming one body: fomenting the ſpirit of party and feeding the flames of faction whenever a ſucceſſion of unfortunate events co-operates to give them birth.

It will be allowed that this is nearly the ſum of the general objection, partly religious and partly political, which is made to national ſocieties, and to charitable aſſociations founded on national principles.

To all captious and indiſcriminate charges of this nature, it might perhaps be deemed a ſufficient anſwer, that no reaſoning from the abuſe can, by any legitimate rule of logic, be urged againſt the uſe of human inſtitutions: that ſublunary things are mixed and imperfect: that no religious, or civil, or political arrangement of man's invention is abſolutely and invariably good: that, by the laws of nature, advantages are mingled with defects: and that difficulties and dangers are inſeparable from every reſolution we form, and every ſtep we take.

But in the present instance we can intrench ourselves on higher ground. It may safely be asserted, that the foundation of our institution is laid by the hand of nature; that the principle of it is, consequently, a good one; and that the abuses objected to it are only casual and incidental, and are not in fact experienced in any sensible degree.

To prove this, let us consider the manner in which our obligations are formed and extended; perceived by the understanding and engraved upon the heart.

What countenance gives animation and joy to the infant on the knee? Is it not that of the parent, or of those who fulfil a parent's duties, and merit a parent's reward? Who exercise and engage the first affections of the boy? Is it not his family, his companions, and his neighbourhood? Undoubtedly it is. From earliest youth he cultivates their acquaintance, and is solicitous to obtain their esteem; attends to their conversation, and takes a decided interest in their affairs. In his progress to manhood his mind and his views expand. As he listens to the traditions of the district, or lisps the historical ballad of a former age, his heart and affections embrace a party. In the internal conflicts of the people he warms, and glows, and becomes a zealot for the honour of his province; and in the strife of nations he buckles on the armour of his native heroes, renews the fields of blood, hears the cry of victory, joins the pursuit, and, in imagination, kills the slain.

Of all the sentiments that spring spontaneous in our bosom, and continue, without our care, to gather strength through life, those which connect us with our country and endear it to our hearts, are, by far, the most deeply rooted and widely spread. They are the growth of no climate, and do not depend upon fertility of soil or salubrity of situation. They obtain and are recognized, in every parallel of latitude, from one end of the earth to the other; and constitute an important part of the natural religion of the heart. Their magical power gives to the barren plain a charm and a fascination which inherent beauties cannot bestow. They attach the untutored native to the horizon of his birth, in preference to every other tract on the surface of the globe. With a silken cord they bind him to the storms and the frosts, the penury and the hardships of his native soil, and render the scanty fare it may yield preferable to the varied fertility of any other land. In every language we find the world exile, and among the most wretched tribes the exiled are objects of commiseration. In the scantiest and rudest dialect we hear the

rapturous

rapturous expreſſion "home," and they who are calm and cool on every other occaſion, utter this word with an emphaſis and emotion which is not perceived in the tone of ordinary converſation.

Now, although it is very true that this feeling may have its exceſs, and although the bigotry of attachment to the land of our nativity may unfit us for enjoying the comforts of any other, yet, in its proper place, it is both laudable and virtuous. It occupies, according to the obvious intention of the Author of our nature, a diſtinguiſhed ſtation in the graduated ſcale of the diſpoſitions and duties of ſocial life, and furniſhes the principle of that inſtitution for which I am contending.

It is indeed univerſally acknowledged that there are primary and ſecondary obligations incumbent on us as members of civil ſociety; and that the prior muſt be diſcharged, before we can be juſtified in proceeding to ſatisfy the poſterior. Thus, when the demands of juſtice are cancelled, and we owe no man any thing but the love which Jeſus has preſcribed, the claims of natural affection are confeſſedly pre-eminent; and parents and children, brothers and ſiſters, before they ſhew kindneſs to others, ought to make due proviſion for thoſe, who are, in ſcripture, emphatically called "their own fleſh." The debts of gratitude ſucceed; the rights of friendſhip and decayed relations rank next in order; and as we recede farther and farther from perfect obligation, an acquaintance is to be preferred to a ſtranger, and, in ſimilar circumſtances and equal ſtraits, a ſtranger of our own country to a ſtranger of a foreign one. This, as it has been ſhewn to be a natural, muſt be admitted as a rational ground of diſtinction. For even between claims, otherwiſe equal, ſome diſtinction is neceſſary; and what is likely to be more unexceptionable than one which is dictated by nature, and approved by the practice of all mankind?

It is obvious then that the ſame objections that are urged, with ſo much parade of philanthropy, againſt national predilections and the combinations reſulting from them, ought, if the objectors were conſiſtent with themſelves and followed up their reaſonings, to be oppoſed with equal force to the attachments and duties of kindred, the bonds of gratitude, the rights of friendſhip, the obligations of neighbourhood, and, in a word, to the whole fabric of civil ſociety from its loweſt foundation to its chief corner ſtone. If the ſentiments and conduct that ſpring from any one of theſe relations, are incompatible with Chriſtian charity, *it* reſtrains them all. But

 if

if thoſe which are moſt perſonal in their object, and moſt limited in their operation, are yet commendable and good, they can never ſurely grow criminal as they grow diffuſive. If the ties which bind heart to heart, and hand to hand, can be defended and juſtified, even upon goſpel principles, doubtleſs much more eaſily may thoſe be juſtified which join city to city, province to province, and connect in one chain the lives and happineſs of millions.

In anſwer to the political objection, that inſtitutions of this nature tend to perpetuate local prejudices and national diſtinctions, and to keep the different claſſes of a new community from uniting into one body; it may be remarked, that it is partly true, and partly without foundation.

National ſocieties, no doubt, preſerve national prejudices, and give countrymen a predilection for countrymen. But this predilection exiſts without them; they find but do not make it; and if the national prejudices which they cheriſh (patriotic ones, if any ſuch there be) are all in favour of a principle to which every good breaſt vibrates, namely, the proſperity of our native land; and if, as colonial ſubjects, they are in favour of the conſtitution and eſtabliſhment, the religion and laws, the glory and the government of the mother country, who that hears me would wiſh to ſee them *diminiſhed*, far leſs *obliterated?*

If we have any national prejudices of a different complexion; if, like the Jews and the Samaritans, we have, to our reproach, any that avert from us every fellow-creature whoſe fortune it was not to be born and bred in the ſame land with ourſelves; any that diſincline us from all dealings with foreigners, and tend to confine to countrymen excluſively the common offices of neighbourhood and good fellowſhip,—for ſuch I am no advocate, and for ſuch, I truſt, this Society will never need an apology.

With regard to the deeper and more criminal charge, that national ſocieties foment the ſpirit of party and feed the flames of faction, this again reſolves itſelf, at worſt, into an objection againſt all connection and aſſociation in life whatever. At any rate, the obſervation has never been verified by experience. On the contrary, hiſtory demonſtrates, that in all the great empires where parties have been trained and employed, they have been collected and banded not according to country and province, but according to perſonal congruities and coincidence of intereſt, reſulting from other cauſes than

than what form the ground of the objection I am now combating. Countrymen and even blood relations are found indiſcriminately on either ſide; connected or oppoſed by hopes and paſſions, which neither the ties of kindred nor of country were ſufficient to controul.

INSTITUTIONS of this kind are in their very nature repugnant to treaſons and conſpiracies. Theſe myſteries of darkneſs dare not venture abroad, but ſeek the concealment of the chamber and the ſolitude of the night. Such inſtitutions are not even adapted to ſerve political purpoſes. No national Society, however maſterly its regulations, and however able its conductors, could ſubſiſt long as a combination to force the favours of government, and to monopolize the offices it has to beſtow. Though they obtained the prize, they would quarrel about the appropriation of it, and the diſcordant competitors would ſooner ſee the vacancies ſupplied by ſtrangers, than by rivals in their own aſſociation.

IF ever national Societies ſtep forward into public view, and challenge the notice of the world, it can only be to pay the tribute of admiration and of gratitude to the eminently good, or to brand the incorrigible with merited infamy. To the former they will never be an object of diſtruſt, and to the latter may they prove a perpetual ſource of anxiety and apprehenſion.

Be ſuch the vindication of national Societies; and to the native of every country be ſuch the arguments for adhering to his own.

II. I now proceed to enumerate the purpoſes to which our inſtitution may be rendered ſubſervient in the preſent ſtate of the community: taking the liberty to ſuggeſt ſome new hints for your future conſideration.

1ſt. THE fundamental principle upon which this Society was eſtabliſhed, was, to aſſiſt and ſupport ſuffering countrymen in indigence, in ſickneſs, or under the preſſures of ſudden and ſevere calamity.

With this deſign, and greatly to their honour, the natives of Scotland, reſident in Halifax, formed themſelves into an aſſociation in the year 1768. With the hearts of patriots they founded a common ſtock out of the ſavings of proſperity, and in the ſpirit of Chriſtians made a common cauſe of the misfortunes to which all were liable. The ſettlement had not then attained that ſtability and permanence which it this day enjoys.

joys. The municipal charity of the town was leſs perfect in its ſcheme, and its funds were leſs adequate to their object, than now. The firſt contributions were therefore religiouſly appropriated to ſuch diſtreſſed inhabitants as had emigrated from Scotland; and as theſe chiefly conſiſted of the aged, the infirm and the deſtitute, they became ſettled penſioners, and were voted a regular quarterly allowance. Kept in a low ſtate by this continual expenditure, the occaſional demands for the extraordinary bounty of the Society ſoon exceeded the compaſs of the funds upon which they were made. But grievous viſitations and ſcenes of complicated ſuffering frequently preſenting themſelves, theſe gradually concurred with the progreſſive advancement of public affairs to extend the views of the Society, and to induce them to reſerve their aid for the greater diſtreſſes of life. This has for ſometime paſt been the leading principle of your appropriations, and it may be worth while to enquire whether you ought not, in prudence, to adhere to it in time to come.

To enter more particularly into this conſideration, it may be obſerved, that as the municipal allowance of the poor, though ſmall, is yet ſtated and duly advanced; as it knows no diſtinction of country, but is impartially extended to all with due attention only to the age, the ſex and condition of the object; it appears equally unadviſeable to take the unfortunate of our country from the weekly proviſion of a legal ſettlement, or to interpoſe in their behalf, on common occaſions, as a national Society, after having contributed to their ſupport in our private capacity as citizens of Halifax. The idea is pregnant with diſtinctions of the moſt pernicious tendency, which, whenever they find their way into a community, it requires one age of wrangling to detect, and another of conceſſion and forbearance to extinguiſh.

It muſt alſo be remembered that in a fluctuating Society, a national charity muſt ever be unequal to the double charge of conſtant penſions, and of effectual interpoſition on ſingular emergencies. Thus ſcattered, its efforts muſt be languid, deſultory and fruitleſs. The fiery embers neither glow nor give heat unleſs collected to a common centre; diſperſe them, their fervour is loſt, and they periſh in darkneſs.

May not theſe conſiderations ſuggeſt the propriety of perſevering to appropriate your fund, in a particular manner, to caſes of great and unexpected calamity, againſt which prudence cannot guard, and for which neither the police of the town, nor private liberality can make an adequate proviſion? This

This deſcription comprehends the grievous ſum of accidents to which mortality is expoſed; the undiſtinguiſhing devaſtations of fire; the fury of the whelming wave; the ſudden death of the heads of families, with the firſt miſeries of the widow and the orphan; deep diſtreſs of various ſorts, ariſing from contingencies not eaſily to be enumerated; in a word, all that ſoftens the heart of fleſh within us, and forces the ſympathy of kindred natures.

At the ſame time it is not to be doubted but that the exigencies of your own members will command (and it is fit they ſhould) your firſt attention. It may likewiſe be believed, that to the aged and the deſolate of your country you will not always be able to refuſe an occaſional aſſiſtance. To your credit, your books have uniformly exhibited penſioners of this deſcription; nor is it intended, by any thing now offered, to diſcountenance the humane and generous ſpirit. To your candour and wiſdom it is only ſubmitted, whether it might not be proper to diſpenſe ſuch aids with as frugal a hand as poſſible, that you may have it in your power to meet deeper diſtreſs and ſtronger calls for compaſſion, with that liberality which you are known to poſſeſs, and to inſtances of which he who now addreſſes you can, during the period of his miniſtry, abundantly teſtify.

2dly. This Society has long been, and may ſtill be, eminently uſeful, in two of the moſt trying periods of our condition; in the hour of ſickneſs and in the article of death.

In the fluctuations and uncertainties of an infant ſettlement and a ſea-port town, the anguiſh of diſeaſe and the viſitations of mortality, come attended with circumſtances of peculiar aggravation. Here multitudes are met, from the various countries of Europe and America, without previous habitudes of intimacy or connection. Their reſidence is precarious, their union imperfect. They live in a moving ſcene, and do not continue long in one ſtay. In ſuch circumſtances ſolid attachment and real friendſhip muſt be extremely rare. But they are equally needful in every region of the globe. Sickneſs and decay follow us to the ends of the earth, and wherever they overtake us, ſympathy and compaſſion are ineſtimable.

Little do they know the lot of the emigrant, who, amidſt native ſcenes, contemplate it through the medium of their own ſufferings, real or imaginary. While at the diſtance of a wide extended ocean, under the incumbrance, it may be, of a family, and the embarraſſments of debt, the parent,

rent, 'midſt the ſtruggles of his calling, exults only in the idea that one of his race is exempted from the condition to which the reſt are doomed, and by his virtues and reputation reflects honour on the name, and on a growing fortune, —This ſtranger, in a ſtrange land, more to be pitied than all his generation, is, perhaps, ſtretched on the bed of languiſhing, and left to ſhiver and to burn, through all the varieties of the ague's cold and the fever's heat, deſtitute of the miniſtrations for which kindred were given us. In his diſtreſs, even the humane do not feel themſelves ſo much intereſted in his fortune as to ſtep forward in his behalf, under the double hazard of delivering their names to the malice of ſlander by aſſuming the office of conducting his buſineſs, and of incurring the ſtill more dangerous conſequence of becoming reſponſible for his property to his creditors and heirs. In this ſituation money is but of ſmall avail. It cannot purchaſe a heart, and the attentions which it buys are altogether of an inferior and coarſer kind. The perſons who nurſe the ſick for wages cannot approach their bed with that tenderneſs of ſympathy and that confidence of affection which the nearer relations of life inſpire. It is not their office to watch and to prevent the riſing wiſhes of the ſoul; to wipe the cold ſweat from the brow; to claſp the trembling hand, and hold the aching head; to mark and to feel the rollings of the eye; to receive the ſecret bitterneſs of the heart, in which a ſtranger cannot intermeddle; and to mingle with the balm of friendſhip and of piety the ineſtimable cup of Chriſtian conſolation. This is not colouring; it is not half the truth. Could I lead you through the different habitations of the emigrant and the adventurer, from the vertical ſun of India to the polar froſts of Labradore, and enumerate, as I turned from every ſick man's bed, the ſymptoms of his diſeaſe and the attendance he enjoyed, I ſhould ſoon convince you how much is ſuffered by that deſcription of men in this ſeaſon of exigence.

The heart-felt ſympathies of tender union are incommunicable; and even this inſtitution, with all its nationality, can ſupply them but in part. But what can be ſupplied, is done moſt effectually. In the land of ſtrangers it brings to the bed of the diſtreſſed and the friendleſs the countenance of a countryman, a voice and an accent which is known. I have witneſſed with joy, and I record with gladneſs, your unwearied care in procuring a ſucceſſion of attendants, and your meritorious condeſcenſion in performing the humble offices that a ſick bed requires. Too much praiſe cannot be beſtowed on this part of your conduct, and it has originated, I believe, with this inſtitution. The beneficial effects of it have been

been frequently experienced, and are regiſtered in a book where they will never be forgotten. In the name of that God whom we are aſſembled to adore, I bid you proceed in theſe labours of love ; I bid you proceed and proſper. If you need encouragement, liſten to the Scriptures and learn your reward ; " Be not weary in well doing, for in due ſeaſon you ſhall reap if you faint not." Perſevere in the pious office. Let not ingratitude itſelf reſtrain you ; it did not reſtrain your Lord. Remember that here below mercy is twice bleſſed, once to the object of mercy, and again to the merciful ; and that hereafter it will prove your robe and your diadem in the kingdom of your Father.

In the article of death the aſſiſtance of this Society has not been wanting.

Your anxious attention, and comprehenſive charity, not only relieve the wants of poverty, and alleviate the agonies of pain, they alſo ſuſtain the laſt moments of expiration, and ſoothe the departing ſpirit with the conſolatory aſſurance that its duſt will be treated with reſpect and receive the honours of Chriſtian burial.

One of the firſt, and not the leaſt memorable, of the laws which the drum and the provoſt-marſhal proclaimed among the mixed multitude on the beach of Chebucto, was, that on the death of a ſettler the juſtices of the peace were empowered to nominate twelve perſons of the quarter to which he belonged, to accompany the funeral and depoſit the corpſe in the grave ; and that while the Royal allowance of proviſions laſted, the name of every perſon who refuſed to obey this ſummons ſhould be erazed from the meſs-books. This penalty ſeems to have been inſufficient to procure the attendance required, and a few months after the magiſtrates received orders to puniſh the inhuman refuſal with commitment.

This is a gloomy view of the ſtate of things in a new eſtabliſhment ; but it is a juſt one. Extraordinary laws are dictated by extraordinary neceſſity ; and in the preſent inſtance it may be conceived that the indifference about the diſeaſed, the dying and the dead, which pervaded the encampment of three thouſand people, caſt, without any connecting tie, on the ſand of a foreign ſhore and the ſkirt of an unknown foreſt, muſt have been extreme.

Happily this ſpirit has long ceaſed ; and from the preſent appearance of our funerals no perſon would ſuppoſe that an e-

dict of this nature had ever been neceſſary in Halifax. Indeed the reverſe is now to be lamented. The burial of the dead is become rather too expenſive ; and I call on you, and on every national Society in the province, to diſcountenance and correct the extravagance. Retrench, if you cannot aboliſh, the idle parade and oſtentatious expence, ſo frivolous and puerile at all times, but ſo peculiarly unſeaſonable at a funeral. It is of no avail to the dead, and materially injurious to the living. A decent, an affectionate reſpect, may be ſhewn to the memory and remains of the neareſt and deareſt relative without it. It forms no part of real mourning, and is indiſputably calculated rather to flatter the vanity of the ſurvivors than to do honour to the deceaſed.

In the ſpirit of rational and virtuous reform, might it not be proper and conſiſtent, nay more, my countrymen, is it not abſolutely incumbent on you as a national Society, to adhere ſcrupulouſly and inflexibly, in this article, to the ſimple ceremonial of your native land? That weakneſs of character which receives a new direction from every impulſe of faſhion is unworthy of a national Society. Be not then ſwayed by a ſlaviſh imitation—nor employ on the moſt ſolemn occaſion that expenſive pageantry, which, however venerable it may appear in the country where it has been conſecrated by immemorial uſage, is out of character here, as well as a dead loſs to your fund of charity. Have the courage to make the reform propoſed as a national aſſociation, and as individuals have the conſiſtency to adhere to it inviolably in your families, however eaſy your circumſtances may be. In private life there is no one who does not ſee, and feel, and deplore this tyranical cuſtom ; who does not heartily wiſh it aboliſhed ; and who would not be ſincerely glad to find a precedent to juſtify the abolition. But few, in compariſon, poſſeſs that fortitude of mind which is neceſſary towards ſubmitting their reaſons for being ſingular to public obſervation and private ſcandal ; and leaſt of all on a ſubject ſo delicate as that of reſpect to the dead, where the ſmalleſt ſaving is ever imputable to a ſordid motive. On this account it is ſo much the more neceſſary to be undertaken by a public aſſociation. The reform is worthy of you ; may you merit the thanks of poſterity for effecting it!

3dly. A third laudable purpoſe to which your inſtitution may be rendered ſubſervient, is, to grant, under your ſeal and the ſignature of your Preſident, certificates and recommendations to the deſerving of your number, whoſe removal to other lands, in queſt of employment and ſubſiſtence, various cauſes may compel.

This,

whom various causes may compel
to visit other lands in quest of em-

THIS, in every point of view, is an object of equal importance with the preceding, and I therefore crave your moſt ſerious attention in its behalf. Indeed protection and patronage take place of alms, in proportion as a friend is of more value than a little money.

UNDER the ſpreading population of the new world as well as of the old, the difficulty will every day increaſe of procuring confidence and employment, without ſufficient documents of adequate talents and a blameleſs life. In the infancy of the colonies, the ſcarcity of men made it neceſſary to abate much of that jealous enquiry into the hiſtory and merits of ſettlers and ſervants which is cuſtomary in countries that have been longer eſtabliſhed. The preſence of emigrants was ſo conſolatory, and their aſſiſtance ſo needful, that they were kindly received and courteouſly entertained by every government. But this period is nearly paſt. A rapid population begins to produce a keen competition for the various appointments of life; and, every thing elſe equal, a ſmaller ſcale of ſubordination and a ſimpler ſtate of manners is likely ſoon to make perſonal merit of more conſequence here, than we find it in parts of the globe more highly improved.

IN the preſent condition of the town and colony, it may juſtly be apprehended that application for certificates will not be wanting. Where ſo many hazardous experiments are made on fortune and happineſs, as every day diſcloſes, failures are unavoidable; and after exhauſting the reſources which the place affords, the ſcene muſt be ſhifted, and a new theatre tried. The conviction of the importance of obtaining creditable recommendations, in exigencies of this kind, may do much good. It may operate on our countrymen as a powerful incitement to that temperance and induſtry for which they have been remarked;—that in every reverſe they may ſtill enjoy, under your inſtitution, the invaluable bleſſing of a good character; and the aſſurance of carrying a reſpectable introduction among ſtrangers, if it ſhall be neceſſary for them to relinquiſh their eſtabliſhment in this Province, and their friends in this Society.

THE fitneſs and propriety, the importance and utility of your inſtitution, muſt have appeared in a ſtronger light from this enumeration of its ends, than from the formal vindication of its foundation and principle at an earlier period of the diſcourſe.

HOWEVER inexpedient and unneceſſary ſuch Societies may be elſewhere, here, at leaſt, they are both commendable and

of

of uſe. As yet our charitable eſtabliſhments are few in number; and common pity has ſo many calls that it is in the utmoſt danger of waxing cold. The heart needs to be touched and the hand to be opened by ſome powerful principle of equal and uninterrupted operation. Such a principle is national attachment; a principle that has here done much good, which without it would not have been done, and relieved much diſtreſs, which without it would not have been relieved.

When, at ſome future period, this portion of America ſhall aſſume a more ſettled form; when emigration, from Europe, in its preſent extent, ſhall ceaſe; when nationality ſhall be blended and loſt; when municipal endowments ſhall be numerous and rich, and when this inſtitution ſhall be no longer neceſſary; then let the few adminiſtering curators who find no countrymen to claim their aid, aſſign our fund to the ſtock of general charity, and place our archives in the moſt conſpicuous ſhelf of the provincial library, to perpetuate among our deſcendants the remembrance of their obligations to Britain, and to ſerve as an admonition to them never to ſuffer the ſtranger to pine unpitied, to ſicken without attendants and medicines, or to die without the decencies of burial. Meanwhile, we, of the preſent generation, who drew our breath in the other hemiſphere, who there received the rudiments of our education, and there formed the *firſt* friendſhips of life, may hope to be forgiven, if entertaining no averſion to foreigners and refuſing them no act of kindneſs or humanity, we, at the ſame time, cheriſh a tender and grateful regard for the land of our nativity, and expreſs it in the glowing language of the text "If I forget thee O Jeruſalem let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth." AMEN.

To celebrate the good which is so adapted to Boston would be the best eloquence on the occasion, but this wanders greatly above a kin to that of the author.

A

SERMON

ON THE

DANGERS AND DUTIES

OF THE

SEAFARING LIFE;

PREACHED BEFORE THE

Proteſtant Diſſenting Congregation,

AT HALIFAX,

AND PUBLISHED AT THE DESIRE OF THE

MARINE SOCIETY,

IN THAT PLACE.

BY ANDREW BROWN, D.D.

Miniſter of the Proteſtant Diſſenting Congregation.

HALIFAX:

Printed by JOHN HOWE, at his Printing-Office, oppoſite the Parade.

M DCC XCIII.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Sermon, haſtily prepared at ſea, while the feelings it deſcribes and the train of thought to which they led were freſh on the mind, was delivered in the ordinary courſe of duty, without any view to publication. At that time, the Author did not know of the exiſtence of a Society in this place for the benevolent purpoſe of patronizing and relieving diſtreſſed ſeamen; and could not foreſee that his diſcourſe would meet their approbation, or be thought capable of promoting the deſigns of their inſtitution.

A ſenſe of gratitude for much kind attention received from ſailors, and a ſincere deſire of contributing to their benefit, has induced him to comply with the too partial requeſt of the MARINE SOCIETY, (the principle of whoſe inſtitution he highly approves) and to ſuffer this diſcourſe to be printed for their uſe.

HALIFAX, *April* 2, 1793.

At a Meeting of the Halifax Marine Society, November 22, 1792.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, *That a Committee of said Society, viz.—Captains* FAWSON, ELMSLIE *and* SALTER,—*wait on the Reverend Doctor* BROWN, *to express in terms of the most sincere respect, their grateful acknowledgements for the very instructive and edifying Sermon preached by him on Sunday last, and to request a Copy thereof, that, with his permission, the same may be printed and distributed for the use of the Society.*

JOHN ALLEN, *Secretary.*

PSALM cvii. from v. 23 to 33.

They that go down to the ſea in ſhips, that do buſineſs in great waters: Theſe ſee the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiſeth the ſtormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their ſoul is melted becauſe of trouble. They reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their diſtreſſes. He maketh the ſtorm a calm, ſo that the waves thereof are ſtill. Then are they glad becauſe they be quiet, ſo he bringeth them unto their deſired haven. Oh, that men would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! Let them exalt him in the congregation of the people, and praiſe him in the aſſembly of the elders.

THE Miniſters of the Goſpel are appointed to explain the doctrines of Chriſtianity, to adminiſter its ſacraments, and to inculcate the practice of piety and good works. Their commiſſion inſtructs them to preach the glad tidings of reconciliation and forgiveneſs to every creature, and they are authorized by the example of an apoſtle, to become all things to all men, that they may gain ſome. Hence it is their duty to ſelect all ſorts of ſubjects, and to addreſs all claſſes of men. No order is ſo deſpicable as to be below their notice, and none ſo profligate as to be beyond their hope.

In their paſtoral care of the Chriſtian Church, it is incumbent on Miniſters to conſider the particular ſituations in which their congregations are placed, the character of the different ranks which compoſe them, and the dangers and temptations to which they are ſubjected; that they may be enabled to accommodate their diſcourſes to their capacity, and to recommend, with energy and effect, the ſentiments and conduct which are ſuited to their circumſtances in life.

In a ſeaport town, where many have concerns on the ocean, and are employed in ſhips, it will not ſurely be reckoned

reckoned too great an encroachment on the rights of general instruction, to bestow a particular discourse on the seafaring life; especially when we consider that none of the works of God are indifferent to any of his people, and that the practical instructions deducible from the present subject, will, in a great measure, be equally applicable to all.

Were further justification necessary for adopting such a theme, I should say of the order of men to whom it more particularly belongs, what the Jews said of the Centurion, who besought Jesus for the recovery of his servant, "They "are worthy for whom we should do this." Though rough in manners and in speech, their hearts are good, and readily warm with friendship for each other, and with pity to the poor. They are very susceptible of serious impressions and of gratitude to God; and though not generally distinguished by the profession of religion, they are at worst, I trust, more thoughtless and inconsiderate, than obstinately wicked.

In the text, which is equally remarkable for simplicity of style and justness of description, the Psalmist has given us a very animated representation of the dangers of the seafaring life, and of the impressions which they make on the heart of the mariner. Treading in the steps of this inspired guide, I propose to offer a few observations on the following articles immediately connected with this profession:

I. On the belief of the existence and government of God, or at least of the practical consequences of that principle, which is expressed or implied in navigation, and in all the hazardous occupations of life.

II. On the signal manifestations of the divine power and providence which are made to the mariner on the great waters.

III. On the imminent dangers of the seafaring life, and the merciful protection which God extends to those who are engaged in it.

IV. On the sentiments and conduct becoming this exposed and perilous profession.

All these ideas are evidently included in the words of the Psalm, "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do bu-"siness in great waters: These see the works of the Lord, "and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and "raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves there-"of. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again "to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and

"are

" are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in " their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their diſtreſſes. " He maketh the ſtorm a calm, ſo that the waves thereof are " ſtill. Then are they glad becauſe they be quiet, ſo he " bringeth them unto their deſired haven. Oh, that men " would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and for his won- " derful works to the children of men! Let them exalt him " alſo in the congregation of the people, and praiſe him in " the aſſembly of the elders."

I begin with offering a few obſervations on the belief of the exiſtence and government of God, or at leaſt of the practical conſequences of that principle, which is expreſſed or implied in navigation, and in all the hazardous occupations of life.

Whether we fear God, or do not fear him, we are indebted to principles eſtabliſhed by religion for our comfort and ſecurity in all the trying exigences of this mortal ſtate. In a particular manner it is owing to our belief in the exiſtence of God, and in the fixed laws of his Government, that we go down to the ſea in ſhips with compoſure and expectation. Were there no order in nature, no preſiding Agent, and no ſettled connection between cauſes and effects, we durſt not truſt ourſelves from firm ground, and would not tread even there with any meaſure of confidence.

Did we believe that chance had produced the ſyſtem of the univerſe, and placed us in our ſtation, we could have no ſecurity for the continuance of our exiſtence, or for the duration of the world in which we dwell. Chance cannot work with deſign, and the fabric which it had ſo wonderfully reared, it might again deſtroy in a manner equally wonderful. In this ſtate of uncertainty with reſpect to our being, we ſhould have no determinate principles to regulate our conduct. All things would appear ſingle and unrelated, reſulting from no eſtabliſhed cauſe, and referring to no certain end. Of conſequence experience would be of no ſervice to us, as we could not infer from what had taken place yeſterday, that to-morrow the ſame cauſes would be attended with the ſame effects, or the ſame means productive of the ſame ends. The future would be wholly fortuitous, and on ordinary as well as extraordinary occaſions, when we had any matter of importance at ſtake, we ſhould be at our wit's end.

On the other hand, if we had reaſon to ſuppoſe that an eternal fate and uncontroulable neceſſity directed the courſe of things, it would be our duty to wait in perfect tranquility till

till their pleaſure was made known, and then to ſubmit to the decree without a ſtruggle or a murmur. On this ſcheme, reaſon and prudence, effort and action would be completely ſuperſeded; nothing being more obvious than that fate cannot be altered, and that it is vain to contend with neceſſity.

Even on the beſt ſyſtems of infidelity, our exiſtence and the world around us would be gloomy and uncomfortable. Unknown and irreſiſtible powers, who had counted mankind worthy of no communication of their will, would be working on every ſide, without any regard for our happineſs. Ignorant of their nature, and of the ends of their adminiſtration, in proſperity we ſhould not be able to enjoy ourſelves, or the arbitrary gifts of our inviſible benefactors; and in adverſity we would have no preſent help, and no ſuſtaining hope of future deliverance.

The belief of the exiſtence and government of an everlaſting and Almighty Being, wiſe, and juſt, and beneficent, compoſes our fears, and gives us courage and confidence in the moſt perilous ſcenes. By the diſcoveries of revelation, his perfections are made our truſt, and his providence becomes our ſafeguard. There we learn that infinite wiſdom cannot err, and that eternal goodneſs is incapable of change; that the intelligence which knows the end from the beginning, can ordain nothing but what is good, and that what is once ordained can never be improved, and conſequently will not be altered.

Theſe principles of religion inſpire us with confidence in the order of nature, and in the efficacy of our own exertions. They aſſure us that in the time to come as well as in that which is paſt, the ſun will riſe in the eaſt, and the magnet point to the pole; that in the ſame latitudes the variation and declination of the needle will be regulated by the ſame laws; and that in ſimilar circumſtances, ſimilar appearances will be the indication of ſimilar effects.

Proceeding on theſe ſolid principles, which are eſtabliſhed by religion with ſtill greater authority than by philoſophy, the mariner weighs his anchor, and ſpreads his canvas to the breeze. Under their direction he purſues his courſe through the pathleſs waters; ſweeps the horizon to aſcertain the midday hour; calculates his diſtance from his port, and even ventures to predict the time of his arrival.

I do not mean, however, to aſſert by any of the preceding obſervations, that the perſons who act upon theſe principles do it with deſign, or in a religious ſpirit. It is much to be

feared

feared that this is very ſeldom the caſe. Walking in a beaten track, and guided by cuſtom and habit, they too often take advantage of them, as circumſtances require, without any reflection at all. In the ſame ſituation they repeat the ſame action, inſtinctively and mechanically, with no concern about its immediate operation, or the ultimate effects which it is intended to produce. Nevertheleſs, when we trace their conduct to the foundation on which it reſts, it evidently reſolves itſelf into the principle here aſſigned, the belief that a wiſe and beneficent providence rules the world by general and unalterable laws.

So neceſſary is the exiſtence and government of God to the exiſtence of the world, and the comfort of his creatures, and ſo true is it that in every ſtep we take, we carry at leaſt the practical conviction of his exiſtence and government at our heart, and in our hands. Our belief of this truth is expreſſed or implied in the whole of our conduct, but more eſpecially in our hazardous undertakings ; and conſidering how important this grand principle is to our ſecurity and enjoyment, it is our reproach as well as our crime, that we are ever ſo inattentive to our intereſt, as to act upon it without proper ſentiments of rational truſt and filial piety.

This inattention and negligence will appear more inexcuſable in ſuch as frequent the ſea, if we conſider, in the 2d place, the ſignal manifeſtations of the power and providence of God which are daily made to them on that element. " They that go down to the ſea in ſhips, that do buſineſs in " great waters : theſe ſee the works of the Lord, and his " wonders in the deep."

The wiſdom of the Almighty ordained the ſeparation of the elements ; and by diſtributing them in admirable order and in juſt proportion, he has diverſified the appearance, and increaſed the perfection of his works. The ſea, that grand magazine of moiſture, forms, as it were, a world by itſelf ; is peopled by diſtinct tribes of being ; and governed by peculiar laws. It likewiſe miniſters, in an endleſs variety of ways, to the ſalubrity and fertility of the earth, and to the convenience and improvement of man. In this advanced ſtage of commercial intercourſe, it may well be ſaid that the ſea at once ſevers and unites the nations. In the infancy of things, we may perhaps ſuppoſe that men viewed its ſwelling deeps with diſmay, and turned from the advancing flood not only as from a boundary they were forbidden to paſs, but alſo as from an enemy threatening to deſtroy. By degrees,

 however,

however, they were reconciled to the appearance of this immenſe aſſemblage of water, and having learned that "God "had broken up for it his decreed place, and ſet bars and "doors, and ſaid hitherto ſhalt thou come but no further, "and here ſhall all thy proud waves be ſtaid*;" they approached it with confidence, and ſoon became familiar with its ſtorms and its tides. Nevertheleſs, to adopt the language of an ancient poet, threefold oak, that is, the moſt invincible reſolution, muſt have ſhielded his heart who firſt violated the ſanctity of the ocean, and in a frail bark tempted the winds, and the waves, and the ſeverer wrath of the angry powers who were ſuppoſed to have choſen it as their peculiar reſidence. But gathering courage from the ſucceſs of their firſt adventures, and finding the benefit of their commerce with the deep, men ſoon became more enterprizing; and while they proceeded with caution and prudence on their part, hoped by prayers and ſacrifices to appeaſe the reſentment of the Gods of the waters, and to make them propitious to their deſigns. Neceſſity continuing to ſharpen invention, expedients were multiplied on expedients to add to the eaſe and ſafety of conveyance by water. Every new generation improved on the practice of the paſt, and tranſmitted to future times ſome valuable diſcovery of its own; till, in the progreſs of art and ſcience, from a raft, which a few oſiers bound together, a ſhip was conſtructed, the moſt ingenious and perfect of all the mechanical productions of man.

Thus to the dominion of the earth the dominion of the ſea has been added; and in the preſent improved ſtate of ſhipbuilding, the mariner enjoys almoſt all the advantages which the land affords, and delivered from the illiberal terrors of ſuperſtition, has an opportunity of contemplating, without interruption and without fear, the works of God, and his wonders in the deep.

In this great department of nature, theſe are neither few nor inconſiderable, and it is not neceſſary to go far from land to diſcover them. Around the ſkirts of the ſhore a garden is planted in the waters, abounding with vegetable productions of various appearance and quality. This marine nurſery is exceedingly beautiful. The preparation which nature has made to attach its productions to the bottom, and to direct their growth to the ſurface and the light, is wonderful; and the whole of their œconomy is eſtabliſhed by that maſterly ſkill which has done all things well. In their watery bed they

* Job xxxviii. 10.

they anſwer the good purpoſes for which they were created, and neither flouriſh nor fade in vain.

As we depart from the land, the ocean itſelf claims our undivided attention. In a ſtate of reſt it is a magnificent and ſtupendous object. Extending further than the eye or the imagination can reach, it is poured into bays and inlets without number, and encompaſſes the earth as a girdle. When the atmoſphere is clear, the immeaſureable expanſe of water enlarges our faculties, and gives elevation to our conceptions of the univerſe. The mind ſwells with the ſcene which it contemplates; the range of viſion is extended; and, for the moment, an addition ſeems to be made to our notions of infinitude.

But this is a ſubject upon which we cannot enter. The conſideration of the uſes, phenomena and laws of the ocean, would divert us from our proper buſineſs, and lead to diſcuſſions unſuitable to this place. Suffice it to ſay, that if the earth is full of the riches of the creator's wiſdom and goodneſs, ſo alſo is the great and wide ſea. Perhaps indeed the ocean is more replete with life than the land. Through the whole of its extent myriads of creatures range unconfined, and, with all our boaſted ſcience, it is but little that we know concerning them. At certain ſeaſons of the year, particular ſpecies of them are found in one place, and at a different period they ſurprize the mariner in a far diſtant region. Some rude gueſſes have been made with regard to the length of their life; but we are ſtrangers to the inſtincts which regulate their migrations, to the routine of ſervice they perform, and to their various uſes in the ſyſtem of animated nature. So far indeed as the learned have been able to examine their external figure and their internal conformation, and to reaſon from theſe to their condition and buſineſs in their own element, they have found the moſt infallible proofs of the wiſdom of the Creator, and of his unwearied attention to the perfection and happineſs of his creatures.

The feathered tribes which dwell upon the ocean, or frequent its coaſts, proclaim the ſame comfortable truth, that God is good to all, and that his tender mercies are over all his works. The extent of the ſea is their domain; and feeble as they are, they are taught to ſhun, or fitted to reſiſt the fierceneſs of the tempeſt. Wherever they are found they appear to be at home, and though in general they move in flocks, yet ſome of them are ſeen alone far from any land, and, as it were, in a ſtate of exile from the reſt of their ſpe-

cies. Delighting in the ſilence of an untroubled retreat, perhaps for months together they do not viſit the ſhore; and their exiſtence is entirely unknown ſave to him who ſeeth all things.

But a more intereſting object ſometimes attracts the mariner's notice and reminds him of the vigilance of providence. Remote in the ocean as well as amongſt the habitations of men, the danger of venturing too far on forbidden ground is occaſionally diſplayed in a very affecting manner. A bird belonging to the land draws near the ſhip, borne on a weary wing. Surprized in all probability, while hovering on the ſhore, by a ſudden blaſt whoſe impetuoſity it was unable to reſiſt, it was carried out to ſea, and perhaps for ſeveral days was driven along, without any other exertion on its own part but that of preventing itſelf from falling into the water. As the ſtorm abated the anxieties of ſelf preſervation returned, and it looked round for a place of ſafety. The appearance of the ſhip attracts its notice, and like the dove at the deluge of the old world, it draws near with confidence and hope. The antipathies of its nature are ſubdued by ſuffering, and it is no longer afraid of man. It ſeeks a refuge at his ſide, and may be ſure to find one in the compaſſion of the ſailor, who has himſelf known danger and fear.—The extent of the hoſtile element on which this bird was expoſed, the weakneſs of its frame, and the wonderful concurrence of circumſtances which effect its preſervation, naturally raiſe the mind to the contemplation of that eternal power without whoſe permiſſion even a ſparrow cannot fall to the ground, and who out of the very jaws of death can give deliverance.

In ordinary caſes the variety at ſea is not great; there is a fatiguing ſameneſs in the avocations of the day; and incidents which elſewhere would be reckoned trifling are there ſufficient to amuſe the mind. Of theſe, however, all ſuch as ſerve to compoſe the thoughts, and to inſpire tranquility and hope are peculiarly pleaſing. Hence it is obſerved, with a mingled ſentiment of ſatisfaction and joy, that in the boſom of the ocean the grand phenomena of nature are as magnificent and beautiful as in the beſt cultivated land. There the arch of heaven preſerves its majeſty, and the rainbow the ſplendour of its appearance; there the ſky is variegated with all the tints and ſhadings which give luſtre to a ſummer morning, or mildneſs to an autumnal day. The ſcene, indeed, is peculiar, and the mariner finds himſelf in a new ſituation. As the ſun deſcends below the gilded wave, a ſolemn

ſtillneſs

ſtillneſs prevails; no cattle low; no ſmoke riſes, and no diſtant noiſe indicates the preſence or the labours of men. In proportion as the laſt ſtreaks of reflected light diſappear in the weſt, a deeper gloom advances from the oppoſite quarter; and at length the horizon conſiſts of dark waters and thick clouds of the ſky.

Such a ſituation requires vigilance and caution, and may lead us to conſider, in the 3d place, the various dangers to which the ſeafaring life is expoſed.

The defenceleſs ſtate of a ſhip at ſea without conſort or convoy, the continual expoſure to accidents, and the little probability of eſcape or deliverance were any evil to happen, muſt in ſome degree at leaſt render a voyage a tedious and an anxious period. The ſafety of the mariner is always uncertain, and his life is in jeopardy every hour. In the fineſt weather and with the faireſt proſpects, the careleſſneſs or the caſualty of a moment may deſtroy his hopes, and reduce him to extremity. They who follow other profeſſions may alſo walk in the midſt of dangers, of ſnares, and of death; but then theſe are in general concealed from their view, and they proceed in a beaten track without diſquietude or apprehenſion. But a multitude of hazards ſurround the mariner which perpetually ſtare him in the face, and there is hardly a ſtep he can take, or a part of his duty that he can diſcharge without expoſing himſelf to danger.

Beſides, the mind has never either more leiſure or inclination to contemplate the nature of the ſcene, and to dwell on its uncertainties, than during a long voyage. Many things occur to fix the attention on what is preſent, and few to divert it to more exhilirating proſpects. The ſecluſion from the world, the abſence of friends, and of all the objects that have been accuſtomed to carry the individual beyond himſelf, leave the mind unoccupied; nothing interrupts the current of uneaſy thought; and when our fears are once alarmed, they magnify real and create imaginary dangers.

But even imagination, fertile as it is in fiction, can ſcarcely multiply the perils of the ſea. So many combinations of difficulty and ſuffering are poſſible on that element, and ſuch a variety of new and untried evils are daily experienced in the courſe of navigation, that no calculation of chances can aſcertain the ſum of hardſhip to which it is expoſed. From the hiſtory of nautical expeditions of all kinds, it is evident, that more complicated and ſevere diſtreſſes have been endured in ſhips than, was ever known on ſhore even in the time

of

of ſiege and battle. Fatigues, and terrors, and diſaſters are the mariner's inſeparable attendants; and theſe are increaſed in proportion to the charge and authority with which he is inveſted. The maſter's office is peculiarly arduous: The management of the ſhip and the ſeamen is expected of him, as well as reſolution and conduct in the ſeaſon of perplexity. Whatever is difficult or embarraſſing in the voyage falls on him with double weight, and his vigilance and activity can never ſleep with ſafety. Contrary winds or continued calms are equally hoſtile to his repoſe; while the ſcarcity of proviſions, the attack of diſeaſe, or the entrance of diſcontent, ſummon him at once to the moſt delicate and deciſive interpoſition.

The text refers in a particular manner to the labours and dangers of the ſtorm, and though theſe are not the worſt evils incident to navigation, yet they are of a very alarming kind, and awaken all the anxieties of the heart.

From the ſeaſon and ſituation in which it attacks the mariner, the terror as well as danger of the ſtorm may be greatly augmented. In the dead of night, it is an awful thing to encounter the rage of the wind and the toſſings of the ſea. Light is enlivening; and the face of heaven, even though enveloped with clouds, inſpires a degree of confidence and ſecurity which we never poſſeſs in darkneſs. Beſides, the meaſures to be taken for the ſafety and eaſe of the veſſel are then obvious, and can be carried into execution with more certainty and expedition, than when all is night and uproar, and the maſter's orders can neither be heard nor anticipated.

In every ſituation, however, and with all poſſible precaution, the working of the tempeſt is terrible to the mariner, When heaved from its bed the ocean ſwells tumultuouſly, nothing can withſtand the commotion. Mountains are heaped upon mountains, and the ſtouteſt ſhip muſt labour for life. Meanwhile dangers thicken, and fear invades the company. Every hour their condition grows more critical; "They mount up to the heaven, they go down again "to the depths: Their ſoul is melted becauſe of trouble. "They reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man, and "are at their wit's end."

The continuance of their trials exhauſts their ſtrength, and depreſſes their ſpirits; and at length, overpowered by fatigue, they give themſelves up to deſpondence. On the brink of eternity, they think of the ſeat of Judgment, and of their appearance before God. But fears are in the way, and

and the ſcene which excites them inſtead of inſpiring hope, ſuggeſts the idea of terrible majeſty and devouring wrath. What a moment is this for the diſſolute and impure! Their paſt actions ruſh upon their memory, and conſcience condemns them for every ſin they have committed. Stung with remorſe, they ſhrink from the thought of meeting the Father of their ſpirits in all the freſhneſs of unrepented wickedneſs. But who ſhall now interpoſe in their behalf, or add to their life a ſhort reſpite for penitence and preparation? Their friends are far diſtant and cannot hear their cry; they are cut off from the inhabitants of the world, and there is none to pity far leſs to relieve them. Without a comforter in all the earth but the God whom they have ſo often offended, their eyes and hearts are lifted up to heaven, and they call upon the Lord if ſo be he will think upon them that they periſh not. The King of mercy, who rules in the ſyſtem of nature, and hears the voice of all thoſe that pray unto him, liſtens to their ſupplication, rebukes the wind, and ſays unto the ſea, peace, be ſtill. Immediately the ſtorm becomes a calm; the ſky reſumes its wonted ſerenity; and the ſun looks out and ſmiles. "Then are they glad becauſe they "be quiet; ſo he bringeth them unto their deſired haven."

But perhaps their hardſhips and ſufferings are not yet at an end. As his home riſes before him, the joy of the mariner is checked by the ſolemn conſideration, that trouble is not peculiar to the ocean, that diſeaſe and death are always at work, and that every day produces changes of its own. In this various life, indeed, it ſometimes happens, that they who go down to the ſea in ſhips are preſerved from the dangers of their profeſſion, to meet ſeverer affliction on the ſhore. The family and relations whom they left in health, and whom they expected to embrace in gladneſs, dwell in the houſe of mourning. The eyes that were wont to brighten at the ſignal of return, are cloſed in death; and the heart which overflowed with gratitude in the hour of reunion, is covered with the clods of the valley. The habitation of domeſtic joy is dark and empty; the voice of kindneſs which chid the long, though involuntary abſence, is ſilent; and the tender affection which ſhared in every viciſſitude of fortune, and called for the whole ſtory over and over, no longer ſweetens the bitterneſs of grief, or heightens the tranſport of joy. The unexpectedneſs of ſuch an event, and the ſudden tranſition from the elevation of hope to the depth of affliction, makes this ſtroke fall heavy on the head of the mariner;

But

But it is one of the calamities incident to the ſeafaring life, and ought to concur with the reſt in impreſſing ſailors with an abiding ſenſe of their abſolute dependence on God, and of his great goodneſs in ſaving them from ſo many dangers, and viſiting them ſo ſeldom with ſuch afflictive diſpenſations.

From this ſhort and imperfect view of the perils of navigation, I now proceed to offer ſome obſervations on the ſentiments and conduct becoming ſeamen. And here, ſurely, I may be allowed to aſk in the firſt place, what returns of veneration, obedience, and gratitude are not due from thoſe who are ſo peculiarly under the care of God, and ſo ſignally preſerved by his providence ?

We have all received ſo many bleſſings from the goodneſs of our Maker, that we are bound to love and to ſerve him ſo long as we have any being. But the ordinary tenor of his providence is ſo beneficent, and in common life the gifts of his liberality come ſo much as it were in the common courſe of things, that we do not generally perceive and acknowledge the hand of the giver. We are only awakened to conſideration and gratitude by ſingular and ſtriking interpoſitions of mercy ; and however unthankful we may be for our daily preſervation, and the neceſſary bleſſings of life, we all agree that perſons who are expoſed to imminent dangers, and who meet with ſurprizing deliverance, ought to teſtify their dependence by an exemplary piety, and to expreſs their gratitude by public acknowledgments.

In juſtice to human nature, it muſt be allowed that this ſentiment has a perceptible influence on the conduct of thoſe who have concerns at ſea. Conſidering that element as hoſtile to human life, and taking it for granted that it muſt require the peculiar care of providence to preſerve the mariner, and to proſper the buſineſs which is tranſacted in ſhips, we find that a guarded manner of expreſſion, and a more than ordinary ſhew of piety diſtinguiſhes the converſation of the ſober part of ſailors. The ſame thing may be remarked in the forms of inſurance and agreement reſpecting ſhipping. The ſupremacy of providence is devoutly acknowledged by the contracting parties ; and phraſes expreſſive of dependence on the divine will, occur more frequently in their covenants, than in other writings of a ſimilar nature. Actuated by the ſame ſentiment, it is common for thoſe who venture on enterprizes not exempted from danger, without any public, and frequently it may be preſumed without any private ſup-

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plication for the divine assistance and protection, to request the prayers of the Church before they proceed to sea.

On that turbulent element men live under the impression and the awe of a superior. They are encompassed with a sky which blackens contrary to their expectation, and find themselves at the mercy of winds and waters over which they have no controul. The sense of fear is almost inseparable from such a situation; it is excited by the grand display of power, by the magnitude of the danger, and the active solicitudes of self-preservation. Amidst the workings of the deep we look up with awful reverence to that invisible arm, which rules the most active elements with as much ease as the most inert. This sentiment is so natural to the human mind, that we find the prophet Jeremiah employing it with great effect in his expostulation with the disobedient Jews. "Fear ye not me, saith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my "presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the "sea by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it; and though "the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not "prevail, though they roar yet can they not pass over "it!*"

But though the fear of God, worked into the mind by the manifestations of his power, ought always to operate as a restraint from offending him, yet it is a transient as well as an illiberal emotion, and cannot safely be trusted as the guide of conduct. Better principles ought to guard the virtue, and prompt the obedience of the Christian sailor. You have heard of the long suffering patience of God, and of his goodness in the Gospel; you have cried to him in trouble, and been delivered, and when he makes you to dwell at ease, will you forget his mercy, or your obligations to gratitude? In the season of tranquility, it is your duty to cherish the remembrance of the protection that was extended to you in the hour of dismay, and to let that remembrance give fervour to your piety, and firmness to your obedience. It is your duty to dedicate the life which God preserved from the proud waters to religion and holiness, to cultivate the spirit of devotion, to attend the public worship of your preserver, and to publish what he has done for your souls in the presence of your brethren. These duties are forcibly and pathetically recommended in the text, "Oh that men would "praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful "works to the children of men! Let them exalt him also

 "in

* Jer. v. 22.

" in the congregation of the people, and praiſe him in the " aſſembly of the elders."

By ſuch rational and manly conduct you would unſpeakably promote your comfort and peace of mind. A ſtedfaſt truſt in God, and a devout dependence on his providence, would arm you with courage and conſtancy for all the labours of your profeſſion. Genuine piety would purify the imagination from viſionary terrors, and caſt out every fear but the fear of doing wrong. Shadowy preſages, evil omens, and unlucky days, the reliques of ancient ſuperſtition, at which the uninſtructed ſailor ſtill trembles, would no longer be regarded with cowardly dread; things that are indifferent would ceaſe to give birth to anticipations of diſaſter; and all the varieties of appearance in the ſea and the ſky would be viewed without apprehenſion. Safe in the divine protection, and ſure of a friend in the ruler of the ſtorm, even amidſt the wrath of the elements, the pious mariner would poſſeſs his ſoul in patience, and act in the very face of death with that calm ſerenity which is ſo uſeful in deſperate caſes. Animal courage is an uncertain quality, dependent on circumſtances, and apteſt to fail when needed moſt. At any rate, no rigidity of nerves, or boldneſs of natural temper, can beſtow that real bravery which ſprings from a good conſcience, and from the confidence of ſafety. In the hour of trial to unaſſiſted nature the value of true piety is fully proved. " God is our refuge and ſtrength," ſay the good, " a " very preſent help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear " though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be " carried into the midſt of the ſea. Though the waters " thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains ſhake " with the ſwellings thereof.*"

In the 2d place, let me admoniſh thoſe who frequent the ſea to beware of an unprofitable and pernicious ſin, to which from example and inconſiderateneſs they are much expoſed, not to ſay addicted; I mean the ſin of profane ſwearing.

In order to preſerve on the mind of his creatures that awful reverence which is due to the majeſty of his perfections, and that inviolable ſanctity which is eſſential to the obligation of an oath, God commanded by an immutable law, that his holy name ſhould not be taken in vain.

There is a ſolemnity and ſtrength in the penal ſanction of this precept which ought never to be forgotten. " Thou " ſhalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for " the Lord will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his name " in vain." Now,

* Pſalms xlvi. 1.

Now, if we attend to our feelings in ordinary life, we will find that it is natural for ourſelves to be extremely jealous of the manner in which our name is mentioned. All nations have ſhewn a wonderful delicacy on this ſubject, and the very ſtructure of language bears witneſs to the ſolicitude of mankind to avoid offence by rudeneſs in addreſſing the preſent, or a diſreſpectful uſe of the names of the abſent. Indeed there is no expreſſion of contempt more mortifying, than the unceremonious and ſcornful uſe of our name. Even between equals the uneaſy emotion which this incivility produces is very pungent; it brings the fluſh of indignation into the face, embitters our reſentments againſt an enemy, and occaſions at leaſt a temporary diſguſt with a friend. But if it is unſeemly and improper for a man to uſe the name of his fellow in a familiar and diſreſpectful manner, how infinitely more unſeemly and improper muſt it be for creatures to proſtitute and abuſe the name of their Creator, to make it the burden of their converſation, and to degrade it as a kind of expletive in the chaſms of their diſcourſe? Other ſins, as has often been obſerved, may have their temptations and their alleviating circumſtances, but for this ſin there is no apology. Neither pleaſure nor profit can reſult from the profane habit of taking the name of God in vain. Even when uſed as an aſſeveration, perhaps the moſt plauſible pretence that can be alleged for the impious practice, it defeats its purpoſe, and inſtead of adding credit and authority to the relation it was meant to corroborate, uniformly excites a ſuſpicion and diſtruſt of the deſigns of the narrator. A perſon of good faith needs no atteſtation to the truth of his report, and an army of oaths will not give credit to the lips of a liar. From theſe obſervations we may learn, in part, the criminality of profane ſwearing, and the reaſon why God will not hold them guiltleſs who are addicted to it.

The habit implies a culpable want of reverence for his divine majeſty, and a determined ſpirit of diſobedience without the proſpect of reward; it deſtroys the practical regard which is due to the ſupreme object of religious worſhip, and weakens the ſanctions of an oath, the laſt bond of truth and civil ſociety.

Beſide all this, ſuch as follow the ſea ought to recollect that profane ſwearing is peculiarly unſuitable to their defenceleſs condition. Your calling, as has repeatedly been ſtated, is full of hazard, and in the time of need no other arm but God's can ſave you from deſtruction. Be exhorted

then to respect in the day of quiet that holy name which you must invoke when at your wit's end. Be not wicked over much; and cease to imprecate on every trifling occasion the wrath of the Almighty, lest you so far provoke his indignation, as to make him fulfil at your latest hour the most terrible denunciation in the scriptures. "Because ye have set at "nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof, I "also will laugh at your calamity and mock when your fear "cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your "destruction cometh as a whirlwind.*"

In the 3d place, Remembering the difficulties of your profession, and the accidents to which it exposes you, be admonished to be temperate and sober in all things.

It would exhaust your patience, and require a volume to enumerate the evils which are occasioned by drunkenness. That stupifying vice is equally pernicious to the body, the mind, and the worldly interests of those who surrender themselves to its power. But beside the long train of direct evils which it never fails to produce, it also operates as an inlet to every species and degree of wickedness. The drunkard has no command over himself, and in the paroxysms of intoxication is equally liable to perpetrate the vilest or the most atrocious crimes. "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who "hath contentions? who hath wounds without cause? They "that tarry long at the wine."

The scriptures compare the state of a drunkard on shore to that of a person who lieth down in the midst of the sea, or of one that sleepeth on the top of a mast. But how much more imminent is the danger on that devouring element? The mariner needs a clear eye and a steady hand: All his faculties are necessary to him; for when the ship is under sail there is no time to rectify mistakes, and in general the inadvertence of a moment is punished with immediate death.

It is painful to recollect how great a number of sailors, in the midst of their vigour and usefulness, are annually lost to their families, their friends, and their country, by this debasing vice. Surprized in the frenzy or the insensibility of drunkenness, they are carried without a moment's preparation to the judgment of God, to give an account of their life, and of the defenceless condition in which they allowed themselves to be cut off in the midst of their days.

This consideration is awful, and ought to have its weight with drunkards. But perhaps it is unnecessary to expostulate

* Prov. i. 25, 26, 27.

late with them on the folly and danger of their conduct; for among the other effects of that deſtructive habit, this is not the leaſt alarming one, that it generally acquires ſuch a complete aſcendancy in the end, as to become almoſt, if not altogether, invincible. Let ſuch then as are yet unenſlaved rejoice in their ſobriety, and be thankful to God for his preventing and reſtraining grace. Let them hold faſt their integrity in this inſtance, and determine to avoid, ſo long as they live, all approaches to drunkenneſs, with as much care as they would avoid the worſt evils that can befal them.

Laſtly, to ſobriety and temperance it would be your wiſdom to add moderation and frugality.

The life you lead is a rough and laborious one, and your wages are hardly earned. Much painful work muſt be performed, and many an inclement night ſpent on the watch, even in the courſe of a proſperous voyage. Hence it is obvious that the duties of the naval profeſſion require health, and ſtrength, and an unbroken conſtitution; at the ſame time it is plain that theſe duties neceſſarily ſhorten the duration of that period in which only they can be borne. Severe exertion, want of regular reſt, and increaſe of anxiety and ſuffering in the worſt weather, with frequent and ſudden changes of climate and proviſions, undermine the conſtitution, waſte the principle of life, and produce a premature old age. Accordingly it has often been remarked, that there are in compariſon but few grey-headed ſailors, and that in the evening of life a perſon of that profeſſion can give but a ſorrowful account of the companions of his youth and his voyages. In the ſame ſhip the ſucceſſion of crews is rapid, though the owners remain unchanged; and few ſailors, in proportion, continue fit for ſervice to the time of their death, when that event is produced by the gradual decay of age. If theſe obſervations are juſt, it follows of courſe that even independent of accidental calamity, a long ſeaſon of inaction lies before the mariner, which muſt be comfortable or uncomfortable according to the prudence or imprudence of his conduct while in the receipt of wages.

Hence reſults the obligation ſo peculiarly incumbent on ſailors to be ſaving of their gains, and to provide in the time of health and ſervice for the helpleſſneſs of infirmity, and the wants of old age. Unfortunately, however, in ſpite of ſenſe and reaſon, the ſpirit of prodigality and waſtefulneſs has long been regarded as one of the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics of the ſeafaring life; and from the number and the arts of thoſe

who

who are interested in encouraging it, and from the generosity of nature from which it is of purpose supposed to spring, it has been sanctioned by custom, and is now almost converted into a professional habit.

Sailors no doubt have many and strong temptations to run into extremes in conduct. The restraints to which they are subjected on ship-board are removed when they reach their harbour; and it is wonderful in how short a space the impressions of the voyage are obliterated. As the visions of sleep are dispersed by the light of the morning, so the ideas which occupied the mind at sea are scattered by the sight of the shore. Fatigue and fear are no longer felt; vows are forgotten with the perils which produced them; and from the very abstinence of their life, sailors rush upon forbidden pleasures with all the hunger of appetite.

In these intervals of service they heed not the storms that are past, nor the approaching miseries of being at once friendless, and indigent, and old. By an oath and a jest they banish serious thought, and take courage in dissipating the wages which ought to support and cheer their declining days.

But in the end they suffer severely for their misconduct. When discharged as no longer capable of service, they have neither resource nor asylum. Estranged from their friends by the nature of their employment, and wholly unqualified for the ordinary labours of life, they are forced to cast themselves upon the charity of the public. The condition of the mendicant poor is always humiliating; but when there is a presumption that the beggar's poverty has been occasioned by his vices, his solicitations excite little compassion, and even his importunity extorts but scanty alms.

There is no other way of avoiding such wretchedness, but by avoiding the folly and extravagance which produce it. Be it then your fixed purpose to act a rational and sober part. Not that I would harden your hearts against the entrance of pity, or shut your hands against the claims of distress. Exercise compassion and beneficence, only guide your affairs with discretion. Live by principle, and prescribe to yourselves an honourable œconomy. Cherish no superfluous desires, and incur no unnecessary expence, that if accident or growing infirmities should disable you for service, it may be in your power to retire to some decent station, in which the last years of life may be useful and happy.

But here you will naturally recollect that this is not the whole of the provision which it becomes you to make for the future.

Provision ought to be made for a family

At every sea port a charitable fund ought to be established for the relief of the distressed

future. Melancholy and uncomfortable were the ſtormy voyage of human life, if it conducted us to no ſafe haven of peace and of joy. But beyond this ſea of trouble there is a harbour of everlaſting reſt. The inconveniences and evils which diſtreſs us here have no exiſtence in that unclouded region; the wind and the waves are ſtill; the danger of ſhipwreck is over; the condition of the good is happy beyond conception; and their happineſs will have no end. Is it not of the firſt importance then to be ready, if we may be allowed the expreſſion, for this final embarkation? In this ſublunary ſtate every thing is uncertain. Our labours may be fruitleſs and our preparations vain, for death and judgment only are fixed and unavoidable. Be it therefore your firſt and chief care to make your peace with God according to the terms of the Goſpel. Conſider your ways, and repent of your ſins; pray for the forgiveneſs of God through the interceſſion of Jeſus, and for the grace of his ſpirit to keep you from falling in the time to come. Give not ſleep to your eyes nor ſlumber to your eyelids till you have made ſome progreſs in this moſt needful work; and when you have once heartily begun it, you may go down to the ſea in ſhips and do buſineſs in great waters in the calm and in the ſtorm, in peace and in war, knowing that God is your ſaviour, and that under his protection no laſting evil can befal you.

"And now, Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the "word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to "give you an inheritance among all them which are ſancti-"fied.*".

* Acts xx. 32.

Marine societies should be careful to have copies of this sermon to distribute gratis — or rather to sell at an advanced price to the sailors — the surplus to go to the charitable fund. It remains yet to be shewn how much good might be done, if those who assume the tone and gesture of masters, not to say of tyrants were to become as it were the fathers & the friends of their men &c.

3

THE

PERILS OF THE TIME,

AND THE

PURPOSES FOR WHICH THEY ARE APPOINTED.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED

On the laſt Sabbath of the Year 1794,

AND

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE HEARERS.

BY ANDREW BROWN, D.D.

MINISTER OF THE PROTESTANT DISSENTING CONGREGATION OF HALIFAX.

HALIFAX:

PRINTED BY HOWE AND M'KINSTRY, CORNER OF GEORGE AND BARRINGTON STREETS, OPPOSITE THE PARADE.

M DCC XCV.

TO THE HONOURABLE

THOMAS ANDREW STRANGE,

Chief-Juſtice of His Majeſty's Province, and Preſident of His Majeſty's Council of Nova-Scotia, &c. &c. &c.

SIR,

IN delivering the following Sermon to the preſs, at the deſire of a loyal and generous Congregation, I embrace, with heart-felt pleaſure, the public opportunity afforded me of expreſſing my affection for your perſon and character.

MOTIVES of eſteem and ſentiments of gratitude, have prompted me to inſcribe with your name, a diſcourſe, the object of which is to expoſe the evils of anarchy, and to concur with divine providence in maintaining the great cauſe of religion, government and order. But had not theſe perſonal conſiderations determined my choice, the unanimous voice of an approving people would moſt certainly have directed me to offer that tribute to the preſent Chief-Juſtice of Nova-Scotia, whoſe ability in expounding our laws can only be equalled by his impartiality and firmneſs in applying them; whoſe adminiſtration has repreſſed the ſpirit of litigation, ſhortened the duration of ſuits, and made a happy Province feel, in the moſt ſenſible manner, the benign influence of the Britiſh Conſtitution, and the glorious ſecurity of Engliſh law.

IN an age that peculiarly needs the weight and authority of religious example, Chriſtianity is pleaſed to rank you,

with the Hales and Talbots of former times, among the Select Band of her enlightened Friends. Amidst the scoffings of infidelity, the acquisition of such a disciple is a consolation and a triumph. Your professional habits give a pledge to the public that you have embraced the Gospel on mature examination of its evidence, and a rational conviction of its truth; while the incorruptibility of your heart assures us that no secondary considerations mingle with your piety, or affect your observance of religious duty.

With the purest regard,

I have the honor to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

ANDREW BROWN.

HALIFAX, *Jan.* 1, 1795.

HALIFAX, *December* 31, 1794.

REVEREND SIR,

WE, the Elders and Committee of the Proteſtant Diſſenting Church, ſenſible of the duty incumbent on all men to notice the dealings of Divine Providence towards them, more eſpecially in thoſe ſeaſons when great commotions prevail in the world, to trace their cauſes with becoming ſubmiſſion to the Divine Will, as far as may be conſiſtent with that humility which ought to diſtinguiſh the Chriſtian from the mere philoſophic enquirer; and to improve ſuch direful events as have ſo lately diſturbed the peace and repoſe of Chriſtendom to the furtherance and ſupport of piety and virtue: Having heard with great ſatisfaction your Sermon on the laſt Lord's Day—wherein the occurrences of theſe later days, with the conſequences actually flowing from them, and thoſe which may be yet apprehended, were ſtated and improved to the ſupport of Chriſtian Morality; and conceiving that the publication of that Diſcourſe might prove uſeful: Do, therefore, in behalf of ourſelves and the Congregation at large, requeſt the favor of your conſent to it's being publiſhed, and, in order thereto, hope you will indulge us with a Copy for the Preſs.

We are,

Reverend Sir,

Your faithful Friends

and obedient humble Servants,

BENJAMIN SALTER	COMMITTEE.	JOHN BROWN	ELDERS.
THOMAS AUSTEN		BENJAMIN BRIDGE	
WILLIAM ANNAND		ADAM FIFE	
ALEX. BREMNER		PETER M'NAB	
WILLIAM DUFFUS			
GEORGE GRASSIE			
THOMAS FILLIS			

Reverend Dr. ANDREW BROWN.

SERMON.

II Tim. iii. 1.

THIS KNOW ALSO, THAT IN THE LAST DAYS PERILOUS TIMES SHALL COME.

IN the ordinary courſe of things time ſteals away unheeded. The occurrence of the hour engages attention, the laws of nature operate in ſilence, and ſeaſons revolve without reminding us that the year is on the wing.

Yet there are ſtated periods and particular days which call us to conſider the unceaſing progreſs of time, the rapidity of its departure, and the events it has brought to maturity. In the ſucceſſions of duration whatever term is ſet apart to an appropriate purpoſe, and returns at a given ſeaſon, becomes remarkable and intereſting. It rouſes us from our uſual ſtate of indifference, and is productive of ſerious thought. Such is the concluſion of one year, and the commencement of another. For as in common life we cannot take a laſt leave of an old acquaintance without a mixture of melancholy and regret, however careleſsly we may have met and parted in the daily intercourſe of ſociety; ſo however inattentive we may have been to the ſmaller portions of the year, we cannot bid farewell to the year

itſelf

itſelf without emotion. At the approach of its laſt day the mind is awakened: We reflect that ſo many more of our appointed months are paſt, and cannot be recalled; that hopes and fears, pleaſures and pains, once intereſting, are gone forever; that our probationary ſtate is ſo much nearer its concluſion; and that we are about to enter on an untried being, concerning which our experience can give us no definite information.

Throughout the Chriſtian world, this ſeaſon of the year is particularly hallowed from the relation it bears to the birth and appearance of the Saviour of men. Hence to that ſpirit of ſocial feſtivity, which has probably been derived from the ancient ſaturnalia, it has been cuſtomary, in many churches, to add pious celebrations commemorative of the happy æra of the Meſſiah's reign, and to encourage charitable collections, as moſt expreſſive of the rational and beneficent joy of Chriſtian worſhip. In all religious communities ſome notice is taken of the memorable events which diſtinguiſh this annual epoch, of the reflections which the peculiar aſpect of the times is fitted to produce, and of the leſſons of inſtruction it ought to inculcate. During my miniſtry I have not been inattentive to the influence of times and aſſociations on the human mind. In former ſermons at this ſeaſon, I have recounted the ſignal revolutions which paſt years have accompliſhed, dwelling with devout joy on the fulneſs of time which witneſſed the Saviour's incarnation, and liſtened to the ſong of the angels in the fields of Bethlehem. At this ſeaſon I have alſo preached on the unceaſing flux of earthly things, on the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of human life, on the importance

of

of our ſpiritual intereſt, and the ſolemn warning given us by the expiring year to be mindful of our end.

On this laſt ſabbath of another year, when a dark cloud overſpreads the earth, I purpoſe to lead your thoughts to the perils to which the cauſe of religion, government and mankind is expoſed in the preſent conflict of nations, parties and opinions.

The diſcuſſion of political intereſts and of the factions of the world, it is true, belongs not to the pulpit of the Chriſtian miniſter; and you will bear me witneſs, that I have not often allowed public tranſactions to give a colouring to religious inſtruction. Diſapproving, as I do in general, of the practice of political preaching, the news of yeſterday, the paſſions of to-day, and the hopes and fears of to-morrow, have been induſtriouſly excluded from this ſacred place. The doctrines and duties of the Goſpel of peace, thoſe eternal truths of immutable obligation, that can give birth to no diverſity of ſentiment, and are wholly of a practical nature, form the ſubjects of our meditation in the houſe of prayer; and by animating you to acquit yourſelves as candidates for heaven, I have hoped to be able to guide you to a virtuous and manly conduct in your public and private ſtations on the earth.

Nevertheleſs, an occaſional and diſpaſſionate conſideration of the affairs of the world, as ordered by God for the correction and inſtruction of the nations, can ſcarcely be repreſented as incompatible with the ſpirit of Chriſtian worſhip, or the object of religious inſtruction. From the magnitude of the intereſts which they involve, the preſent times challenge particular notice; and when ſo many miſchievous arts are employed to poiſon the popular mind, the

expoſed condition of their flocks, demands from Chriſtian miniſters whatever ſhall be thought neceſſary for information or conducive to ſafety.

In our remote ſituation and comparative inſignificance in a political view, we may perhaps ſuppoſe that we are in no degree concerned in the general convulſions of the earth. Secure in this idea, many of us have poſſibly never turned our thoughts to the nature of the preſent war with the anarchy of France, or to the conſequences that would inevitably follow the ſucceſs or failure of the national arms. Yet ſurely a well informed judgment is always deſireable in itſelf, and always of uſe for the regulation of conduct. The loweſt of us too, ought to recollect that his intereſt is eſſentially concerned in the fate of his country, and that he muſt take his full ſhare of her proſperity or adverſity.

Let us then contemplate the object of the war ſtill raging with unabated violence, that we may view it with proper ſentiments; that we may offer our prayers to God for its termination with an underſtanding heart; and learn from the events we are witneſſing, the leſſons that they are calculated to teach.

To give our meditations on this ſubject a proper extent, I ſhall 1ſt. Endeavour to explain the peril of the times.

2dly. Point out the probable reaſons for which God has made the times ſo perilous, and the moral effects which he intends them to produce.

After which I ſhall direct your attention to our own exiſting condition in this part of the Empire, as ſuggeſting the devouteſt ſentiments of gratitude to our inviſible, but beneficent Preſerver.

1. Let

1. Let us consider the peril of the present times. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."

Engrossed with the objects that claim our attention, magnifying present interests, and regarding those dangers which threaten our repose as of extraordinary consequence to the world, we are always liable to err in applying particular prophecies to the age in which we live. Yet in assuming it as a fact, that the present times are perilous, and *that* in the fullest sense of the text with its illustrations, I am not afraid of incurring the reproach of perverting scripture by any one who shall attend to the reasons on which this application of it is founded.

From a variety of causes however, men seem to be less alarmed at the present portentous aspect of human affairs, than the importance of the blessings now at stake can well justify. In part, no doubt, this culpable inattention to the signs of the times, arises from the ordinary apathy of human nature, and in part from a relaxed morality, a growing hardness of heart, and from certain peculiarities in the manner of representing the subsisting struggle between the nations, which have operated on public opinion with a most unhappy influence. But the peril of the times is only so much the more formidable, in proportion as its extent and proximity are not seen by the great body of mankind. A phial of wrath has been poured upon the nations, and well might the dispensing Angel, as the drops began to fall, cry woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth!

In our own case it may truly be said, that the present conflict is the most important in its principle, and will be the most decisive in its consequences of any national quarrel

that ever demanded the unanimity and vigour of Britons, ſince the foundation of the monarchy. Prior to its commencement, various circumſtances had occurred to enlighten mankind on the ſubject of Civil Government, and to carry the ſpirit of liberty to a greater height than it had ever before attained. At the opening of their Revolution, the attentive world watched, with anxious expectation, the deliberations of the aſſembled Repreſentatives of the French people. Even their hereditary enemies looked on with pleaſure and approbation, while temper and wiſdom ruled their councils, and led them in the path of moderation and juſtice to ſubſtantial reform. But the progreſs of their proceedings ſoon excited very different ſentiments. Of theſe, however, it is neither my deſire, nor compatible with my deſign, to give an hiſtorical detail. Suffice it here to obſerve, that having taken leave of reaſon, juſtice and liberty; having murdered their King, abjured their God, and ſubverted all the wiſe inſtitutions of policy, which neceſſity and experience had contrived to enſure the ſtability of nations, the perſons exerciſing the executive Government of France, declared their country in a ſtate of permanent revolution, and let looſe the incalculable force of a population of twenty-ſix millions, not to revenge or prevent injuries; not to reclaim rights detained by injuſtice, or to defend poſſeſſions invaded by the luſt of dominion; but to propagate their political ſyſtem, to enforce the approbation of their outrageous proceedings, and to reduce other nations to the ſame ſtate of violence and miſrule into which they had plunged their own.

This atrocious conduct neceſſarily ſprang from the ſpirit of the new principles, which are incompatible with juſtice,

order

order and tranquility at home, and with the exiſtence of any regular Government on the face of the earth. Yet with a Dæmon's purpoſe, the anarchy of France aſſumed an Angel's form. Affecting to be the aſſertor of univerſal freedom, it offered fraternity to an aſtoniſhed world. Emboldened by the general ſentiment of popular favour, which in the beginning had operated ſtrongly on their ſide, the French levellers meditated the accompliſhment of their nefarious deſigns by cajoling the good into a deceitful tranquility, and employing the bad as inſtruments to ſtrike a univerſal blow. Hence the leaders of the Convention placed their firſt dependence on the power of ſophiſtry; and before they declared war againſt the nations which diſapproved their meaſures, they reſolved to ſeduce the great maſs of the people to their party. For this purpoſe a legion of apoſtles was levied among the clubs, to preach the varying doctrines of Paris in all the languages of Europe; while the grand maſters of falſe reaſoning were put into a ſtate of requiſition to proclaim the age of anarchy from the preſs. This plan of diſſeminating their politics embraced the whole community of mankind. They who could read learned the favoured ſyſtem from books, and they who had only ears to hear were taught it by the aſſiduity of very zealous miſſionaries. When hoſtilities commenced, the ſame inſidious arts were continued. With murder in their hearts and daggers in their hands, the French anarchiſts proteſted that they had no controverſy with the people whom they attacked, but only with the tyranny of their rulers. Quitting the practice of fair war, and converting every appearance to their miſchievous purpoſes, they repreſented the general combination of European

pean powers, which their unqualified attack on the existence and rights of every independent nation had produced, as a conspiracy of kings and despots against liberty, a confederacy of privileges and orders against reformation, and of opulence and feudal tenures against the establishment of equality and the rights of man.

Much has been spoken and written in proof of these positions, by the secret emissaries and avowed defenders of the French Revolution. And when we consider the natural attractions of their doctrines, the splendid, but deceitful colouring, of which they are susceptible, and their wonderful conformity to the desires and wishes of the poor, the unfortunate, and unprincipled of every country, it will cease to be a matter of just surprize, that they should have gained a multitude of converts, even in the bosom of the happiest government that ever blessed a people.

Yet the malignant design with which they were obtruded on the world, ought to have guarded mankind against their pernicious influence. By the specious sophistry of their bulletins, declarations and addresses, the French demagogues hoped to inspire their own people with the ardour of enthusiasm, and to persuade them that they were going forth, as the soldiers of liberty, to fight unwilling slaves, to rid the earth of oppression, and to confer blessings on the conquered. From the pamphlets of their emissaries they expected other effects not less important. They trusted that they would be successful, in exciting insurrections, and in ranging the governors and the governed on different sides in the progress of the dispute. The splendid professions, and shameless misrepresentations of the French

anarchists,

anarchiſts, ought therefore to be regarded as parts of the effective force, by which they endeavour to circumſcribe the operations of their enemies, and to enſure the accompliſhment of their own ſchemes of ſubverſion.

For when conſidered in a juſt point of view, the preſent war can in no reſpect be called a war of kings, orders, or privileges, however much it may ultimately affect their exiſtence. It is a war of juſt defence againſt uprovoked aggreſſion, of order againſt confuſion, of law againſt licentiouſneſs, and of the good againſt the bad. Witneſs the patrons and promoters of the new doctrines throughout the world. The worthleſs and abandoned of every nation are now in arms, openly countenancing, or ſecretly abetting the Pariſian ſyſtem, not from a love to the French, but from the hope of renewing, in conſequence of their ſucceſs, thoſe ſcenes of plunder and revenge in their own country, which have been the reward of their crimes. Hence this war involves our deareſt rights, and every object that can make life either ſafe or deſireable.

The danger of fair defeat on the field of battle, is the leaſt of the evils with which it threatens us. *Our Conſtitution is in peril.* The favourite ſaying of the leaders of the Convention, that the Republic of France muſt periſh, or the Monarchies of Europe come to an end with the century, announces, with ſufficient preciſion, the danger to which, in this conflict, our national eſtabliſhments are expoſed. Were ſucceſs to attend the arms and the machinations of anarchy, the ability of the French nation to aſſiſt thoſe who profeſs the ſame principles, and worſhip the ſame idols in other countries, would be inconceivably increaſed; while on their part the deſire of imitating a ſucceſſful example would pro-

bably

bably be excited beyond the poſſibility of reſtraint. In ſuch a caſe the attempt, at leaſt, would be made, to introduce the ſyſtem of equality into other countries, and to ſeize the ſpoils it offers to the hand of rapacity. Other Egalite's and other Mirabeau's, other Briſſot's and other Condorcet's, other Robeſpierre's and other Danton's would lead on the gang of inſurgents and aſſaſſins. Health and fraternity, proſcription and the guillotine, would reſound from ſhore to ſhore; and in other lands, as well as in France, the months would be marked with new days of carnage and mourning.

Religion is alſo ſtaked on the iſſue of this conflict. If by the jealouſy and diſunion of the Allied Powers, and the diſpoſition too apparent in ſome of them to count the expence of the war with a miſer's niggardlineſs, France were to gain her meditated aſcendancy in Europe, Chriſtianity would be diſgraced for a ſeaſon. Every thing venerable would be denounced by the frantic orators of the day. The temples in which our fathers worſhipped would be polluted by vile proceſſions; and plundered of every precious monument, would either be thrown open to the winds and rains of heaven, or ſhut up in the gloomineſs of night. Nature, liberty, and the rights of man would be proclaimed as the divinities of the human race; or the ſtill ſtranger gods of Robeſpierre: and the tenth day would again claim the unhallowed worſhip of a proſtrate world. Secularized and diſhonoured, the miniſters of religion would be proſcribed with the moſt unfeeling cruelty, and expoſed without a refuge to all the miſery of their fate,—as no generous government would remain to receive them to its boſom, to relieve their wants, and dry their tears, as the Gallican clergy found in Britain, on the day when their country thirſted for their blood.

In ſuch a wreck, morals, order, and every ſalutary inſtitution would inevitably periſh. During the reign of anarchy, when the people, *i. e.* the unprincipled and ſanguinary are ſupreme, the bonds of ſociety are diſſolved, and all the malignity of the paſſions rages without controul. The milk of human kindneſs is curdled by fear. Perſonal and party intereſts become the ſole concern of each individual; and in purſuing them the moſt violent meaſures are always preferred, as being moſt ſafe and ſummary. In ſuch a ſtate of things there is neither ſecurity nor enjoyment. Every one ſtands on the brink of the precipice, and trembles for his life. This irritability of mind naturally tends to the increaſe of crimes. Pity is baniſhed from the breaſt of the public actors. All muſt proceed to the utmoſt length in the ſervice of their party. Life ceaſes to be an object of regard; death is inflicted on the ſuſpected; and in the midſt of apparent gaiety, a name, a ſound, the watchword of the day, becomes the ſignal of aſſaſſination.

Such is the nature of this war, and ſuch are the perils with which it is attended. It ſtrikes not only at national independence, and at the exiſtence of government, law and religion, but at the life and happineſs of every individual of the human race. Hence, in a general view, it is not the war of one country more than another, but of the whole body of mankind. It is the war of every community that has either a civil eſtabliſhment, a code of law, or a ſyſtem of religious faith. It is the war of every good man, of every father, every brother, and every friend. Whoever has a talent, a property, or a comfort on the earth he would call his own, has an intereſt in this war. Upon the reſult of it, the peace of the preſent and the hopes of the next generation greatly

depend. And yet, in the midſt of this common peril, many nations appear to be quite unconcerned; while ſome, miſled by falſe principles of policy, or a ſordid regard for ſelf intereſt, moſt prepoſterouſly cheriſh in their boſom, the ſerpent that will ſting them to the heart.* 2. From

* Seeking no prophetical paſſages in the books I conſult, I pay very little attention to random gueſſes reſpecting the future Yet at the diſtance of Nova-Scotia, and in a moment of anxiety with regard to the turn which public opinion might take in Great-Britain, I read, with painful emotion, the following paragraph in a ſermon of Archbiſhop Tillotſon, on John xii. 35—"Walk while ye have the light; leſt darkneſs come "upon you." "I remember," ſays that accompliſhed Preacher, in the illuſtration of his text, "there is a very odd paſſage in Mr. Herbert's po-"ems, which, whether it be the prudent conjecture and foreſight of a wiſe "man, or there be ſomething more prophetical in it, I cannot tell, it is "this:"

'Religion ſtands on tiptoes on our land,
'Ready to paſs to the American ſtrand.
'When Seine ſhall ſwallow Tiber, and the Thames,
'By letting in them both, pollute her ſtreams,
'Then ſhall religion to America flee,
'They have their times of Goſpel even as we.'

"The meaning of it," adds the Archbiſhop, "is this, that when the "vices of Italy ſhall paſs into France, and the vices of both overſpread "England, then the Goſpel will leave thoſe parts of the world, and paſs "over to America, to viſit thoſe dark regions, which have ſo long ſat in "darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death." Fol. ed. v. 3. p. 587.

Fearing for a moment, as I peruſed this quotation, that the revolutionary tribunal was eſtabliſhed in my country, and the blood of the beſt of her ſons in a ſtate of requiſition; and expecting at the ſame time nothing but unanimity and wiſdom in the people of America, I thought it not improbable, that many of the victims of loyalty and the conſtitution might eſcape the edge of the guillotine, and bring a valuable addition of knowledge and piety to the foreſts of this hemiſphere. But that period is paſt, and things appear in a different light. Union and co-operation are a pledge of ſafety to Britain; while the friends of peace and order are left to wiſh that America had as fair a proſpect.

In the infatuation of the times, it was not ſurpriſing that the arts of deſigning men, and the falſe animation produced by clubs ſhould have prevailed on a few private individuals, of perverſe ambition or deſperate fortune, to join in the black conſpiracy againſt religion, government and property. But that the bulk of a nation ſhould in any degree have favoured ſuch a cauſe, is truly aſtoniſhing. And I join my regrets to thoſe of the wiſe and good in the United States, that the Anglo-Americans have incurred this reproach, by ambitiouſly fraternizing with French anarchy, and manifeſting a determined reſolution to promote its intereſt, and ſhare its fate. By this conduct they appear to have involved themſelves unneceſſarily in the perils of the time, and to have ſuſpended in ſome meaſure their future ſtability on external and contingent events over which they can have little controul.

2. From this dark and troubled ſcene let us turn to the conſideration of the probable reaſons for which God has made the times ſo perilous, and of the moral effects which he intends them to produce.

At a period of ſo much action and event, it would ill become a ſhort-ſighted mortal to determine beforehand what may be the preciſe purpoſes which God is carrying forward amidſt the diſtractions of the earth. Yet from his character and perfections, as moral Governor of the world, we have no reaſon ultimately to deſpair of the cauſe of religion and virtue. The preſent generation is threatened with a ſevere correction; national eſtabliſhments are in danger of being overturned, and the powers of darkneſs may be let looſe for a time: But amidſt the ſtorms of political revolution, the ſhipwreck of human inſtitutions, and the violence of wicked men, the bark of Chriſtianity rides ſecure. "Why do the "heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing! The "Kings of the earth ſet themſelves, and the rulers take "counſel together againſt the Lord, and againſt his anointed, "ſaying, let us break their bands aſunder, and caſt away "their cords from us. He that ſitteth in the heavens ſhall "laugh; the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion!"*

The Father of light and mercy never ordained impiety and anarchy to be perpetual among men. No proviſion is made for their permanence, and when they have ſerved their purpoſe, they muſt prepare the blow for their own extermination. As in the natural world tempeſt and thunder, the inundation and the earthquake, purge the elements, and give ſerenity and ſalubrity to the atmoſphere, ſo the preſent convulſions in the moral world will in like manner

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* Pſalms ii.

purify the hearts of men, and reſtore health and tranquility to the nations. During their paſſage both are dark and deſtructive, but in their effects both are good and ſalutary.

Theſe reflections naturally ſuggeſt the double purpoſe for which Divine Providence ſends calamitous diſpenſations to the earth. In part they are penal, and in part monitory and corrective.

1. The judgments now abroad in the earth ought to be regarded as partly penal; and they ſhew, where they have fallen moſt heavily, that abuſes and wrongs, irreligion and immorality will not be tolerated for ever.

To refer calamitous events, and eſpecially thoſe which proceed to exciſion, to the diſpleaſure of the Deity, and to repreſent them as at once the proof and the puniſhment of incorrigible guilt, has been the general practice of mankind under every religious diſpenſation. But in particular inſtances ſuch an interpretation of the Divine judgments is as unjuſt as it is uncharitable. The tower of Siloam did not fall on the worſt men that lived in Jeruſalem; nor were the Galileans, whoſe blood Pilate mingled with their ſacrifices, ſinners above all the Galileans, as the rigour of their fate might have led a ſuperſtitious obſerver to ſuppoſe. The truth is, that in the allotments of life the puniſhment of the wicked is wholly inviſible. One event happens to the juſt and the unjuſt; the application which conſcience makes to perſonal deſert, conſtitutes all the difference. In their diſtreſſes the good ſubmit to the will of God, and are ſuſtained by their integrity; while the bad ſee in their calamity an inviſible avenger, and ſink under the weight of their puniſhment.

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It is therefore only the conſcience of the party concerned, that can ſafely determine with reſpect to the object and deſign of the afflictive diſpenſations of Divine Providence. The world at large is incompetent to decide on the caſe, and to ſay in times of viſitation what judgments are for trial, and what for puniſhment. In general, indeed, it may be laid down as a fundamental principle, that in the adminiſtration of Providence, we ſee not the correction of bad men, but of bad meaſures; not the puniſhment of ſingle acts of iniquity; but of a long ſeries of iniquitous acting.

Without doubt the terrible calamities which have lately been deſolating France, and which by her inſtrumentality have been extended to other countries, were commiſſioned in part to ſcourge a guilty age for the groſs corruptions which univerſally abound, and for the growing boldneſs of profaneneſs and immorality. Yet in the awful diſpenſations ordained by God for the cure of thoſe diſorders, the good ſuffer with the bad, and frequently merit and virtue themſelves prove the occaſions of ruin. Still the leſſon is forcibly written, even in the blood of the righteous, that in the end national vices will draw down national puniſhments; and that the recorded crimes of rank and office will be viſited on thoſe who ſucceed to them, though chargeable with no vicious exceſs in their own conduct. How well do theſe obſervations apply to the events of that diſtracted country to which they more immediately relate? If there were abuſes and oppreſſions in the Royal Government of France, the expiation has been a coſtly one, and of all the kings who ever ſat on the throne of that monarchy, He who ſuffered for them, leaſt deſerved his fate. The voice of Europe proclaims, with firm and general accord, that the

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royal government was not abuſed by the will and conſent of the mild but unfortunate Louis, who, ſtruck by the axe of miſguided citizens, fell lamented by all good men. By the confeſſion of his murderers he fell, not ſo much for his perſonal offences, as for the tyranny of former kings, and the exactions of former miniſters. Accordingly he fell at his poſt, with an approving conſcience, with falling order, and a falling country.

If the nobles of France were imperious and unfeeling, the leaders of a giddy capital in all kinds of diſſipation, and auſtere and oppreſſive among their dependents, they too have ſuffered to the full extent of their miſdoings. They have been caſt down from their ſplendid ſtation, ſtript of their poſſeſſions, and driven into exile ; and none can tell when they may be reſtored to their country and their dignities.

If the Gallican clergy taught that Chriſtianity conſiſted in the belief of metaphyſical or myſtical doctrines, and in the practice of ſuperſtitions and unprofitable ceremonies, they alſo have made an atonement. Driven from their home, their habitation has been rendered deſolate ; and they ſit down by the rivers of a foreign land, and weep when they remember Zion.

But gladly leaving this part of the ſubject, which I deſire to touch with all tenderneſs, I think we may ſee in the univerſal ſweep of rank, order, and eſtabliſhments, in France, the obvious puniſhment of more oſtenſible faults ; namely, of the want of principle and energy, and of an incurable ſpirit of jealouſy and diſunion in the hereditary guardians of a nation.

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The band of nobles, clergy and enlightened men, engaged in one cauſe, with one binding intereſt to connect them, who ought to have ſtood and fought together, *the immortals of their country*, * were divided in ſentiment, and deſtitute of leading plans of operation. Looſely cemented, they ſhewed their want of vigour and integrity on the firſt attack of the democracy. Falſe men deſerted their ſtandard, and by thinning the ranks increaſed the irreſolution of their order. At this criſis the councils of the monarch were guided by a feeble and injudicious hand; and to avoid all controverſy with the repreſentatives of his people, the king was moſt unfortunately adviſed to diſband his nobles and clergy, by incorporating them with the third eſtate.

Retaining the jealous ſpirit of their caſt, after their political exiſtence was terminated, and actuated by a kind of judicial blindneſs, the privileged orders ſeem in ſucceſſion to have viewed each other's degradation with a ſecret ſentiment of pleaſure, and without ever once adverting to the certain ruin which this abſurd conduct was preparing for themſelves. When the Aſſembly robbed the clergy of the patrimony and the honours of the church, the nobility appear to have looked on with ill concealed ſatisfaction; anxious only to retain and extend their own privileges, and not caring how far the other claſſes might be depreſſed in the ſcale of influence. But ſcarcely was the altar ſtripped of its ornaments, when hereditary diſtinctions were diſcovered to be cumberſome, unjuſt, and impolitic; and the people of property and wealth, without titles, rejoiced in their turn to ſee the proud monuments of nobility deſtroyed. Deprived of its main pillars, the tottering throne was next hurled from its baſe, and

* Alluding to the Roman legion of that name.

and the men of letters and perſonal accompliſhments, without property, who formed expectations of riſing on the wings of popularity to office and authority, congratulated each other on this memorable event. But their triumph was likewiſe of ſhort duration. Having loſt their guardian and diſpenſer, the laws loſt their influence, and talents and letters ſhared in their degradation. The inferior claſſes continuing to riſe, in irreſiſtible maſſes, levelled all diſtinctions, till in the end the moſt worthleſs of the Convention, ſupported by all the miſcreants of the nation, became the ſovereigns of the ſtate; and of the life and property of the inhabitants.

But from the paſt we may venture to predict the future. "For if they do theſe things in a green tree, what ſhall be "done in the dry."* If the errors and offences of monarchy, rank and ſtation, have been ſo grievouſly corrected, what may not the nameleſs atrocities of anarchy expect? The conflagration rages, but the matter which feeds the fire ſhall itſelf be reduced to aſhes.

Even thoſe dire events, which we can only deplore, may have their uſe. Of diſunion and corruption, of the want of energy and ſyſtem, in the fate of France, let all the governments of the earth ſee and fear the end.

It was obſerved in the IId. place, that the judgments of God are to be regarded as monitory and corrective; and without doubt thoſe which have lately awakened the attention of mankind, will be productive in the end of a variety of good effects. Three of theſe I ſhall venture to mention, aſſigning the reaſons which have induced me to expect them.

And

* Luke xxiii. 31.

And 1ſt, Whatever may be the immediate reſult of the ravages of anarchy in France, and of the war for revolutions in which ſhe has involved the world, I am perſuaded that the events which have already happened in the courſe of her affairs are fitted in their nature, and partly intended by Providence, to expoſe the hollow pretenſions of ſceptical philoſophy, and to give all the modifications of deiſm a deadly wound.

It would be a ſubject of curious and inſtructive ſpeculation to trace, with fidelity and diſcernment, the origin, progreſs, and ſucceſſive views of the ſect of free-thinkers, from their firſt appearance in Europe, to the execution of their favourite projects of political and religious reformation in the government of France.

In the beginning they were modeſt, temperate, and reſpectful to religion. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, whom they claimed as their founder, was a virtuous man; but many of his followers embraced his doctrines on other conſiderations than thoſe of their tendency to enforce his example. For a while however, the boldeſt and moſt licentious among them were compelled to keep meaſures with public opinion. Fettered in their purſuit of innovation by the unanimity of mankind on religious ſubjects, the champions of the cauſe began their attack at a diſtance, and under the diſguiſe of friendſhip. Profeſſing an eſteem for Chriſtianity, and a deſire to unite her more cloſely with reaſon, they complained of the empire of prejudice, the bondage of authority, and the improper reſtrictions impoſed on the exerciſe of thought; aſſerting what ought never to have been diſallowed, the abſolute freedom of private judgment, the common intereſt

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which mankind have in moral ſpeculations, and the conſequent right of promulgating opinions by means of the preſs.

Having gained theſe neceſſary points without much oppoſition, the party proceeded to enlarge its views, and to meditate conqueſts of ſtill greater importance. In this ſpirit its advocates aſſumed the right of doubting of every thing, and extolled above all other merit that of free-thinking; by which was meant the practice of calling into queſtion every ſeparate article of revealed religion, and of embracing or rejecting it, not on the foot of its appertaining to a grand ſcheme of divine truth imperfectly underſtood, the general evidences of which were nevertheleſs invincible; but on the narrower ground of its own plainneſs and comprehenſibility, or the ſtill more ſlippery foundation of their vague notions of the majeſty of the divine nature, or the dignity and wiſdom of the divine government.

By enflaming the pride of human reaſon, and affecting to ſubject the ſublimeſt myſteries to its deciſion, the free-thinkers ſucceeded in perſuading the ſuperficial and preſumptuous to adopt this new mode of trying the detached parts of ſcripture hiſtory. Having thus ſapped the foundations, they concluded that the ſuperſtructure might be attacked with ſafety, and immediately began a furious war againſt all the received ſyſtems of Chriſtian doctrine. Under the inſidious pretence of extirpating ancient prejudices, the work of the nurſery and the ſchool, or of artful and impoſing prieſts, they indulged themſelves in the moſt virulent abuſe of the Chriſtian inſtitute; and laboured to turn the very character and virtues of its Author into contempt, whoſe immaculate purity and divine benevolence had till

then

then been the ſubject of unwilling eulogium, even among thoſe who had rejected his miſſion with expreſſions of diſlike.

At this period all the departments of literature were invaded by the partizans of infidelity; and productions of ſcience and books of amuſement, the ſtudies of the grave and the paſtimes of the gay, were artfully converted into vehicles of their principles. The pomp of eloquence, the poignancy of wit, and the obſcurity of metaphyſic, were impreſſed into this ſervice; and no mode of ſeduction that could captivate the weak, or ſurprize the unwary was left untried. Meanwhile, the friends of Chriſtianity were not inactive. Engaged in a glorious cauſe, they made an honourable defence. The principles and evidence of divine revelation were placed in a conſpicuous light; the oſtentatious reaſonings of its enemies were refuted; and their malignant and diſingenuous arts expoſed in all their odiouſneſs. But in ſpite of the moſt ſtrenuous efforts, the poiſon ſpread more widely than the antidote. The impotent attack was circulated with avidity, while the immortal defence was conſigned to the duſt of the library. Vanity and affectation co-operated with licentiouſneſs in recommending the cauſe, and multiplying the converts of infidelity. Embracing the ſceptical ſyſtem, which offered a commodious apology for the diſorders of their conduct, with gratitude proportioned to their obligations, the higher ranks of ſociety deſerted the ordinances of the goſpel, and gradually laid aſide the profeſſion of religion. To the faith of proſelytes, the frothy and the petulant were ambitious of adding the merit of apoſtles; while the more prudent unbelievers enjoyed their new liberty in ſilence, and ſtill

affected to reſpect the pious uſages of their country. Abandoned by the rich and faſhionable, the church continued for a ſeaſon to be a refuge to the poor and afflicted. But in time the lower orders learned to deſpiſe, in their heart, thoſe religious obſervances which they ſaw their more enlightened ſuperiors treat with unreſerved contempt. Copying their example with perverſe ingenuity, they joined in the ridicule poured upon their clergy, and regarded every ſcandalous ſtory which reflected on the church or the ſacred office, as an invaluable piece of hiſtory which could not be too carefully recorded, or too extenſively known.

Glorying in the general and deep impreſſion which their labours had made on the public mind, the high-prieſts of the party could not longer conceal their exultation. Keeping no meaſures with that religion over which they had gained ſuch diſtinguiſhed advantage, they aſſumed the tone and authority of maſters; they proclaimed their victories; and boaſted of the number, unanimity and influence of the illuminated, and of the grand moral reformation they were deſtined to accompliſh.

The awe of public opinion being once withdrawn, the adverſaries of religion avowed their ſentiments and projects with leſs reſerve. Amidſt the indifference and depravity of a degenerate age, Chriſtianity was publicly renounced by many in the upper ranks of life, and a ſpeculative deiſm, in no reſpect diſtinguiſhable from actual atheiſm, was ſubſtituted in its room.

Having in a great meaſure loſt their uſe, religious eſtabliſhments were expoſed to all the rancorous malignity of the ſceptical philoſophers. Their opulence attracted cupidity,

dity, and their defencleſs ſtate provoked inſult. Churchmen were now repreſented as a burdenſome and unneceſſary race, a tax on induſtry, and a bar to improvement. No longer protected by the ſanctity of their function, or the veneration of their people, they were ſecretly devoted to deſtruction, and a favourable opportunity was ſought for executing in the utmoſt extent the deadly decree which had gone forth againſt them.

In France where theſe diſorders had proceeded to the greateſt length, a ſeries of very ſingular events brought into action the wiſdom and policy of the ſelf-created guides of the world; and during the laſt five years they have given mankind a memorable ſpecimen of the bleſſed and glorious times they promiſed to introduce.

The ſceptical reformers of the French nation entered on their office with declaring every mode of faith and worſhip equally free. Indifferent about all religious inſtitutions themſelves, they left the faithful for a time to the direction of conſcience, and the worſhip of the God of their fathers. But this indulgence was not long continued. Senſible that the adherents to the ancient doctrines were the moſt determined enemies to the new ſyſtem, they proſcribed Chriſtianity, and enſnared its miniſters by peſtilent oaths. It is not competent for me to relate what followed, but from the general tenour of the affairs of France ſince its rulers abjured religion, the leaſt inſtructed of mankind, I ſhould conceive, may be enabled to inſtitute a compariſon between the effects of genuine Chriſtianity, and of that ſublime Philoſophy which was to regenerate the human race. To this teſt the enlightened Chriſtian will reſort with unaffected confidence.

dence. Almoſt eighteen centuries have now been bleſſed in the faith and hope of the goſpel. Soon after its propagation it enlarged the bounds of human knowledge, diſperſed the clouds of ſuperſtition, and gave men conſiſtent notions of the Deity, and of that religious ſervice which he requires from his reaſonable creatures. It likewiſe improved the ſyſtem of morals, by extending the obligations of beneficence, reſtraining the vindictive paſſions, and inculcating a pure doctrine of ſelf government. Adding eternity to time, it explained, with the moſt exact preciſion, the connection which ſubſiſts between this life and the next, and taught the virtuous and penitent to expect beyond the grave, in regions of uncreated light, a perpetual progreſs in wiſdom and happineſs.

But no ſooner had the ſceptical philoſophers uſurped the powers of legiſlation than theſe elevating hopes were ſhipwrecked, and dark and barbarous ages reſtored. Amidſt the inceſſant praiſes of reaſon and philoſophy, the arts of civil life were neglected, and ſtrife and anarchy prevailed. The worſt paſſions of the worſt perſons rioted without controul. Piety was driven into exile. The priſons were crouded with victims; new modes of trial and execution were invented; and under the direful agency of a murderous tribunal blood flowed in a continual ſtream.

Nor were theſe only temporary evils occaſioned by the tumult and violence of a revolution. They are inſeparable from the nature of the new principles, and would mark their rule to the world's end. Illiberal, intereſted, unfeeling; conſidering this life as the whole of exiſtence, and death as an everlaſting ſleep, the ſceptical ſyſtem propoſes only one

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claſs of objects to the avidity of its votaries. It propoſes ſafety and ſelf-aggrandiſement as the end of life; and deſtitute of all reliance on the Governor of nature, and holding man accountable for no part of his conduct, it not only juſtifies but approves the purſuit of them by all means, even the moſt atrocious. Hence, inſtead of reſtraining, philoſophy has let looſe the ferocity of the ſelfiſh and vindictive paſſions, and for the goodneſs of God and the ſpirit of heaven, to which Chriſtianity taught the faithful to aſpire, it has ſubſtituted the rage of hell and the malignity of demons.

The conſequences reſulting from the new order of things being once completely unfolded, bewildered men will ſee the neceſſity of conſulting their ſafety by reverting to their ancient guides. The goſpel, which moderates the paſſions of the rich, and ſupports the virtue of the poor, will again command attentive conſideration; and this is all it aſks for an effectual reception among men. The more it is examined the greater clearneſs and force will its evidence acquire; and to all the arguments in its favour which paſt ages have furniſhed, will be added thoſe alarming ones derived from the bloody hiſtory of the French revolution.

Reverencing that pure and peaceable religion to which they have been indebted for their ſafety, the nations which have maintained its authority will be more firmly attached than ever to its doctrines and inſtitutions. Chriſtianity will thus be reſtored to new credit and influence. The vain babblings of philoſophy will be conſigned to everlaſting perdition. Men will reject with deteſtation all the modifications of deiſm, and be ſolicitous to eſtabliſh in their country, in their houſes, and in their hearts, the genuine doctrines of the Croſs of Chriſt.

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In the gospel reign an age of darkness has always been followed by more resplendent light. Christianity derives fresh lustre from a temporary obscuration, as the sun emerges with renewed brightness from the gloom of an eclipse.

2dly. I am also persuaded that the transactions which have lately engaged the observation of a reflecting age, are calculated to produce a lasting conviction of the indispensable necessity of public and private virtue, as well as of a public and private profession of Christianity, to the prosperity of states, and the peace of society.

In those countries where the ordinances of the gospel are still frequented, long have public instructors taught, though with too little efficacy, that without the practice of virtue the individual can have no solid comfort in life, and no gleam of hope at the hour of death. Often too have the scriptures repeated in the audience of kings and legislators, that righteousness exalteth a nation, but that sin is a reproach to any people. In the calamitous events of the present time, God appears to have been enforcing the same truths, in a new and more impressive manner. Facts have lately demonstrated that where conscience and the world to come have lost their authority, not only enjoyment but existence is in danger. In a corrupt society there is no protection for property, character, or life. Destitute of morals, the more accomplished any people may be, the more outrageous do their excesses become. Their sciences and arts extend their ability of doing mischief, while their manners only add to their power of seduction. Among faithless men the most solemn obligations lose their force. No tie can bind the unprincipled; and in such a state of things even oaths are

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engines of deception. In the French revolution thefe truths have been moft awfully illuftrated. The infecurity of all combinations not founded on virtue and fortified by principle, has been clearly feen in every change of meafures and of men. Intereft has proved a fallacious bond; for in tumultuous times as popularity fhifts from faction to faction, the intereft of to-day is always liable to prove the caufe of to-morrow's downfal. Confederacies formed on the bafis of party and plunder have alfo betrayed their perilous nature; for on the fall of a party each of the members is impatient to purchafe his own fafety by impeaching the reft, and furnifhing all the fecret information in his poffeffion to accelerate their ruin. Faith and honour, truth and juftice, gratitude and humanity, depend entirely on the moral fenfe, which being blunted or corrupted, they lofe their hold on the heart, and become empty and infidious names.

It is indeed not matter of fuppofition merely, that the prefent diforganizing rulers of France themfelves, began to be convinced of the reality and importance of thefe fundamental principles; and that, ftanding with fearful triumph on the recent graves of their unpitied victims, it is among their moft anxious endeavours of the day, to provide for their own fecurity, by the re-eftablifhment, if poffible, of law and order among a difbanded and raging people. Striking condemnation of the fyftem they have been propagating! Precarious hope to be realized in their favour, whofe crimes have tended to extinguifh its object throughout the civilized world!

3dly. I am likewife inclined to hope, that the crimes and horrors which have followed the fubverfion of government in France, and the uncontrouled licentioufnefs of a favage democracy, will evince the abfurdity of impracticable fchemes of political reformation, and difpofe the common

people to be ſatisfied with thoſe meaſures in which it has pleaſed the founder of nations to combine perſonal freedom with public ſecurity.

The ability of man to execute falls far ſhort of his capacity to conceive. The leaſt inſtructed in ſociety may poſſeſs ideas of perfection, which the moſt liberal minds ſhall labour in vain to realize. While our active power is reſtrained by the frailty of our nature, the reſiſtance of other men, and the eſtabliſhed order of things, our imagination is left unſettered to embelliſh our being, to heighten our conceptions of moral excellence, and to afford us a ſolace in trouble. Hence though we may innocently indulge ourſelves in forming theories of imaginary happineſs, we cannot ſafely propoſe theſe theories as the guides of conduct. In the ſummer's heat, or the winter's cold we may tranſport ourſelves, in fancy, to a delicious region, where the happy native breathes an invigorating atmoſphere, without being oppreſſed by any of the elements. But at the end of the reverie we muſt be content to ſubmit to the neceſſity of our ſituation, and to act as the inhabitants of a variable climate. For did we proceed on the ſuppoſition, that to will a perpetual ſpring were ſufficient to effect it, we ſhould find ourſelves wofully miſtaken. Without regarding our volition, the ſun and the ſeaſons would purſue their ancient courſe, and bring the uſual extremes of intemperature, the more difficult to bear, as we had made no proviſion to encounter them.

The caſe is exactly the ſame with reſpect to our political condition, whatever ſtate empirics may ſay to the contrary. While we dream of the privileges and joys of higher worlds, if we are wiſe we will ſubmit to the laws of mortality. In every ſtage of our being we are the ſubjects of diſcipline, more or leſs ſevere according to the ſtrength and influence of our reaſon or our paſſions. The child is doom-

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ed to reſtraints which are not impoſed on the man; and the bad are cut off by penal ſtatutes which do not in the ſmalleſt degree affect the good. But even in the beſt condition, we muſt live in a ſtate of coercion. While men retain their nature, there muſt be checks on liberty, ſanctions to enforce the obſervance of law, and puniſhments to correct the violation. Perfect freedom is compatible only with perfect reaſon and perfect goodneſs, and not to be coveted in a mixed and diſordered community, expoſed to the arts of the flagitious, and the ebbs and flows of tumultuary paſſion.

Upon the ſame principles, notwithſtanding all the improvements that may be introduced into human affairs, there muſt be inequalities and diſtinctions in ſociety: Diſtinctions and inequalities which might no doubt be remedied, if by the decree of the Almighty they were not productive of ultimate and neceſſary good which cannot be obtained without them. To meditate the eſtabliſhment of equality then, that ſplendid deluſion of the preſent age, the viſion of the weak, and the pretext of the wicked, is in fact to meditate war againſt God, and the primary laws of creation. Regularity and beauty, harmony and the univerſal whole, reſult from the exiſtence of inequality. In heaven itſelf there are thrones and dominions, principalities and powers. In the firmament there is one light of the ſun, and another of the moon, and the ſtars differ from each other in ſtation and brightneſs. The ſame beautiful analogy is obſerved in all the productions of the earth. Carry the leveling ſyſtem to the foreſt, what havoc would you be compelled to make among the faireſt of the trees? In ſociety inequality is juſt as natural as in the foreſt, but productive of much more ſalutary effects. Without inequality what would become of the neceſſary diſtinctions of parent and child, maſter and ſcholar, the employer and the employed!

Even on the moſt moderate ſyſtem, an abſolute equality of perſons and property cannot be effected without murder and devaſtation, and, from the unalterable courſe of things, the day on which it was introduced would ſee it ſubverted.

While the affairs of France expoſe the abſurdity and madneſs of viſionary plans of political regeneration, they may alſo give a ſolemn and uſeful warning to rulers and the people, to beware of raſh experiments in government; to guard againſt the progreſs of deluſion in a community; and to reſiſt the fanaticiſm of projectors and the frenzy of inſurrection, as they would reſiſt the grand ſcourges of the human race, plague, peſtilence, and famine. Happy! if they ſhall teach the ſubjects of Britain in every quarter of the globe, the ineſtimable value of their conſtitution, which unites ſo many perfections with ſo few defects, and prevents ſo much evil at the expence of ſo little good. Happy! alſo if they ſhall inſpire them with unanimity and vigour to maintain it as their birth-right and beſt inheritance, and to ſeek no improvement or melioration of their political condition, ſave under the firm protection of its laws, and in the temperate uſe of thoſe juſt expedients which have been deviſed in the wiſdom of its proviſions.

Such my brethren, in my humble opinion, are ſome of the purpoſes of correction and inſtruction for which the late diſaſtrous revolutions have been ordained by God: And I am ſtrongly inclined to believe that until theſe leſſons be effectually inculcated, there will not be an end to the troubles of the earth. Should therefore the admonitions already given prove inſufficient to ſubdue a licentious and intractable generation, juſtly may we fear that more grievous admonitions will be added to the number, until awakened by the divine judgments, and chaſtened by their own diſorders, the reſidue of the nations ſhall liſten to the voice of Providence; and learn ſubmiſſion to its appointments. But

But leaving the future to the merciful diſpoſal of that beneficent Being who does not willingly afflict the children of men, let us contemplate with gratitude his moſt unmerited goodneſs to our nation. How different is our political ſituation from our public demerits? Notwithſtanding the luxury and diſſipation of our people, we have hitherto been preſerved from the peculiar miſery of the times. Foreign war, though a proof of divine diſpleaſure, and a ſevere correction to a ſinful people, is not to be compared with the ravage and deſolation inſeparable from a revolution, or the ſtill more horrid enormities of a permanent anarchy. When the brave man bleeds on the bed of honour, compaſſion ſheds her tear, and the ſcar is glorious. When the good man falls in the cauſe of his country, a grieving nation bleſſes him in death, and bids the column riſe to perpetuate his memory. But when kings and queens, when the noble, the wiſe, and the good, are led to execution amidſt furies, and faces covered with crape, when the earth drinks up their blood, and no murmur of diſapprobation aſcends to heaven, humanity ſhudders, and we hate the nature that is capable of ſuch depravity.

In our public exigencies we have alſo the pleaſure of reflecting, that in this conflict our country ſuſtains a diſtinguiſhed part. Our armies go forth under the banners of government, law and religion, not in purſuit of victory and conqueſt, but of peace and ſafety for a diſtracted world. We ought even to remark, but not without the moſt unfeigned thankfulneſs to the ſupreme diſpoſer of events, that the perils of the time ſeem to have made a ſalutary impreſſion on the minds of our countrymen. The value of our conſtitution appears to be better underſtood; the importance of religion and morals is more generally acknowledged, and a ſpirit of unanimity gives vigour to the government.

But above all, my brethren, how ſingularly have we been protected and preſerved in this part of the empire, amidſt the alarming diſpenſations of Divine Providence? The ſpecialty of our caſe can hardly have eſcaped the notice of the

the moſt inattentive obſerver. While every year changed the proſpect or the peril of the times, it produced ſome event ſo ſeaſonable in its occurrence, and ſo ſalutary in its conſequences, that it deſerved to be regarded as deſigned on purpoſe to prolong our tranquility—a conſideration which will apologize, I truſt, for a more minute recollection of domeſtic affairs than would on any other occaſion be ſuitable to this place.

And here I flatter myſelf we have not yet forgotten that when a malignant epidemic deſolated the capital of a neighbouring nation, and reduced the opulent city to the gloomy abode of terror and death, the health of our people was continued without interruption. Nay as if to place us beyond the reach of danger, a ſuperabundant harveſt in one of our ſiſter provinces * furniſhed us with an ample ſupply of proviſions. For the firſt time during many years our merchants were delivered from the neceſſity of having recourſe to the American market, and the country eſcaped all riſk of infection.

When towards the cloſe of the ſame year the apprehenſion of invaſion, with which we had been threatened for ſeveral months, became more alarming, deſtitute as we were in a great meaſure of Britiſh force, our reſources did not fail us. The citizens were firm and unanimous, and upon the firſt requiſition of aſſiſtance the country ſent to our defence a bold and hardy yeomanry, neither ſtrangers to arms, nor to that valour and intrepidity which render them formidable to an enemy. Meanwhile, without our interpoſition the deſigns of our adverſaries were fruſtrated by their own diſſenſions. God on high maintained our peace, and proved our protector.

In the courſe of the preſent year when our ſupplies were exhauſted, and the ſource from which we procured them had failed, by the vigilance and ſucceſs of the ſquadron appointed for our protection, we were again provided with plenty of wheat, and at a cheaper rate than the huſbandman could afford to ſell it on the field where it was raiſed. At home the province has been bleſſed

* Canada.

with

with an abundant harveſt, and hitherto even the mercileſs winter has appeared to reſpect the defenceleſs condition of our poor, by paſſing away with unuſual mildneſs.

To crown the ſingular felicity of our colonial ſtate, while ſophiſtry and ſedition have been buſily, and but too ſucceſsfully at work, in other parts of the empire, we have lived to this day in all concord and loyalty. No factions have divided our people, or diſtracted our government. Clubs and cabals are unknown in our ſettlements. No one has dared to accuſe another of diſaffection. There has not been an information, far leſs an impriſonment, in conſequence of ſeditious practices in any part of the country. Peace and unity have ſhed their happieſt influences over the province, and our King and our Conſtitution continue to be the objects of our dearest regard.

In ſuch a fortunate, may it not be ſaid in ſuch an enviable condition, are we not bound by all the ties of gratitude and duty to love and praiſe the Lord, and to walk uprightly in his commandments? No people were ever more highly favoured, or bleſſed with a better opportunity of becoming wiſe, and good and happy. Let not the kindneſs of Providence plead with us in vain. Enjoying ſafety in the midſt of danger, let us obſerve the diſpenſations of judgment to other lands, and apply the inſtructions which they deliver to our own improvement. In a particular manner let us beware of the prevailing vices which have produced the perils of the time —infidelity, licentiouſneſs, and a ſpirit of innovation.

And oh my friends, let not the parting admonition of the expiring year be loſt upon you! It calls you to the exerciſe of repentance, and to an immediate and effectual reformation of your conduct. It ſpeaks with earneſt voice on the importance of theſe duties, and you will not hear it ſpeak in this place again. The envious moments fly while we are talking of their ſpeed; arreſt them in their progreſs, and apply them to the buſineſs of your ſalvation. For though time be ſhort, remember that procraſtination is endleſs. Purpoſes of amendment indeed which indefinitely embrace

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an hereafter, embrace in fact a non entity. As the hereafter is not fixed, it cannot possibly arrive, though life were to be prolonged to its utmost term; and hence all good resolutions, not immediately carried into effect, are only the illusions of self-deceit. They quiet the mind for the present, and yield the fallacious hope of final security; but they daily grow weaker, and in the progress of life the reasons for neglecting them become stronger, while new reasons are continually added to the old. In proof of these observations, let me ask yourselves what are now become of the wishes, the resolutions, and the vows of past years? Are they not lost and forgotten with the events and impressions which produced them? Permit me also to inquire what reformation the passing year has effected. Have the licentious and profligate of the year ninety-three, become regular and virtuous in the year ninety-four? Has the miser ceased to worship his hoard; has the liar made his peace with truth, or have the dishonest become observant of justice? Have the careless grown considerate; the foolish wise, and those who had no sense of religion attentive to its duties? Alas! my brethren such changes never happen by chance, and are not to be expected without design and exertion. Cease then to be unreasonable. Seek not from accident what intention only can procure. Dismiss procrastination. Improve what remains of the departing year to make your calling sure, that the next may find you walking safely in the paths of pleasantness and peace.

Glory be to thee O God in the highest, and on earth may the perils of the time fulfil thy designs of mercy to the race of men! May their warning voice reclaim a guilty world, and prepare the way for the further propagation of the Christian religion! May every year as it revolves offer some new tribute of praise to thy Divine Majesty, and hasten the happy consummation of all things, when the kingdom shall be delivered up to thee, and when thou shalt reign one with thy son and thy saints in glory and blessedness for ever. AMEN.

LOVE OF COUNTRY

EXPLAINED AND ILLUSTRATED.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT MUSSELBURGH,

MAY 3. 1801,

BEFORE THE CORPS OF

ROYAL MID-LOTHIAN VOLUNTEER CAVALRY.

BY

ANDREW BROWN, D. D.

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF EDINBURGH,

AND ONE OF THE CHAPLAINS TO THE REGIMENT.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE CORPS.

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1801.

TO

THE LIEUT.-COL. COMMANDANT,

THE OTHER OFFICERS AND GENTLEMEN

OF

THE REGIMENT OF ROYAL MID-LOTHIAN VOLUNTEER CAVALRY,

THIS SERMON,

PREACHED IN THEIR PRESENCE,

AND PUBLISED AT THEIR REQUEST,

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

EDINBURGH,
4th *June*, 1801.

LOVE OF COUNTRY,

EXPLAINED AND ILLUSTRATED.

A

SERMON.

PSALM CXXXVII. 5, 6.

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

THIS pſalm holds up to our view an affecting picture of the condition of a people torn, by the hand of violence, from the boſom of their country, and reduced to ſervitude in a foreign land. By a few delicate touches it paints the diſtreſs of mind ariſing from captivity, and the gloom which it ſpreads over the whole field of human life. The ſun ſhone on the city of the Chaldee's excellency, but a dark cloud reſted on the diſperſion of Iſrael. Spring, that revives the powers of vegetation, and wakes

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through nature the voice of joy, returned ungreeted by the melancholy Jews. Summer, that completes the glory of the year, ſhed upon their dwellings no ray of gladneſs. By the rivers, where the natives rejoiced, they ſat down and wept when they remembered Zion. On the willow-tree their harps are ſuſpended; and it embitters all their grief, when, naming the place of their worſhip, the arrogant idolater requires them to gratify his curioſity with a ſpecimen of their ſacred muſic. This was to touch a chord in uniſon with their tendereſt feelings. It reminded them of the felicity of their nation in better days; of the ſplendour of their annual feſtivals; of the conſolation of their religious hopes; and it darkened, by the power of contraſt, the circumſtances of their preſent diſtreſs. Their children are nurſed in tears; their young men eat the bread of affliction; and their beauty is delivered into the enemy's hand:—but, more than all their perſonal or domeſtic calamities, they mourn the downfall of their country; and, more than all their perſonal or domeſtic intereſts, they ſeek the reſtoration of its honours. It was in Judea only that the promiſes of favour to their fathers could be accompliſhed. In Judea only could the throne of the kingdom be eſtabliſhed in the family of David; and in Bethlehem-Ephratah of Judah, was to appear Meſſiah the Prince, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the

glory

glory of Ifrael. Hence all their affections and all their hopes centered in their country; and even the few, whom the captivity had promoted to the favour of the great King, vowed, amidſt the magnificence of the court of Babylon, an inviolable attachment to the city of their fathers' ſepulchres. *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.*

The love of country, and the bond of a common intereſt, which endeared to the minds of the expatriated Jews the ruins of mount Zion, and taught them to appreciate the value of their civil and religious inſtitutions, it is ours, my friends, to contemplate, for the more pleaſing purpoſe of exciting us to encourage one another, amidſt an arduous conflict yet undetermined, to maintain, by piety and patriotiſm, the character and rights of our nation.

Let us then conſider the foundations of the love of country, and of a common intereſt in the human mind; the uſeful purpoſes divine Providence intended theſe principles to ſerve; and the reflections the ſubject may ſuggeſt to us in the preſent ſtate of our public affairs.

I. We

I. We are to conſider the foundations of the love of country, and of a common intereſt in the human mind.

The bond of connection between mind and body, and the wonderful mechaniſm by which ſubſtances ſo different in their qualities mutually influence one another, have not been diſcovered to man; and it is not likely that we ſhall ſoon be able to explain the curious proceſs by which material forms, preſented to the organs of ſenſe, not only convey to the thinking principle the perception of their exiſtence and ſituation, but touch the ſprings of memory, and call up paſt ideas. Of the fact itſelf we are not permitted to entertain a doubt. Even among the inferior animals, we find that the recollection of paſt ſenſations is intimately connected with the places in which they were produced. The impreſſions of fear, which were excited, in their imagination, at a particular ſpot, return on viſiting it a ſecond time, though the object of alarm be removed. We trace the operation of the ſame law in the firſt efforts of memory in the human mind. All our knowledge of nature is acquired through the medium of ſenſible objects, or from the leſſons of inſtruction; and it is only after a long and painful diſcipline that we are able to riſe from particular facts to general principles, and from the qualities of a number of

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ſeparate objects, to the laws of the orders to which they belong. For a conſiderable part of life we are directed, in our intercourſe with things external, by particular perceptions of what we have experienced to be pleaſant or painful to our feelings; and theſe perceptions are ſuggeſted to our thoughts, not by an act of volition, or any guiding foreſight, but by the preſence of an exciting cauſe. Hence the faculty of memory, as well as the power of ſenſation, connects us cloſely with the material world. Even in the maturity of reaſon, when our command over the mind is moſt abſolute, the livelieſt remembrance of events is awakened in the ſcenes which ſilently witneſſed them. As we tread, after years are departed, the inſpiring ground where we once were happy, every circumſtance of our former happineſs ruſhes on the ſoul. From the world of reality we are tranſlated, for the moment, to the world of memory. The diſtant return from afar; the dead ariſe from the grave; and every actor reſumes his part. Not a look is loſt; not a word is forgotten: in a place which is empty, in a place which has undergone, perhaps, material alteration, we live in departed time with departed friends, as if both were reſtored to exiſtence.

By the ſecret ſympathy which is thus eſtabliſhed between the human mind and the external objects

jects to which it has been accuſtomed, the habitation is endeared to the affections of the inhabitant. In the progreſs of life, the horizon which bounds our proſpect, the great objects which daily draw our attention, the field of our labours, and the ſeats of our repoſe, become, in ſome degree, a portion of ourſelves. The mind inſenſibly aſſociates them with its ideas and reflections; makes them a party in its pleaſures and its pains; and finds, in the materials which they furniſh, a local habitation for all its conceptions of beauty, of order, and of happineſs. When we grow old, theſe objects become the depoſitaries of our perſonal hiſtory, a kind of artificial memory which preſerves unbroken the tenor of our being. As the ſeaſons of the year paſs over them, we hold, with the varying appearances they exhibit, a melancholy, but pleaſing intercourſe. We recollect the ſucceſſive changes which have taken place in our condition: we recollect how we were affected by former viciſſitudes of nature, and all our ſenſibilities are revived. Surrounded by objects ſo dear to the heart, we find ourſelves at home, and number, with the ſevereſt trials of our pilgrimage, the hard neceſſity by which we are compelled to bid them farewell. Even criminals have been known to petition their judge, to ſubſtitute, for the pains of baniſhment, the puniſhment of death.

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Our ſocial and benevolent affections, which, in the order of nature, precede the influence of local relation, and increaſe its power, mature, in the human mind, the love of home, and form the bond of a public intereſt.

To our country we are indebted for our exiſtence, our preſervation, and all the comforts of life. There our parents were united in the bond of virtuous affection, and there, with unutterable tenderneſs, they watched over our weakneſs, wiped away our tears, and taught us to feel, to ſpeak, and to reaſon. There, in our infant boſom, they laboured to plant the principles of piety, and ſpent their ſtrength in unceaſing toil to provide for our eſtabliſhment in the world.

In the inſtitutions which the wiſdom and beneficence of our anceſtors founded, our minds were enlightened with knowledge, our powers received an uſeful direction, and we were qualified for public ſervice to the community.

In the freedom and enterpriſe by which our country is diſtinguiſhed, an unbounded field has been opened for the various profeſſions of cultivated life; and, under the protection of its laws, we ſurrender our hearts in full ſecurity to the endearments of friendſhip, and the affections of the domeſtic ſtate.

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In the peace of our country, we enjoy tranquillity: in its prosperity, our condition improves: and, by the rank which it holds among the nations, each individual finds himself raised into consequence.

To the means of improvement and happiness which our country places within our reach, the efforts and experience of many ages have richly contributed. To establish our liberties, our forefathers laid down their lives; to perfect our laws, the wise and the learned combined their labours; and, to secure our religious privileges, holy men watched and prayed, and resisted unto blood.

To all the interests, and all the obligations, which prompted their minds to patriotic exertion, we have succeeded. In our country is contained every object of our fondest attachment; and when our eyes shall be closed in death, there only can our children perpetuate our memory, inherit our acquisitions, and prepare the happiness of future generations.

Thus, the principle of self-preservation, the force of natural affection, the ties of friendship, the claims of gratitude, and every personal, and every public relation, unite their obligations to form the duty of patriotism. When our country is invaded, the danger is common; and common also is the call for

defence.

defence. If we have underſtanding to diſcern, ingenuity to contrive, or courage to execute, to our country they are due. If we have a heart, it pertains to our country; if we have hands, their nobleſt work is to uphold our country's liberties. To all other duties, then, the duty of patriotiſm is paramount; and he who is unfaithful here, has burſt the bands of every relation, and violated the ſanctions of the whole law. The man who ſhrinks from his country's danger, or declines the peril of her defence, has conſented, in his heart, to abandon his parents, to expoſe his children, and to ſell, for the infamy of a traitor, or the baſeneſs of a ſlave, all that is valuable in exiſtence.

II. Having thus traced in the human mind, the foundations of the Love of Country, and a common intereſt, let us next conſider the uſeful purpoſes Divine Providence intended theſe principles to ſerve.

By the conſtitution of the natural world, a great variety of ſoil, and climate, and ſeaſons, has been produced in different diviſions of the globe. Between the Tropics, the landſcape is rich in beauty: bloſſom and fruit meet together on the ſame tree; and benevolent nature, with unceaſing care, liberally provides for the comfort of life. In the temperate climates, the eaſy labours of Spring and Autumn

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procure, from a fertile ſoil, the means of ſubſiſtence. But, on approaching the polar circles, the heavens and the earth aſſume a ſeverer aſpect. The productions of the field fit for the uſe man are few in number. Night and cold predominate, and it requires, throughout the year, the unremitted efforts of attention and induſtry to collect the ſcanty means of ſupport.

In all theſe regions man was deſtined to exert his powers and form his character. By what expedient then has the Deity provided for the population of countries, requiring, in ſuch different proportions, the labours of induſtry, and furniſhing, in meaſures ſo unequal, the accommodations and ornaments of life? By what means has he reconciled to ſituations ſo various, and ſo oppoſite, one race of beings, influenced by the ſame general ideas of what is beautiful and good, and engaged in the purſuits of a common happineſs?

The Deity has ſecured theſe important purpoſes, by inſpiring men with an ardent, an invincible attachment for the place where they began their acquaintance with nature, and feaſted on the joys of youth. Had the endearing names of Country and Home been unknown in the language of men, or had their power over the human heart been eaſily

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overcome, what could have reſtrained an irritable race, ordained, in ſo many lands, to contend with hardſhips, from yielding to the impulſe of a reſtleſs and diſcontented mind? With no preference for any particular place, is it not likely, that, inſtead of profiting by paſt experience in the ſtations aſſigned them, and redoubling their diligence to attain future ſecurity, men would have ſought, under the impreſſion of unfavourable ſeaſons and diſappointed hopes, ſkies more clement, fields more fertile and fortune more propitious? But purſuing the ſame objects in the ſame tract, would not perpetual broils have afflicted their perpetual migrations? Striving at one time for a hill, and at another for a fountain of water, without a ruler or a judge, the ſtate of man had become, in ſuch a caſe, a ſtate of inceſſant and inveterate hoſtility, and the contending parties muſt have propoſed mutual extermination as the end of the conflict.

From the horrors of a fate like this, the love of home has ſaved the human race. By this ſentiment, men are not only reconciled, but even attached to the inconveniences and hardſhips of their condition. Meaſured by no degrees of latitude, this ſentiment is not affected by the felicity or infelicity of local ſituation. Cheared by its influence, the native of the drearieſt region enjoys the ſunſhine of his fleeting ſummer, and

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exerts all his ingenuity to fence, for the reception of his family, the dark apartments of his winter houſe. In the apparent wretchedneſs of his condition, he exults in his capacity of ſuffering, and in the independence of his mind on thoſe glittering vanities to which the ſupercilious ſtrangers who viſit his coaſt are enſlaved. He dwells among his own people; he traverſes the fields where his fathers earned their fame; and would not exchange his habitation for the proudeſt abodes of eaſtern magnificence.

The ſame ſtrong attachment to country, which diſtinguiſhes rude nations, is found among men in all the different ſtages of ſociety, and follows the natives of every climate to the ends of the earth. To whatever regions proſperity or adverſity may conduct the children of men, it is to the ſeats of youth that the imagination delights to return. Every cheriſhed idea of beauty or of happineſs is inſeparably aſſociated with the ſcenery of our native land. The ſun riſing in brightneſs reminds the emigrant of the morning light that gladdened the houſe of his father; and when he thinks of the ſweets of repoſe, the murmur of ſome far diſtant ſtream breaks on his ear. The fields where fancy wanders by day are occupied afreſh by the viſions of night; and hence, in the infancy of the European ſettlements, the ſingular fact which hiſtory has recorded,

corded, of a people *sleeping* in one hemiſphere, and *dreaming* in another.

No length of abſence, no ſucceſs in enterprize, and no favour with ſtrangers, can efface from the mind of man the love of his native country. Of all our affections this is the one which it is the moſt difficult to ſubdue; and when ſtrongly excited, it produces a ſtate of diſeaſe which, unleſs relieved by timely reſtoration to the healing influence of native ſcenes, conducts its victim to the grave.

Even amidſt the ſelfiſhneſs which we too juſtly aſcribe to the commercial ſyſtem, the wealth, for which Adventure croſſes the ocean and braves the dangers of every climate, is accumulated to purchaſe an inheritance at home. There the fortunate reſolve to eſtabliſh their families, and it gratifies the higheſt ambition of the father's heart to place his children under the protection of his country, and with its intereſt to connect their fortune.

Nor is the power of this ſentiment merely prolonged, unabated, to the laſt moment of life, in the breaſt of the emigrant and the exile; through them it is kindled in the boſom of their children, and of their children's children, though they never taſted the ſweets of the land of their fathers. When the

years

years of the captivity of Judah were numbered, and a new race returned to take poſſeſſion of mount Zion, the hiſtorian has recorded, that, when they reached the ſummit of the mountain from which they ſaw the ſeats of the glory and happineſs of their nation, they halted and wept. Modern times furniſh a ſtill more ſtriking example of the invincible power of this ſentiment. After the lapſe of three centuries, and a civil war which excited many reſentments, the Britiſh race, planted in America, ſtill deſcribe a viſit to this country, by the affectionate phraſe of "Going home," and to the dangers of the voyage this beloved idea reconciles their minds.

By this wiſe proviſion the Author of nature has preſerved the leſs hoſpitable climates from being abandoned by the human race, and has guarded the fairer abodes from being invaded, on all ſides, by a crowd of competitors in arms. The love of their country gives to every people the full enjoyment of their condition, ſaves them from the bitterneſs of diſcontent, and the miſeries of migration, and operates as a powerful incentive to induſtry and exertion. In oppoſing the unfavourable influences of climate, in remedying the defects of ſituation, in meliorating the ſoil, and rearing the village and the city, the energies of the human character are rouſed, the liberal arts are invented, and the light of

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ſcience dawns. In the progreſs of improvement, the aſperity of climate is ſoftened the productive powers of the earth are improved, and preparation is made for an increaſing population, and a more perfect order of things. *The wilderness and the solitary places rejoice, and the desart blossoms as the rose. The parched land becomes a pool: and a thirsty land springs of water. The inhabitants of the rock sing; they shout from the top of the mountains.*

The principle of attachment to country is alſo employed by the Deity to ſecure the diſtribution of mankind into nations, and to contribute, by that diſtribution, to the fulfilment of his gracious deſigns to the human race.

Accuſtomed, in the land of their fathers, the lot of their inheritance, to the ſame aſpect of nature, to the ſame change of ſeaſons, and the ſame round of labour, the mind of a people is caſt in a common mould. From ſituation and employment, from mutual intercourſe and the power of imitation, they gradually acquire a peculiarity of character. Their reflections flow in the ſame channel; they expreſs the ſame ſentiments by the ſame analogies and illuſtrations; they are pleaſed with the ſame imagery and deſcription; they contemplate the ſame characters and actions, with ſimilar emotions of admiration or contempt,

tempt, and form at laſt a common ſtandard of opinion, of taſte, and of morals. Hence the authority of national proverbs, the influence of national poetry, and national muſic, a common language, common laws, a public eſtabliſhment of religion, and all the ſympathies to which every heart vibrates thro' the whole extent of a country.

We behold the general arrangements of Providence fully eſtabliſhed: we perceive that they are ſimple in their principles, we feel that they are ſalutary in their operation; but ſeldom contemplate the depth of the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God, which they invariably diſplay. By what other means, for inſtance, but thoſe now mentioned, could the diſtribution of the human race into nations have been ſo eaſily, or ſo effectually ſecured? What other principle, but the love of country, could have tempered the jealouſies, reconciled the taſtes, and united the affections of individuals; produced among them the aſſociations and affinities which form the bond of a public intereſt, and preſerved by that bond, through all the viciſſitudes of proſperity and adverſity, the identity of the nation? From the love of country and the relations of which it is the origin, the body politic ariſes, graceful in its form, and perfect in its functions. Hence the head contrives, and the hands execute; every

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temper finds its place, and every talent its object. Hence the millions, of which a community is compoſed, are combined in all the labours of public and private life; hence, through the remoteſt diſtricts, the ſtrength of the ſtate protects the weakneſs of the individual, and peace, order, and comfort, pervade a happy land.

The plan of Providence, with reſpect to man, is remarkable for unity of deſign. A family has its intereſts, its rights, and its juriſdiction, and appears to be a ſmall ſtate, perfect within itſelf. A ſtate conſiſts of many families, and may be regarded as forming a great family, in which the rulers occupy the place and the power of parents. The nations of the earth, the community of mankind, compoſe a ſingle family, under the care of the common Parent, who orders their affairs on purpoſe to promote the general good.

By this diſtribution the peace of the earth is admirably ſecured, and the mutual communication of mankind greatly facilitated. Various centers of union, and mediums of intercourſe, are eſtabliſhed between the kindreds of the nations. Under the protection of public juſtice, the inhabitants of the moſt diſtant regions viſit one another with confidence, and know where to prefer the complaint of

violence, and where to apply for the redreſs of wrong. Meanwhile, by commercial intercourſe, the neceſſities of one country are relieved by the ſuperfluities of another, and through all the tribes of men is circulated the various bounty of their common Parent.

The arrangement which miniſters to the comfort, is made ſubſervient to the improvement of our race. In deliberating on the intereſts of nations, in managing their buſineſs, and conducting their defence, man finds the nobleſt theatre for the exerciſe of his powers. In the ſervice of his country, the individual is placed in a conſpicuous ſtation, and his conduct is purified by the reſpect which he feels for the judgment of mankind. Diſdaining to promote the public intereſt, by the arts of injuſtice and inhumanity, ſtateſmen and patriots contend with the enemy in wiſdom, in valour, and generoſity. In urging on the battle, the ſoldier ſeeks to ſuſtain the honour of his nation, but he ſeeks alſo to ſave the warrior to whom he is oppoſed. Thus, in the mercy of heaven, even the buſineſs of war itſelf, notwithſtanding all the miſery that accompanies it, is converted into a ſchool of virtue; and the human character acquires ſome of its brighteſt ornaments, amidſt employments which ſeem, at firſt view, to exclude the mild influences of humanity.

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By the ſame diſtribution, proviſion has been made for reſtraining the progreſs of corruption among men, for correcting public diſorders, and for reforming the world. Hence too diſtinguiſhed nations are brought forward in ſucceſſion to take the direction of human affairs---to diffuſe the light of their knowledge, the benefit of their arts, and the energy of their character, and to accompliſh, in their ſeaſon, the merciful deſigns of the Moſt High.

Such are the uſeful purpoſes to which, in the order of Providence, the Love of Country is appointed to be ſubſervient. Let not then a vain philoſophy, whoſe ſucceſs depends on the ſubtilty with which it employs the arts of deluſion, tell us that this ſentiment is factitious and unnatural, worked into the minds of ignorant, unreflecting men, by the ingenuity of prieſts, of poets, and legiſlators. We have ſeen that this ſentiment is implanted in our nature by the hand of God, and forms, as it were, a part of the natural religion of the human heart. We have ſeen that the affections on which it is founded, are blended with the firſt elements of our conſtitution, and that, in the progreſs of life, they are unfolded with the reſt of our intellectual and moral powers. Enlightened reaſon approves of the generous ardour of unperverted patriotiſm; and, when we turn to the records of religion, we find it glowing

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in the pages of the Old Teſtament, and ſanctioned in the New by the expreſs authority of the Saviour of the world. The goſpel invariably recognizes the diſtribution of the human race into tribes, and languages, and nations, as the work of God. Governors, and Magiſtrates, and laws, are there repreſented as the ordinances of Divine wiſdom for the good of man. They ariſe out of the conſtitution of our nature, and the circumſtances in which we are placed, and it is only within the limits they preſcribe that individuals can hope to be uſeful to their brethren. What extent of benevolence can embrace all the families of men ſpread over the face of the whole earth, and by what efforts of wiſdom or ſtrength is it poſſible to improve their condition? Univerſal philanthropy is a ſwelling ſound without a definite meaning. It is by diſcharging, in private and public life, the duties of thoſe relations we ſuſtain, that we fulfil the purpoſes of our exiſtence, and contribute to the happineſs of mankind. To our neighbours only, to thoſe who are brought near us by local ſituation, or connected with us in the buſineſs of life, can our good offices extend; and to our neighbours, accordingly, religion appropriates the exerciſe of benevolence. Love to our Country, acting under the direction of juſtice and humanity, fills up the whole meaſure of ſocial obligation, and is the moſt comprehenſive of all our duties.

It is by the purity of this principle among a people, and the extent in which it influences the conduct of individuals, that hiſtory has taught us to eſtimate the ſtrength of the ſtate. With ſuch a meaſure of national ſecurity, we may this day contemplate, with a lively ſentiment of gratitude to God, the condition and proſpects of our country.

In no period of our annals has the fire of patriotiſm burnt with a purer flame. When all the powers of ſophiſtry and error were ſent forth to deceive the uninſtructed, the good ſenſe and ſound principles of our country checked their progreſs. During the tumult of revolution, when, borne on the tide of victory, a raging people proclaimed, to the aſtoniſhed nations, a new order of deities, a new diviſion of time, and a new form of ſociety, the hopes of the civilized world reſted on Britain alone, and by her they were ſuſtained. In this trying hour, when the ordinary revenue became inadequate to the exigencies of the ſtate, the ſavings of the induſtrious, and the treaſures of the opulent were, with a zeal and liberality till then unheard of, devoted to the public ſervice. The means of exertion with which the Government was ſo honourably furniſhed, were applied with wiſdom and vigour to the purpoſes of our defence. Nor were they applied in vain. The great atchievements of our fathers, amidſt the perils of former

mer times, if not ſurpaſſed, have at leaſt been equalled by the great atchievements of their deſcendants, amidſt the perils of the preſent age. Already have the banners of the captive fleets of three nations been devoutly preſented in the houſe of God, by our King and our nobles, as a teſtimony of religious gratitude. The operations planned by the executive power ſtill continue to be crowned with ſucceſs, and the trophies of a fourth people are now ready to be offered up, in token of our dependence on divine protection.

When our warriors were ſent abroad to turn the battle from our gates, the learned, the opulent, and induſtrious, who remained at home, gathered round the conſtitution, and, under the auſpices of the Sovereign, embodied themſelves to ſuppreſs the tumults of ſedition and anarchy. With a zeal and generoſity worthy of the cauſe in which they are engaged, they ſtill add to their duties, in all the departments of public and private life, a perſevering attention to the exerciſe of arms. To the ſecurity of property, and the ſupport of law, we now bring not only the integrity and reſolution of Britons, but bands of brave men, from all the orders of the ſtate, united by the ties of friendſhip and the toils of diſcipline. To the enemy we now preſent, not only the ſtrength of a formidable national force, but a people, in every diſtrict, expert in the uſe of arms, accuſtomed to act

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together in the field, and prepared to diſtinguiſh themſelves by honourable conduct.

Nor are theſe the only grounds of our public ſecurity. During the repeated and the deep-felt preſſure of ſcarcity, the benevolence of an enlightened nation has watched for the comfort of the poor. Every expedient that wiſdom could deviſe, or experience ſuggeſt, to avert the horrors of famine, and ſupply the hungry with food, a glowing humanity has adopted with zeal. Perhaps, in no country but our own could the difficulties of the time have preſſed with ſo little weight, or produced ſo ſmall a portion of actual ſuffering. Many new inſtitutions for charitable purpoſes, liberally endowed and extenſively uſeful, preſent the rich to the eye of the poor under the endearing aſpect of guardians, benefactors, and friends.

In the mean time, as if Divine Providence delighted to ſmile on theſe labours of love, a new age has opened on the Britiſh Iſlands happily united under one King and one deliberative Council. The ſtrength of the ſtate is conſolidated, and local diſtinctions and excluſive privileges no longer obſtruct the progreſs of improvement. At home and abroad the proſpect is equally animating. *This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.*

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I conclude with a ſingle reflection. If the exertions of our country ſhould ultimately be bleſſed of God, with that ſucceſs which preſent appearances ſeem to indicate; if they ſhould be rendered effectual to reſtrain the violence of revolutionary principles, and to compoſe the troubles of the earth, as our glory would in that caſe be great, it would procure for us a proportionable influence in directing the courſe of human affairs. The conſiſtency of our political principles, the firmneſs of our national character, and the ſplendour of our military atchievements, would concur in giving an extraordinary importance to all that is peculiar to us as a people. In our ſchool, generous minds would ſeek the wiſdom which inſpired the counſels of the cabinet, and the diſcipline which formed the heroes of the field; the theory of our government, the principles of our juriſprudence, and the ſpirit of our literary and religious inſtitutions, would be examined with attention and reſpect. Our opinions would acquire ſome of the weight of authority, and our manners might give a tone to the taſte and character of nations.

But ſhould a deſtiny ſo glorious be reſerved for our country by the favour of heaven, of how much importance is it, that the people, held up to general admiration, ſhould be found in faith and pure in morals,

rals, as well as ſkilful in arts and great in battle? If we are to be employed by the Governor among the nations, as the inſtructors and the patterns, as well as the defenders of the human race; of how much importance is it, that, united at home in the bond of peace, and diſtinguiſhed abroad by rational piety and manly virtue, we become the inſtruments of diffuſing, through the wide extent of our political and commercial greatneſs, the wiſdom of ſound policy, and the bleſſings of pure religion.

In diſpenſing proſperity and empire among the kindreds of the earth, the Almighty is guided by no arbitrary partiality, and by no temporary reſentment. In all the revolutions of human greatneſs, he conſults the intereſts of religion and virtue. A favoured people can only preſerve the advantages of their condition by promoting the gracious deſigns of his government. The corruption of wealth, and the abuſe of power, invariably prepare the downfall of a nation.

This is an argument in behalf of religion and virtue, the force of which will be felt in this aſſembly. Let it encourage us to correct our errors, to reform our vices, to purify our public taſte, and to exhibit to the world an example of that righteouſneſs which exalteth a people. In the new diſtribu-

tion

tion of territory and dominion among the nations of Europe, it will require the united energies of private and public virtue, to ſuſtain the weight of Britiſh greatneſs.

May God, then, of his infinite mercy, inſpire our rulers and our people, with wiſdom and firmneſs, and with vigour and unanimity, to reſiſt all the ſeductions of evil, and to ſeek that which is truly good!

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