to the States, they might remove to Noyon or Soiſſons, in which caſe he ſhould go to Compeigne, in order to keep up that immediate intercourſe which ought to ſubſiſt between them. The king's declaration of his motives was ſo poſitive, the facts were ſo unqueſtionable, and the propoſal itſelf was ſo fair, that ſeveral of the leading members of the more moderate parties were perfectly ſatisfied, and willing to agree to it; but the determined leaders of the popular ſide, whoſe views extended farther, were too well aware of the ſtrength and ſupport which they derived from the vicinity of the capital to liſten to it. There was no reaſon to alledge againſt going to Noyon or Soiſſons; it was evident that their deliberations would be there leſs liable to be influenced or diſturbed than in the neighbourhood of Paris; and, by conſtant practice, the choice of the place, where the aſſembly ſhould be holden, belonged to the ſovereign. All theſe conſiderations, however, were inſufficient to ſuperinduce a compliance with the king's propoſal, which, being condemned by Mirabeau, with his uſual intemperance, was finally rejected.

That the motives which influenced the conduct of that profligate demagogue were of that kind which fixes the indelible ſtamp of infamy on the mind that harbours them, is a fact proved beyond the reach of confutation. Two members of the aſſembly, Meſſieurs Bergaſſe and Duport, men of veracity unimpeached, of character the moſt reſpectable, have poſitively affirmed, that Mirabeau talked with them familiarly and unreſervedly, about their having *a Louis the Seventeenth, in the place of a Louis the Sixteenth*, as king, or, at leaſt, as lieutenant-general of the kingdom; thereby alluding directly, and by *name*, to the *duke of Orleans, with whom*—he likewiſe ſaid—*he had converſed upon the ſubject; and that the prince had received the communication in the moſt pleaſing manner.*

Mounier (a man, whoſe honour and integrity was never queſtioned by *any* party, in all the violence of their contentions) has likewiſe recorded, that having mentioned to Mirabeau his exceſſive alarm at the manœuvres which were continually practiſed in Paris to ſeduce the troops from their officers; and obſerving, farther, with what facility an ambitious prince, appearing at the head of a diſcontented army, diſtributing money with one hand and libels with the other, might uſurp the throne, Mirabeau, treating his apprehenſions with ridicule, anſwered, "Why, you good ſimple man, I am as much attached to "royalty as you are; *but what ſignifies whether we have Louis the Seventeenth or Louis the "Sixteenth*; and why need we have a child [48] to govern us?" M. Mounier, who experienced, at the horrid ſuggeſtion, that indignation which every virtuous man muſt have experienced on ſuch an occaſion, candidly acknowledges, that he felt a temptation to plunge a dagger in the heart of a wretch who could conceive ſo wicked a ſcheme. The teſtimony adduced in ſupport of this important fact cannot be controverted; it is clear,

[48] The term *bambin*, which Mirabeau uſed, may be underſtood either as a child or an ideot.

direct,

direct, and deciſive; and the fact itſelf throws a ſtrong light on the ſubſequent proceedings of Mirabeau, and his deteſtable patron. —*par nobile fratrum!*

But though the king's conduct in aſſembling the troops in the vicinity of the capital was accounted for in a manner the moſt rational and clear, it was nevertheleſs rendered, by the violence of party, a ground for cenſure, invective, and reprobation. The popular writers and declaimers deſcribe it as one of the moſt perfidious and bloody plots that ever was formed; and which, if carried into execution, would have rivalled and renewed all the horrors of the maſſacre on Saint Bartholomew's day. They repreſent, that fifty thouſand men, one hundred pieces of artillery, an army of banditti, and ſix princes, were to have pulled down the ſanctuary of liberty on its miniſters' heads, and to have overturned the French empire; that the national aſſembly would have been diſperſed; its reſolutions declared ſeditious; its members proſcribed; the Palais-Royal, and the houſes of all *patriots* given up to plunder; while the electors and their deputies were to be executed. The glaring inconſiſtency in theſe ſeveral puniſhments are ſo obvious, as ſcarcely to require obſervation. Some difficulty might appear in diſperſing a body of men who were buried under the weight of an enormous building; and, on the ſuppoſition of a reſurrection, it might appear entirely needleſs to proſcribe men who were given up to execution.

The Hiſtorian of the Revolution, however, finiſhes his picture with the following *ſublime* effort of imagination:—"This is the horrible tiſſue of crimes and aſſaſſinations "which a troop of *villains* and *infamous women*, meditated with barbarous joy in the tu- "mult of their execrable orgies!!!" It is ſurely curious to obſerve, that none of the enormities here deſcribed ever took place, even in a ſingle inſtance, on the ſide of the court; and that all the crimes and aſſaſſinations here charged upon troops of villains and infamous women, were not only fully realized, but brought into daily and continual practice on the popular ſide, by the two numerous orders thus ſpecified, with both of whom, it is probable, that Paris at this period abounded far beyond any other city in the univerſe. Indeed, the indifference, and, in ſome caſes, the complacency, with which the National Aſſembly received and heard details of the horrid cruelties and murders committed by theſe two orders, afford too much room for ſuppoſing that they conſidered them as very neceſſary and eſſential arms of their power.

But it muſt not be conceived that, even by moderate men of different parties, the approach of the troops was viewed with jealouſy and apprehenſion: they conceived, that the troops had been aſſembled, partly to prevent the exploſion which a projected change in the miniſtry might occaſion, and partly to enable the king to carry into effect the plan of reform he had ſuggeſted in his declaration of the twenty-third of June. Impreſſed with this belief, they expected that the king would require the States to ratify that declaration,

claration, and, in caſe of their refuſal, would proceed to the extremity of attempting a diſſolution of the aſſembly. As ſuch an attempt would be reſiſted, they apprehended, that the military might be called in to ſuppreſs thoſe tumults which, in the preſent temper of the people, their forced ſeparation muſt inevitably occaſion.

Theſe were the greateſt evils or dangers which moderate men apprehended from the preſent conduct of the court. But even in this worſt ſtate of things, and ſuppoſing the forced diſſolution to take place, although they trembled at the idea of an act of power and violence ſo diſgraceful both to the government and country, yet they conſoled themſelves under the certainty they fully poſſeſſed, that the king could then have no other reſource than that of immediately ſummoning another meeting of the States, as it would be otherwiſe impoſſible for him to manage or ſettle the diſorders of the nation, or to conduct the government in any manner. As to the pretended plots which were ſaid to be diſcovered, and the details of them propagated with ſo much induſtry, ſuch as the blockade of the city of Paris; the ſtarving or maſſacre of the inhabitants; the overturning that capital from its foundations, with the long liſts of deputies to the States who were to be ſeized or executed; all theſe, with others of the ſame deſcription, would have been treated by ſuch men only with ridicule, if the wickedneſs of the deſigns which they ſaw they covered had not excited their utmoſt indignation. They declared their firm opinion, *that no perſons in the aſſembly were more thoroughly convinced of their falſhood, than the very men who took the greateſt pains to propagate them abroad as undoubted facts*[49].

Though the mareſchal de Broglio ſeemed to have been forgotten by the court, yet the opinion that was univerſally entertained of his private virtues and military talents pointed him out as the fitteſt perſon to be employed in ſo critical a conjuncture as the preſent. He was accordingly called from his retirement by a letter from the king, and appointed to command the army, with the title of generaliſſimo. It was imagined that the troops would be flattered, in again ſeeing at their head a veteran who had acquired ſo much merited reputation, when oppoſed to one of the ableſt captains of the age. But the circumſtances in which he was now to act were entirely different. Then, his courage and military ſkill were ſufficient to carry him through every difficulty. Now, inſtead of a warrior, who fought on the field of honour, he had to encounter the prejudices of his countrymen; inſtead of a martial foe to ſubdue, he had an inſidious faction to overcome; and, if the aſſertions of many of the French may be credited, he was to be enſnared by intrigue, and defeated by corruption. He ſeems then to have neglected the only danger that awaited him, the deſection of his ſoldiers; and, probably from a conſciouſneſs of his own principles, he did not ſufficiently ſuſpect theirs.

[49] Mèmoire de M. de Lally-Tolendal, p. 63, 64

The troops came by detachments, and were ſent as they arrived into the villages about Paris, and ſome into the town itſelf. The conſequences that might be expected from this diſpoſition muſt at once have ſtricken even the leaſt attentive obſerver of the ſcenes that had lately paſſed there. The troops being debauched by money and promiſes, deſertion became general; and thoſe who found means to quit their quarters, were brought in triumph to the *Palais Royal* to be feaſted, and to hear the orations that were pronounced there. But had a camp been marked out in ſome ſituation equally calculated to cover Paris and Verſailles, the troops might have entered it as they arrived; all improper intercourſe would have been prevented, the ſpirit of diſcipline would have been revived; and military manœuvres, and the appearance of the monarch, might have awakened thoſe ſentiments of loyalty, and love of glory, that are congenial with the profeſſion of arms. Had ſuch a plan been adopted, it is highly probable, that, without having occaſion to draw the ſword, the diſorders that quickly followed would have been prevented, and the perfidious deſigns of the factious and diſaffected cruſhed in their infancy.

The conduct of the firſt miniſter of the finances had long been the ſubject of animadverſion with thoſe who chiefly approached the ſovereign. The manner in which the States were compoſed, his behaviour with regard to the royal ſeſſion, and a variety of other circumſtances, were pointed out as ſure indications, that he was ſecretly connected with, and encouraged the pretenſions of, the democratic party. After being tormented with many doubts, and perplexed by a variety of advice, the king was at laſt prevailed upon to diſmiſs him; and, on the eleventh of July, about two in the afternoon, he ſent him a letter, written with his own hand, to acquaint him that the ſituation of public affairs made it neceſſary that he ſhould reſign his place, and quit the kingdom. M de Luzerne, miniſter of the marine, who carried the letter, informed him, that it was the king's deſire that the order he then delivered to him ſhould be kept ſecret; which was ſtrictly complied with. M Neckar dined with a large company, and afterwards received many viſits. In the evening, under pretence of taking an airing with his wife, he went to his country houſe at Saint Ouen, near Paris; nor was his departure known there till the twelfth, when he was at a conſiderable diſtance from the capital.

It has been obſerved, by a French periodical writer[50], that his diſmiſſion at that time was juſt as impolitic, as if the king of Naples, in the midſt of ſome fanatic inſurrection, were to order the ſacred vial that contains the blood of Saint Januarius to be contemptuouſly thrown into the ſea. But, beſides popular favour, M. Neckar enjoyed the confidence of the public creditors, among whom was a great number of perſons of every claſs, who depended on their annuities for their maintenance. Their apprehenſions of a national bankruptcy were now revived; and, from this moment, we may conſider the monied intereſt of the kingdom as moſt decidedly and actively oppoſed to the meaſures of the court. The opportunity, which it now preſented, was eagerly embraced. A thou-

[50] L' Abbé Sabatier.

ſand

ſand mouths were inſtantly opened to ſpread the news, and to cry, that the public payments were to be ſtopped; the aſſembly to be diſſolved; that the army had been aſſembled on that account; and that, as the virtue of the miniſter was inflexible, he had not only been diſmiſſed from the council, but ſent ignominiouſly out of the kingdom. The conſternation was univerſal; and, in every ſociety and place of public reſort, nothing was heard but the clamours of thoſe, who, in the ſuppoſed impending ruin, ſaw a proſpect of penury for the reſt of their days.

The people now began to meet in crowds in different quarters of the city. In the afternoon, the buſts of the duke of Orleans and of M. Neckar were carried, enveloped in black crape, in proceſſion through the ſtreets. The heterogeneous coalition of two perſons—artfully contrived by the partiſans of the duke—who had never been aſſociated in politics or otherwiſe, was not attended to; they were ſaid to be alike victims to the cauſe of the people: a report was induſtriouſly propagated, that his highneſs, and ſome other popular members of the aſſembly, had been arreſted; and, to mark the ſentiments of the public on theſe imaginary calamities, deputations from the crowd aſſembled at the *Palais Royal* were ſent to the different theatres, with *orders* that they ſhould be ſhut.

In conſequence of theſe tumults, detachments from the regiments of Choiſeul dragoons and Royal Cravate cavalry, that were quartered in the town, patroled through the ſtreets; and a ſtrong body of the Swiſs guards was poſted with cannon in the Champs Eliſées. About five o'clock in the evening, a ſkirmiſh happened between the people, in the *Place Louis Quinze*, and a party of the dragoons. A patrole of the Royal Allemand cavalry, that were quartered at La Muet[51], commanded by the prince de Lambeſc, coming up at the ſame time, and being aſſailed by the populace with a ſhower of ſtones[52], charged them, and drove them into the garden of the Thuilleries, where two or three perſons, ſaid to be merely ſpectators, were unfortunately wounded. When it began to grow dark, the people ſet fire to ſome of the wooden barriers at the end of the town, and drove away the perſons ſtationed there to collect the cuſtoms. A party of the Royal Allemand, that had been diſpatched to diſperſe the mob, that were burning the barrier at the end of the ſtreet *Chauſſée d'Antin*, in coming from thence upon the *Boulevard*, was fired upon by a party of the French guards, at the corner of that ſtreet from what is called their *depôt*. Though their alienation from the court had been long ſuſpected, this was their firſt act of open hoſtility; but almoſt all of them were now under arms in their barracks; they would not any longer obey their officers, but deſired they would withdraw. In every quarter of the town reſounded the cry "*To arms!*" and "*Down with the officers and foreign troops!*" During the night, detachments of the French

[51] A royal palace, in the *Bois de Boulogne*, about two miles from Paris.
[52] Rabaud de Saint Etienne, p. 84. Engliſh tranſlation.

guards mixed with the citizens, patroled through the ſtreet. In the morning of Monday the thirteenth, the alarm-bell *(toeſin)* was rung in all the ſteeples [53].

For

[53] In our account of the tranſactions of this period, after a careful compariſon of the facts advanced by different writers, we have preferred the authority of an Engliſh gentleman, of character and fortune, who reſided at Paris at the time; and who, independent of the claims to belief which his perſonal reputation muſt give him with all who know him, is peculiarly entitled to credit by an exemption from all prejudice and partiality, and from all temptation to deviate, in the ſmalleſt degree, from the ſtricteſt veracity, in his account of the events, which he has recorded with equal fidelity, elegance, and perſpicuity. We are aware, that, by purſuing this courſe, we differ materially from the anonymous authors of the Engliſh Hiſtory of the Revolution, who have boldly proclaimed their own impartiality, but who have, nevertheleſs, not ſcrupled to adopt ſome of the groſſeſt and moſt abſurd falſhoods, and ſome of the moſt ridiculous tales which had been fabricated for the rabble in Paris, during the firſt paroxyſms of confuſion, tumult, and madneſs, and to which they have endeavoured, ſo far as they were capable, to give the character, rank, and weight, of hiſtorical facts. Some of theſe we ſhall have occaſion to notice as we proceed.

By their account of the tumult of the twelfth of July, one ſhould be naturally led to ſuſpect that the people were perfectly pacific, and the military the aggreſſors. They tell us, that "A body of citizens," who were eſcorting the buſts of Neckar and the duke d'Orleans, was ſtopped "by a German regiment, the Royal Allemand" That, the buſts having been broken by the ſoldiers, "the ARMY now came forward, in force, with the prince de Lambeſc, "grand eſcuyer of France, *at their head*, who was *ordered* to take poſt at the Thuilleries.—Irritated, *perhaps*, at the "ſpirit of *reſiſtance* which he *obſerved* in the citizens, he imprudently wounded with his ſabre a poor old man, who "was walking peaceably in the garden—The French have a *remarkable reſpect for age*," (it muſt be confeſſed they have an odd way of ſhewing it) "and this wanton outrage proved the SIGNAL of revolt." A more groſs perverſion of facts has ſeldom been exhibited!—A riotous mob is repreſented as "a body of citizens;"—a party of dragoons, is converted into a *regiment* of German cavalry; and a patrole of horſe into an "ARMY."—The prince de Lambeſc, though placed at the head of this pretended army, receives *orders*—from *whom* we are not told—to ſtation himſelf in the Thuilleries; the attack on him with ſtones, mentioned by Rabaut, is carefully omitted; and the wanton outrage committed by him on an old man, is, through the remarkable reſpect of the French for old age, gravely aſſerted to have been the *ſignal of revolt*:—The reader being of courſe left to ſuppoſe that there were no *previous* ſymptoms of revolt; and that, but for *this* circumſtance, no revolt would have taken place!!!

In the ſame *ſpirit*, we are ſoon after told, that while the inhabitants of the capital were involved in conſternation and diſmay, during the diſaſtrous night of the twelfth, "The court party abandoned themſelves to the moſt in-"decent joy," and "the women of the court mingled with the foreign ſoldiers *in laſcivious dances*, to the ſound of the "German muſic." In this choice paſſage, the "*impartial*" hiſtorians almoſt exceed the violence and calumny of the moſt democratic writers. By the women of the court is generally underſtood the female attendants on the royal family, who were certainly women of rank and character; and to aſſert that ſuch perſons would be guilty of ſuch marked and public profligacy, is to propagate a calumny that can only obtain credit from ignorance or prejudice. We have read of *laſcivious dances* in the courts of Eaſtern monarchs, but they are a ſpecies of amuſement peculiar, we believe, to thoſe climates, and unknown even to the moſt refined voluptuaries of Europe. The account of this tranſaction is evidently taken from the *Hiſtoire de la Revolution de* 1789. tom. i. p. 315, 316. but it varies even from that doubtful authority, and exhibits an incorrectneſs of tranſlation that can only be aſcribed to a wilful perverſion of facts. The original paſſage is this—Les *bandits* (not the *women*) de la Cour, s'applaudiſſoient de leur victoire, ils "ſe rejouiſſoint de la conſternation & des larmes des bons citoyens; ils danſoient au bruit de la muſique Allemande, "ils inſultoient, dans *les chanſons laſcives* et groſſieres, les amis de la liberté."

Rabaud de Saint Etienne, indeed, ſpeaks of women, of "princeſſes and favourites," who entertained themſelves with muſick of "martial inſtruments," and who "loaded the ſoldiers with careſſes and with preſents:" but every

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For the purpoſe of electing repreſentatives in the States, Paris had been divided into ſixty *diſtricts*; and, at the ſound of the bell, the electors aſſembled at the places were they had lately met. From the electors of the diſtricts, a general aſſembly was now formed that met at the town houſe; and, out of that, *a permanent committee* was choſen, that was entruſted with the executiv power. Monſieur de Fleſſelles, provoſt of the merchants, being the principal municipal magiſtrate, was nominated preſident of this committee, and a correſpondence was eſtabliſhed with committees, that ſat in the different diſtricts. The firſt ſtep taken was to embody a militia of forty-eight thouſand men; and many officers and ſerjeants, who had retired from the army, or were at Paris on leave, having offered their ſervices, were diſtributed to inſtruct it. The firſt motive for arming was the preſervation of the town from pillage; but it was ſoon extended to its defence againſt the army, in caſe it ſhould attempt to enter.

That the ſkirmiſhes which occurred between the populace and the cavalry were the conſequence of the riotous diſpoſition and tumultuous conduct of the former, and not the reſult of any plan formed by the miniſtry, is clearly demonſtrated by this circumſtance; that though there were ſeveral regiments of foot at the time ſtationed cloſe to Paris, not one of them made the ſmalleſt movement to aſſiſt or ſupport the horſe; ſuch a want of conſort among the commanders muſt be conſidered as a certain proof that no orders had been iſſued by government on the ſubject. The total inaction of the troops, both on that night, and the ſucceeding day and night—during all which time, critical as the ſeaſon was, and notwithſtanding the alterations and preparations which they ſaw and knew were taking place in Paris, they never once made the ſmalleſt attempt to enter that city—ſeems likewiſe to exculpate the court and miniſters from the bloody deſigns and cruel intended maſſacres which were attributed to them; for this would have been the ſeaſon, and the night of Sunday (the twelfth) particularly, when nothing but terror and confuſion reigned in the city, and no regular ſcheme of reſiſtance or defence was yet thought of, to have carried them with full effect into execution, if any ſuch had been formed; and the ſtate of things was ſuch, that it would have been very difficult, if not impoſſible, to prevent their completion, if plans ſo wicked could be formed with wiſdom, and executed with promptitude, which, through the goodneſs of Providence, is not often permitted.

Many exceſſes were committed in the morning of the thirteenth, particularly at the houſe of the congregation of Saint Lazarus, who being ſuſpected of having corn concealed in their granaries, were, by that charge or ſuſpicion, expoſed to a pretence for be-

ſchool-boy knows the innocent application of the term "combler de careſſes," as invariably uſed by the French and nothing contained in either of the above paſſages, can warrant the calumnious aſſertion, that "The women of "the court mingled with foreign ſoldiers in laſcivious dances."

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ing plundered. This circumſtance was the more to be lamented, as it was a truly pious and charitable inſtitution; but ſuch matters were ſoon to be loſt in the glare of greater enormities. Many ſlighter robberies were committed on the ſame day; but as theſe were directed againſt individuals, and executed by ſmall gangs of thieves on their own account, without any popular pretence, when they were ſeized in the fact they were inſtantly dragged to the *Grève*, the common place of execution, and hanged by the ropes which were uſed to faſten the lanterns. From hence originated that moſt horrid practice of the mob's conſtituting themſelves judges and executioners in the ſame inſtant, without the ſmalleſt regard to rank, to laws, or to juſtice. From hence alſo originated that horrid and barbarous cry, *á la lanterne!* the laſt ſounds that vibrated in the ears of many unhappy victims as have thus cruelly periſhed.

The arming of the militia, and the conſequent diſtribution of patroles, tended to impoſe a momentary reſtraint on the licentious proceedings of the mob. The French guards, now called, SOLDIERS OF THE COUNTRY (*Soldats de la Patrie,*) were mixed with the militia. Some companies had, at firſt evinced a reluctance to this meaſure, but all now joined, except the uſual guard at the palace of Verſailles, that was ſtill on duty there to protect their ſovereign.

The count de Montmorin, miniſter of foreign affairs; monſieur de la Luzerne, miniſter of the marine; and monſieur de Saint Prieſt, a member of the council, but without office, had retired at the ſame time with the director-general of the finances, having been all diſmiſſed except monſieur de la Luzerne. Monſieur de Puyſegur quitted the place of miniſter of war to make way for the mareſchal de Broglio; the baron de Breteuil was appointed preſident of the council of finances; the duke de la Vauguyon ſucceeded monſieur de Montmorin; monſieur de Villedeuil continued in his place of miniſter of Paris; and monſieur Barentin remained keeper of the ſeals. Monſieur Foulon was offered a poſt in the war-office, under the mareſchal de Broglio, but he refuſed to except it.

On the thirteenth, the National Aſſembly ſent an addreſs to the king, to inform him of the alarming ſituation of the capital, the diſmay which the meaſures lately taken had produced there; to requeſt that the troops might be withdrawn from its neighbourhood; and, not ſeeming to be acquainted with what had been done by the Pariſians, propoſing that a militia ſhould be immediately formed. They, at the ſame time, offered to ſend a deputation to the town, to communicate the anſwer they hoped to receive, and to endeavour, by quieting the fears of the people, to reſtore the public tranquillity. In reply to this addreſs, the king ſaid, he had already communicated his motives for the adoption of thoſe meaſures to which they alluded; that he alone could judge of their neceſſity, which, as it ſtill exiſted, did not admit of any change: that he was very far from entertaining any doubt of the purity of their intentions in the preſent afflicting circumſtances,

ſtances, but their preſence at Paris could be of no utility, while it was much wanted where they were, in order to proceed with the important buſineſs in which they were engaged. This anſwer ſeemed by no means to ſatisfy the aſſembly; and a debate enſued, in which the moderate party took the lead, ſhewing themſelves as little diſpoſed to ſubmit to any deſpotic exertions of regal authority, as the moſt furious of thoſe who were diſtinguiſhed by the much-proſtituted appellation of *patriots*. Mounier opened the debate with an eloquent ſpeech, wherein, after exhorting the aſſembly to proceed with coolneſs, prudence and moderation, and ſtating the great and immutable line which muſt be drawn between the legiſlative and executive power—a line which was acknowledged and confirmed by the aſſembly—he proceeded to obſerve, that though the aſſembly had no legal right to direct the king's choice of miniſters, yet as the choice he had now made led to the moſt dangerous conſequences, it was neceſſary to vote their ſolemn and grateful thanks to M. Neckar, and to declare that the preſent miniſters had not the confidence of the nation. He was ably ſeconded by M. de Lally-Tollendal, and, after ſome deliberation, the following reſolutions were adopted.

"That the National Aſſembly, being the medium by which the ſentiments of the "nation are conveyed, declares, that M. Neckar, and the other miniſters who have juſt "been removed, carry with them its eſteem and regret.

"That, alarmed by the proſpect of the fatal conſequences which the anſwer of his "majeſty may produce, the aſſembly will not ceaſe to inſiſt on his ſending away the "troops that are collected about Paris and Verſailles, and on eſtabliſhing guards of "citizens.

"That there cannot exiſt any immediate perſon or power between the king and the "aſſembly.

"That the miniſters and other agents of authority, civil and military, are anſwerable "for every thing they may do that is contrary to the rights of the nation, and the de-"crees of the aſſembly.

"That the miniſters and counſellors of his majeſty, of whatever deſcription or rank "they may be, are perſonally reſponſible for the preſent calamities, and the conſequences "that may reſult from them [54].

"That the public debt having been placed under the ſafeguard of the faith and

54 This reſolution, which bore the character of an *ex poſt facto* law, the aſſembly juſtified on the ground of neceſſity, and its own deſperate ſituation.

honour

" honour of the French nation, and the nation being willing to pay the intereſt of that " debt, no power has a right to announce the *infamous word, bankruptcy*, under any de- " nomination whatſoever.

" That the aſſembly perſiſts in all its former decrees, and expreſsly in thoſe of the ſe- " venteenth, twentieth, and twenty-third of the month of June; and orders, that a " copy of the preſent reſolutions be delivered to his majeſty, by its preſident; that a " copy be ſent to M. Neckar, and the other miniſters who had been removed; and that " they be printed and publiſhed."

By theſe reſolutions, the three orders united confirmed all thoſe important decrees that had been made by the *Tiers Etat*, while they were aſunder; the counſellors of the king were made reſponſible for the meaſures of the government; the people were more than ever impreſſed with the idea, that an intention had been formed to ſuſpend or reduce the public payments; and were taught to conſider the aſſembly as the only ſafeguard againſt a calamity they ſo much feared.

On the thirteenth, the people began to wear a cockade of green and white; but having recollected that green was the colour that diſtinguiſhed the houſhold of the count d'Artois, it was changed for blue, white, and red. Theſe were called the colours of liberty, and ſuch as neglected to wear the national cockade, as it was termed, were expoſed to inſult, whatever their rank and character; ſuch a diſpoſition to tyranny did theſe new *ſovereigns* evince in their firſt exertions of power!—In the night, the troops that had been ſtationed in the *Champs Eliſées* were withdrawn, and, in the morning of the fourteenth, a body of the militia, followed by a crowd of people, and led by a M. de Corny, repaired to the Hôtel des Invalids, of which M. de Sombreuil, formerly commandant of Lille, was the governor. Taking advantage of an interval of reſt which that officer had allowed to his men, the inſurgents forced an entrance into the place, and carried off twenty pieces of cannon, and about thirty thouſand ſtand of arms. They had already rifled the king's *garde meuble*, in the *Place Louis Quinze*, of many ancient and curious arms that were kept there; and, among others, of thoſe once worn by their *then* favourite prince, the fourth Henry, whoſe breaſt-plate and helmet bore the marks of his courage, and of the danger to which he had been expoſed.

Emboldened by ſucceſs, the populace next proceeded to the Baſtille; and as it was the only priſon in Paris that could reſiſt the efforts of an armed mob, it was, of courſe, deemed expedient to reduce it, if only with a view to ſcreen from puniſhment the authors of theſe popular exceſſes. At this time, there were fifteen pieces of cannon on the towers of the fortreſs, eleven of which were eight pounders, and the reſt four pounders, mounted on truck carriages, and formerly uſed on occaſions of rejoicing. As the parapets

pets were thin and low, the ſoldiers employed at theſe guns muſt have been entirely expoſed, nor had any meaſures been taken for their protection.

Some few days before the inſurrection, three field-pieces were brought from the arſenal, and planted before the draw-bridge. The governor, the marquis de Launay, likewiſe procured from thence twelve wall-pieces, called *Amuſettes du Comte de Saxe*, carrying balls of one pound and a half each; a number of muſketoons, carrying balls of two-thirds of a pound; with a quantity of ſmall-arms, cartridges, cannon-balls, and two hundred and fifty barrels of gunpowder, which were brought thither as to a place of ſecurity rather than for uſe. Upon the ramparts above the draw bridge a great number of ſtones, grenades, and looſe cannon balls, were laid, to be ready to throw down upon any who ſhould attempt to force the paſſage.

The garriſon conſiſted of the governor and other eſtabliſhed officers and ſervants of the Baſtille, eighty two invalid ſoldiers with their officers; and a lieutenant and thirty-two ſoldiers of the Swiſs regiment of Salis Samade. About two in the morning of the thirteenth, monſieur de Launay ordered the ſoldiers to retire from their barracks into the caſtle, leaving ſentinels at the gate that led to the ſtreet Saint Anthony.

The garriſon remained within the caſtle undiſturbed during the day of the thirteenth; but the ſentinels on the towers were fired on in the night, though without effect: they did not return the fire, but gave the alarm.

Early on the morning of the fourteenth, the ſentinels at the gate Saint Anthony were taken priſoners by the people, and carried to the committee at the town-houſe. About ten in the morning, three deputies came from the committee, as far as the iron-railing at the firſt draw-bridge, and deſired to ſpeak with the governor, who went to them: but ſeeing an immenſe crowd of people, he ſaid, that only the three deputies could be admitted, and offered to ſend out as many hoſtages, which was agreed to. While they were with the governor, monſieur de la Roziere, a Pariſian barriſter, and firſt elector of the diſtrict of Saint Louis, arrived, and, at his requeſt, was admitted likewiſe. He ſaid, that he came to repreſent to the governor, that the cannon pointed from the towers on different ſtreets of the town, had alarmed the inhabitants, and to ſolicit their being withdrawn. The governor urged the impoſſibility of his compliance without orders from his ſuperiors: he obſerved, they were in places where they had been for many years paſt; but that, to quiet thoſe alarms, he would order them to be drawn back within the parapet. Monſieur de la Roziere aſked permiſſion to go into the caſtle to ſee this done: the governor, at firſt, made ſome difficulty, but at the requeſt of the major, de Loſme, he conſented. As ſoon as de la Roziere was within the caſtle, addreſſing himſelf to the governor, he conjured him and the garriſon not to fire on the people, but to *give up the*

place. He was, very properly, anſwered, that the people would, moſt certainly, not be fired on, unleſs they attacked the caſtle. He then returned with the governor to the houſe of the latter, and, after ſtaying a ſhort time, went away [53].

About half an hour afterwards, the people appeared in great numbers in the ſtreet Saint Anthony, and in the paſſage-court, armed with muſkets, ſabres, and hatchets, exclaiming, *They muſt have the Baſtille, and down with the troops!* The officers from the walls begged them to keep back, and repreſented the danger to which they expoſed themſelves. They, however, perſiſted in advancing, and as there were no troops to defend the firſt draw-bridge, they found means to get it down. The garriſon again called out to them to retire, or they muſt fire upon them; but they ſtill continued to advance towards the bridge of the caſtle, and *fired their muſquets at the troops on the walls.* They *returned the fire*, and the inſurgents retired beyond the firſt draw-bridge, from whence they kept up a conſtant fire upon the ramparts. Soon after, a flag was ſeen advancing from the arſenal, followed by an immenſe number of perſons in arms. Some halted with the flag in the firſt court, called the court of Elms, while others advanced to the next court, calling out to the garriſon not to fire; and ſaying, that deputies were come from the town-houſe. Monſieur de Launay ſaid, that the deputies with the flag might advance, but deſired the people in arms not to proceed beyond the firſt draw bridge. The ſoldiers on the walls called out, that they would not fire; and, as a proof of it, clubbed their muſkets. After many ſigns, and much entreaty, the people ſtopped, and the deputies advanced into the paſſage-court, from whence they might have ſeen the ſoldiers on the towers with their clubbed firelocks, and a white flag as a ſign of peace. The deputies ſtaid in the paſſage-court about ten minutes without advancing, notwithſtanding the ſoldiers that were on the towers called out to them—*Come and ſpeak to the governor; we will be anſwerable for your ſafety with our lives:* but they returned to the Elm-court, where they ſtayed about a quarter of an hour, and went away.

The governor obſerved to the garriſon, that thoſe could not be deputies ſent from the town-houſe, but perſons who wiſhed to ſurpriſe them; for if they had really been deputies, they would not have heſitated to advance after the aſſurances that were given them. The numbers continued to encreaſe, and, in a ſhort time, the Elm court, the paſſage-court, which led to the firſt draw-bridge, and the court beyond the draw-bridge, were entirely full. They again preſſed forwards towards the next draw-bridge, called the draw-bridge of the caſtle, and the garriſon called to them as before, not to advance,

53 It would ſeem as if the principal object of M. de la Roziere's miſſion was to reconnoitre the fortreſs, for the purpoſe of ſeeing how far it was in a ſtate of defence, and what part of it was moſt open to attack. Before the aſſault commenced there was juſt time enough for him to make his report, and the inſurgents to march to the caſtle.

or they would be fired upon. They, however, proceeded, and the governor, at laſt, ordered the troops to fire, which they did, when ſeveral fell, and the reſt fled: but they did not go far, and continued firing on the battlements. Some broke open the barracks, on the right of the paſſage-court, and plundered them. About an hour afterwards, they brought in a great quantity of ſtraw, and ſet fire to the guard-room, which was ſituated to the left, on the entrance of the court before the caſtle; to the governor's houſe, on the right, farther on; and to the kitchens, which were placed on the left, beyond the court, and nearer to the interior of the caſtle. A cannon was then fired at them loaded with grape ſhot; *the only one that was diſcharged during the attack.* The garriſon only defended the place with muſkets.

The French guards appeared, bringing with them a mortar, two four pounders, and a cannon inlaid with ſilver, which had been taken out of the king's *garde-meubles.* Monſieur de Launay had neglected to lay in any proviſions; and as the people perſiſted in their determination to reduce the place, about four in the afternoon all the non-commiſſioned officers went and ſolicited the governor to ſurrender it. Finding himſelf in this extremity, he attempted to fire a piſtol into the powder that had been brought from the arſenal, and was depoſited in one of the towers, called the tower *de la liberté*, but was prevented by two ſerjeants, Ferrand and Beguard. Monſieur de Launay aſked the garriſon, what they wiſhed him to do: he ſaid, his own opinion was, that they ſhould defend themſelves to the laſt, and even blow up the place, rather than fall into the hands of a furious mob. But as the garriſon inſiſted on ſurrendering, he gave a white handkerchief to a ſerjeant, ordered him to ſhew it from the battlements, and ſent a drummer at the ſame time to beat the chamade. His orders were ſtrictly obeyed: but the populace, regardleſs of the ſignals, and rendered more courageous by the ceſſation of reſiſtance, continued to fire. They ſoon after advanced to the draw-bridge, and deſired it might be let down. The officer who commanded the Swiſs detachment ſpoke to them through a loop-hole at the ſide of the gate, and propoſed that the garriſon ſhould be allowed to march out with their arms; but they all exclaimed—*No, no!* He then told them, that the troops would deliver up the place and their arms, if they would promiſe that neither inſult nor violence, of any kind, ſhould be offered to them. The inſurgents replied—"*Let down the draw-bridge, nothing ſhall happen to you.*" The governor, on this aſſurance, took the key out of his pocket, and ordered two corporals, Gaiard and Pireau, to let down the bridge. It was no ſooner down, than the people ruſhed into the court, and attacked the invalids who had laid down their arms, and were ranged along the wall on the right. The Swiſs were oppoſite to them, and eſcaped, not being immediately remarked, owing, probably, to the canvas frocks which they wore over their uniforms: The people then entered the apartments of the officers, where they broke the furniture, doors, and windows: and ſo great was the tumult and confuſion, that many continued to fire, and, without intending it, killed and wounded their companions

The officers and the invalid ſoldiers were ſeized, and dragged towards the town-houſe. Some ſoldiers of the garriſon, who publiſhed a narrative of the tranſactions of this day, ſay—"After humiliations of every kind, we ſaw, on arriving at the Grêve, the bodies "of two of our companions, who had been hanged. Some exclaimed that we deſerved "the ſame fate, and in an inſtant a thouſand perſons demanded that we ſhould be delivered "to them. But the ſoldiers of the French guards ſtepped forwards, ſurrounded us, and "deſired that we might be ſpared. The people conſented, and the guards then eſcorted "us to one of their barracks in *La Nouvelle France*, gave us a ſupper and beds, and the "next morning ſent us to our hôtel."

M. de Launay was alſo dragged to the Place de Grêve, and miſerably murdered [54]. Monſieur de Loſme Salbray, the major of the Baſtille, experienced a ſimilar fate, and ſimilar

[54] We have, in our account of the reduction of the Baſtille, followed that of Mr. Crawford, the gentleman alluded to in a former note. Many of the particulars are taken from a publication, entitled *La Baſtille deveilée*, which was ſtrongly recommended, for its accuracy, by meſſieurs Suard and de la Harpe, conductors of the Journal de Paris, and Mercure de France, and both of them members of the French Academy.

Our relation of this event will be alſo found to differ, in many material points, from that of the authors of the Engliſh Hiſtory of the Revolution, adverted to in a former note; who have preferred the unfounded aſſertions of anonymous writers, to the irrefragable teſtimony of formal depoſitions, taken upon oath. It would be foreign from our purpoſe to correct each particular perverſion, as the ſame ſpirit of miſrepreſentation pervades the whole account; but having accuſed thoſe writers of contributing to the propagation of "groſs falſhoods" and "ridiculous tales," it may not be unneceſſary to adduce ſome further proofs in ſupport of the charge. Of the claſs thus characterized muſt particularly be conſidered the injurious and cruel falſhood, that the unfortunate and murdered de Launay had treacherouſly enticed a number of Pariſians into one of the courts of the Baſtille, where he cauſed them to be maſſacred in cold blood. This horrible and wicked invention produced its odious purpoſes at the time; in the firſt inſtance, by exciting the animoſity of the populace, and ſpurring them on to that pitch of outrage and cruelty which was intended; and in the ſecond, by holding out ſome palliation for the inhuman murder of the governor, and repreſenting it to the world as an act of juſt retribution for his treachery. That a falſhood, ſo foul and calumnious, ſhould have been aſſerted by an *Engliſh* writer, and at ſo late a period as the year 1794, when it ſtands contradicted by the poſitive and unrefuted teſtimony of the *Invalids*, who formed a part of the garriſon; and when even the author of the *Baſtille Deveilée*, though evidently no friend to M. de Launay, and though he ſeems not to diſapprove of his being put to death, exculpates his memory from the treachery that was imputed to him;—that, under ſuch circumſtances, ſuch a falſhood ſhould be ſo adapted and propagated, muſt excite both aſtoniſhment and indignation!—In this inſtance, the "IMPARTIAL" authors have preferred the raſh and unſupported aſſertions of the "*Deux Amis de la Liberté*" to all other authority; and have contented themſelves, in their account of the reduction of the Baſtille, with almoſt a literal tranſlation of a work, which bears, on that ſubject at leaſt, ſcarcely one mark of authenticity, and innumerable ſymptoms of the moſt marked and inveterate prejudice: of this no ſtronger proof will, it is conceived, be required, than the aſſertion, that "M. de Launay deſerved death as governor of the Baſtille—"The mere act of holding that poſt made him guilty of *leſe-nation!!!*" (tom. ii. p. 48.) But the tranſlators have occaſionally exceeded even the originals, by boldly hazarding an unqualified aſſertion (as to a matter of fact) where the latter have adopted the modification of an "*On dit*," or a "*ſelon quelques uns*."—Thus, ſpeaking of a paper ſaid to be diſplayed from the walls by a Swiſs officer, addreſſed to the inſurgents, which an unknown perſon attempted to ſeize,

lar cruelty; although it has ſince been generally acknowledged, even by the democratic writers, that he was a man of great humanity, whoſe tenderneſs to the priſoners deſerved far different treatment. This was, indeed, ſtrongly confirmed by a remarkable circumſtance

fetch, by laying a plank over the ditch, and ſetting it on the parapet, the Frenchmen ſay—"*Le brave inconnu s'avance, "il eſt pret a ſaiſir le papier, mais il tombe dans le foſſe, frappé,* SELON QUELQUES UNS, *d'un coup de fuſil*"—(tom. ii. p. 30,) which the Engliſhmen thus render—"The brave unknown advanced upon the plank; but juſt as he was ready to "ſeize upon the paper, *he received a muſket ſhot* and fell into the ditch." (Vol. i. p. 269.)

It cannot eſcape notice, that the only acts of treachery that paſſed at the taking of the Baſtille, were committed by the *people*, who wantonly broke the word they had ſolemnly pledged, and inflicted death where they had promiſed ſafety.

The pleaſant tale of the heroic barber, who found himſelf ſo deeply involved in the weighty concerns of empire, that he attempted to blow the Baſtille and himſelf up together, though it ſeems intended only as a companion to the former, certainly poſſeſſes many advantages over it; "for beſides its being totally innocent, and undoubted-"ly affording much ſatisfaction to the members of that fraternity, ſome of whom it may poſſibly ſtimulate to ſimilar "deeds of chivalry, it has the poſitive merit of being an unique in that ſpecies of compoſition." But harmleſs as ſuch tales may appear when uſed as a temporary expedient to anſwer a particular purpoſe, they merit the ſevereſt reprobation, when employed to ſully the purity of the hiſtoric page, and to contaminate the clear ſtream in which hiſtory ſhould invariably flow.

In the month of January, 1790, one Francis Felix Dénot, by birth a Pariſian, and by profeſſion a cook, was arreſted in the capital, and proved to be the man who had beheaded the marquis de Launay. The following extract from the depoſitions taken before the Chatelet is too curious to be omitted.

"Being interrogated with reſpect to his conduct on the twelfth of July and the following days, he ſays, that, "on the twelfth of July, ſeeing the buſts of the duke of Orleans and M. Neckar carried through the ſtreets, he "went to the Palais Royal; that ſome perſons there propoſed to him to go to the Place Louis Quinze, to aſſiſt the "people againſt the dragoons who were purſuing them; that he there ſaw troops, among whom he was told was "the prince of Lambeſc, charge and diſperſe the people ſword in hand; that he himſelf was thrown down, and "received ſeveral blows from ſtones; that he heard a muſket fired, and, being frightened, threw himſelf on his "face; that, when he got up, he found a dragoon's helmet, which he brought away with him; that on his way "home, he called out to all he met, to be on their guard that night; that he did not go out again on the twelfth, "but that the next day, hearing that the citizens had taken arms, he went, with the helmet on, to the *Place de "Greve* about nine in the morning; that he from thence went along with many others to get arms at the barracks "at Papincourt; that they there got a number of muſkets, and that he endeavoured to prevent any from getting "arms but ſuch as were fit to be truſted with them; that they there diſperſed and went off to different quarters; "that he and others came to the town-houſe, where they were deſired to return home, and acquainted that a plan "would be formed in the different diſtricts; that he did ſo, and from thence went to the place of rendezvous for "the diſtrict Saint Opportune; that he and other citizens, on that day, and afterwards, marched in patroles through "the ſtreets, and for eight days and nights he was almoſt conſtantly on foot *to preſerve good order*; that on the "morning of Tueſday the fourteenth he was employed in bringing arms from the Hotel des Invalides, that afterwards hearing the people were gone to the Baſtille, he went thither likewiſe; that he was there informed, that "the people were conducting M. de Launay to the town-houſe; that he ran after them, and joined them at the "arch Saint John; that the people who were aſſembled before the town-houſe called out, *Hang him, hang him!* that

"M. de

ſtance which occurred at his death; for the marquis de Pelleport, a young man, whoſe faſhion and figure, independent of his rank and generoſity, entitled him to reſpect, was ſo deeply impreſſed with the kindneſs he had experienced from the major, when he was himſelf a priſoner, that eagerly claſping him in his arms, in the midſt of all this terror and danger, he moſt pathetically entreated the people to ſpare the life of his friend, to whom he owed ſo much. But his entreaties were as fruitleſs as his exertions were vain; the major's head was ſeparated from his body, and his grateful and generous friend, after receiving a ſevere wound in his neck, with difficulty eſcaped the fury of the mob.

In the midſt of theſe diſorders, M. de Fleſſelles, the provoſt of the merchants, had been detected in a correſpondence with the court; he was accordingly diſmiſſed from his office by the committee of electors, and ordered to be conveyed to priſon until his trial; but he had ſcarcely reached the bottom of the ſteps at the town-houſe, when the new executors of ſummary juſtice forced him from the guard, ſhot him inſtantly without trial or enquiry, diſmembered his body, and carried his bleeding head about the ſtreets on a pike in triumph, along with that of M. de Launay. Monſieur de Maray, *aid major*, was killed in the Rue Tournelle. Monſieur Perſan, lieutenant of the Invalids, was murdered in his way to the Grêve; and monſieur Caron, lieutenant in the ſame company, after receiving four wounds in the ſtreets, was carried to the Hôtel Dieu, where he recovered. In the defence of the place only one ſoldier was killed and four wounded. One invalid was killed, and ſeveral wounded by the people after their admiſſion into the caſtle; and two were hanged by the inſurgents at the Grêve.

After more then two hours had rapidly elapſed, under the double intoxication of joy and revenge, ſome humane perſons reminded the populace, that the priſoners in the Baſtille ought to be releaſed; their cells were accordingly broke open, and they were led in triumph round the gardens of the Palais Royal. But how great was the ſurpriſe of

" M. de Launay, who had hitherto kept his eyes caſt down, on hearing this, lifted them up, and ſaid, *Let them put me to death, I prefer that to theſe unmerited inſults*; that in the ſame inſtant, a number of perſons, unknown to the priſoner, gave M. de Launay many wounds with ſwords and bayonets; that the people ſeeing him, the priſoner, with the helmet on, called out, *Come, dragoon, cut off his head*; that though monſieur de Launay was now dead, he felt a great repugnance to do ſo; that he began to do it with a ſword they gave him, but, as it did not cut well, he finiſhed it with a knife that he had in his pocket; that the head being put on the end of a pike, ſtill preſſed by the people, he carried it through the ſtreet, and, being joined by the perſon who, in like manner, carried the head of the Provoſt of the merchants, they went with them to the Palais Royal, and afterwards carried them to the Morgue*; that far from apprehending any *blame* for what he had done, he addreſſed himſelf to ſeveral deputies of the National Aſſembly, expecting to have been rewarded with a medal, *for having freed ſociety of a monſter*; and that about an hour before he had beheaded M. de Launay, had drunk a glaſs of *brandy with gunpowder in it* which had turned his head."

* A place in Paris where dead bodies were expoſed by the police, in order to diſcover who they were.

moſt

moſt, and the diſappointment, doubtleſs, of many, when it was found, that theſe dreary dungeons, which were ſuppoſed to be crowded with the victims of deſpotiſm, contained only *ſeven* priſoners.

The names of theſe men, were, Tavernier, Pujade, La Roche, the count de Solages, White, La Gaurege, and Bechade.—Tavernier had been repeatedly ſent to the Baſtille for different offences. He ſeemed when the place was taken to be diſordered in his mind, and was afterwards ſent to the public receptacle for lunatics at Charenton. Pujade, La Roche, Gaurege, and Bechade, were arreſted at different places, and committed to the Baſtille, until they could be brought to trial for a notorious forgery of bills of exchange to a great amount, that were accepted by meſſieurs Tourton, Ravel, and Gallet de Santerre, bankers at Paris.

The count de Solages, by his own account, was arreſted at Toulouſe in Languedoc, his native country, in 1782, by an order from the miniſter, monſieur Amelot, granted at the requeſt of his father, for diſſipation and other circumſtances of miſconduct. He did not ſeem to conſider his confinement as unmerited, but he complained of having never received any account of his family from the time he had been arreſted. He was firſt ſent to Vincennes, and was removed from thence to the Baſtille, in February, 1784. Having heard the firing, he enquired of the turnkey, who had juſt brought up his dinner, what it meant. He was told it was occaſioned by a revolt of the people on account of the ſcarcity of bread; but while the turnkey was apologizing for being later than uſual in bringing him his dinner, the room was filled with armed men. It was ſome time before the count thought himſelf in ſafety, or could find any one ſufficiently compoſed to relate the events of the day. He was carried to the diſtrict of the Oratoire, and from thence was eſcorted to an hotel, where he was told, for the firſt time, that there had been two aſſemblies of the Notables, and that the States were then ſitting at Verſailles; of the changes that had happened in the miniſtry; and of the diſorders that exiſted throughout the kingdom. He afterwards received an account of his father's death, and the ſeizure of the property which had devolved to him, by his own creditors.

White was arreſted, and ſent to Vincennes, by an order from M. de Sartine, whence he was tranſferred to the Baſtille, at the ſame time with Solages. He was born of Iriſh parents at Rochelle, and was a major in the French infantry. It appeared that he was deranged in his underſtanding, though quiet and inoffenſive. After being carried about the metropolis, for ſome days, by the people, and ſhewn at the coffee-houſes, he was ſent to the mad-houſe at Charenton.

It ſhould not be forgotten, that the preſent ſovereign, through his natural clemency and humanity, and in conformity with the moderate ſyſtem of government which he intended

intended to purſue, had early cleared the ſtate-priſons of moſt of their wretched inhabitants, none being retained but ſuch as had been guilty of notorious crimes againſt ſociety, or concerned in dangerous offences againſt the ſtate. It is likewiſe worthy of obſervation, that, with all the odium and deteſtation under which the queen and the count d'Artois laboured, and with all the libels which were hourly written and ſpoken againſt them, not a ſingle victim to their reſentment or juſtice was found in all the priſons of the kingdom [55].

The people, of their own impulſe, had deſtroyed the governor's houſe, and ſome of the other buildings at the Baſtille; but the mayor and committee, at the town-houſe, reſolved that the caſtle itſelf ſhould be demoliſhed. The city architects were appointed to conduct the work, and this immenſe edifice was ſoon levelled with the ground. Many cannon-balls were found in the walls, ſuppoſed to have been lodged there during the war of the Fronde, at the battle in the ſuburbs of Saint Anthony, when the royal army was commanded by Turenne, and that of the Fronde by the Great Conde [56].

During the twelfth and thirteenth, thoſe critical days, on which their own fate and that of their ſovereign ſeemed to depend, and on the firſt of which the ſcale ſeemed to vibrate ſo much, that it was evident a vigorous exertion might have fixed its bias, the miniſters at Verſailles, and the commanders of the army, appeared to be ſunk into a deep lethargy, or a profound ſleep; the former, indeed, when unwillingly rouſed to hear the accounts from Paris, treated them with the utmoſt contempt and ridicule, as matters not worthy of their conſideration; but on the fatal Tueſday, the fourteenth of July, evil tidings arrived ſo faſt from every quarter, that they were overwhelmed with conſternation and terror, and rendered totally incapable, if it had not even been too late, to adopt any meaſures which required deciſion or vigour, either with reſpect to orders or execution. It now appeared, that the deſection of the French guards had, with other pre-diſpoſing cauſes and motives, produced a moſt unfortunate effect upon the national troops

[55] It is by no means incurious to contraſt with this fact the ſtate of things under the influence, or it may be called, government, of Madame Pompadour, who filled all the priſons of France with the unfortunate victims to her private malice and perſonal reſentments; yet Pompadour was idolized by Voltaire, and by all the poets, wits, and philoſophers of the kingdom, in her days, and was even, at times, a favourite with the people.

[56] The demolition of the Baſtille, by a formal reſolution, has been juſtly conſidered, by an Engliſh author, as an ebullition of that deſtroying ſpirit which has levelled all the orders of the ancient monarchy. "It was like the "anger of an ill-brought-up boy, who beats the floor, when by his own awkwardneſs he has fallen, with this diſ-"ference, the one is an impulſe of paſſion in a child, the other was the reſult of deliberation in men." The Baſtille had been erected under different reigns at an immenſe expence; it had ſtood above four hundred years, through all the viciſſitudes of tempeſtuous times; it ſeemed calculated to brave the effects of age, and might have been of great utility in a city, perhaps worſe provided with priſons and hoſpitals than any other great town in Europe.—*Hiſtory of the Baſtille*, p. 189, 190.

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in the army; that they were no longer to be depended on; and that they openly aſſerted the unlawfulneſs of fighting their fellow citizens. Before they had yet time to reflect on the conſequences of this deplorable news, or to conſider what meaſures were proper to be purſued, they were farther confounded by the intelligence, that but little more reliance could be placed on the foreign regiments than on the national troops. The former had ever been unpopular, chiefly upon the idea—excluſive of national pique and vanity—that, being entirely dependent on the crown, they would be found, upon any occaſion that offered, the ready inſtruments of deſpotiſm; but now, to the aſtoniſhment of every body, they ſhewed themſelves very little diſpoſed to engage in national diſputes; and ſeemed very cold and indifferent with reſpect to the cauſe they were called to ſupport. In this diſmal ſtate of things, the only policy which the genius of the miniſters was capable of deviſing, was the fugitive, pitiful, and cowardly expedient of concealment, in keeping the king ignorant of the misfortunes in which he was involved, and of the dangers to which he was expoſed.

But when, on the evening of Tueſday, the news arrived at Verſailles, of the taking of the Baſtille, of a powerful army being formed in Paris, and of the deplorable fate of de Launay, Fleſſelles, and Loſme, the Miniſters, all aghaſt, ſeemed as if ſtricken with a thunder-bolt. Still, though their confidence had forſaken them, their policy was preſerved, and it was determined not to reveal the diſmal tidings to their ſovereign. In the courſe of that day, the National Aſſembly, after much and eager debate, and a variety of motions, adopted, with unanimity, the following reſolutions:

"The National Aſſembly is of opinion, that the public tranquillity may be reſtored "and preſerved, by regularly forming and maintaining the militia that has been raiſed "in the capital. It reſolves, that the king be again conjured to withdraw his troops, "whoſe preſence has been the principal cauſe of the diſorders that now prevail, and "which, by ſhewing the contraſt of a military force that alarms, with a civil power "that protects, puts in oppoſition the privileges of authority with the rights of the ci-"tizen. It directs that the deputies lately ſent to the king, go back, and employ the "moſt preſſing inſtances with his majeſty, to engage him to ſend away his troops."

The deputation accordingly repaired to the palace; and, after a conſiderable abſence, the archbiſhop of Vienne, their preſident, who was at the head of the deputation, returned at nine in the evening with the following anſwer:

"I am without intermiſſion employed in the adoption of means for reſtoring tran-"quillity in the capital. I had ordered the provoſt of the merchants to come to me, in "order to take meaſures for that purpoſe. Having ſince been informed that a militia "has been eſtabliſhed there, I have given orders to general officers to put themſelves at

" the head of that militia, to aſſiſt it with their experience, and to ſecond the zeal of " the good citizens. I have likewiſe given orders to withdraw the troops in the *Champ* " *de Mars* The concern you expreſs at the diſorders that reign there, is a ſentiment " that ſhould be in the heart of every one, and moſt ſeriouſly afflicts mine."

While this deputation was with the king, another arrived at the aſſembly from *the permanent committee of the Town Houſe*, to repreſent the ſtate of the city; and to deſire, in the preſent criſis, the eſtabliſhment of a correſpondence between the committee and the aſſembly. One of the members of the aſſembly, the baron de Vens, who came from Paris about the ſame time, gave an affecting deſcription of the ſcene he had juſt quitted. He had been ſeized by the people, and forcibly conveyed to the town-houſe; on his way thither they ſhewed him the mangled bodies of meſſieurs de Launay and de Fleſſelles, and repeatedly threatened him with a ſimilar fate. The aſſembly paſſed over in ſilence this inſult offered by the inſurgents to one of their own body, though even the appearance of *ſlight* on the part of the *king* never failed to incur their ſevereſt reprehenſion; and contented themſelves with ſending another deputation to the palace to communicate the intelligence to his majeſty. The archbiſhop of Paris, who was at the head of this deputation, returned about eleven at night, and told the aſſembly, that he had obtained immediate admiſſion to the king, whom he found with his brothers, and who, on hearing the news, replied, that *his heart was more and more deeply wounded, but that it was not poſſible to believe that orders had been given to the troops capable of producing ſo many cala-* " *mities.* " Alas!"—exclaims M. de Lally-Tolendal, who was preſent at the time—" it " was ſufficient to ſee him and to hear him, to be convinced that he ſpoke truth[57]."

On the fifteenth, the king went to the aſſembly, without guards, and pronounced the following ſpeech:

" I called you together, to conſult you on matters of the utmoſt importance to the " ſtate, and none can be more important than the dreadful diſorders that prevail in the " capital—None affect me ſo deeply; and the chief of the nation comes with confidence " among its repreſentatives, to ſhew them his affection, and to invite them to the adop- " tion of means for the reſtoration of order and tranquillity.

" I know that unjuſt inſinuations have been induſtriouſly diffuſed; I know that ſome " have dared to publiſh that your perſons were in danger—Is it neceſſary for me to " diſavow rumours thus criminal, and which I hope are ſufficiently contradicted by my " character, that is ſo well known to you?

[57] Mémoire de M. le Comte de Lally-Tolendal, p. 68.

" I, then,

T. Jones Fecit.

M. BAILLY, MAYOR OF PARIS.

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"I, then, who am one with the nation, unite myſelf with you, and deſire you to aſſiſt "me in the adoption of meaſures for the ſafety of the ſtate. I expect this from the "National Aſſembly. The zeal of the repreſentatives of my people, called together "for the public welfare, aſſures me of it: and, relying on the love and fidelity of my "ſubjects, I have given orders for the troops to retire from Paris and Verſailles. I au- "thorize, nay I invite, you, to make my intentions known in the capital."

This ſpeech was received with the loudeſt acclamations; the ſtream of loyalty ſeemed again to return to its natural channel; and as the king roſe to return, the deputies ſtarted from their ſeats, and forming a circle around him, conducted their ſovereign in triumph to the palace. From that inſtant Lewis had in effect reſigned the ſovereignty into the hands of the aſſembly, with little proſpect of his ever again recovering it. From that time alſo the middle, or moderate party, led by Mounier, Lally, Malouet, &c. were reconciled to him, and ſeem to have relied cordially upon his faith; but the friends and patronizers of extreme democracy, either were or affected to be afraid that his known irreſolution would afford the means for throwing him back into the hands of their enemies, and therefore determined to exert their power to its utmoſt extent, in order to fetter him as cloſely as poſſible.

The terror of ſieges and blockades had got ſuch poſſeſſion of the minds of the Pariſians, that they could think of nothing elſe, and they were inceſſant in their preparations of defence. La Fayette was now elected to the command of the new militia, with the title of general. The old office or appellation of provoſt of the merchants, was ſuppreſſed, and M. Bailly, formerly known by his aſtronomical writings, was appointed chief magiſtrate, under the name of mayor of Paris.

That capital was now to be conſidered as a great republic, and it ſoon became ſo ſenſible of its own power, as to give the law, not only to the unfortunate ſovereign, but to the National Aſſembly, and to the kingdom at large. All the arrogance, preſumption, cruelty, ferociouſneſs, and tyranny; all that contempt for the laws, for order, and ſubordination; all that diſpoſition to miſtruſt, ſuſpicion, and revolt, which had invariably marked their conduct in all times of public tumult, from the earlieſt periods of the monarchy to the preſent æra, was now ſtrongly diſplayed by the Pariſians. The National Aſſembly, profiting by the invitation of the king to make known his ſentiments to the inhabitants of the capital, which might eaſily have been done by a letter from the preſident, even now, ſeemed to acknowledge its maſter, by ſending a deputation of eighty-four of its members to the city of Paris, rather to implore than to propoſe, much leſs to order or command, peace. This may be conſidered as one of the many evil conſequences which reſulted from the ill-adviſed and ruinous meaſure of aſſembling the ſtates at Verſailles; for it is not probable that the aſſembly would have ſubmitted to the degrading

grading humiliation of complimenting a band of inſurgents, if they had been out of the reach of that turbulent capital; neither would the factious part of them, in ſuch a ſituation, have had an opportunity of becoming, as they did parties in their cabals and factions; until at length, alternately acting and being acted upon, they became by turns the inſtruments of each other's purpoſes, though the faction in the aſſembly was not ſeldom obliged to give way, contrary to its own inclination, to the dreadful power of thoſe in the city. The Pariſians were, however, too ſenſible, in the preſent inſtance, of the importance which they derived from this ſingular deputation, not to receive the deputies with every mark of applauſe and reſpect.

The National Aſſembly now haſtened to give that advice which the king had ſo earneſtly aſked in his ſpeech of the fifteenth; but like men elated with unexpected ſucceſs, they already began to overleap the bounds of moderation, and evinced an eager deſire to ſtrip their ſovereign of thoſe rights which are not only eſſential to the preſervation of monarchical dignity, but highly conducive to the welfare of a ſtate. It became a topic of diſcuſſion with theſe infant legiſlators, whether, as repreſentatives of the people, they had not the excluſive right of chooſing the miniſters of the crown. Mounier, who, with equal energy and eloquence, pointed out the abſurdity and danger of ſuch principles, which tended to veſt an unlimited and deſpotic power in the aſſembly, was accuſed by Mirabeau, of advancing a doctrine *impious* and *deteſtable* [52]. The voice of moderation, however, prevailed; after very warm debates, a milder and more conſtitutional mode of proceeding was adopted; and an addreſs, propoſed by the baron de Juigné, being agreed to, was preſented to the king. It ſet forth, that in conſequence of the deſire which his majeſty had been pleaſed to expreſs, of conforming his ſentiments to thoſe of the National Aſſembly, they humbly adviſed him to diſmiſs his preſent miniſters and counſellors, and to recall M. Neckar, and thoſe who had lately been removed.

The new miniſters, however, had anticipated the wiſhes of the aſſembly, and voluntarily reſigned their poſts: while the king chearfully complied with their requeſt to recall M. Neckar; and, in order to prevent any poſſible ſuſpicions as to the ſincerity of his conduct, ſent the letter he had written for that purpoſe for the inſpection of the Aſſembly.

But, notwithſtanding theſe conciliatory meaſures, the power and violence of the mob had now riſen to ſuch a height, that it became dangerous to ſuch as were known to entertain ſentiments oppoſite to thoſe of the popular party, to remain within its reach. The count d'Artois withdrew ſecretly in the night, and went to Bruſſels, whither he had already ſent his ſons, the dukes of Angoulême and Berry. The prince of Condé,

[52] Expoſé de la Conduite de M. Mounier, p. 19

with

Jones Sculp.

Count D.' Artois

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with his ſon and grandſon, the dukes of Bourbon and Enghien, and the prince of Conti, retired thither about the ſame time. The count d'Artois, and the princes of Condé and Conti, had, in the aſſembly of *Notables*, oppoſed the double repreſentation of the Third Eſtate, and had, on all occaſions, profeſſed their attachment to the ancient principles of the monarchy. Thoſe who bore them any enmity, or who thought their preſence might obſtruct their views, were induſtrious to inflame the popular prejudices, and to aſcribe to them a variety of ſayings and counſels, hoſtile to the opinions that now prevailed. Bills had been ſtuck up in the PALAIS ROYAL, *piouſly* recommending their deſtruction, and even *charitably* offering a price for their heads [39]. In theſe bloody proſcriptions were to be ſeen the names of the miniſters who had juſt reſigned, and of a number of perſons, of both ſexes, who had become obnoxious to the people, by having been favourites with the court. In their flight, they were under the neceſſity of diſguiſing themſelves till they reached the frontier. The news of the late occurrences at Paris ſpread with wonderful rapidity; the meſſengers of theſe tidings urged the people to arm; and announcing that the guilty were endeavouring to eſcape, travellers, for months afterwards, were liable to be arreſted and detained at every town throughout the kingdom, unleſs furniſhed with a paſſport from the *permanent committee* in the capital.

Symptoms of the rapid decline of ſetting monarchy were now abundantly perceived. On the night of the ſixteenth, an univerſal gloom reigned throughout the immenſe palace of Verſailles. Not a miniſter remained: and all the princes, with their attendants, were gone, except Monſieur, next brother to the king. No longer were the ſpacious apartments crouded with courtiers; alarmed at the paſt, and doubtful of the future, they had withdrawn; and but few were to be found, except ſuch as were immediately on ſervice. It has been remarked, on this occaſion, that ſome of thoſe who had been accuſtomed to baſk in the ſunſhine of royalty, and whoſe families had riſen to opulence by the bounties of the ſovereign, were the firſt to deſert his cauſe.

The king was adviſed and perſuaded, in the hope of removing the eternal ſuſpicions and jealouſies of the Pariſians, of calming the reſtleſs turbulence of their minds, and thereby of reducing them to a ſtate of good order and temper, to viſit himſelf the city of Paris. This humiliating and deſperate meaſure he carried into execution on Friday, the ſeventeenth of July, under a full conviction, in his own mind, that he thereby encountered the perils of inſtant aſſaſſination. Nor will theſe apprehenſions be deemed unfounded, when it is conſidered, that he was deſtined to paſs through a multitude in arms, moſt of whom were unacquainted with the management of them; and many in a ſtate

[39] There can be no doubts, but that the *maſter* of the Palais Royal would have been glad to purchaſe them at any rate.

of popular delirium, and ſome yet ſtained with the blood which it had madly led them to ſpill.

The National Aſſembly appointed a deputation to accompany their ſovereign, who left his palace, about ten in the morning, without parade, without his uſual guard, and ſurrounded by a body of armed inhabitants of Verſailles on foot, who had inſiſted upon attending him. When this motley, but ſolemn, proceſſion ſet out, many of the ancient ſervants of the court, who had never ſeen their maſter viſit his capital but ſurrounded with the ſplendour of the throne, and amidſt the acclamations of his people, burſt into a flood of tears. At Seve he was received by a detachment of five-and-twenty thouſand of the Pariſian militia. As he approached the gates of the capital, he was met by M. Bailly, the new choſen mayor of Paris, attended by the municipal officers, and the deputies of each diſtrict. After the mayor had preſented him with the keys of the city, and addreſſed him in a ſpeech, neither remarkable for its eloquence nor its truth, he proceeded to the town-hall between two files of burghers, three deep, who lined the road, to the number of two hundred thouſand men, armed with ſuch weapons as they had been able to procure, and conſequently exhibiting a moſt motley appearance. The cannon that had been taken at the Baſtille and the Hôtel des Invalids were purpoſely placed in his road, while about his coach were thoſe perfidious troops who, a few days before, had enjoyed the diſtinction of being his guards. Throughout the immenſe crowd a profound ſilence prevailed; the uſual exclamation of *Vive le Roi!* with which the air, at other times, would have reſounded, had been prohibited, or was forgotten. The accidents that had been apprehended were now experienced; muſkets were heard to go off; ſeveral perſons were wounded; and a young woman of a decent family, and mother of ſeveral children, was ſhot near the carriage of the king [60].

It was half paſt four in the afternoon, when the king, after having been more than ſix hours in performing a journey of about ten miles, reached the town-hall, where he was again harangued by a M. Moreau de St. Mery, one of thoſe *revolution-orators*, who, having collected a few ſtale maxims, and hackneyed ſentiments, diſplayed them on all occaſions, without the ſmalleſt regard to fitneſs of time, or propriety of application. With men, vanity has the magic power of giving an appearance of novelty to truths old as the univerſe. M. de Saint Mery concluded his harangue by ſagaciouſly obſerving, that "The throne of a king is never ſo ſolid as when it hath for its baſis the love and *fide-*"*lity* of the people," whence he inferred, that the throne of Lewis the Sixteenth (though then tottering to its very foundation) was *immoveable!*

One part of his ſpeech, however, was calculated to impreſs a belief of the real exiſt-

[60] See Mr. Crawford's publication, quoted in a former note, p. 184.

ence

ence of thoſe flagitious and cruel deſigns againſt the city of Paris, which had been ſo induſtriouſly imputed to the court, as a means of exciting the preſent troubles. On this imputation, a denial ſo involuntary, ſo unembarraſſed, and ſo poſitive, burſt from the lips of the king, that it was impoſſible for the by-ſtanders to avoid feeling a conviction, that it was the language of conſcious innocence in an indignant reſiſtance to falſe accuſation; and M. de Lally, who heard it, declares that the mayor of Paris himſelf, who was alſo preſent, muſt, from that moment, have ceaſed to believe that any hoſtile project had been formed againſt the capital [61].

As Charles the Wiſe had been compelled to accept the badge of faction from the hands of Marcel, ſo was Lewis the Sixteenth, who filled the ſame throne, now obliged to ſubmit to the degradation of receiving from the hands of Bailly, who occupied the ſame poſt, the national cockade. After having heard ſeveral other ſpeeches, the king declared, that the object of his viſit to Paris was to remove any doubts that might be entertained of the ſincerity of his conduct, and to requeſt that tranquillity might be reſtored to the metropolis, and his ſubjects return to their uſual occupations. He approved of the nomination of La Fayette to the command of the Pariſian militia, and of Bailly to the office of mayor; the former was his ſervant, and his conſent for the appointment of the other was not yet thought needleſs. After his majeſty had ſufficiently ſhewn himſelf to the people, at the windows of the town houſe, while the exclamations of *Vive Le Roi! Vive le Nation!* were heard from innumerable voices below, he expreſſed his deſire to return, and arrived at Verſailles about eight in the evening.

The powers, which had hitherto been exerciſed in the capital by the ſervants of the government, were now aſſumed by the mayor and aſſembly at the town-houſe. The maſter of the poſt-office took an oath of fidelity to the nation before the mayor, and the *Hotel de la Police* was changed into the *Hotel de la Mayorie.* The allowances to the mayor and other officers; the expences of the militia, of the police, and all other public diſburſements in Paris, were to be defrayed from the revenue; but for the extraordinary charges, incurred for the defence of the town, contributions were to be demanded from the inhabitants, according to their means, and their zeal for the public cauſe. The barriers that had been deſtroyed were re-eſtabliſhed; the officers of the cuſtoms were again placed at them; patroles marched conſtantly through the ſtreets; and, beſides the uſual mode of lighting them, the inhabitants were obliged to illuminate their houſes at a certain hour; ſo that Paris for many weeks after the Revolution, exhibited every night the appearance of ſome extraordinary public rejoicing. But, notwithſtanding theſe precautions, it was ſoon ſadly experienced, that whenever the people bent their minds upon, or were excited to, any act of violence, there exiſted no regular force by which

[61] Memoire de M. le Comte de Lally-Tolendal, p. 75.

they could be reſtrained; and that even thoſe who had been raiſed by their power, might eaſily become the victims of their caprice.

Though the people had diſplayed the moſt unbounded ſatisfaction at the profeſſions of their ſovereign, and a reſtoration of harmony had apparently taken place, they ſecretly cheriſhed a ſpirit of revenge againſt thoſe who had eſpouſed an oppoſite party; which they reſolved to gratify, whenever an opportunity ſhould occur. The firſt victims of their reſentment were M. de Foulon, and his ſon-in-law, M. Berthier, intendant of Paris. The former was accuſed of having treated the people with *diſreſpect* during a ſcarcity of proviſions, by ſaying, that if corn could not be had, its place might be ſupplied with hay [62]. We have before obſerved, that he had declined a place to which he he had been nominated under the mareſchal de Broglio; and, being aware of the general indignation which prevailed againſt him, he had, at the commencement of the preſent diſturbances, retired to the country-ſeat of his friend, M de Sartine; but the vigilance of an enraged populace was not eaſily eluded: he was ſoon diſcovered, and in the night of the twenty-ſecond of July, ſeized in his bed, by a horde of ruffians, and dragged, though trembling with age, having attained his ſeventy fifth year, on foot to Paris; where, without any previous interrogation or form of trial whatever, he was put to death, with circumſtances of ſuch peculiar barbarity, as would be painful, and, indeed, indecent to relate;—circumſtances, too, in which the *women* were the principal actors; twice was he ſuſpended to the fatal rope, and twice did the cord break, while the inſults he had received were renewed during the dreadful intervals; and a quarter of an hour was ſuffered to elapſe before the new cord could be procured, that put an end to his exiſtence, though not to the enormities of his ferocious aſſaſſins. His head was ſevered from his body, and, ſome hay being ſtuffed into the mouth, was fixed upon a pole, and paraded in triumph through the ſtreets of the city [63].

M. Berthier, who had been ſeized at Compiegne, was brought to Paris the ſame evening; and, in his way to the town-houſe, he was met by a proceſſion of furies and ruffians, who compelled him to kiſs the lifeleſs head of his murdered father: he had not been long at the town-houſe, before they ruſhed in, and in ſpite of every effort to allay their ſavage fury, dragged out their devoted victim; and, after cutting off his head, opened his entrails, while they drew his mangled limbs, which they had torn from his body,

[62] That he had really uttered this *proverbial* phraſe, no proof whatever was adduced.

[63] The mob, alike impious and ferocious, added blaſphemy to their cruelty; they placed *a crown of thorns* upon the head of the wretched ſufferer, and when, ſinking with pain and fatigue, he aſked for ſomething to quench his thirſt, they offered him *vinegar*. *L'Abbe Sabatier*, tom. i. p. 93.

about

about the ſtreets, exhibiting his head on a pole, and his heart on the point of a cutlaſs [64]. This unfortunate man left eight children to deplore his loſs.

Such was the fatal conſequence of debauching the regular troops, and depending for ſecurity on a *Civic* army; though eight-and-forty thouſand men had been regularly embodied in the capital, and ſo diſtributed that, at a ſhort notice, they might all have been eaſily aſſembled, the magiſtrates and officers found it impoſſible to prevent a furious mob from committing the moſt horrid murders, in the face of day, and in the heart of the city. But let it not be ſuppoſed that the mayor and the general—Bailly and La Fayette—diſcharged their duty on this occaſion!—All that their *perſonal* influence and exertions could effect was tried:—but did they ſound the *tocſin*? did they attempt to aſſemble the national guards? Did they, in ſhort, adopt any one of thoſe meaſures, for the ſuppreſſion of tumult, and for the prevention of ſuch groſs violations of juſtice and humanity, to which they would have had recourſe, if but a ſingle regiment of Broglio's army had advanced towards the capital; or if their ſovereign, unarmed and unattended, had repaired thither to receive their commands?—No—not *one*. They were thereby guilty of a ſcandalous neglect of their duty; nor could the *ſuddenneſs* of the event be pleaded in palliation of ſuch neglect; for it was notorious that one body of men was gone for the purpoſe of ſeizing M. de Foulon; and a ſecond, headed by an *elector*, to apprehend his ſon-in-law; and the time requiſite to go to Very and Compeigne, and to return from thence, was more than amply ſufficient for the adoption of the neceſſary precautions, to enſure ſafety to the ſufferers, and tranquillity to the capital [65].

64 The ſame man who had been employed to cut off the head of the marquis de Launay was alſo preſent at this horrid ſcene. In the depoſition, part of which we have quoted in a former note, he ſays—"That he had no part in "the murder of M. Berthier; that he was near him, heard him proteſt his innocence, and ſupplicate the people "if they thought him guilty of any crime, to carry him to priſon, in order that he might be tried; that M. Ber-"thier was ſtabbed to death by ſome ſoldiers; that a ſoldier of the regiment of Royal Cravate opened his belly "with a ſabre, and one he is unacquainted with pulled out his heart, put it into his (the priſoner's) hand, and in a "furious manner took him by the collar, ſaying, *Come, dragoon, bring it to the Hotel de Ville*; that he accordingly went "with him accompanied by many other perſons, and, having ſeen M. de La Fayette, came away; that in coming "down the ſtairs, the ſoldier put the heart upon the point of a cutlaſs, and obliged him (the priſoner) to carry it "through the ſtreets to the Palais-Royal; that while he was at ſupper with the ſoldier at an eating-houſe, and "*the heart lying on the table*, the people came and demanded the heart, which they threw out at the window †."

The declaration made by this man was publiſhed in all the daily papers printed in the metropolis, under the article of *Chatelet de Paris*.

65 It is, indeed, probable, that they had no confidence in the militia, and that they believed, if called upon to act, they would have acted againſt them; but, at all events, this ſhould have been tried, and it was their duty to make the trial.

† Not a word is here mentioned of the *reſentment* of the ſoldiers of the corps to which the monſter belonged who tore out the heart of Foulon; nor of the *duel* which that reſentment is ſaid to have occaſioned, on this very night, and by which the ruffian is ſaid to have periſhed.—It is evidently a tale fabriſated by the "*Deux Amis de la Liberté*, and adopted by their tranſlators.

Preparatory

Preparatory to theſe deeds of horror, the moſt barbarous and inhuman popular ſongs—which it was alſo the duty of the mayor to ſuppreſs—ſet to inviting tunes, had been fabricated for the people of Paris, in order, if poſſible, to encreaſe their native ferocity and cruelty. One of theſe, the verſes of which ended with the pious wiſh, that all the ariſtocrats might be hanged at the lanterne, was to be heard, from morning till night, in every ſtreet, and almoſt every houſe, ſung by all claſſes and orders; the fairer part of the ſofter ſex degrading themſelves in this reſpect to the ſame level with the moſt profligate and abandoned. Theſe barbarous words, like the *war whoop* of the ſavages in North America, became afterwards the *death ſignal* in every part of France.

After the departure of the princes of the blood, the diſſenting nobles haſtened to renounce their former proteſt, and held themſelves abſolved by neceſſity from the oath they had taken to their conſtituents. It was agreed to bury the name of *States General* in oblivion, and the name of *National Aſſembly* was henceforth adopted by all parties. Some reverence ſeemed ſtill to be paid to the word *royalty*, although the ſubſtance to which it related had entirely loſt its eſſence. It was thought that the term royaliſts, applied to thoſe who were devoted to proſcription and popular fury, would yet be too wounding to the ears of Frenchmen to be endured, the term *ariſtocrat*, therefore, of which not one in a thouſand of thoſe who uſed it knew the true meaning and import, was, upon all occaſions, ſubſtituted in its place.

The commotions which had taken place in the capital ſoon extended their fatal influence not only to the neighbouring towns, but even to the moſt diſtant provinces. At Saint Germain and Poiſſy ſome murders had been committed, on the charge or ſuſpicion of a monopoly of corn; attempts of a ſimilar nature were with difficulty prevented at Pontoiſe; in Brittany the ſame diſorders prevailed; nor were Normandy and Burgundy leſs infected with the ſpirit of tumult and ſedition, which ſeemed on the point of diffuſing itſelf all over the kingdom. *Emiſſaries evidently diſpatched from a central point, went different roads, paſſing through the towns and villages, where they ſtaid only a ſufficient time to cauſe the alarm-bell to be rung; in one place announcing, as the cauſe of alarm, the march of foreign troops; in another, the approach of a band of plunderers; in all, calling the people to arms; while many of them, for the more effectual accompliſhment of their purpoſe, diſtributed money as they paſſed*[66]. The end and object of their deſtructive progreſs, was the pillage of granaries, the burning of houſes, and the aſſaſſination of the proprietors. Whenever the ſoldiers were called upon to ſuppreſs the tumults, thus excited, they made a merit of diſobedience, and joined the mob.

The prevalence of diſorders that ſeemed to threaten a total diſſolution of govern-

[66] Mémoire de M. de Lally-Tolendal, p. 77, 78.

ment

ment naturally called for the attention of the National Aſſembly, in which both the executive and legiſlative authority appeared, at this period, to be excluſively inveſted. The mind of every virtuous member was of courſe impreſſed with ſentiments of indignation at the acts of barbarity which had been committed in the capital, and at the ſanguinary diſpoſition which was ſpreading with ſuch terrific ſymptoms in the country. Lally-Tolendal took the lead in the debate on this momentous point, and was ably ſeconded by Mounier, and ſupported by others of the moderate party; who propoſed a proclamation to warn the people from thus conſtituting themſelves judges and executioners of the law.

But the powerful democratic party entertained ſentiments of a very different nature on this ſubject, and did not by any means wiſh to reſtrain the hands, or to confine the authority of *their uſeful allies*. Some of theſe endeavoured to calm the the virtuous indignation of their adverſaries; one of them, thinking, perhaps, that the victims already immolated would be inſufficient to gratify the reſentment of the populace, propoſed the eſtabliſhment of a tribunal for trying thoſe perſons who had been arreſted, and ſuch as ſhould in future be denounced *by the people* as guilty. This propoſal was defended by ſeveral deputies; and many of them, adopting the wiſh of ſome of the diſtricts of Paris, even adviſed the eſtabliſhment of a grand jury in the capital, for the trial of all ſtate criminals. At this very time, too, a liſt of proſcriptions, in which ſeveral members of the aſſembly were included, was circulated among the people of Paris [67].

Theſe dangerous propoſitions were moſt ably combated by M. Mounier, who ſhewed that the creation of laws and tribunals for the puniſhment of *anterior* crimes would be a violation of the plaineſt principles of juſtice; he maintained, that the proſecution of offences againſt the ſtate was the excluſive province of the national repreſentatives; and that it would be a ſcandalous proſtitution of the ſublime inſtitution of juries, to render it ſubſervient to popular rage: he aſked, whether a tribunal, deſtined to try men accuſed by a populace, thirſting for blood, and always prepared, in their ſtupid ignorance, to receive as certain facts calumnies the moſt abſurd, would be at liberty to afford protection to innocence; and whether ſuch a commiſſion would not form a tribunal of blood ſubſervient to the orders of the factious, and a thouſand times more formidable than the ſatellites of tyrants the moſt abhorred?

When the democratic party objected, "That the buſineſs of the aſſembly was to make "laws, and not to attend to a few particular diſorders," Lally-Tolendal replied, that the ſtoiciſm which could lead them coldly to dictate laws, while murders were ordering around them, appeared to him to be very far from deſerving the name of a virtue. He

[67] Expoſé de la Conduite de M. Mounier; dans l'Aſſemblée Nationale, p. 24, 25.

ridiculed

ridiculed the pretence of valuing ſo highly the liberty of thoſe whoſe lives they did not ſeem to value at all; and that curious ſpecies of generoſity, which induced them to deſpiſe dangers of which they did not partake.

But ſtrong and incontrovertible as the reaſons urged in ſupport of the motion indiſputably were, every ſophiſtical argument, every pitiful ſubterfuge, every daring aſſertion, that the ingenuity of faction could deviſe, or its effrontery advance, was employed for the purpoſe of perſuading the aſſembly to reject it. M. de Lally was told that his ſenſibility had ſeduced his reaſon; that the conflagrations, impriſonments, and aſſaſſinations which inſpired his mind with horror, were *untoward circumſtances, which muſt have been expected, and ſhould be borne with patience.* Another member obſerved to him, *that his imagination had created dangers which had no exiſtence*; and *that there was no danger but in his motion*; it was dangerous to liberty, becauſe it tended to take from the people a *ſalutary inquietude* which they ought to preſerve; dangerous to the public tranquillity, becauſe it would give the people a *falſe inquietude* which they ought not to experience; ſtill more dangerous to the ASSEMBLY, *who would ſee the city of Paris declare againſt it, if they adopted the motion*[61]; dangerous to the legiſlative power, which, after having broken the formidable force of authority, would, by that means, raiſe up another force ſtill more formidable; and dangerous to the executive power, which, all dreadful as it had juſt been repreſented, would be affected by its inability to enforce obedience. So fertile were the brains of theſe orators in the creation of imaginary dangers; and ſo blind to exiſting dangers of ſuch enormous magnitude as to exceed, in their conſequences, all human calculation!

M. Lally, in his reply, obſerved, that a man muſt ſhut his eyes againſt the light, not to ſee dangers which every minute rendered more alarming; that, in a ſhort time, there would no longer be either an executive power, a judicial power, or a coercive authority, in France. He called upon the members of the oppoſite party to explain a contraſt which he was unable to comprehend: "On the one hand, it is inſiſted,"—ſaid he—"that we "ſhould remain tranquil, while two perſons are actually proſcribed at Poiſſy[60]; when "twelve

[61] *This* was the operative motive for the open rejection of the propoſal with the democratic party; they were afraid of loſing their worthy allies of the capital, whoſe aſſiſtance, they knew, was eſſentially requiſite to the ſucceſs of *their* ſchemes; and, to obtain this, they did not ſcruple to render the legiſlative body, as far as they could at leaſt, ſubſervient to the caprice of the *metropolitan* inſurgents.—"*If it were not for theſe Pariſians*"—ſaid one of them —"*whom you blame, we ſhould not now be ſitting here.*"

[60] One of the perſons who fell a victim to the rage of the populace, was *Sauvage*, a miller at Poiſſy: being accuſed of having a quantity of flour in his poſſeſſion, the people entered his premiſes, where ſix or ſeven hundred ſacks of flour were found; this was deemed ſufficient proof, and the mob bade him prepare for inſtant death; but, on the interference of ſome humane perſons, they were with difficulty perſuaded to reſpite the miller, until a proper enquiry ſhould have eſtabliſhed his guilt. He was, therefore, taken to a neighbouring convent, when, after a very minute inveſtigation of the fact, it was clearly demonſtrated, that he was no monopolizer, but had been appointed

" twelve others are threatened; when the lives of ſix inhabitants are demanded at Pon-
" toiſe; when, yeſterday, the *tocſin* was rung at Brie-Comte-Robert, and the inhabitants
" were expelled from their houſes; when the commandant of Burgundy, diſtinguiſhed
" by the purity and moderation of his character, has narrowly eſcaped being cut to
" pieces, and thrown into a well;—on the other hand, a needleſs inquietude is pertina-
" ciouſly kept up, when all the troops are removed, when all the miniſters whom we
" dreaded are diſmiſſed, and when the king has reſigned himſelf up to us."—He aſked, whether they were legiſlators, or *conſpirators?* and, when a citizen-king gave them liberty, and they had nothing to do but *receive* it, why they perſiſted in their determination to *conquer* it, as if it were to be torn from a tyrant[70]?

When Lally enforced his arguments, by deſcribing the horrid deaths of Foulon and Berthier, the celebrated patriot Barnave ironically aſked, " *if the blood he lamented was* " *ſo very pure*[71]*?*" while Mirabeau told him, " It was a time to *think* rather than to " *feel.*" To this laſt remark Lally replied, that Tiberius *thought*, and deeply too; and Lewis the twelfth *felt* moſt accutely; and he aſked his opponents, if they had the choice between the two princes and between the two legiſlators, which of them they would chuſe?

As the debate was continued during three ſucceſſive days, and the tumults rather encreaſed than diminiſhed, one of the members took advantage of that circumſtance to affirm, that the very mention of a proclamation had excited an inſurrection, though its profeſſed object was to enforce reſpect to the laws, and promote the return of public tranquillity; it was objected at the ſame time, that *the perſons to whom it was addreſſed could not read*, though when the *declaration of rights* came to be diſcuſſed, the ſame party diſcovered that every man in France could read; another objection was, that it could not be preſented to the king for his ſanction, becauſe the form of the ſanction was not yet determined, though a fortnight after they loſt ſight of this circumſtance, when they wiſhed the king to ſanction the decrees of the fourth of Auguſt.

A ſenſe of ſhame on one ſide, and unceaſing perſeverance on the other, produced at length, in ſome degree, their effect, and, on the twenty-third of July, the proclamation was iſſued, but not till it had been ſtripped of all the cogent expreſſions propoſed by Lally, ſuch as the following ſentences; that " Whoever excited troubles was a bad citi-

pointed by government to purchaſe corn for the uſe of the capital. The mob, however, reſolved not to be diſappointed of their prey; they again ſeized the unhappy man, and conducted him to the place of execution, where a journeyman butcher ſevered his head from his body.

[70] Mémoire de M. le Comte de Lally-Tolendal, p. 82, 83.

[71] L'Abbé Sabatier, tom. i. p. 98.

" zen; and that the puniſhment of a crime was itſelf a crime, when not commanded by " the law." The motives for preventing the promulgation of theſe evident truths could not be miſtaken.—The propoſal that the proclamation ſhould be preſented to the king, accompanied by a requeſt, that his majeſty would cauſe it to be circulated throughout the provinces, and read in all the churches, was alſo rejected.—The proclamation, as entered on the regiſters of the aſſembly, was this:

" The National Aſſembly conſidering, that, from the firſt moment of its formation, " it has adopted no reſolution but what gives it a juſt title to the confidence of the peo- " ple; that it has already eſtabliſhed the firſt foundations on which the public liberty and " felicity ſhould reſt; that the king has recently acquired a ſtronger claim than ever to " the confidence of his faithful ſubjects; that he has not only himſelf permitted them to " demand their liberty and rights, but that at the deſire of the aſſembly, he has removed " every ſubject of diffidence capable of alarming the public mind; that he has removed " thoſe troops whoſe preſence or approach had ſpread terror through the capital; that he " has diſmiſſed from about his perſon thoſe counſellors who were objects of uneaſineſs " to the nation; that he has recalled thoſe whoſe return was ſo anxiouſly deſired; that " he has appeared in the National Aſſembly, with the unreſerved confidence of a father " amidſt his children, to requeſt their aſſiſtance in promoting the ſalvation of the ſtate; " that, actuated by the ſame ſentiments, he has returned to his capital to *aſſociate himſelf* " with his people, and, by his preſence to remove every remaining apprehenſion; that, " in this ſtate of perfect harmony between the chief and the repreſentatives of the nation, " and after the complete union of all the orders, the aſſembly is now occupied, and will " never ceaſe to occupy itſelf, in the grand object of the conſtitution; that any diffi- " dence, tending to diſturb the ineſtimable harmony of the preſent moment, would im- " pede the labours of the aſſembly, prove an obſtacle to the execution of his majeſty's " intentions, and, at the ſame time, give a fatal blow to the general intereſt of the na- " tion, as well as to the private intereſts of its component members; that not a citizen, " in fine, but ſhould ſhudder at the idea of troubles, which, in their deplorable conſe- " quences, would produce the diſperſion of families, the interruption of commerce, the " privation of ſuccour from the poor, a ceſſation of labour for workmen and citizens, " and for all ranks a total ſubverſion of ſocial order:—The National Aſſembly, there- " fore, exhort all the nation to peace, to the maintenance of public order and tranquil- " lity, to diſplay that confidence which is due to their ſovereign, and their repreſenta- " tives, and to ſhew that reſpect for the laws without which no liberty can have " exiſtence.

" The aſſembly farther declares, with reſpect to the agents of power, who ſhall have " cauſed, or by their crimes may cauſe, the misfortunes of the people, that they ought to " be accuſed, convicted, and puniſhed, but that only by the law, which ſhould take them

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" under its ſafeguard, until the final deciſion of their fate; that the proſecution of all " crimes of *leſe-nation* appertains to the repreſentatives of the nation; that the aſſembly, " in *the conſtitution which it is inceſſantly occupied in forming*, will point out the tribunal " before which every perſon accuſed of ſuch crimes ſhall be proſecuted, that he may be " judged according to the laws, and enjoy the advantage of a public trial."

It here again appears that the Aſſembly had imbibed the idea that they had been convened for the purpoſe of *forming a conſtitution*; this was the grand rock on which they ſplit; the flagrant miſtake which betrayed them into a thouſand errors, into numberleſs exertions of UNCONSTITUTIONAL authority. What idea could be more prepoſterous, or more degrading to the people themſelves [72], than that ſuch a nation as France was, ſo many centuries after its eſtabliſhment, without a conſtitution; Men muſt ſurely have drunk deeply of the waters of Lethe who could entertain ſuch an idea, and forget *that* conſtitution, in virtue of which the States themſelves had been aſſembled, and under which the nation had riſen almoſt to the ſummit of glory and ſplendor. That it was their province and their duty, to remove any corruptions that had crept into the conſtitution; to reſtore, *in conjunction with the king*, the national eſtabliſhments to their primitive purity; and even to modify, correct, extend, and improve thoſe inſtitutions on which the welfare and happineſs of the people eſſentially depended, we are not diſpoſed to conteſt; but to ſuppoſe that becauſe the finances were deranged, the ſtate was to be diſorganized, chaos to come again, and a new creation to take place, would be to harbour a ſuppoſition that all rational men muſt regard as the offſprings of inſanity! Nor does it afford leſs ground for aſtoniſhment, that ſome of the very perſons who thus talked of *forming a conſtitution*, not only acknowledged the *exiſtence* of a conſtitution, in the moſt expreſs terms, but ſeemed to conſider its principles as ſacred and inviolable.—M. Mounier, in making his report from the committee charged to regulate the mode of proceeding with regard to the conſtitution, reminded the Aſſembly of ſeveral " fundamental laws " of the monarchy:[73] he ſaid " We will not forget that the French are not a new peo- " ple, recently emerged from the foreſts to form an aſſociation, but a great ſociety of " twenty-four millions of men, which wiſhes to confirm the bonds that unite its dif- " ferent parts, which wiſhes to regenerate the kingdom, and *which will ever hold ſacred* " *the true principles of the monarchy* [73]."—The fact is, that prompt *definition* and *gradual melioration* were the ſubjects that called for the attention of the Aſſembly, and by a ſtrict

[72] It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that, amidſt a diſplay of vanity, pride, and preſumption, almoſt unequalled in the annals of nations, the French did ſubmit to degradations at which the ſmalleſt ſtates would have ſhuddered: what could be more degrading to them than *the deſpair* they evinced on the diſmiſſion of Neckar, which was tantamount to an acknowledgment that the fate of the kingdom depended on one man,—and that man a *foreigner*?

[73] Expoſé de la Conduite de M. Mounier, p. 12.

adherence to thoſe points they might have drawn that deſirable line, which precludes the encroachments of deſpotiſm, on the one hand, and of anarchy, on the other.

What paſſed in the debates on the ſubject of the proclamation, convinced M. de Lally-Tolendal of "one dreadful truth."—"I perceived," ſays he, "a connection between "the troubles without doors and the internal movement of the Aſſembly; I ſaw that "terror would ſubdue thoſe whom ſophiſtry could not ſubdue; that, from time to time, "ſome grand combuſtions would occur to renew the impreſſions of terror; and that, by "this means, a very ſmall number of individuals might render the pure intentions of "the majority uſeleſs; for I muſt ſay, that it appeared to me, and I do not think I was "deceived, that by much the greater number of the deputies were friends to the public "good; that it was the conſtant object of their purſuit; that they often imagined they ſaw "it where it did not exiſt; that they always experienced regret when prevented by their "fears, from promoting it, and promoted it whenever no perſon had an intereſt in pre-"venting it [74]."

We have already obſerved that Neckar had been recalled by letters from the king, which overtook him at Baſil, he having quitted Bruſſels, with a view to retire to his eſtate in the vicinity of Geneva; on his way to Verſailles he had been informed of the murder of Foulon and Berthier, as well as of the imminent danger of the baron de Bezenval, commander of the Swiſs troops, who had been ſeized, in violation of the freedom of the ſubject, and the orders of the king [75], by the militia of Villenaux, and threatened with inſtant death, on account of an intercepted letter, in which he had ordered M. de Launay to defend the Baſtille to the laſt. Neckar immediately wrote a letter of interceſſion from Nogent to the magiſtrates of Villenaux, in his favour, apprizing them of the permiſſion which the baron had obtained from the king to repair to Switzerland, and attempting to enforce the reſpect that was due to the orders of their ſovereign; but his efforts were ineffectual, for the magiſtrates had ſent to the permanent committee at Paris for orders, by which they were determined to be guided. At Verſailles, Neckar was received with ſuch general demonſtrations of exceſſive joy, as have been compared to the tranſports of the Romans when Cicero was recalled from exile.

After he had paid his reſpects to the king and the National Aſſembly, he repaired to Paris; and the gratifications of vanity were never more amply diſpenſed to any conqueror in ancient Rome, than they were, upon this occaſion, to M. Neckar. Thoſe voices which ſome few days before had found the greateſt difficulty in pronouncing *Vive le Roi!* now filled the air with the univerſal ſhout of *Vive M. Neckar!* He laudably endeavoured to convert this moment of popular applauſe and enthuſiaſm to an excellent pur-

[74] Mémoire, p. 95. [75] Idem, p. 98.

poſe;

poſe;—after ſuitable expreſſions of gratitude for the honour conferred on him, he expatiated largely on thoſe rights of humanity which every member of ſociety is bound moſt religiouſly to obſerve, with that animated eloquence which a knowledge of his private virtues rendered doubly impreſſive; he conjured the aſſembly of electors to put an end to thoſe ſanguinary proſcriptions, at which even juſtice ſhudders, whoſe victims ever merit their fate; and he requeſted, in particular, the releaſe of the baron de Bezenval. He drew a very faithful picture of all the horrors that ſuch lawleſs proceedings would inſpire, and entreated the Aſſembly to exert every precaution in order to prevent a repetition of theſe calamities, which ought, if poſſible, to be conſigned to eternal oblivion; he repreſented, that ſuch ſanguinary executions, without trial, without form, without law, are no leſs an outrage to juſtice then to humanity, ſubverſive of the public order, and fatal to the national honour. Theſe paſſages of his ſpeech were pronounced with ſo much feeling, that they proved irreſiſtible; every heart was moved, and every eye ſuffuſed with tears, while the only words that were heard throughout the hall were thoſe of "Mercy, mercy to the guilty! *a general amneſty!*"—At this moment the populace who were waiting in the Place de Grêve, where the town houſe is ſituated, loudly demanded M. Neckar; and while he went to a balcony, in order to gratify their wiſhes, the count de Clermont Tonnerre, who had accompanied him to Paris, propoſed to the Aſſembly to confirm, by a formal reſolution, the vote of mercy and forgiveneſs which he had framed; this motion was received and ratified with unanimous applauſe; and, on M. Neckar's return to the hall, the count de Clermont Tonnerre read the reſolution, which affected him moſt ſenſibly, and excited his warmeſt approbation.

In conſequence of this reſolution, the aſſembly of electors diſpatched two duputies and a guard to Villenaux, to conduct the baron de Bezenval to the frontiers of Switzerland. But, alas! ſhort was the triumph of juſtice and humanity! the pacific diſpoſition evinced by the electors filled with alarm the minds of thoſe to whom troubles and commotions afforded the means of ſubſiſtence or elevation. At the approach of night the factious aſſembled in their capital—the Palais-Royal;—in that Palais-Royal (to verify the prediction of Lally-Tolendal) where hiſtory is obliged to ſay that the manners of the people were corrupted; the troops debauched; the bodies of the dead dragged about, and the heads of the living proſcribed. There they had ſworn to enforce the revocation of the decrees paſſed at the town houſe, and they began their march for that purpoſe. One diſtrict, alarmed, had communicated its terror to ſeveral others: the tocſins were rung; the troop enc eaſed; and the town-houſe was expoſed to the dangers of a ſiege [70].

Thus ſtimulated, ſeveral diſtricts expreſſed their diſapprobation of the proceedings of the morning; and intimidated the aſſembly of electors, who, far from daring to perſe-

[70] Mémoire de M. de Lally-Tolendal, p. 99.

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vere in a laudable meaſure, haſtened to ſubſcribe the following *explanatory* paper, replete with falſhood and equivocation.

"The Aſſembly, at the requiſition of ſeveral diſtricts, explaining, as far as neceſſary, "the reſolution taken this morning, in conſequence of the ſpeech and requeſt of M. "Neckar, declare, that, in expreſſing a ſentiment of pardon and indulgence towards "their enemies, they did not mean to include thoſe who might be accuſed or convicted "of high treaſon againſt the nation; but, merely, that they would henceforward decide "and puniſh only according to law; and, conſequently, that they proſcribe, agreeable "to the tenor of the reſolution, every act of violence and exceſs that may tend to diſ-"turb the public tranquillity; and this reſolution can bear no other conſtruction, be-"cauſe the Aſſembly from which it proceeded, never ſuppoſed, or could ſuppoſe, it had "a right to pardon [77]."—This curious retractation was ſigned by M. Moreau de Saint Mery,

77 It was peculiarly unfortunate that in this attempt, ſo truly conſonant to virtue and humanity, M. Neckar ſhould have fallen into two political errors of ſuch importance, that they ſerved much to weaken the enthuſiaſm of his admirers, and to leſſen the general opinion conceived of his abilities. The firſt of theſe related to the National Aſſembly, and the ſecond to the Pariſians. The former, and by much the greater, was his applicat on to the city of Paris for the liberty or life of an accuſed criminal, and, at the ſame time, for a general pardon, knowing, that, as the National Aſſembly now ſupplied the places both of the ſovereign and parliament, there was no other power exiſting which could lawfully grant either. This was accordingly diſpleaſing to the Aſſembly, in a very great degree. It was, indeed, but too true, that Paris was rapidly haſtening to aſſume the ſhape of an independent republic, and making alarming ſtrides towards the poſſeſſion of abſolute power; and it was no leſs true, that the National Aſſembly, though fully aware and apprehenſive of the danger, yet, whether from want of ſpirit, or from whatever other cauſe, did not venture to attempt confining that turbulent capital within due bounds of ſubjection; but they were by no means pleaſed or ſatisfied that her independence or power ſhould be formally acknowledged by a miniſter of ſtate.

The ſecond error conſiſted in his addreſſing the electors of Paris as a legal body, when their proper functions extended no farther than to the choice of repreſentatives; and the new command, with which they were entruſted by the people on the thirteenth, proceeded merely from the non-exiſtence of any other body of men in whom they could repoſe confidence; but that refractory populace, who abhorred every degree of ſubordination, were already heartily tired of the government exerciſed by the electors, and were extremely diſſatisfied with, and entertained great jealouſy of them, on the very grounds of M. Neckar's ſpeech; ſo that when he probably thought that he was highly flattering and pleaſing the people by the compliments he paid, and the powers he aſcribed to their council at the town-houſe, his eloquent harangue was producing a directly contrary effect. The people conſidered the conduct of the council as a flagrant invaſion of their rights, as an undue reſtriction on their favourite exerciſe of adminiſtering ſummary juſtice; and being now farther irritated by this direct and public appeal,—the conſequences of which were greatly magnified by the arts of the factious—to an authority that was become highly odious, they grew outrageous.

The committee of electors, perceiving that their popularity was gone, and that they were expoſed to the danger of being treated as uſurpers, prudently reſigned their ſeats: the government of the tumultuous capital was then placed in a body that was called the repreſentative body of the commons of Paris, with the mayor, M. Bailly, at its head.

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Mery, the *celebrated* Pariſian *orator*, and by M. Vigne, preſident of the general aſſembly of the electors of the city of Paris.

On the following day, theſe proceedings were taken into conſideration by the National Aſſembly, when ſeveral members ſuffered their zeal ſo far to tranſport them beyond the bounds of juſtice, as to inſiſt that every man *ſuſpected* of harbouring bad intentions towards the nation ſhould receive exemplary puniſhment; by which means a more intolerable ſpecies of deſpotiſm than even that which had prevailed in the reign of the fifteenth Lewis would have been eſtabliſhed. But the *converſation* on this ſubject being interrupted by the arrival of ſome deputies from Paris, the object of whoſe miſſion was, partly to complain of the attempt to procure an amneſty, and partly to warn the Aſſembly againſt adopting or giving a ſanction to ſuch a meaſure, a regular *debate* enſued, in which the ſame influence prevailed that had ſwayed the electors at Paris.

The count de Clermont-Tonnerre courageouſly, but ineffectually, inveighed againſt the manœuvres employed to excite the people to revolt, and to inſpire them with a diſguſting ferociouſneſs[78]. M. Mounier defended, with great energy and eloquence, the principles of perſonal freedom, without which, he juſtly obſerved, political liberty was but an abſurd and dangerous chimera. He aſked, who was the accuſer of M. de Bezenval; what was the charge preferred againſt him; and in virtue of what order the militia of Villeneaux had ventured to arreſt an officer of the king's troops? He maintained, that no man could be impriſoned but by virtue of the law; that the law did not permit the impriſonment of any man, without a regular accuſation and a legal charge, unleſs the culprit were taken in the fact, or apprehended in conſequence of a hue and cry —*clameur publique*—that is to ſay, immediately after the fact was committed, and when purſued by perſons who had witneſſed its commiſſion. He obſerved, that this was the only ſenſe in which the words *clameur publique* could be underſtood; that it only became ſubordinate tyrants to give them a different interpretation; and that, if a popular report, a ſimple ſuſpicion, was to be called a *clameur publique*, no individual could be ſure of his liberty.—Congenial as theſe ſentiments indiſputably were to the true ſpirit of rational freedom, and incontrovertible as were the arguments by which they were enforced and ſup-

In the debates in the National Aſſembly, on the ſubject of the proclamation propoſed by M. Lally, Mirabeau and ſeveral other members broached the dangerous doctrine, that the capital ſhould, in conjuction with the Aſſembly, organize its own municipal government, inſtead of receiving, with obedience, the law that ſhould be given it on that ſubject, by the legiſlative body. If every man in the kingdom had claimed a ſimilar privilege, what muſt have become of the *unity of the political body*, which M. Mirabeau himſelf ſo ſtrongly recommended?

[78] He particularly reprobated the ſhameful practice of publickly expoſing to ſale, at all the gates of the Palais-Royal, the moſt ſcandalous and libellous prints. There was one print, in particular, he noticed, entitled, The *Calculator*, in which a man was repreſented, forming an arithmetical rule, with four bloody heads lying before him on his bureau, and a paper on which was written—*out of twenty-four pay five, and nineteen will remain.*—Memoire de Lally-Tolendal, p. 204.

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ported, the orator was, nevertheleſs, interrupted, in the middle of his ſpeech, by the hiſſes of the democratic party. He replied, however, with manly firmneſs—"I do not "deſire applauſe; I do not fear cenſure; nor do I ſeek to obtain the favor of the city "of Paris[79]." His opponents juſtified their conduct in interrupting him by obſerving that he had uttered nothing but *common-place remarks*[80]*!!!*

This curious juſtification called up M. de Lally, who remarked that whenever a member of the Aſſembly yielded to an impulſe of humanity, and deplored the public calamities with a degree of ſenſibility, that would ſcarcely, he conceived, be deemed inconſiſtent with the character of a legiſlator, he was drily recalled to the rigour of principles; and that when the moſt rigorous principles were invoked in favour of liberty, of perſonal freedom, they were rejected in their turn, and ſtigmatized as *common-place remarks*. But all the efforts of the moderate party proved ineffectual; and, after a warm debate, it was reſolved, that, the National Aſſembly, having heard the reports of the deputies of the repreſentatives of the commons of Paris, declared its approbation of the explanation given by the electors of Paris to their reſolution of the thirteenth of July. (Thus did they condeſcend to ſanction the baſe retractation of a commendable act, a retractation, too, founded on falſhood!) They reſolved, alſo, that if a generous and humane people (the Pariſians had, ſurely, by this time, forfeited every juſt claim to ſuch flattering epithets) wiſhed for ever to prohibit all proſcriptions, (they never expreſſed ſuch a wiſh!) it became the repreſentatives of the nation to try and puniſh thoſe who were accuſed and convicted of having made any attempt againſt the ſafety, liberty, and tranquillity of the public;—(it became them to act with propriety and juſtice, to regulate trials and convictions by the laws which exiſted at the time when the crime was committed, and not to inflict arbitrary puniſhments, warranted only by *ex poſt facto* laws; moreover, if it became them to ſlight the dictates of mercy, and to puniſh thoſe who made any attempt againſt the liberty and tranquillity of the ſubject, the inhabitants of Paris ſhould moſt certainly have been the firſt objects of puniſhment!)—That, conſequently the National Aſſembly perſiſted in its former regulations reſpecting the reſponſibility of miniſters and thoſe entruſted with the executive power, and the eſtabliſhment of a tribunal to decide on, and a committee to receive, informations, inſtructions, and intelligence. They concluded their reſolutions with an order, that Bezenval ſhould be kept under a ſafe guard at Brie Comte Robert, the town where he was then confined. This laſt was to him the moſt fortunate clauſe that could poſſibly be deviſed; for the writers, on both ſides, acknowledge or declare, that no human power could have prevented another pub-

[79] Expoſé de la Conduite de M. Mounier, p. 27, 28.

[80] If allthe members had been debarred the utterance of *common-place remarks*, the numbers of orators would have experienced a diminution ſo conſiderable, that the Aſſembly muſt have rather reſembled a meeting of Quakers than a convention of Frenchmen.

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lic murder if he had been brought to Paris. This opinion was, indeed, fully confirmed by the following fact, that thirty thouſand frantic Pariſians waited for him a whole day at the Place de Grêve, and had, with ſavage pleaſure, all the inſtruments of inſult and death prepared for his reception[81].

About the ſame time, M. de Clermont Tonnerre claimed the protection of the Aſſembly for one of his uncles, whoſe life, among many others, had been threatened by the mob. The Aſſembly was on the point of granting his requeſt, when the viſcount de Noailles objected to any exception being made in favour of an individual; and his objection was ſupported by M. de Lally-Tolendal, who juſtly obſerved, that, inſtead of confining their intention to the preſervation of a ſingle perſon, it was high time they ſhould make a general law for the effectual protection of all citizens againſt attempts that were daily multiplying; that the Aſſembly would ſhudder, were he to read the heap of letters he held in his hand, which he had recently received from Franche-Comté, Burgundy, Champagne, and Alſace, and which he would deliver to their committee; and that he would never ceaſe to inſiſt on the eſtabliſhment of a public force for the prevention or ſuppreſſion of ſimilar outrages, until his demand ſhould be complied with. This manly conduct excited a violent clamour on the ſame ſide of the houſe whence the hiſſes proceeded during the ſpeech of M. Mounier; and the debate, on a ſubject thus ſerious, was, by the ſame party, converted into ridicule[82].

[81] The baron de Bezenval was afterwards proſecuted at the ſuit of the *Procureur-Syndic* of the capital, in direct violation of a decree of the National Aſſembly, by which it was enacted, *that the proſecution of all crimes of leze-nation appertained to the repreſentatives of the nation.* It was the duty of the Procureur-Syndic to denounce the culprit to the Aſſembly, and that of the Aſſembly to proſecute him, if the accuſation proved to be juſt.

[82] M. de Lally, in his account of this debate (*Memoire*, p. 104, *note*) tells us, that M. de Mirabeau reproached him, at the time, with having denounced a few untoward circumſtances (*Contrarietés*) of a private nature as horrible calamities, and a few precautions ſuggeſted by miſtruſt as acts of ferocity. But he aſks, whether the devaſtations, conflagrations, and murders which had deſolated almoſt every part of the kingdom; whether ſix-and-thirty country-ſeats, of which he had the liſt in his pocket, either burned, demoliſhed, or plundered, in a ſingle province, could be called *private calamities?* and as to the *precautions of miſtruſt*, he cites a few of the acts to which that appellation had been applied: among others, he mentions a M. de Barras, of Languedoc, cut into pieces, in the preſence of his wife, who was on the point of lying-in, and who died in conſequence of the ſhock occaſioned by the horrid ſight; at Mons, M. de Montellon, ſhot, after ſeeing his father-in-law maſſacred before his face; in Normandy, a man afflicted with the palſy thrown into a fire, whence he eſcaped with the loſs of his hands; a gentleman's ſteward, whoſe feet were burned off to make him deliver up his maſter's title-deeds; and M. de Belzunce, whom, after he had, with more generoſity than prudence, reſigned himſelf up to the populace, they were ſo eager to aſſaſſinate, that they fired at him from different places at the ſame time, and, by that means, deſtroyed ſome of their own party; in Franche-Comté, Madame de Battily, forced, in order to ſave her life, the fatal axe being holden over her head, to give up not only her title-deeds, but her eſtate alſo; Madame de Liſtenay, compelled to make a ſimilar ſacrifice, while a pitchfork was holden to her neck, and her daughter lay, in a ſwoon, at her feet; the marquis d'Ormenan, a reſpectable old nobleman, expelled from his houſe in the night, though afflicted with the palſy, and purſued from town to town, till he arrived at Baſil in a dying ſtate, accompanied by his daughters driven to deſpair; the

At this conjuncture, too, a very warm debate was occaſioned by the ſeizure of ſome letters, on the perſon of the baron de Caſtelnau, the French reſident at Geneva, among which was one from the duke of Dorſet, the Engliſh ambaſſador at Verſailles, to the count d'Artois; which, as the preſident of the aſſembly had returned the packet to the mayor and permanent committee of Paris, without reading it, gave riſe to various reports not very favourable to England. When this matter was taken into conſideration, very different opinions were entertained as to the moſt proper mode of proceeding. Many of the members expatiated on the flagrant inconſiſtency of violating epiſtolary correſpondence at a moment when the repreſentatives of the nation were expreſsly inſtructed by their conſtituents to provide a remedy for that abuſe in future. In the midſt of theſe debates a letter was received by the preſident, from the baron de Caſtelnau, informing him, that as ſoon

the count de Monteſu and his wife, who after a piſtol had been holden to their breaſts for three hours, during which time they aſked for death as a favour, were dragged from their carriage and thrown into a pond, where they muſt have periſhed but for the aſſiſtance afforded them by a regiment that happened to march that way; the baron de Montjuſtin, ſuſpended in a well for an hour and a half, while the mob were deliberating whether they ſhould let him fall into the water, or put him to death in ſome other way; and the chevalier d'Ambli, ſeized at his country-ſeat, dragged naked through the village, and buried in a dunghill, after having had his eye-brows and hair plucked out, while the mob, like a horde of ſavages, danced around him!

After alluding to ſeveral other facts of a ſimilar nature—"There," ſays M. de Lally, "is an *abridged* liſt of "thoſe *precautions of miſtruſt* which I have calumniated, by calling them *acts of atrocity!* and whence proceeded this "*miſtruſt?* *Who* has excited the people of the country and the towns to revolt? *Who* wrote to Veſoul to ſay that the "nobles of the aſſembly intended to blow up the hall at a time when none but the members of the Third Eſtate "ſhould be preſent? *Who* perſuaded the peaſants of Franche-Comté that the nobles were againſt the king? *Who* "forged orders from the king to attack the nobles, and deſtroy their poſſeſſions? Why was that infernal fable, "which at firſt inſpired all the horror againſt M de Meſmay that it was calculated to produce, conſigned to oblivion "the moment it was perceived that horror muſt be turned againſt his calumniators*? And ſhall the indignation I "experience at theſe crimes, and the impunity with which they are ſuffered to paſs, be conſidered, alternately, as "weakneſs of diſpoſition, and as coolneſs in the cauſe of liberty? Ah! I feel myſelf influenced by the example of "the modern Americans, or of the Dutch of former times, when I ſee them ſhedding ſtreams of blood in fighting "for that liberty. But thefts juſtified by ſophiſtry! Conflagrations excited by Forgers! Aſſaſſinations urged by "Rhetoricians! At a time, too, when there was no reſiſtance—when the nobles conſented to every thing;—when "a part of them had devoted themſelves to the popular cauſe; when they had all renounced their privileges!—"Such circumſtances muſt appal the ſtouteſt heart, if it has not abjured every ſentiment of morality and hu-"manity!"

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* The object of this calumny was to fix upon M. de Meſmay, lord of Quercy, and one of the judges of the parliament of Beſançon, the guilt of having invited a number of perſons to a feaſt at his country ſeat, under the pretext of celebrating the union of the Three Orders, but, in fact, with a view to blow them up by means of a mine. It was, probably, invented, for the purpoſe of palliating, or rather juſtifying, the conduct of the populace, who reduced the houſe of M. de Meſmay to aſhes, and committed every kind of exceſs.

This *infernal fable*—as M. de Lally, very properly, terms it—is related by the "Deux Amis de la Liberté" as an *hiſtorical fact*. See tom. ii. p. 130.

as he knew the letters found on him, had been laid before the Preſident, he had written to the duke of Dorſet, entreating him to requeſt they might be opened. The baron added, that, on receiving the miniſter's order for his return to Geneva, he aſked for a delay of twelve days, with the view of paſſing through Hainault, to pay his reſpects to the count d'Artois, to whoſe perſon he was attached by his office—he had a place in the count's houſhold—as well as the ties of gratitude; and he concluded by declaring, that the letters contained nothing but compliments on the part of the duke of Dorſet, and congratulations on the count's ſafety. The preſident added, that he, himſelf, had received a letter from the duke of Dorſet, requeſting an interview, which he had thought proper to decline. This ſingular debate was, at length, terminated by the count de Clermont Tonnerre, who aſſured the aſſembly, that he had read the letter in queſtion, at the Town-houſe in Paris, and that it did not contain one ſyllable capable of being conſtrued as injurious to the national intereſt.

But though this declaration was ſufficient to convince the aſſembly of the futility of their ſuſpicions, it did not produce the ſame effects on the Pariſians, the reſult of whoſe meditations and diſcuſſions was a ſagacious diſcovery, that England had entered into a treaty with the ariſtocratic party, and that the duke of Dorſet and the count d'Artois were to negociate between them.

This idea being once adopted, a thouſand circumſtances were ſpeedily produced to ſanction and confirm it. A pamphlet, falſly aſcribed to an Engliſh nobleman—by M. de Saint Mery, who had found ſuch an imputation neceſſary for the embelliſhment of one of his patriotic harangues,—had been recently publiſhed in order to prove that the claims of the people were in *many* inſtances unreaſonable;—a proof not very difficult to eſtabliſh: this was deemed amply ſufficient to ſhew that the ſentiments of the Engliſh nation were hoſtile to the popular cauſe; and every poſſible doubt on the ſubject was removed when they heard of the equipment of a ſmall ſquadron, then fitting out at Portſmouth, for the purpoſe of obſervation. It was poſitively aſſerted, the ariſtocratic party had agreed to deliver the port of Breſt to the Engliſh; in return for which, England was to aſſiſt them in diſſolving the National Aſſembly.

The duke of Dorſet ſoon found an evident alteration in the conduct of the Pariſians towards him, and, when he was informed of the cauſe, he deemed it requiſite to write to the count de Montmorin, one of the miniſters, in order to contradict a report which he juſtly conſidered as injurious to his honour; and as he was debarred from any direct communication with the National Aſſembly, he requeſted the count would take upon himſelf to communicate to them the ſubſtance of his letter. This requeſt was accordingly complied with; and in his letter the duke ſet forth, that he had heard reports from divers quarters, inſinuating that the court of England had aſſiſted in fomenting the troubles which had afflicted the capital for ſome time paſt; that ſhe had taken advantage

the two powers, would be attended with the moſt ſignal advantages to both, and their co-operation contribute, in a great degree, to the reſtoration of tranquillity in Europe: this letter was ordered, by the National Aſſembly, to be printed and publiſhed, that every remaining prejudice againſt the Engliſh might be removed from the minds of the people.

But though the aſſembly had thus amicably terminated this delicate tranſaction, it was attended with ſerious conſequences in the province of Brittany. The plot, mentioned in the duke of Dorſet's letter againſt the port of Breſt, was, by the Bretons, immediately laid to the charge of the nobility; and the enemies of ſome of that body, who had ſhewn themſelves averſe from the revolution, induſtriouſly repreſented them to the people as the criminals. Several of them were accordingly arreſted and committed to priſon; when the nobility of the province appealed to the juſtice of the National Aſſembly, and entreated that the duke of Dorſet might be requeſted to give more preciſe documents, that the criminality ſhould no longer be extended to all the ancient families of a reſpectable quarter of the kingdom, but might attach to thoſe only who were really concerned. The inveſtigation of the fact was referred to the executive power, but the Aſſembly at the ſame time expreſſed their conviction, that the evidence was ſo vague and indirect, that the gentlemen ought to be liberated.

The month of Auguſt was the period deſtined by the National Aſſembly for the commencement of thoſe important labours which they repreſented as the grand object for which they had been convened. But before we enter into a detail of their proceedings on points of ſuch infinite magnitude, it may not be amiſs to take a view of the real ſtate of the kingdom, and particularly of the capital, at this criſis, which had evidently no ſmall influence on the conduct of the members.

In the courſe of little more than three weeks, that vaſt and turbulent metropolis, which was deſtined to give the law to a whole empire, had undergone no leſs than three revolutions in its own conſtitution of government. Having, in the firſt inſtance, thrown off all eſtabliſhed authority, whether derived from the ſovereign, or from its own municipal inſtitutions, the capital ſeemed expoſed a prey to every ſpecies of diſorder, violence, and of the moſt unbounded anarchy. In this alarming and dangerous ſtate, it happened moſt fortunately for that city, and, probably, ſaved it from continual ſcenes of plunder and maſſacre, that the better claſs of citizens perceived within their reach the means of eſtabliſhing, at leaſt, a temporary authority, which might tend to preſerve order, and to afford ſecurity. The body of conſtituent electors, who returned the deputies from Paris to the States, were, of courſe, compoſed of the principal citizens in their reſpective diſtricts: they amounted to about three hundred, and, fortunately for the capital, poſſeſſed, in a high degree, the good opinion and confidence of the people. On theſe the moſt opulent and reſpectable part of the citizens immediately caſt their eyes, as

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capable of forming a central, effective, and what, with any other people to manage, might well have proved a permanent body of magiſtracy; for the electors, were, in fact, in their ſeveral diſtricts, the direct repreſentatives of the people, being immediately elected by them, which the deputies at Verſailles were not, they being created by the three hundred, and having a very remote connection with the people at large, to whom they were but little known, and to whom they were not bound by any obligation. It was, however, fortunate, that theſe conſiderations operated powerfully upon the bulk of the people in the firſt inſtance, by which means the government of the capital was for ſome days carried on ſmoothly enough, and the authority of the new magiſtracy would have ſeemed complete, if it had not been for thoſe occaſions of murder and maſſacre which called forth the ferocity of the rabble, when all laws, government, authority, and reſpect to perſons, were trampled under foot.

The electors were too ſenſible of the critical ſituation of affairs, and too well acquainted with the diſpoſition of the people for whom they were to act, to be at all ſolicitous for the pre-eminence to which they were called, and which was attended with none of thoſe *ſweets* of office which could operate as a compenſation for the dangers of uſurpation; on the contrary, it was at the earneſt ſolicitation and repeated entreaties of the beſt part of their fellow-citizens, that they ventured upon the arduous taſk of governing the capital. Their conduct was ſuch during the ſhort continuance of their power, as to gain the approbation of all the ſober part of the citizens; and, for a few days, the applauſe which they received even from the rabble was boundleſs, and the merit and importance of their ſervices were univerſally acknowledged.

But the natural levity and inconſiſtency of the Pariſians, their groſs ignorance, their mortal abhorrence of ſubordination, and, above all, that horrid ſuſpiciouſneſs of temper, which induces them to imagine treachery or villainy in actions the moſt indifferent, the moſt innocent, or the moſt laudable, rendered it impoſſible for any man, or ſet of men, long to preſerve their favour, or to conduct their buſineſs in any manner which could afford ſatisfaction, and which would not even in the concluſion be attended with imminent danger. It has been ſeen what a narrow eſcape the electors had from the ſuſpicious rage of the multitude, when, coinciding with the humane views of Neckar, and wiſhing to heal the bleeding wounds of their country by a general amneſty, the rabble conceived theſe acts of wiſdom and virtue to be ſo flagrant an invaſion of their new ſovereignty, and, like other deſpots, not enduring any partners in power, that they were on the point of making them *feel* the effects of their reſentment. Indeed, it ſeemed clear, that nothing leſs than the conſciouſneſs of their danger, and the conſequent and immediate derelict̃ion of their ſeats and authority, was likely to preſerve the perſons of the electors from the ſummary execution of the lanthorn, or their houſes and property from deſtruction.

It ſeemed, however, as if the body of the electors had either ſome previous notice that the tide was beginning to turn, or that they had ſo perfect a knowledge of the temper and diſpoſition of their new maſters, that they foreſaw, to a degree of certainty, the event which was to take place; for, ſome days before this final iſſue, while they were yet loaded with praiſe, and that all appeared to acknowledge the importance of their ſervices, they called a meeting of the ſeveral diſtricts, and ſubmitted to them a propoſition—which was accepted—to elect one hundred and twenty deputies, who ſhould conſtitute a temporary adminiſtration, and who might, in the mean time, form a ſcheme for a future permanent municipal government. Nothing could have been more judicious or more fortunate than this meaſure. When the day of evil and danger arrived, the new adminiſtration filled up the chaſm which their ſudden reſignations would have occaſioned, and, by obviating the confuſion which muſt otherwiſe have taken place, afforded the electors an opportunity to retire with the leſs notice or obſervation, and to ſeek for ſhelter or oblivion in the maſs of the people. But neither their prudence, caution, nor the timely and ſignal proof they had given of their diſintereſtedneſs, were ſufficient to preſerve them from the moſt virulent invective and abuſe, nor from the dangerous charge of ambitious deſigns, directed to the prolongation and increaſe of their power.

Among the novelties which the late election of deputies to the States had introduced, one of the moſt eſſential, and which was, indeed, productive of conſequences that were, at the time, little thought of, was the new diviſion of Paris into ſixty diſtricts;—a meaſure which preſented an outline of form and order that could not be overlooked, and that was turned to great account in the ſucceeding convulſions. In each of theſe diſtricts, general aſſemblies were holden, at which every inhabitant was permitted to ſpeak and vote; and each formed permanent committees of police and adminiſtration. Theſe aſſemblies framed reſolutions, which had the force and effect of laws in their individual diſtricts, and in as many others as they could induce to coincide with them: they likewiſe iſſued proclamations, granted paſſports, ſtopped and examined carriages and paſſengers, opened packages, and were beyond meaſure anxious and vigilant in the exerciſe of a moſt haraſſing and vexatious inquiſition, which extended to every thing and which nothing could evade or reſiſt.

But the abſence or loſs of influence of the electors was ſoon followed by the departure of every degree of decency and decorum from theſe meetings. It has been aſſerted, by obſervers worthy of credit, that it would be impoſſible for a native of any other country to form even a remote conception of the noiſe and tumult which prevailed in theſe aſſemblies; and that the foreigner who could, for any length of time, withſtand the preſſure of the former upon his ſenſes, need never give any other demonſtration of the ſoundneſs of his head, or the firmneſs of his nerves. All the boldeſt and moſt impetuous of the ſpeakers, to the amount ſometimes of a hundred, were to be ſeen at the

ſame inſtant ſtraining their lungs together, each endeavouring to drown the voice of his competitors, and to monopolize the attention of the aſſembly. Yet this contention of noiſe, this confuſion of voices, ſo totally unintelligible to all ſtrangers, was ſo far underſtood by the ſurrounding crowd, whoſe organs of hearing and perception ſeemed endued with powers calculated for the purpoſe, that the general clamour was frequently increaſed, or the jarring diſcord of the orators totally interrupted, by the loud ſhouts of approbation, or the deep roar of execration and threat, which they occaſionally drew forth [83].

In this ſtate of things Paris might rather be conſidered as a confederacy between ſixty diſtinct democratical republics, than as one commonwealth, or as acting under one ſimple form of government. Each individual diſtrict was independent in its own adminiſtration, and allowed no ſuperiority of diſtinction or authority to any other. Upon ſending deputies from one of theſe departments to confer with or make any propoſal to another, t was laughable to behold the mimick forms of ſtate ceremonial which were obſerved on both ſides, the deputies being treated with all the obſervance and honours which could have been ſhewn by one ſovereign power to the ambaſſador from another. In proceſs of time, a few of the moſt turbulent, noiſy, and, generally, the moſt profligate, demagogues, became the leaders in every aſſembly, and guiding the multitude at their pleaſure, all power, in every department, came, by degrees, to be virtually lodged in their hands: while the ſerious and better part of the citizens abſtained from attending theſe tumultuous meetings, where, independent of the inconvenience they ſuſtained from the noiſe and clamour, they were expoſed to the groſſeſt inſults from the loweſt of the rabble.

Thus, by degrees, the government of a million of people, who, having thrown off all eſtabliſhed authority and ſubordination, fancied themſelves free, and who might almoſt be ſaid to have gone mad in their purſuit of liberty, became placed in the hands of a few hundreds of the moſt worthleſs among themſelves; men equally deſtitute of character, property, principle, and the moſt common portion of moral, political, or general knowledge. Theſe, however, naturally became the inſtruments of men of much greater knowledge and capacity, but equally deſtitute of all public or private virtue. The new republican clubs, of which the *Jacobins* became the moſt noted, and who had their de-

[83] The ingenious device of one of the preſidents of theſe aſſemblies will, perhaps, afford a clearer idea of the diſorder which prevailed in them than any deſcription. This man had a drummer conſtantly ſtationed at the back of his chair, and when the noiſe and tumult roſe to ſuch a pitch as to be inſupportable, and that all his efforts to produce order and ſilence were totally diſregarded, he gave the ſignal for beating the drum, which was done with ſuch vigour and effect, as ſoon to overpower all other noiſes; and this was continued until the people ſhewed ſome ſigns of recovering their temper and reaſon.

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pendant ſocieties, ready to execute their orders upon the ſhorteſt notice, in every town in France, were compoſed of the moſt turbulent, daring, and hot-headed men in the kingdom, or perhaps that exiſted in any country. Many of theſe were adepts in the new philoſophy, and all of them ſufficiently learned in the new viſionary theories of government, to be capable of ſpreading confuſion and anarchy wherever their influence or communication could extend. All the republican party, the moſt viſionary theoriſts, and the boldeſt innovators in the National Aſſembly, became members of this club; and it ſoon became the faſhion that all laws, all meaſures, and all buſineſs, brought forward in that body, were firſt diſcuſſed, prepared, and digeſted by the Jacobins, whoſe ſanction was the ſure paſſport to ſucceſs. Being thus doubly fortified, ruling the tumultuous rabble in the ſixty departments of Paris, through the means of their inſtruments, the demagogues who excited them to whatever pitch of outrage and violence they were directed, on the one hand; and governing the National Aſſembly itſelf, on the other, by a decided majority, procured, in a great degree, by the grand *revolutionary engine*, TERROR [84], their power ſeemed to be unbounded; the more eſpecially as it was extended through every part of the nation, by their deputies and emiſſaries. Thoſe of the club, whether members of the aſſembly or not, who were the moſt violent in their republican principles, and the moſt diſtinguiſhed for their invincible animoſity to monarchy in all its forms and relations—which they deteſted ſo much as not to endure even the name of king, but ſubſtituted the terms deſpot and tyrant in its ſtead—held the firſt place among the Jacobins, and gave the tone to all the reſt.

It appears from the letters publiſhed under the name of Groenvelt, who ſays he was preſent when many of the tranſactions which he relates took place, (and who, though profeſſedly a German, was a great admirer of the Revolution, as well as a ſtrong democrat in principle) that falſhoods and forgeries were the conſtant reſources and favourite weapons of the cabals in Paris. Some of the inſtances which he adduces in ſupport of this aſſertion are ſo curious, and at the ſame time throw ſo much light upon the hiſtory of the time, that it becomes neceſſary to inſert them. In writing to his ſuppoſed friend, he ſays—"You cannot form an idea of the impudence with which the moſt palpable "lies are publiſhed and propagated among the people. The moſt poſitive aſſertions, "the moſt minute details of facts, the ſtrongeſt appearances of probability, are made to "accompany the groſſeſt falſhoods. Fleſſelles was the victim of a pretended letter

[84] The influence of *terror* over the National Aſſemblies of France is confirmed by men of different parties, by men, too, who were themſelves members, and who could not therefore, poſſibly be *miſtaken*. We have already cited the authority of M. de Lally-Tolendal on this ſubject, with regard to the firſt aſſembly; M. Mounier corroborates the fact; and *Briſſot* himſelf gives a decided confirmation to the aſſertion, which he extends to all the three aſſemblies, that have been convened, ſince the year 1788. He ſays "*With one ſingle word you might compoſe the greateſt* "*part of the hiſtory of* THREE *aſſemblies. This word is* FEAR. See Briſſot's letter to his conſtituents, *Engliſh tranſlation*, p. 15.

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" which every body could repeat by heart, but which nobody has ever ſeen. Of the " letter which is the only evidence againſt Bezenval, there are in Paris a thouſand co- " pies, but no original. No ſooner is it whiſpered in ſome obſcure corner, that a certain " monaſtery is a magazine of arms, or of corn, than the report ſpreads with rapidity, " gathers ſtrength, becomes matter of certainty, and yet, the moment the houſe is exa- " mined, the whole is found to be groundleſs. The convent of Montmartre has been " twice beſet by twenty or thirty thouſand men, who threatened it with deſtruction, for " having engroſſed the provender of Paris, but no ſooner was it ſearched, by commiſ- " ſioners appointed for the purpoſe, than it appeared that it had barely proviſion enough " to ſupply the houſe."——" At one moment it is affirmed that the ariſtocratical con- " ſpirators have thrown a vaſt quantity of bread into the Seine; at another, that they " mowed the green corn: a party of the national guard is immediately ſent to the field, " where the crime is ſaid to have been committed, and finds the corn ſtanding, and af- " fording the proſpect of an abundant harveſt. In ſhort, the public is overwhelmed " with lies and calumnies, and a prudent man can ſcarcely give credit to any thing that " he has not ſeen himſelf."

And again—" Many of theſe falſhoods have certainly been deliberately fabricated to " ſerve party purpoſes; and ſome men, who probably miſtake a diſregard of all moral " obligations for profound policy, have been audacious and infamous enough to pub- " liſh falſhoods with the ſolemnities of laws. Letters have been forged in the name of " the National Aſſembly, and edicts in that of the king, exhorting the peaſants to de- " ſtroy the patents and pedigrees of the nobility, and to burn their caſtles. The effect " of theſe forgeries is already ſeen in the ruins and aſhes to which ſome of the fineſt " buildings in Dauphiny, Franche Compté, Brittany, and Burgundy, have been re- " duced [85]."

The Pariſians had ever been noted, for uniting in their minds two qualities of a na- ture ſo directly oppoſite that their union ſeems ſcarcely credible—credulity and ſuſpi-

[85] See Groenvelt, (Engliſh tranſlation) p. 209 and 211; letter dated Auguſt 15th, 1789.

The ſcandalous and abominable propagation of falſhood and forgery, which Groenvelt here reprobates, continued at a much later period of the Revolution, and was even encouraged, promoted, and ſanctioned, by members of the National Aſſembly. On the ſixth of July 1791, the marquis de la Queuille, who had himſelf been elected, a repreſentative of the nobility of Auvergne, but who had emigrated to Bruſſels before that period, wrote a letter to M. Merlin, a member of the Aſſembly, (which appeared in the *Gazette de Paris*) of which the following is an extract:

" You advanced an atrocious falſhood, Sir, when you read to the Aſſembly a pretended letter, in which the " king is accuſed of having authorized the army to deſert: you compoſed it yourſelf, in the ſame manner, as all " thoſe which *I ſaw compoſed*, in the committee-rooms of the Aſſembly, and which I afterwards heard read in the " houſe, as coming from Brittany, Provence, and other places.—I here give you the *lie direct*."

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cion. While they had always been accuſtomed to ſwallow, and ſeemed nearly to live upon, an eternal ſucceſſion of the moſt abſurd and improbable tales and ſtories, plain and undiſguiſed truth was ever received with caution and doubt, and ſuppoſed to conceal ſome guile, deception, or danger. The extreme ignorance of theſe people, with reſpect to every thing beyond their own walls—an ignorance ſo *inveterate* as to be unexampled in any country of equal civilization, and ſo productive of men eminent in arts, ſciences, and learning, as France—had long afforded matter of obſervation to travellers, and of ridicule to poets and ſatyriſts. A conſideration of theſe circumſtances will tend much to account for and throw light upon many parts of the conduct of that extraordinary people, which would otherwiſe have appeared inconſiſtent or unintelligible.

The unbounded licentiouſneſs of the preſs, which was carried to an extreme before unknown under any government, was a moſt potent inſtrument of the Revolution. And, from the example of France, nations may learn this important truth, that as the freedom of the preſs is eſſential to the exiſtence of civil liberty, ſo its licentiouſneſs is wholly deſtructive thereof. Nor was that more extraordinary than the unceaſing induſtry with which it was eternally ſupplied with an inexhauſtible ſource of the moſt dangerous and inflammatory matter, ſubverſive of all order and government, was aſtoniſhing. For, amidſt the general darkneſs and ignorance which involved the people at large, there was a numerous portion of men who dedicated, or ſeemed to dedicate, their lives to the purſuit of literature. Of theſe the capital alone was computed to contain *twenty thouſand*; including, doubtleſs, a conſiderable number of perſons who aſſumed the name of literati, becauſe they had nothing to do, and could not claſs under any other deſcription. This twenty thouſand, however, from the advantage of their being concentrated in the capital, gave the law in matter of opinion, or at leaſt in whatever related to government and the new philoſophy, to the whole nation.

The theories now publiſhed were derived from the tenets of thoſe philoſophers who were ſo aptly characterized by the illuſtrious father of Lewis the Sixteenth [86]. They were, in general, abſtract, viſionary, unintelligible, or impracticable; and the authors ſeemed to run wildly in the purſuit of an imaginary phantom of perfection, which neither had nor could have exiſtence. They went not to the definition of the fundamental laws of the monarchy; not to the correction of errors, the removal of corrup-

[86] See vol. iv. p. 715. of this Hiſtory —Nor could the tenets of theſe theoriſts be better deſcribed than they were by M. Seguier, in his ſpeech to the Parliament, in September, 1775.—"*Falſe philoſophy*"—ſaid that magiſtrate—"which ſeeks but *to deſtroy*, under pretence of inſtructing; that body, ever active, though concealed, which ſeems "only occupied in preparing in darkneſs the means of effecting *a ſudden revolution in religion, in government, and in manners*," &c.—Never did man diſplay greater judgment in appreciating the merits of a ſect, or greater penetration in foretelling the conſequences of their tenets!

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tions, or the adoption of ſalutary improvements, but to the abſolute ſubverſion of government under all its known forms, and to the looſening of all bands of civil ſociety, and the deſtruction of its harmony, beauty, and order. All the wiſdom of paſt ſages, philoſophers, and legiſlators, which had commanded the reſpect and veneration of all ages and of all nations; all that could be derived from the practical experience of ancient and modern times, in their exertions to promote or ſecure the felicity of mankind, were now holden out as objects of contempt and deriſion, and ſet wholly aſide to make way for the reveries of the new illuminators, who deſpiſed all experience, and diſdained all wiſdom but their own. It ſeemed as if the tranſactions of paſt ages had been conſigned to eternal oblivion, or that a new generation of men was juſt created, who were to mould every ſublunary thing anew [87].

Among the numerous inſtances of neglect in the conduct of the miniſters, none was attended with more fatal conſequences, than the ſhameful and unaccountable ſupineneſs with which they beheld the flame which was ſpreading from the licentiouſneſs of the preſs through every part of the kingdom, without their uſing a ſingle exertion to correct the cauſe, or to counteract the effect.

The enormity was accordingly carried to an extent beyond all example in any country. The numerous preſſes in Paris hourly groaned under the number of ſeditious and levelling pamphlets which they were continually bringing forth. Indeed their number almoſt exceeded belief; thirteen, and even ſixteen different pamphlets, in one day, were no matter of ſurprize; and ninety-two came out in one week; while the avidity for reading and procuring them was ſo great, that it was a matter of ſome difficulty to enter

[87] Le Mercier, one of theſe literary peſts, who flattered himſelf that he had eſſentially contributed to bring about the Revolution, has publickly avowed the object, and gloried in the ſucceſs, of publications of this deſcription. To one of his works, in which he has *calumniated* Rouſſeau, by beſtowing on him praiſes which he certainly did not deſerve, and by aſcribing to him motives which he certainly never had harboured, he has adopted this motto—"They have deputed men to the States-General, we—*Men of Letters*—have deputed Works; and to thoſe works are "the National Aſſembly indebted for their original exiſtence, and their ſubſequent proſperity."

Speaking of the neceſſity of finding a counterpoiſe to the power of the military, whoſe ſole virtue, he ſays, conſiſted in a blind obedience to the orders of their ſuperiors; whoſe profeſſion it was to ſhed blood "for a geſture or a "word;" and who would have made no ſcruple to ſhed the blood of "*rebels*;" he tells us, that a counterpoiſe was ſupplied by "the general diſpoſition of men's minds,"—a diſpoſition entirely owing to the *generous writings*, to the "*courageous harangues*, to the *bold thoughts*, to the *profound reaſoning*† of thoſe writers, who, for twenty years paſt, had "employed (either anonymouſly or openly) all their faculties, all their talents, all their ſtrength, in combating *deſ-*"*potiſm*; for it is not to a few arms, to a few muſquets, that the preſent formidable Revolution is owing, but *to the* "*works of literary men*. In this point of view, I congratulate myſelf on having publiſhed "The Year 2440," in "1771; "The Picture of Paris," in 1782; and "Notions upon Government," in 1787.

† A man who can thus ſpeak of *himſelf* muſt be endued with no common portion of *modeſty!*

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the bookſellers' ſhops, they were ſo conſtantly crowded. The price of printing had accordingly riſen in the capital to almoſt three times its cuſtomary rate per ſheet; and yet the preſſes in every part of France were ſaid to be at the ſame time equally occupied. But the moſt extraordinary circumſtances were the amazing diſpatch with which theſe innumerable productions were ſpread from the capital through every part of the kingdom, and the unknown fund by which the vaſt expences of the diſtribution were ſupported; the great body of the people being furniſhed with them *gratis*.

While theſe poured forth an unceaſing torrent of abuſe upon government, and were continually diſſeminating principles equally calculated to promote the overthrow of the monarchy, and the utter annihilation of the two firſt orders of the ſtate, the three parties whoſe exiſtence was at ſtake, the court, the nobles, and the clergy, betrayed an inattention to their own intereſt and ſafety, ſo wholly unaccountable, as to wear the appearance of downright inſenſibility. Not a ſingle writer of ability or eminence was engaged to refute the doctrines which were thus aſſiduouſly ſpread, or to counteract the poiſon which they ſo widely diffuſed. The few ſolitary volunteer pamphlets which appeared on that ſide, being written—with not more than three or four exceptions—by men without parts or information, poſſeſſed neither intereſt nor ſpirit to allure readers.

The famine which was ſorely felt, though not in an equal degree, in every part of the kingdom, may be conſidered as a main ſpring in accelerating all the movements of this ſingular revolution. Men in want of bread neceſſarily execrate and abhor that ſtate of things which produces their miſery. They are little diſpoſed to enquire into natural, or to trace remote cauſes, as the ſource of their diſtreſs; they find leſs trouble in charging it directly upon their rulers, and fancy ſome alleviation to their miſery in venting their indignation againſt them, even in words. The preſent ſtate of things in the other countries in Europe having prevented thoſe ſupplies from without, which might, in other caſes, have been procured, and the internal ſtock of proviſion being deemed inſufficient for the ſubſiſtence of the inhabitants, the moſt alert and wiſeſt government, ſuppoſing it to be in other reſpects at eaſe, and unembarraſſed by faction or danger, would have found it a matter of great difficulty to apply any effective remedy to the evil. But in the preſent ſtate of affairs, the haſty ill-judged regulations, founded upon miſtaken notions of a ſubject generally ill-underſtood, which were adopted, inſtead of good, produced the moſt unfortunate effects. Theſe, however, might have been palliated, if the ungovernable violence of the people, in obſtructing the free ſale of the markets, and compelling the proprietors to ſell their grain at whatever price they pleaſed to give, and the inſidious machinations of thoſe who ſought the accompliſhment of their own ſchemes in fomenting the ſpirit of popular diſcontent, had not completed the evil, and occaſioned an artificial famine while plenty ſtill ſubſiſted. It has even been aſſerted, that the ſtock of corn produced this year in the kingdom would have been ſufficient, under due regulation, management, and diſtribution, if not to afford abſolute plenty, at leaſt to prevent any great want.

In the general ill-temper of the people, continually goaded and irritated by the moſt urgent and inſupportable of all wants, it will be eaſily ſeen what advantages the emiſſaries of the factious poſſeſſed in working upon their paſſions; and ſpread as they were, like the preachers of a new religion, in every part of the kingdom, it will not be wondered at—the ignorance of the multitude being always kept in ſight—that they ſhould have ſucceeded in prompting them to the greateſt acts of outrage and violence,

But the great promoter of the Revolution, and, in ſuch a material degree as to render the appellation of "Author of the Revolution" not wholly inapplicable to him, was the duke of Orleans;—that man, who, deſtitute of ſpirit in himſelf, poſſeſſed and applied the means of communicating energy to millions, and of infuſing diſaffection and diſloyalty into every order of men, through that vaſt and populous kingdom. His immenſe fortune, which, under the guidance of wiſdom and virtue, might have been devoted to the accompliſhment of ſchemes the moſt ſalutary and beneficial, was now directed to the ruin of his country, to the ſubverſion of its government, and to the extermination of that royal family to which he was ſo nearly related[88].

In the conduct of this profligate prince is to be found a ſolution for many things which would otherwiſe appear unaccountable, or remain involved in the moſt impenetrable obſcurity. From hence it was that the gardens of the Palais Royal, and all the open places of Paris, were ſtocked with hungry, ignorant, and abandoned orators, and covered with riotous mobs, who ſucked in from theſe preachers every thing that could corrupt and poiſon the mind, and not only eradicate every moral principle, but deſtroy all the native feelings of humanity. Thus likewiſe was the ferocity of the Poiſſardes, and of all the other female furies of the capital, called into action; until the ſex, ſeeming to have totally changed its nature and character, was degraded and ſtained by atrocities, unequalled in any civilized country. And thus a numerous army of *Sans Culottes*, of ruffians from the gallies, and from every part of the kingdom, being incorporated with the no leſs ferocious broo of natives, were maintained and kept in readineſs for the purpoſes of rebellion, anarchy, and murder, as time and occaſion ſhould call forth their ſervices.

From the ſame abundant ſource of evil, crowds of couriers were diſpatched—as has before been obſerved—from the metropolis to every part of the kingdom, conveying every where the falſe intelligence, as if proceeding from the firſt authority, that the ariſtocrats were raiſing troops or armies of *Brigands*, in order to deſtroy or maſſacre the peaſants: and calling upon the latter to prevent the danger, by immediately taking up

[88] He was next in ſucceſſion to the crown, in the caſe of failure of iſſue male in the immediate reigning family.

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arms and deſtroying their enemies, the nobility, in the firſt inſtance; an injunction which they moſt willingly, and, in many places, moſt effectually, complied with. In the ſame manner was the prodigious expence ſupported, of ſo long diſſeminating throughout the kingdom thoſe innumerable ſeditious publications, which were daily preſented to the people. By the ſame means majorities were ſecured, and ſeveral of the principal orators and moſt popular demagogues in the new clubs were retained; and theſe clubs, as we have ſeen, by they dependent and correſponding ſocieties, which were eſtabliſhed in all the provincial towns, gave law to the whole nation. Nor was the National Aſſembly by any means exempted from the ſame influence, nor was the effect it produced on many of its members leſs known.

As the duke's annual revenues, extenſive as they were, were ſtill unequal to the ſupply of theſe numberleſs drains, he deemed it neceſſary to apply to other ſources. Indeed, with ſuch vaſt objects in view, and after the ſacrifice of ſo much wealth as was already expended, it ſeemed upon the principles of gaming that it was better to encounter any riſque of future evil, than to ſtop ſhort in ſuch a ſtate of things, and when ſo much was already ſtaked. Holland always affords money, as well as numberleſs ſpeculators who wiſh to make the moſt of it, and the duke's vaſt eſtates ſeemed to hold out ample ſecurity for a loan. The amount of the ſums he borrowed is uncertain, and has been rated from three hundred thouſand pounds to half a million ſterling [19].

It is evident, however, that the duke not only totally miſtook his own abilities, but that he was as little ſenſible of the ill-effects which his unfortunate character could not but produce, when he adopted the wild idea of being able to ſubvert or circumvent all other factions, and of being able to riſe on the ſhoulders of men, poſſeſſing talents infinitely ſuperior to his own, and of rendering them the inſtruments to the accompliſhment of his ambitious views. The natural deficiency of reſolution and courage, with which every body knew he was curſed, was, independent of all others, an inſeparable bar to his ever becoming, under any change of circumſtances, or in any courſe of events, the ruler of ſo ungovernable and ſo outrageous a people. Yet in this blind purſuit he laviſhed treaſures, which, in many paſt periods, might, by proper application; have amounted in effect to the requiſition of a kingdom.

An opinion was advanced by many, even at an early period of the Revolution, which, illiberal as it may at firſt appear, and unpleaſant as the ſenſations are which it muſt naturally excite in a liberal mind, ſeems to have acquired a conſiderable degree of ſtrength and confirmation from the courſe of ſubſequent events; viz.—That the French, as a

[19] It has been obſerved, that the niceſt and moſt difficult calculation would be to eſtimate the exact quantum of moral and political evil which ſuch a ſum, in ſuch hands, was then capable of producing in France.

nation, were not yet in a ſtate capable of receiving liberty; and that many intermediate preparatory ſteps would have been neceſſary to qualify them for ſo great a bleſſing. Even Rabaud de Saint Etienne, the apologiſt for, and advocate of, the Revolution, amidſt all his ſins of ſuppreſſion and miſtepreſentation, and all the artful colouring which he has given to facts and circumſtances, acknowledges, "That the people, aſtoniſhed at "ſeeing their chains broken with ſuch facility, and at feeling their own ſtrength, "abuſed that ſtrength in taking vengeance of their oppreſſors; and their new liberty "was, as yet, but licentiouſneſs. General hatred, in its blind rage, ſought every where "to puniſh enemies, pointed out to it by chance or by prejudice. A never-ceaſing in-"quietude tormented theſe freemen born of yeſterday; in their neceſſity for a new or-"der of things, and for a ſovereign juriſdiction, they ſeized and engroſſed all juriſdiction "to themſelves; and ſeveral tumultuous aſſaſſinations were the fruit of this delirium." And, again, in his remars on the two parties which divided the National Aſſembly, he ſays, "One ſentiment, however, predominated there, and that was the dread of the ef-"fects which anarchy, *too long continued*, might occaſion."—The *too long* continuation of anarchy muſt apply to the well-founded charge preferred againſt ſeveral members of the Aſſembly, that they had been the inſtigators and authors of many of the diſtractions and enormities which took place in the provinces.

The outrages, conflagrations, and maſſacres, which were ſpreading deſolation through various parts of the kingdom, had, in a ſhorter ſpace of time then could well have been conceived, riſen to ſuch a pitch of enormity, as at length to communicate alarm and diſmay even to the National Aſſembly, fortified as it was by the ſuffrages of the nation, and ſupported by the numerous army formed in the capital. For in conſequence of the forged orders and falſe intelligence which had been ſo villainouſly conveyed to the peaſantry, the whole nation was inſtantly in arms, and theſe operating upon the evil diſpoſition of the people, and the abhorrence in which they now held their ancient maſters, it ſeemed as if no bound could limit their violence, and no exceſs of cruelty ſatiate their revenge. Thus the nobility were, in many places, hunted down like wild beaſts, their family ſeats or caſtles demoliſhed, and their patents, pedigrees, title-deeds, family ſettlements, court-rolls, and all records of paſt tranſactions, deſtroyed by fire. Happy were thoſe who, even in this ſtate, plundered of every thing, could eſcape half-naked from the flames, without perſonal injury. But in too many inſtances ſuch acts of atrocity were committed that humanity ſhudders at the recital. Some few of theſe we have quoted from the count de Lally-Tolendal; but, ſhocking as many of them were, they fall ſhort, in point of enormity, of many others, the recital of which great pains have been taken to ſuppreſs. In many inſtances, it has been aſſerted, by men whoſe veracity we are not permitted to doubt, the wives of the nobility were violated, and their daughters deflowered, in the preſence of the unhappy fathers and huſbands; and the horrid tragedy frequently concluded by the moſt inhuman murders, aggravated by circumſtances of deliberate and almoſt unexampled cruelty, without regard to age or ſex. Nor—dreadful to relate!

—were

—were theſe cruelties, in any degree, confined to ſuch perſons as had previouſly rendered themſelves odious by their pride or oppreſſion; but, on the contrary, the moſt kind and benevolent landlords and maſters, the moſt humane and charitable to their neighbours and the poor, were expoſed to the ſame fate with thoſe of the moſt oppoſite diſpoſitions.

Although the ſpirit of revolt appeared in various and remote parts of the kingdom at nearly the ſame inſtant, yet the degrees of violence and cruelty with which it was attended were widely different in different parts. The northern provinces were much more temperate than the central and ſouthern. The exceſſes at Lyons and in the Lyonnois rivalled thoſe of Paris in violence and fury. The province of Dauphiny was in the moſt violent ferment, the whole people being up in arms. Franche-Compté and part of Burgundy ſeemed particularly marked as ſcenes of deſolation. The Bretons, long trained in hoſtility with their lords, were in a ſtate of abſolute rebellion and anarchy. At Straſburgh, the town-houſe was totally demoliſhed by the mob, being firſt plundered of all that appeared to them valuable, the court-papers, records, and public archives being carefully deſtroyed, to the future diſtreſs and ruin of numberleſs families in the ſurrounding country, as well as in that city.

In a few places, the gentlemen and other proprietors of land had the ſpirit and ſenſe to unite and ſtand ſucceſsfully on their defence. This was the caſe, though too late, in the Maçonnois and Beaujolois, where the banditti, amounting to ſix or ſeven thouſand, and headed by a village attorney, had already ſpread deſtruction along the fertile banks of the Saone, having, in a few days, burned ſeventy-two gentlemen's houſes, and plundered all the churches and ſmall towns in their way. A battle took place, in which the enraged proprietors, with their friends and ſervants, defeated the plunderers with great ſlaughter. They then inſtituted a kind of temporary tribunal at Maçon, for trying the ringleaders of the banditti, twenty or thirty of whom were condemned to ſuffer death. The democratic publications in Paris cried out loudly againſt this proceeding, as being highly illegal and arbitrary, although not a word of condemnation had been uttered againſt the ruffians who had plundered and burned ſo many gentlemen's houſes, nor of pity for the inhabitants of that beautiful country which they had deſolated. The national Aſſembly received the impreſſion intended by theſe publications, for in a ſhort time, they interfered, by putting a ſtop to the proceedings at Maçon, while a number of atrocious criminals ſtill remained to be tried. Their interference, indeed, would have been highly proper, had it not been *partial*, and had it been accompanied by proper regulations for inforcing a rigorous adminiſtration of criminal juſtice.

Such was the ſtate of things, at the beginning of the month of Auguſt, the period fixed by the Aſſembly for the commencement of that important taſk which they choſe to

to take upon themſelves, of giving a *new* conſtitution to a kingdom that had ſubſiſted, as a monarchy, for upwards of fourteen centuries. Inauſpicious as the general aſpect of affairs undoubtedly was, the proceedings of the Aſſembly itſelf at this period were by no means calculated to diſpel the gloom which it had caſt over the minds of all rational men. On the firſt of the month, M. Thouret, an advocate of Rouen, was elected, by a conſiderable majority, to ſucceed the duke de Liancourt in the preſident's chair. As M. Thouret had *hitherto* diſplayed the moſt moderate principles, he had rendered himſelf odious to the democratic faction, who had marked him as an *ariſtocrat* [90]; and the deciſion of the majority was no ſooner declared than the moſt violent and indecent ſymptoms of diſapprobation were exhibited on the oppoſite ſide of the houſe. The democrats aſſerted that his nomination was a triumph of ariſtocracy that ought not to be tolerated; their diſcontent was ſpeedily communicated to the Palais-Royal, where not only murmurs were increaſed, but *threats* were multiplied: and ſuch was the tumult this matter was expected to produce, that M. Thouret, with more prudence than fortitude, reſigned the ſtation he had been choſen to fill, and thereby gave encouragement to a deſperate faction, who from that moment plainly perceived that, by the operation of *terror*, they could at any time bias the majority of the Aſſembly, and ſuperinduce the adoption of their own propoſitions:—under ſuch auſpices, the *conſtitutional* labours of the Aſſembly began [91].

Had every member entertained the ſame ideas on this weighty buſineſs as ſeems to have been entertained by the count de Lally-Tolendal, and ſome others, the Aſſembly could never have committed thoſe groſs errors, which led to a violation of the fundamental principles of the monarchy. The count tells us [92], that hearing a great number of the deputies declaring that the Aſſembly was a *National Convention*, and concluding from thence that *they were empowered to act in the ſame manner as at the firſt inſtant in which a ſociety is formed, and as if there was nothing exiſting previous to the eſtabliſhments they were about to make*, he was induced to examine the principle whence ſuch a conſequence was deduced. With this view he firſt endeavoured to define the word *Convention*; and as the French took the expreſſion from the Engliſh, he was naturally led to adopt the definiton of Hume, who calls it—a parliament aſſembled without the uſual forms. He then adverted to the Scotch Convention in 1637, and to the Conventions holden in England on the reſtoration of Charles the Second, and after the abdication of his ſucceſſor, in which caſes, he found—to uſe his own expreſſion—that the bonds of government had been broken.

[90] Expoſé de la Conduite de M. Mounier, p. 31.—Mémoire de M. de Lally-Tolendal, p. 107.

[91] Rouſſeau, in ſome one of his political writings, has obſerved, that a conſtitution formed in times of anarchy and tumult bears within it the principles of its own deſtruction!

[92] P. 108, et ſuiv.

"Thank heaven"—ſays the count—"we were not in ſuch circumſtances. At the "period of our convocation, the government was not diſſolved; the national parliament "of France had been aſſembled with the uſual forms; it had been convened by the "king, in the ſame manner as all the national aſſemblies which had been holden ſince "the time of Charlemagne. Therefore we were not a *National Convention*.

"If by that title was meant an aſſembly of plenipotentiaries, to whom the nation had "delegated the taſk of giving it a government, and of dictating ſuch laws as they ſhould "deem expedient, it was a queſtion of *fact*:—Where were our powers? We had only "to read them: they certainly told us no ſuch thing. Therefore, we were not a "*National Convention*.

"The ſupporters of this doctrine had recourſe to a variety of abſtract arguments, which "were literally reduced to this,—*That the conſtituting power had conſtituted us a conſtitu-* "*ting power with regard to the conſtitution, but conſidered us as conſtituted with regard to* "*the laws*[93]. Before it was neceſſary to take the trouble of comprehending this, there "was fortunately a fact to be eſtabliſhed. Were theſe definitions, theſe diſtinctions "to be found in our powers? Aſſuredly not. Therefore we were not a *National Con-* "*vention*.

"The abbé Sieyes himſelf, when he propoſed to us to reduce to practice that brilliant "theory which made the world young again for the purpoſe of regenerating France, "warned us, that we could only decree it *proviſionally*; and that, in order to render it "definitive, a new extraordinary convocation would be neceſſary. Therefore we were "not a *National Convention*.

"In ſhort, we had mandates, inſtructions, which, while they left us to exerciſe our "diſcretion on other objects, were imperative and obligatory on conſtitutional points. "As to the propriety of receiving inſtructions generally, that was a queſtion which "was open to diſcuſſion; but the fact was that we *had* inſtructions[94], and the ſtrongeſt "argument adduced in oppoſition to them was here of no avail, for, *on the ſubject of the*

[93] Unintelligible as this may appear to the Engliſh reader, it is certainly no leſs ſo in French—*Le pouvoir conſtituant nous avoit conſtitués pouvoir conſtituant quant à la conſtitution, et pour conſtitué quant aux lois.*

[94] The policy or expediency of compelling members to follow implicitly the inſtructions of their conſtituents, is a queſtion on which much ſound argument may be adduced on either ſide. But, as far as it regarded the members of the National Aſſembly, it was a ſettled point: for we have ſhewn, in a former part of this Hiſtory, (*See* vol. ii. p. 282. *note*) that the members of the States-General were invariably conſidered as the mere organs of the people, whoſe mandates they were bound to receive, and to whoſe inſtructions it was their duty literally to adhere. We then ſhewed, too, that deputies who had ventured to act, *without* orders, were *diſavowed* by their conſtituents.

"*conſtitution*

" *conſtitution they were almoſt unanimous.* It was difficult to maintain that thoſe who had " given us the right of exerciſing a general will, could not have had a ſingle will of " their own. In fact, they had manifeſted their will; they had entruſted the execution " of it to us, and we had taken charge of it. Therefore, we were not only not a *Na-* " *tional Convention*, if we followed our inſtructions *(Cahiers)*; but, if we did not follow " them, on conſtitutional points, *we were nothing; for he who infringes upon, who anni-* " *hilates, the title by which he holds his power, remains without title and without power.*"

The majority of the Aſſembly, unfortunately, were of a different opinion; but while they were engaged in preliminary diſcuſſions on their memorable declaration of rights, they were ſuddenly interrupted by the arrival, in one day, (the fourth of Auguſt) of expreſſes or letters from every part of the kingdom, with details of the dreadful devaſtations which were laying waſte the face of the country, and which, from their preſent appearance and violence, ſeemed to threaten nothing leſs than ſpeedy and general deſtruction.

All the landed proprietors in the Aſſembly were, in a greater or leſs degree, involved in the calamity; with the material difference, that while many had to lament the deſtruction of their houſes, and the plunder of all their moveable property, others had as yet no farther cauſe of complaint than the general refuſal of their tenantry to pay their rents, or to fulfil any of their other cuſtomary duties. The terror was, however, general; and having had leiſure, during the ſeaſon allotted for dinner, to ruminate upon the dreadful details which they had received, conflagrations, murders, and maſſacres, were the only ſubjects of their thoughts or converſation. Nothing could accordingly be more gloomy than their appearance in going to the evening ſitting; and before the commencement of buſineſs, an unuſual and extraordinary degree of agitation was viſible throughout the Aſſembly. "Upon the ſame principle on which mariners, under the immediate danger of " a tempeſt, will throw much valuable property overboard, in the hope of ſaving the re- " mainder; ſo it would ſeem upon this occaſion, that the great land-owners were ſeized " with a ſudden impulſe of voluntarily ſacrificing a large portion of their rights and " poſſeſſions, in the hope of retaining thereby quiet and permanent ſecurity for what was " left." They ſeemed alſo to have adopted the idea that a ſincere coalition with the Third Eſtate was become indiſpenſably requiſite to their preſervation.

It was eight o'clock when the Aſſembly met, and the ſitting opened by the peruſal of the following decree, propoſed by the committee of reports, and intended to ſecure the country from any farther depredations of the populace—" The National Aſſembly, " conſidering that, while it is ſolely occupied in eſtabliſhing the happineſs of the peo- " ple on the baſis of a free conſtitution, the troubles and violences which deſolate dif- " ferent provinces fill the minds of men with alarm, and violate, in the moſt fatal man-

" ner,

" nor, the ſacred rights of property and perſonal ſafety; that theſe diſorders cannot " fail to retard the labours of the Aſſembly, and to promote the criminal deſigns of the " enemies to the public good; declares, that the ancient laws ſhall ſubſiſt, and ought to " be executed, until ſuch time as the authority of the nation ſhall have abrogated or " modified them; that the collection of the old taxes ought to be continued agreeably " to the terms of the decree of the National Aſſembly of the ſeventeenth of June laſt, " until it ſhall have eſtabliſhed contributions and forms leſs onerous to the people.

" That all quit-rents, and other cuſtomary dues, ought to be paid as formerly, until the " Aſſembly ſhall have otherwiſe ordained.

" That, laſtly, the laws eſtabliſhed for the ſafety of individuals, and the ſecurity of " property, ought to be univerſally reſpected.

" The preſent declaration ſhall be ſent into all the provinces; and the pariſh prieſts " ſhall be invited to make it known to their pariſhioners, and to recommend the obſer- " vance of it."

Immediately after this decree had been read, the viſcount de Noailles, ſeconded by the duke d'Aiguillon, opened that extraordinary ſcene, which has rendered the night of the fourth of Auguſt ſo memorable in the annals of this extraordinary revolution. The firſt of theſe noblemen ſaid—" The object of the decree which you have juſt heard, is to " put a ſtop to the effervеſcence which prevails in the provinces, to confirm the public " liberty, and to ſecure to proprietaries their lawful rights. But how can we hope to " accompliſh this object, without knowing the cauſe of the inſurrection which appears " in the kingdom; and how can we expect to ſuppreſs it, without applying a remedy to " the evil which occaſions the convulſion?

" The communities have preferred certain demands; it is not a conſtitution which " they have deſired; the bailiwicks alone have expreſſed a wiſh for that. What then " have they aſked?—the ſuppreſſion of *aides* and ſubdelegates; and the diminution or " exchange of ſeignorial rights.

" The communities have ſeen their repreſentatives occupied, for more than three " months, with what we call, and what is in fact, the public welfare *(la choſe publique)*; " but the public welfare appears to them to call, in a particular manner, for the comple- " tion of their deſires, which they are ſo anxious to obtain.

" In conſequence of the differences which took place between the national repreſen- " tatives, the inhabitants of the country had been taught to diſtinguiſh only two de-

" ſcriptions of men—thoſe whom they themſelves had armed, and who were ſolicitous " to *promote* their happineſs;—and the powerful perſons who *oppoſed* it. In this ſtate of " things, what has happened?—They deemed themſelves juſtified in oppoſing force to " force, and now they ſcorn all reſtraint. The conſequence is, that, at this moment, " the kingdom is reduced to the alternative of ſuffering a total diſſolution of ſociety, or " of eſtabliſhing a government which will be an object of admiration and *imitation* to " all Europe. How is this government to be eſtabliſhed?—By the reſtoration of public " tranquillity. How is public tranquillity to be reſtored?—By calming the people, " by ſhowing them that we only reſiſt their efforts to deſtroy what it is their *intereſt* to " preſerve.

" To obtain this tranquillity, ſo eſſentially neceſſary, I propoſe;—1. That the decla- " ration projected by the committee be preceded by a reſolution, that the repreſentatives " of the nation have decided that all taxes ſhall in future be paid by every individual in " the kingdom, and in proportion to the income he enjoys;—2. That all public burdens " ſhall be equally borne by every member of the ſtate;—3. That all feudal rights ſhall " be redeemable, by the communities, in money, or exchanged, after a fair valuation, " ſettled on the average produce of ten years;—4. That all obligations to work for the " lord on the roads, rights of *main-morte*, and other perſonal ſervices, ſhall be aboliſhed, " without any ranſom."

The duke d'Aiguillon, when he roſe to ſecond this motion, ſaid—" There is no man " but ſhudders at the ſcene of horror which France now exhibits to his ſight. This " effervеſcence of the people which tended to confirm freedom when guilty miniſters " wiſhed to deprive us of the bleſſing, is become an obſtacle to the progreſs of that free- " dom, now that the views of government ſeem to accord with our deſires for the pub- " lic happineſs. The provinces are not only over-run by a horde of armed plunderers, " who ſeek to enrich themſelves in the midſt of calamity; but in many of them the " whole body of the people form a kind of league for the deſtruction of gentlemen's " ſeats, for the deſolation of their eſtates, and eſpecially for the ſeizure of their title- " deeds. They endeavour, in ſhort, to throw off a yoke under which they have la- " boured for ages; and it muſt be acknowledged, gentlemen, that this inſurrection, al- " though criminal,—for every violent aggreſſion is ſo—may find its excuſe in the vexa- " tions which gave riſe to it. The proprietors of fiefs and lordſhips are very ſeldom " guilty of theſe exceſſes of which their vaſſals complain; but their agents are often de- " void of pity; and the wretched farmer, ſubjected to the barbarous relics of the feudal " laws ſtill ſubſiſting in France, becomes the victim of oppreſſive conſtraint. Theſe " rights, it cannot be denied, are a *property*, and all *property is ſacred*; but they are " onerous to the people, and every body muſt allow they are productive of continual " reſtraint.

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"In this *enlightened age*, in which *ſound philoſophy* has recovered her empire; at this "fortunate epoch, when, united for the public good, and diſengaged from all perſonal in-"tereſt, we are about to *regenerate* the ſtate, it appears to me, gentlemen, that we "ſhould, previous to the eſtabliſhment of that conſtitution which the nation ſo anxiouſly "expects from us, prove to all the citizens, that it is our intention, our wiſh to "anticipate their deſires, and to eſtabliſh, with all poſſible ſpeed, that equality of rights "which ought to exiſt between all men, and which can alone render liberty ſecure. I "have not a doubt but that the proprietors of fiefs, and the lords of manors, far from "denying this truth, are diſpoſed to ſacrifice their rights to juſtice. They have already "renounced their privileges, their pecuniary exemptions, and, at this time, they cannot "be required to make a ſimple and unconditional renunciation of their feudal rights. "Thoſe rights are their property, they conſtitute the whole fortune of many indivi-"duals; and equity forbids to exact the reſignation of any property, without granting a "juſt indemnity to the proprietor who ſacrifices his convenience to the public good. "From theſe potent conſiderations, and to convince the people that you are efficaciouſly "employed in promoting their deareſt intereſts, it is my wiſh that the National Aſſem-"bly ſhould declare that taxes ſhall in future be borne equally by every claſs of citi-"zens, in proportion to their incomes, and that all the feudal rights attached to fiefs and "lordſhips ſhall be redeemed by the vaſſals of thoſe fiefs and lordſhips; and it is my "opinion that they ought to buy them at thirty years purchaſe.

There is no nation on the globe ſo ſuſceptible of ſudden impreſſions, and ſo ſubject to the moſt impaſſioned emotions, as the French are, and ever have been. Whether the object of their purſuit be a trifle the moſt inſignificant, or a matter the moſt important, the ardour and enthuſiaſm of the moment always appear to be the ſame. It would be vain, therefore, to attempt by deſcription to convey any idea of the tranſports which theſe ſpeeches excited both in the Aſſembly and in the galleries. The very large poſſeſſions and extenſive royalties of the duke d'Aiguillon added ſurpriſingly to the effect, and inſpired every body with a wiſh to be able, in ſome degree, to emulate the *apparent* magnanimity of his conduct. The contagion quickly ſpread through the two orders of the nobles and clergy, and the contention was only which ſhould be the firſt to offer, and which ſhould make the greateſt ſacrifices to the public welfare. The commons ſeemed loſt in admiration at this ſudden and unexampled fit of patriotiſm, and frequently burſt into loud and involuntary acclamations of praiſe and gratitude for the benefits which were thus ſo unexpectedly and generouſly conferred on the people. This was particularly the caſe when the biſhop of Chartres, who was himſelf poſſeſſed of very extenſive foreſts, propoſed the abolition of the excluſive rights of the chaſe; which, from the extreme cruelty of the laws by which they were protected, as well as the miſchief done by the ſtags, boars, and other game, to the farmers, had ever been deemed a grievance of the firſt magnitude.

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The commons conducted themſelves with great art upon this occaſion [91], not ſuffering their admiration to overcome their temper, or their judgment to be ſunk in their applauſe. They coolly perceived all the advantages to be drawn from the preſent fervour, and determined not to let any of them eſcape, but to obtain every poſſible conceſſion while it laſted, well aware of the change which the cool conſideration of a few hours might produce in many of thoſe whoſe enthuſiaſm appeared the moſt ardent. The deſign was ſo well conducted that it was attended with the fulleſt ſucceſs; and, ſtimulated by emulation, and blinded by applauſe, nothing that was demanded could be withholden. The conteſt between the nobles and the clergy, now ſeemed to be, who ſhould be foremoſt in ſacrificing the rights of chaſe, of fiſhing, of warren, and of dove-houſes. The pariſh-prieſts, feeling the general impreſſion, and eager to emulate, as far as they were able, the example of their ſuperiors in rank and fortune, ruſhed forward to make a free offering of their cuſtomary perquiſites; while the beneficiaries, diſdaining to be left behind in the race for glory and popularity, diſclaimed all pluralities, and bound themſelves never to hold more than a ſingle benefice.

But amidſt the heat of enthuſiaſm, one member, M. Dupont, of Nemours, cauſed the cool voice of reaſon to be heard. He took a curſory view of the dreadful diſorders which prevailed in the kingdom, which he very juſtly aſcribed to the inactivity of all the agents of power: he demonſtrated, that no political ſociety could exiſt without laws, and without tribunals for the ſecurity of freedom, the ſafety of perſons, and the preſervation of property: he inſiſted upon the neceſſity of maintaining the laws, imperfect as they were, which had for their object the preſervation of general order: he repreſented that the ancient tribunals exiſted both in law and in fact, and muſt exiſt until they ſhould be legally ſuppreſſed; that it was not poſſible for the repreſentatives of the nation to reform the legiſlation, until they ſhould have firſt determined, by the conſtitution itſelf, in what manner the new laws ſhould be propoſed, adopted, and executed; and that it was eſſentially requiſite, that the reſtoration of tranquillity, peace, and juſtice, through-

[91] M. le Guen de Kerengalh, with a view, doubtleſs, to ſtimulate the nobility to the ſacrifice of all feudal ſervices, took great pains to repreſent them in the moſt diſguſting point of view: he enumerated all thoſe *excreſcences* of the ancient feudal ſyſtem, which were beſt calculated to excite horror and diſguſt; among others, he mentioned the laws of certain cuſtoms, in which the vaſſals were liable to be yoked to the cart of their lord, like beaſts of burden; in ſome, they were ſubject to paſs whole nights in beating the ponds, that his reſt might not be diſturbed by the croaking of frogs; in others they were compelled to keep his dogs; in particular diſtricts, a law was ſaid to have prevailed, which authorized the lord, on his return from hunting, to rip open the bellies of two of his vaſſals, that he might refreſh his feet in their warm bowels. It is almoſt needleſs to obſerve that theſe laws were ſo obſolete, that we believe ſcarcely a ſingle inſtance of their being enforced is to be met with in any of the moſt ancient hiſtorians; nor were they by any means peculiar to France, ſince in moſt countries where the feudal ſyſtem has prevailed in its utmoſt rigour, for any length of time, ſimilar veſtiges of the barbariſm of the early ages of ſociety are to be found. But though it never could be ſuppoſed, for a moment, that *ſuch* obſolete laws, or rather cuſtoms, would ever be revived, ſtill, as poſſible inſtruments of miſchief in the hands of tyranny, their abolition was juſt and proper.

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out the empire, ſhould relieve the National Aſſembly from all other ſolicitude but that which naturally reſulted from the taſk impoſed upon it, of ſelecting and fixing the elements of a *wiſe* and *durable* conſtitution.

He therefore propoſed the adoption of a declaration, that every citizen was bound to obey the laws, and to reſpect the liberty, ſafety, and property of his fellow-citizens; that the tribunals ought inceſſantly to act, in order to enforce the execution of thoſe laws, which enjoined, as did alſo the repreſentatives of the nation, the city militia and all military corps to ſtand forward in promoting the re-eſtabliſhment of order and peace, and in affording protection to perſons and property, as often as they ſhould be called upon for that purpoſe, by the municipalities and the civil magiſtrates.

To crown, as it were, the events of this memorable night, the deputies of the *Pais d'Etat*, with thoſe of ſeveral privileged towns, advanced in ſucceſſion, and offered up the ſacrifice of their ancient rights and charters, at the ſame time expreſſing their deſire, that there ſhould be no more provinces, that there ſhould be but one ſole nation, one ſole family, one ſole empire.

In the higheſt exceſs of the joy and enthuſiaſm, which obtained in the aſſembly, both were ſuddenly checked by the ill-timed avidity of a member of the commons, who propoſed the total abolition of all manorial juriſdictions. As this by no means came within the line of intended conceſſion, it could not but occaſion a ſhort pauſe; the nobility, however, agreed to the propoſal with a tolerable grace: but one of them inſtantly returned the favour by moving, that juſtice ſhould, for the future, be, in all caſes, adminiſtered gratuitouſly, and that judicial offices ſhould no longer be venal—a motion calculated to cut off the commons from almoſt the only means they poſſeſſed of being ever ennobled. That body, however, diſdained to be outdone even in the appearances of patriotiſm; and the motion was accordingly received and confirmed with the ſtrongeſt marks of approbation.

This circumſtance undoubtedly contributed to give riſe to an opinion, which has been adopted by ſome, that the buſineſs of this celebrated night was neither more nor leſs than a game of *croſs-purpoſes*, played by the contending parties; that the ſacrifices made were moſtly dictated by a ſpirit of revenge, when one party, incenſed by the loſſes it had been made to ſuffer, propoſed to the other acts of generoſity by way of puniſhment; and that they mutually dared each other to conceſſions, of which thoſe who ſuggeſted them expected to enjoy the honour, without feeling the inconveniences [96].

[96] This opinion appears to us to be more refined than juſt; ſtill, though there be an appearance of illiberality in aſcribing generous actions to bad motives, we cannot but think that the duke d'Aiguillon, one of the principal actors

Whatever may be the juſtice of ſuch an opinion, thus much is certain: that many things were done that night, in the heat of enthuſiaſm, which were afterwards, upon cool recollection, ſorely regretted; and it is poſitively aſſerted, that ſeveral of the nobility, who had from the beginning been eminent for their patriotiſm, and for the ſhare they had taken in forwarding a reform of the old government, were, notwithſtanding, ſo much diſguſted by the proceedings of this night, that they immediately abandoned the popular ſide and party, and ranked from thence among the moſt determined ariſtocrats.

The aſſembly, however, conſidering this as a complete regeneration of France, decreed that a medal ſhould be ſtricken, in order to immortalize the acts of that great and glorious night, as they termed it; and, tranſported by the warmth of their paſſions, and the eagerneſs of their zeal, they conferred upon the king the flattering and glorious, but ſhort-lived title of *Reſtorer of French Liberty*; and ordered a deputation to preſent him with the decrees, together with the homage of his regenerated kingdom, and to addreſs him by his new title. When Chapelier, the preſident, and the deputation, had addreſſed the king, he concluded his anſwer to them with the following words: "Let us go and return "thanks to God, for the generous ſentiments which prevail in your aſſembly." A ſolemn Te Deum was accordingly celebrated, and attended by the whole aſſembly, Chapelier (the leader and founder of the famous Breton club, ſo inveterately hoſtile to monarchy) walking, as preſident, though a commoner, by the ſide of the king; and thus, in the opinion of *M. Rabaud de St. Etienne*, properly ſupporting the majeſty of the people. It is likewiſe obſerved, by the ſame writer, that this was the firſt benediction of religion over the birth of liberty.

It is remarkable that the liberal conduct of the clergy, on this memorable occaſion, failed to procure, either from the nobles or commons, thoſe acknowledgments which they moſt richly deſerved. On the contrary, there were ſtrong indications, both then and after, that they were deſtined to be forſaken by both parties; and all the good humour and harmony of the fourth of Auguſt was wound up by a motion, ſucceeded by a long and earneſt debate, for the ſuppreſſion of their tithes.

This debate was reſumed on the next day, and continued on the ſucceeding, and the motion oppoſed with great vigour. The celebrated Abbé Sieyes, with all his abſtract no-

tors in this ſcene, was rather ſwayed by party, than influenced by patriotiſm, in the ſacrifices he made; and that the apparent magnanimity of his conduct may fairly be imputed to his attachment to the *Orleans* faction, which would naturally lead him to diminiſh, as much as poſſible, that influence and power of the nobles, which would infallibly be exerted to protect their ſovereign from the inſidious plans and wicked machinations of a faction that manifeſtly ſought his deſtruction. Our opinion on this ſubject is founded on the ſubſequent conduct of the duke d'Aiguillon, to which we ſhall hereafter have occaſion to advert.—The Abbé Sabatier tells us, that the night of the fourth of Auguſt was by the nobles called, *the night of the ſacrifices*, but, by the commons, it was termed, *the night of the dupes*. Journal, Polit. Tom. 2. p. 85.

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tions of government, was ſtill a firm adherent to the rights of the church, at leaſt in thoſe things that related to her eſtabliſhment and independence; and he oppoſed this violent invaſion of both with equal ardour and ability. He had not been preſent at the firſt debate, but, apprized of the intention to ſeize the tithes without an indemnification, he rapidly compoſed an elaborate diſcourſe, which he carried to the aſſembly [97], replete with ſound argument, but not more argumentative than acrimonious, ſtrongly urging the violence, oppreſſion, and injuſtice, of the propoſed meaſures, as well as the inſecurity and danger to which the precedent would expoſe all other property; and inſiſting, that the cauſe he was ſupporting was not merely that of the church, but of all property whatever. The abbé, who was uſually collected and compoſed, upon this occaſion aſcended the tribune in great and viſible wrath; but this only ſerved to encreaſe the animation and vehemence with which he urged his arguments. He demonſtrated, with great perſpicuity and legal accuracy, that the tithes were not a tax impoſed by the nation, but a rent-charge laid upon their eſtates by the original proprietors for the maintenance of the church; that the actual proprietors had purchaſed their eſtates ſubject to this rent-charge; and that the legiſlature had no authority to transfer this, which was a real property, from the hands of the clergy to the landholders, who had no legitimate nor apparent claim to it. He concluded a very forcible ſpeech, by boldly telling the Aſſembly, that "*They wiſhed to be free, but knew not how to be juſt* [98]."

Though the abbé had been no ſmall favourite with the Aſſembly, and his ſpeeches, upon other occaſions, commanded particular attention, yet his arguments now, inſtead of producing effect or conviction, were heard with the utmoſt impatience, and with marks of diſapprobation which amounted even to interruption, both by the nobility and the commons. Whether his reaſons were ſo ſtrongly founded, or not, as to afford no room for controverting them, it is certain that the conduct obſerved by the other ſide gave no little ſanction to the affirmative opinion, not the ſmalleſt attempt being made to refute, or even to anſwer, any one of his poſitions [99].

[97] It muſt be obſerved, that it was the general mode adopted in the aſſembly, for the members to write their ſpeeches at home, and to read them in their places, there being as yet very few—not more than half a dozen, it is ſaid, in the whole—who were capable of delivering their ſentiments in an extempore public ſpeech.

[98] *Qu'ils voulaient etre libres, et qu'ils ne ſavaient pas etre juſtes.* Journal Politique, &c. tom. ii. p. 20.—Mémoire de M. le Comte de Lally-Tolendal, p. 114.

[99] The abbé Sabatier gives this account of the buſineſs:—"In vain did the abbé Sieyes, *idol of the Palais-Royal, and firſt apoſtle of democracy*, aſcend the tribune, to defend the property of the church; in vain did he cry out to the demagogues, that "they wiſhed to be free, but knew not how to be juſt;" he conſumed himſelf, to no purpoſe; in the midſt of the fires which he himſelf had raiſed; and he loſt at once his cauſe and his popularity. Men aſked each other how *he*, who had, in his firſt publications, demoliſhed the foundations of all property, could flatter himſelf with the hope of making the Aſſembly reſpect the property of the clergy. In the accents of truth which he uttered they ſaw but the cries of intereſt; they oppoſed him with his own arguments; and the people

It muſt be obſerved, that, through the unexampled precipitation which marked the proceedings of the night of the fourth, ſixteen reſolutions of the higheſt importance being paſſed in a few hours, moſt of which, ſingly, would require the cool deliberation of more than a day, aſſiſted by much knowledge and judgment, for its due determination; as well as from the continual diſarrangement of thought, occaſioned by the general clamour and acclamation, it became extremely difficult for the moſt comprehenſive mind to catch the nature or object of the ſubjects which were unexpectedly introduced, and hurried through, with little diſcuſſion or explanation. The clergy were repreſented by ſome as having been in this ſtate of blindneſs or ignorance, when the queſtion in which they were ſo deeply intereſted, relative to tithes, was, on that night, brought forward. They had generally conceived, and from the proces-verbal of the proceedings of that night, digeſted by M. Freteau, it appears their conceptions were perfectly well-founded, that they were to receive a juſt, or, at leaſt, a reaſonable pecuniary compenſation, an idea which afforded the higheſt gratification to them, as they would thereby be releaſed from that odious neceſſity of taking tithes in kind, which, above all things, they wiſhed to be exonerated from, and for that purpoſe would willingly have ſubmitted to no ſmall ſubſtraction from their value on the ſuppoſition of a commutation.

But when they found it was the intention to deſpoil them of their only means of living, and that they were deſtined to look for ſome undefined compenſation, which was to depend entirely upon the future degree of benevolence that might happen to operate upon the nation or aſſembly, nothing could exceed their ſenſe of the wrong, or their indignation at the injury: nor did the contemptuous treatment which the abbé Sieyes had juſt experienced, nor the clamour which was oppoſed to their own arguments and remonſtrances, nor even the galling ridicule which occaſionally intervened, and would paſs a ſubject—to them much too ſerious for merriment—off as a jeſt, at all deter them from contending rigorouſly for their rights, and firmly defending their daily bread. It was upon this occaſion that one of the country vicars, in the bitterneſs of his heart, addreſſed himſelf to the commons; and calling out with the higheſt and moſt marked indignation, aſked—"Was it then to devour us, that you invited us to join you in the name of the *God of Peace*[100]?" It cannot be doubted that a ſenſe of their own conduct in abandoning the nobility, with a recollection of the means uſed to draw them to that meaſure, and a galling compariſon between the fraternal embraces, together

"people, aſtoniſhed that after having adviſed the maſſacre of the flock he ſhould wiſh to preſerve the fleece, compelled all wiſe men to acknowledge, that the abbé Sieyes either reaſoned ill in the tribune, or had reaſoned ill in his works. So that he deceived two parties at the ſame time:—the clergy, who had, at firſt, only found in him a philoſopher under the habit of a prieſt; and the Palais-Royal, who only ſaw a prieſt under the cloak of a philoſopher."—*Journal Politique-National des Etats Generaux, et de la Revolution de* 1789, tom. ii. p. 20, 21.

[100] Mémoire de M. le Comte de Lally-Tolendal, p. 114.

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with the flattering title which they had ſo lately received, and the immediate ingratitude of thoſe very members by whom they had been ſo highly commended and careſſed, and to whom they had in reality done ſuch eſſential ſervice, muſt altogether have ſerved to embitter the preſent ſcene in the greateſt degree.

The debate, if a continued ſcene of tumult, noiſe, and confuſion, might be allowed to uſurp that name, was continued through the whole day. In vain did a number of the deputies, who wiſhed to put an end to ſo tireſome a diſcuſſion, by that ſhort mode of deciſion which conſiſted only in the counting of heads, and in which they were certain of a majority of two or three to one, call loudly and repeatedly for the queſtion. The diſorder was too great, and the paſſions on both ſides were too much inflamed, to admit of the coolneſs and regularity neceſſary even for a diviſion; ſo that the buſineſs was, by common conſent, adjourned to the following day.

The popular writers not only acknowledge, but ſeem to mention it as an inſtance of the activity and ability of the leaders on their ſide, that the night of the fifth of Auguſt, which was that immediately ſucceeding the debate on tithes, was by no means idly nor ineffectively ſpent. Every engine was ſet to work to overcome the obſtinacy, or to mollify the minds of the clergy. Hope, terror, and flattery, were alternately tried, and each in its turn found a ſoil fit for its reception, and, accordingly, produced its proper effect. The object in view was to obtain from themſelves a formal, and, at the ſame time, an apparently voluntary ſurrender of tithes. In fact, the clergy could not but ſee, that the union of the nobles and commons againſt them muſt of neceſſity render all their efforts abortive; and it required no great trouble to determine, whether it was not better to ſubmit with a good grace to an inevitable evil, than by a vain, and, what would be deemed, a pertinacious reſiſtance, to exaſperate that power on which they were ſtill deſtined to rely for ſupport and protection.

In theſe circumſtances, and under theſe ſimilar impreſſions, the point was gained in the courſe of the night; and, at the commencement of the ſitting on the next morning, the archbiſhop of Paris, in the name of his brethren, ſurrendered all the tithes of the church into the hands of the nation; accompanying the ſurrender with the following ſhort ſpeech: "Let the goſpel be preached; let divine worſhip be celebrated with "decency and dignity; let the church be provided with virtuous and zealous paſtors; "let the poor amongſt the people be ſuccoured. This is the deſtination of our riches; "theſe are the objects of our miniſtry, and of our wiſhes: we truſt ourſelves, without "reſerve, to a juſt and generous nation." This ſacrifice was received with an affected acclamation of applauſe, as if any one could be perſuaded that it was a free and voluntary gift, and not the effect of compulſion. It was not an incurious circumſtance to obſerve the ſudden change which took place in the countenance and manner of the Aſſembly. That body, ſo agitated, ſo noiſy, ſo tumultuous and violent on the preceding day

day and night, was now ſo calm, ſo tranquil and placid, that it was difficult to ſuppoſe it compoſed of the ſame men.—By the decree, which provided for the abolition of tithes, with a view to aſſiſt the finances of the country, the National Aſſembly loſt an income of ſeventy millions (near three millions ſterling) the produce of the eccleſiaſtical tithes; while the public treaſure remained charged with the ſupport of the clergy; and the claſs of rich proprietaries, who had never been thought of during the diſcuſſion, gained in part what was loſt to the church[1].

In the ſame ſitting of the ſixth of Auguſt, while the Aſſembly was employed in reducing into the form of decrees the haſty reſolutions of the fourth, M. Mounier obſerved, that if the redemption of ſeignorial rights were juſt and uſeful to the ſtate, it would be unjuſt to aboliſh, without an indemnification, thoſe feudal rights and duties, which repreſented the rights of main-morte and perſonal ſervice. Such a meaſure, he conceived, was calculated to give birth to numberleſs law-ſuits, and to invade the ſacred rights of property, which his inſtructions ordered him to defend. But when he attempted to aſcend the tribune, he was prevented from proceeding by the indecent clamours of the Aſſembly, who ſeemed to dread the effects of calm deliberation and cool diſcuſſion. M. Mounier told the preſident, that it would be a ſufficient juſtification for him to his conſtituents, if he could prove to them that he had exerted his utmoſt efforts to fulfil their inſtructions; for which purpoſe he requeſted, that the Aſſembly would either hear him, or formally declare that they would not hear him. At length, the majority, aſhamed, probably, of the proceeding, ſuffered him to ſpeak. He accordingly began by expreſſing his ſatisfaction at the redemption of the ſeignorial rights; but he obſerved, that, in order to eſtabliſh on a ſolid baſis the happineſs of a nation, not the ſmalleſt deviation from the rules of juſtice ſhould be tolerated, that, hitherto, preſcription had, for the peace of ſociety, been deemed a legitimate means of acquiſition; that, if a man had been poſſeſſed of quit-rents charged upon eſtates, for more than a century, whatever might be the origin of theſe rents, they had indiſputably become the patrimony of his family; that, in ſucceſſions and acquiſitions, the value of eſtates, ſo charged, had ever been calculated according to the income it produced when the quit-rents were deducted; that perſonal ſervice having been almoſt general throughout Europe, and the *ſerfs* having been attached to the ſoil, which often belonged excluſively to the lord, many franchiſements had taken place, where perſonal ſervice had been commuted for quit-rents; and that no inconvenience could poſſibly ariſe from declaring all ſuch rents, charged upon eſtates, redeemable; without which, many families would be expoſed to ruin. But theſe obſervations, juſt and reaſonable as they were, had no effect on the Aſſembly, who rejected his demand[2].

[1] Journal Politique, &c. tom. ii. p. 20.

[2] Expoſé de la Conduite de M. Mounier, dans l'Aſſemblée Nationale, p. 82, 83.

Though

Though many of the decrees framed in conſequence of the reſolutions of the fourth of Auguſt were highly ſalutary and juſt, yet the proceedings altogether laid the foundation of a change ſo important in the internal polity of the kingdom, that it may, perhaps, be a matter of doubt whether, upon the whole, they are to be conſidered as having a beneficial tendency, or as producing an effect of a contrary nature. That the members had greatly exceeded their *powers*, is a fact not to be controverted; and that the ſpirit of *annihilation* was carried too far, ſeems equally certain; neither the wiſdom nor the patriotiſm of deſtroying the rights which conſtituted the condition by which certain provinces were annexed to the crown, is ſo conſpicuous as the Aſſembly ſeem to have imagined; and the propriety of aboliſhing the provincial ſtates may alſo admit of conſiderable doubt. All the ancient ſyſtems of theology and the ſchools, together with the canon, political, and eccleſiaſtical bodies of law, were ſwept away like cobwebs; as were, with ſtill greater eaſe, all the claims or ſuppoſed rights of the court of Rome, and all fees or taxes paid for it were for ever aboliſhed [3]. In a word, every thing changed its ancient form and aſpect.

In the mode, too, of effecting this change, more zeal than wiſdom was certainly diſplayed; for ſo intent were the aſſembly on the reformation of abuſes, that they did not ſtay to adopt thoſe previous regulations which are ever neceſſary in the abolition of ancient cuſtoms, and the removal of ancient prejudices. We are apt to behold the works of our anceſtors with a degree of reverence which renders us blind to their imperfections; hence we ſhudder at the daring hand of innovation, when it endeavours to demoliſh the beloved fabrics, ere the perſuaſive tongue of reaſon has attempted to convince us of their defects. Beſides, the ſuppreſſion of rights, enjoyed by our anceſtors, and by them tranſmitted to ourſelves, wears an appearance of tyranny which diſguſts and alarms, unleſs we are given to expect ſome ſuitable recompence, or are taught, by argument, the neceſſity of the ſacrifice.

It has alſo been obſerved too, by men of ſhrewd obſervation, that however brilliant the generous enthuſiaſm of the fourth of Auguſt appeared, and whatever honour the greateſt ſacrifices made by the nobility and clergy to the people conferred on the parties, yet that this new method of haſtily paſſing the moſt important laws *by acclamation*, was fraught with much inconvenience and evil; that it took away from that reſpect, from that opinion of wiſdom, which ever ſhould attend the proceedings of a great deliberative aſſembly; more particularly the preſent, engaged as it was in the moſt arduous taſk, which any ſimilar body of men had ever *aſſumed* to themſelves, that of correcting all the abuſes accumulated in the courſe of a long ſeries of paſt ages, and of framing a

3 By the ſuppreſſion of *annates* it was expected to diminiſh the *pope's* annual income, to the amount of three hundred and thirty thouſand pounds ſterling.

new

new and perfect conſtitution for the government of a great and powerful empire, as if it had now been only commencing its exiſtence. They maintained, that one eſſential law coolly paſſed in favour of the people, marked with its proper characteriſtics of due deliberation, diſcuſſion, and enquiry, would have produced better effects upon their temper and diſpoſition, and inſpired them with higher ſentiments of gratitude, than the whole bundle of laws thus precipitately hurried through by the voice of clamour and acclamation. That ſuch a torrent of benefits pouring upon them at once was more calculated to turn their heads, to looſen all the bands of ſubordination, to eradicate every ſenſe of their reſpective duties, and to indiſpoſe them to every form of government whatever, than to render them good citizens, and uſeful members of ſociety in their proper ſphere of life. That theſe laws ſhould have been promulgated, and theſe benefits imparted, gradually, to give them proper effect, and thereby to render them uſeful; but that, in the preſent ill-choſen ſeaſon of paſſing the one, and no leſs ill judged mode of diſpenſing the other, the people muſt certainly aſcribe them either to a ſudden paroxyſm of fear or madneſs; and that, under this impreſſion, their gratitude on the one hand, and all the good effects which were hoped to proceed from theſe prodigious conceſſions, on the other, would be equally ſuperſeded. They farther inſiſted, that, independently of all extrinſic conſiderations, ſo important and ſo intricate a body of laws, which went to change the whole law and policy of the nation, to diſarrange or diſpoſe of near half its property, and to draw eternal lines of demarcation between the rights and claims of the rich and the poor, the great and the ſmall, required, whether with regard to their ſtability, or to the character of the legiſlators, that none of them ſeparately, much leſs the whole, ſhould have been paſſed, without deep thought, calm deliberation, long diſcuſſion, cloſe enquiry into facts and conſequences, and a vigorous exertion of human foreſight in looking to poſſible or probable effects.

The event was ſuch as might naturally have been expected: the nobility and clergy in the provinces, feeling no part of the enthuſiaſm which operated on their brethren upon the fourth of Auguſt, and being, on the contrary, in the higheſt degree irritated by the devaſtation and ruin which they were enduring, were much diſſatisfied with, and very generally condemned the conduct of their delegates, in exceeding the powers contained in their mandates, by thus haſtily ſacrificing their rights and property, without their concurrence, and without obtaining the ſmalleſt ſecurity, either preſent or future, for their perſons, or for whatever ſtill remained of their poſſeſſions. On the other hand, the illiterate peaſantry, having received only very imperfect accounts, and forming very confuſed ideas of what had paſſed in the Aſſembly, yet the mixture of truth and falſhood which reached them, that the feudal ſyſtem was entirely overthrown; all privileges and diſtinctions between men for ever aboliſhed; that all open lands were the property of the nation (by which they underſtood *themſelves*) with that addition, which was received more greedily than any other, that no rents were in future to be paid; theſe things, they thought,

thought, not only afforded a full juſtification of their paſt violence, but ſufficient authority for its continuance; nor is it much to be wondered at that *they* ſhould conſider theſe ſudden and extraordinary benefits as the effect of their own outrages. Under this perſuaſion the people, who, it was maintained by one party in the Aſſembly, would be appeaſed by theſe numerous ſacrifices, and for whoſe future good behaviour the count de Caſtellane, the viſcount de Noailles, and the duke d'Aiguillon, pledged themſelves, became more inſatiate in their demands, and ferocious in their actions:—The preſent epoch being diſtinguiſhed by more conflagrations of gentlemen's ſeats, and the commiſſion of more murders throughout the kingdom. The Aſſembly aboliſhed a part of the feudal rights—the people ſet fire to all the archives and title-deeds; the Aſſembly effaced the diſtinctions of birth—and the people maſſacred the nobles; the Aſſembly decreed the deſtruction of pecuniary privileges, and the equal diſtribution of impoſts—and the people refuſed to pay any impoſts at all[4]. So that the people, armed with the executive power, have invariably exceeded the decrees of the Aſſembly; and have inceſſantly decided, by *fact*, what the Aſſembly have endeavoured to eſtabliſh by law;—thus, the people ſoon began to conſider the Aſſembly as timid and contemptible; and to pay no more attention to their decrees, than to the king's orders.

Some ſevere laws were, indeed, paſſed, at the inſtigation of M. Dupont, member for Nemours, (who ſcarcely ſuffered a day to paſs without renewing his efforts for that purpoſe, until he accompliſhed his objects) for ſuppreſſing the diſorders, and puniſhing the offenders; but they, not being ſupported with vigour, and no proper force aſſigned for carrying them into execution, produced but little effect[5]. The proprietaries, however, at length, whoſe ſupineneſs hitherto had been a matter of general aſtoniſhment, took up arms in their own defence, and checked the barbarous ravages of the peaſantry. To this late diſcovered vigour on their ſide Rabaud de Saint Etienne attributes the ſalvation of France; for he obſerves, that that claſs of men who had nothing to loſe, and every thing to gain, in the confuſion of revolutions, was thereby deterred from aſſembling[6].

As an appearance of ſome tranquillity and good temper now prevailed in the court and Aſſembly, the king ventured to appoint a new miniſtry. The great ſeal was given to the archbiſhop of Bourdeaux; the nomination of benefices to the archbiſhop of Vienne; the war department was committed to M. du la Tour du Pin; while the counts de Saint

[4] Journal Politique, p. 24.

[5] The difficulty of ſuppreſſing diſorders was, of courſe, conſiderably enhanced, by the injudicious abolition of *ſeigneurial* tribunals, previous to the inſtitution of other courts, for the ſpeedy adminiſtration of juſtice. The haſty ſuppreſſion of the rights of the chaſe afforded a pretext for the moſt ſerious outrages; the game became a common prey; and, in the purſuit, even the extreme neceſſities of the kingdom were diſregarded, as the ſtanding corn was trodden down and deſtroyed.

[6] Engliſh tranſlation, p. 106.

Prieſt and de Montmorin, who had been recalled with Neckar, were reinſtated in their former offices. The three former were members of the Aſſembly, but they forbore to ſit or vote there after their appointment. The Aſſembly expreſſed great ſatisfaction at the choice of thoſe miniſters, which the king had immediately communicated to them by letter.

It happened, unfortunately, that the ſame evil, which had already proved ſo fatal to the king and to his adminiſtrations, ſtill continued to preſs upon the executive government with greater weight than it had ever done before. The payment of the taxes—owing, chiefly, to the injudicious declaration of the Aſſembly on the ſubject of the exiſting impoſts—being generally refuſed or evaded in moſt parts of the kingdom, there was no money to ſupport government, or carry on the public buſineſs. In this ſtate of things the new miniſters demanded an audience of the Aſſembly, when the archbiſhop of Bourdeaux—as keeper of the ſeals—addreſſed them in the following terms:

"While the repreſentatives of the nation, happy in their confidence in the ſovereign, "and in his paternal reliance on their affection, are employed in eſtabliſhing, on a per- "manent baſis, the felicity of the country—that country is agitated and convulſed, and "an univerſal conſternation prevails.

"Whether reſentment of the various abuſes which the king wiſhes to have reformed, "and which you deſire to proſcribe for ever, has led the people aſtray; whether the "annunciation of an univerſal regeneration has ſhaken the different powers on which "depends the exiſtence of ſocial order; whether paſſions hoſtile to our felicity have "ſhed their malignant influence over the empire; or whether from any other cauſe; the "truth is, gentlemen, that the public order and tranquillity are diſturbed in almoſt "every part of the kingdom.

"You well know, gentlemen, that all property is violated in the provinces; the "hands of incendiaries have ravaged the habitations of the citizens; the forms of juſ- "tice are laid aſide, and acts of violence and proſcriptions ſubſtituted in their place. "In ſome parts the very crops on the ground have been threatened with deſtruction. "and even the *hopes* of the people nipped in the bud. Wherever depredations have "failed of their effect, terror and alarm have been induſtriouſly diſſeminated. *Licen- "tiouſneſs remains without reſtraint; the laws without force; the tribunals without activity: "deſolation has ſpread over a part of France, and terror has ſeized the whole. Commerce "and induſtry are ſuſpended; and the aſylums of piety can no longer afford protection againſt "the murderous attempts of aſſaſſins.*"

After this dreadful repreſentation of the *unpuniſhed*[7] crimes which deſolated the king-

7 Hiſtoire de la Revolution de 1789, tom. ii. p. 303.

dom;

dom; after having ſupplicated the Aſſembly, in the king's name, to accelerate the completion of their great and important labours; after having entreated them to adopt ſuch coercive meaſures as ſhould appear to them neceſſary for putting a ſtop to ſo many diſorders, and having aſſured them of the king's concurrence and ſanction, he obſerved, that M. Neckar would immediately lay before them the true ſtate of the finances.

That miniſter accordingly repreſented, that, on his re-entrance into office, he had only found in the treaſury four hundred thouſand livres, part in caſh, and part in notes of the Caiſſe d' Eſcompte: that the difference between the revenue and the current expences was enormous, and *the national credit annihilated*; that it had been neceſſary, however, to conduct the public buſineſs without betraying any appearance of diſtreſs, until the time when the National Aſſembly ſhould lay the foundation of permanent order; that the arrival of that period had been protracted, and, at the ſame time, the extraordinary expences and unexpected diminutions which had taken place in the produce of the revenue had augmented the pecuniary embarraſſments of the ſtate:—Among theſe expences and defalcations, he mentioned the immenſe ſupplies of corn which the king had been obliged to procure for the kingdom; the extraordinary works about Paris for the purpoſe of giving ſubſiſtance to twelve thouſand poor, who were paid for their labour at the rate of twenty ſols a day; the reduction of the price of ſalt to one half, in ſeveral places, occaſioned by the audacity of ſmugglers, who introduced that article and tobacco openly, and under the eſcort of troops of armed men; the deſtruction of many of the barriers; the pillage of the cuſtom-houſes; the diſperſion of the regiſters; the obſtructions to the collection of duties; and the refuſal to pay the taxes.—Having thus expoſed the dreadful ſtate of the finances, he deſired the Aſſembly, in the king's name, to ſanction a loan of thirty millions of livres, to ſatisfy the engagements and inevitable expences of the ſtate for two months, by which time he preſumed that the conſtitution would be completed, or, at leaſt, far advanced. He expreſſed his opinion of the impropriety of tempting the monied men, by the offer of an high intereſt; and propoſed that only five per cent. ſhould be allowed. After detailing the means of accommodating the lenders by fixing the nature and ſtability of their ſecurities, he ſuggeſted the idea of publiſhing a liſt of the perſons who ſhould ſubſcribe to this *patriotic* loan, and of inſerting it in the regiſters of the Aſſembly.

"You will not, gentlemen,"—purſued the miniſter—"refuſe to ſanction this loan. "Several of your mandates have doubtleſs required that you ſhould withhold your con- "ſent from any impoſt or loan until the conſtitution ſhould be ſettled; but could they "poſſible foreſee the difficulties which have retarded your labours? could they foreſee "the unexampled revolution which has taken place within the laſt three weeks? Could "your conſtituents make themſelves heard, they would exclaim—Save the ſtate; ſave "the country; you are accountable for our peace, for our happineſs!—And, gentlemen,

" how much is your reſponſibility increaſed, now that *the government has no longer any* " *power*, and that you alone are poſſeſſed of the few means that remain for reſiſting the " ſtorm!—As for me, I have fulfilled my taſk; I have made you acquainted with the " true ſtate of affairs, and whatever meaſures you may adopt, it is my duty to reſpect " your opinions, and to give you, to the laſt moment, proofs of my zeal and devotion."

After expatiating, in a very affecting manner, on the calamities of the kingdom, M. Neckar deemed it neceſſary to offer ſome topics of conſolation, at the concluſion of his ſpeech, which he terminated with theſe words:

" Notwithſtanding the evils we experience, the kingdom is ſtill entire, and the union " of knowledge and talents may fertilize the germ of proſperity. Let no one, then, " either in this aſſembly, or in the kingdom, loſe courage. The king ſees the truth; " the king wiſhes to promote the general good; his ſubjects have preſerved for his per- " ſon a *penchant*, which the return of national tranquillity will fortify and augment. " Let us, therefore, gentlemen, give ourſelves up to the enjoyment of the happy pro- " ſpect ſtill to be diſcerned. A day, perhaps, will come, when, in the midſt of thoſe " ſweets which rational freedom and undivided confidence afford, the French nation will " efface from her recollection theſe times of calamity; and, while ſhe enjoys the bene- " fits reſulting from your generous efforts, ſhe will never, in her effuſions of gratitude, " omit the name of a monarch on whom, as a token of your affection, you have recently " conferred ſuch a glorious title."

The ſpeech of the miniſter was followed by the applauſe of the Aſſembly; and M. de Clermont-Lodeve, convinced, by his repreſentations, of the urgent neceſſity of applying an immediate remedy to the pecuniary diſtreſſes of the ſtate, moved that the ſum required ſhould be inſtantaneouſly granted. But that Aſſembly, which had ſo recently voted away millions by acclamation, and changed, as it were, the whole internal polity of the kingdom in one night, had, on a ſudden, become ſo extremely prudent, cautious, and circumſpect, that they refuſed to vote a ſum thus comparatively trifling, without due deliberation, and ſerious diſcuſſion. In the firſt inſtance, indeed, the objects of a *party* were to be accompliſhed; in the laſt, the *public good* alone was to be conſulted. Mirabeau, who was of courſe extremely unwilling to afford that aſſiſtance to the ſtate which could in any degree tend to the reſtoration of order, and by that means interfere with the ſchêmes of his patron, ſtigmatized as " a vile ſlave," and even threatened with proſcription [8], the member who made the motion; while the Aſſembly calmly ſubmitted to this daring invaſion of the freedom of debate, this ſcandalous violation of decency. The man, who rejected, in the moſt poſitive terms, the authorities of imperative man-

[8] Expoſé de la Conduite de M. Mounier, p. 84.

dates,

dates, and aſſerted the independence and omnipotence of the Aſſembly, now maintained the neceſſity of appealing to their conſtituents, for their ſanction to a *monthly* vote of credit [9]. The neceſſity of adhering to thoſe inſtructions which they had *ſworn* to obſerve, now acknowledged, though generally denied, by Mirabeau, was indeed founded on the ancient laws and cuſtoms of the monarchy; but if any occaſion could juſtify a departure from the ſtrict rule of adherence, it was certainly the preſent, when a national bankruptcy, which the Aſſembly had deprecated in ſuch ſtrong terms, as even to forbid, under the ſevereſt penalties, the utterance of the words, would be the probable conſequence of refuſal or delay: and when, as M. de Lally obſerved, an implicit obedience to the letter of the inſtructions, would operate in contradiction to the ſpirit of them, ſince they could not order the deputies to make a conſtitution for a ſociety, which, without this loan, could no longer exiſt [10].

The conſideration of the queſtion was, at length, referred to the committee of finance, whoſe chairman, the duke d'Aiguillon, made his report to the houſe, on the following day. He acknowledged the neceſſity of the loan, but declared his opinion, that the *national* loan ſtood in no need of ſubſidiary means, as there could not be a doubt but that every deſcription of citizens would zealouſly haſten to advance the ſum required [11].

Under this perſuaſion, the loan was adopted; but, relying on the patriotic zeal of the citizens, all thoſe inducements which M. Neckar had holden out to ſubſcribers were omitted, and the intereſt reduced to four and a half per cent. The conſequence was ſuch as might naturally have been expected; people refuſed to part with their money, where the ſecurity was doubtful, and the terms were diſproportioned to the riſk, ſo that the ſtate was left in the ſame embarraſſed ſituation as before.

Nor was the immediate failure to procure the neceſſary relief to government the worſt conſequence of the miſconduct of the Aſſembly on this occaſion. In the courſe of the debates on the ſubject, their power to paſs a vote of credit was frequently called in queſtion; and M. Camus moſt injudiciouſly, if not *deſignedly*, intimated that the intereſt due to the creditors of the ſtate could not be exempted from the effect of the general reſolution, that every ſpecies of property ſhould be ſubject to taxation. Thus if a determination had been adopted to exert every effort to diſſuade men of property from ſtanding forward in relief of the ſtate, the ſcheme could not have ſucceeded more compleatly. Beſides, the confidence which the nation had hitherto repoſed in M. Neckar could not but be affected by the *want of confidence in their own* miniſter, diſplayed by the Aſſembly, in rejecting his ſcheme, though they had ſo often extolled his abilities and integrity, in a

[9] Hiſtoire de la Revolution de 1789, tom. ii. p. 332.

[10] See *Pieces Juſtificatives*, at the end of M. de Lally's Memoire, p. 92.

[11] Hiſtoire de la Revolution de 1789, tom. ii. p. 333.

degree

degree which approached to the hyperbole. This conduct drew a degree of unpopularity, and even of odium, upon the National Aſſembly, which it did not eaſily ſhake off; for, as Neckar did not ſcruple publickly to vindicate himſelf, the whole blame naturally fell upon that body, who were accuſed of having paid him a ſervile homage, and laviſhed expreſſions of confidence which their ſubſequent conduct contradicted; they were likewiſe charged with having demanded his recall and fruſtrated his ſchemes, from one and the ſame motive—that of diſplaying their own power, or thwarting the will of their ſovereign[12].

Having found it impoſſible to procure money on their own terms, and the neceſſities of the ſtate every hour encreaſing, the Aſſembly, at length, permitted Neckar to preſcribe ſuch conditions as in his opinion would prove effectual, for raiſing a loan of eighty millions of livres, at five per cent. on the credit of the aſſembly. But the ſeeds of miſtruſt were too widely diſſeminated; the fortunate moment had been imprudently ſuffered to eſcape, and could not be regained; although the propoſals were ſufficiently alluring, the ſubſcription advanced too ſlowly to produce the deſired effect, and, in fine, was not half filled. In the mean time, a ſcheme for promoting and receiving patriotic contributions was adopted; and, like other novelties in that country, raged for a time with the violence of an epidemic diſorder. Silver buckles and gold rings were the moſt common contributions to the Aſſembly; ſo that, in a few days, not a ſilver buckle was to be ſeen, nor, probably, many wedding rings to be found any where in or near Paris. The National Aſſembly themſelves, in one of thoſe ſudden fits of enthuſiaſm, to which they were ſo liable, diſmantled all their own ſhoes in a moment. Such was the rage of faſhion, while it laſted, that the pooreſt people, even thoſe who, if they did not ſubſiſt upon common charity, were but little removed from ſuch a ſtate, preſented their offerings. The loweſt, as well as the higher order of courtezans were eminently diſtinguiſhed for their liberality on this occaſion; and the wages of proſtitution were deemed acceptable oblations at the ſhrine of patriotiſm!—A more diſgraceful meaſure, with reſpect both to the nation and themſelves, was ſurely never adopted by any body of men in ſimilar circumſtances!!!

Meantime the king and queen, being reduced to a ſtate of abſolute poverty, according to M. Neckar, were obliged to ſend their gold and ſilver plate to the mint, to be converted into current coin for the relief of their immediate neceſſities.

It ſoon appeared, and might have been eaſily foreſeen, that the patriotic donations were totally incapable of extricating the ſtate from its pecuniary embarraſſments, which were

[12] Memoire de M. de Lally-Tolendal, p. 118.

of

of too vaſt a magnitude to be at all affected by ſuch trifling reſources; ſo that the danger of a public bankruptcy, and of a total ceſſation of all the operations of government, could not fail to impreſs the mind of every friend to his country with the moſt ſerious apprehenſions; the taxes being almoſt entirely unproductive, and no means appearing for ſupplying their place with an adequate ſubſtitute. It was in this ſtate of extreme difficulty, when the greatneſs of the neceſſity ſeemed almoſt to afford a ſanction to any meaſure that might be purſued for obtaining relief, that Neckar ventured to propoſe to the Aſſembly a ſcheme for a ſupply, which the boldeſt miniſter that ever lived, and in the moſt deſpotic government, would perhaps have heſitated at adopting. This was nothing leſs then the extraordinary contribution of the fourth part of each man's yearly revenue, to be paid at different ſtated periods during the courſe of three years. The eſtimate of each man's income, and conſequently the amount of the ſum which he was to contribute to the ſtate, being left to his own honour.

It was certainly a ſingular caſe, that a tax, almoſt without example in the moſt arbitrary governments, ſhould have been paſſed by a body of men, not only highly republican, but who openly avowed themſelves the aſſertors of liberty. But it muſt be conſidered, on the other hand, that they were already labouring under great and general odium on account of the failure of Neckar's firſt ſcheme for raiſing money by a loan, which was entirely and juſtly charged to their injudicious and wanton interference in the buſineſs. At the ſame time, inſtant bankruptcy, with all its fatal conſequences, was ſtaring them full in the face; and if they rejected the preſent plan, they would make themſelves thereby reſponſible for all the evils that might enſue. It is remarkable, that the arguments uſed by Mirabeau, on this occaſion, were directly contradictory to thoſe which he had adduced in oppoſition to the firſt loan. He then reprobated the idea of voting by acclamation, whereas he now deprecated all diſcuſſion and deliberation: he exhorted the Aſſembly to repoſe an unlimited confidence in the miniſter; telling them that by accepting his propoſitions, and by raiſing him to a kind of *proviſionary dictatorſhip*, they would diſcharge their duty as citizens and repreſentatives of the nation [13]—Whether this change was owing to an idea, that the preſent ſcheme for raiſing money was more *objectionable* then the former, and leſs likely to be *productive*, or whether he really felt any repugnance at the obſtructions he had before thrown in the way of the miniſter's plan, or dreaded the loſs of his own popularity, it is not for us to determine. It was too late now for the Aſſembly to reflect, that much of the public diſtreſs proceeded from their own extraordinary declaration, which taught the people to conſider all the preſent taxes as illegal, from the circumſtance of their not being impoſed by their repreſentatives.

[13] Hiſtoire de la Revolution de 1789, tom. iii. p. 172.

Nothing

Nothing was, however, left undone by the Aſſembly, which could tend to render this ſcheme of ſupply palpable; and to prevent its aſſuming the odious appellation of a tax, it was repreſented entirely as a patriotic contribution or donation. But the difficulty that naturally aroſe from this pitiful mode of temporiſing, ſo much beneath the dignity of a legiſlative body, was this—that the means which were adopted to remove the unpopularity and even odium that, from the diſpoſition of the people, it was evident muſt attend ſuch a meaſure, were calculated to render it unproductive, and to deſtroy the effect it was intended to promote. Conſidered as a tax, it was deemed oppreſſive; and as a voluntary contribution futile. In vain did the Aſſembly paſs an addreſs to the nation, ſtating the neceſſity of great ſacrifices in caſe of great emergency. Neither this exhortation, nor the knowledge that the ſcheme originated with Neckar, could prevent a great number of thoſe who were expoſed to its effect, from conſidering this decree as the reſult of a combination, formed by men without property, to ſtrip thoſe who ſtill retained any, of the laſt farthing they poſſeſſed. For, the example being once ſet, of thus partially taxing a part of the community, and condemning them to bear all the burthens of the ſtate, it was aſked, who could pretend to define the extent to which the injury and oppreſſion might be carried under the ſanction of ſuch a precedent; eſpecially as all power was lodged, and liable to continue, in the hands of thoſe very men who had committed the original wrong? If ſtate neceſſity was pleaded as the colour or pretence, they obſerved, that it was at beſt the plea only of tyrants; and that the ſame pretence would anſwer the ſame purpoſe, while they had any thing left to loſe. If the total failure of the cuſtomary taxes was brought as an argument, the queſtion was readily put, why the people were armed to reſiſt their payment, until better, or, at leaſt, other taxes were provided, to ſupply the deficiency? They ſaid, that the landed proprietors had already ſacrificed a great part of their rights and property to the public good; that another conſiderable portion had been totally deſtroyed, by the cruel devaſtations commited on their houſes and eſtates, by thoſe very people on whom they were ſhowering benefits; and that now, in the ſeaſon of their humiliation and diſtreſs, ſcarcely breathing from the horrors and ruin which they had experienced, to condemn them to the ſupport of all the expences of the nation, was a meaſure of ſuch injuſtice and cruelty, as to be without example in all the annals of tyranny. Nor did the ſanguine and active part which Mirabeau had taken in paſſing this decree, ſerve in any degree to leſſen theſe impreſſions, or to render the meaſure more acceptable. Upon the whole, nothing had yet taken place in the courſe of the Revolution, which ſerved ſo much to embitter the minds of men, to increaſe the animoſity and malignity of parties, and which through the violence of their colliſion produced ſuch unfortunate and diſgraceful conſequences, as this meaſure of partial taxation.

During theſe efforts to relieve the diſtreſſes occaſioned by the diſordered ſtate of the finances—which took up a conſiderable ſpace of time—the National Aſſembly were buſily

ſily occupied in forming different parts of the new conſtitution; and, as they were determined to prove, that they were wholly unconfined by the ſhackles of precedent, and their proceedings unbiaſſed by the conduct of the States-General of the kingdom, convened in former periods of the monarchy, they reſolved to begin *ab ovo*, by a declaration of the rights of man. On this ſubject the Aſſembly bewildered themſelves in the labyrinth of abſtract queſtions and metaphyſical diſquiſitions. La Fayette, who had adopted his political principles in America, preſented a declaration, which was an epitome of all thoſe that had been adopted by the different members of the United States. This might poſſibly have been received by the Aſſembly as the ground-work to their own, had not the abbé Si-yes compoſed an abſtract and complex work, in which he defined and traced the rights of man to their firſt principles. Though the abbé's friends and admirers were unſucceſsful in their ſupport of this production, they, however, procured the rejection of La Fayette's ſyſtem; but this double failure, inſtead of operating as a diſcouragement, was ſucceeded by ſuch a multitude of plans of new declarations, that the Aſſembly, embarraſſed by a variety of choice, found it neceſſary to appoint a committee, in order to reduce the ſubſtances of thoſe numerous plans into one digeſt, to which they might refer, as a text-book, in their deliberations.

This digeſt was as far from affording ſatisfaction as the ſeparate plans of individuals. In the mean time eſſays were every day written upon the ſubject; and every man ſeemed to think it the eaſieſt thing in the world to do that which none did. Opinions multiplied upon opinions in the Aſſembly, every time the ſubject was diſcuſſed; every line teemed with new difficulties; the mutual jealouſies and diſtruſts of the parties led them to ſuſpect ſome dangerous myſtery or hidden fraud to be involved in axioms the moſt ſimple and obvious; and while they reciprocally accuſed each other without ceremony, either of intending to give the reins entirely to licentiouſneſs, or of wiſhing to check the progreſs of liberty, cool debate and deliberate diſcuſſion were, in ſuch circumſtances, rather to be wiſhed for than expected.

A declaration, which was propoſed by one of the ſections into which the Aſſembly was divided, was at length ſo far received, as to become the ſubject of a general debate, with a view to its affording the foundation for the grand ſuperſtructure. Every article became a ſubject of much diſcuſſion, and was not unfrequently productive of great heat and bitterneſs. The debates were exceedingly tedious and unintereſting; being in many caſes a mere war of words, running much into metaphyſical abſtractions, grammatical niceties, and verbal diſputes, of no conſequence. They were rendered ſtill more irkſome and difficult from its being ſcarcely poſſible to arrange any number of words in ſuch a form as would equally ſtrike the ears of, and be received with the ſame degree of apprehenſion by, ſo great an aſſemblage of men as twelve hundred, even ſuppoſing that they were all equally ſincere in their purſuit of the truth, and that none were prompted

by particular motives to deviate from the right line of direction. It became, indeed, now evident, if it had been before doubted, that ſo numerous a body was by no means properly calculated for a deliberative aſſembly.

The debates, however, were not entirely confined to the ſubject or compoſition of the declaration; for one of the moſt conſiderable, and, perhaps, the moſt intereſting with regard to matter, aroſe upon the queſtion of adopting the meaſure, conſidered with reſpect to its expedience and propriety. It was ſaid, by thoſe who oppoſed the meaſure, that this American idea was, in fact, more brilliant than ſolid; that it originated from a new and peculiar ſtate of things, which did not exiſt with reſpect to France; but that whether it ſuited or not the circumſtances and condition of thoſe by whom it was firſt adopted, was not the queſtion to be conſidered, but whether it ſuited their own? This they endeavoured to diſprove. They ſtated, in the firſt place, that ſuch a declaration, in the preſent ſtate and temper of the nation, would not only be inexpedient, but might probably prove dangerous, from an improper uſe being made of it; that the people, juſt delivered from oppreſſion, and indulging themſelves in a momentary licentiouſneſs, were unprepared for ſuch new doctrines; that when they were intoxicated with the unaccuſtomed ſpirit of independence, they would no longer acknowledge the authority of the laws, but would be too apt to conſider them only as remaining appendages of that ſyſtem of ancient tyranny, from whoſe other ſhackles they had ſo lately liberated themſelves; and under this blind deluſion they would eagerly exert their new liberty in enforcing by violence, every claim which caprice, folly, or the worſt paſſions might ſuggeſt.

They added, that in order to avoid theſe miſchiefs and dangers, which were too obvious to be overlooked by any body, the Aſſembly, after involving itſelf in a taſk of great moment and expectation, would be afraid to execute, conſiſtently and properly, that difficult buſineſs which it had ſo needleſsly and wantonly undertaken; for that, under theſe ſhackles, it could only form a patched up, imperfect, and inconſiſtent work, under the name of a declaration of rights, which would be a diſgrace to the authors as well as to the ſubject, the parts militating againſt each other, and contradicting the title, from the number of reſtraints and limitations, with which, in ſuch untoward circumſtances, it muſt of neceſſity abound; and thus the mighty whole, when it came forth, inſtead of a political creed, which ſhould *convert*[34] all mankind by the juſtneſs and ſimplicity of its principles, would prove an inſignificant, incoherent, contradictory jargon. They ſaid, the Aſſembly, by this premature attempt, would find itſelf involved in other difficulties, which it did not ſeem aware of, with reſpect to the great caution which was to be

[34] Theſe infant legiſlators—even in their cradle, as it were,—had the vanity to ſuppoſe themſelves capable of making *converts*.—No wonder, then, they ſhould reject the wiſdom of their neighbours, and treat with diſdain a ſyſtem of government that had extorted the admiration of the wiſeſt men of all countries.

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uſed in not confining its powers of legiſlation, and the danger of a contradiction between general principles and particular laws; this muſt occaſion their declaration of thoſe principles to be timid and circumſpect, if not equivocal; and the production, it was inſiſted, would appear to be merely the offspring of their preſent neceſſities, and of the ruling prejudices of the moment.

Were it not better, therefore, ſaid they, to defer your declaration of rights, until the conſtitution is completed and eſtabliſhed? We ſhall then have it in our power to appropriate the one to the other, and to make them harmonize together.—M. Malouet put this appoſite queſtion:—"Why ſhould we tranſport men to the ideal ſummit of a "mountain, and ſhew them the extenſive domain of their rights beneath, then we "ſhall moſt aſſuredly be obliged to make them deſcend, and to bring them into the real "world, where they will find every ſtep fettered with reſtraints?"

But the much more numerous party who ſupported the meaſure, treated with indignation and diſdain the idea of ſuppoſing there could be any danger in *enlightening* the public, and communicating to them a knowledge of their rights. Theſe maintained, that it had been the old trick of deſpotiſm, in all ages and places, to keep the people ignorant, in order to rivet their chains the more firmly, and to render their ſlavery eternal. They talked in lofty language, but not always perfectly intelligible, about the *native* rights of man, "Which" they ſaid, "are eternal, unalienable, and impreſcriptible; that their "ſource is in nature itſelf; that they are equal and unchangeable in every age and every "country; and can never yield to any reaſon of convenience or neceſſity: that, as the ſole "object of ſociety is the preſervation of theſe rights, to declare what they are is an indiſ"penſable preliminary to the eſtabliſhment of a political conſtitution: that the repreſen"tatives of the people are ſpecially called upon to declare them, becauſe it is their duty "to lay the foundations before they raiſe the edifice; to eſtabliſh principles before they "draw concluſions; to fix upon a determinate and invariable end, before they make "choice of the means by which it is to be obtained: that it is neceſſary to declare them, "in order that the people may underſtand and decide upon the motives of their legiſla"tors; that our ſucceſſors may tread in our footſteps, and, ſeeing clearly our object, "and comprehending fully the ſenſe of our deſign, may be enabled to bring our work "to perfection; and, *that other nations may be made ſenſible by our precepts of the injuries "they ſuffer, and may learn by our example how to redreſs them.* It is a debt which France "owes to mankind."

The majority of courſe prevailed, and the following production was the fruit of their labours.—"The repreſentatives of the French people, conſtituting a National Aſſembly, "conſidering ignorance, forgetfulneſs, or contempt, of the rights of man, to be the ſole "cauſe of the public calamities, and the corruption of governments, have reſolved to ex-

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" plain, in a ſolemn declaration, the natural, inalienable, and ſacred rights of man; in " order that ſuch declaration, being conſtantly preſented to all the members of the ſo- " cial body, may inceſſantly remind them of their rights and their duties; in order that " the acts of the legiſlative power, and thoſe of the executive power, being every inſtant " compared with the object of every political inſtitution, may become more reſpected; " and, laſtly, in order that the claims of the citizens, founded in future on ſimple and " inconteſtible principles, may ever tend to the ſupport of the conſtitution, and the hap- " pineſs of the whole;

" In conſequence whereof, the National Aſſembly acknowledges and declares, in the " preſence, and under the auſpices of the Supreme Being, the following rights of man " and citizens:

1. " Men are born and *remain* free and equal in rights; ſocial diſtinctions can only be " founded on general utility.

2. " The end of every political aſſociation is the preſervation of the natural and im- " preſcriptible rights of man. Theſe rights are liberty, property, ſafety, and reſiſtance " of oppreſſion.

3. " The principle of all ſovereignty reſides eſſentially in the nation. No body, " no individual, can exerciſe any authority but ſuch as expreſsly emanates [15] from " thence.

4 " Liberty conſiſts in the ability to do every thing which is not prejudicial to others. " Thus, the exerciſe of the natural rights of each individual has no other limits than thoſe " which enſure to the other members of ſociety the enjoyment of thoſe ſame rights. " Theſe limits can only be fixed by the law.

5 " The law has only a right to prohibit ſuch actions as are prejudicial to ſociety. " Nothing that is not prohibited by the law can be prevented; and no one can be con- " ſtrained to do what the law does not ordain.

6. " The law is the expreſſion of the general will. All citizens have a right to " *concur*, either perſonally, or by their repreſentatives, in its formation; it ought to be " the ſame for all, whether it protects, or puniſhes. All citizens being equal in the eye

[15] In tranſlating the ſtate papers and parliamentary ſpeeches of the preſent period, we ſhall rather aim at literal adherence to the originals, than at a ſtrict accuracy of language, from a conviction, that by ſo doing we ſhall convey the moſt perfect idea of the *ſpirit* and *manner* of the writers and orators.

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" of the law, are equally admiſſible to all dignities, places, and public employments, ac-
" cording to their capacity, and without any other diſtinctions than thoſe which reſult
" from their virtues and their talents.

7. " No man can be accuſed, apprehended, nor detained, except in ſuch caſes as are
" determined by the law, and according to the forms which the law has preſcribed.
" Thoſe who ſolicit, expedite, execute, or cauſe to be executed, arbitrary orders, ought
" to be puniſhed; but every citizen ſummoned or ſeized in virtue of the law ought to
" obey inſtantaneouſly; by reſiſtance he renders himſelf guilty.

8. " The law ought only to eſtabliſh ſuch puniſhments as are ſtrictly and evidently
" neceſſary; and *no man can be puniſhed but in virtue of a law eſtabliſhed and promulgated*
" *previous to the commiſſion of the crime, and legally applied.*

9. " Every man being preſumed innocent until he has been declared guilty, if it be
" deemed neceſſary to apprehend him, all rigour, except ſuch as is requiſite for ſecuring
" his perſon, ſhould be ſeverely repreſſed by the law.

10. " No man ought to be moleſted on account of his opinions, even on religious ſub-
" jects, provided their manifeſtation do not diſturb the public order eſtabliſhed by
" the law.

11. " The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the moſt precious
" rights of man. Every citizen, therefore, may ſpeak, write, and print freely, ſubject
" only to a reſponſibility for the abuſe of that freedom, in caſes determined by the law.

12. " The ſecurity of the rights of man and the citizen renders a public force
" neceſſary. That force then is inſtituted for the advantage of all, and not for the pri-
" vate utility of thoſe to whom it is confided.

13. " For the maintenance of the public force, and for the expences of government,
" a common contribution is indiſpenſably requiſite; it ought to be equally divided
" among all the citizens, in proportion to their faculties.

14. " All the citizens have a right to aſcertain, by themſelves or their repreſentatives,
" the neceſſity of the public contribution, freely to conſent to the ſame, to watch over
" its application, and to determine its amount, aſſeſſment, collection, and duration.

15. " Society has a right to demand an account of the adminiſtration of every pub-
" lic agent.