

X 2066946

THE
BENEFICIAL EFFECTS
OF
CHRISTIANITY
ON THE TEMPORAL CONCERNS OF
MANKIND,
PROVED FROM HISTORY AND FROM FACTS.

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND
BEILBY PORTEUS, D.D.
LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

SECOND EDITION.

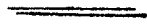
L O N D O N:

Printed by Luke Hansard, near Lincoln's-Inn Fields,
FOR T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES, IN THE STRAND;
T. PAYNE, AT THE MEWS-GATE; AND
E. C. AND J. RIVINGTON, IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1806.

5217
11 2820

Editions referred to in the following **ESSAY**.



- Aristotelis Opera.—Aurel. Allobr. 1605.
- Platonis Op.—Frankfort, 1549.
- Herodoti Op.—Lugd. Bat. 1716.
- Thucyd. Op.—Frankfort, 1594.
- Taciti. Op.—Ernest. 1752.
- Senecæ Op.—Leipf. 1615.
- Cicero Olivet.—Genev. 1743.
- Livy Crevier. 12°—1750.

SECTION I.

THERE are few arguments against the truth and divine origin of the Christian Revelation, on which the Adversaries of our Faith more frequently and more vehemently declaim, than that spirit of cruelty and intolerance, which they contend is its distinguishing feature, and the endless massacres, wars, and persecutions, with which (they affirm) that spirit has desolated the Christian world.

That too many of the professors of our Religion have, by their intemperate and inhuman conduct, brought reproach upon the Gospel, and extreme misery upon their fellow-creatures, is, it must be confessed, unquestionably true ; but it is no less true, that others ought to bear a large share of that odium, which is generally thrown exclusively on the disciples of Christ, and that it is not Christianity but

human nature, that is chargeable with the guilt of persecution. It is beyond a doubt, that a large part of those bitter dissensions and sanguinary contests which have been usually stiled religious, and with the entire guilt of which Christianity has been very unjustly loaded, were altogether, or at least in a great measure, owing to political causes; and that difference of opinion in matters of faith, has much oftner been the ostensible, than the real cause of those calamities which have been ascribed to it. But allowing it to have been in some cases the real cause, still the Gospel itself stands perfectly clear of all blame on that account. Whatever mischief, persecution has done in the world, (and it has God knows done full enough) it was not Christ, but some mistaken followers of Christ, that brought this sword upon earth; and it would be as injurious to ascribe to Christianity, the false opinions and wrong practices of its disciples, however pernicious, as to impute to the physician, the fatal mistakes of those who administered his medicines. The very best laws are liable to be misinterpreted and perverted. It was the fate of the Evangelical law to be

so. Its spirit was misunderstood, and its precepts misapplied by some of its avowed friends, and its authority made use of as a cloak for ambition, resentment, cruelty and oppression, by some of its secret enemies. But the Gospel all the while was guiltless of this blood. It disclaimed and abhorred such unnatural supports, which it was as far from wanting, as it was from prescribing. It authorized the use of no other means of conviction, but gentleness and persuasion; and if any of its disciples have, by a misguided zeal, been betrayed into violent and sanguinary measures, the blame is all their own; and it is they must answer for it, not Jesus or his Religion*.

But this is not all. The defence of our divine Religion against the charge of cruelty, must by no means rest here. We contend not only that it has never been the real source of any misery upon earth, but that, on the contrary, it has added most essentially to the sum of human happiness; that it is not only in its own nature calculated to promote the

* To impute *crimes* to Christianity, says the celebrated king of Prussia, (in his Posthumous Works) is the act of a *Novice*. His word may fairly be taken for such an assertion.

peace, the welfare, and the comfort of mankind, but that it has actually done so; that its beneficial effects are in a greater or a less degree visible throughout the Christian world; and that, considered in all the various points of view in which it presents itself to our observation, and in all its different bearings on the several conditions and relations of human life, it appears evidently to be the greatest and most substantial blessing, even in the present state, that heaven in its bounty ever conferred upon the sons of men.

In order to establish the truth of these assertions, I must beg the reader's attention to the following plain statement of facts, which the most determined and most ingenious adversary of the Gospel will not, I apprehend, find it very easy to controvert*.

* It was not till after this essay was finished, that I had the good fortune to meet with Dr. Valpy's two discourses on this subject; and it is a great satisfaction to me to find that we not only concur in our general sentiments upon it, but in several of the authorities which we cite from ancient authors, in support of our argument. This circumstance affords me an opportunity, which I gladly embrace, of recommending to the notice of my readers, those two excellent discourses, which are replete with learning, ingenuity, and judicious remarks, on a variety of interesting and important subjects.

I. It

I. It is on all hands admitted, that from our domestic relations, flows a very large proportion of the misery or the comfort of human life. Among these, the first in order, and from which the others take their rise, is the state of MARRIAGE. And here Christianity first displays its beneficent spirit.

The two great banes of connubial happiness among the ancient Pagans, were polygamy and divorce. The first of these, it is well known, prevailed, and does at this hour prevail, through almost every region of the eastern world. The other was allowed for the most trivial causes, and exercised with the most wanton cruelty, in the later ages of Rome, not only by the worthless and the profligate, but by some of the most distinguished characters in the republic*: and both of them evidently tended to destroy that mutual confidence, harmony, and affection, that constant union of interests and of sentiments, which constitute the supreme felicity of the matrimonial state. Besides this, the treatment of married women in general, among the ancients, was harsh, ungenerous, and unjust.

* See Appendix, note (a.)

And

And at this day (for the spirit of paganism is at all times, and in all places, the same) the savages of North America, as well as those of the new discovered islands in the South Seas, consider their wives as little better than slaves and beasts of burthen, and use them accordingly.

To all these cruelties Christianity (wherever it is received and professed with any degree of purity) has put an effectual stop. It has entirely cut off that grand source of domestic wretchedness, polygamy; and has confined the dangerous liberty of divorce to one only cause (the only cause that can justify the dissolution of so strict and sacred a bond) viz. an absolute violation of the first and fundamental condition of the marriage contract, fidelity to the marriage-bed*. It has provided

* The historian of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, has been pleased to observe, (vol. iv. p. 380.) that "the ambiguous word which contains the precept of Christ respecting divorce is flexible to any interpretation that the wisdom of a legislator can demand, and that the proper meaning of the original word *πορνεια*, cannot be strictly applied to matrimonial sin." But if that author would have given himself the trouble to look at 1 Cor. v. 1. he would have perceived that the word *πορνεια* not only may be applied to matrimonial sin, but is actually

vided no less for the security and comfort of the weaker part, than for the sovereignty of the stronger. It has established just so much command on one side, and just so much subjection on the other, as is necessary to prevent those everlasting contests which perfect equality must unavoidably produce. It lays, at the same time, a foundation for encreasing harmony and tenderness by mutual obligations, and reciprocal concessions; and gives to each more frequent opportunities of displaying their affection, by ruling with mildness, and submitting with cheerfulness.

There cannot, indeed, be a finer proof of the benevolence of our Religion than this regard and consideration for that part of the species which most wants, and yet in this instance before the promulgation of the Gospel, did least enjoy the privileges of hu-

actually so applied sometimes by the sacred writers; and in the place just cited can scarcely admit of any other sense. In this sense it is also used by our Saviour, Matth. v. 32. xix. 9. And this being incontrovertible, it is, I confess, past my understanding to comprehend, how this precept of Christ can be flexible to any other meaning than that plain and obvious one which it bears upon the very face of it, and in which it has been hitherto constantly understood; namely, that the only legitimate ground of divorce is adultery.

manity.

manity. In effect, the condition of this sex, at least in the conjugal state, is so infinitely superior to the part assigned them by the heathens of old, and the Mahometans and Pagans of this day, that they seem to be a different rank and order of beings. Instead of being considered merely as necessary parts of the family, of being confined to the loom and the distaff, and excluded from many of the most essential comforts of life; (which was their case in the most civilized nations of antiquity;) instead of being entirely cut off from all commerce with the world, imprisoned for life within the walls of a seraglio, and looked upon in no other light than as instruments of pleasure, as having neither rational minds nor immortal souls; as born only to minister to the happiness of others at the expence of their own, to be the slaves of sensuality, caprice, and revenge (which is still their condition in eastern countries); instead of this, I say, they are now, by the gradual prevalence of Christian principles and manners, admitted to an equal share in the advantages and the blessings of society. Their understandings are cultivated, their minds improved, their sentiments

iments refined, and their interest and happiness uniformly and properly consulted in every important concern of life.

II. Next to this, in the order of domestic relations, stands the PARENTAL. Here, if any where, one would imagine that mankind must always be the same. One would conclude that nature, by planting in our breasts a most passionate fondness for our offspring, had effectually provided against every act of inhumanity towards them; had made the force of parental love a sufficient barrier against the encroachments of parental power. But in this, as in a thousand other instances, it is evident, that nature, speaking with all her force and eloquence to the heart, was not able to make men hear, or at least obey her dictates. The Gospel was more powerful. It heard and commiserated the cries of infancy, and came in to the assistance of helpless and unprotected innocence; insomuch, that it is most literally and strictly a peculiar happiness to be *born* in a Christian country.

It is well known, that in some of the most celebrated heathen nations, the pitiable state of infancy, which so much wants the care and
indulgence

indulgence of a parent, was not always able to obtain it; and that in those cases where humanity and compassion pleaded most strongly in its behalf, it was treated with a more than ordinary degree of cruelty. Every one will understand me here to mean the custom of exposing, that is of murdering, weak, deformed, or sickly children, which was for many years practised not only with impunity, but with applause; and what is now considered as the most atrocious of crimes, and worthy of the severest punishment, was then esteemed a wise, political expedient, to rid the state of useless and troublesome members, and was even enjoined by some of their most celebrated sages and legislators. This was one of those blessed effects of philosophy and the fine arts, of which we hear so much from a certain class of writers*.

* The same practice still subsists in China, a country so much celebrated by modern philosophers for the wisdom of its institutions. About 9,000 children are said to be annually exposed in the city of Peking, and the same number in the rest of the empire.—See *Barrow's Travels in China*, p. 170—176.

Among the Hindoos, children are hung up on trees in baskets, and devoured by birds of prey; and female infants among the Rajpoot Hindoos are destroyed by starving. *Buchanan's Mem. of the Rajpoots*, p. 94 and 97.

The

The condition of those children that were suffered to survive was, in some of those countries, scarce less deplorable than the fate of those who were condemned to die. The extreme rigour of their education, exceeding all the bounds of virtuous discipline, and contrary to all the dictates of natural tenderness; the unlimited power allowed to the father, extending to the liberty and even life of the child, and the intemperate use they too frequently made of this power, rendered the situation of their youth in general extremely irksome and unpleasant, sometimes truly miserable.

These inhumanities are now no more. Nothing can exceed the tenderness shewn by parents towards their offspring in Christian countries, from their earliest infancy to their ripest maturity: and so far is the public from countenancing in private individuals the destruction of their children, that it guards against any unnatural desertion of them, and is itself a parent. The power of the father is just sufficient for all the useful purposes of education: the severity of education no greater than the proper culture of the mind requires; and there

there subsists in general between the elder and the younger parts of a family, that harmony and good understanding which resembles the easy intercourse of friends, rather than the awful distance between authority and subjection.

III. But in no part of domestic society are the happy effects of Christianity so visible as in the lowest, though not least useful, branch of it, that of SERVANTS; agreeably to the blessed spirit of that Religion, which lends its aid most willingly where it is most necessary, in raising the lowly, in healing the broken spirit, and cherishing the contrite heart.

It has been justly observed, that under most of the governments in Europe (severe as some of them are) the *bulk* of the people do in reality enjoy more true liberty than was ever possessed by the lower classes, under the freest states of antiquity: because, with a few exceptions (which are every day lessening) they are no longer subject to that worst of all oppressions, DOMESTIC SERVITUDE; whereas, in all the ancient republics, by far the greatest part of the inhabitants were not free-men,

men, but slaves*. In fact, every private family was, in the times of paganism, a little despotic kingdom. The master was the tyrant, and the servants his wretched subjects, whom he bought and sold, and treated as he did his cattle; whom he could punish and torture as he pleased, and put to death with or without reason, and even for his own amusement. It is true, indeed, that the *vernæ*, or home-born slaves, were sometimes treated with lenity, and even with tenderness and indulgence. But these favourites of fortune bore a very small proportion indeed, to that immense multitude who were made to feel the utmost rigour of their condition. In general, these wretched beings were continually exposed to every evil that the most wanton tyranny could inflict. They were compelled frequently to till the ground in chains†, or confined in subterraneous dungeons, and strained to labour beyond their strength by

* In the 110th Olympiad, there were at Athens only 21,000 citizens, and 400,000 slaves. In the small island of Ægina there were 470,000 slaves. It was common for a private citizen of Rome to have 10 or 20,000. *Taylor's Civil Law*, p. 436-7.

† *Catenati cultores, vincti fossores*, are expressions we frequently meet with in the Roman authors.

the severest treatment. They were obliged to suffer every insult, and every injury, without resistance and without redress. They had no protection afforded them, could have no justice done to them, no reparation made to them*. They were subject to the cruelty not only of their own masters, but of every one that met them. "They had no place to flee unto, and no man cared for their souls." The hurt that was done to them and to a beast was estimated in the same manner. Nothing was considered, but the diminution of their value, and the loss sustained by their master. The injury or the pain endured by the slave himself never came into contemplation. Their evidence was scarcely ever taken but by torture. They were not supposed capable of being applied to in any other way. If their master happened to be found murdered in his house, every slave in the family (which sometimes amounted to several thousands) were frequently put to death; even those that were confessedly innocent. Nay, they were sometimes made the sacrifice of a youthful frolic, and murdered in the streets and roads, by

* Cum in servos *omnia* liceant, &c. Seneca de Clement. i. 18.

thousands,

thousands, for amusement. These are the effects which the possession of unlimited power over our own species has actually produced, and which (unless counteracted and subdued by religious principle) it has *always* a *natural tendency* to produce, even on the most benevolent and best cultivated minds*.

Such was the temper of Paganism, towards a very large class of the human species: a class too, which ought to have attracted pity and protection, instead of meeting with the bitterest oppression. The temper of the Gospel was of a different cast. From the very first moment of its appearance, it gave every consolation, every support, to those who groaned under this heavy bondage, that was consistent with the peace and welfare of society, and with the avowed principles of the Christian Religion. The first teachers of this Religion did not indeed expressly prohibit slavery; nor did they tell the slaves whom they converted to the faith, that their conversion made them free, and released them from the obedience due to their masters. This would have been a most imprudent and

* See Appendix, note (b).

B 2

dangerous

dangerous doctrine, dangerous both to the teachers and the disciples. It would have occasioned the former to be represented by their enemies as adverse to all authority and subordination, as disturbers of the peace and order of society; it would have armed against them all the powers of the earth, and overwhelmed them and their infant system of religion in one common ruin. To the slaves themselves, it would have been equally destructive and fatal. It would have excited them to violent and sanguinary, yet vain and ineffectual, resistance; and would have involved them, finally, in far greater miseries than they before experienced. But besides this, such a proceeding would have been diametrically opposite to the distinguishing character and genius of the Christian Revelation; one of whose leading and fundamental principles was, not to interfere with, or oppose itself in the least to, any peculiar form of government, any civil institution, any long acknowledged and long established authority, either political or domestic; but on the contrary, to inculcate a peaceful and dutiful submission to all lawful superiors; to “every ordi-

“ nance

“ nance of man for the Lord’s sake*.” Yet, at the same time, it took care to lay down such general rules of conduct, and governing principles of action, for *all* ranks and conditions of men, as should silently and quietly, but effectually, correct the inherent vices or adventitious corruptions of every kind of power; such as should gradually soften and smooth away the asperities of every species of arbitrary government, whether supreme or subordinate, whether exercised over nations or individuals; and rather meliorate and reform them by gentleness, than subvert and destroy them at once, by open force and violence.

Another great principle of this divine Religion, and its divine Author, was, to require from its followers a meek submission and patient resignation to evils, and sufferings, and persecutions of every kind, however unmerited, however unprovoked and unjust. “ I say

“ unto you, resist not evil; bless them that

“ curse you, do good to them that hate you,

“ and pray for them which despitefully use

“ you, and persecute you; not rendering evil

* 1 Pet. ii. 13.

“ for evil, or railing for railing: but contrari-
 “ wise blessing. Avenge not yourselves,
 “ but rather give place unto wrath; for it is
 “ written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay,
 “ saith the Lord*.” In perfect conformity
 to these precepts was the example of our
 blessed Lord; “ who, when he was reviled,
 “ reviled not again; when he suffered, he
 “ threatened not; but committed himself to
 “ him that judgeth righteously †.”

With these ideas and these sentiments, so
 predominant in every page of the sacred
 writers, it is evident what course the great
 Founder, and the first preachers of Christi-
 anity, would take, respecting the long esta-
 blished and almost universal practice of DO-
 MESTIC SERVITUDE. Notwithstanding the
 extreme hardships and cruelties inseparable
 from that condition, they would not think it
 expedient to annihilate at once the authority
 of the master, and burst asunder suddenly
 the bonds of the slave; but would suggest to
 the one, such motives to acquiescence and
 submission, and to the other, such reasons

* Matth. v. 39. 44. 2 Pet. iii. 9. Rom. xii. 19.

† 1 Pet. ii. 23.

for

for moderation and tenderness in the exercise
 of his power, as they well knew would greatly
 lighten the miseries of this state for the pre-
 sent, and by degrees totally remove them.

Accordingly, masters were enjoined to give
 to their servants (that is their slaves) that
 which was “ just and equal, and to forbear
 “ threatening;” and they were told, what
 they had never been told before, that *they*
 also had a master in heaven, with whom was
 no respect of persons*, who would one day
 demand from them a strict account of the
 use they had made of the unlimited power
 they possessed over their unfortunate fel-
 low-creatures. They must know also, and
 would frequently be reminded, that they, as
 well as every other disciple of Christ, are
 commanded to consider all mankind as their
brethren †; to treat them as such, to love
 them as themselves, to be condescending,
 gentle, tender-hearted, merciful, compassion-
 ate, and kindly affectioned towards them,
 and of course towards their slaves also.

To the slaves, on the other hand, the most
 express commands were given, “ to be sub-

* Col. iv. 1. Eph. vi. 9. † 1 Pet. iii. 8.

B 4

“ ject

“ject to their masters with all fear, not only
 “to the good and gentle, but also to the fro-
 “ward; to please them well in all things;
 “not answering again, not purloining, but
 “shewing all good fidelity; not with eye-ser-
 “vice, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of
 “Christ, with good-will doing service, as to
 “the Lord, and not to men*.”

These precepts were evidently meant to guard against all provocation, all neglect of duty, all want of attention and diligence on the part of the slave; to render him meek, humble, patient, submissive, honest, industrious, faithful; and by thus disarming the anger, and conciliating the affection of his master, to lighten, as much as possible, the weight of the chain that was upon him. At the same time, the slaves had encouragements and consolations held out to them, to which their heathen brethren were utter strangers. They were told, that by serving their masters well, they were not only “pleasing men but
 “God; that they were adorning the doctrine
 “of their Saviour; that they were to look
 “forwards for their reward to the glorious

* Eph. vi. 5. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 18. Tit. ii. 10.

“appearing

“appearing of the great God and our Saviour
 “Jesus Christ; and that whatever good any
 “of them did, the same should he receive
 “of the Lord, whether he were bond or
 “free*.”

These were considerations sufficient to support, and sooth, and strengthen their souls under the harshest treatment, and the heaviest pressures of bondage; while the prudence, the fidelity, and the obedience, recommended to them, would avert or soften the severities to which they were exposed. With these injunctions to the slaves on the one hand, and to the masters on the other, there can be no doubt that the condition of the Christian slave was far easier and happier than that of the Pagan. And wherever these injunctions are faithfully and conscientiously observed, the evils of servitude will be in a great measure subdued, and some of its sharpest stings will be drawn out. But this was not all that the Gospel did for this unfortunate race of men. When the empire became Christian, laws were made for their protection and relief. The influence both of government and of re-

* Eph. vi. 6. 7. 8. Tit. ii. 10. 13.

ligion,

ligion, was continually operating in their favour, and gradually prepared the way for that happy event, which, to the immortal honour of Christianity, took place in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; I mean the utter extinction of the pagan system of slavery in Europe. It is true, indeed, that in consequence of the feudal tenure, and feudal customs, introduced into Christendom by its barbarian conquerors, another species of servitude for some time prevailed, under the name of villenage. But this, in point of severity, was not to be compared with the horrors of ancient slavery. And even that new servitude by degrees gave way, in the greater part of the Christian world, to the mild genius of the Gospel; insensibly mixing with the civil policy, and tempering the laws, customs, and usages of every country that received it.

There is, it must be confessed, another species of slavery still existing in some parts of the Christian world, (that of the African negroes) which seems to bear too strong a resemblance to its predecessor in the times of paganism. This cannot be denied. But
from

from what we have already seen of the influence of Christianity, in the instances just mentioned, we have every reason to indulge the consoling hope, that the same beneficent spirit of the Gospel, which by degrees extinguished pagan slavery, will also gradually and without injury to any one (for our heavenly Religion generally effects its purposes by the gentlest means), relieve mankind from the pressure of this and every other species of personal and perpetual servitude.

In the meanwhile, it would redound infinitely to the honour, and I am persuaded ultimately to the benefit of the West India proprietors, if they would themselves voluntarily take measures for the *gradual extinction* of that opprobrious and unchristian traffic in human beings, The Slave Trade to the Coast of Africa; which on every ground of reason, humanity, justice, and religion, is utterly indefensible, and is now admitted, even by some of those who were advocates for its continuance, to be so. See more particularly *the speech of Mr. Bryan Edwards, a Member of the Assembly of Jamaica, Nov. 19, 1789*, in which he acknowledges that the
manner

manner in which slaves are procured, and the fatal effects of the Slave Trade in Africa, are precisely such as they are represented to be by those who contend for the abolition of it.—“The *whole*,” says he, “or the greatest part of the immense continent of Africa is a field of *warfare and desolation*; a wilderness in which the inhabitants are *wolves* towards each other. That this scene of *oppression, fraud, treachery, and blood*, if not *originally occasioned*, is in part (I will not say wholly) upheld by the Slave Trade, I dare not dispute. Every man in the sugar islands may be convinced that it is so, who will enquire of any African negroes, on their first arrival, concerning the circumstances of their captivity.”

After this honest and explicit avowal of the direful effects of the Slave Trade, (which at the same time every one must see is softened down as much as possible) by one who was a strenuous advocate for that Trade, how is it possible for a nation professing the *mild and merciful religion of the Gospel*, to authorize and encourage that inhuman traffic? This is surely one of those many strange inconsistencies

consistences of the human mind, which it is difficult to explain and impossible to defend!

It must be acknowledged, however, for the credit of our countrymen, that a very considerable part of them, comprehending some of the most illustrious characters in this kingdom, some of the wisest, most upright, and most enlightened statesmen which this or any other country ever produced, have expressed, in the strongest terms, their abhorrence of this Trade: and generously laying aside all their political differences (for men of every party and persuasion united in this great cause) contended for the immediate abolition of it, with a force of argument, and a splendour of eloquence, which astonished all who heard them. These noble efforts, however, have all failed of success. And the same fate seems to have attended a plan even for the *gradual* abolition of the Trade, which, in the year 1796, was proposed in the House of Commons by Mr. Charles Ellis, a gentleman of most respectable character, and a very large proprietor of plantations in Jamaica, who would scarcely propose any thing that would be really injurious to the possessors of that sort of property.

property. This plan, which appears to be a wise and a practicable one, was approved by the House of Commons, and was strongly recommended by his Majesty's ministers to the Colonial Legislatures; but I cannot learn that any step has yet been taken to carry it into execution.

This is much to be lamented, because nothing is more clear than that if the importation of slaves from the coast of Africa was gradually done away by salutary regulations for that purpose; and if at the same time, the natural increase of the negroes already imported, was encouraged by treating them *universally* (as many worthy proprietors already do) with lenity and kindness, by continuing to enact humane and equitable laws in their favour, (similar to those which some of the Islands have already adopted) and above all by cordially promoting their instruction in the principles of morality and religion, and appointing clergymen for that very purpose (which was strongly recommended to the colonies by the British government, but to which no attention has hitherto been paid); If, I say, measures such as these were
 7 generally

generally adopted, and steadily persevered in, a sufficient supply of slaves for all the reasonable purposes of West India cultivation might easily be kept up*, and the miseries of slavery itself so softened and assuaged, as to render the condition of the negroes not much inferior to the labouring poor in European countries; whilst the cruelties attending the African Trade would be no longer a reproach to this Christian kingdom.

* This is not said on light grounds. It was proved by many eloquent speakers in the House of Commons; it was proved by the evidence given before a Committee of the Privy Council, appointed to examine into the nature of the Slave Trade; (which I attended myself very constantly for near a twelvemonth); and what is still more to the purpose, it is proved by fact and by experience. For it is well known, that several opulent planters in some of the West India Islands have for many years kept up their stock without any importation at all; and it is no less certain, that throughout the whole state of Virginia, where there has been no importation of negroes for a very considerable length of time, (I believe never since the American revolution) and where the climate is much less friendly to the negroes than the West India Islands, the number of their slaves has increased so rapidly and to such a degree, as almost to occasion some alarm to the government. Of this I have authentic and incontestible proofs in my possession. These facts, in my apprehension, completely do away the plea of *necessity*, which is the great argument, indeed the only plausible one, for the continuance of the Slave Trade.

SECTION II.

WE have seen, in the preceding Section, that in every domestic relation, Christianity has visibly and undeniably promoted the happiness of mankind. Nor is its beneficial influence less evident in all the great and important concerns of civil and social life.

In the article of government, its operation has been highly salutary and useful; not by enjoining or proscribing any peculiar form of government, (for with the kingdoms of this world, and the various modes of civil institutions, it disclaimed all concern), but by regulating the respective duties, both of those who governed, and those who were governed. It reminded the latter that their Christian profession did by no means dissolve or weaken (as some of them were apt to imagine) their political obligations, but on the contrary confirmed and strengthened them; that under whatever form of government they lived, and whatever allegiance they owed, *before* their conversion, the same was still due from them
after

after it; that their Religion made no other alteration in the case, than that of rendering them still better citizens and better subjects, and of enforcing every civil tie, by the sanction of divine as well as human authority. They were not therefore to use their spiritual freedom "as a cloak of maliciousness," as a cover for faction and mischief, for dissention and tumult; as a pretence for disturbing the peace and order of society: but they were to submit themselves patiently to "every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake;" they were to be subject to those rulers, under whom Providence had placed them, and Christianity found them, "not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." They were "to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute was due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour*."

In the same manner, it was required of their rulers, that however unlimited their power might be by the laws and constitution of their country, they should themselves limit and re-

* 1 Pet. ii. 16. 23.

Rom. xiii. 5. 7.

Tit. iii.

strain it by the great immutable laws of moral rectitude; that they should observe, in their public as well as private conduct, the dictates of justice, equity, moderation, mercy, humanity, and universal good-will, which the Gospel prescribed to *them*, as well as to every other disciple of Christ. Their duty was repeatedly set before them with the utmost plainness and freedom. They heard, and *trembled* as they heard, the inspired preachers reasoning before them, concerning "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." They were told, that the authority they were invested with, was given them to be "a terror, not to good works, but to the evil;" that they were ministers of God for the good of their people; that of course, if they abused this power to cruel or wicked purposes, they must be accountable for that abuse to the great Governor of the Universe; must stand before his tribunal with the meanest of their subjects, to be recompensed for the blessings they had bestowed, or punished for the miseries they had inflicted, on mankind*."

* Acts, xxiv. 25. Rom. xiii. 3, 4.

It

It could hardly fail, but that precepts such as these, repeatedly inculcated and deeply impressed on the minds of those to whom they were addressed, would produce the most beneficial consequences; and so in fact they have. For nothing can be more evident, than that the various modes of *established* and *legitimate government* now existing in Europe, are either in their form or their administration, and sometimes in both, far superior to those of the same description in the ancient Pagan world, and consequently productive of much greater happiness to those who live under them. Were it convenient or proper to enter here into a minute comparison of these different political fabrics, it would be extremely easy to prove the truth of what is here asserted; but I must content myself with very briefly contrasting some of the principal outlines and distinguishing features of civil policy in ancient and modern times, which will, I conceive, sufficiently justify the opinion here advanced.

1. In the first place it is well known, that except in the free states of Greece and Rome, (and that only for a few centuries,) a fero-

c 2

cious

cious despotism prevailed over the greater part of the ancient habitable globe; and that even those celebrated republics scarcely ever enjoyed (at least for any considerable period of time) two of the sweetest and most valuable fruits of liberty, and without which indeed no true liberty can long subsist, internal tranquillity and external peace. They were continually agitated and distracted within by popular commotions and sanguinary convulsions, or exposed without to unceasing and inexorable wars, which always destroyed their repose, and sometimes endangered their very existence. This was the case, with but few exceptions, even in their most perfect state; and, in their decline, they were mangled and torn in pieces by such dreadful massacres and proscriptions, by such deliberate and premeditated methods of murdering each other, as cannot be recited without pain and horror*.

2. We

* See more particularly the account which Thucydides gives, lib. 3. of the sanguinary dissensions, seditions, tumults and convulsions, which distracted the little island of Corcyra; and the historian assures us, that the *same* miseries were experienced afterwards in almost every other part of Greece. See also l'Origine des Loix, &c. V. 5. p. 74.

The

2. We may perceive, that in the freest ancient states, they could scarcely ever maintain a true genuine equal liberty, diffused through the whole mass of the people, and distributed in just proportions (as it is in this kingdom) through every rank and order of the community. They were always in danger, either from the artifices and power of the few, or from the licentiousness and violence of the many; and whilst they guarded some one avenue with the greatest care, tyranny generally surprized them at another. Nor did their boasted freedom (such as it was) extend in general much beyond the walls of the metropolis, and the adjacent territory. It could seldom subsist, but under the immediate influence of the legislature. The go-

The horrible proscriptions of Marius, Sylla, and the triumvirs, and the dreadful civil wars between the leading men of the republic, which followed soon after, are well known.

The same scenes occur perpetually in the annals of the Assyrian, the Median, the Persian, the Turkish, the Moorish, and the Hindostan empire. The principal source of all these horrors was the want of a *merciful Religion*; and the same want has, we all know, produced the same direful effects in our own times in a nation where ALL Religion was at once annihilated.

vernors of the provinces, removed from under the eye of the supreme magistrate, and destitute of all religious restraint, became the most savage and merciless of tyrants. The unhappy people over whom they presided, were continually exposed to plunder, rapine, oppression, insult, and every kind of injury; and thus whilst liberty reigned in the centre, the utmost rage of despotism laid waste the extremities of the empire*.

3. One

* See *Choix des Memoires de l'Academie Royale*, first part of V. 1. p. 151.

The character of Verres was, to a great degree, the character of almost all the Roman governors. Cicero, speaking of the Provinces *generally*, says, *Populatæ, vexatæ, funditus eversæ provinciæ: socii stipendiarii que populi Romani afflicti, miseri, jam non salutis spem sed exitii solatium quærunt.* In *Q. Cecil. Divinat.* 3. This is amply confirmed by Sallust, *Ignavissimi homines per summum scelus omnia ea sociis adimere, quæ fortissimi viri victores reliquerant; proinde quasi injuriam facere id demum esset imperio uti.* *Bell. Cat. xii.*

The Athenians also treated the cities and islands dependent on them with the utmost rigour and inhumanity. It was their avowed principle, and their constant practice, to oppress, harass, and plunder them with the most unfeeling rapacity, to reduce them to the most abject state of dependence, and to create and foment perpetual dissensions and factions among them, in order to render them utterly incapable of annoying the parent state. See *l'Origine des Loix,*

3. One of the principal characteristics of a sound constitution, is the system of laws which it has established for the protection and security of the people, and the regulation of public manners. If we judge of the ancient governments by this criterion, they will not rise very high in our estimation. I will touch only with great brevity on a few of the most remarkable laws in different countries.

Among the Egyptians there was a law, which not only encouraged but rewarded theft*.

The laws of Draco were, as is well known, immeasurably and capriciously severe. They were written in characters of blood. They punished with the same rigour the slightest offences, and the most atrocious crimes.

The laws of Lycurgus were, in many instances, unjust and cruel; and some of the

des Arts, and des Sciences, V. 5. p. 75. But more particularly consult that very curious and admirable treatise of Xenophon's, *on the Republic of Athens*; which, although professedly written in defence of the Athenians, yet exhibits such a picture of their iniquity, cruelty and tyranny, as must for ever decide the opinion of every thinking man, on the character of that mode of government.

* *Diod. Sic. L. 1. c. 80. Aul. Gell. L. 11. c. 18.*

most celebrated Greek philosophers have condemned them, as better calculated to form good soldiers, than virtuous and honest citizens*.

They encouraged theft, adultery, and many other gross immoralities and enormities †.

The Cryptia, or places of concealment, from whence the Spartans issued out upon the Helots, and murdered them in cold blood, is said by Aristotle to have been an institution of Lycurgus ‡.

But the consummation of all was, that this Legislator not only permitted, but enjoined the murder of sickly or deformed infants §.

In Solon's laws, there are several which are objectionable, but there is one in the highest degree reprehensible. It is that in which,

* Aristotle Pol. L. 2. c. 9. and L. 7. c. 14. Plutarch in Lyc. endeavours to defend them but in vain.

† L'Origine des Loix, &c. Vol. 5 p. 429. Plutarch in Lyc. Whatever might be the *intention* of the legislator, in obliging the Spartan boys to steal their victuals, &c. the *real effect* of it was to encourage deceit and fraud, and to render property insecure.

‡ Plut. in Lyc.

§ Ibid.

though

though he did not enjoin, yet as far as he was able, he gave credit and estimation to the most detestable of crimes; and even encouraged it by his own example.*

In Crete and some other Grecian states, it was also encouraged by law †.

The laws of the twelve tables were sanguinary and cruel, more especially those respecting insolvent debtors; who, after an imprisonment of sixty days, might be sold for slaves, or put to death, and their bodies divided among their creditors. Ingenious and learned men, have endeavoured to explain away the severity of this law, but without success §.

Romulus

* Plut. Solon. sub. init.

† Plut. de Liber. Educat. c. 15. Aristotle Polit. L. ii. c. 10.

§ A very learned critic and civilian, has an ingenious dissertation on this subject, in which he undertakes to prove, that the law of the twelve tables did not condemn the insolvent debtor to death, but to servitude; he was to become the slave of the creditor, and to pay his debt by his labour. And if there were many creditors, they were to divide his personal labour among them, in proportion to their respective demands upon him. But this interpretation goes contrary to the concurrent opinions of Quintilian, Aulus Gellius, Tertullian, and other ancient authors, who all agree in supporting

Romulus allowed the murder of infants, and it does not appear that this practice was forbidden by any subsequent law. Some think it was confirmed by the twelve tables. It was, however, certainly permitted to pass with impunity; and the Roman state, as well as almost every other in the ancient world, was for many ages drenched in the blood of these innocent victims to a mistaken and inhuman policy †.

The cruelty of the Roman law, with respect to children, did not stop here; it was not content with the destruction of infants; it extended its severity even to the adult; it gave the father uncontrouled and unlimited power over his children; it considered them not as *persons* but as *things*, as part of the furniture of the family mansion, which the master of the family might remove or sell, or destroy, like any other part of the furniture,

porting the plain and literal sense of the law. And it is not probable that a modern Civilian in the eighteenth century, should discover a meaning in a Roman law, which was totally unknown to the Romans themselves. See Taylor's *Commentarius de Inope Debitore in partes dissecando*, p. 15. and the authors above-mentioned.

† Dion. Halic. Rom. Antiq. l. 2.

at

at his discretion. In one respect the condition of a son, was worse than that of a slave. A slave could be sold only once, a son three times; and he might be imprisoned, scourged, exiled, or put to death by the pater-familias, without appeal to any other tribunal *. With respect to daughters, there was an act of power more exquisitely cruel, than perhaps all the rest. The father could compel his married daughter to repudiate a husband whom she tenderly loved, and whom he himself had approved †.

But what was, if possible, still more preposterous and intolerable, the wife herself, though the mother perhaps of a numerous family, was subjected no less than her children, to the paternal authority and despotic will of her husband. She was in the eye of the law considered as his daughter, and might be retained or dismissed at pleasure; and for certain crimes (some of them of a very trivial nature) might be put to death. The liberty of divorce also on the part of the hus-

* Nicuport. de Rit. Rom. p. 585.

L'Esprit des Loix, T. iii. Liv. 26. c. 3. p. 75.

band,

band, was (as I before observed) almost unbounded, and in the later ages of the republic, was perpetually exercised with the most wanton, insolent, and capricious tyranny*.

Such were the laws of the most celebrated nations of antiquity; and as the legislative acts of a country present us with the truest picture of its manners, and give us at one view the genius and the character of a whole people taken collectively, we shall be at no loss what opinion to form of the ancient Pagans and their government.

5. And as the laws were, in many important instances, inhuman or vicious, the administration of them was no less partial and corrupt. That great bulwark of liberty, that most powerful protector of the rights and immunities, the persons and properties of the subject, the civil and criminal jurisprudence of the state, was, among the ancient com-

* L'Esprit des Loix, T. ii. p. 88. and the licentiousness of the women in this respect, (for *they* also had the power of divorce) was at least equal to that of the men.—*nunquid jam ulla repudio erubescit* (says Seneca) *postquam illustres quædam ac nobiles fæminæ non consulum numero sed maritorum annos suos computant.* Sen de Beneficiis, iii. 16.

monwealths,

monwealths, very far removed from that degree of purity and perfection in which it is now found in some Christian countries, but more especially in our own. In what manner, justice was administered at Athens, is evident, from their treatment of the two most upright and virtuous of their citizens, Socrates and Aristides; and by what motives the judges were commonly guided in forming their judicial opinions on the character and merits of the accused person, may be collected from the well-known conversation between the latter of those illustrious men, and one of the judges who condemned him*. In Rome, especially in the later periods of the republic, the courts of justice were one continued scene of the most open and undisguised iniquity, venality, partiality and corruption, insomuch, that it was hardly possible for a poor man to obtain redress for the cruellest injuries; or for a rich man to be brought to punishment for the most atrocious crimes †.

In all these great and important articles of civil policy, (and in a multitude of others which

* Plutarch in Aristid. † See Appendix, note (d).

might

might be mentioned) the infinite superiority of our own government, without having recourse to other kingdoms, admits of no question. And this, it may be safely affirmed, is in a great degree owing to the influence which the spirit of Christianity has had on our civil constitution, with which it is closely and essentially incorporated and interwoven, on the temper of our governors, on the temper of the people, on the temper of the laws, on the temper of those who framed, and of those who administer them. It is this, principally, which has so softened and subdued the fierceness even of arbitrary power, that despotism in all its rigour (that rigour which it possessed in Pagan nations, and still possesses in African and Asiatic kingdoms) is scarcely to be found in Europe. It is this which, by mitigating in some degree the rancour of contending factions against each other, and inspiring them with some little share of mutual charity and forbearance, has hitherto preserved this country from those scenes of carnage and devastation, that stain and disgrace the annals of ancient history. It is this which has, in general,

neral, restrained our provincial governors, from exceeding the bounds of equity and humanity, in their administration; and has carried even to our most distant colonies, a large share of the freedom, the justice, the ease, the tranquillity, the security and prosperity, of the parent state*. It is this, in fine, which has impressed on the minds of our magistrates and our judges, that strong sense of duty to God, to man, and to their country, that sacred regard to justice and rectitude, which renders them beyond all example, impartial, upright, and uncorrupt; which secures to every rank of men the equal benefit of the laws, which extends to the meanest their protection, and brings the greatest under their controul.

* See the excellent Introduction to Mickle's translation of the *Lusiad*, and Rennel's *Memoir on Hindostan*. "The Bengal provinces (says the last well-informed and candid writer) which have been in our possession near twenty-three years, have, during that whole period, enjoyed a greater share of tranquillity than any other part of India, or indeed than those provinces have ever enjoyed since the days of Aurengzebe. And it is a fact not to be controverted, that the Bengal provinces have a better government, and are in a better state as to agriculture and manufacture, than any other of the Asiatic countries, China alone excepted." P. 106.

II. Next to the miseries arising from cruel systems of domestic and civil policy, from bad forms of government, from oppressive laws and corrupt forms of judicature, there are few evils more formidable and afflicting than those of war. And here, too, we have a manifest advantage over the ancient Pagans.

I have formerly observed, * and some arguments have been adduced to prove, that in Christian countries the horrors of war (that severest scourge of the human race) have been greatly mitigated, and their frequency, their duration, and their attendant miseries, considerably diminished. In further confirmation of this fact, and in addition to what has been already advanced in support of it, I would entreat the reader, when he is perusing the history of the ancient states, to pay a little attention to the nature, the origin, the number, the extent and the continuance of their wars, and to the methods in which they were conducted. We are accustomed, from our infancy, to look on those people with such im-

* Sermons, V. 1. S. xiii. P. 317. Ed. 10.

plicit

plicit and almost idolatrous veneration; we are so dazzled with the splendour of their victories, and the glory of their conquests; with the courage, the ardour, the intrepidity, the heroism, the grandeur and elevation of mind they so frequently displayed; and, above all, we are so charmed with the eloquence and the sublimity with which their martial achievements are recorded by their historians, and immortalized by their poets, that we never think of that horrible inhumanity which was the great prominent feature of their character; we never see the torrents of blood they shed, in order to arrive at their favourite object, nor the various and inconceivable miseries they spread throughout the world. The plain truth is, that they were the common enemies of mankind; the oppressors, the plunderers, the robbers, and the tyrants of the whole earth. By much the greatest part of their wars were voluntary and unprovoked; were wars of aggression, of interest, injustice, rapine, and ambition. They gave their protection to every one that applied for it, without the least regard to the justice of the cause, for the sole purpose of extending their conquests;

D

quests; and the most solemn treaties were evaded or violated, without the smallest scruple, whenever their interest appeared to require it. A lust of empire, a passion for martial achievements, an insatiable thirst for glory, were the ruling principles of their conduct, and to these every other consideration, however sacred, was made to give way*. Their governments were little else than military establishments. Every citizen was a soldier, and every kingdom upon the watch to devour its neighbour. The surest road to the honours of the state was through the field of battle; and men were obliged to force their way by the sword to almost every object of their pursuit.

Whilst every thing thus tended to inflame the fiercest passions of the human heart, no wonder that the wars of the ancients were incessant and sanguinary, that the injustice and wantonness with which they were begun, could be exceeded by nothing but the vindictive and implacable spirit with which they were carried on, and that the world was conse-

* See Appendix, note (c.)

quently

quently for many ages overwhelmed with ruin, desolation and bloodshed. The savage and cruel treatment of their captives in war, is well known to every one in the least acquainted with ancient history; every page of which is polluted with scenes of this nature, too numerous and too horrible to be specified here. It is sufficient to observe, in general, that the loss of thousands in the field, was in those ages the least part of the evil of war. Those among the vanquished, who survived, had reason to envy the lot of those that fell. Perpetual slavery, or an ignominious death (sometimes torture) by the hand of the executioner, were their certain destiny; and even among nations the most polished, and the most celebrated for their private and their public virtue, (such were the *pagan* notions of virtue) we are continually shocked with the desolation of whole countries, with the entire destruction of flourishing and opulent cities, and with the indiscriminate massacre and utter extermination, not only of those able to bear arms, but of the most helpless and unoffending part of the inhabitants of every age, sex, and condition.

D 2

If

If we go back to the earliest ages of Greece, Homer very honestly and very concisely tells us, what the general practice in his time was in one of the principal operations of war. "These," says he, "are the evils which follow the capture of a town. The men are killed, the city is burnt to the ground, and the women and children are doomed to slavery*."

The descendants of Homer's heroes, in subsequent ages, did not in this respect degenerate from their ferocious ancestors. On the contrary, they kept constantly improving on those models of barbarity. After the taking of a town, and sometimes after the most solemn promises and oaths that they would spare the lives of the besieged, they murdered every human creature in the place, not excepting even the women and children. Instances of this sort occur perpetually in the Peloponnesian war, as well as almost every other †.

The

* II. ix. v. 590.

† See Thucydides throughout: but more particularly the extreme cruelty of the Athenians and Lacedæmonians to their prisoners, l. 2. The massacre of the Myteleneans and Platæans, and the incredible barbarities at Corcyra, l. 3. The murder of the Æginetæ and Megareans, l. 4. of

The Romans trod but too closely in the footsteps of the Greeks, their masters and preceptors in cruelty, as well as in every thing else. Abundant proofs of this occur in all their histories*.

of the Scioneans and Melians, l. 5. of the Mycalessians, l. 7. In this last instance, the Thracians not only butchered men, women, and children, without distinction, (even a whole school of boys) but also every living animal that fell in their way. The historian, though in general very little affected with scenes of this kind, cannot help expressing his horror at such a slaughter as this. But, says he, (by way of mitigation) Το γένος το των Θρακων φοβικωτατον εστι. It is true. But that epithet was applicable not only to those barbarians, but to the Athenians themselves, and to every other state in Greece. It describes, in short, most accurately, in one comprehensive word, the true character of all pagan antiquity. Most unfortunately for the world, this γένος φοβικωτατον, this murder-loving race, has of late revived; but let it be remembered, that it revived under the fostering care, not of the Gospel, but of its true parent, PHILOSOPHY: by which word I mean throughout this Essay, (when speaking of the present times) not that genuine sublime philosophy which we meet with in the immortal works of Bacon, Boyle, Newton, &c. but those wild pernicious doctrines which assume the venerable name of philosophy, which have been disseminated through the world, principally by Voltaire, and his numerous disciples and coadjutors, and are justly considered as the chief source of those dreadful calamities that have been for so many years desolating almost the whole continent of Europe.

* Livy, l. ix. c. 14. l. xxi. c. 14. l. 26. c. 15. l. 45. c. 34. See Appendix, note (f)

With respect to all the various nations of Asia, the whole history of that country, both ancient and modern, from one end of the continent to the other, exhibits such an uninterrupted series of barbarity, bloodshed, havock, and devastation in their incessant wars, revolts, revolutions, and intestine dissensions, as it is impossible to contemplate without disgust, astonishment, and horror*.

Yet all this, and more than this, was naturally to be expected from the *principles* entertained and avowed by the great warriors and statesmen of antiquity. One of them was this, “to glut our souls with the cruellest vengeance upon our enemies is perfectly lawful, is an appetite implanted in us by nature, and is the most exquisite pleasure that the human mind can taste †.” In this most exquisite pleasure they indulged themselves without reserve; in this species of voluptuousness they were certainly perfect epicures.

* See the dreadful achievements of Gengis-Khan, Timur, Aurengzebe, and Nadir Schah, in the Histories of India and Persia.

† Thucyd. l. vii. p. 540. The original words can scarcely be translated with sufficient energy—*αποπλῖσαι τῆς γνώμης το θυμωμενον*. Even in the Pelew Islands they put their captives in war to death.—*Account of Pelew Islands by Mr. Keate*, p. 33.

It

It is impossible not to remark here, the complete opposition between this favourite doctrine of Paganism, and the doctrine of Revelation. “To glut our souls with the cruellest vengeance on our enemies, is the most exquisite of all human enjoyments,” says the former. “Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath,” says the latter. Nothing can so strongly mark the different spirit of the two Religions; and the consequences to mankind have already in some measure corresponded, and will hereafter correspond still more, to that difference. Though too much fierceness and animosity, too much propensity to war, too many acts of passion and cruelty, are still to be found among the nations of the earth, yet the diabolical principle of *vengeance* is certainly much abated, and many of its most tragical effects are no longer seen. To a certain degree there must undoubtedly be disputes and contests both between kingdoms and individuals, so long as kingdoms consist of men, and men are subject to the infirmities of human nature. But that *vindictive* and *implacable fury* which raged in the breasts of the ancient conquerors, does

D 4

not

not seem to be as it was then, the *predominant passion*, the *general turn* and temper of the present age. It *seldom* happens that wars are now begun wantonly and injuriously (as they were *perpetually* among the ancients) with the *sole view* of oppressing and enslaving an innocent and unoffending people. A thirst of power and of conquest has given way to more rational and humane pursuits; a certain gentleness of manners mixes itself in the warmest contentions; and even where recourse to arms is found unavoidable, there generally appears on all sides a mutual disposition to soften and alleviate, as much as possible, those dreadful evils which are, to a certain degree, inseparable from national contests. They who suffer in the field are now almost the only sufferers. The rest, though vanquished, are neither enslaved nor put to death. They are treated commonly with lenity and tenderness: and even when obliged to pass under the dominion of a foreign master, are sometimes benefited instead of being injured by the change*.

III. There

* The reader will perceive that all these observations relate solely to nations *professing and practising Christianity*.

Where

III. There is still another very remarkable instance in which the Gospel has put a stop to a species of cruelty of the most atrocious nature; and that is, the entire abolition of *human sacrifices*. This horrible practice prevailed throughout every region of the heathen world, to a degree which is almost incredible, and still prevails in many savage countries, where Christianity has not yet reached. There are incontestable proofs of its having subsisted among the Egyptians, the Syrians, the Persians, the Phœnicians, and all the various nations of the east*. It was,

Where Christianity is extinguished, and philosophy substituted in its room, there you immediately see all the savageness of ancient paganism regaining its empire over the mind, and manifesting its ferocious spirit in war, in civil dissension, in its laws, its punishments, and every other great concern of human life.

* Porphyry *περι αποχης*, l. xi. s. 27. Herod. l. 7. It appears also to have prevailed to a dreadful degree among the ancient Hindoos. See Maurice's *Indian Antiquities*, v. i. from p. 152 to 337. The vedas themselves, that is, the sacred books of the Hindoos, enjoined it, p. 162. See also in p. 181—188, the horrible description of the *black goddess Callee*, to whom human sacrifices were anciently offered in Hindostan, From a late very interesting Publication by Mr. Buchanan, one of the chaplains at Calcutta, called *A Memoir on the Expediency of an Ecclesiastical Establishment*

was, we all know, one of the crying sins of the Canaanites, one of the causes of their extermination by the hands of the Israelites, and one of the principal reasons of the many peremptory and tremendous prohibitions to the latter not to have the slightest commerce or communication with those monsters of

blishment in India, it appears, that human sacrifices still subsist among the Hindoos. Death is inflicted in various ways in their sacred rites. Children are sacrificed by their parents to Gunga. Men and women drown themselves in the Ganges, in the places reputed holy. They devote themselves to death by falling under the wheels of the machine which carries their gods. Widows are burned and buried alive with their deceased husbands. And it was calculated, by the late learned Mr. William Chambers, that the widows who perish by this self-devotedness in the northern provinces of Hindostan alone, are not less than 10,000 annually.—App. p. 95, 96, 97, 98.—This shows, in the strongest point of view, of what infinite importance it is to communicate the light of the Gospel to heathen nations, as it is the only effectual means of extirpating the savage customs to which they are all more or less addicted, especially that of human sacrifices. Christianity has already annihilated this horrible practice wherever it has been introduced. Does it not then become the British Government, is it not the duty of a Christian kingdom, to impart to their pagan subjects in India, the blessings of the Gospel, which can alone completely civilize and humanize them, and which the above-mentioned Memoir shows to be perfectly practicable, if a sufficient Ecclesiastical Establishment is allowed to that Country.

cruelty.

cruelty*. Yet all these prohibitions did not avail to preserve them entirely free from infection. They suffered themselves to be sometimes drawn into this prevailing and detestable crime, and “offered up their sons “and their daughters unto devils †.” The baneful contagion spread like a pestilence over every part of Asia, Africa, and Europe. No climate, no government, no state of civilization, no mode of pagan superstition, was free from it. Even the Greeks and Romans, though less involved in this guilt than many other nations, were not altogether untainted with it. On great and extraordinary occasions, they had recourse to that which was esteemed the most valuable, the most efficacious, and most meritorious sacrifice that could be offered to the gods, the effusion of human blood ‡. But among other more barbarous nations, it took a firmer and a wider root. The Scythians and Thracians, the

* Dent. xii. 29—32.

† Ps. cvi. v. 37.

‡ Plutarch, in the Lives of Themistocles, Marcellus, and Aristides. Livy, l. 22. c. 57. Florus, l. i. c. 13. Procopius de Bell. Goth. l. 2. p. 38. Virg. Æn. x. 518. xi. 81.

Gauls

Gauls and the Germans, were strongly addicted to it *; and even this island, where benevolence and humanity have now (thanks to the Gospel) fixed their seat; this island was, at one time, (under the gloomy and ferocious despotism of the Druids) polluted with the religious murder of its wretched inhabitants. The evil reached from one end of the globe to the other; and, on the first discovery of America, it was found that the southern hemisphere was even more deeply contaminated with this crime than the northern. In the midst of wealth, luxury, magnificence, and many of the polished arts of life, Montezuma offered twenty thousand human victims every year to the sun †. In one of the most powerful kingdoms of Africa ‡ the same savage superstition still exists; and our own navigators found it established in every new

* Herod. l. 4. Tacit. Annal. xiii. c. 57. De Moribus German 9. Cæsar de Bell. Gall. l. 6. c. 15. 18. Histoire Philosophique et Politique, &c. v. 6. p. 175. Maurice on India, p. 159.

† Introduction to Mickle's Translation of the Lusiad, p. 7. note; and Robertson's Hist. of America, v. 3. p. 199, and note 31.

‡ Kingdom of Dahomi,

discovered

discovered island throughout the whole extent of the vast Pacific Ocean *.

What a picture does this present to us of human nature unsubdued by grace, and of human reason (that is, of natural religion, or, as it is now by the courtesy of the times called, philosophy) unassisted by revelation. And what a deep and grateful sense ought it to impress on our minds, of the infinite obligations we owe to the Gospel, which has rescued us from this, as well as from the many other abominations, enormities, and cruelties of paganism. Wherever the divine light of Christianity broke forth, at that moment did this tremendous demon of superstition disappear. Human sacrifices are unknown in the Christian world, and "the land is no longer defiled with blood."

* Cook's last Voyage, V. 2. p. 203.

SECTION III.

TO a plain and a common understanding, the facts which have been adduced in the two preceding Sections, would appear decisive in favour of the beneficent genius, and the divine origin, of our Religion. But there is, it seems, a compendious and an easy way of getting rid of this sort of reasoning. The facts are admitted; but the inference drawn from them is denied. It is allowed, that those happy changes in the face of human affairs, which have been here specified, have actually taken place; but it is asserted, that they are not to be ascribed to the operation of evangelical principles and precepts. They are owing solely to the benign influence of A HUMAN PHILOSOPHY, and the gradual improvements of the human mind*.

* Whoever is in the least conversant in the writings, either of foreign philosophers or of our own, need not be informed that this is their uniform doctrine; and that the beneficial effects of Philosophy, and the miseries produced by Christianity, are their constant and favourite topics.

I have already shewn in another place, that there is not, and cannot be, the smallest truth in this bold assertion, which is perfectly gratuitous, and unsupported by the slightest proof*. But as it appears to me a matter of the very last importance to the honour and interest of our Religion, that its claim to the sole, or at least to the principal merit of having alleviated the miseries, and advanced the happiness of mankind in the instances above adduced, should be fully and clearly made out, and established on the firmest ground; I must beg leave to add to the arguments already stated, the few following observations.

It is incumbent on the philosophers of the present day, to show from whence they derive that humanity to which they now lay claim, and which, it seems, has produced such beneficial consequences. If they say from the cultivation of their minds, the improvement of their understanding, and the extent of their knowledge and erudition, it is, then, obvious to ask, how it comes to pass that these causes should not, in ancient times, have produced the same effects? How it comes to pass, that, before the appearance of the Gos-

* Sermons, Vol. 1. f. xii, xiii.

pel, philosophy and humanity were perfect strangers to each other, though they are now, it seems, such close and intimate friends? If we should only say, that the philosophers of Greece and Italy were at least equal, both in natural sagacity and acquired learning, to the philosophers of modern Europe, we should not be thought to do the latter any great injustice. Yet not one of those great, and wise, and enlightened men of antiquity seems to have had any apprehension, that there was the least cruelty in a husband repudiating an irreproachable and affectionate wife from mere humour or caprice; in a father destroying his new-born infant, or putting his adult son to death; in a master torturing or murdering his servant for a trivial offence, or for none at all; in wretches being trained up to kill each other for the amusement of the spectators; in a victorious prince oppressing and enslaving a whole country from mere avarice or ambition; in putting a great part of his prisoners to the sword, and enslaving all the rest; nor, lastly, when the magnitude of the occasion seemed to require it, in offering up human sacrifices to the gods.

gods. So far from expressing (as far as I am able to recollect) a just detestation of these horrid practices, there were several of the most eminent philosophers, that expressly approved and recommended some of the worst of them. Aristotle particularly, and Plato, both gave a decided opinion in favour of destroying deformed or sickly infants*. We have already seen, that this execrable practice was even enjoined by Lycurgus, yet the humane Plutarch sees nothing unjust in *any* of his laws, and considers him as a completely perfect character†. Thucydides relates the massacre of two thousand Helots by the Lacedæmonians in cold blood, and a multitude of other shocking barbarities, committed during the Peloponnesian war, without one word of censure or disapprobation‡; and Livy describes innumerable

* Aristotle Pol. l. vii. c. 16. Plato de Rep. l. v. Plut. in Lyc.

† He appeals to the general *mildness* and *justice* of Lycurgus's character, as a proof that he was not the author of the *Κρυπτικα*. He tells us, that he was pronounced by the oracle the beloved of God, and rather God than man, and that he was actually worshipped as a God by the Spartans. Plut. in Lyc.

‡ Thucyd. l. 4.

scenes of a similar nature, with the most perfect indifference and unconcern. Homer goes still further. He expressly approves and applauds the deliberate murder of all captives without distinction, even infants at the breast, and pronounces it to be *perfectly right and just* *. And even Virgil, the tender, the elegant, and pathetic Virgil; he who, on other occasions, shews such exquisite feeling and sensibility, represents his hero as offering human sacrifices, without the smallest mark of horror or disgust †; and has not only selected the shocking punishment of the Alban dictator, as a proper and graceful ornament of the shield of Æneas, but has dwelt on the dreadful circumstances of it with an appearance of complacency and satisfaction, and seems even to exult in it, as a just retribution for the crime of the wretched sufferer. *At tu Dictis Albane Maneres*, Æn. viii. 642. It would be endless to enumerate instances of the same kind, which occur

* Il. i. vi. v. 62. *αισιμα παρειπων*. The poet seems even to have thought it an act of duty and of piety: for so the word *αισιμος* sometimes imports. See Scapula, Hesychius, Stephens, &c.

† Æn. x. 518. xi. 81. See also Iliad, xxiii. 175.

perpe-

perpetually in the most distinguished writers of antiquity *, and which incontestably prove, that neither the brightest talents, nor the most successful cultivation of philosophy, of history, of eloquence, of poetry, of all those branches of literature which are properly called the *literæ humaniores*, and which are supposed to soften, and humanize, and meliorate the heart, could in any degree subdue the unyielding stubbornness of PAGAN CRUELTY. On the contrary, it would be no difficult task to show, that the more the ancients advanced in letters and the fine arts, and the more their communication and commerce with the different parts of the then known world was extended and enlarged, the more savage, oppressive, and tyrannical they became. And it is a fact no less remarkable,

* Cicero applauds the twelve tables, though full of dreadful punishments, De Orat. i. 43, 44. and seems also, in some degree, to approve gladiatorial shews, while, at the same time, he relates one circumstance in these combats, which is enough to melt the most obdurate heart. "Mittunt etiam vulneribus confecti ad Dominos qui querant quid velint: si satisfactum iis non sit, *se Velle Decumbere*." Tusc. Quest. ii. 17. See also the extreme cruelty of the most humane characters in Terence. Heautontim, Act iv. sc. i. v. 21.

E 2

as

as well as a proof no less decisive of the doctrine I have been endeavouring to establish, that, on the discovery of the new world, the same astonishing phenomenon presented itself, that we have just been noticing in the old. In the very heart of South America, an empire appeared which had made advances in government, in policy, in many useful and many ornamental arts, far beyond what could have been expected without the use of letters, and infinitely beyond all the surrounding nations of that country. And it appeared also, that these polished Mexicans (for it is to those I allude) exceeded their neighbours the Peruvians, and all the other Indian kingdoms, in fierceness and in cruelty, as much as they surpassed them in all the conveniences and improvements of social and civilized life*.

What shall we now say to the philosophy of the present age, which assumes to itself the exclusive merit of all the humanity and benevolence which are to be found in the world; and how shall we account for the striking contrast between the insensibility and hard-

* See one remarkable instance of this cruelty above, p. 60.

heartedness

heartedness of the ancient philosophers, and those professions of gentleness and philanthropy which their brethren in our own times, so ostentatiously display in their writings and their discourses? The only adequate and assignable reason of the difference is, that the latter have a source to draw from which was unknown to the former; that to the Gospel they are indebted for all their fine sentiments and declamations on the subject of benevolence; which, however, seem never to reach their hearts, or influence their conduct; for (as fatal experience has shewn) the moment they are possessed of power, they become the most inhuman of tyrants*.

2. Whoever considers, with any attention, the great leading principles, and characteristic precepts of the Christian Religion, will immediately perceive, that they are exactly such as would naturally produce (when not impeded by any accidental obstructions) those very effects which we ascribe to them. They seem to have been, as it were, purposely intended to *meet* and to correct all the violences

* Witness what has passed for the last sixteen years in France. See also Rousseau's Works, 12mo, v. viii. p. 10.

and cruelties of paganism, and more especially to afford protection and relief to the most oppressed and most helpless part of mankind, in all those instances where we have shown, that power and authority were so grossly abused in the hands of the ancient heathens. Husbands, for instance, are enjoined “to love their wives, “and not to be bitter against them; fathers “are commanded not to provoke their children to wrath, but to bring them up in “the nurture and admonition of the Lord. “Masters are directed to give their slaves “what is just and equal; sovereigns to consider themselves as the ministers of God to “men for good; soldiers to do violence (needless violence) “to no man; and they, among “others, are exhorted to love even their enemies*.” The *sacrifices* required of us are not those of our fellow-creatures, but of our own irregular appetites and passions; and, in general, in all the various relations and connexions of civil and social life, we are commanded “to shew all meekness unto all men; “not to avenge ourselves, but rather give

* 1 Col. iii. 19. Eph. vi. 4. Col. iv. 1. Rom. xiii. 6. Luke iii. 14.

“ place

“ place unto wrath; to recompence to no man “evil for evil; to be of one accord, of one “mind, of one heart, and of one soul*.”

These are evidently the sacred fountains from whence the various streams of benevolence, which, in Christian countries, now refresh and exhilarate the earth, have taken their rise. And if our philosophers can show, that they have added one iota to the original stock of benevolence to be found in the Gospel, or advanced one single humane sentiment which is not either expressly or virtually comprehended in the Christian Revelation, they may then be allowed to arrogate some praise to themselves, on the score of their philanthropy. But till they can prove this, the claim of Christianity to all those happy changes in the face of human affairs, which have been here specified, stands unimpaired.

When our blessed Lord enjoined his disciples to love one another, he gave them what might well be called, A NEW COMMANDMENT. Before that time we have seen, that

* Titus, iii. 2. Rom. xii. 17. 19. Phil. ii. 2.

E 4

in

in many of the most essential articles of social life, the predominant principle and practice of mankind was to hate and devour one another. *His* was the first complete code of humanity that was ever given to the world. THE GREAT ROYAL LAW OF CHARITY, which this Divine Legislator enacted, has never yet been improved upon by all the florid declamations of modern philosophers on the fashionable topic of benevolence. They can only, at the best, have the praise of ingenious and eloquent expositors; the true original text to which we owe every thing of this sort, is the Gospel.

3. That this is a just and well-grounded conclusion, will appear, beyond all doubt, from an appeal to history and to fact. We find, that besides the silent and gradual influence of Christianity on the minds and manners of men, the first efforts that were made, and the first laws that were enacted, to restrain and check, and in several instances to annihilate at once, some of the most frightful inhumanities above-mentioned, were the acts of *Christian* princes, and *Christian* legislators.

With respect to paternal power, the first Christian emperor, in order to prevent the

destruction of grown children by their father, (a practice at that time too frequent) very wisely and humanely ordained, that the public should maintain the children of those who were unable to provide for them*.

In the year 319, he put an effectual stop to this horrible practice by making it a capital offence, and even affixing to it the punishment denounced against parricides †.

The exposure of infants, however, still prevailed. This he also restrained by an edict, in the year 331; and under the emperors Valentinian, Valens, and Gratian, this crime was made a capital offence ‡.

Another branch of domestic tyranny, perpetual servitude, was, as a learned civilian observes, greatly discountenanced by the Christian Religion; and about the twelfth or thirteenth century, "when ecclesiastical legislation was at its height, is dated the extinction of slavery in Europe §."

The

* Taylor's Civil Law, p. 406.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. p. 406.

§ Taylor, p. 435. Pope Alexander the Third, declared, in the name of his council, that all Christians ought to be exempt from servitude. That law alone (says an historian not much disposed to speak well of any Christian legislator)

The first edict against gladiatorial shows, was by a Christian emperor; and Honorius afterwards completed what Constantine had begun. This horrid exhibition was by his laws finally abolished*.

To this we may add, that the savage punishment of crucifixion was also put an end to by Constantine †.

In these instances (and more might be produced) we see that some of the greatest miseries which oppressed mankind in the heathen world, were actually removed by the laws and edicts of CHRISTIAN RULERS ‡. Here, then, there can be no doubt that the happy effects of these laws are to be ascribed solely and exclusively to the beneficent spirit

(legislator) ought to render his name dear to all the people of the earth. Volt. Un. Hist. v. 20. p. 266. Ed. Amst. 12mo, 1764.

* History of the Decline of the Roman Empire, v. 3, p. 157. Jortin's Eccles. Rem. v. 3. p. 220.

† Ib. p. 219.

‡ Even in the dark ages of popery, the wars of contending princes, and powerful lords, were frequently checked, and the fierceness of the times greatly mitigated by the authority, the remonstrances, and the influence of the clergy; particularly by what was called the TRUCE OF GOD, and other benevolent devices of that nature. Robertson's Charles V. v. 1. p. 54, 64, 335, 336, 338.

of

of that heavenly religion, which meliorated the heart, and humanized the dispositions of those who made them. And we are therefore warranted in concluding, that many of the *other* great improvements in civil, social, and domestic life, which render our situation so infinitely superior to that of the ancient, as well as to the modern pagan world, are to be attributed to the operation of the same powerful cause.

If this important truth stood in need of any further confirmation, it is to be found in the confessions of those who are either the avowed enemies of Christianity, or at least have no unreasonable prejudices in its favour, to mislead their judgment,

They acknowledge, that "the pure and genuine influence of Christianity, may be traced in its beneficial, though imperfect effects, on the barbarian proselytes of the north;" and that on the fall of the Roman empire, it evidently mollified the ferocious temper of the conquerors*.

They acknowledge, that Constantine acted the part of a sound politician, in affording

* Decline of the Roman Empire, v. 3. p. 633.

Christianity

Christianity protection and support ; because it not only tended to give firmness and solidity to his empire, but also to soften the ferocity of the armies, and to reform the licentiousness of the provinces ; and by infusing a spirit of moderation and submission to government, to extinguish those principles of avarice and ambition, of injustice and violence, by which so many factions were formed, and the peace of the empire so often and so fatally broken*.

They acknowledge, in still more pointed and decisive terms, that no Religion ever appeared in the world, whose natural tendency was so much directed to promote the peace and happiness of mankind †.

They acknowledge, that Christianity, divested of all fanaticism, and better understood than in former ages, has rendered modern government less sanguinary, and given more gentleness to the manners of mankind.

They acknowledge, in fine, that these changes are *not owing to the cultivation of letters*, because, wherever they flourished the

* Rolingbroke, v. 4. p. 433.

† Ibid. p. 281, 282.

most,

most, humanity was not the most regarded ; but that from the Gospel numberless acts of mercy and kindness take their rise*.

Such are the acknowledgments of men of distinguished eminence in the world of letters, but certainly not much disposed to make needless concessions in favour of Christianity. And with these unsuspecting testimonies, added to the various facts that have been produced, we are enabled to estimate the respective merits, and to delineate, in a few words, the true characters of Philosophy and of Revelation.

We have seen that the predominant feature of paganism, or what is now called philosophy, (which is nothing more than paganism without idolatry) is CRUELTY in the extreme. All its steps are marked with blood. We have traced its ferocious temper in the civil policy, the laws, the domestic institutions, the wars, and even in the most solemn religious rites of the ancient heathen world. This was the case even among the most learned and

* Rousseau, Emile T. iii. l. 4. 12mo, Frank. p. 102. It is admirably well said by the same writer,—La Philosophie ne peut faire aucun bien, que la Religion ne le fasse encore mieux : et la Religion en fait beaucoup que la philosophie ne sauroit faire. lb. p. 101.

most

most *philosophical* nations of antiquity. But its aspect was still more dreadful among those whom they called barbarians, and it remains no less so among the savages of the present day, of which their cruelty to their women, their sanguinary and vindictive wars, the tortures they inflict on their prisoners, and their human sacrifices, are but too convincing proofs. In one of the most powerful kingdoms of Africa, where human sacrifices are sometimes offered, the object of their princes worship is a TIGER *; a deity well suited to the worshippers, and a very fit emblem of the temper and disposition of Paganism. The whole countenance, indeed, of that religion is so strongly impressed with the features of that malignant being from whom it springs, that it is impossible to mistake its origin. It can have no other parent, than the parent of all evil, THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS.

In the Religion of Christ, on the other hand, we see a directly contrary spirit; a spirit of meekness, mercy, gentleness, humanity, and kindness, which has been for

* See Mr. Norris's Evidence on the Slave Trade before the Privy Council, p. 5.

more

more than eighteen hundred years contending with the evils generated by paganism, has actually banished some of them from the face of the earth, has greatly mitigated and softened others, is gradually undermining all the rest, and has already given so different a colour to the whole system of human affairs, has introduced so large a portion of benevolence and mutual good-will into the minds and manners of men, into all the various relations of social, civil, and domestic life, as plainly shews the sacred source from whence it springs. Philosophy (both ancient and modern) is cruel, and could not be the author of such blessings as these. There could be but one author of them, THE GOD OF ALL CONSOLATION AND JOY.

So stands the comparison between Philosophy and the Gospel. And if, after all the proofs above adduced, any one should still affect to think that the portraits here drawn of them are the mere fictions of imagination, there is one means of conviction still remaining, which at this very hour forces itself on our observations, which in speaking on this subject it is impossible to pass over unnoticed,

ticed, and which it will not be easy for the most determined incredulity to withstand. Let the man who entertains these doubts (if such a one there can be) cast his eyes for a moment on each side of the narrow strait, which separates two of the greatest and most powerful nations in Europe. In one of these, PHILOSOPHY has usurped the THRONE of God; in the other, CHRISTIANITY has long established its empire. And it should seem as if (among other reasons) Providence had permitted the former to triumph, in a kingdom so near our own, almost on purpose to contrast together, to show in the strongest possible light, and to force upon the very senses of mankind, the different spirit and the different effects of infidelity and religion. The scenes that have lately passed in one of these countries are well known. They are too horrible to relate, and too recent to be forgotten. The blessings experienced in the other are before our eyes, and I trust engraved on all our hearts. After contemplating both with due attention, let us then say, whether "*the tree* (planted on each of these neighbouring shores), *is not known*

known by its fruit *:" whether the fruit of PHILOSOPHY is not now, what it always has been, *unrelenting cruelty*; and the fruit of the GOSPEL *unbounded benevolence and universal love*. Here, then, are the two great moral teachers and guides of life proposed to your choice; and as you approve the temper, and relish the actual effects, of the one, or of the other, decide between them.

* Matth. xii. 33.

APPENDIX;

CONTAINING

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

(a) **A**MONG many others, Cato Minor, Cicero, and Augustus, were all highly culpable in this instance. But the brutal inhumanity of Pompey towards his wife, almost exceeds belief, and drew after it a long train of most tragical consequences. For the sake of connecting himself with Sylla, he repudiated his wife Antistia, and married Æmilia, the daughter-in-law of Sylla, and then living with her husband. Antistia's father had before been murdered on account of his attachment to Pompey; and her mother, shocked at the cruel treatment of her daughter, destroyed herself. Æmilia soon after died in child-bed in Pompey's house. Plut. in Pomp.

(b) It would be endless to produce all the instances we meet with in history, of the incredible barbarity of the ancients towards their slaves. The few that here follow, may serve as a specimen.

Two thousand Helots, who had been promised their freedom, and were led round the streets of Sparta in triumph with garlands on their heads, soon afterwards disappeared, and were never heard of more; but how they were destroyed, no one ever knew. Thucyd. l. 4.

The youth of Sparta, it is well known, frequently lay in ambush for these wretched slaves in the night, and sallying out upon them unexpectedly, with daggers in their hands, murdered, in cold blood, every Helot they met with.

The Ephori also, as soon as they entered upon their office, *declared war against them in form*, that there might be the appearance of destroying them legally. Plut. in Lyc.

At the time when L. Domitius was prætor in Sicily, a slave happened to kill a boar of uncommon size. The prætor, struck with the account he had received of the man's dexterity and intrepidity, desired to see him. The poor wretch, overjoyed at this distinction, presented himself to the prætor, expecting, no doubt, applause and reward. But Domitius understanding that he had killed the boar with a hunting spear, the use

of which (as well as of all other arms) was forbidden to slaves, ordered him to be immediately *crucified*. The barbarity of this punishment is scarce more astonishing and atrocious than the perfect indifference and unconcern, with which the orator relates and reasons upon it. "*Durum hoc fortasse videatur; neque ego ullam in partem disputo.*" Cicero in Verrem Actio. ii. l. 5. c. 3.

It was the custom of Vedius Pollio, when his slaves had committed a fault, (sometimes a very trifling one) to order them to be thrown into his fish-ponds to feed his lampreys. Seneca de Ira. iii. 40. Id. de Clement. i. 18. Plin. l. ix. c. 23.

A certain Roman being found murdered in his own house, all the slaves (to the number of 400) were instantly put to death. The historian adds that this was done. *Vetere de more*. Tacit. Annal xiv. 43.

(d) Xenophon, in his treatise on the Athenian republic, acknowledges that the courts of justice were to be influenced by bribes; that they favoured and saved from punishment those to whom they were attached, and condemned those whom they hated. And in every

every instance it was the constant practice of the people, both at Athens and in the dependent states, to oppress the virtuous and encourage the most abandoned, as much as possible.

Thucydides assures us, (l. vi.) that the Athenians frequently thrust into prison, and condemned to death, the very best citizens, on the information of the most worthless and profligate.

With respect to Rome, the following facts will give the reader a faint idea of the manner in which justice was there administered.

When L. Gellius and C. Lentulus were censors, they expelled no less than sixty-four senators for taking bribes in their judicial capacity. Middleton's *Life of Cicero*, v. 1. p. 117. Pighii *annal.* A. U. 683.

The method which Pompey took to restore order and decorum in the Roman courts of judicature, was of a sort which would occasion no small surprize in Westminster-Hall. He presided there in person *with a file of soldiers*. And yet, notwithstanding this prudent care to preserve the decorum and purity of judicial proceedings, he was not extremely scrupulous and

and delicate when his own friends were concerned. For when Scipio, his father-in-law, was impeached, he sent for the three hundred and sixty judges to his house, and implored their friendship to Scipio. (Plut. in Pomp.) Yet this is the man whom Cicero calls *Hominem integrum et castum et gravem*. *Epist. ad Attic.* xi. 6.

Such were the ideas which Cicero entertained of *judicial integrity*. And most of the great men of Rome seem to have entertained the same. For when Catiline was tried for some atrocious murders, many of the consulars appeared in his favour, and gave him an excellent character. And Cicero himself, on a similar occasion, was once disposed to have undertaken his defence. *Epist. ad Attic.* l. 1. l. 2.

(e) The Athenians (says an historian who knew them well) were formed by nature *never to be at rest* themselves, nor to allow others to be so. Thucyd. l. 1.

The war against Syracuse, which led to their ruin, was founded in extreme injustice and ambition. The design of the Athenians was first to subdue Sicily, then Italy, then the Peloponnesus. *Ib.* l. 6.

They

They thought it the *natural turn* of the human mind to grasp at dominion whenever it could be done. They confessed that they acted on this principle themselves, and supposed all other nations did the same. *Ib.* l. 5.

They thought the shortest road to empire was to assist those that demanded their protection, without minutely enquiring how well they deserved it. *Ib.*

The Spartans, among one another, gave ample proofs of honour and virtue; but with respect to the rest of the world, their rule of acting was to consider as honourable whatever was pleasing to them; and as just, whatever was conducive to their interest. *Ib.* l. 5.

Let the reader also refer to the shameful perfidy of Posthumius to the Samnites, in *Livy*, l. ix. c. 5. and 11. and of *Æmilius* to *Perseus*, l. 45. c. 8. 39.

(f) No less than seventy cities of Epirus were given up by *Æmilius Paulus* to be pillaged by the soldiers in one day, and at the same time 150,000 of the inhabitants were made slaves. *Livy*, l. 45. 2. 34. *Polybius* informs us, l. 10. frag. 2. that when *Scipio* took *Carthage*, he ordered his soldiers to attack the inhabitants, and put them all to death without

without distinction, and to spare none according to the custom of the *Romans*. The historian adds, that the *Romans* did this to strike all nations with the terror of their name. And for the same reason he says, whenever they take a town, you not only see all the men put to death, but dogs, and other animals, cut to pieces, and their limbs scattered about the streets.

It is said of *Julius Cæsar*, that he had subdued three hundred nations, stormed a thousand cities, made a million of slaves, and put as many to the sword, either in the field or in towns. (*Plut.* in *Pompeio*.) Yet this general was celebrated for his great humanity.

During the siege of *Jerusalem*, and in the course of the Jewish war, the number of Jews that perished by the sword, was one million three hundred and fifty-seven thousand six hundred and sixty; and the number of captives was ninety-seven thousand. Those under seventeen years of age were sold for slaves; those above seventeen were sent to the works in *Egypt*, or dispersed through the *Roman* provinces to be destroyed by the sword or by wild beasts, and eleven thousand of them

perished by hunger. Even Titus, the mild and merciful Titus, the *deliciæ humani Generis*, treated those wretched beings with the most savage barbarity. In the shews and spectacles which he exhibited at Cæsarea, many of the captives were destroyed, some by wild beasts, and others were compelled to fight with each other. At the same place, in honour of his brother's birth-day, fifteen hundred Jews were slain, and a great number also at Berytus, in honour of his father. The same was done in other cities of Syria. Those whom he reserved for his triumph, were Simeon and John, and seven hundred others of remarkable stature and beauty*.

* Newton's Dissert. on Prophecy—Diss. 20, Part 3, vol. ii. p. 313.

F I N I S.