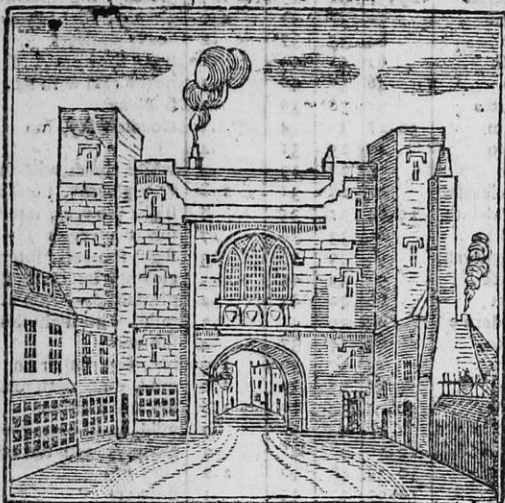


The Gentleman's Magazine

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London Evening.
Whitehall Even.
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London Packet
English Chron.
Courier—Ev. Ma.
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a CURIOUS SEAL, &c. &c.

By SYLVANUS URBAN, Gent.

Printed by JOHN NICHOLS, at Cicero's Head, Red-Lion Passage, Fleet-street;
where all Letters to the Editor are desired to be addressed, POST-PAID. 1798.

pages more, to argue for a happy, again^t an honourable, peace; all the while doubting "whether peace itself will be a sufficient salve for all our sores; whether our case is not already become so desperate or difficult as to require some farther remedy besides even that blessing." This remedy, we are once more told, is a real representation of the Commons in Parliament; but on none of the various proposals for effecting it does his Lordship hazard an opinion; but "finishes the effusions of an old man, whose chief interest in what he is writing is the pleasure to contemplate the public happiness at present, and to foresee it for the future. If, with a peaceable state abroad, shall be united a real representation of our Commons in our government at home, we may hope and expect to become, once more, a happy and prosperous people. May our Ministers then pursue the best measures for the public good! and may the Nation use their due endeavours, in concurrence, for that purpose!"

28. *The Integrity and Excellence of Scripture: A Vindication of the so-much-controverted Passages, Deut. vii. 2—5, and xx. 16—17, whereby the Fulsness of the Commands they enjoin are incontrovertibly proved, and, consequently, the Objections of Thomas Paine and Dr. Geddes completely refuted.* By George Benjoin, of Jesus College, Cambridge.

MR. B. whose elucidation of the book of Jonah has had our warmest applause (vol. LXVI. p. 1024), here undertakes to vindicate the command of God to Israel, respecting the seven nations of Canaan, to *smite* and *utterly destroy* them; and to shew that these words, in the original, do not imply that cruel and sanguinary excision ascribed to them by Thomas Paine, who rejects the sacred Scriptures, and Dr. Geddes, who declares them not to be the will and word of God. From parallel passages, Deut. vii. 5, Numb. xxxiii. 51, 52, 53, 55, Josh. iii. 10, only expulsion of these nations, and destruction of their idols, is intended; and from other passages it appears, that many of the people were spared. Deut. vii. 2. is therefore to be translated, "And when the Lord thy God giveth them unto thee, *and thou shalt have smitten* them, dispel, dispel them; thou shalt not make any covenant with them, nor shew them any *favour*;" and Deut.

xx. 16, 17, "But of the cities of *these* nations which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, thou shalt not *support* any thing living. But dispel, dispel them *all*, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee." The seven nations were to be destroyed *as nations*, but not murdered without possibility of escape. The historical parts of Scripture are connected with the whole. All the learning and philosophy of ancient and modern times have not produced a history of the creation of the world like that in Genesis, of which they are only imitations. Nor can Nature teach like the word of God. Dr. G. objects to the authority of Scripture from the cruelty and injustice which some passages seems to inculcate; but Mr. B. shews that the historians of the Constantinopolitan empire, which he affects to prefer to them, relate acts of greater cruelty by Theodosius the Great. Mr. B. goes on to shew the authority and importance of Scripture. He has, to use his own words, in his concluding summary, proved, from the Bible translation, that the general tenor of the passages in question neither implies the evil commands which have been erroneously imputed to them, nor enjoin any thing that is inconsistent with the goodness and mercy of God. That the *general spirit* of the command does not imply an *utter destruction of the men, women, and children, and every living creature*, of seven nations, he proves from the very event itself; that though the Israelites had it in their power to slay every living creature, yet they and their judges, and their kings, voluntarily suffered many of their enemies to live in unmolested peace, with their wives, and friends, and little ones, and cattle, and property, even after they had peaceful possession of their dominions, and had the power to destroy them. The author then treats on the *different parts, the particular expressions*, which constitute the whole of the command, and which, taken singly, might convey a sense repugnant to God's mercy; and explains every one *separately*, and proves them to be perfectly consistent with God's justice and mercy, even as they stand translated in their present form. He has then recourse to the *original*, in which the sacred word of God, containing the passages in question, was first given to mankind. The original he literally translates, and

proves that the words, Deut. vii. 2, commonly translated "thou shalt utterly destroy them," literally mean "thou shalt dispel them;" that the words translated "nor shew mercy unto them," literally mean "nor shew them any FAVOUR;" that the words, Deut. xx. 16, translated "thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth," literally mean "thou shalt not SUPPORT any thing living;" that the expression, in Deut. xx. 17, "thou shalt utterly destroy them," means "thou shalt DISPEL them ALL." These different renderings do not proceed from the translator's choice or fancy, but from the plain and natural meaning of the words in the original, which words he has produced. He then presents his readers with a few instances from which it may be proved that the Sacred History is in perfect harmony with the preceptive part of Scripture. The writer then proceeds to prove that Nature alone would not have been sufficient to make mankind happy even but in this life; nor the productions of the learned to make them wise and really good; that from Scripture alone, as being the word of God, proceeds all knowledge and wisdom, and every consolation; that they alone contain precepts, the observance of which will make man happy in this life, and assure him everlasting happiness hereafter. Then follows a copious description of the miserable state whereinto man must fall were he to follow Nature only; a state wherein neither Religion, Morality, or Reason, make part of a man's conduct. The conscience of the man of mere Nature is then enquired into; and a description of his miserable end closes the scene of his wretched life. Thomas Paine's knowledge of God and Nature is examined; and the ground upon which he maintains that Nature is preferable to the Sacred Writings is investigated. Then follows a general rule by which the authenticity or spuriousness of a book ought to be proved. The general cause of all effects is next traced, and the source whence we derive our knowledge of Nature pointed out. The excellence of Scripture is thus displayed, and its sacred contents given *in abstract*. Israel being chosen God's people is accounted for. The necessity of a Mediator is shewn; and the Divine Wisdom, in gradually revealing Salvation to mankind, illustrated. The predominant features of the character of Christ

are concisely described. Then follows a short enumeration of the blessings, happiness, consolation, joyful hopes and expectations, which mankind derive from Scripture, the sacred written word of God.

29. *The Imperial Epistle from Kien Long, Emperor of China, to George III. King of Great Britain, &c. &c. in the Year 1794; transmitted from the Emperor, and presented to his Britannic Majesty by his Excellency the Right Honourable George Earl Macartney of the Kingdom of Ireland, K. B. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Emperor of China in the Years 1792, 1793, and 1794. Translated into English Version, from the original Chinese Poetry; with Notes by various Persons of Eminence and Distinction, and by the Translator.*

WITH a true poetic vein, and the full spirit of virtuous liberty, and with no less happy allusive faculty, the translator (who is also author of those admirable touches of satire, "The Pursuits of Literature," see vol. LXVII. pp. 568, 660, 1004, 1081, 1111; vol. LXVIII. 27; and, as it should seem by community of advertisement of all the three, of that Letter to the Marquis of Buckingham on the emigrant French Priests), depicts and satirizes the prevailing characteristicks and characters of the times. He is perhaps the first of our satirists whose aim is strictly virtuous; and his satire, however poignant, is only the severity of Cato. We shall extract, as most highly coloured, yet with strict poetic truth, his glowing picture of the *times of Europe*:

" ——— for other scenes are near:
Darkness and Discontent, Distress and Fear,
And brooding Policy, in novel forms,
Call o'er the deep of empire clouds and
storms. [nia's field,
And wild those storms would rend Britan-
Should Patriot Bands the rod of Faction
wield,
While Law, Religion, Property, they seize,
And senates tremble at their own decrees;
Sweeping with REFORMATION'S HONOURWAY,
They'd crush each land that scrupled to obey;
From Splendour's robe each proud distinc-
tion wipe,
And place a barren bauble in thy gripe.
Then mitred Fathers, and the ermin'd Peer,
And Ancestry, and all to Honour dear,
The fond, well-earn'd rewards of antient
Worth,
All, spirits disembodied, leave the earth.
These are state-blots, which, in their dread
intent, [LIAMENT;
Should be ras'd out IN THEIR FIRST PAR-
For