Q. Do you know a perſon of the name of Gales, a printer at Sheffield?

A. Yes, very well.

Q. Mr. Yorke was not a ſettled inhabitant of Sheffield?

A. No.

Q. Did he attend the meetings of the Conſtitutional Society at Sheffield?

A. He frequently attended, almoſt every weekly meeting during his laſt viſit to Sheffield.

Q. As he was not a ſettled inhabitant of Sheffield, in what character did Mr. Yorke attend regularly the weekly meetings of the ſociety.

A. They conſidered him as a man of conſiderable abilities and an orator, paid great reſpect to him; and he uſed to attend conſtantly once a week at the meeting called the committee; but it was not properly a committee; for the time of the expiration of the committee was elapſed before, and another was not choſe; and ſuch perſons, whether they had been in the committee before or not, were admitted on account of Mr. Yorke being at Sheffield.

Q. I ask you in what character he came there

A. I am totally unacquainted with it, for he did not bring any letter to us: I have heard ſay—

Q. Did you ever hear himſelf ſay?

A. No.

Q. But being there, you diſcovered that he had great talents; and was an orator?

A. Yes.

Q. Did he take any part in the diſcuſſions of the ſociety, or in the management of it?

A. Yes, he wrote ſeveral pamphlets while he was at Sheffield, and ſeveral times brought ſome part, if not the whole of his pamphlets in manuſcripts to thoſe meetings to be read.

Q. Do you ſpeak now of the weekly meetings, that were improperly called committees?

A. Yes.

Q. Where were thoſe held?

A. At my houſe.

Q. In a large commodious room there, probably?

A. It was a ſmall room when the meeting met. But there was a large room when there were more perſons preſent.

Q. How often was that large room uſed?

A. Some two, three or four times; I do not recollect how many.

Q. During his laſt viſit?

A. Yes.

Q. In

Q. In that room was there any particular accommodation for the more commodious exerciſe of the talents and oratory of Mr. Yorke?

A. Yes, ſome little thing erected for to elevate the ſpeaker.

Q. What did they call it?

A. I do not know any particular name for it: ſome called it a pulpit and ſome a tribune; but it never was chriſtened.

Q. And from this tribune Mr. Yorke addreſſed the ſociety?

A. Yes.

Q. Beſides this meeting, improperly called a committee, and the meeting where the tribune was, do you recollect any general meeting upon the Caſtle-Hill, Sheffield?

A. Very well.

Q. Was it the ſeventh of April?

A. I do not juſtly recollect; but I was there.

Q. Was Mr. Yorke there?

A. Yes.

Q. Did he there exerciſe himſelf in addreſſing the people?

A. Yes.

Q. In what ſort of manner and language?

A. He had with him a book in his hand, wrote by Mr. Locke, and he expatiated very largely on the corruptions that had crept into the Britiſh conſtitution, or rather the evils which are generally complained of; he thought there was a deviation in ſome degree from the original conſtitution of Great Britain; but his manner of ſpeaking may ſometimes lead him to go farther in ſpeaking than he ought.

Q. That does happen to thoſe that are great orators very often.—On that occaſion did this unfortunate fatality attend him, that he went farther than he ought; did it appear that this addreſs of his, and Locke's book for his text, was more violent and went farther than he ought?

A. He is peculiarly energetic, and at the ſame time very warm, very ſtrong; but at this meeting I do not know that he ſaid any thing that was detrimental to the conſtitutional law of England.

Q. It was ſettled that you was to do ſomething at that meeting?

A. It was.

Q. Settled by whom?

A. By Mr. Yorke and Mr. Gale at a previous meeting.

Q. To do what?

A. That I ſhould make a motion at that meeting for petitioning the Houſe of Commons for a Reform in the Repreſentation of the People.

Q. For what purpoſe was you to make that motion as it was ſettled?

A. That it might be over-ruled.

Q. Was it ſettled by the committee beforehand that the motion ſhould be made, and that it ſhould be over-ruled?

A. Yes; it was ſo agreed upon, and further for the purpoſe of introducing another motion in its place.

Q. Pray, Sir, did you make the motion as it was agreed?

A. I did, for petitioning the Houſe of Commons.

Q. What was done upon your making that motion?

A. It was objected to with a view of making way for another, which was brought in and carried.

Q. Who was the objector?

A. There were only four of us that were elevated above the reſt.

Q. Then there was an elevation on Caſtle-hill?

A. Yes; one of theſe matters was carried there from our room.

Q. This tribune?

A. Yes.

Q. Who were the other three with you?

A. Mr. Yorke, Mr. Gale, and Mr. Camage.

Q. Then either Mr. Yorke, Mr. Gale, or Mr. Camage oppoſed your motion?

A. Yes.

Q. What number of perſons might be aſſembled at this meeting?

A. Several thouſands.

Q. This was a meeting in the open air?

A. Yes.

Q. Then one of theſe perſons oppoſed your motion, as it had been agreed, for introducing the other?

A. Yes.

Q. What was that other motion?

A. Inſtead of petitioning the Houſe of Commons, to petition his Majeſty, and the petition was drawn up; the parchments lay at my houſe.

Q. Drawn up by who?

A. By Henry Redhead.

Q. Was it drawn up before or after the meeting?

A. It might be drawn up before, and read there; I think it was, but it was not ſigned till after.

Q. It was left at your houſe for ſignatures?

A. Yes.

Q. Upon this occaſion did Mr. Yorke addreſs the meeting, which you ſay was compoſed of ſome thouſands?

A. Yes;

A. Yes; he introduced the ſubject of petitioning the King to exerciſe his power for a Reform in the Repreſentation of the People; and this petition was ſent to London to Earl Stanhope, and he did not think proper to preſent it in that form.

Q. Do you remember, a day or two after the meeting upon Caſtle-hill, being in company with Mr. Gale and Mr. Yorke at your houſe, when any application was made to him on the ſubject of printing the ſpeech he had delivered upon Caſtle-hill?

A. I remember ſomething of that ſort being ſaid to him at my houſe.

Q. Did he agree to print his ſpeech?

A. To the beſt of my recollection he did agree to it.

Q. Was it done?

A. Yes, to the beſt of my recollection.

Q. Did you ſee it afterwards?

A. Yes.

Q. Printed?

A. Yes.

Q. From having heard it upon the Caſtle-hill, could you form an opinion whether the printed one is a pretty accurate ſtatement?

A. The ſubſtance of the matter I expect it contains.

Q. Was that publiſhed at Sheffield?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you believe this to be one of thoſe publications?

A. I do.

Q. Did you receive afterwards, in your character of ſecretary, from Mr. Yorke, any number of this pamphlet for any purpoſe?

A. I did not receive them from Mr. Yorke, but I received them at Mr. Gale's ſhop.

Q. Did you do any thing with them by the direction of Mr. Yorke?

A. It was by direction of the meeting, previous to their being communicated to different perſons.

Q. Do you mean the public meeting?

A. The private meeting.

Q. Did you in conſequence thereof make up any packets?

A. Yes.

Q. Look at theſe packets.

A. Theſe are directed by me according to order.

Q. How many might you direct in that manner in ſeveral packets?

A. I do not recollect exactly.

Q. About how many?

A. There might be twenty-four.

Q. What were done with them?

A. They were lapped up, and directed to ſeparate perſons, and then all put in a box.

Q. To whom were they ſent?

A. To the beſt of my recollection, they were ſent to Thomas Hardy.

Q. I would ask you firſt, what your ſituation in life was before you was applied to, to become the ſecretary of this ſociety?

A. I was a cutler,

Q. Was you working at your buſineſs?

A. Yes, when I had any buſineſs to work at.

Q. Was you applied to, to become the ſecretary, or did you apply?

A. I was applied to.

Q. Who applied to you?

A. John Allcock was one.

Q. Was you paid any thing for your trouble?

A. Yes.

Q. What was your inducement for taking that office upon you?

A. I ſhould not have taken it upon me if I had not been applied to.

Q. What induced you?

A. The war had ſpoiled my buſineſs.

Q. You did it to increaſe your means of ſupport?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you hear any thing about procuring arms at Sheffield?

A. I heard the report, as many others did, but I purpoſely avoided meddling in thought or act with any thing of that ſort.

Q. Did you hear in the ſociety, or from any of the members in the ſociety, any propoſition for arms?

A. Yes, I did; but it is neceſſary that this ſhould be well explained. A few days before this meeting, when it was ſpoke to as being the right of Engliſhmen to have in their power means of defence, a ſpurious hand-bill was publiſhed in Sheffield, with an intention to provoke the ſociety to ſome unjuſtifiable meaſure; it was ſpoke to in the meeting, as having a right to have them in their own defence; and Joſeph Gale ſpoke to it; he was the man; and this bill, this wicked hand-bill, was not ſigned by any magiſtrate, and it was *throw'd* about the town in the dark. It cauſed agitation in the minds of the people, and it was ſpoke of as being the right of every individual there to have ſuch and ſuch arms according to their rights, leſt any riot or tumult ſhould break out; and I am happy to ſpeak of this, for I ſhould be happy to

ſee

ſee that advertiſement which was publiſhed in the Sheffield paper a week after.

Q. Was that hand-bill diſtributed previous to the meeting upon the Caſtle-hill?

A. To the beſt of my knowledge it was after that meeting.

Q. Was this ſubject of procuring arms publicly diſcuſſed, or at the private meeting?

A. It was in the public meeting of the ſociety that Gale ſpoke of our rights, in our large room.

Q. Was it a public meeting of the ſociety; were there ſtrangers there?

A. Yes, many others who were not members in the room. Tickets were not regularly delivered at that time I believe.

Q. You members introduce viſitors?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you ſee any arms, or any model of any?

A. I never ſaw one.

Q. What ſort of arms were they that were talked of as fit to be had for the purpoſe you were ſtating?

A. Pikes, but I never ſaw any till I was brought to London.

Q. I do not know whether you have heard any thing of night-cats?

A. I ſaw a model of one, but it was only like a child's play-thing.

Q. We will juſt get an account in what manner children play with it at Sheffield. What ſort of a thing was it?

A. It was a little thing, ſtanding on three points, and one point ſtanding up.

Q. How many points were there to it?

A. I think there were four.

Q. If you throw it down it always preſents a point?

A. Yes.

Q. And how long was that point?

A. About three quarters of an inch, juſt to ſhew what ſort of a thing it was.

Q. Was there any other purpoſe for which theſe inſtruments were to be made, except as a play-thing for children?

A. I never heard of them in the ſociety at all.

Q. Where did you ſee that model?

A. To the beſt of my recollection, in the houſe of one Benjamin Dan.

Q. Was he a member of the ſociety?

A. Yes, but it was not he that produced it.

Q. Who did produce it?

A. I think they call him Charles Rhodes.

Q. Had you ever ſeen ſuch a thing before?

A. I never

A. I never did.

Q. You naturally asked its uſe, for which it was conſtructed?

A. I do not recollect any converſation on that head, only that it was taken and thrown on the floor.

Q. Was that act of throwing it down on the floor, accompanied by no deſcription of the uſe of it, except as a play-thing?

A. There might, but it was not ſerious; there was nothing ſerious ſaid on it.

Q. Serious or not, what was ſaid on it?

A. Nothing was ſaid, but he brought it to ſhew them.

Q. What was ſaid, ſerious or not ſerious, as to the uſe?

A. I cannot call to mind, only that he took it out of his pocket, and ſaid, that he had come to ſhew them this that a little boy had made.

Q. Was it called by any name?

A. I heard no name of it there till I came to London, and then it was called a cat.

Q. What did you hear it called in addition to that name?

A. I heard no name at all there whatever.

Q. Was there any converſation at that time, when it was thrown upon the floor, about cavalry?

A. I do not recollect any converſation at all; they might ſay, look at the model.

Q. Was there no converſation? You told me juſt now, that the converſation was not ſerious about it. Upon your oath, was there nothing ſaid about cavalry or the town of Newcaſtle?

A. I know nothing about the converſation of Newcaſtle; Newcaſtle was not mentioned.

Q. Upon you oath, was you not preſent at a converſation in which the model was produced, and there was a talk of the town of Newcaſtle?

A. Upon my oath, I never was.

Q. Nor you never heard of any converſation with reſpect to cavalry?

A. No, I do not recollect any converſation about its uſe; I never heard any thing except deſultory, looſe, trifling, pleaſing converſation.

Q. The more deſultory, looſe, trifling, pleaſing converſation it was the better; let us have it?

A. I am ſure I cannot recollect it, elſe I would.

Q. Try, do not hurry yourſelf?

A. I do not recollect, except taking it out of his pocket and throwing it on the floor.

Q. No, no debate at all, and the converſation you do not recollect?

A. No, there was none at all; it was ſhewn principally to the

the company as being the production of a boy or child; I remember it perfectly well.

Q. It was a thing you had never ſeen any thing like it before?

A. No, I do not recollect that ever I had.

Q. And you contented yourſelf with ſeeing it thrown down upon the floor, without asking any queſtions about the uſe of it?

A. I had nothing at all to do with that.

Q. Now, ſir, you told me that at that meeting at the Caſtle-hill, Mr. Yorke, though generally warm and energetic, diſpoſed to ſay ſtrong things, did not ſay any thing detrimental to the conſtitutional law of England. Were you preſent at any other meetings, when his ſpeeches were not altogether conſtitutional?

A. I have been preſent at other meetings where he has not been ſo guarded as at that meeting.

Q. Perhaps when he has not been ſo well guarded, it was at the meeting of the ſociety only?

A. Yes.

Q. Be ſo good to tell us a little the tendency of his diſcourſe when he gave himſelf a looſe manner, and followed the impulſe of his nature?

A. If I had noted them down, I might have been able to repeat them.

Q. I do not expect that you ſhould give them in his manner, or preciſe words, but the ſubſtance?

A. I do not recollect at preſent; I may have heard him when converſing in this meeting; ſometimes he was very warm to be ſure, and ſometimes might drop an unguarded expreſſion; ſometimes ſuch as comparing what he looked upon to be the grievances under which we labour, and the privileges that we once enjoyed; he might ſtep out of the way; I heard him once uſe an expreſſion, but for my own part I would not chuſe to put a comment on it; he expreſſed himſelf to this purpoſe, that we were in a low deſpicable ſituation, and rather than ſubmit to it, he would go up to London with the people there preſent, but did not ſay for what.

Q. How many of you might there be then preſent, who were to come up with Mr. Yorke to London, rather than ſubmit to live in ſo deſpicable a ſituation?

A. There might be one hundred and fifty or two hundred.

Q. Was this at one of the meetings of the ſociety?

A. Yes, with ſome others.

Q. At one of the general meetings?

A. Yes.

Jury.

Jury. Go to London, and what then?

A. He did not draw any inference.

Mr. Garrow. Was that after you had heard any thing upon the ſubject of arming?

A. I think it was before that; to the beſt of my memory it was before that, I am not perfectly clear of that.

Q. Was that delivered from the tribune?

A. Yes, delivered from the place that was called ſo; ſometimes it is called a pulpit.

Q. It was from that orator's elevation that this ſpeech was delivered?

A. Yes.

Q. Then, perhaps, having brought that to your recollection, you may poſſibly recollect ſomething elſe?

A. No, I never remember any other that gave me any pain; I ſhould not recollect that, but I felt pain at the time.

Q. What was it that made you feel any pain at that declaration of Mr. Yorke's?

A. Becauſe I fear God and honour the King.

Q. And therefore you felt pain at that declaration of Mr. Yorke?

A. Yes.

Q. Either at that or any other meeting do you recollect any other expreſſions of Mr. Yorke?

A. No, I do not remember any expreſſions that ſo ſtruck me as that.

Q. I do not know whether you have ſeen this paper before.
(*The proceedings of the faſt day at Sheffield ſhewn him.*)

Q. Did you ever ſee that before?

A. I never ſee but one from which this was taken, perhaps.

Mr. Attorney-General. Look at the hymn there.

A. Yes.

Mr. Garrow. Have you ſeen a pamphlet of which that appears to be a copy?

A. Yes.

Q. Be ſo good as to look at this: (*another paper ſhewn him*) have you ſeen that before?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you remember the circumſtance of a proclamation for a general faſt-day to be held in January 1794, in London?

A. Yes.

Q. Tell us in what manner the faſt was obſerved upon the Caſtle-Hill, at Sheffield?

A. It was not at the Caſtle-Hill, it was another place, at the top of the town; I forget the name of the place.

Q. Was you there?

A. I was.

Q. Was

Q. Was that in the open air?

A. Yes.

Q. How many perſons might be aſſembled for the purpoſe of obſerving that faſt?

Court. How is that evidence?

Mr. Attorney-General. In order that that may be underſtood, your Lordſhips will recollect that there has already been read from the Conſtitutional Society's book, a reſolution, thanking the people of Sheffield for the manner in which they had ſpent the faſt day.

Mr. Garrow. With the addition that this printed paper was found in the priſoner's poſſeſſion.

Q. (*To witneſs*) How many do you think there were aſſembled?

A. There might be a thouſand or two.

Q. Be ſo good as to tell us the manner in which you, together with that aſſembly, of a thouſand or two of the inhabitants of Sheffield, celebrated that faſt day?

A. With the hymn that is there printed.

Q. In order to ſhorten it, I will put it thus: Is the manner in which it is repreſented in this printed paper, correct?

A. To the beſt of my knowledge it is.

Mr. Garrow. (*Reads*) "A Royal Proclamation having been iſſued, commanding February 8, 1794, to be obſerved as a General Faſt, the friends of Peace and Reform in Sheffield determined to honour the day in the moſt diſtinguiſhed manner. Accordingly, the thouſands of that town aſſembled upon a ſpacious plain, near Weſt-ſtreet, Back-fields, where the meeting was opened with prayer; after which a ſerious lecture, ſuitable to the occaſion, was read with great energy."

Mr. Gibbs. Take the legal courſe in introducing the paper.

Mr. Garrow. There are ſeveral legal courſes.—If you approve of it better, I will authenticate the paper.

Mr. Gibbs. The legal courſe is the beſt.

Q. What might the number of your ſociety amount to at Sheffield?

A. Nearly ſix hundred, more or leſs.

Q. Are you divided into diviſions or ſections?

A. Such a mode has been adviſed, but has not been regularly and orderly kept.

Q. By whom had that mode been adviſed?

A. I cannot recollect, becauſe it was adviſed before I was ſecretary.

Q. Do you ſuppoſe that ſix hundred were the full amount of the members of the ſociety at its greateſt extent of your numbers—did they amount to two thouſand?

A. No, no ſuch thing.—I wrote the tickets.

Q. You think about ſix hundred was the number.

A. Yes.

Q. You ſay the diſtribution into diviſions or ſections was not regularly executed; what was done towards it?

A. There were a kind of books delivered, called diſtrict-books, but they were not regularly attended to.

Lord Chief Juſtice. Where did thoſe books iſſue from?

A. They were printed by Joſeph Gale.

Q. By whoſe directions?

A. They were printed before I became a member; before I joined the ſociety.

Q. They were the ſocieties books, printed by Mr. Gale?

A. Yes.

Q. To whom were they diſtributed, to what manner of perſons, and for what purpoſe?

A. For the members of the ſocieties to divide into diſtricts, or you may call it ſections.

Q. It was not regularly effected; what was the mode in which theſe diſtricts were to aſſemble themſelves?

A. They were to meet, if they thought proper, but principally to collect a penny per week from each member.

Q. That was the contribution towards the fund of the ſociety?

A. Yes.

Q. Were there any regular periods at which the different ſections were to communicate in one general aſſembly, or was that left to emergency?

A. Such a thing was mentioned but never executed.

Q. What was mentioned but not executed?

A. The diſtrict meetings; but they were not properly attended to.

Mr. Lauzun called in again.

Q. Look at this paper, (*a pamphlet entitled Faſt-Day, as obſerved at Sheffield*) where did you find that?

A. At Mr. Hardy's houſe.

Q. Look at this (*A Serious Lecture.*)

A. I found that at Mr. Hardy's.

Q. (*To Broombead*) After the Serious Lecture was read, there was a hymn prepared

A. Yes.

Q. Who compoſed it?

A. It was compoſed by one Montgomery.

Q. It is ſtated to be ſung in full chorus by the aſſembly.

A. It was ſung.

Q. By whom were theſe two pamphlets printed and publiſhed—by whoſe order?

A. I believe

A. I believe they were printed by Joſeph Gale.

Q. But by whoſe order—at whoſe expence?

A. They were ſold.

Q. Who ordered them to be printed?

A. I believe it was a private matter.

Q. But there is an expence incurs, you know, before the ſale of printing and publiſhing?

A. He was not paid till after it was done.

Q. Who furniſhed the copy to Gale?

A. I don't know for certain.

Q. Who read the lecture?

A. A gentleman from Halifax.

Q. Do you know of any proceedings of the ſociety, or committee, or of Yorke, reſpecting the printing and publiſhing theſe two pamphlets?

A. I do not.

Q. Do you know whether they were generally diſtributed in the town of Sheffield?

A. They were ſold.

Q. Do you or not, from your own knowledge, know whether the ſale was extenſive?

A. I think not very.

Q. There is a prayer; who compoſed that?

A. I did.

Q. You compoſed it yourſelf?

A. Yes.

Q. Who was it delivered by?

A. By myſelf.

Q. From notes or extempore?

A. It was extempore.

Q. You had written it and committed it to memory, perhaps?

A. Yes.

Q. What became of your copy?

A. I do not know, there was no account taken of it; it was delivered to Gale, to be printed.

Q. At whoſe direction?

A. I do not know, it was a private meeting of ſeveral members of the ſociety that that was ſpoken of.

Q. Be ſo good as tell me if you know theſe names; John Payne Newhill?

A. I have heard the name, but I do not know the perſon.

Q. Was he member?

A. I believe ſo.

Q. Joſeph Gale?

A. Yes, I know Joſeph Gale.

Q. He was a member?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you know Joſeph Smith?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you know David Martin?
A. Yes.

Mr. Garrow. It is not worth while going through the names, it is a ſufficient evidence that they were ſent up to the Conſtitutional Society, to be affiliated with them, which is proof they were members.

(*Read by the Clerk of the Court*)

" Proceedings of the public meeting held at Sheffield in the open air, 2d of April, 1794, and alſo an Addreſs to the Britiſh nation, being an expoſition of the motives which had determined the people of Sheffield to petition the Houſe of Commons no more on the ſubject of Parliamentary Reform.

(*Page* 9.) " Fellow Citizens, the day is at length arrived, when fanaticiſm and ſuperſtition, deprived of their tinſel trappings, and expoſed in their native uglineſs, to the view of mankind, ſlink ſcowling back to the cave of obſcurity, there I hope they will for ever remain."

Mr. Erſkine. Let the whole of it be read.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC MEETING.

" In purſuance of a public advertiſement, a General Meeting of the Friends of Juſtice, Liberty and Humanity, was held, at three o'clock on Monday the 7th of April, 1794, on the Caſtle-hill, in Sheffield, to conſider upon the propriety of addreſſing the King, in behalf of the perſecuted patriots, Citizens Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Margarot and Gerald; alſo of again petitioning the Houſe of Commons for a Reform in the Repreſentation of the People, and to determine upon the propriety of petitioning the King, for the total and unqualified Abolition of Negro Slavery.

" Notwithſtanding the inclemency of the weather, (very ſevere rains having fallen until within a quarter of an hour of the appointed time of meeting,) from ten to twelve thouſand people were aſſembled on the occaſion:

" *Henry Yorke* having been voted to the Chair,
The buſineſs was opened by reading the following Addreſs to the King, in behalf of the ſuffering Patriots.

" TO THE KING.

" *An Addreſs from Inhabitants of the Town and Neighbourhood*
" *of Sheffield, in the County of York.*

" SIRE,

" WE, the underſigned, being warm friends of Liberty, and the Rights of Man, feel ourſelves deeply affected by the ſentences

tences which have lately been paſſed in your Majeſty's Courts of Scotland, upon citizens Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Margarot and Gerald.

" Had theſe men been really guilty of *crimes*, their puniſhment ſhould doubtleſs have been proportionate to their offences; but, ſo far from conſidering it as a crime for a man to uſe every conſtitutional means in his power to effect a Reform in the Commons Houſe of Parliament, we think that every man who thus exerts himſelf, deſerves well of his country; ſince we are perſuaded that nothing ſhort of the accompliſhment of ſuch a Reform, will reſtore peace and happineſs to our preſent aggrieved and injured nation.

" We truſted alſo, that your Majeſty entertained the ſame opinion with us of ſuch exalted conduct, from your Majeſty's having choſen for your moſt confidential ſervants in the ſtate, men who had ſingularly diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their patriotic exertions in the cauſe of Parliamentary Reform.

" But the friends of theſe ſufferers having brought their caſe before Parliament, without producing the deſired effect—the principal of theſe very ſervants of your Majeſty having oppoſed the meaſure with all his corrupt, but irreſiſtable influence—ſeeing no other reſource, we approach your Majeſty in this Addreſs, to intreat your Majeſty to interfere in behalf of theſe (whom we deem) *innocent* men, with that power which the Britiſh conſtitution has placed in your Majeſty, of pardoning whom your Majeſty pleaſes—a privilege which is ſometimes graciouſly extended even to real and palpable criminals.

" Let it not be recorded in the hiſtory of this country, that King George III. or any of his judges, tranſported men for fourteen years, becauſe they had dared to ſpeak the ſame words upon a ſpeculative ſubject, which, if they were not the immediate means of advancing his Majeſty's then prime miniſter to his high ſituation, cauſed his election to be remarkably popular. Let it not be ſaid, that men of education, of refined ſentiments, of the moſt virtuous and benevolent characters, were ſevered from their deareſt connections, and plunged into dungeons with thieves and proſtitutes. Let it not be ſaid, that fathers were torn from their wives and children, and ſons from their aged parents, becauſe they had the virtue openly to condemn the acknowledged corruptions of government, and to exert every peaceable means in their power to remove them. Let it not be ſaid, that it was as great a crime to ſpeak the TRUTH as to be guilty of FELONY.

" But rather, O King, let it be recorded, that George III. had the wiſdom, the humanity, and the juſtice, to ſtep in betwixt theſe ſevere and cruel ſentences and their execution.

" Theſe

" Theſe are our deſires—theſe our plain ſentiments. We know they are ſuch as your Majeſty is unaccuſtomed to hear; but, if they are ſupported by truth and reaſon, ſuffer not the homelineſs of our manner to offend your Majeſty. We are plain men, and will not flatter a King. If our wiſhes be attended to, we are perſuaded it will, in ſome good degree, huſh the murmurs which unreaſonable ſeverity in a government never fails to excite; and it may alſo avert that *Storm*, which it is but too evident has long been awfully gathering, and which may burſt forth in a moment when your Majeſty thinks not."

" The Addreſs being read, and received with repeated applauſes, The Henry Yorke addreſſed the meeting in ſupport of the meaſure. He obſerved, that the cauſe for which our countrymen were now ſuffering, was the ſame as had been advocated in the year 1783, by Mr. Pitt, the Duke of Richmond, and other men, who were at this time penſioners and placemen under the actual government; that a convention, for the purpoſe of obtaining a Parliamentary Reform, had been held at the Thatched-Houſe Tavern, in which theſe men went as delegates, or acted as aſſiſtants; that it was cruel, if not unjuſt, to puniſh men for following the example which thoſe in power had ſet them. The queſtion was not a queſtion of *convenience*, but of *right*.—It was not enough to ſay, that the people were *formerly* repreſented, but that they had a *right* to be repreſented *now*. Did the miniſtry, therefore, mean to aſſert, that what was right to-day, was wrong to-morrow? Did they mean to declare, in the face of the world, that what was in conformity to the maxims of juſtice at that time, ſhould, in ſo ſhort a ſpace, be deemed *unjuſt*, and puniſhed as a *crime?*

" After having expatiated conſiderably on this very important ſubject, he proceeded with obſerving, that in all countries where ſevere and ſanguinary puniſhments were encouraged, men could have no affection for the government under which they lived, and their obedience to it could reſult ſolely from motives of *fear*. That liberty of opinion could not be denied to any free country, without denying at the ſame time the rights of the people. That nothing argued more ſtrongly againſt a government than the uniform deſign of depriving the people of this liberty; that it was a proof that ſomething *went wrong*; and that even governors were aſhamed of their conduct, when the right of diſcuſſion was violated or put an end to. The civil liberty we enjoyed in our country was the effect of political diſcuſſion; and its political liberty would have long ſince been reſtored and ſecured, if our rulers had not interpoſed to weaken or annihilate this right; Firſt, by giving a power of deciſion to judges, which the ancient law of the land did not acknowledge; Secondly, by confounding

founding the truth with the fact of publication: And, thirdly, by having punished with the utmost severity libels in private cases, to prepare the public mind for those severe sentences in public ones, which dishonoured and irritated the nation. It had been lately the fashion to confound government with the constitution, and the ministry with the government. To oppose, therefore, the mad and wild, if not criminal schemes of administration, was to oppose government, and, by this mode of reasoning, to oppose government was to be an enemy to the constitution. A government can never give a more authentic proof of its propension to tyranny, and of the impropriety, as well as impolicy of its measures, than by restraining or forbidding the liberty of discussing publicly matters of legislation and policy. It is debasing the character of man, as an intellectual being, to deny him the right of enquiring into that which even governors allow was made for his use, namely, government.

"To punish inquiry, severity is exercised for imaginary guilt. But what is the effect? Mischief is prolific. Violence in government begets resentment in the people, who murmur and exclaim. Government is provoked, and studies vengeance. When one act of vengeance is exposed, more always follow. Affection is lost on both sides, and, what is worse, is irrecoverable. Hatred begins; and the government and the people being a variance, consider each other no longer as magistrate and subject, but as mutual enemies. Hence the inhuman wish of Caligula, that he could murder all the people at one blow. The sequal is in order: he is continually destroying them; they are continually wishing him destroyed.——Such conduct had the fatal tendency of cramping the genius of men, and of replunging the nation into a state of barbarism with regard to their religion, their laws, their morals, and their government, and to keep them ignorant of the most important concerns in their trade, their splendor, their felicity; whilst all the nations around them were improving themselves in morals and policy, by the daring efforts and concurrence of enlightened men, whose views were directed to those objects alone which were really worth their attention. The reasoning of a government, which prohibits information, is defective in every particular; its progress is not to be stopped, nor even to be checked, without manifest disadvantage. Prohibition has no other effect than to irritate men; to inspire them with an idea of insurrection, and to give to all their writings a libellous tendency. Severe and arbitrary sentences may *intimidate*, but they cannot *convince* a nation. It is by reason and argument alone, opposed to apparent reason and apparent argument, that a government can hope to be victorious over its internal enemies, or render itself permanent by the

quiet

quiet and conſcientious concurrence of all its citizens. It is doing too much honor to innocent ſubjects to be alarmed at a few pages of writing, or at a few fugitive orations, when barracks are erected in a country, and 60,000 armed mercenaries are ready to execute the mandates of government. Experience had proved, that the rigorous proſecutions which had lately taken place throughout England, and that the cruel ſentences which had diſgraced the capital of Scotland, had not anſwered the purpoſe of eſtabliſhing arbitrary power, and of cruſhing the rebellion of honeſt minds. Although there is no ſpirit ſo erect and independent as not to be broken by the long continuance of the ſilent and inglorious ſufferings of a jail; yet it had been found, that men were proud to ſtep forward in this moſt ſtormy ſeaſon, when ſuch terrible examples of legal vengeance had been held up before them to plead the ancient rights of their country, to unmask the infamy, intrigue, and murderous projects of adminiſtration, and according to the principles of the pureſt benevolence, to aſſert the liberty of the whole human race. The preſent times bore a ſtrong and marked reſemblance to thoſe terrific ages when prieſts held their dominion over the minds and conſciences of men, and when they endeavoured to eſtabliſh the reign of intolerance and orthodoxy amidſt flakes of fire, and ſtreams of human blood. All hiſtory had evinced, that every attempt to curb and bridle the expanſion of the human mind had been ineffectual; it had evinced, that opinions, though ſmothered for a time, burſt forth with redoubled fury, and were victorious over power; it had evinced the triumph of reaſon and truth over prejudice and ſuperſtition, and that liberty, whether of opinion or perſon, however ſlow in its progreſs, had uniformly moved forward towards its deſtined goal; and that even, at this moment, the interruptions which had been oppoſed to it in our own country, although they might be injurious to individuals, would finally obtain, confirm, and eſtabliſh the rights of the people. Conſcious of their uprightneſs, the friends of freedom had perſevered in their noble cauſe, unappalled by the influence of ſpies and informers, and by the threats of a corrupt, a crazy, and wicked adminiſtration. In ſo doing, they had acted in perfect conformity to the principles of virtue, without which no man could be a friend to his country, and a lover of mankind. Its eſſence conſiſted in the regulation of our conduct by ſuch moral axioms as are beſt calculated to promote the general happineſs of our fellow-creatures; and as it frequently happened, that the happineſs of the individual ſtood in direct oppoſition to that of the public, it is the perfection of virtue in individuals to ſacrifice their own happineſs to that of the public. A man, in poſſeſſion of this virtuous principle, feels

delight

delight whilſt actually burning in the brazen bull of Phalaris; and ſuch, he truſted, was the actuating principle of thoſe generous patriots, who are become willing victims of the moſt barbarous and ſavage ſentences that ever had been pronounced in Britain; who had made a glorious ſtand againſt arbitrary power, and who broke looſe from the fondeſt endearments of human life, in the hope of redeeming their loſt country from the fangs of a dark and brooding prejudice, and from the horrors and turpitude of an ignominious ſlavery.

"It was the tyranny of the Britiſh government which drove William Penn, with the philoſophic people called Quakers, to the delectable regions of Penſylvania, where, by toleration, induſtry, and permanent credit, they revived the ſimplicity of the primitive ages of ſociety. It was the ſame tyranny which has driven into voluntary exile, or forced by law into baniſhment, the moſt virtuous of men, the firſt of philoſophers, the moſt exalted and courageous band of patriots that ever honoured the ſoil of Britain. Among the former Joſeph Prieſtly, one of the moſt profound philoſophers of the age, and moſt meek and amiable of citizens, claims the ſad pre-eminence; and among the latter, ſtand the names of thoſe perſecuted patriots, in whoſe behalf we are now about to addreſs the executive magiſtrate of our country—a noble and a generous band, whoſe ſufferings do not claim our pity, becauſe they boil up our rage; whoſe ſentences diſgraced thoſe who pronounced them, not thoſe on whom they were pronounced; whoſe condition is enviable, becauſe honourable, and to the whole of whoſe opinions and conduct, no good man, or honeſt citizen, can give one diſſentient voice! In times like theſe, when a man is mocked and inſulted, becauſe he bears the name of a patriot, an epithet once honoured by the people of England; at a time when thoſe who have the courage and magnanimity not to flatter their country, are deſerted, betrayed and perſecuted, what honours are ſufficient for thoſe who thunder truth againſt tyranny? What diſgrace ought not to await thoſe timid beings, thoſe *negative* patriots, who keep aloof from the ſcene of action, and riot on their country's wrongs? When our nation ſhall be regenerated, theſe perſecuted men will wear civic crowns. In the political, as in the moral world, the friend who appears to ſoothe our diſtreſſes, excites our eſteem; and he who, in calamitous times that try men's ſouls, ſacrifices intereſt, friends and home, in order to ſave his ſinking country, merits well, not only of every Briton, but of all mankind, and even of the government under which he lives.

"Fellow citizens, the day is at length arrived, when fanaticiſm and ſuperſtition, deprived of their tinſel trappings, and ex-

poſed, in their native uglineſs, to the view of mankind, ſlink ſcow'ling back to the cave of obſcurity; there I hope they will for ever remain. The energy of Engliſhmen will no longer endure this ſtrange uproar of injuſtice. I truſt my countrymen are ſick of religious and political impoſture; and that their deciſive and manly conduct will command, in an imperious tone which will take no denial, not a melioration of theſe enormous abuſes, which would be to compromiſe with injuſtice; but I truſt they will demand the annihilation of corruptions and abuſes, and a reſtitution of the original rights of human nature. I aſk of our governors, this plain queſtion, Is it better that the people ſhould be in a conſtant ſtate of ſtupidity, than that they ſhould be ſometimes turbulent? Miniſters of ſtate, if ye mean to be wicked, ſuffer the people to write and ſpeak; you will find men corrupt enough to ſerve you according to your evil deſires, and who will improve you in the art of Sejanus. If you mean to be good, permit them to write, you will find ſome honeſt men, who will improve you in the art of a Turgot. How many things are ye ſtill ignorant of, before you can become great either in good or in evil. I ſee no glory, no advantage, no pleaſure, no ſafety, in any man reigning as a Sultan over ſlaves. Such a horrid preeminence tarniſhes the luſtre of the moſt exalted ſtation. It is, beſides, precarious, for Sultans are frequently depoſed, and vengeance wreaked upon them.

" I need not invite you, fellow citizens, to feel for any human being who ſuffers, much leſs need I ſolicit your approof of the preſent meaſure, after the general teſtimony of ſatisfaction you have given of it. You are too enlightened to need the aid of any inſtruction from me, and your underſtandings are too much awakened to require that your paſſions ſhould be played upon. Whilſt the unerring tribunal of poſterity ſhall condemn, with ſcorn and deriſion, with execration and diſguſt, thoſe inhuman beings who have been the cauſes of ſuch unexampled and inhuman ſeverity, our perſecuted brethren will obtain a verdict of honour and glory. I may venture to ſay, that, beloved by the preſent age, future ages ſhall heap around their monuments trophies of undying fame; and an exaſperated and repentant people ſhall enrol their names in the volume of hiſtory, which records alſo the names of Sidney, Hampden, and Locke!"

" The following reſolutions were then read three times over, and, with the exception of one or two perſons, were unanimouſly adopted:

1. " That the people being the true and only ſource of government, the freedom of ſpeaking and writing upon any ſubject cannot be denied to the members of a free government, without offering the groſſeſt inſult to the majeſty of the people.

2. " That

2. " That therefore the condemnation of citizens Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Margarot, and Gerald, to tranſportation, for expoſing the corruptions of the Britiſh government, was an act better ſuited to the maxims of a deſpotic than a free government.

3. " That the addreſs which has now been read, be preſented to the King, in behalf of the above perſecuted patriots."

" On the ſecond reſolution being propoſed, an hiſs was heard from different parts of the meeting, in conſequence of one or two perſons holding up their hats againſt it; on obſerving which, H. Yorke thus addreſſed the meeting:

" FELLOW-CITIZENS,

" As your chairman, I call you to order. As an individual I muſt obſerve, that this hiſſing is repugnant to the principle of toleration or freedom, which we wiſh to ſee eſtabliſhed. We have this moment read and given our aſſent to, an Addreſs to the King in favour of liberty of opinion; let it not be ſaid, that we are the firſt to violate that liberty in others, which we claim for ourſelves. Opinions will always vary, even amongſt the wiſeſt and beſt of men. We are bound, therefore, to ſhew tenderneſs to the opinions of others, and compaſſion even to their prejudices. Let our enemies ſee that we conſecrate by our example, what we deſire to ſee eſtabliſhed as a principle. Hiſſes do not convince; they tend only to irritate the minds, and to beget the ill-will of our fellow-citizens; let us, on the contrary, confront them with the weapons of reaſon and truth, the only logic of liberal minds. Every thing which has a tendency to ſtir up the paſſions without awakening the underſtanding, is unbecoming of freemen, or of men who would be free."

" Theſe well-timed obſervations had the good effect of preventing any further ſigns of intolerance, and the utmoſt decorum prevailed throughout the conduct of the buſineſs.

" It was next moved, ' that a *Petition* be preſented to the Houſe of Commons, for a Reform in the Repreſentation of the People in Parliament:' but ſo marked was the diſapprobation given by the whole meeting to this meaſure, that not one ſingle perſon *ſeconded* the motion, but a moſt profound ſilence, interrupted only by a few murmurs, was obſerved: upon which Henry Yorke again roſe, and addreſſed the meeting in an animated ſpeech of an hour long, and of which it is impoſſible for us to give our readers a juſt conception. He took a general view of the Britiſh conſtitution, and ſtated its moſt prominent defects; among which the want of a perfect national repreſentation was the moſt glaring. He dwelt a conſiderable time upon this ſubject, and then proceeded to take a rapid ſurvey of

the exertions which had been made at different periods, and by different perſons, to promote the cauſe of Parliamentary Reform.

" He obſerved, that the ſubject was become a mere bugbear, employed to deceive the people, and worked upon as an engine to raiſe into power, needy and ambitious men; that the very ſame men, who, in oppoſition, had declared, that it was the only meaſure of ſaving the country from ruin, were the firſt to reprobate and ſcout the meaſure of Reform when they were in power. From the corruptions of the Britiſh government, parties had been generated, which, in their route to power, had convulſed and plundered the empire. Under the diſtinctions of names, principles had been forgotten; and for the ſake of leaders, whom the people had fooliſhly idolized, the machine of government rolled on amidſt the feuds and contentions of party. Eternally the peace of our country had been diſturbed by the rancour and animoſities of factions, and the people, inſtead of turning themſelves to correct the groſs evils which exiſted in it, had ever been the tools of baſe and deſigning men, and ſeemed prepared to whet and ſharpen their ſwords one againſt another.

" It was now high time that the people ſhould lay aſide leaders, diſcard factions, and *act for themſelves.* He ſtrongly inforced theſe principles, and then entered into a compleat detail of the ancient conſtitution as eſtabliſhed by Alfred, which he proved to be at this time totally defaced, if not loſt. He then purſued the gradual decline of popular liberty in England, from the anarchy which was the conſequence of Daniſh and Norman invaſion; and taking a general ſketch of our hiſtory, ſo far as it was connected with the ſubject of popular repreſentation, he made ſome ſtrong and pointed remarks on the revolution of 1688, the object of which, he ſaid, was not, could not be anſwered, unleſs annual parliaments and general ſuffrage were reſtored. For this he had the authority of Lord Somers, who drew up the Declaration of Rights, and who was promoted by William III. for his popular exertions at that memorable epoch.

" In order to prove that the revolution had not correſponded with the expectations of the people, no ſooner was the Prince of Orange eſtabliſhed on the throne of England, than all ideas of the ancient mode of annual parliaments were effaced, and the triennial act was paſſed in the very face of that revolution, and in direct contradiction to its principles; for the revolution, at leaſt, ſo far as it reſpected the people, was not intended to be a compromiſe between the King and the ariſtocracy, for the joint inheritance of the people, but to eſtabliſh on unequivocal principles the right of the people to govern themſelves, and to recal thoſe delegated powers which they had entruſted to their ſervants

vants for this purpose, when they were either abused, or neglected to exercise them. If the revolution were not a revolution for the people, it was no revolution at all, but a conspiracy of a few ennobled oppressors against the liberties and happiness of the many. But if it were designed to comprehend the people, and its end has been perverted, or purposely laid aside, the people are not warranted in *petitioning*, but are justified in *demanding as a right*, agreeably to the tone of language used in the Declaration of Rights, the restitution of annual parliaments, and the establishment of universal suffrage. But the shock which was given to the stability of these principles, was most infamously flagrant, by the enacting of the septennial act, in the reign of George I. If the act of parliament in the reign of Henry VI. erased from the roll of citizenship some of the best members of the community, the enacting of the triennial and septennial acts, filled up to the brim the measure of governmental iniquity, and poured forth the waters of bitterness throughout our land."

"FELLOW-CITIZENS,

"Enough of precedent. The human race has long been roling down the tide of ages neglected, unpitied and oppressed. It is high time that the devious course of human policy should not be left to the uncertain issue of storms and of elemental wars; but that the machine of state should be guided by the polar star of reason alone, which is never seen but when the majesty of the people is resplendent. What is beneficial in the example of ages, we ought to reserve with caution. What is injurious, and what is only *tolerably* competent to answer the common purposes of society, ought to be abolished. We insult ourselves, when we abjectly distrust the powers which nature has given us; nor ought we passively to acquiesce in institutions, which, though injurious, may be preferable to those that may be endured by others. We insult ourselves, when we foolishly balance between *tolerable vices* and *positive good*; between unnatural systems, and novel, untried, but just maxims. The human mind is progressive; so is the social mind. That the one therefore should remain stationary, amid the rapid course of the other towards perfection, is a prejudice as unnatural as it is injurious to the happiness of man. The governments of Europe present no delectable symmetry to the contemplation of the philosopher—no enjoyment to the satisfaction of the citizen. A vast, deformed and cheerless structure, the frightful abortion of haste and usurpation, presents to the eye of the beholder no systematic arrangement—no harmonious organization of society. Chance, haste, faction, tyranny, rebellion, massacre, and the hot, inclement action of human passions, have begotten them.

Utility

Utility has never been the end of their inſtitution, but partial intereſt has been its fruit. Such abominable and abſurd forms; ſuch jarring and diſſonant principles, which chance has ſcattered over the earth, cry aloud for ſomething more natural, more pure, and more calculated to promote the happineſs of mankind. Experience muſt regulate the mechaniſm of government, by which I mean not a narrow and confined, but a liberal and enlightened experience, which, hearing without paſſion or prejudice, the teſtimony of ages and nations, collects from its general principles, to further the progreſs of civilization. It is in hiſtory that we are to dive for thoſe rich materials of legiſlative experiment, which are to ameliorate the ſocial order, and repair thoſe breaches which injuſtice has long ſince made. But if this experience be found inadequate to the purpoſe of alleviating human miſeries; if it afford nothing but the melancholy proſpect of outrageous deſpotiſm—of exceſſive vices on the part of the governing, and debaſement and vaſſalage on that of the governed; if it aſcribe the commotions of ſuffering countries to the deſigns of factions, and not to principles; if it ſhew, that in conſequence of national ignorance, after the firſt ebullitions of revolt, they have ſat down in a torpid calm, and borne with uſurpations ſtill heavier than thoſe by which they were rouſed to arms—it muſt be granted that this experience is important, becauſe it teaches the ſuffering nations of the preſent day, in what manner to prepare their combuſtible ingredients, and humaniſts in what manner to enkindle them, ſo as to produce with effect, that grand political exploſion, which at the ſame time that it buries deſpotiſm, already convulſive and agoniſing in ruins, may raiſe up the people to the dignity and ſublime grandeur of freedom.

"To effect this juſt and uſeful purpoſe, *revolution of ſentiment* muſt precede revolution of government and manners. The popular energies muſt be excited, that the popular voice may be felt and heard. The people muſt grow wiſe, in order that the people may rule. It is ſaid we preach anarchy; but what is anarchy but the eſtabliſhment of confuſion on the wreck of popular opinion? It is ſaid we are Levellers; but thoſe are Levellers who would wiſh to reduce man to the condition of the brute, guided by paſſion and uninfluenced by reaſon. Thoſe are Levellers whoſe hands are dipped in the public ſpoils; who aſſert impunity for crimes, and inviolability of perſons; who would make humanity take a retrogade motion; who would palſy the arm of juſtice, and defeat the end of equal laws. We have ever diſclaimed the fooliſh idea of *levelling property*; becauſe our own property, the fruit of our labour, or of our talents, might, by the example, be expoſed to the invaſion of the

the firſt intruder. It were well, if thoſe who confound juſtice with crimes, would conſider that the poor man's property, little as it is, is as precious to him, as is the wealthy ſtock of the rich man. It were well, if feeling the force of this principle, the ariſtocracy would unite with us in the cauſe in which we are embarked. Property, they ſay, is ſacred. Is not, then, the property of the poor man as ſacred as that of the rich; and ought it to be filched or forced from him without his conſent, any more than that of the rich man? Can thoſe who do not reſpect the property of others, expect others to reſpect their property? We wiſh to exalt, not to level. We wiſh to better the condition of the wretched; to equalize men under the influence of law, but to give to merit, induſtry, talents, patrimony, virtue, their proper weight and correſpondent dignity in the ſocial order. Are we, then, ungovernable, becauſe we reject miſ-government? Are we ungrateful, becauſe we defend our liberty and property againſt thoſe who ought to reſpect them? Are we rebels in maintaining our violaied laws, againſt thoſe who are open rebels to laws, and who ſet themſelves above thoſe laws which they ought to have venerated? I know, that in all ages of the world, people who would not be oppreſſed, have been reckoned ungovernable, by men who are, or who would be oppreſſors. I know that the enemies of oppreſſion have always been ſtigmatized as enemies of government. I know that it is ſeditious to blame the exceſſes of power, and inſolent to mention the inſolence of thoſe who abuſe power. I know that it is ſedition to diſtinguiſh between public right and public wrong, between government and tyranny. Nor is it enough to acknowledge all *good* government to be irreſiſtable; but the *worſt*, and the *abuſe* of the beſt, muſt be irreſiſtable alſo. I know, that to complain of tyranny is *faction*, and to throw it off *rebellion*; but they who oppreſs are the greateſt *rebels*, and for the oppreſſed to turn upon them, is but to *reſiſt* rebellion—it is but to do a juſt and natural action. Whoever violates the laws of reaſon, equity and nature, whatever ſtation or name he may bear, is a *rebel*, ſubject to laws againſt tyrants and rebellion. Tyrants, therefore, and oppreſſors, are the higheſt and moſt conſummate rebels in the world—capital traitors to God and man, and puniſhable by all the laws of God and man. Amid all the abſurdities and chimeras of Paganiſm, it was never believed that tyranny was warranted by Heaven. It was never believed that the bloody Caligula was the vicegerent of God, and that the worſt of men had a commiſſion from Heaven to oppreſs the human race. It was never believed that murder, rapine and miſ-rule, were government, and that lawleſs and bloody-crowned robbers were governors divinely appointed. It

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was never believed that ſociety had no remedy againſt devouring luſt and the raging ſword, which were deſtroying all the ends of ſociety, and even ſociety itſelf. Such indignities to God and man, were never broached by Pagans; they never propagated doctrines which would have turned men into ideots, deſtitute of reflection and feeling; into beaſts of burthen, and beaſts of ſacrifice; turned Heaven into Hell; human ſociety into a chaos of blood and carcaſes; and the earth into a place of torments. It never entered into the heart of a Greek or a Roman, nor into any heart that felt the ſentiments of virtue and humanity, that it was unlawful to defend nature; a crime to ward off murder, barbarity and deſolation; and an impiety to do the moſt godlike action which can be done on this ſide Heaven, that of diſarming tyrants, and of ſaving our country from periſhing. Government is doubtleſs a ſacred thing, and juſtly claims our reverence and duty; but when government is general oppreſſion; when havoc, ſpoil and perſecution prevail, to the deſtruction of all who do well; when law and juſtice are baniſhed, and military deſpotiſm triumphs; when property is attacked and ſeized without the conſent of its owner, and lives are wantonly deſtroyed?—Is this government too? If it be, tell me what is not government? I do not think, in an age like this, that the people of this, or any country, can ever be ſo ſunk or deadened by oppreſſion, but that repeated provocation will raiſe a ſpirit amongſt them capable of accompliſhing the greateſt projects. Even the moſt profeſſed and degraded ſlaves, the people of Turkey, often rouſe themſelves, and caſting their proud rider to the earth, trample him to death. A little ſpark often kindles a great flame, and a flame ſoon ſpreads to a conflagration. An ignorant nation rouſed to aſſert its liberties, will be mad and furious; for, when men are uſed like beaſts, they will act like like beaſts! But, when an enlightened people, knowing their rights, are reduced to a ſtate of degradation, they will know that their condition cannot be worſe, but, by their own efforts, their condition muſt be better. An ignorant people, incited by repeated injury to ſhake off the load of injuſtice, will riſk unſeen evils and calamities—will risk even a civil war, to be revenged on their oppreſſors. Such was the temper of the Romans upon the revolt of Sacrovir—they even exulted in it, and, in hatred to Tiberius, wiſhed ſucceſs to the public enemy. Such were the injured people of Spain, who, when the Romans came, joyfully received them as their deliverers from the tyrannous yoke of Carthage. But an enlightened people will never ſully the victories of patriotiſm by ſuch irregular conduct. Revenge will never be adopted as a principle. Peace will actuate their demeanour, and they will glory in awaiting the ſlow proceſs of univerſal information, as

a prelude

a prelude to univerſal emancipation, rather than tarniſh the career of liberty, by involving their country in ſcenes of terror, waſte and depredation. Oppreſſed nature will, at a proper ſeaſon, depart from paſſive principle; and, ſhould an attempt be made to wreſt what remains of liberty from us, I truſt all men will concur to vindicate their violated rights—for, if the attempt be ſuffered once, it will be often repeated. A few repetitions create a habit, and habit will claim preſcription and right. For governors to be omnipotent, the race of man muſt be extinct; and no argument for deſtroying anarchy can be uſed, but what is full as ſtrong for the overthrow of tyranny. It is difficult to reſtore public affairs, when once diſconcerted, to their former ſteady principle—numbers will engage in the corruption, and will try every art and power to ſupport it, and they will continue to do ſo, until nature, which is always uppermoſt in man, ſigns their tragical doom!

"CITIZENS,

"I repeat my former aſſertion. Go on, as you hitherto have done, in the culture of reaſon. Diſſeminate throughout the whole of your country, that knowledge which is ſo neceſſary to man's happineſs, and which you have yourſelves acquired. Teach your children, and your countrymen, the ſacred leſſons of virtue, which are the foundations of all human polity. Teach them to reſpect themſelves, and to love their country. Teach them to do unto all men, as they would that they ſhould do unto them, and their love ſhall not be confined to their country, but ſhall extend to the whole human race. When ſuch a revolution of ſentiment ſhall have diſperſed the miſts of prejudice; when, by the inceſſant thunderings from the preſs, the meaneſt cottager of our country ſhall be enlightened, and the ſun of reaſon ſhall ſhine in its fulleſt meridian over us; then the commanding voice of the whole people ſhall *recommend* the five hundred and fifty-eight gentlemen in St. Stephen's Chapel to go about their buſineſs."

"After having concluded the above ſpeech, Henry Yorke obſerved, that as there might be many perſons preſent who came from motives of curioſity, and others who came for a more criminal purpoſe, he ſhould adduce in juſtification of the reaſonings he had employed, the writings of a man, who was the firſt to reduce into a ſyſtem the ſtudy of the Human Underſtanding, and the Principles of Government—he meant John Locke, whoſe excellent diſcourſe on Civil Government he then held in his hand, and from which he read the following extracts:

"No government can have a right to obedience from a people who have not freely conſented to it; which they never can be ſuppoſed to do, till either they are put in a full ſtate of liberty to

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chuſe their government and governors, or at leaſt till they have ſuch ſtanding laws, to which they have, by themſelves or their repreſentatives, given their free conſent, and alſo till they are allowed their due property, which is ſo to be proprietors of what they have, that nobody can take away any part of it without their own conſent, without which, men under any government are not in the ſtate of freemen, but are direct ſlaves under the force of war.

" There is another way whereby governments are diſſolved, and that is, when the legiſlative, or the prince, either of them, act contrary to their truſt. Firſt, the legiſlative acts againſt the truſt repoſed in them, when they endeavour to invade the property of the ſubject, and to make themſelves, or any part of the community, maſters, or arbitrary diſpoſers of the lives, liberties, or fortunes of the people. The reaſon why men enter into ſociety, is the preſervation of their property; and the end why they chuſe and authorize a legiſlative is, that there may be laws made, and rules ſet, as guards and fences to the properties of all the members of the ſociety, to limit the power, and moderate the dominion of every part and member of the ſociety: for ſince it can never be ſuppoſed to be the will of the ſociety, that the legiſlative ſhould have a power to deſtroy that which every one deſigns to ſecure, by entering into ſociety, and for which the people ſubmitted themſelves to legiſlators of their own making; whenever the legiſlators endeavour to take away, and deſtroy the property of the people, or to reduce them to ſlavery under arbitrary power, they put themſelves into a ſtate of war with the people, who are thereupon abſolved from any farther obedience, and are left to the common refuge, which God hath provided for all men, againſt force and violence. Whenever therefore the legiſlative ſhall tranſgreſs this fundamental rule of ſociety, and either by ambition, fear, folly or corruption, endeavour to graſp themſelves, or put into the hands of any other, an abſolute power over the lives, liberties and eſtates of the people; by this breach of truſt they forfeit the power the people had put into their hands for quite contrary ends, and it devolves to the people, who have a right to reſume their original liberty, and, by the eſtabliſhment of a new legiſlative (ſuch as they ſhall think fit) provide for their own ſafety and ſecurity, which is the end for which they are in ſociety. What I have ſaid here, concerning the legiſlative in general, holds true alſo concerning the ſupreme executor, who having a double truſt put in him, both to have a part in the legiſlative and the ſupreme execution of the law, acts againſt both, when he goes about to ſet up his own arbitrary will as the law of the ſociety. He acts alſo contrary to his truſt, when he either employs the force,

force, treasure and offices of the society, to corrupt the representatives, and gain them to his purposes; or openly pre-engages the electors, and prescribes to their choice, such, whom he has, by solicitations, threats, promises, or otherwise, won to his designs; and employs them to bring in such, who have promised before-hand what to vote, and what to enact. Thus to regulate candidates and electors, and new-model the ways of election, what is it but to cut up the government by the roots, and poison the very fountain of public security? for the people having reserved to themselves the choice of their representatives, as the fence to their properties, could do it for no other end, but that they might always be freely chosen, and so chosen, freely act, and advise, as the necessity of the commonwealth, and the public good should upon examination, and mature debate, be judged to require. This, those who give their votes before they hear the debate, and have weighed the reasons on all sides, are not capable of doing. To prepare such an assembly as this, and endeavour to set up the declared abettors of his own will, for the true representatives of the people, and the law-makers of the society, is certainly as great a breach of trust, and as perfect a declaration of a design to subvert the government, as is possible to be met with. To which, if one shall add rewards and punishments visibly employed to the same end, and all the arts of perverted law made use of to take off and destroy all that stand in the way of such a design, and will not comply and consent to betray the liberties of their country, it will be past doubt what is doing. What power they ought to have in the society, who thus employ it contrary to the trust went along with it in its first institution, is easy to determine; and one cannot but see, that he who has once attempted any such thing as this, cannot any longer be trusted.

"To this perhaps it will be said, that the people being ignorant, and always discontented, to lay the foundation of government in the unsteady opinion and uncertain humour of the people, is to expose it to certain ruin; and no government will be able long to subsist, if the people may set up a new legislative, whenever they take offence at the old one. To this I answer, Quite the contrary. People are not so easily got out of their old forms, as some are apt to suggest. They are hardly to be prevailed with to amend the acknowledged faults in the frame they have been accustomed to.

"But it will be said, this hypothesis lays a ferment for frequent rebellion. To which I answer, first, No more than any other hypothesis; for, when the people are made miserable, and find themselves exposed to the ill usage of arbitrary power, cry up their governors as much as you will for sons of Jupiter;

let them be ſacred and divine, deſcended, or authoriſed from heaven; give them out for whom or what you pleaſe, the ſame will happen. The people generally ill-treated, and contrary to right, will be ready upon any occaſion to eaſe themſelves of a burthen which ſits heavy upon them. They will wiſh and ſeek for the opportunity, which in the change, weakneſs and accidents of human affairs, ſeldom delays long to offer itſelf. He muſt have lived but a little while in the world, who has not ſeen examples of this in his time; and he muſt have read very little, who cannot produce examples of it in all ſorts of government in the world. Secondly, I anſwer, that ſuch revolutions happen not upon every little miſmanagement in public affairs. Great miſtakes in the ruling part, many wrong and inconvenient laws, and all the ſlips of human frailty, will be borne by the people, without mutiny or murmur; but, if a long train of abuſes, prevarications and artifices, *all tending the ſame way*, make the deſign viſible to the people, and they cannot but *feel* what they lie under, and *ſee* whither they are going, it is not to be wondered at, that they ſhould then *rouſe themſelves*, and endeavour to put the rule into ſuch hands which may ſecure to them the ends for which government was at firſt erected; and without which, ancient names and ſpecious forms, are ſo far from being better, that they are much worſe than a ſtate of nature, or pure anarchy—the inconveniencies being all as great and as near, but the remedy farther off and more difficult."

" After reading the above, Henry Yorke continued," ' I muſt obſerve to you, that for this diſcourſe on Civil Government, John Locke was preferred by King William, to the important place of Maſter of the Mint, and was univerſally beloved and honoured at Court. This book was generally conſidered at the time it came out, to have been a more powerful means of ſecuring the King upon his throne, than even the arms of Holland and Britain; and it has contributed perhaps, more than any other publication, to ſecure the preſent Royal Family upon the throne of theſe kingdoms. Although it was written a century ago, it was a principal in eſtabliſhing the American Revolution; it has conſpired the overthrow of deſpotiſm in France; and, before long, its principles will have driven deſpotiſm from the face of Europe. To ſuch a book there can be no exception; and I think I cannot better ſerve the King, or my fellow-citizens, than in bringing it before the public. I underſtand it is not to be purchaſed, becauſe I am told miniſtry have bought them all up, or they were purchaſed to be ſent to America; but I will defeat their ends; I will extract its ſpirit, and give it you in a ſmall compaſs, and as cheap as the preſs can print it.'—(*Loud and reiterated applauſes.*)

" The

" The following reſolutions were next read and unanimouſly approved of, amidſt the loudeſt applauſes.

4. " That in every country where the people have no ſhare in their government, *taxation* is *tyranny*.

5. " That therefore a government is tyrannical or free, in proportion as the people are equally or unequally repreſented.

6. " Convinced of this truth, it is the opinion of this Meeting, that the people ought to demand as a *right*, and not petition as a *favour* for univerſal repreſentation.

7. " That therefore we will petition the Houſe of Commons no more on this ſubject."

" After which Henry Yorke, according to a requiſition which had been made to him a few days before, preſented the following Petition to the King for the total and unqualified emancipation of the Negro Slaves. He prefaced the Petition with a moſt eloquent and animated ſpeech on the ſubject; but from the fatigue which he had undergone from the preceding part of the buſineſs, it was impoſſible for him to carry to his intended length, a diſcourſe which had already drawn tears and ſighs from a great part of his auditory. As we underſtand he means to make an appeal to the public on the ſubject, in which, of courſe, will be included the obſervations which he made at this meeting, we truſt no apology will be neceſſary for our omitting to give any ſketch of them here."

" TO THE KING.

" SIRE,

" Juſtice is eternal. Unconfined by time, perſon, circumſtance, or place, it ought to form the baſis of all legitimate government, and the motive of all human intercourſe.

" As intellectual beings, we conceive it to be a ſacred obligation, impoſed on us by the Supreme Being, *to think for ourſelves*. In conformity to which principle, we are naturally led to deſire the extenſion of knowledge throughout the world. As we ourſelves *feel*, we are naturally led to ſympathiſe with thoſe who *feel* alſo. Wiſhing to be rid of the weight of oppreſſion under which *we* groan, we are induced to compaſſionate thoſe who groan alſo, and to deſire an alleviation of their ſufferings.

" On our *own* account we have repeatedly petitioned the Lower Houſe of Parliament—but petitioned in vain. We are weary of the practice. We are diſguſted to hear the hallowed name of liberty made the ſport of corrupt placemen; and we are ſhocked to ſee, that in the practice of legiſlation, humanity is but a name. We are now petitioning, not for ourſelves, but for others;—for thoſe, whoſe ſorrows harrow up the feeling ſoul, and terrify the Chriſtian heart; for thoſe, who are the

victims

victims of avarice, cruelty, rapine, immorality, and luxury — We have the ſanction of one of your Majeſty's ſons, in declaring, that the Negro Slaves, in the Weſt Indies, are full as happy as the lower claſſes of people are in England. We employ ſo great an authority in juſtification of our petition; and conſidering, that we who ſupplicate your Majeſty are generally men of that deſcription, we are bound to conclude, that if our African brethren be no happier than we are, they muſt be wretched indeed. For we groan, Sire, under great and grievous burthens, and we ſee no proſpect of redreſs before our eyes, nor have we a hope that our miſeries will ſhortly end. Our wives and little ones are ſtarving, and ourſelves unable to provide them with the common neceſſaries of life, are ſunk in ſorrow, and compelled to join in their bitter agony and deep deſpair. But the contemplation of our diſtreſſed ſtate becomes additionally alarming, at the certainty of having more burthens accumulated upon us, which may be productive of conſequences injurious to the cauſe of humanity, and fatal even to the intereſts of government itſelf. Such, Sire, is our ſtate, and ſuch, from the compariſon drawn by the Duke of Clarence, is the ſtate of our Negro brethren in the colonies. But in addition to the teſtimony of ſo high an authority, we have a volume of reſpectable evidence delivered into the Houſe of Commons, which proves, beyond contradiction, that our condition is by no means ſo deplorable as that of the wretched Africans. They are SLAVES;—under which odious epithet, man is reduced to the condition of the brute, and is deprived of a country, and of the tendereſt ties of human life. The rights of a ſocial being are denied to him, and every principle of moral obligation is deſtroyed. The liberty, the perſon, and the induſtry of the Slave, are at the diſpoſal of the maſter. Far different is our ſtate; and although from not being repreſented in the Houſe of Commons, our property may be taken from us without our conſent—although from the erection of barracks throughout our country, and from the unconſtitutional introduction of foreign troops into it—from the encouragement given to a ſyſtem of ſtate inquiſition, and from the violent meaſures employed to wreſt the liberty of the preſs from the hands of the ſubject—we cannot call ourſelves FREE men in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word. Yet our lives cannot be taken from us, but for crimes previouſly defined and declared puniſhable by law; nor can our perſons be wantonly ſported with, to gratify the luſt, the avarice, or the cruelty of overſeers and ſlave-drivers. So far we have undoubtedly the advantage over the Negro Slaves; and we cannot help thinking, in juſtice to the Royal Perſonage who drew the reſemblance, that he reaſoned more from our actual condition,

tion, than from what we were, and what we ought to be—a free, a happy, and contented people.

"Quitting, therefore, the compariſon which has been drawn between the poor of this country and the Negro Slaves in the colonies, we beſeech your Majeſty to take into your gracious conſideration our Petition in their behalf. We are happy to congratulate your Majeſty, that we not only cultivate reaſon ourſelves, but we are daily exerting ourſelves to diffuſe its influence univerſally. Our ſucceſs, Sire, has been wonderful!—We glory in announcing to your Majeſty, that, by the uſe of that reaſon, we have diſcovered that ſociety is made for man's happineſs; that liberty is the firſt and beſt gift of GOD to man—which it would be impious not to aſſert, and ſacrilege to ſurrender. In the names, therefore, of Liberty, of Juſtice, and of Humanity, and for the ſake of thoſe, whoſe cries of 'Mercy! Mercy, Maſter!' are ringing eternally in our ears, we petition, we implore your Majeſty, to put an end to that deviliſh commerce in human fleſh; which is a thouſand times more abominable in the eyes of GOD and of man, than the practice of ſelling human fleſh in Germany—becauſe accompanied with acts more profoundly cruel, and more deliberately inhuman. The voice of an immenſe majority of the whole nation has invoked the humanity of the Houſe of Commons for the partial abolition of injuſtice—but in vain. It was told, that the Slave Trade was inhuman, impolitic, and unchriſtian. Eighty-eight only, out of 558, voted agreeably to the will of the nation for its abolition!!!—Did the remaining 470 mean thereby to ſanction inhumanity and impolicy, and to oppoſe the Holy Chriſtian Religion, the fundamental maxim of which is, 'Do unto all men as you would they ſhould do unto you.' One melancholy fact, however, it has proved, that the ſenſe of a majority of the people was not regarded in that Houſe, and that Juſtice and Humanity are of no conſideration, when put in competition with avarice, wealth and power. But what makes humanity more than ſhudder, one of the members of that Houſe, who had his leg bit off by a ſhark, and whoſe life was ſaved by poor negro, declared, that he ſhould vote *againſt* the abolition of the Slave Trade, becauſe the Negroes contumed the refuſe of our fiſheries. Such marked ingratitude, ſuch unfeeling barbarity, publicly avowed in the Britiſh Senate, inſtead of ſending the author to priſon for an abuſe of ſpeech, met with repeated applauſes. And what grieves us more, we find, that this very man has been appointed, by your Majeſty's miniſters, to ſuperintend the proviſionment of the army now carrying on the dreadful work of human ſlaughter on the blood-ſtained fields of Flanders.

"So

" So many bars having been thrown in the way to prevent the abolition of the Slave Trade, by thoſe unfeeling barbarians, who, unblushingly, call themſelves Slave Dealers, Weſt India Merchants and Planters; ſo many obſtacles having been oppoſed to the reclamations of humanity in favour of the wretched—we petition your Majeſty, in whoſe hands is mercy, to reccommend, or command, the Britiſh Senate immediately to aboliſh, in the fulleſt manner, and without any qualification, Negro Slavery in the Weſt India Iſlands—becauſe it is inſulting to human nature in an age of reaſon and philoſophy—becauſe it tends to open wide the flood-gates of patronage, corruption, and dependance; inflames and ſtimulates the ſordid paſſion of avarice, which is ever ready to feed ambition, to furniſh the firſt means of engaging in ruinous, bloody, and deſtructive wars, by which courtiers are enriched and nations beggared—becauſe its abolition will redeem the national honor, too long ſullied by the trade of blood—becauſe it will promote the cauſe of liberty, which is ſtriding apace throughout all the regions of the world—becauſe it will avenge peacefully ages of wrongs done to our negro brethren—becauſe it will give to induſtry its juſt latitude—becauſe it will put an end to injuſtice, impolicy, cruelty, avarice, havock, ſpoil, blood—becauſe it will cover a multitude of national ſins, and in the ſtead of national faſts, which are too frequently the dreadful preludes of blood and ſorrow, it will be a national feaſt, grateful to GOD, and pleaſing to man. It will extend the empire of benevolence, the brotherhood of the human race, and immortalize your Majeſty's reign, for having eſtabliſhed, on their pureſt principles, the claims of Juſtice, and the Rights of Man."

" The above petition and the following reſolutions were received with unbounded applauſe, and without one diſſenting voice, except that the word *humbly*, which was ſeveral times uſed in the petition, was objected to, and on being put to the vote, was unanimouſly agreed to be expunged.

8. " That we feel ourſelves not only aſhamed, but indignant, that the Britiſh government ſhould be actively engaged in the traffic and ſlavery of human beings.

9. " That as no compromiſe can be made between freedom and tyranny, between virtue and vice, juſtice and injuſtice, we think it our duty not to confine ourſelves to the mere abolition of the Slave Trade, which would be ſacrificing a right to a convenience, but to petition for the total emancipation of the Negro Slaves.

10. " That the petition to the King, now read, for the total and unqualified abolition of Negro ſlavery, is approved.

11. " That a congratulatory letter be tranſmitted to Thomas Walker,

Walker, of Mancheſter, on his victory over Church and King aſſociations, and that the letter now read be approved.

12. " That the above petition and addreſs be tranſcribed on parchment; and that they be forwarded to Earl Stanhope, and that he be requeſted to preſent the Addreſs and Petition to his Majeſty.

13. " That the thanks of this meeting are given to all thoſe Juries, who, in theſe inquiſitorial times, have acted like freemen in acquitting thoſe of their fellow-citizens who have been brought to trial for ſpeaking what they *thought*.

14. " That the proceedings of this meeting be publicly advertiſed, and tranſmitted to the friends of liberty, of juſtice, and of humanity, throughout the kingdom.

15. " That a voluntary ſubſcription be immediately opened for defraying the expences attending theſe proceedings.

16. " That the committee of the Sheffield Conſtitutional Society be deſired to ſee that the above reſolutions be carried into effect; and that they prepare an Addreſs to the Britiſh Nation, explanatory of the motives which have induced this meeting to adopt the reſolution of no more petitioning the Houſe of Commons on the ſubject of Reform."

" The above reſolutions being paſſed, and a congratulatory letter to Thomas Walker, of Mancheſter, read, on his acquittal from an infamous proſecution at Lancaſter, the meeting was diſſolved.

" Notwithſtanding the largeneſs of the company, ſo great were Henry Yorke's exertions, and ſo cloſe the attention paid to him, that there was ſcarcely a perſon preſent who did not diſtinctly hear: many, indeed, we are told, who were not heretofore remarkable for their liberality of ſentiment, have acknowledged themſelves greatly enlightened by what they heard.—To ſhew the high ſenſe entertained of Henry Yorke's ſervices at this meeting, by the populace, he was no ſooner ſeated in the coach which attended on him, than the horſes were taken from the carriage, and the people drew him through moſt of the public ſtreets in Sheffield, amid the acclamations of thouſands:—which done, after a few admonitory words from the orator, every man went peaceably to his own home."

Mr. Garrow. (To Broomhead.) There was an Addreſs to the Britiſh Nation publiſhed in this book; look at that Addreſs?

A. Yes, this is the Addreſs.

(*The Clerk reads.*)

" *An Addreſs to the Britiſh Nation.*

" FRIENDS and COUNTRYMEN,

" We have this day decided, with the exception of only one diſſentient voice, that the Houſe of Commons ſhall never again be *petitioned* by us, on the ſubject of Parliamentary Reform.

" We owe to the nation, to poſterity, even to foreign countries, and to the government itſelf under which we live, an expoſition of our motives. To the nation we owe this duty, becauſe we are of opinion, that *the will of the majority of the people ſhould be, at all times, the ſupreme law*; and that if the *few* diſſent from the opinion of the *many*, however obligatory the will of the majority may be to them as a rule of action, yet opinion is always free and ſacred, the right of man to enjoy, and the conſcientious duty of man to diffuſe. Under the full conviction of this principle, we feel ourſelves, *at preſent*, the minority, becauſe we are the firſt to agitate the queſtion, and to repel the monſtrous idea of petitioning when our petitions are diſcountenanced by the Houſe of Commons. But, we are numerous—we are many thouſands; and as nothing opens the eyes of men ſo much as their intereſts, we demand, fellow-citizens, nay, we are entitled to it from our numbers, that you lend an attentive ear to the truths we are about to utter, and to the reclamations we are about to make in favour of oppreſſed humanity. Hearken unto our voice, for we think it will ſtrike conviction; attend to our reaſoning, for we know that your applauding ſentiments will give ſolemnity to our meaſures, and conſequence to our example. To poſterity this duty is owing, becauſe they will expect juſtice at our hands, liberty from our exertions, happineſs and peace from the ſucceſs of our cauſe. To foreign countries, becauſe they will then form ſome eſtimate of the degree of confidence which we who live under the Britiſh government repoſe in it; and of the affection, reſpect and obedience, paid by our rulers to the *majeſty of the people*. To the government itſelf, becauſe it will diſcover, in our firm and manly tone of conduct, materials for ſerious and ſolemn debate. It will diſcover that the exerciſe of a power, underived from even magiſterial authority, is totally repugnant to the genius of a legiſlative aſſembly, (which ought to be an emanation from the public will, and therefore obedient to it,) becauſe it has a tendency to looſen the bands of ſubordination, and to weaken that reverence which ſhould always be ſhewn to a government which regards the condition, and fulfils the mandates of its ſovereign, *the people*. It will be taught a leſſon, which is ſanctioned by the teſtimony of both ancient and modern ſtory, that when a government contemns the people, the people will in their turn contemn the government: it will be taught, that when there exiſts a want of confidence between the governors and the governed, confuſion, the worſt of national diſtempers, is the iſſue.

" Our petition was received with the utmoſt indignation by the Houſe of Commons; which was no more than we expected.

We

We knew that the homely truths, we uttered, would be very unwelcome gueſts in that houſe. We never expected that a body in which there were ſo many placemen and penſioners, would liſten to the palpable facts ſtated in that petition; the object of which was to root out injuſtice, and to curb licentiouſneſs and corruption. Nevertheleſs, as we were called upon by our countrymen to unite with them, we thought ourſelves bound to comply with their wiſhes. And although our petition was diſdainfully rejected, becauſe not couched in language ſufficiently polite and reſpectful for the *five hundred and fifty-eight Gentlemen* who ſit as the Houſe of Commons, yet, believe us, *Fellow-citizens*, we are ſtill of opinion, that the matter it contained, was not only juſt and proper, but, we think, that even the language, which gave ſo much offence to the *honorable Gentlemen*, was much too polite and too moderate for us. For, if the Houſe of Commons were the real Repreſentatives of the people, we certainly had a right to *dictate*, and not to *petition*, becauſe they could be conſidered in no other light than as the organs of the public will. And, if they refuſed to obey that will, they would be uſurpers, and not repreſentatives. If, on the contrary, they are not the repreſentatives of the people, what have we to do with them? If they are not our repreſentatives, we cannot be their conſtituents; and to *petition* thoſe who are not our repreſentatives as our repreſentatives, would be a manifeſt abſurdity, if not an inſult and mockery of ourſelves. However, the petition, ſuch as it was, being termed diſreſpectful, was thrown out by a majority of 79, there being 29 only who voted for its being received, and 108 who voted againſt it. Such imperious treatment rather gives *warning*, than ſtrikes *terror*. The abuſe of repreſentation can never come in the place of a rule, for no legal power can be derived from injury or injuſtice. On this ground alone, therefore, we are juſtified in preſerving a ſullen ſilence in reſpect to the Houſe of Commons. For, if grievances, abuſes, complaints, and truth, are to be diſcarded from that Houſe, becauſe not dreſſed in a *gentleman-like* language, how are we, plain mechanics, ever to obtain redreſs, who are not *gentlemen*, and who are, conſequently, ignorant of thoſe polite and courtly expreſſions which are neceſſary to gain a hearing in that Houſe. We are ignorant of the art of diſplaying truth by halves, and, as we love plain dealing ourſelves, we deteſt hypocriſy in others, and pity thoſe who would wiſh us to follow their example.—We ſaid to the Houſe of Commons, we are wronged and aggrieved—will you right us, and redreſs our grievances, or will you not? If you will, we ſhall be ſatisfied; if you will not, we ſhall ſeek redreſs ſome other way.—This is the ſole queſtion with us, and we put it, as

we thought, in a moſt becoming ſtyle to the Houſe of Commons. But, our *petition* being ſcouted. we ſhall trouble them no more with our coarſe and unmannerly language. It will be our duty to proceed, as we have uniformly done hitherto, in enlightening the public mind; and, when a complete revolution of ſentiment ſhall take place (as will ſhortly be the caſe) in our country, we ſhall open our mouths, in that key we think moſt agreeable to ourſelves. And our voice, together with that of our disfranchiſed countrymen, will reſemble, perhaps, the thunderings from Mount Sinai!"

WILLIAM BROOMHEAD, croſs examined by Mr. GIBBS.

Q. You was ſaying about the time theſe pikes were talked of, there had been a miſchievous hand-bill put about for the purpoſe of provoking the members of this ſociety as you ſuppoſe, can you tell what were the terms of that hand-bill?

A. I had one of them in my hand, but I cannot ſpeak directly of every thing it contained.

Q. I don't ask you to ſpeak to every thing it contained, but what was the general ſubſtance of it?

A. It was a call upon the people to arm againſt foreign and internal enemies; and the reply that was made to it was couched in the ſame language.

Q. At what time was this publiſhed, was it before or after this meeting?

A. I do not recollect the exact time, but I read them both; I ſhould have been happy to have had them both here.

Q. The object was to provoke the people?

A. It was given out about the town of Sheffield, we can never do any thing againſt theſe people till we ourſelves cauſe a riot; I ſaw myſelf ſeveral perſons ride up and down and through the market place full gallop, to ride over the people.

Q. Then the cry was, that they could not do any thing with you without cauſing a riot againſt you?

A. It has been ſaid ſo, but I cannot recollect the people that ſaid it, but this wicked hand-bill being ſpread about, and if I had thought of this, I would have brought it here; and this was the cauſe of the arms firſt being ſpoke about

Q. So I underſtand. This you ſay was the occaſion of arms being firſt talked of, now let me ask you from all this, from whom you ever heard any converſation reſpecting theſe arms, the pikes, were they intended for making any attack againſt any power in this country; or only for defending yourſelves againſt any attack?

A. I never underſtood them in any other light; all that ever I heard about them was in reference to this wicked hand-bill.

Q. I un-

Q. I underſtand that the converſation of the pikes, and the production of them, was in conſequence of this hand-bill; what I want to know is this, whether thoſe who talked of theſe pikes, and attempted to produce them, whether you ever recollect from them that they meant to attack or to defend yourſelves being attacked?

A. This was the very truth.—It was to oppoſe illegal force, direct violation of the law of the land made upon us, as was the caſe in Mancheſter and Birmingham.

Q. Then they were meant only to be uſed on the defenſive?

A. Yes; and Mr. Gale had this hand-bill in his hand when he mentioned it, and there was an advertiſement in Mr. Gale's paper about it the week after, a direct anſwer thereto; I would have brought them both with me, if I had thought any thing of this.

Q. Had any of the people in this ſociety, to which you belonged, any idea of altering the government, doing without a King and Houſe of Lords?

A. I think they ought to have been ſent to Bedlam if they had.

Q. Had you, as one of that ſociety, any ſuch intention yourſelf?

A. Juſt the ſame as flying to the ſun.

Q. Speak plain.

A. No, no; I had never ſuch a thought in my mind.

Q. What was it you wiſhed to produce by theſe meetings of yours?

A. To enlighten the people, and ſhew them the ground of all their ſufferings and complaints; when a man works hard for a week through, thirteen or fourteen hours in a day, and yet cannot maintain his family.

Q. Was not the object of your meeting a Parliamentary Reform?

A. Yes, it was, and as ſuch we correſponded with the Society of the Friends of the People as well as the Conſtitutional Society.

Q. Who were the members of the Friends of the People?

A. I do not directly know the ſecretary. I know ſeveral communications were received from that ſociety.

Q. Mr. Stuart, I believe, is the ſecretary?

A. Yes.

Q. Should you have continued a member of this ſociety if you had thought they had intended to have attacked the King or the Lords, or had an idea of depoſing the King from his throne?

A. No, I would not.

Q. Should you not have abhorred ſuch an idea?

A. Yes,

Q. Have

Q. Have you any reaſon to believe that any ſingle member entertained ſuch a notion?

A. I do not believe there is ſuch a wicked man amongſt them.

Q. The object of your meeting, you ſay, was to ſtate to the people the grounds of certain evils you conceived to exiſt, and you wiſhed to bring about a Parliamentary Reform; where was that Parliamentary Reform to be—in the Houſe of Commons?

A. Yes.

Q. You meant that the King and the Lords ſhould remain as they were?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you believe, and was that the ground upon which you acted, that a Parliamentary Reform would do away thoſe evils in the Houſe of Commons?

A. That the King, and the Lords and Commons, with the concurrence of the nation, might reform them things themſelves. As to we reforming the Parliament, we pretend in Sheffield! we had not the vanity to think of ſuch a thing.

Q. Do I underſtand you right, when I ſuppoſe this to have been your principle, that you thought the King and the Houſe of Lords, with the Commons ſo reformed, would redreſs all your grievances?

A. Yes.

Q. Your object was to obtain it peaceably?

A. Yes, and there is no man doubts it in Sheffield.

Q. Was it your own object?

A. It was.

Q. Have you any reaſon to think it was the object of any other man in the ſociety at Sheffield to uſe any thing but peaceable means?

A. Not to my knowledge; what perſons might do if a convention had been called, I do not know what wicked people might have done;—we cannot anſwer for their wickedneſs.

Mr. Garrow. Repeat that again.

A. If there had been a convention, thoſe ſocieties who ſent them, I ſuppoſe, would have put confidence in them, and in their conſultations, ſuppoſing them to be more competent to deviſe and direct the means to the end for a Parliamentary Reform. I underſtood it in that light.

Mr. Gibbs. When that meeting was held, to be ſure, no man can anſwer for the acts of thoſe who ſhould compoſe it—certainly not.

Q. Had you any reaſon to ſuppoſe that thoſe whom you ſhould have ſent to that meeting would have acted peaceable?

A. No, we ſhould not have ſent any elſe.

Q. And

Q. And you have no reaſon but to think that others would have ſo acted?

A. No, we have no reaſon to think otherwiſe at all.

Q. When national repreſentation was talked of by Mr. Yorke at this meeting, was it not meant the repreſentation of the people of England in the Houſe of Commons?

A. I always underſtood it ſo.

Mr. Garrow. This converſation between you and my friend makes it neceſſary, that I ſhould put a queſtion or two to you. In the firſt place I wiſh to aſcertain whether I took you correctly; you meant, and as far as you underſtood your ſociety, meant to produce a Reform in the Repreſentation of the Commons Houſe of Parliament by peaceable means?

A. Yes.

Q. But you apprehended that when you ſhould depute your delegates to a convention, that you truſted to that convention, and that when they were met, you could not anſwer for what they might do, not being able to anſwer for the wickedneſs of individuals. Did I take you correctly?

A. Yes.

Q. For the purpoſe of obtaining this object, a Parliamentary Reform, you ſay you correſponded not only with the Conſtitutional Society, but with others, the Society of the Friends of the People. Did you know the anſwer that that ſociety returned to your communications as early as the 26th of May.

A. I do not recollect.

Q. Do you know a perſon of the name of Aſhton?

A. Yes.

Q. Did he ever act as ſecretary to your ſociety?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you recollect Aſhton writing, by the direction of the ſociety, or your committee, a letter—I ask you whether you do not know, that on the ſociety of the Friends of the People returning ſome anſwer to your ſociety, that your ſociety wrote a letter to the ſecretary of the Conſtitutional Society, diſclaiming all connection with the Friends of the People, as not fit for their purpoſe; did he not?

A. Diſclaiming this, I do not deny, but I do not know of a certainty, that he did, becauſe great part of the time that he was ſecretary I was not in the ſociety?

Q. Was this meaſure of diſcarding the Friends of the People as not fit for your purpoſe, diſcuſſed in your ſociety at any meetings?

A. Yes, it may have been.—I do not recollect it was.

Q. Was it in any of your diviſions, or was it any meetings of your diviſion?

A. Yes,

A. Yes, it may have been.

Q. Was it in any meetings of your ſociety diſcuſſed, the propriety of having nothing further to do with theſe men, the Friends of the People, becauſe they would not go lengths to make them fit for your communication?

A. It was diſcuſſed.

Q. Was the conſequence of that diſcuſſion, your writing to the Conſtitutional Society, that the Friends of the People were not fit for your purpoſe?

A. I do not know of ſuch a letter being communicated.—No ſuch a letter received.

Q. I do not ask you whether you know ſuch a letter was received or ſent; but I ask you whether the reſult of that deliberation was not, that they were unfit for the communication of your ſociety?

A. I am not certain it was the determination of that meeting. I rather think it was determined afterwards.

Q. Did Mr. Yorke take any part in that diſcuſſion?

A. No, he was not there, I think.

Q. Who were the parties that engaged in that diſcuſſion of the miſdemeanour of the Friends of the People?

A. There were ſeveral perſons ſaid ſomething at that meeting, among whom I was one.

Q. Have you read the declarations publiſhed by that ſociety called the Friends of the People?—Doubtleſs you have for your information.

A. I believe I might.

Q. Do you not know, that in language, to which I can do no juſtice, they declared their firm intention by all conſtitutional and proper means to produce that very thing, which you ſtate to have been your object, a Reform in the Commons Houſe of Parliament?

A. A great number of people did not believe them to be honeſt.

Q. Perhaps the language was too fine to believe it honeſt; however, they had made this profeſſion

A. Yes, there was ſomething of that.

Q. But that you did not quite believe?

A. No, a number of them did not.

Q. Was that as early as the 26th of May, 1792, that you diſclaimed the communications of this ſociety of the Friends of the People?

A. It may, I think it was about that time.

Q. That was long before Mr. Yorke came among you upon his laſt motion?

A. Yes, it was.

Q. And

Q. And of courſe long before all theſe diſcuſſions?

A. Yes.

Q. Now be ſo good as tell me a little more diſtinctly what this miſchievous hand-bill was that excited you to arms; I think it was calling upon the people to arm againſt foreign invaders and domeſtic enemies?

A. Yes, I think it was; and upon the conſultation at the meeting, when arms were ſpoken of, it was determined in ſeveral reſolutions to get theſe arms for the ſame purpoſe in reply to that hand-bill.

Q. Did you adopt that hand-bill, and arm in conſequence of it, or was you alarmed from its unconſtitutional injunction, or did you arm?

A. I never did.

Q. In what terms was your reply couched?

A. Their words were taken and put into reſolves, and put in Gale's paper the next week, to arm againſt foreign and internal enemies of the preſent government.

Q. The reaſon of this was, becauſe you was afraid of illegal force being uſed againſt you, as had been done at Mancheſter and Birmingham; did you apply to any magiſtrate to protect you?

A. No, nor did thoſe people that publiſhed this.

Q. Will you be ſo good to anſwer my queſtion; did you, upon thoſe alarms which were communicated by this wicked hand-bill, lay your complaints before any magiſtrate, or apply for protection to the civil power?

A. No, not to my knowledge.

Q. But, on the contrary, publiſhed reſolutions for arming?

A. To this purport, couched in their words.

Q. You had no intention at all of altering the government, but of applying to the Houſe of Commons to redreſs the grievances under which the people ſuffered?

A. I always underſtood it in that light.

Q. How early was it that you came to the reſolutions in your ſociety to petition them no more, and that they were too fine gentlemen for you, and that your language was not fine enough to pleaſe their courtly ears?

A. Theſe articles and reſolves were drawn up by Gale and Yorke, and therefore were winked at, thinking they were better judges, out of complacency, ſuppoſing them to have ſuperior knowledge.

Q. And you, who were too rough for the Houſe of Commons, were courtly enough to paſs theſe reſolutions to pleaſe Mr. Yorke and Mr. Gale?

A. Viewing them to be men of underſtanding.

Q. After having determined to petition the Houſe of Commons no more, the next ſtep was to procure a convention, and by the delegates to procure a full, free, and fair repreſentation?

A. There was at firſt a motion to petition the King.

Q. That was about the Slave Trade?

A. Yes, and about a Reform too.

Q. Whether this forms a part of thoſe reſolutions which you paſſed upon the ſubject of arming, "that the landing of Heſſian troops in this country, a ferocious and unprincipled hord of butchers, without conſent of Parliament, has an alarming and ſuſpicious appearance, and is contrary to the ſpirit of our conſtitution," when you printed the hand-bill was that paſſed?

A. That was paſſed when the lecture was read.

Q. That was paſſed long after the hand-bill?

A. No, long before.

Q. "That it is high time to be upon our guard, ſince theſe armed monſters may in a moment be let looſe upon us, particularly as the erection of barracks throughout the kingdom may have only been an introduction to filling them with foreign mercenaries," was that the other reſolution that you paſſed before the hand-bill?

A. Some time before, I cannot ſay how long.

Q. Will you be ſo good as to tell me, as you were to arm at Sheffield, very properly for the ſake of preventing attacks upon you, whether you communicated your plan of arming or of communicating your inſtruments to any other parts of the kingdom?

A. I did not, nor do I know that any body elſe did.

Q. I ask if you do not now know that your ſociety communicated the plans of arming, the mode of procuring the inſtruments, and the models of the weapons?

A. I never heard a ſyllable of it till I was informed of it by the gentlemen of the Privy Council.

Q. Then if Davidſon, in the name of the ſociety, ſent ſuch a letter to any ſociety at London, you was not informed of that ſecret?

A. No, I was not.

Q. If ſuch a thing was done, you was not informed of it?

A. I was not.

Q. You know Davidſon very well?

A. Yes, ſome little time.

Q. He was a member of the ſociety?

A. Yes, I ſuppoſe he was.

Q. You have told me there was no man in Sheffield fooliſh enough to arm; do you include Davidſon in the number of thoſe whom you ſay were not to be found in Sheffield with any kind

kind of intention againſt the Government, or againſt his Majeſty's perſon?

A. I will ſay this, that he did it without the knowledge of the ſociety; he did it without my knowledge.

Henry Alexander called, but not anſwering immediately,

Mr. Attorney-General propoſed, while this witneſs was coming, to read part of the publication concerning the faſt day, and how it was kept at Sheffield.

(The Clerk reads the faſt day.)

"FAST DAY AS OBSERVED AT SHEFFIELD.

"*A ſerious Lecture delivered at Sheffield, February* 28, 1794. *Being the day appointed for a general faſt; to which are added a Hymn and Reſolutions.*

"*Reſolved Unanimouſly,*

1. "That war, the wretched artifice of courts, is a ſyſtem of rapine and blood, unworthy of rational beings, and utterly repugnant to the mild and benevolent principles of the Chriſtian religion.

2. "That if the preſent war, be a war of combined Kings againſt the people of France to overthrow that liberty which they are ſtruggling to eſtabliſh, it is, in our opinion, a war of the moſt diabolical kind.

3. "That when public faſts and humiliations are ordered with the ſame breath, which commands the ſhedding of oceans of human blood—however they may anſwer the purpoſes of ſtate policy—they are ſolemn proſtitutions of religion.

4. "That the landing of Heſſian troops in this country (a ferocious and unprincipled hord of butchers) without conſent of Parliament, has a ſuſpicious and alarming appearance, is contrary to the ſpirit of our conſtitution, and deſerving of the marked indignation of every Engliſhman.

5. "That it is high time to be on our *guard*, ſince theſe armed monſters, may, in a moment, be let looſe upon us; particularly, as the erection of barracks throughout the kingdom, may only have been an introductory meaſure to the filling them with foreign mercenaries.

6. "That the high and freeborn minds of Britons, revolt at the idea of ſuch a ſlaviſh ſyſtem, and cannot be ſo far broken as to kiſs the hand which would chain them to its will.

7. "That peace and liberty are the offspring of Heaven, and that *life* without them is a burden.

8. "That the thanks of this meeting are due to Earl Stanhope, for his motion and ſpirited ſpeech for acknowledging the French Republic, and reſtoring *peace* to our diſtreſſed country; for his motions and able ſpeech in behalf of the perſecuted and ſuffering patriots, Meſſ. Muir, Palmer, Skirving and Marga-

rot, in which he nobly ſtood alone; and alſo for the whole of his truly animated and benevolent exertions in ſupport of the injured *Rights of the People*.

9. "The thanks of this meeting are alſo due to Mr. Sheridan, for his nervous and eloquent ſpeeches in the cauſe of injured patriotiſm, and in ſupport of the conſtitution; and alſo to every other member of Parliament who has nobly ſtood forward at this important criſis, in ſupport of the conſtitutional liberties of Engliſhmen.

10. "That if any thing had been neceſſary to have convinced us of the total inefficacy of argument againſt a miniſterial majority, the deciſions which have lately taken place in Parliament, would have fully confirmed our opinion.

11. "That, therefore, the people have no remedy for their grievance, but a *Reform in Parliament*—a meaſure which we determine never to relinquiſh, though we follow our brethren in the ſame glorious cauſe to *Botany Bay*.

"W. CAMAGE, Chairman."

Mr. Garrow. Now read Mr. Camage's lecture.

(*The Clerk reads.*)

A SERIOUS LECTURE.

"In every age of the world, the cauſe of truth has always met with its oppoſers, whenever it chanced to claſh with the intereſts of a venal tribe of *Kings*, *Courtiers*, *Prieſts*, and their *accomplices* By reading over the 18th chapter of 1. Kings, we find that this was the caſe; yet the Almighty was pleaſed by an act of *Omnipotent Power*, to overturn the malice and wicked intentions of that infamous tyrant Ahab, and the ſatellites who ſurrounded him: for, in the preſence of them all (though it made againſt them). Truth ſhone forth with redoubled ſplendour; and the very judgment which Elijah would probably have met with, had not God been for him, fell on thoſe abominable *deceivers of mankind*.—I refer you to the chapter itſelf, and without further introduction, I ſhall make a few remarks on the events of that period, as it muſt be obvious, to every ingenious mind, that there is a great ſimilarity betwixt the conduct of the rulers of that day and thoſe of the preſent: therefore it may be needful to obſerve.

"Firſt. Baal's prieſts could not poſſibly ſucceed, becauſe he to whom they prayed could not help them. Baal, being a name given to an heathen God, who had no exiſtence, except in the imagination of his devotees. And 2dly, they had a bad cauſe in hand, therefore, were not likely to prevail; no motives to induce them but pride; no appetites to ſerve but what were ſenſual and deviliſh, ſo that if they had offered ſacrifice to the true God, in a bad cauſe, they would not have obtained their

end

end—for 'the ears of the Lord are not open to the cries of the fooliſh, but unto the wiſe.'

"It is in this point of light, I view with concern, a combination of Kings apparently leagued againſt the cauſe of freedom; a combination which I believe to be odious in the ſight of heaven, although for its ſupport we are commanded a ſecond time from the throne, (not of God) to faſt and pray for the ſucceſs of our arms over our brethren, who are ſtruggling for every thing that is dear to man, and which is the will of God he ſhould be poſſeſſed of—*Liberty*, *civil*, *political* and *religious*. Life without them is a burden. To pray then, for a re-eſtabliſhment of deſpotiſm, tyranny, and oppreſſion (which we do if we pray to conquer *freemen*) would be to mock Heaven, to inſult his divine Majeſty, to pour contempt on his word, and in the heart to ſay, 'Who is the Lord, that we ſhould obey him?' Oh! ye, who fill the throne of power, tremble at the thought of approaching your Maker with a lie in your right hand; tremble at approaching the God of Peace, when *war* and *bloodſhed* are your views. 'Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatſoever a man 'ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap.'

HENRY ALEXANDER ſworn, examined by Mr. WOOD.

Q. Was you a member of the London Correſponding Society?

A. Yes.

Q. How long is it ſince you firſt became a member?

A. The latter end of the year 1793, I do not know the week.

Q. What diviſion was you of?

A. The twenty-ninth.

Q. Did you meet at Robins's coffee-houſe?

A. Yes, in Shire-lane.

Q. How many might your diviſion conſiſt of?

A. I think I was the ninety-fifth member when I went in.

Q. Did you know Mr. Yorke?

A. Yes, by ſight.

Q. Was he a member of the London Correſponding Society?

A. He became a member while I was there.

Q. Do you remember his being with you the latter end of 1793, at Robins's coffee-houſe?

A. Yes.

Q. What number of people might there be aſſembled at that time?

A. I ſuppoſe there was between ſixty and a hundred; the room was quite full.

Q. Did Mr. Yorke tell you whether he was going to leave you or not?

A. The

A. The laſt night he was there he did; the laſt night he was at that ſociety he took leave of them by a long ſpeech; he ſaid he was going to Belgium.

Q. Did he ſay for what purpoſe?

A. Yes, he was going to head the French army, which would be ripe by Chriſtmas.

Q. Repeat that?

A. That he had received a letter from a friend of his at Belgium, that they would be ripe by Chriſtmas.

Q. Ripe for what?

A. For a revolution.

Q. Did he ſay whether he meant to return to England again?

A. He did.

Q. What more did he ſay?

A. He ſaid he was in hopes he ſhould come at the head of them into England.

Jury. Where was he to come to?

A. To London.

Q. Mr. Alexander, you ſay he made a long ſpeech upon his taking leave?

A. Yes.

Q. Will you be ſo good as to tell us what he ſaid in making that ſpeech, the ſubſtance of it?

A. The ſubſtance of it was, that he had received a letter to go over to them, and that he had the honour of being a Member of the National Convention of France, and hoped he ſhould have the pleaſure of coming here either at Chriſtmas or the beginning of the year, and that he ſhould ſee that ſociety all ready to join them; and that he was in hopes that Mr. Pitt, and the different miniſters he mentioned, and the King's head, would be upon Temple-bar.

Lord Preſident. That who would join him?

A. That the ſociety would.

Q. Whoſe heads were to be upon Temple-bar?

A. Mr. Pitt's, mentioning the miniſters and the King.

Q. Will you recollect as much of the ſtatement as you can?

Jury. What time did this meeting take place?

A. Upon the 5th of laſt November, 1793.

Mr. Wood. Did he ſay any thing about the King and Queen of France?

A. Yes, he did, but I cannot recollect the words now.

Q. But try and recollect the ſubſtance?

A. He ſaid they had met with their deſert, it was what they deſerved.

Q. Did he ſay any thing to you about the war?

A. I do

A. I do not recollect that he did.

Q. Did he ſay any thing to you about the Sans Culottes?

A. He did make mention of them; they were a ſet of brave fellows; he ſaid a deal about them; but I cannot recollect further.

Q. Do not you recollect what he ſaid beſides?

A. I do not.

Q. Did he ſay any thing about arms?

A. He did.

Q. Be ſo good as to tell us what he ſaid about arms?

A. He ſaid, when he came he hoped they would be ready to join; and that he hoped when the time came, they would not cringe or ſhrink from what they pretended to be: he ſaid it was impoſſible to do any thing without ſome bloodſhed.

Jury. Who do you mean by they?

A. The ſociety he was ſpeaking to.

Mr. Wood. What did he ſay about bloodſhed?

A. He ſaid there would be no good done without ſome bloodſhed.

Q. Did he ſay any thing to you about Sheffield, or the people of Sheffield?

A. He ſaid there was a ſet of brave men there.

Q. Did he tell you how or in what they were brave?

A. I cannot ſay that he did.

Q. What more did he ſay about the Sheffield men?

A. I do not recollect.

Q. Where was the blood to be ſhed?

A. He did not ſay.

Q. Did he ſay any thing about bread and cheeſe, that you recollect?

A. There was ſuch a thing mentioned in the ſociety one night before. A perſon came in from Sheffield, and ſaid they had pikes made at Sheffield for ſixpence apiece; another made anſwer and ſaid, it would be a good notion for them to have the ſame, and that it would be only living upon bread and cheeſe for one day.

Q. Was this the preceding night?

A. No, it might be two or three nights before.

Q. How was Mr. Yorke's ſpeech received amongſt them?

A. They all appeared unanimous, and roſe and ſhook hands with him when he got up and left the room.

Lord Preſident. Did you ſee Mr. Yorke any more?

A. No.

Q. Do you know where he went?

A. No.

Mr. Wood.

Mr. Wood. Did you continue with the ſociety after that night, or did you leave it?

A. I went after that to Mr. Dundas's office, and after that to the Lord Mayor, Sir James Sanderſon.

Q. Look at that; have you ever ſeen any bills like that before?

A. No, I never ſaw this before.

Q. Why did you go to the Lord Mayor or to Mr. Dundas?

A. Becauſe I thought it was proper Government ſhould know what they were proceeding upon; immediately I knew what they were I went and told them.

Q. How came you firſt to go there?

A. At firſt I went with Mr. Smith, a delegate. I was asked if I would be made a member; I did not know what it was; I agreed to be made a member, not knowing what it was.

Q. How long was you there?

A. I think I was there ſeven times.

HENRY ALEXANDER croſs-examined by Mr. ERSKINE.

Q. What are you?

A. A Linen-draper.

Q. Where do you live?

A. At the Roſe, in Fleet-market. I am a ſervant at preſent.

Q. What time did you firſt go with your friend to this ſociety?

A. Towards the latter end of the year 1793.

Q. Did you go there for the purpoſe of being a member?

A. I did not, though I became one.

Q. What did you go for the purpoſe of?

A. I went for the purpoſe of going to the club; my friend asked me to go with him to a ſociety, and I went.

Q. Who is this friend?

A. Mr. Whitehall; he ſaid Mr. Smith had asked him frequently.

Q. You went there out of curioſity, it may be?

A. It was nothing elſe.

Q. Was Mr. Yorke there?

A. No.

Q. Who might be there that firſt night?

A. Smith was there as delegate, Aſhley was there, and Baxter was there; theſe were all I knew by name.

Q. What day of the month was it?

A. I cannot ſay.

Q. What day of the week?

A. Tueſday.

Q. What month?

A. I cannot ſay.

Q. Try,

Q. Try, you may by thinking a little?

A. I cannot.

Q. Did you hear any thing that offended you that night?

A. Nothing at all.

Q. How long did they ſit?

A. Till twelve o'clock, and ſome of them until one o'clock.

Q. What did they converſe about?

A. They had papers of different kinds; Mr. Smith in general uſed to bring papers of ſome kind.

Q. Were they read?

A. I believe there was ſomething read by Mr. Smith.

Q. Did you become a member that night?

A. Yes.

Q. Then you approved, I ſuppoſe, of what you heard?

A. As ſoon as we got in the room we ſat down. Mr. Smith asked immediately if I would become a member; he asked Mr. Whitehall; he read ſomething to me, but I did not pay any attention to what it was.

Q. Whitehall went out of curioſity too?

A. I do not know what purpoſe he went for.

Q. When did you go next, afterwards?

A. I do not know whether I went next night or no; I miſſed two or three times; I attended ſeven times.

Q. You very ſoon became a convert; you ſay that immediately upon Mr. Smith's ſtarting up you became a member?

A. Yes.

Q. Was Mr. Yorke there the ſecond time?

A. No, he was not.

Q. Who was there the ſecond time?

A. Mr. Smith was there as delegate.

Q. Did not you, after you became a member, become acquainted with the people there, by converſing with them, by going there?

A. No, I ſpoke to Aſhley two or three times.

Q. Then you became a member to propagate their doctrines?

A. No.

Q. When you became a member you went for the purpoſe of becoming a ſpy?

A. After I was there I went as a ſpy.

Q. Did you wiſh a Reform in Parliament?

A. I did not.

Q. Then, if you did not wiſh for a Reform in Parliament, why did you become a member of that ſociety but for the purpoſe of becoming a ſpy?

A. When I became a member I did not know what they were.