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I HAVE now continued for some years a silent, not an inattentive, spectator of the flood of ribaldry, invective and intolerance which has been poured out against me and my writings. The work which has principally afforded a topic for the exercise of this malignity has been the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice. This book made its appearance in February 1793; its reception with the public was favourable much beyond my conception of its merits; it was the specific and avowed occasion of procuring me the favour and countenance of many persons of the highest note in society and literature, of some of those who have since lent themselves to increase the clamour, which personal views and the contagion of fashion have created against

me. For more than four years it remained before the public, without any man's having made the slightest attempt for its refutation; it was repeatedly said that it was invulnerable and unanswerable in its fundamental topics; high encomiums were passed on the supposed talents of the writer; and, so far as I have been able to learn, every man of the slightest impartiality was ready to give his verdict to the honest sentiments and integrity of spirit in which it was written.

If the temper and tone in which this publication has been treated have undergone a change, it has been only that I was destined to suffer a part, in the great revolution which has operated in nations, parties, political creeds, and the views and interests of ambitious men. I have fallen (if I have fallen) in one common grave with the cause and the love of liberty; and in this sense have been more honoured and illustrated in my decline from general favour, than I ever was in the highest tide of my success.

My book, as was announced by me in the preface, was the child of the French revolution. It is easy to understand what has been the operation of many men's minds on the subject of that great event. Almost every man entertains in his bosom some love for the public: there is, I suppose, no man that lives who has not some love for himself. Both these sentiments were extensively exercised, in the various European nations who were spectators of the French revolution. Where was the ingenuous heart which did not beat with exultation, at seeing a great and cultivated people shake off the chains of one of the most oppressive political systems in the world, the most replenished with abuses, the least mollified and relieved by any infusion of liberty? Thus far we were all of us disinterested and generous. But the reflex act of the mind is so essential a part of our nature, that it was impossible men should not, in the first interval of leisure, enquire how they would be affected by this event in their personal fortunes. The reasonings which guided the persons alluded to in this particular, are obvi-

ous. They believed that liberty could not be thus acquired by a most respected and considerable nation in the centre of Europe, without producing consequences favourable to liberty in every surrounding country. They inferred therefore that, while each man was indulging his enthusiasm and philanthropy, each man would find himself most effectually promoting his private interest. They worshipped the rising sun. They applauded their sagacity and long-sightedness, while they thus heaped up for themselves the merit of being the virtuous and early champions of infant, and as yet powerless liberty.

But these expectations and this sagacity have been miserably disappointed. The persons however who acted under their influence, were slow and unwilling in giving up their hopes. They had felt a real and honest passion for the French revolution: but honesty is a principle of an unaccommodating sort; and passion, once set in motion, will not be subdued in a moment. Beside, these persons, confiding in their sagacity had declared themselves in a very peremptory and decisive manner. Shame therefore for a long time held them to their point. They saw that their retreat would come with a very ill grace; they would not retire upon the first symptoms of miscarriage; they cheered themselves and one another with assurances that these symptoms would speedily subside; they hoped to add to the praise of long-sightedness the nobler praise of magnanimous perseverence in spite of adverse and discouraging appearances.

What was the consequence of this? Mr. Burke published his celebrated book against the French revolution in 1790: they were unmoved. The powers of Europe began to concert hostile measures upon this subject in 1791: they were unmoved. Louis was deposed; monarchical government was proscribed in France: they were unmoved. In September 1792 scenes of execrable and unprecedented murder were perpetrated in the capital and many of the provinces: they scorned for the sake of a few private misdeeds to give up a great public principle. The head of Louis fell upon the scaffold: still they were con-

sistent. The atrocious and inhuman reign of Robespierre commenced; it continued from May 1793 to July 1794; almost every day was marked with blood; almost all that was greatest and most venerable in France was immolated at the monster's shrine, the queen, madame Elizabeth, Vergniaud, Gensonne, Roland, madame Roland, Bailli, Lavolfier ; it were endless to recollect a tithe of the bloody catalogue : still there advocates of the French revolution were confident. Down to the spring of 1797, when petitions were sent up from so many parts of England for the removal of the king's ministers, scarcely one of those persons who had declared themselves ardently and affectionately interested for the success of the French, deserted their cause.

I am willing to yield to these men considerable praise for the constancy with which they persevered so long; as long perhaps as worldly prudence could in any degree countenance. But why, because I have not been so prudent as they, should I be made the object of their invective? I never went so far, in my partiality for the practical principles of the French revolution, as many of those with whom I was accustomed to converse. I uniformly declared myself an enemy to revolutions. Many persons censured me for this lukewarmness; I willingly endured the censure. Several of those persons are now gone into the opposite extreme. They must excuse me; they have wandered wide of me on the one side and on the other; I did not follow them before; I cannot follow them now.

But, though I commend these persons for having persevered so long, I can be at no loss to assign the principal cause why they have persevered no longer. What has happened since the spring of 1797 to justify their revolt? Has any new system of disorganization been adopted in France? Have the French embrued their hands in further massacres? Has another Robespierre risen, to fright the world with systematical, cool-blooded, never-satiated murder? No, none of these things. How then has it happened, that men who remained unaltered

our nature. Let us then learn to respect man, and to be proud of ourselves that we belong to a species capable of so high achievements. Let us not, from the vain fastidiousness of misanthropy, be led to blaspheme against the cause of virtue. For myself I firmly believe that days of greater virtue and more ample justice will descend upon the earth; and in the mean time, I will not hold it for my consolation and luxury, fondly to imagine that the throne of ignorance and vice is placed on so firm a basis that it can never be removed.

never brought before the tribunal of the public. In this view, and considering the solemnity of the task I had undertaken, I am willing, if Dr. Parr pleases, to be the victim of "contrition," and to take shame to myself for all the oversights committed by me in that book, and which have been so eagerly seized, and so emulously taken advantage of, by my opponents. The question at issue is whether "any extraordinary improvement can ever be expected to take place in society." The human imagination is capable of representing to itself a virtuous community, a little heaven on earth. The human understanding is capable of developing the bright idea, and constructing a model of it, where "every thing shall be consistent; where, granting its first position, a position which has every prepossession in its favour, all the inferences shall follow so clearly, that it seems impossible to elude their force." Shall this idea ever be realised; or, do we "walk in a vain show, and disquiet ourselves in vain?" Are vice and misery, as my antagonists so earnestly maintain, in all their extent, and with all their disgustful circumstances as they now exist in the world, entailed on us for ever; or may we hope ultimately to throw off, or greatly diminish, the burthen? In other cases of an eminent nature what the heart of man is able to conceive, the hand of man is strong enough to perform. There is no beauty of literary and poetical composition which we can so much as guess at, that excels what we find executed in the divinest passages of Milton or Shakespeare. There is no virtuous action which we can figure to ourselves, that surpasses that virtue and elevation of mind which we find over and over again recorded in the faithful page of history. Fiction here labours in vain; it never equals what men have acted and felt, in the great vision and awe- creating presence of reality. Imagination only treads the round of man; and, whatever mysterious being we may reverence without comprehending him, every individual image of excellence which we are capable of vividly and impressively representing to ourselves, we may safely claim as the lawful endowment and birthright of

spite of these terrible events, now profess their conviction that the hope of melioration in human society must be given up; and, not contented with that, virulently abuse those by whom the hope is still cherished? To the government of Robespierre succeeded what was called an Executive Directory, a set of men whose principles and actions so nearly resembled those of the regular governments of Europe, that it is with an ill grace the advocates of those governments can pronounce a censure against them. Upon the dissolution of the Directory, we have seen an auspicious and beneficent genius arise, who without violence to the principles of the French revolution, has suspended their morbid activity, and given time for the fever which threatened to consume the human race, to subside. All the great points embraced by the revolution remain entire: hereditary government is gone; hereditary nobility is extinguished; the hierarchy of the Gallican church is no more; the feudal rights, the oppressive immunities of a mighty aristocracy, are banished never to return. Every thing promises that the future government of France will be popular, and her people free. It follows therefore, almost with the force of a demonstration, that it is nothing which has happened in France that has produced this general apostacy from the principles of her revolution.

But the persons for whose conduct I am accounting, while they have looked with less solicitude than before at what is passing in France, have looked very attentively at what is passing at home. Not that in our own country events have happened, to justify any better, in the way of argument, this transformation of their opinions, than the events in France. The revolutionary societies in this metropolis were once numerous; they had spread their ramifications through almost every county in England; revolutionary lectures were publicly read here and elsewhere with tumults of applause; almost every alehouse had its artisans haranguing in favour of republicanism and equality: at this time the persons of whom I am speaking

conceived no alarm. The societies have perished, or, where they have not, have shrunk to a skeleton; the days of democratical declamation are no more; even the starving labourer in the alehouse is become a champion of aristocracy. Yet it is now that these persons come forth to sound the alarm; now they tread upon the neck of the monster whom they regard as expiring; now they hold it necessary to show themselves intemperate and incessant in their hostilities against the spirit of innovation.

We must look therefore elsewhere than in the naked convictions of the understanding, for the principle of their conduct. Like the patriarch of old, they watched narrowly to see a day of auspicious tidings to the people; and, if they could have seen it, like the patriarch, they would have been glad. But, while they expected the bursting of a glorious sunshine, the sky around them became darker and more unpromising — It is not to my present purpose to enquire how far recent events have tended to confirm and give stability to the old governments of Europe, and that of our own country in particular; but at least these persons have seen them in that point of view. They are willing to make their peace; nor would they chassen too obstinately, though it should be necessary to make a sacrifice or two at the shrine of the divinity against whole worship they had too irreverently railed.

But it is not my disposition to see the characters and actions of men in the worst point of view. I can discern other human weaknesses concerned in this conversion of my neighbors, less offensive to the moral feelings than bare worldly wisdom and personal interest. It is not in the nature of man to like to stand alone in his sentiments or his creed. We ought not to be too much surprised when we perceive our neighbors watching the seasons, and floating with the tide. Nor is this fickleness by which they are influenced, altogether an affair of design. It is seldom that we are persuaded to adopt opinions, or repersuaded to abandon them, by the mere force of arguments.

dox. If the nature of man is not altogether so progressive, so full of prospect and promise, as I, and those who think with me, have imagined; is it quite certain we can never get beyond what Grotius and Puffendorff, or even Aristotle and Bacon have digested to our hands? At present it is only attempted to deter men from rebellion against these great literary authorities, by obloquy and abuse, by the contempt of the authorised instructor and his followers, and by an ill-will and animosity to be generated and diffused through as wide a circle as possible. I believe there is somewhat in the nature of man, and of his attainments already realised, strong enough to baffle the present deep laid project of despotism and intolerance. But if they are not thus checked, I am persuaded that the contempt, the scurrilities and the obloquy which are now circulated, will speedily be exchanged for those more formidable adversaries of discussion, imprisonment and pillory, banishment, and what its promulgators will denominate an ignominious death. No one, acquainted with the nature of man, can fail to perceive by how easy a gradation one of these leads to the other, and that, when you have successfully held up a person for years to general derision and abhorrence, you rather comply with, than outrun, the sentiments of mankind, by dooming him to destruction.

I would not have given myself the trouble of throwing together these few observations, were it not the general purpose of my adversaries to undermine a great public interest, through the medium of the errors and absurdities they have so liberally imputed to me. In the commencement of these pages, I have allowed myself to speak a little personally of my own situation, and the injustice I have experienced; and, after the immense volume of abuse, ludicrous and grave, which for years has been poured out against me, this departure from the great question we are examining (if it be indeed a departure) will be forgiven to me by the good-natured reader. But I am nothing, in comparison of the important cause the Political Justice was intended to plead. A question indeed of higher magnitude was

of Aristotle, Bacon and Hooker, of Grotius, Puffendorff and Vattel?

This proceeding undoubtedly comes with sufficient grace from the adversaries of the progressive nature of man. By placing a barrier against discussion, and by branding with abhorrence and obloquy those who have not sworn themselves in at any school or under any master, they, to the best of their power, suspend the improvement of human intellect. He cannot vigorously understand or explain any system, who has not allowed himself with an unbiased mind to investigate one system and another. He cannot truly and firmly be convinced of the truth of any doctrine, who has not dared intrepidly to analyse its evidence. The man who enters the school of science, predetermined and pre-engaged as to the conclusions in which his enquiries must terminate, makes a mock at science, and tramples upon the divinity of the human mind. As the parties now stand arranged, the advocates of the progressive nature of man are the champions of refinement and cultivation and politeness, which their adversaries would without mitigation or remorse exchange for the savage state.

Let it be granted (in the way of argument), that the French revolution has been prolific of mischief to mankind. Let it be further granted, that it was enquiry, and discussion, and the undaunted assertion and pleading for all opinions without reserve, which afforded the occasion and the means to these evils. May it not yet be worth our while to enquire, whether the discussion might not be permitted, and the mischiefs which in this instance have been grafted on it, prevented? whether men might not be permitted to dispute in their schools, and in theoretical and scientific disquisition, without being allowed tosally forth with firebrands in their hands, and devastation and ruin in their intentions? It is a serious thing to say, that men must neither argue nor write, till they have first subdued the freeborn nature of their souls to the trammels of some fortunate and highly patronised creed, which is to be received as ortho-

The change is generally produced silently, and unperceived except in its ultimate result, by him who suffers it. Our creed is, ninety-nine times in a hundred, the pure growth of our temper and social feelings. The human intellect is a sort of barometer, directed in its variations by the atmosphere which surrounds it. Add to this, that the opinion which has its principle in passion (and this was generally the cafe with the opinions of men on the topic of the French revolution) includes in its essence the cause of its destruction. “Hope deferred makes the heart sick.” Zeal, though it be as hot as Nebuchadnezzar’s furnace, without a continual supply of fuel will speedily cool.

I feel little resentment against those persons who, without any fresh reasons to justify their change, think it now necessary to plead for establishments, and express their horror at theories and innovation, though I recollect the time when they took an opposite part. But this I must say, that they act against all nature and reason when, instead of modestly confessing their frailty and the transformation of their sentiments, they rail at me because I have not equally changed. If I had expressed a certain degree of displeasure at their conduct, I should have had a very forcible excuse. But I was not prepared with a word of reproach: I would have been silent, if they would have permitted me to be so.

Down to about the middle of the year 1797, as I have said, the champions of the French revolution in England appeared to retain their position, and I remained unattacked. About that time a forlorn hope of two little skirmishing pamphlets began the war. But the writers of these pamphlets appear to have been uninstructed in the school of the new converts I have attempted to describe, and their productions were without scurrility. The next and grand attack was opened in Mr. Mackintosh’s Lectures. A book was published about the same time, professing to contain remarks upon some speculations of mine, entitled an Essay upon Population. Of this book and the spirit in which it is written I can never speak but with unfeigned

respect. Soon after followed a much vaunted Sermon by Mr. Hall of Cambridge, in which every notion of toleration or decorum was treated with infuriated contempt. I disdain to dwell on the rabble of scurrilities which followed: the vulgar contumelies of the author of the Pursuit of Literature, novels of buffoonery and scandal to the amount of half a score, and British Critics, Anti-Jacobin newspapers, and Anti-Jacobin Magazines without number. Last of all, for the present at least, for I am not idle enough to flatter myself that the tide is gone by, Dr. Parr, with his Spital Sermon before the Lord Mayor, brings up the rear of my assailants. I take occasion from this first avowed and respectable publication*, [*The main attack of the Essay on Population is not directed against the principles of my book, but its conclusions] to offer the little I think it necessary to offer in my defence.

But, before I enter upon particulars, let me stop a moment to observe upon the singular and perverse destiny which has attended me on this occasion. I wrote my Enquiry Concerning Political Justice in the innocence of my heart. I fought no overt effects; I abhorred all tumult; I entered my protest against revolutions. Every impartial person who knows me, or has attentively considered my writings, will acknowledge that it is the fault of my character, rather to be too sceptical, than to incline too much to play the dogmatist. I was by no means assured of the truth of my own system. I wrote indeed with ardour; but I published with diffidence. I knew that my speculations had led me out of the beaten track; and I waited to be instructed by the comment of others as to the degree of value which should be stamped upon them. That comment in the first instance was highly flattering; yet I was not satisfied. I did not cease to revise, to reconsider, or to enquire.

I had learned indeed that enquiry was the pilot who might be expected to steer me into the haven of truth. I had heard a thousand times, and I believed, that whoever gave his speculations on general questions to the public with fairness and tem-

ing population, and that there is an obstacle of such a nature in the way to any extraordinary improvement in society, as we can never entertain the hope to overcome. I do not regard these conclusions with any complacency. It is not, I hope, a taste absolutely singular in me, that I entertain no vehement partialities for vice and misery, and that I view the prospect of extraordinary improvement in society, of some kind or other, to take place hereafter, with pleasure and affection. I do not think the conclusions of our author powerfully connected with his premises. If I look to the past history of the world, I do not see that increasing population has produced such convulsions as he predicts from it, or that vice and misery alone have controlled and confined it; and, if I look to the future, I cannot so despair of the virtues of man to submit to the most obvious rules of prudence, or of the faculties of man to strike out remedies as yet unknown, as to convince me that we ought to sit down for ever contented with all the oppression, abuses and inequality, which we now find fastened on the necks, and withering the hearts, of so great a portion of our species. In these sheets, among other topics, I have thought proper to develop the personalities which have been directed against me, and the treatment I have endured. But I am fully aware that there is nothing singular in my case. It is part of a great plan. It is on this account the more fitting in me to have called the public attention to it. The maxims, upon the discovery and establishment of which our fathers of the last century prided themselves, are reversed. Discussion is no longer regarded as one of the great sources of benefit to man. The principle and practice of toleration among us hang by a very slender thread. All declamation, and all licensed argument, must be on one side. The questions now proposed to a reasoner, are not, Do you argue well? Are the principles on which your theory rests sound? Do your premises sufficiently sustain and make out your conclusions? But, Are your arguments cast in the mould

tue, prudence and honourable pride in such a condition of society, than there is at present? It is true, the ill consequences of a numerous family will not come so coarsely home to each man's individual interest, as they do at present. It is true, a man in such a state of society might say, If my children cannot subsist at my expense, let them subsist at the expense of my neighbour. But it is not in the human character to reason after this manner in such a situation. The more men are raised above poverty and a life of expedients, the more decency will prevail in their conduct, and sobriety in their sentiments. Where every one has a character, no one will be willing to distinguish himself by headstrong imprudence. Where a man possesses every reasonable means of pleasure and happiness, be will not be in a hurry to destroy his own tranquility or that of others by thoughtless excess.

Nor, in such a state of society as that which now employs our reasonings, will it be possible for a man to fall into the error upon which we are commenting, from inadvertence. The doctrines of the Essay on Population, if they be true as I have no doubt that they are, will be fully understood. Society will not fall into clans as at present, nor be puzzled and made intricate by the complexity of its structure. Such regularity and equity will prevail, as to enable every man to see a vast way before and around him. Every man will understand the interests of the community and be master of the outline of its political moral evils, and to deprecate every generous attempt to improve the condition of mankind, as leading, under specious appearances, to the reality of great and intolerable mischief.

Let me conclude this review of the Essay on Population with a brief recollection of its principal doctrines, so far as we have been concerned with them. The basis of our author's work, the ratios, of population and subsistence, I regard as unassailable, and as constituting a valuable acquisition to the science of political economy. His conclusions from these premises are, that vice and misery are the only sufficient checks upon increas-

per, was a public benefactor: and I must add, that I have never yet heard the fairness or temper of my publication called into doubt. If my doctrines were formed to abide the test of scrutiny, it was well: if they were refuted, I should still have occasion to rejoice, in having procured to the public the benefit of that refutation, of so much additional disquisition and knowledge. Unprophetic as I was, I rested in perfect tranquillity, and suspected not that I should be dragged to public odium, and made an example to deter all future enquirers from the practice of unshackled speculation. I was no man of the world; I was a mere student, connected with no party, elected into no club, exempt from every imputation of political conspiracy or cabal. I therefore believed that, if my speculations were opposed, and if my opponent were a man of the least pretention to character and decorum, I should be at least opposed in that style of fairness and respect which is so eminently due from one literary enquirer to another.

My attention was not much excited by what I have already called the preliminaries of the combat. Mr. Mackintosh was the first person who awakened me to any strictness of attention. How much then was I surprised at finding his printed preliminary Discourse written, in such parts as had any allusion to my doctrines, in a spirit lofty, overbearing and scornful, such as that I scarcely recollected its parallel in the publications of the eighteenth century! I had been for some years in habits of friendly intercourse with Mr. Mackintosh; the frankness of my disposition led me therefore immediately to address him with a letter of expostulation.

January 27, 1799

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE just read with mingled emotions of pleasure and pain your Discourse of the Law of Nature and Nations. My emotions of pleasure, you will take, and you are well entitled to do so as the just tribute of my admiration for the comprehensiveness

of your talent and the profoundness of your discernment. An enquiry into the source of my emotions of pain[1] will probably not be very interesting to you, and I therefore (except in one incidental particular) pass it over in silence.

Will you give me leave to enquire (I hope you will not impute to an impertinence of disposition, a question I should scarcely have deigned to address to a less man than yourself) who are the speculators whom you designate by the following epithets? — Superficial and most mischievous socialists, p. 24- of fatal controversies, p. 30- men who, in pursuit of a transient popularity, have exerted their art to disguise the most miserable commonplaces in the shape of paradox, p. 32- promulgators of absurd and monstrous systems, p. 35- of abominable and pestilential paradoxes, p. 36- shallow metaphysicians — sophists swelled with insolent conceit, p. 36 — savage desolators, p. 38[2]."

If these epithets are meant to apply to Rousseau, Turgot, or Condorcet, will you condescend to inform me how it is you have discovered, that their motives were less pure or less philanthropical, than those of Grotius, Puffendorff, Wolff, Burlamaqui or Vattel, who are the subjects of your applause? It would perhaps be presumption in me to suppose that any portion of this invective was designed to light upon myself; but, if it were, I must be allowed to answer that, however weak my speculations may be, I am not conscious of their dishonesty.

Again, supposing the motives of the authors you seem disposed to treat as heterodox were less pure than those of the orthodox (and I bold no motives to be unmixed), is it the soundest

[1] I knew not before the extent of the change in Mr. Mackintosh's system of politics.

[2] Of this writer, Dr. Parr states it as one prominent characteristic, to "refute without acrimony, p. 114." Whether he refutes or not, for obvious reasons I do not take upon me to determine; but that he is acrimonious, no one reader, I believe, of these pages, not excepting Mr. Mackintosh himself, will pretend to deny.

stroyed by neglect and improper food, and that, after pining away a few weeks, or a year or two of existence, they perish miserably without any chance of approaching maturity. The parents, in many classes of the community, scarcely able to maintain themselves in life, if they provide food in sufficient quantity for their children, can at least a pay no attention to its being properly adapted to their age or constitution. The married woman, whose only shelter is a hovel or a garret, if she is unfortunate enough to be prolific, is so harassed by the continual labour which her circumstances require of her, that her penury becomes visible to every spectator in the meagreness of her shattered frame. She can pay no regularity of attention to the infants she brings into the world. They are dragged about by children a little older than themselves, or thrust into some neglected corner, unable to call, or to seek, for the supply of their wants. They are bruised, they are maimed, their bodies distorted into horrible deformity or their internal structure suffering some unseen injury, which renders them miserable while they live, and ordinarily hurries them to an early grave. This is undoubtedly a sufficient check upon increasing population. But there is nothing in this which any political reasoner will recommend to imitation. This is probably the principal of those checks arising from misery and vice, which the writer of the treatise before us had in his contemplation.

Another check upon increasing population which operates very powerfully and extensively in the country we inhabit, is that sentiment, whether virtue, prudence or pride, which continually restrains the universality, and frequent repetition of the marriage contract. Early marriages in this country between a grown up boy and girl are of uncommon occurrence. Every one, possessed in the most ordinary degree of the gift of foresight, deliberates long before he engages in so momentous a transaction. He asks himself again and again how he shall be able to subsist the offspring of his union. I am persuaded it very rarely happens in England that a marriage takes place, without

bers of a happy community. I am answering a book of calculation, and therefore must repel its doctrines by the same means with which they are inforced. All I propose by the estimate here presented is to show, that the evil is not so urgent, nor the limitation so narrow, as a terrified imagination might lead us to conceive.

The general doctrine of the Essay on Population is so clear, and rests on such irresistible evidence, that this circumstance, together with its novel and unexpected tenour, is apt to hurry away the mind, and take from us all power of expostulation and distinction. When however we have recovered from our earliest impression of astonishment, the first thing which is likely to strike every reflecting mind is, that this excess of power in the principle of population over the principle of subsistence, has never in any part instance, in any quarter or age of the world, produced those great and astonishing effects, that total breaking up of all the structures and maxims of society which the Essay leads us to expect from it, in certain cases in future. Its operation has been silent, graduated and unremarked; so much so, that no former political writer has touched upon it but by incident, and it was reserved to the year of the Christian era 179S fully and adequately to call our attentionto its effects. Yet, as the author of the Essay on Population very properly remarks, this is no new case or remote speculation. In all old settled countries, the measure of population continually trenches on the measure of subsistence, and the actual quantity of provisions falls somewhat short of what would be necessary for the vigorous and comfortable support of the inhabitants.

It is therefore well worthy of our attention to enquire, respecting such a country as England, where, according to the majority of political calculators, population has long been at a stand, by what checks it is kept down within the limits it is found to observe.

One of the checks continually operating is, that great numbers of the children who are born in this country are half de-

and most manly way of refuting an author's paradoxes, to load his character with odium, and his doctrines with a frightful catalogue of consequences, pernicious and immoral? I am the more surprised at this in the Discourse before me, as, in the personal intercourse which for years I have been so fortunate as to bold with you, I have always found you the closest, the most dispassionate and candid disputant I ever encountered..... I should really be happy to meet you as a literary antagonist; for I should rejoice to have the mistakes into which I may have fallen corrected, and I know no man so competent to the task as yourself. But, if you condescend to refute my errors, 1 should very earnestly with that you would console me, by the liberality and generosity of your manner, for the philosophical patience which the task of seeing his systems demolished would require from any human being. It would be a consolation, not to my personal feelings merely, but upon general principles.

No man, who, after having meditated upon philosophical subjects, gives the result of his reflections to the world, believes that, for having done so, be deserves to be treated like a highwayman or an assassin: and this sort of invective, I think, upon further consideration, you will not deny, contributes much more effectually to the spread of malignity and persecution than of science and truth.

I am, with great regard, yours, &c.

This letter, as being in the first instance my own, and in its application relating merely to the letter writer and the person to whom it is addressed, in a sort of public capacity, I hold myself at liberty to insert here for the purpose of illustrating the present argument. I do not feel that I am equally free upon the point of Mr. Mackintosh's answer. I shall therefore only say that, if it were inserted, it would not fail, provided it bad been followed by a correspondent conduct, to redound in the highest degree to the credit of the writer.

I soon found however that what I had written totally failed of the effect, of moderating the indecorum and violence of Mr.

Mackintosh's style. I was not present at the first of the Lectures delivered in Lincoln's Inn Hall. I attended the two or three following; and I should have continued my attendance, bad it not been that the expressions, which I believed to be personal in the speaker, and which I saw were understood as personal to me by many of the hearers, were so continual, and had so little moderation, as made it utterly improper for me to be the silent spectator and witness of an attack, to which from its nature and circumstances I could not reply.

But, though I ceased to be an auditor of Mr. Mackintosh's Lectures, I did not cease to hear of the spirit and temper with which they were marked. One person in particular, upon the accuracy of whose observation and the fidelity of whose memory I could entirely rely, reported to me, not constantly, but from time to time, the style in which they went on. From his report, and that of many others, I found that they were in a state of continual improvement, in every thing that could do honour to a Dominican or an inquisitor.

One sentence, though in reality there was little room for the exercise of choice, struck me so forcibly that I instantly took it down from the mouth of this person, who had as instantly visited me after the Lecture was over. By an accident not worth mentioning I loft this minute from my possession, some time after it was made. Were it now before me, I should have no hesitation to vouch for its accuracy to the minutest syllable. Quoting, as I am now compelled to do, from my own memory of its contents, I can only answer for giving a faithful representation of its spirit and sentiment. "Gentlemen," said Mr. Mackintosh, "may be assured that, if these self-called philosophers once came to have power in their hands, it would speedily be seen that the consequences I draw from their doctrines, are not, as they would have us believe, far-fetched inferences; they would be seen to be realized in action; and those who maintain them would be found as ferocious as blood- thirsty, and full of personal ambition, as the worst of those men who sheltered

cumstances it is plain, that every man and woman in the community might be permitted to marry, and that every marriage might be allowed to produce two children. This would merely keep up the population to its present standard. In reality more than this might be allowed. Of the children born into the world in the most favourable circumstances, I believe not more than two out of three may be expected to be reared to maturity. Every marriage then might be permitted to produce three children. But further than this. Every marriage is not found to be prolific. There will be natural defects on the side of the man, or on that of the woman. Again; every man and woman in the community will not marry. The prejudice which at present prevails against a single life, and the notion so generally received, that a man or woman without progeny, has failed in discharging one of their unquestionable duties to society, frightens many men and women into an inclination towards the marriage state. This prejudice the doctrines of the Essay on Population, when they shall come to be generally diffused and admitted, will tend to remove. Add to this, that every mind will not meet with its mate. Some men will not be gross enough to marry from mere appetite, and too delicate easily to believe that they have met with the woman, whose mind claims kindred and equality with theirs. If this subject were further pursued it would lead to many observations and details, curious and important in their own nature, but which would prove repulsive to the general reader, and would more properly find place in a treatise of medicine or animal economy. From these added particulars it appears, that the average of three children to every prolific marriage would not keep up the present state of population. I believe we might allow four. Hence it follows that, whatever becomes of the general question of checks, the case is not altogether so alarming and tremendous, is by some persons it has been apprehended to be.

It is not necessary to regard the calculation here presented as a rule to be laid down for the conduct of the individual mem-

however to give a comprehensive, though compendious, view of the subject. This catalogue might be further enlarged.

It is right however that, in addition to these particulars, we should hypothetically take into the account, the resources of the human mind; the inventions and discoveries with which almost every period of literature and refinement is pregnant, rendering familiar and obvious to every understanding, what previously to such discoveries presumption and ignorance had pronounced to be impossible; and the vast multitude of such discoveries which may be expected before we arrive at the chance of making experiment of a state of equality and universal benevolence. Were it not for the impression which the ingenuousness of this author and some of his readers has made upon me, I should certainly have pronounced, that a man must be strangely indifferent or averse to schemes of extraordinary improvement in society, who made this a conclusive argument against them, that, when they were realised, they might peradventure be of no permanence and duration.

Let us however consider the case, such as in the present state of political science we are able to make it, and putting out of our view those harsh and displeasing remedies, which have no further recommendation than that they are better than misery and vice.

Many persons with whom I have conversed, adverting on the one hand to the boundless power of the principle of population, and on the other recollecting that, in a state of continual advance in liberty and justice, the period must come, when public safety would imperiously require that the principle of increase should be suspended, have seen the necessary checks under a more frightful aspect, and as more nearly and urgently pressing and hemming us round, than is by any means the case. This error may easily be corrected.

Let us suppose that population was at this moment, in England or elsewhere, so far advanced, that the public welfare demanded that it should no further increase. Under these cir-

themselves under similar pretentions in a neighboring country. "I do not mean to rebuke any single expression in Mr. Mackintosh's Lectures; I enter my protest against the whole spirit with which they were animated, and by which almost every single Lecture was in a greater or less degree characterized.

Among many objections that I felt against this species of declamation, one was as follows. Mr. Mackintosh's plan, it seems, did not admit of his naming specifically any individual political writer of the present day. What was the consequence of this? If he had named me, for instance, old habits of familiarity and intercourse would have obliged him to interpose something kind and considerate, respecting a man who had been, and who wished still to continue his friend. If he bad named me, or any one circumstanced as I was, he would have been obliged to make some concession to the intellectual powers of a man, whom he judged worthy to be taken as the eternal subject of his refutation. But, sheltering himself in generalities, he thought himself entitled to revolve incessantly between the extremes of contempt and abhorrence, without one interval to show that he regarded his adversary as possessing the form or characteristics of a human creature.

It was my fortune to be, among English writers, the most conspicuous and generally known of those whom Mr. Mackintosh and his friends have nicknamed advocates of the New Philosophy. This is no boast; it is on the present occasion, and in the circle of the auditory in Lincoln's Inn Hall, like the situation of Milton's devil in Pandemonium, a "painful preeminence." The consequence was however, that every sentence of invective against the New Philosophy, was by many of Mr. Mackintosh's hearers as faithfully applied to me, as if the lecturer bad spoken of me by name.

There are two things, especially worthy of notice, as inseparable from this mode of attack upon a political writer in a series of Lectures. First, the attack proceeds a uniform and uninterrupted style without admitting of an answer. Three times a

week did Mr. Mackintosh address an audience of one hundred persons, dissecting and mangling my sentiments and reasonings as he pleased, without the possibility of my in any way checking his career. If Mr. Mackintosh bad printed his animadversions as I printed my Enquiry, I might have examined them deliberately, and replied or not, accordingly as I judged they called for reply. Now, having ventured only to quote a single sentence, Mr. Mackintosh may shelter himself under the confessed inaccuracy with which I have represented the words of his sentence, and from thence may conclude, if he pleases, that I have misrepresented the spirit. But further; if Mr. Mackintosh bad printed, instead of spoken his animadversions he would have found himself, in spite of his new-born zeal, checked in some of his sublimest flights, and reduced in a certain degree within the bounds of propriety and decency.

Another feature, inseparable from an attack, which is at least generally construed as personal, in a series of public Lectures, is to be found in this known fact, the contagiousness of human passions when expressed in society. Of this at all events an Anti-Jacobin ought to have been completely aware. When Mr. Mackintosh was three times a week expressing uncontradicted in all the richness of his varied phraseology his contempt and abhorrence of me and my writings, and representing me as a wretch, who only wanted the power, in order to prove himself as infernal as Robespierre, how did he know that be was not inciting audience to personal outrage, to the tearing me to pieces? Or, let it be granted that his audience were by their education and condition in life secured from these excesses, he was at least industriously planting, as for as was in his power, a dislike and abhorrence towards me in every one of their breasts. I am hot much in the habit of indulging personal alarms; but, where the public is concerned, I confess I have no great affection for a mob, either vulgar or polite.

From Mr. Mackintosh I proceed to Dr. Parr.

not men the prospect of so easy a method of getting rid of their children."

I do not think there is any truth in these conclusions. They are in direct hostility to the main theory of the Essay on Population. According to that theory population is always held closely in check by the measures of subsistence, and nothing can cause a nation greatly to increase in numbers, but a prospect of an obvious and easy enlargement of those measures. Lycurgus limited the number of citizens in his republic. Something of a similar nature took place in Athens. If China, as late observers have informed us, is, and has long been so populous, that every inch of ground is highly cultivated, and the very surface of the rivers is covered with beds of earth, and compelled to yield its contribution to the flock of subsistence, it is impossible but that, in such a country, population must be at a stand.

But, if the conclusions of Hume were as correct, as they appear to me to be loose and unfounded, the remark would not be essential. It would still be true that the exposing of children is in its own nature an expedient perfectly adequate to the end for which it has been cited.

This was the expedient resorted to by the ancients and the Chinese as a check upon the principle of population. Other expedients may be found in the descriptions and records of other parts of the world. In the island of Ceylon for example, it appears to be a part of the common law of the country, that no woman shall be a mother before she is thirty, and they accordingly have their methods for procuring abortions, which, we are told, are perfectly innoxious. I do not love to enter into the minutiae of these expedients. Those who are curious on the subject may refer to what travellers have related on this article.

I have not introduced these particulars, as seemingly to me necessary to the solution of the difficulty proposed. It was just

To discover whether exactly the same propositions of vice and misery which now obtain, are requisite for the preservation of the great structure of human society, let us open our eyes to survey the records of ancient history and to consider what is perhaps now taking place in different parts of the globe. One of the greatest evils which can infest political disquisition, is the imagination that what takes place in the spot and period in which we live, is essential to the general regulation and well-being of mankind. What was called the exposing of children prevailed to a very extensive degree in the ancient world. The same practice continues to this hour in China.

I know that the prejudices and habits of modern Europe are strongly in arms against this institution. I grant that it is very painful and repulsive to the imagination of persons educated as I and my countrymen have been. And I hope, and trust, that no such expedient will be necessary to be resorted to, in any state of society which shall ever be introduced in this or he surrounding countries.

Yet, if we compare it with misery and vice, the checks pleaded for in the Essay on Population, what shall we say? I contemplate my species with admiration and reverence. When I think of Socrates, Solon and Aristide among the Greeks, when I think of Fabricus, Cincinnatus and Cicero among the Romans, above all, when I think of Milton, Shakespeare, Bacon and Burke, and when I reflect on the faculties and capacities everywhere, in different degrees, inherent in the human form, I am obliged to confess,–that I know not of how extraordinary productions the mysterious principle to which we owe our existence is capable, but that my imagination is able to represent to itself nothing more illustrious and excellent than man. But it is not man, such as I frequently see him, that excites much of my veneration. 1 know that the majority of those I see, are corrupt, low-minded, besotted, prepared for degradation and vice, and with scarcely any vestige about early marriages could scarcely be general, had

And here I must first remark, that several of the observations I had occasion to make in attempting to delineate the history of apostacy, do not apply to Dr. Parr. He is not nn apostate, or not an apostate in the sense in which the persons there referred to are such. His head and his logic have, I believe, scarcely ever been favourable to experiments, or to speculations which might lead to experiments, for meliorating the political conditions of mankind. I have always found him the advocate of old establishments, and what appeared to me old abuses. But in this respect his heart seemed to my apprehension much better than his logic; the generosity of his sentiments and the warmth of his temper have often led him to express partialities as honourable to him, and wishes as little likely to please our political superior, as if his creed had been more favourable to those objects I am accustomed to love.

But, though I do not accuse Dr. Parr of tergiversation, or tergiversation of the same sort as theirs whose conduct he is now imitating, yet (if he will permit me so far to compliment his talents as to compare them to whatever is most awful in the elements of nature) I will accuse hin, as King Lear reproaches the angry skies, that, if he were not of my political kindred, and "owed me no subscription, yet I call him servile" auxiliary, that he has "joined his high-engendred battles" to theirs.

All that I am now commenting upon, is the time which Dr. Parr has chosen for his attack. There is nothing which I can perceive in the public situation of things that required it. Jacobinism was destroyed; its party, as a party, was extinguished; its tenets were involved in almost universal unpopularity and odium; they were deserted by almost every man, high or low, in the island of Great Britain. This is the time Dr. Parr has chosen to muster his troops, and sound the trumpet of war.

Thus stands the public view of the period. As to myself, after having for four years heard little else than the voice of commendation, I was at length attacked from every side, and in a style which defied all moderation and decency. No vehicle was

too mean, no language too coarse and insulting, by which to convey the venom of my adversaries. The abuse was so often repeated, that at length the bystanders, and perhaps the parties themselves, began to believe what they had so vehemently asserted. The cry spread like a general infection, and I have been told that not even a petty novel for boarding-school misses now ventures to aspire to favour, unless it contain some expressions of dislike and abhorence to the new philosophy and its chief (or shall I say its most voluminous?) English adherent. I do then accuse Dr. Parr that, instead of attempting to give the tone to his contemporaries, as his abilities well entitle him to do, he has condescended to join a cry, after it had already become loud and numerous.

In what I shall think proper to say expressly on the topic of Dr. Parr's Spital Sermon, I shall first lay before the reader a specimen of the style and spirit in which it is written, and then comment upon so much of the argument of it, as I may chance to feel myself particularly interested in.

It may appear at first sight a little surprising that all there is of gall, intolerance and contempt in Dr. Parr's publication, is contained in that part of it which was delivered by him from the pulpit in the character of a Christian preacher, and that whatever is gentlemanlike, liberal or candid is thrown back into the Notes. It would not perhaps be very difficult, if it were necessary to my disquisition, to account for this. I cannot however avoid using this circumstance in illustration of my argument respecting Mr. Mackintosh: that, while men intrench themselves in generalities, the eloquence of invective is too apt to find a ready way to their lips; but, when they name individuals, they will necessarily, if not dead to every feeling of ingenuousness, yield some attention to the dictates of good temper and decency. In Dr. Parr's publication, I am not directly spoken of in the Sermon, but, when he comes to the Notes, he, in a way which is entitled to my commendation, names the individual whom the reference concerns, and quotes his words.

they owe to the community. On the contrary it now appears to be rather the man who rears a numerous family, that has in some degree transgressed the consideration he owes to the public welfare. Population is always, as this author observes, in all old-settled countries (putting out of our view the temporary occurrence of extraordinary calamities, which however may be expected to be rapidly repaired), in some degree of excess beyond the means of subsistence: there is constantly a smaller quantity of provisions, than would be requisite for the comfortable and vigorous support of all the inhabitants.

The checks upon population which are honoured with the patronage of the author of this essay, are vice and misery. Here it is obvious to the remark of every man, that we can scarcely select checks which shall have a less seducing and agreeable appearance, or fewer intrinsic recommendations to plead in their behalf. Thus the author, in correspondence to the habitual fairness of his disquisitions, affords every advantage to such as shall feel disposed to enquire into the doctrine of substitutes.

Is it necessary that we should always preserve the precise portion of vice and misery which are now to be found in the world, under pain of being subjected to the most terrible calamities? The author very truly says, that his inferences are in a state of open war against every "extraordinary improvement in society." Not only what Mr. Mackintosh styles the "abominable and pestilential paradoxes" of Political Justice, but every generous attempt for any important melioration of the condition of mankind, is here at stake. The advocates of old establishments and old abuses, could not have found a doctrine, more to their heart's content, more effectual to shut out all reform and improvement for ever. Let then every ardent and philanthropical friend to the best interests of mankind, whatever may be his particular speculation and favourite project, go along with me in the investigation of our author's conclusions.

addressing readers, many of whom never bestowed a perusal upon the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, and the rest, if they ever entered with ardour into the feelings that book was intended to excite, have doubtless, in the interval which has since elapsed, had their ardour cooled by the operation of time. The intercourse of the world has a powerful tendency to blunt in us the sentiments of enthusiasm, and the spirit of romance; and, whatever truth we may suppose there to be in the doctrine of the progressive nature of man, it is so far remote from the transactions of ordinary life, and the feelings which impel us in such transactions to bend to the routine of circumscribed and unspeculative men, that it can with difficulty preserve its authority in the midst of so strong a contagion. Yet I am now obliged to recur to the romantic and unpracticed theories of the Political Justice, nakedly, abruptly, without any preparation or interval to mitigate the prejudices of the reader. I can therefore only intreat him to recollect, that the question how far they are romantic or impracticable in other views does not now fall under our consideration, but that we are simply to enquire in what degree they are affected, by the discoveries of the author respecting the principle of population.

Let it be recollected, that I admit the ratios of the author in their full extent, and that I do not attempt in the slightest degree to vitiate the great foundations of his theory. My undertaking confines itself to the task of repelling his conclusions.

I admit fully that the principle of population in the human species is in its own nature energetic and unlimited, and that the safety of the world can no otherwise be maintained, but by a constant and powerful check upon this principle. This idea demolishes at once many maxims which have been long and unsuspectedly received into the vulgar code of morality, such as that it is the first duty of princes to watch for the multiplication of their subjects, and that a man or woman, who passes the term of life in a condition of celibacy, is to be considered as having failed to discharge one of the principal obligations

The following expressions therefore are drawn exclusively from the body of the Sermon. " The philanthropic system is accompanied by a long and portentous train of evils, which have been negligently overlooked or insidiously disguised by its panegyrifts, p. 2.- In the motives by which the philanthropist is impelled, the kind affections may be so writhed round the unsocial,- that, if our common sense did not revolt from the incongruous mass, scarcely any process could separate affectation from hypocrisy , delusion from malignity, that which deserves only contempt or pity from that which calls aloud for reprobation, p. 3." -The champions of this system are "men, neither altogether asleep in folly, nor sufficiently awake in the true light of understanding, p.5.-To fill the capacious mind of a modern sage, who is rapt in beatific visions of universal benevolence, p. 9 — If the representations we have lately heard of universal philanthropy served only to amuse the fancy, we might be tempted to smile at them as groundless and harmless, p. 10.- Whether we are induced by ——, or by a supposed proficiency in philosophy, to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, and to seek theing-school misses now ventures to aspire to favour, unless it contain some expressions of dislike and abhorence to the new philosophy and its chief (or shall I fay its most voluminous?) English adherent. I do then accuse Dr. Parr that, instead of attempting to give the tone to his contemporaries, as his abilities well entitle him to do, he has condescended to join a cry, after it had already become loud and numerous.

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principle of population, which has so perpetual a tendency to proceed beyond the limits of the means of subsistence, is kept down in this and other countries, so as, to be attended scarcely with any perceptible increase? And his answer cannot be accused of not being broad and ample enough to cover the difficulty. He states it to be "the grinding law of necessity; misery, and the fear of misery, p. 176." And elsewhere he appears willing to assign two causes, which undoubtedly can never exist separately from each other, vice and misery.

The inference from these positions is, that the political superintendents of a community are bound to exercise a paternal vigilance and care over these two great means of advantage and safety to mankind; and that no evil is more to be dreaded, than that we should have too little vice and misery in the world to confine the principles of population within its proper sphere. Of consequence every attempt greatly to improve the condition of mankind is to be viewed with an eye of jealousy; and, above all, a scheme such as in the fervour of my heart I endeavoured to delineate, the tendency of which is to drive all vice and misery from the face of the earth, would, if it could be realised, prove to be one of the most intolerable calamities with which the human species can be afflicted. The author does not exult in this view of the subject. He is pleased to say, "The system which Mr. Godwin proposes is, without doubt, the most beautiful and engaging of any that has yet appeared.–In short, it is impossible to contemplate the whole of this fair structure, without emotions of delight and admiration, accompanied with an ardent longing for the period of its accomplishment, *Essay,* p. 174,5." And he can only express his regret, that "the great obstacle in the way to any extraordinary improvement in society, is of a nature that we can never hope to overcome, p. 346." The author therefore cannot be displeased with me for attempting the relief of so "disheartening" a consideration.

The chief, perhaps I might say the only, difficulty I feel in entering upon this subject, is that I must consider myself as

millions. Well, says the author of the Essay on Population, let us be liberal in our concessions, let us not risk the enforcing our principle with too great strictness, and let us suppose that, by a more enlightened study of agriculture, by the breaking up of waste lands, and by various other expedients, the soil of England shall, twenty years hence, be able to submit this vast accession of inhabitants.

Let us go on again and again in the same liberal style of concession in which we set out. We are far from being able to anticipate all the expedients man is able to discover, and the resources of his ingenuity. Let us imagine that, as the first twenty years produced additional subsistence adequate to the support of eight millions of added inhabitants, the next twenty years shall produce subsistence for eight millions more, and so on, in arithmetical ratio, or the ratio of addition, for ever. This is an ample allowance, as the soil of England, as well as the surface of the globe, is limited, and contains only an assignable number of acres. But this conclusion presents to us in the most striking light, the inadequateness of the principle of subsistence to meet and bear up against the principle of population. Population, left to itself, would go in the ratio of 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, and subsistence, upon a supposition certainly sufficiently favourable, only in the ratio of 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, for every twenty years successively. I have found it most convenient, both for the sake of clearness and brevity, to state the main doctrine of the Essay on Population in my own words. I hope I have done justice to the meaning of the author: I am sure I have not designedly misrepresented it. It is a doctrine too full of serious reflections to the political speculator, and of too much importance to the best interests of mankind, not to impose upon every one who meddles with it, a rigid duty of fairness, impartiality and candour.

The way in which the author of this treatise endeavours to bring his arguments to bear upon the doctrines of Political Justice is as follows. How is it, he is led to enquire, that the

of our pretentions will awaken suspicion in, &c. p. 11.- Socrates did not misemploy his talents in wily insinuations, or declamatory harangues, to the discredit and gratitude of patriotism, *ditto*.

I now dismiss the direct consideration of what is personal and illiberal in Dr. Parr's Sermon, and proceed to a short comment upon the train of his argument.

Persons not versed in the mysteries of this controversy, may perhaps be at a loss to understand, why what Dr. Parr calls the doctrine of "universal philanthropy" should awaken in lawyers and divines, in reviewers and scribblers for the circulating libraries, such fierceness of invective, and such vehemence of reprobation. I proceed to examine how far it deserves the treatment it has experienced.

And here, that the question may be placed at once in the clearest light to the most uninformed reader, I will set out with transcribing a passage from the preface to a book, published by me in December 1799, and entitled, "St. Leon : a Tale of the Sixteenth Century;" which passage is also transcribed by Dr. Parr, in the Notes to his Sermon, p. 52, though from some cause, he has not specified the book from which the quotation is taken.

"Some readers of my graver productions will perhaps, in perusing these little volumes, accuse me of inconsistency; the affections and charities of private life, being every where in this publication a topic of the warmest eulogium, while in the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice they seemed to be treated with no degree of indulgence and favour. In answer to this objection all I think it necessary to say on the present occasion, is that, for more than four years, I have been anxious for opportunity and leisure to modify some of the earlier chapters of that work in conformity to the sentiments inculcated in this. Not that I see cause to make any change respecting the principle of justice, or any thing else fundamental to the system there delivered; but that I apprehend domestic and private af-

fections inseparable from the nature of man, and from what may be styled the culture of the heart, and am fully persuaded that they are not incompatible with a profound and active sense of justice in the mind of him that cherishes them. The way in which these seemingly jarring principles may be reconciled, is in part pointed out in a recent publication of mine [Memoirs of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Woman, ch. vi. p. 90. second edition], the words. of which I will here therefore take the liberty to repeat. They are these:

"A sound morality requires that *nothing human should be regarded by us as indifferent*; but it is impossible we should not feel the strongest interest for those persons whom we know most intimately, and whose welfare and sympathies are united to our own.

True wisdom will recommend to us individual attachments; for with them our minds are more thoroughly maintained in activity and life than they can be under the privation of them, and it is better that man should be a living being, than a stock or a stone. True virtue will sanction this recommendation; since it is the object of virtue to produce happiness; and since the man who lives in the midst of domestic relations, will have many opportunities of conferring pleasure, minute in the detail, yet not trivial in the amount, without interfering with the purposes of general benevolence. Nay, by kindling his sensibility, and harmonizing his soul, they may be expected, if he is endowed with a liberal and manly spirit, to render him more prompt in the service of strangers and the public."

ST. LEON, *Preface, p.* viii.

Here is a full and explicit avowal of all I acknowledge or perceive to be erroneous upon this point in the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice; and this is the point, and the only point, which Dr. Parr, after he knew of my avowed purpose to introduce into it certain essential modifications, has attempted to refute, with such superciliousness of rebuke, and vehemence of invective. In fact it seems to me to be by a very nice shade

The foundations of the discovery contained in this treatise are exceedingly simple. Every one, whose attention is for a moment called to the subject, will immediately perceive, that the principle of multiplication in the human species is without limits, and that, if it tends to any increase in the numbers of mankind, it must have that tendency, independently of any extrinsic causes checking the growth of population, for ever.

Dr.. Franklin has found, in the result of a series of enquiries set on foot in the new-settled colonies of North America, that the increase of population among them is so rapid, that they constantly double the number of their inhabitants in twenty or five-and-twenty years. Under the long established governments of Europe, population in some instances is at a stand, and in others is thought rather to tend to diminution. The only cause of this difference is probably to be traced to this circumstance, that, in old-settled countries, an increase in the number of children is found in almost all instances to be a burden to the parents, and, in countries which are on the point of being settled for the first time, they are the most precious wealth which the settler can have to his lot. The genuine and unadulterated operation of the principle of population is therefore to be taken from new-settled countries. Hence it appears that the progress is in the nature of a geometrical ratio, or 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, doubling itself every twenty years.

Having thus ascertained and fixed the principle of Population, we come next to consider the measures of subsistence. If the latter do not keep pace with or at least press closely on the footsteps of the former, the most dreadful calamities and disorders must be expected to ensue. To ascertain this point then, let us suppose the actual produce of the soil of England precisely capable of feeding its present inhabitants, and let us suppose that the number of those inhabitants is eight millions. It has already appeared that, in twenty years, the principle of population, if operating without a check, would cause those inhabitants to double their present number, that is, to be sixteen

discussion of its principles. Perhaps I owed to these persons to have written something expressly on that point. But I own I never could persuade myself to see any adequate reason for doing so. It stood out so obvious and glaring to my mind, that the reasonings of the Essay on Population did not bear with any particular stress upon my hypothesis, that I thought other men, who had any considerable motive to wish for information, ought to be able to make out the point for themselves, without calling on the original assertor of the hypothesis for assistance. I am happy however to have this opportunity obtruded on me; to make a few brief observations on an argument which I was by no means sure did not call on me for some explanation, independently of the occurrence of such an opportunity.

I approach, as I have already said, the author of the Essay on Population with a sentiment of unfeigned approbation and respect. The general strain of his argument does the highest honour to the liberality of his mind. He has neither laboured to excite hatred nor contempt against me or my tenets: he has argued the questions between us, just as if they had never been made a theme for political party and the intrigues of faction: he has argued, just as if he had no end in view, but the investigation of evidence, and the development of truth. This author has a claim, perhaps still higher, upon my respect. With the most unaffected simplicity of manner, and disdaining every parade of science, he appears to me to have made as unquestionable an addition to the theory of political economy, as any writer for a century past. The grand propositions and outline of his work will, I believe, be found not less conclusive and certain, than they are new. For myself I cannot refuse to take some pride, in so far as by my writings I gave the occasion, and furnished an incentive, to the producing so valuable a treatise.

Dr. Franklin seems first to have collected the facts upon which our author's hypothesis proceeds; but he has not given the slightest hint of those inferences which are drawn from them in the Essay on Population.

that Dr. Parr and I differ upon this point: but this is not the first time in which the well-known maxim has been illustrated, that "the smaller is the space by which a man is divided from you in opinion, with the more fury and intemperance will he often contend about it.

I will now, first, attempt to ascertain the quantity of *pestilential and destructive consequences* which were like to have flowed from this error in my Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, "for such offences I am charged withal;" and, secondly, I will enquire into the soundness of what Dr. Parr has "heard remarked by persons well skilled in the tactics of controversy, that, after the surrender of so many outworks [as are contained in the point above specified] the citadel itself [the great purpose aimed at in the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice] is scarcely tenable." *Sermon,* p. 52.

In entering on the first of these questions it is right we should have a clear idea how far my admissions already recited militate with any thing advanced in my original treatise. The idea of justice there contained is, that it is a role requiring from us such an application of "our talents, our understanding, our strength, and our time[3]," as shall, in the result produce the greatest sum of pleasure, to the sum of those beings who are capable of enjoying the sensation of pleasure.–Now, if I divide my time into portions, and consider how the majority of the smaller portions may be so employed, as most effectually to procure pleasure to others, nothing is more obvious, than that many of these portions cannot be employed so effectually in procuring pleasure, as to my immediate connections and familiars: he therefore who would be the best moral economist of his time, must employ much of it in seeking the advantage and content of those, with whom he has most frequent intercourse. Accordingly it is there maintained, that the external action recommended by this, and by the commonly received systems of

[3] Political Justice Book If. Chap. 11. p. 135, third edition.

morality, will in the generality of cases be the same, all the difference lying in this, that the motives exciting to action, upon the one principle, and the other, will be essentially different.

Here, according to my present admission, lies all the error of which I am conscious, in the original statement in the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice I would now say that, "in the generality of cares," not only the external action, but the motive, ought to be nearly the same as in the commonly received systems of morality; that I ought not only, "in ordinary cases, to provide for my wife and children, my brothers and relations, before I provide for strangers, p. 132," but that it would be well that my doing so, should arise from the operation of those private and domestic affections, by which through all ages of the world the conduct of mankind has been excited and directed.

There is a distinction to be introduced here, with which I am persuaded Dr. Parr is well acquainted, though for some reason he has chosen to pass over one side of this distinction entirely in silence in his Sermon, between the motive from which a virtuous action is to arise, and the criterion by which it is to be determined to be virtuous. The motives of human actions are feelings, or passions, or habits. Without feeling we cannot act at all; and without passion we cannot act greatly. But, when we proceed to ascertain whether our actions are entitled to the name of virtue, this can only be done by examining into their effects, by bringing them to a standard and comparing them with a criterion.

I cannot be mistaken in affirming that Dr. Parr and I are agreed about this criterion. All the difference is that Dr. Parr is most inclined to call this criterion by the name of " utility," and that I have oftenest called it by the name of "justice." Nor is the difference here complete; since I have frequently used his name for it, though I believe be has never employed mine. We are agreed however, as I have said, in this interesting and leading proposition, that "that action or principle which does not tend

I should be sorry to leave a loop-hole in the argument, out of which for Dr. Parr to escape. I add therefore a very few words. Mr. Green says, just after the passage above referred to, p.17, "I am fairly at issue with the advocates of the New System of Morals, by directly denying,–that it is practicable, as a project, to deduce moral distinction from this source," viz., "the tendency of its objects to promote or thwart the general good." Can any thing be less equivocal than this? Again: Mr. Green very fairly and spiritedly owns, that the authors to whom his reasonings are adverse, are "Law, Brown, Paley, Helvetius and Hume." Dr. Parr must therefore show how his opinion on the subject of utility differs from theirs, before he can make out that Mr. Green's pamphlet is not in as direct hostility to his creed, as to the leading principle of the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice.

The remainder of these pages shall be dedicated to an examination of so much of the reasoning in the Essay on the Principle of Population, as has been supposed by some persons to be subversive of the favourite doctrine of the Political Justice, the progressive nature of man. Dr. Parr says that the author of this treatise has "*demonstrated,* that Mr. Godwin's scheme of equality can never be realised, and that, were it realised, it soon would cease, and drive us back, from the transient blessings of an ill-directed and overstrained benevolence, to all the terrible evils of the most corrupt and ferocious selfishness, *Spital Sermon,* p. 143."–The word in italics is so marked by Dr. Parr.

And, independently of Dr. Parr's sanction, which is too easily gained, and too easily forfeited, for me to be disposed to lay much stress upon it, I had several reasons for wishing to pay a certain attention to the Essay on Population. Many persons who have been well disposed towards the theories of Political Justice, and whose ardent benevolence led them to contemplate with delight the prospects of unlimited improvement, have expressed themselves exceedingly perplexed with the reasonings of this treatise, and have invited and urged me to enter into the

system to stand invulnerable and impregnable to the latest ages. This principle is stated by the author with great explicitness, p. 16. It is "the opinion which has lately prevailed that virtue conflicts altogether in utility ; that it is the beneficial or pernicious tendency of an action, which alone constitutes it virtuous or vicious. If virtue is indeed only another name for the utility of an action, I am bound to look to utility, and to utility only, as a test of moral rectitude."

I remember, the first idea which arose to my mind, in that tone of carelessness and security which such an attack produced, was, I may leave this gentleman to be answered by Dr. Parr. I knew, if I knew any thing, that Dr. Parr regarded "utility, and utility only, as a test of moral rectitude," in common, as, Mr. Green very justly observes, with "Law, Brown, Paley, Helvetius and Hume, *Exam.* p. 20." I knew that Dr. Parr held this principle in high reverence, and made it the very frequent topic of his Panegyric. Yet to my astonishment, in the Notes to the Spital Sermon, p. 86, I find Mr. Green very warmly recommended for his "penetration, taste, and large views in philosophy," without the least notice of his having fallen, in the pamphlet applauded, into any considerable error. I can no otherwise account for this, than by supposing that whatever attacks the pernicious system of universal philanthropy, though at the expence of the leading article of Dr. Parr's creed, the very test and criterion of all virtue, is acceptable.–Dr. Parr has indeed gone further than this. He has undertaken to effect a consolidation of Mr. Green's doctrine to his own. He has inferred in his Notes, p. 72, the very passage of the Examination above recited; and, by the help of not quoting the second sentence, and of throwing an emphasis upon the words "altogether" and "alone" in the first, has attempted to extract a meaning out of the passage, of which I believe every impartial reader will pronounce it incapable.

I am loth to labour too much so irresistible a point as the opposition between Dr. Parr and Mr. Green, though I own

to produce a general overbalance of pleasurable sensation, is not virtuous."

What then is the most essential difference between us as to the principle of morals? Simply this, that Dr. Parr is inclined to lay most emphasis, and most frequently to remind those he would instruct, of the motive from which as human beings their moral actions must spring, and that I would oftenest and most earnestly remind them of the criterion by which they must ascertain whether their actions are virtuous. This is the great source of all Dr. Parr's declamation. This is the sufficient reason why I am to be.treated as a "wily insinuator, the child of affectation, entitled at best only to contempt or pity, a man to be smiled at as dealing in groundless and unauthorised hypotheses," to be sneered at, as only "not altogether asleep in folly, as a modern sage of capacious mind, rapt in beatific visions of benevolence;" and my tenets, as "accompanied with a long and portentous train of evils, which have been negligently overlooked, or insidiously disguised," by their author.

I grant however that there is a real difference between Dr. Parr and me in the point now stated. He, for some reason or other, has not once mentioned utility, the criterion of virtue, in his whole Sermon. I had been told indeed by one of his hearers that he had expressly contradicted and opposed that principle. I find in perusing the Sermon, that it is only passed over in silence; and I therefore take it for granted, that his real opinion on that point is just what it was accustomed to be. Dr. Parr in the mean time, certainly upon this, and probably upon most occasions is inclined to lay his principal stress upon the motives of virtue: I on the contrary regard it as the proper and eminent business of the moralist, to call the attention of his fellow men to the criterion of virtue. My mind indeed, in writing the Enquiry Concerning Justice, was so deeply and earnestly bent upon this, as to lead me to throw an undue degree of slight and discredit upon the ordinary, and what I would now call the most practicable, motives of virtue. I am certainly sorry

that the treatise I wrote is affected by this error; I feel, since Dr. Parr is so pleased to express it, "some degree of contrition," that the detection of this oversight "had not occurred to the writer before" the book was given to the world[4]. Yet my contrition is considerably the less, 1. because I never intended to set up for a dictator, or to form a party, who were to take my sayings for infallible: 2. because, though it would be well that no single treatise of morality or politics should be blotted with a single error, yet the existence and discovery of such errors has at least the salutary effect of teaching the reader, that he must exercise his own understanding, and not resign it into the hands of another: and 3. because I do not believe, that the error into which I fell, is accompanied with those tremendous and appalling consequences that "long and portentous train of evils," which Dr. Parr and his coadjutors have been pleased to ascribe to it.–The reasons for my not believing so are these.

The human mind is so constituted, as to render our actions in almost every case much more the creatures of sentiment and affection, than of the understanding. We all of us have, twisted with our very natures the principles of parental and filial affection, of love, attachment and friendship. I do therefore not think it the primordial duty of the moralist to draw forth all the powers of his wit in the recommendation of these.

Parental and filial affection, and the sentiments of love, attachment and friendship, are most admirable instruments in the execution of the purposes of virtue. But to each of them, in the great chart of a just moral conduct, must be assigned its sphere. They are all liable to excess. Each must be kept within its bounds, and have rigorous limits assigned it. I must take care not so to love, or so to obey my love to my parent or child, as to intrench upon an important and paramount public good.

Parental and filial affection, and the other principles above enumerated, are so far from composing the great topics by

[4] Sermon, p. 52

purpose. I affixed his name to the page, merely from a spirit of frankness, because in reality it was Jonathan Edwards's Essay there referred to; which first led me into the train of thinking on that point exhibited in Political Justice; and I believed it would be unmanly to suppress the name of my benefactor. If any person is either amused or instructed by Dr. Parr's distinction between virtue and true virtue, in order to prove that, though Jonathan Edwards denied gratitude to be true virtue, he admitted it to be virtue simply taken, I confess I have too much humanity to be willing to disturb his enjoyments.

The first pamphlet, I believe, which ushered in this tremendous war against philanthropy, is entitled an Examination of the Leading Principle of the New System of Morals, and was, some time after its publication, avowed as the production of Thomas Green, esq. I was considerably amused, and, as far as such a trifle could operate, confirmed in the way of thinking expressed in Political Justice, by the perusal of this essay; though I could not accept the compliment which Mr. Green pays me in the outset, where he says, " Nothing can be more thoroughly consistent," than the doctrines of this work. "Allow the first position (and it has every prepossession in its favour), and all the inferences follow so clearly and irresistibly, that it seems impossible to elude their force." He goes on, in a sort of attempt to imitate tile style of Mr. Burke, "All was sound, all was water-tight; not a cranny, not a chink for truth to slip out, or error to creep in," *Examination,* p. 13, 15. I could not, I say, accept this compliment; I never flattered myself that a work, so multifarious in its disquisitions, could be without inconsistencies; nor, to speak ingenuously, though I was not vain enough to presume that every thing I had said was truth, neither was I modest enough to imagine that my book, from beginning to end, contained no line but what was error.

My curiosity however was somewhat excited to know what my antagonist regarded as the leading principle of my system, which must be removed, under penalty of suffering the whole

to be proved, that in morality each man is entitled to a certain sphere for the exercise of his discretion; that it is to be desired that in this sphere he should be directed by a free, an instructed and independent judgment; and that it is necessary for the improvement of mankind, that no man or body of men should intrench upon this sphere but in cases of the most irresistable urgency. The inference drawn from these particulars is, that the less government we had, and the fewer were the instances in which government interfered with the proceedings of individuals, consistently with the presevation of the social state, better would it prove for the welfare and happiness of man. Nothing which has been admitted on the subject of the domestic affections, in the slightest degree interferes with these reasonings. As to the quantity of improvement which may from time to time be introduced into the social condition of man, and the extent to which the interferences of government may ultimately be proscribed, the decision of that question depends upon the degree in which the human species is susceptible of improvement in virtuous propensities.

I have been obliged to treat the proposition of the progressive nature of man in a very slight and imperfect manner in this place. I have rather furnished hints, which the reader may, as he feels inclined, apply to the doctrines and reasonings delivered in Political Justice. I thought so much due to such readers as may be disposed to attach a value to the theories delivered in that work; but I cannot do more, consistently with the plan and design of the present essay.

I know not whether it is of sufficient importance to notice the strictures Dr. Parr has made upon my marginal reference to Jonathan Edwards, in Political Justice, p. 129. *See Spital Sermon, p. 74.* Every candid reader will perceive that the reference is not made for the purpose of giving authority to what is there stated by me on the subject of gratitude. The name of Jonathan Edwards is much too far removed from general eminence and notoriety in English literature, to answer any such

which the doctrine of virtue is to be taught, that they are the proper characteristics of a mind, which has as yet remained an utter stranger to doctrine. The most ignorant parent, whose lips were never refreshed from the well of knowledge, whose mind was never expanded by sympathy with the disinterested and illustrious dead, or by a generous anxiety for the welfare of distant climes and unborn ages, will scarcely ever fail to love his child. He will often love him so much, even though he should be an idiot deformed and odious to the sight, or with the farest and most hateful propensities, that he will perhaps rather consent that millions should perish, than that this miserable minion of his dotage should suffer a moment's displeasure. I do not regard a parent of this sort with any strong feeling of approbation.

Patriotism, or the love of our country, will frequently operate in a similar way. With the majority perhaps of the human species, a kind of selfish impulse of pride and vain-glory, which assumes the form of patriotism, and represents to our imagination whatever is gained to our country as so much gained to our darling selves, leads to a spirit of hatred and all uncharitableness towards the countries around us. We rejoice in their oppression and make a jubilee, venting our joy in a hundred forms of extravagance, when the bleeding carcasses Of thousands of their miserable natives are strewed upon the plain. This sort of patriotism, in its simplest and most uninstructed exhibition, vents itself in tittering hisses, and perhaps casting stones at the unprotected foreigner as he passes along our streets. I do not regard a patriotism of this kind with much feeling of approbation.

A truly virtuous character is the combined result of regulated affections. These sentiments of which scarcely any human being is destitute, and of which we have much more frequent occasion to observe the excess than the defect, -the cultivation of these sentiments, I say, does not appear to me the principal office of moral discipline. For, after all, though I ad-

mit that the assiduities we employ for our children ought to be, and must be, the result of private and domestic affectations, yet it is not these affectations that determine them to be virtuous. They must, as has been already said, be brought to a standard, and tried by a criterion of virtue.

This criterion has been above described, and it is not perhaps of the utmost importance whether we call it utility, or justice, or, more periphrastically, the production of the greatest general good, the greatest public sum of pleasurable sensation. Call it by what name you please, it will still be true that this is the law by which our actions must be tried. I must be attentive to the welfare of my child; because he is one in the great congregation of the family of the whole earth. I must be attentive to the welfare of my child; because I can in many portions of the never-ceasing current of human life, be conferring pleasure and benefit on him, when I cannot be directly employed in conferring benefit on others. I best understand his character and his wants; I possess a greater power of modelling his disposition and influencing his fortune; and, as was observed in Political Justice, (p. 132.) he is the individual in the great "distribution of the class needing superintendance and supply among the class capable of affording them," whom it falls to my lot to protect and cherish. -I do not require that, when a man is employed in benefiting his child, he should constantly recollect the abstract principle of utility, but I do maintain that his actions in prosecuting that benefit are no further virtuous than in proportion as they square with that principle.

Considering the subject in this light, it appears to me to follow with irresitible evidence, that the crown of a virtuous character conflicts in a very frequent and a very energetic recollection of the criterion, by which all his actions are to be tried, "whether they are of good, or whether they are of evil." It is this point, and this point alone, that leads to the distinction between such a man, and a man of the most vulgar character, of a character the least entitled to our approbation. The person,

for him to live. I cannot pursue this argument to its just extent. Were I to enter further into it in this cursory way, I should inflict an injury upon its beauty and force. It has already been amply discussed in the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice; and it is obvious that none of the considerations here touched on, are in the slightest degree invalidated by the admission of the domestic affections.

I know that Dr. Parr and Mr. Mackintosh look with horror upon this doctrine of the progressive nature of man. They cling with all the fervours of affection, to the opinion that the vices, the weaknesses and the follies which have hitherto existed in our species, will continue undiminished as long as the earth shall endure. I do not envy them their feelings. I love to contemplate the yet unexpanded powers and capabilities of our nature, and to believe that they will one day be unfolded to the infinite advantage and happiness of the inhabitants of the globe. Long habit has to trained me to bow to the manifestations of truth wherever I recognize them, that, if arguments were presented to me sufficient to establish the uncomfortable doctrine of my antagonists, I would weigh, I would revolve them, and I hope I should not fail to submit to their authority. But, if my own doctrine is an error, and if I am fated to die in it, I cannot afflict myself greatly with the apprehension of a mistake, which cheers my solitude, which I carry with me into crowds, and which adds somewhat to the pleasure and peace of every day of my existence.

Respecting the point of the improvement of our social institutions, that cannot be fundamentally affected by any consideration to arise out of the domestic affections. Politics is nothing else, but one chapter extracted out of the great code of morality. While therefore the criterion of virtue remains unchanged, the conduct which ought to be held by states, by governments and subjects, and the principles of judicial proceeding between man and man will for ever remain the same. In the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice it is endeavoured

the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice) is scarcely tenable." Upon this point I shall be very short.

The great doctrine of the treatise in question is what I have there called (adopting a term I found ready coined in the French language) the perfectibility, but what I would now wish to call, changing the term, without changing a particle of the meaning, the progressive nature of man, in knowledge, in virtuous propensities, and in social institutions.

Upon the face of the question it is not easy to see, how the admission of the private and domestic affections operates to put a period to the progress of human improvement. Our advances in knowledge, I believe it will be admitted, will not be materially and fatally interrupted by the due exercise of these affections.

Our improvement in virtuous propensities, is intimately connected with our improvement in knowledge. There is no condition of mind so favourable to the rank and poisonous vegetation of vice, as ignorance. It is only short-sightedness and folly which persuade men that, while they are over- reaching and defrauding their neighbours, they are promoting their own interests. Extravagant expense and ostentation are the playthings of the infancy of mind; and when, in consequence of the continued and perennial influx of knowledge, the human species, or great societies of men are past their infancy, we shall cease to admire and applaud these things in one another, and they will insensibly become antiquated and perish. The progress of knowledge will render familiar to every mind the criterion of virtue, or, in other words, this terrible doctrine of universal philanthropy. We shall be astonished to see in how many instances interests, supposed incompatible, perfectly coincide; shall find that what is good for you, is advantageous to me; that, while I educate my child judiciously for himself, I am rendering him a valuable acquisition to society; and that, by contributing to the improvement of my countrymen, I am preparing for my child a society in which it will be desirable

who has been well instructed and accomplished in the great school of human excellence, has passions and affections like other men. But lie is aware that all these affections tend to excess, and must be taught each to know its order and its sphere. He therefore continually holds in mind the principles by which their boundaries are to be fixed.

I should think such a man would be the more perfect, in proportion as be endeavoured to elevate philanthropy into a passion. There appears to me to be little danger on that side. That we are all of us the creatures of sensible impressions, is a great and momentous truth. Let a man then try, as much as he will, to cultivate a love for his species, we may, I conceive, be very secure that occasions enough will present themselves, to pull him down from his enthusiastic eminence, and remind him of his concerns as an individual.

I certainly regard those examples, in which men, struggling with the dearest and most powerful sentiments of their nature, have sacrificed their own lives, or the lives of their children, to the imperious demands of public good, as the most glorious instances of the degree of excellence to which human beings are capable of ascending. I contemplate with transports of admiration the conduct of a Decius and a Regulus. If the story of these men is a fable, I am proud that I belong to a species, of which some individuals have been capable of imagining such excellence, and thousands have felt "that within" them, that embryo generosity and nobleness of nature, which prompted them to credit this excellence as a member of genuine history. Brutus probably did well, when he put his sons to death, as the only alternative for preserving and perpetuating the rising liberties of the Roman republic.

But I conceive that there are not only extraordinary cases in which men should recollect and act upon views of general philanthropy. I would state these views as a part of the ordinary business of our lives, and would maintain that we ought to recollect and impress them upon our minds, as often as pious men

repeat their prayers. I would desire to love my children; yet I would not desire so to love them, as to forget that I have what we were accustomed to call, before the hoarse and savage cry of Jacobinism! had frighted all moral language from propriety, *higher duties*. I would wish so to employ a portion of every day, as to qualify me for being a benefactor to the stranger and the man whom I know not; and I would have men, in proportion to the faculties they possess not omit to devote part of their energies to the natives of distant climates, and to ages yet unborn.

Let us consider here for a moment the case, so often attacked with all the weapons of argument and ridicule, of Fenelon and the valet, and ask how far the decision of this case will be affected, by the admission of the domestic affections.

"In a loose and general view," says the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, "I and my neighbour are both of us men; and of consequence entitled to equal attention. But, in reality, it is probable that one of us is a being of more worth and importance than the other. A man is of more worth than a beast; because, being posessed of higher faculties, he is capable of a more refined and genuine happiness. In the same manner the illustrious archbishop of Cambray, was of more worth than his valet, and there are few of us that would hesitate to pronounce, if his palace were in flames, and the life of only one of them could be preserved, which of the two ought to be preferred.

"But there is another ground of preference, beside the private consideration of one of them being further removed from the state of a mere animal. We are not connected with one or two percipient beings, but with a society, a nation, and in some sense with the whole family of mankind. Of consequence that life ought to be preferred, which will most conduce to the general good. In saving the life of Fenelon, suppose at the moment he conceived the project of his immortal Telemachus, I should have been promoting the welfare of thousands, who have been cured by the perusal of that work, of some error, vice and consequent unhappiness. Nay, my benefit would extend further

our days, that it will have sufficient popularity, to become a formidable rival to pretended devotion, or patriotism, or any other of those specious seemings, by which knaves have been accustomed to impose upon fools time out of mind. But to whatever bad purposes the pretence of universal philanthropy may be used, certainly none can be more hostile to the reality, than that which Dr. Parr specifies. Philanthropy is a bank in which every creature that lives has an interest, the first and preferrable tallies being, by the very nature of the case, in possession of those who are nearest to us, and whom we have most frequent opportunity to benefit. The doctrine of philanthropy countenances no negligence, but requires of us diligently to devote "our talents, our understanding, our strength and our time, to the production of the greatest quantity of general good." So as long as we continue under the influence of this principle, we cannot be inattentive to any of the claims of benevolence; and, when it relaxes its empire over us, as from the frailty of our nature it will frequently do, I believe we shall fall back into the great mass of our fellow-men, and be governed by such motives, passions and affections, as they are accustomed to obey.

There is one superficial and somewhat ludicrous universal philanthropy (even as it is stated in Political Justice, with somewhat too much disparagement and too little toleration to the private affections) is not "accompanied with so long and portentous a train, of evils," as Dr. Parr is willing to ascribe to it. I feel myself obliged to infer, that it was some extraordinary perturbation of Dr. Parr's intellectual perspicaty, and not a cool and unruffled view of the subject, which led him to combine it with such nameless horrors.

The second thing I proposed, was to enquire into the soundness of what Dr. Parr has "heard remarked by persons well skilled in the tactics of controversy, that after the surrender of so many outworks (viz., the question of the private and domestic affections), the citadel itself (the great purpose aimed at in

ercise of that illustrious and godlike philanthropy, which constitutes the highest merit the human heart is able to conceive.

An expression has escaped Dr. Parr, in his zeal against the doctrine of universal philanthropy, which is perhaps remarkable enough, to deserve to find a place in the process of this discussion. He says, "the good Samaritan hastened to the succour of the man fallen among thieves, and the blessed Author of Christianity has *justified* the deed, p. 5." If Dr. Parr will permit me for a moment to play the divine, a trade for which I am not altogether without discipline, I will answer him that Christ did not "justify the deed." He did something infinitely different. He applauded; he has, I believe, immortalized it; he has bid all his followers go and imitate that deed, which Dr. Parr thinks he has barely justified. Indeed, whatever becomes of the doctrine of universal philanthropy, I am persuaded that, to the extent in which I have above explained it, the author of Christianity will be found among its most conspicuous advocates. He has stated the love of God, and of our neighbour, that is, of our fellow-men, as the sum of morality, or, to use his own expression, as the "two commandments on which hang all the law and the prophets:" so much stress did he place upon that maxim of utility, which Dr. Parr in his Spital Sermon has thought proper to pass in total silence. He has again and again expressed himself in disparagement of the private affections. Not that I mean to affirm he intended wholly to proscribe them; but certainly, if there is meaning in words, he meant to assign to them a very subordinate situation.

But Dr. Parr says, that the doctrine of universal philanthropy "may be used as a cloke to us for insensibility where other men feel, and for negligence where other men act with visible and useful, though limited, effect, p. 10." Certainly it may, like the best principles of morality, or the most vaunted institutions of religion, be used by bad men as a pretence and justification of the most hateful proceedings. But I should think it little likely; as it is not probable, at least in

than this; for every individual, thus cured, has become a better member of society, and has contributed in his turn to the happiness, information and improvement of others.

"Suppose I had been myself the valet; I ought to have chosen to die, rather than Fenelon should have died.–

"Suppose the valet had been my brother, my father or my benefactor. This would not alter the truth of the proposition. - My brother or my father may be a fool or a profligate, malicious, lying or dishonest. If they be, of what consequence is it that they are mine?" *Political Justice, Book II. Chap. II p. 126.*

Dr. Parr well observes that this is a question of unusual duties," and a case, " imaginary" he calls it, I would say, that perhaps will scarcely happen once in the history of an age. That it is not imaginary, will be evident to every man who recollects that a decision precisely on the same principles happened in the life of Timoleon, and a second time in that of Lucius Junius Brutus, to confine myself to instances of the most consummate notoriety. The reader however is bound in fairness to recollect the unusualness of the case, and to bear in mind that, whichever way it is decided, it can have no tendency to shake the domestic affections in the ordinary intercourses of life. Dr. Parr indeed, because it is unusual and extreme, treats it as criminal to have called towards it the attention of mankind. In this I do not agree with him. It is a question which must be tried by the criterion of all virtue. If indeed, as Dr. Parr seems to think (judging from the sacred silence he has preserved concerning it in the course of an argument where it must have obtruded itself on his mind a thousand times), this criterion by which all our actions are to be tried, this book of life by which must be decided the merits and demerits of every day of our existence, must slumber in awful repose to the resurrection of the dead, then it may be a crime to enquire into the respective claims of Fenelon and his valet. But, as has already appeared, I hold, that this criterion cannot be consulted too often, that the recollection or non-recollection of it constitutes the main

difference between the Livonian peasant and the sage, and that it would be well for mankind and the generation of an accomplished moral character, that justice and philanthropy should be converted into a passion and made one of the stirring and living thoughts of our bosom. I conceive that there must lurk a secret contradiction in terms, in the idea of a criterion which is never to be consulted; and, I do not know how our acquaintance with, and facility in the application of, this criterion can be so effectually improved, as by frequently consulting it, and applying it to cases of a certain niceness and delicacy.—-
To return.

In reviling the question of Fenelon and the valet, in its relation to the sacredness, the beauty and utility of the domestic affections, three things are principally to be observed.

First, I will suppose that I save in preference, the life of the valet, who is my father, and in so doing intrench upon the principle of utility. Few persons even upon that supposition will be disposed severely to blame my conduct. We are accustomed and rightly accustomed, to consider every man in the aggregate as a machine calculated to produce many benefits or many evils, and not to take his actions into our examination in a disjointed and separate manner. If, without pause or hesitation, I proceed to save the life of my father in preference to that of any human being, every man will respect in me the sentiment of filial affection, will acknowledge that the feeling by which I am governed is a feeling pregnant with a thousand good and commendable actions, and will confess, according to a trite, but expressive, phrase, that at least I have *my heart in the right place*, that I have within me those precious and inestimable materials out of which all virtuous and honourable deeds are made.

But, secondly, the consideration of the domestic affections, and their infinite importance to "the culture of the heart," does essentially modify the question of utility, and affect the application of the criterion of virtue. The action, viz., the saving

of the life of Fenelon, is to be set against the habit, and it will come to be seriously considered, whether, in proportion to the inequality of the alternative proposed to my choice, it will contribute most to the mass of human happiness, that I should act upon the utility of the case separately taken, or should refuse to proceed in violation of a habit, which is fraught with a series of successive utilities.

Thirdly, it is proper to notice the deception which Dr. Parr and his coadjutors put upon themselves and others, in constantly supposing that, if the father is saved, this will be the effort of passion, but if Fenelon is saved, the act will arise only from cool, phlegmatic, arithmetical calculation. No great and honourable deed can be achieved, but from passion. If I save the life of Fenelon, unprompted to do so by an ardent love of the wondrous excellence of the man, and a sublime eagerness to achieve and secure the welfare and improvement of millions, I am a monster, unworthy of the appellation of a man, and the society of beings so "fearfully and wonderfully made," as men are.

I perceive that I did not sufficiently take into mind the prejudices and habits of men, when I put the case of Fenelon, the writer of certain books of reasoning and invention. The benefit to accrue from the writing of books is too remote an idea, to strike and fill the imagination. If I had put the case of Brutus, and supposed that upon the preservation of his life, against which his sons appear so basely to have conspired, hung all the long series of Roman freedom and Roman virtue,– if I had put the cafe of Bonaparte, upon the assumption that his existence was necessary to avert the restoration of despotism on the one hand, or the revival of all the horrors of anarchy on the other, few persons, I believe, would have felt any difficulty in deciding. It would easily have been seen, that to have sacrificed any life, rather than suffer the destruction of a man who could alone preserve his contemporaries and future ages from barbarism and slavery, was a proper theme for passion, for the ex-