

as he can for his country, regardless of the injuries he may commit. Such a man acts for a nation as he does for himself; he carries into practice the precept, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Many writers have touched upon war, and much has been said, both for and against it; those of the present day are, however, generally opposed; and the Congress of Nations, which, but a few years since, was ridiculed as an emanation from the brains of hot-headed fanatics, is already occupying the attention of the wisest legislators throughout the world.

What a blissful state of things, when all nations shall be at peace! when we shall see each pursuing its own interest with benefit to the rest! This shall be the consequence, and not the cause of the universal spread of Christianity. The situation of our own country is particularly favorable for the application of its rules. It may, indeed, be urged, that they would not yet be appreciated; let us then hasten the period, and not rest in the work of well-doing, till all tribes and nations shall be brought to know their God, and his law. Onward! should then be the cry of every moral man; our time of action here is but short at the most, yet much may be done, and is there one, who, with an immortal's happiness within his grasp, is too indolent to put forth his hand for it? No! that man is unworthy the name of republican, whose sole aim is self, who regards not his country, and his fellow-men throughout the world.

Let us, then, as a nation, stand forward for the introduction of moral precepts to direct our relations with foreign countries. The experiment is new, but does not the interest at stake warrant us in the risk, if there can be danger, in preferring the dictates of conscience and our God, to the precepts of short-sighted man.

XCHL

A DISCUSSION.

A Discussion is the treating of a subject by argument, to clear it of difficulties, and to separate truth from falsehood. It is generally carried on between two or more persons, who take contrary sides, and defend them by arguments and illustrations.

Discussions are of several kinds, such as philosophical, literary, political, or moral, according to the subjects of which they treat; or colloquial and deliberative, according to the style in which they are written, or the occasion for which they are prepared.

Discussions serve for amusement, rather than for any solid purpose; the cause of truth seldom derives any immediate benefit from them, although the minds of men may become invigorated by a collision of sentiment.

PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION.

Example.

PART I.

On the Expediency of making Authorship a Profession.

In modern civilized communities, a certain opinion or maxim is often prevalent, which, would we strip it of the shroud of conceit and the glitter of cant, would appear unwarrantable prejudice. Of this description is the objection so constantly urged against the profession of the author—a man whom few will call their brother, the laughing-stock of the merchant's clerk, and a laborer poorly paid in the world's coin. The broker seldom meets him on the exchange; the usurer never chaffers with him on the mart; the old man clinks his bags and shrugs his shoulders at his prospects; the schoolmaster takes to trade, and presently rolls by him in his coach, and, perhaps, worst of all, the bright eye is turned away, and the fair hand withheld by one who can never be the wife of an author! This prejudice which I describe, was once common throughout the old world; now it is particularly confined to America. Still everywhere the man whose pen is to be his support is thought a visionary, or an idler. The author's garret has long since passed into a by-word, and the gaping elbow has become the escutcheon of his family. His poverty is a kind of general butt, and his sensitiveness a fair subject of caricature. I am aware, that I shall not speak agreeably to the judgment of most who hear me; let us, however, examine fairly some of the errors which have led people to think authorship unprofitable and inexpedient.

There are many persons, who, having neither the vigor nor refinement of mind to distinguish between what is material and intellectual, would measure poetry by the yard, or fill a library by the bushel! To such, whatever yields the greatest amount of tangible, improvable product is the best producer; unless mind acts openly, as a machine, they suppose it to be dormant. Let such persons first comprehend the purpose of the author whom they censure; let them learn, that there possibly may be higher motives of action than gold or silver,—loftier contemplations than those of the counting-house or factory! And, although this is a working-day world, and man must labor for hire, let them thank God, that there are men, who find times of communion with better thoughts; and, but for whose speculations, and grasps at the infinite, these short-sighted cavillers would be as lifeless as the clods on which they tread! Coleridge says, with the enthusiasm of a genius,—"I expect neither profit nor general fame by my writings, and I consider myself as having been amply repaid without either. Poetry has been to me its own exceeding great reward; it has soothed my afflictions; it has multiplied and refined my enjoyments; it has endeared solitude, and it has given me the habit of wishing to discover the *good* and the *beautiful* in all that meets and surrounds me." Urge such a man, if you can, to convert his "Christabel" into an interest-table, and limit his peace of mind by the rise and fall of stocks!

We of America complain, that we have no established literature; and until more among us are willing to devote themselves to the cause of literature, we must be content to reflect the literary splendor of England. Some of the brightest creations, indeed, of modern days, some of the fairest creatures of love, and poetry, and romance, belong to America, but they are not very numerous, and, ten to one, our poet or novelist, like the poor author's garment, which was, "a cap by night, a stocking all the day," pours forth his strain after completing the routine of a pleader at the bar, a bank officer, or political editor! Among the respectable and vitally important cares of professional life, literature has a poor chance of encouragement; the philosopher's speculations, or the poet's theory, having nothing to do with the brief or the dissecting knife.

"This is the language," says the objector, "of romantic folly; we must live, so let us labor for the readiest recompense; intellect will not support life, nor secure comfort." Such an one, be it observed, mistakes the ambition of the literary man. Without altogether neglecting, he seeks something infinitely better, than pecuniary ease. True, Goldsmith was needy, and Chatterton was driven to despair, and Otway died of starvation. But I do not believe that either would have foregone one sublime conception, or erased from his writings one maxim of sound morality, to gain the wealth of the princes who neglected him! A lying tombstone tells the story of many a rich patron of their time,—their memorials are, "The Deserted Village," and "Venice Preserved."

I am not advocating that sickly, sentimental, "love-in-a-cottage" kind of doctrine, which teaches, that mind is above ordinary necessities, and that the wants of life are not our common inheritance. But I do contend, that the time is coming, and that it should speedily come, in America, when a class of men whose wants are not extravagant, but attainable and refined, will meet with support. The human powers are unfairly and unprofitably employed, if turned to many different subjects; and this truth should be better known in America. The lawyer has an end before him, which only a life can attain; so has the physician, the clergyman, and the author. Unite the duties of either two, and you injure both.

Assuming, what we need not enlarge upon, the importance of a high national literature, let any one observe, who are the supporters of that which adorns England. "Not those, he will find, who united two or three occupations! Goldsmith was a professional man at first, but his patients were few, and he soon became what he was born to be, an author! Scott never figured at the bar, and Shakspeare was an indifferent actor. The problem may be easily solved. Some minds are fitted to investigate by help of the data of others, and apply to God's work their conclusions, and others are designed more exclusively to create;—a distinction rarely sufficiently observed. The author has no common work to perform; he who would instruct others, must untiringly improve himself; presenting no theories undigested, and familiar with the wildest speculations. In America, and everywhere else, we want a race of thinkers; men who will keep aloof from the eddy, which draws in politician and merchant, and even the professional man, and give us the results of long meditation. The mere words are no part of an author's labor; they but represent long previous mental action. The silence of the study is to mature the observations of the world.

Professional men generally appeal to their race only in one capacity; the author, by enlarged views of life, and illustrations of moral truth, may

be a great reformer. Vice has long enough run riot; let the author, by moulding passion to his will, make it of service to his race! Is he a philosopher,—the wonders of the past, and the mysteries of the future, are his province. Is he a poet,—the freshness of nature, the fair holiness of woman, and the purity of truth, urge him to a life of thought and meditation. His influence spreads light about him; his pursuits soften his nature; he loves more heartily what is lovely, and is more ready to pity what is frail. The world says truly, he is poor; but what is that poverty which gives wealth to one's contemporaries, and bequeaths an inheritance to posterity!

PART II.

The Expediency of making Authorship a Profession

Almost universal experience proves the pecuniary reward of literary labor to be but trifling. In the throng of authors and men of genius, we find only here and there a solitary instance of well-requited endeavors; and if, at the present day, it is not as formerly quite true, that the idea of an author must be associated with a narrow lane and an obscure garret, it is not because his reward is liberal, or in any degree proportioned to his merits. Individual instances may, indeed, be brought up, to prove the success which sometimes attends literary pursuits; but for every one that could be cited, who had basked in the sunshine of prosperity, and enjoyed the smiles of the great and good among his contemporaries, we could marshal a hundred of equal power and genius, depressed by poverty, and treated with indifference and neglect; whose only recompense has been the tribute paid to their memory and writings in after times.

If we judge, then, from the remuneration that has generally attended the labors of the author, we are justified in forming presages little flattering to his future success. And, since fortune and genius are seldom found in companionship, what must be the consequence of making authorship a profession, of individuals devoting themselves to the cause of truth and literature, and relying on the gratitude and favor of the public for support? It is useless to say what *should* be the reward of the author, and to speak of the dignity and importance of the part which he sustains in the public drama, so long as we witness what is, and what *has been* the requital of his labors. It is upon facts alone, that we must ground our decision. And with these before our eyes, must we not fear the consequences to literature, if its existence and progress depend upon the exertions of disappointed and ill-requited genius? Consider the situation of that man, who, conscious of his own power, resolves to devote himself to the pursuit of letters, to become an author. Supposing, as has been the case with thousands who have preceded him, that his first attempts at authorship are unsuccessful. His expectations are disappointed; the promise of fame and of support is withered and blighted; the world looks upon him with indifference; a rival regards him with contempt; and the sharp and cold words of the critic ring in his ear the knell of his first literary offspring. If he acquiesces in the decision of his judges, it is only confessing his poor claims to distinction. If not, if he feels that time alone can pronounce the true decision upon his writings, there is yet no

resort for him, if he would obtain support from the profession which he has chosen, but to conform his writings to the popular taste. Follow that man to his closet, and witness the struggles of his mind, the contest between inclination and interest. The one prompts him to follow his own genius; to utter the dictates of his own feelings, to be true to his own nature. The other sternly requires him to bow to the critics, to yield to the decision of the public, and in future to lower his aspirations. It is here that we would most deprecate the evils of making authorship a profession; that we would warn the young aspirant for literary distinction, with means inadequate to his support, against trusting to the uncertain reward of his exertions, unless he is willing to degrade his genius, and substitute for his own taste and inclinations, those of the capricious and unthinking multitude. If, instead of relying upon the avails of authorship, he looks to another profession for the means of subsistence, the thoughts of his leisure moments may be given to the world, without being fashioned and moulded by the opinions of other men. How can we expect one to preserve his individuality as a writer, if it must be at the expense of his interests, his only means of support. He that does right only from interested motives, cannot rank among men of the highest moral excellence; nor can the author, who writes mainly with a view to his own support, be considered the most vigilant guardian of the cause of truth and letters.

Nor is this all. When an author has resigned his right of self-guidance, and has taken up the *trade* of writing to suit the public taste; whose desire is to write what may be popular; the kindred desire soon manifests itself of increasing, as fast as possible, the number of his works. Names are not wanting to prove, that this has often been the case, and that, too, with some of the most distinguished authors. We witness it in the thousand ephemeral productions, that appear but to attract the public curiosity for a moment, and then give way to works as worthless and short-lived as themselves; justifying the remark, "that authorship immoderately employed makes the head waste and the heart empty, even were there no other and worse consequences; and that a person who sends away through the pen and the press every thought, the moment it occurs to him, will, in a short time, have sent all away, and will become a mere journeyman of the printing office, a compositor!" The cause of literature is the cause of truth, and it would be as unnecessary as unwise to trust it in the hands of those, who would support its interest, only so far as they coincided with their own.

We would willingly join in the sentiment of Professor Henry, that "we need an order of men of lofty intellectual endowment, an intellectual high priesthood standing within the inner veil of the temple of truth, reverently watching before the holy of holies for its divine revelations, and giving them out to the lower ministers at the altar;" but if this priesthood and their inferior ministers must become the servants and dependents of the multitude, whom it is their great office to guide and direct, their power and their usefulness are at an end. The shrine of truth had better be intrusted to inferior hands, or at once be desecrated and overthrown, than become the sanctuary of hypocrisy and error.

Example.

A LITERARY DISCUSSION.

[One side only.]

The Merits of the Histories of Hume and Lingard.

False opinions in morality, or mistaken notions in philosophy, are not so much to be dreaded, as the wilful misrepresentations of the historian. "Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri," should be the motto of every honest historian; be his party in the right or wrong, he is to state "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Yet there is no one who has greater inducements to misrepresentations than the historian. Party feelings will lead him, not only to extenuate the guilt and apologize for the measures of his friends, but to exaggerate the misconduct of his adversaries, and attribute every act of theirs to the worst of motives. But, should he have the good fortune to be of no political party, yet the animosities of the church are no less bitter than those of the state, and theological enmities are far more difficult to compose, since each religious sect believes, that the voice of its own partisans is, without doubt, the voice of God.

Almost every historian has been influenced in one or the other of these ways. Hume and Gibbon, professing to be the enemies of all religion, have too often made their writings the channel of their infidelity, and thrown out their doubts and insinuations on every opportunity. Hume, again, was led away by his love of kings; he was too great a favorer of the doctrines of passive obedience and the divine right of kings; too much of a monarchist to feel any of that ardor, which glowed in the breasts of Hampden and Sydney; he consequently views with apathy every attempt of the people to be free, and considers every assertion of popular rights as an invasion of royal prerogative.

Neither is Dr. Lingard free from blame; indeed, we fear that he has wholly forfeited the character of an honest historian; he has erred and greatly erred, from his zeal for his particular religion. Educated in the faith of the Romish church, he must naturally feel a love and a reverence for her institutions; a priest at her altar, and, as we hope, sincerely believing in the doctrines which he teaches, he must feel a desire to defend her from the attacks and calumnies of her enemies. But his zeal has carried him too far; he seems to think himself pledged to support, not only her doctrines, but the means she has used to extend these doctrines, and uphold her temporal as well as her spiritual authority; every thing in the farthest degree related to Holy Mother Church is, in his eyes, sacred and inviolable, and the Popish miracles, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the Gunpowder Plot, are as much entitled to defence, as the doctrines of transubstantiation and the infallibility of the Pope.

If he wish to do away the prejudices against his faith, and induce men to look with more charity upon the doctrines of his sect, furnished any motive to Dr. Lingard for writing his history, he has entirely failed of his object by grasping at too much; he has lost the whole, he has weakened his side and exposed himself to the ridicule and attacks of his adversaries.

If he had merely advocated the doctrines of his church, and endeavored by fair argument to convince men of their truth, although we cannot allow an historical work to be the fit place for theological discussions, we should not have so much reason to complain. But when he espouses the cause of error, and virtually by apologizing for, if not openly by vindicating, supports those measures, which every man's conscience must tell him admit of ne

excuse, — when he defends the characters of those men whom the voice of all ages since their own has condemned to infamy, we must either doubt his sincerity or pity his understanding. People are now too enlightened to justify those means which centuries ago were employed to compel men's consciences. It is idle now to tell a man, that it will be doing God service to assassinate his neighbor, because he will not hear mass, bow to the host, and acknowledge the Pope as his spiritual father.

Dr. Lingard takes every opportunity to exalt the merits of those of his own sect, and to speak in terms of indifference, if not of disparagement, of every distinguished protestant. While Cardinal Pole is the subject of the highest encomiums, Archbishop Cranmer is passed as a man of but little talents, and less strength of character. While he in a manner defends the cruelties of the Marian persecution, and vindicates the characters of Bonner and Gardiner, when scarcely the fires of Smithfield and the piles of Ridley and Latimer, Hooper and Cranmer are extinguished, he complains of the restraints, the fines, and imprisonments, which, under Elizabeth, were imposed on the Popish recusants. While he magnifies every indiscretion of the unfortunate Anne Bolleyn into a crime, and would load her character with the blackest infamy, he extols the virtues and conceals the vices of Mary Stuart, whose only virtue was her weakness, and whose only apology for crime her youth and beauty.

Whatever merit there may be in Dr. Lingard's History, either of originality and deep and extensive research, which he claims, or of beauty of style and pleasing narration, which have been allowed him, all these, however, will by no means make up for the manifest partiality towards the Catholics, and the constant prejudice against the Protestant faith, which prevail through the whole work. It will never be a popular history; it may be read and admired at St. Omer's and Douay, it may be found in the library of the scholar, but never, like Hume, in every parlor, and in the hands of common readers.

When the historian strays from the truth, his work becomes a mere work of fiction, inheriting all the dulness of narration, without acquiring any of the liveliness of romance; it can neither instruct us like the one, nor amuse us like the other. Facts misrepresented, however they may be skilfully adapted to our particular prejudices, will always be like the flattered portrait, which may gratify our vanity, or please us by the excellence of the coloring, but can never inspire us with that interest that truth alone can impart.

Example.

OF A DELIBERATIVE DISCUSSION.

PART I.

"*Liberal Principles as affecting the Strength of Government.*"

The opinion that the strength of government consists in its being placed as far beyond the influence of popular commotions as possible, is one of long standing, and, when rightly understood, is, without doubt, perfectly correct. But I do very much doubt the correctness of that exposition of it, or rather, of that *perversion* of it, which teaches that the strength of a government consists in crushing the energies of the people, and continuing them in a state of abject mental and moral degradation and darkness. Nay, I conceive such a mode of proceeding to be entirely incompatible with the

strength of government. For, let us suppose the existence of such a state of things as has just been alluded to. Let us suppose a people involved in a barbarism the most complete and gloomy that the world ever knew; and that they are ruled with a despotism, compared with which the Ottoman despotism of the present day is very liberty. I allow, that so long as they can be continued in a state of such miserable slavery and darkness, so long will the government stand, and stand firmly. But who will answer for it, that the light shall never break in? Who will vouch that they shall never rouse from this moral lethargy? Who is there that dares affirm that this Samson, though now blinded, and shorn of his strength, oppressed, mocked, insulted, will not at some future period, remote it may be, collect the force of his energies, and hurl down the whole fabric of tyranny on the devoted heads of his followers? Station a guard, if you please, in every house,—set a spy over every man's actions; but tell me, of what effect will your guards and your spies be in restraining the current of men's thoughts? Were they possessed of no other means of coming to a sense of their wrongs, the very circumstance that there are in the community those who do not feel these wrongs, (the ministers of despotism,) this very circumstance, I say, would inevitably, though it may be slowly, raise in the minds of the people reflections on their own condition as compared with that of their rulers. It will then be but a short process for them to begin to desire better things; and every one at all conversant with human nature, knows full well that when men once begin to desire in earnest, it is not long ere they make an effort to possess themselves of the object of their wishes. A spirit of insubordination has thus arisen; and now tell me, student of history, tell me, politician, where will it end? Let tyranny, and the illiberal principles which have hitherto prevailed, in haughty assurance of their own might, tremble, for their downfall is at hand. All the experience of all ages shows full well, that when a people are once roused to a sense of injuries, opiates more powerful than man can tell of, are required to lull them to a second sleep.

If, now, there be any need of examples in proof of what I have advanced, I have only to refer you to the revolution which required the best blood of France to wash away the illiberal principles which had hitherto swayed the throne,—to the free states of North America, who owe their independence to the blind and narrow policy which had actuated the British monarchy ever since the days of the first James,—to Greece, the last strong hold, west of the Dardanelles, of those who once spread the terror of their arms from beyond the farthest stretch of the Caucasian range to the most distant shores of remotest Europe; but whose oppressive and impolitic principles are now, we confidently trust, about to force them, a disgraced and despised race, with a weak and irresolute government, into a corner of the earth, a terrible monument to all nations of the insufficiency of intolerance for the support of power.

But, while in a government established on illiberal principles, there are the most formidable springs of ruin, I believe that principles, the opposite of these, contribute, more than any other cause, to the strength and stability of government. It is supposed, of course, that the people are enlightened to the advantages and necessity of government in some shape or other; and to suppose that they would be willing subjects of a power whose constant aim was to oppress and restrain their energies, to reduce their prerogatives, to obstruct their interest, and to hinder their advancement in moral and intellectual improvement; or, to suppose that they would become willing instruments of destruction to a government, which, keeping pace with the progress of civilization, and the spirit of the age, would secure to them every privilege, in as high a degree as would be possible for them to enjoy, would be to deny the very circumstance which has just been taken for granted, namely, an enlightened condition of the people. So far, indeed, from overturning the government, their main solicitude, unless their motives

of conduct were strangely at variance with those which usually actuate men in other cases, would be as to the means of supporting it in its fullest strength;—so far from discarding it, their chief anxiety would be lest other powers, jealous of the influence of such an example on their subjects, should endeavor to wrest it from them.

It is, in fact, but the futile imaginings of a disordered brain, which see in the effect of liberal principles any thing approaching to the dissolution of government. For what are liberal principles but a disposition to keep pace with the spirit of improvement which is constantly going on among men? And, can any one, in his sober senses, aver that good government and general civilization are things so entirely incompatible, that the one cannot be enjoyed but at the expense of the other? That vigor and stability in national councils are ever, from their very nature, inconsistent with the progress of the mind? That if men insist on moving onward in the march of intellect, they must be content to sacrifice to this object every thing like a firm and well-regulated state administration? And so, on the contrary, if they wish to be preserved from constant anarchy and civil contention, they must be satisfied to remain in barbarism and degradation? Such doctrines are too monstrous to be harbored for a moment; but yet, I defy any one to deny that they are the doctrines of those who contend that liberal principles are incompatible with the strength of government. For myself, were such my belief, I would utterly discard all allegiance to society. I would betake myself to the obscurest corner of the earth; and there, dwelling aloof from the world, and inaccessible to any of my race, I would prosecute the culture of my understanding and my heart by myself, and undisturbed by that connexion with my species, which would, according to these doctrines, involve my mind in ignorance and darkness. My name should be no more known among all mankind. I would live alone; and none other should rule over me than the Almighty.

PART II.

“Liberal Principles as affecting the Strength of Government.”

That the rights which nature has bestowed upon man may be protected and enjoyed, he finds it necessary to subject himself to laws, and to part with some portion of his original freedom, for the maintenance of the rights and freedom of his fellow-men. The social system, of which he is a member, entitles him to other rights, without which, civil liberty is not enjoyed, and the ends for which society was formed are not obtained. Those principles of government are liberal, which secure to man the rights of nature and of society. They are the principles which conduce to the happiness and prosperity of a nation; but it has been observed by political writers, and the observation has been so frequently made that it appears almost an axiom, that those very principles have a powerful effect in weakening government. Reason and experience confirm the remark. Though history has often and clearly proved to us that man is unwilling to be oppressed by man, and will not sacrifice his just rights, when the possession of them will not injure others, he has unfortunately seldom restrained himself from abusing as soon as he begins to enjoy them, till he finally subjects himself to oppression which he endeavored to escape.

It is in their liability to abuse, that the great danger of liberal principles is seen. To enjoy their advantages much precaution must be taken against their evils. They are liable to be carried to excess. To establish the proper security and to mark out the proper limits for them, seem almost

impossible. The work will be imperfect. The examples of ancient governments too plainly prove that it was so in them. Faction and corruption were the constant companions of liberty, continually distracting and enfeebling government. They soon exerted their pernicious influence, when Athens began to enjoy that liberal principle, which rendered the voice of the people the law by which they were to be governed. That free principle which declared the proud patricians and humble plebeians of Rome equal, and gave the latter the enjoyment of public offices in company with the former, added not to the strength of government. We find that the interval of tranquillity was but short, and that the tumults of the people, and the oppression of ambitious citizens soon followed. Sylla was the favorite, and became the tyrant of the people.

“So every scope by the immoderate use
Leads to restraint.”

The principal cause of the fall of the republic of Rome, has been ascribed to the excess of power which the favor of the people too often intrusted to unworthy hands.

As liberal principles allow the people some degree of power, the question may with good reason be asked, whether that power will content them; whether it will not be intentionally abused, or imprudently exercised?

They are forgetful of the relation in which they stand to each other; of the responsibility under which they are placed. Ignorant or thoughtless of the benefit of the whole, which the privileges of each individual enable him to render, they too readily sacrifice the good of the public to their own partiality for some flattering demagogue. They are not sensible of the true value of the liberal principle which is put in their hands, but they are fully aware that they possess power, and will misapply their possession to gratify themselves, at the expense of the public safety, and the public happiness. Such is the abuse of the right of suffrage, an abuse to which the privilege is always exposed, however well informed the people may be of the true design of society, and of the happiness which it is in their power to confer.

We need not examine ancient history, and the imperfect constitutions of old governments, to be convinced that free principles will be dangerous. The history of later times will give us the same information. Will not our own days teach us the same lesson? We have seen the dangers of the press. In the words of one of our own writers, “Its freedom will be abused. It is a precious pest, and necessary mischief, that has spoiled the temper of our liberty, and may shorten its life.”

Another effect to be feared from liberal principles, is a want of respect towards those who make and administer the laws. If the people are, directly or indirectly, the makers of the laws, do they the more willingly submit to them! The magistrates whom they have created, they will look upon as their equals, but equality may be forgotten by the magistrates. They will be approved by some, and disapproved by others. There will arise opposition of party to party, and oppression of the one by the other. The purposes of government are forgotten, while each looks with jealousy upon his opponent. There is none of that feeling of awe and reverence which the authority of an hereditary ruler inspires, whose cradle is a throne, of whose oppression it is dangerous to complain, and the success of resistance doubtful.

It is the foundation of the political theory of a distinguished writer, that honor is the support of a monarchy, fear of a despotism, and virtue of a republic. The strongest governments place their security in principlet which awe or captivate their subjects. They take advantage of every mode which will excite terror or delight. The will of a despot bows down the victims of ignorance with fear and trembling, who hardly dare to know that nature has bestowed upon them faculties and rights, which were given for their happiness, or the strength of government is derived from a fountain

of honor, and consists in ornaments of silver and gold, in the stars and grand crosses of nobility, or in the amusements by which men are charmed into submission. We may, then, say, though in a different sense from the original, "Amusement is the happiness of those who cannot think." But in what does the strength of liberal governments consist? In something of far higher authority than the will of any mortal; in something more ennobling than all other honor; in the only true divine right of sovereignty, the virtue of the people.

This is a strong foundation; but is it not one which is more to be desired than expected? It is little to the honor of human nature that the principle of fear has been found to have a more powerful influence than the principle of virtue. Such has been the case; and liberal principles, from the want of power to preserve them in their purity, have too often produced effects which it seemed contrary to their nature to produce. Though they may be beneficial to themselves, they will be corrupted, unless there is that degree of intellectual and moral cultivation in the community which we are not justified in expecting. It is true, that there is little hope of virtue and learning among a people without liberal principles to encourage and support them. Some portion of freedom is certainly necessary before virtue can be expected to display herself, and exert her influence openly, and before the mind can exercise to advantage the faculties with which it is gifted. But does it follow that this liberty will always reform a community? Liberal principles may be adopted too suddenly, before the character of a people is prepared for them, and then, while they produce not the happiness which they otherwise would produce, will create anarchy or oppression.

Thus it appears that some information and virtue are required for the protection of liberty. But, when free principles are established, and they are producing contentment, virtue may not be secured, may not be preserved. All the effect which fear has over the mind is removed, and the faculties are roused to life and exertion from a state of tranquillity, but a tranquillity like that of the tombs. To escape from the terror of despotism, is a blessing; but there is danger of the slavery of vice. Virtue is, indeed, encouraged by liberty to come forward to the light, and to exercise herself for the benefit of man; but vice meets with like encouragement, and will readily seize its opportunity to gratify itself, and to exert its corrupting influence.

The unfortunate terminations of many revolutions in favor of liberty, are to be found in the want of virtue and knowledge among the people, who are consequently incapable of governing themselves.

Since, then, liberal principles have been so constantly abused, unless the people are, in a high degree, virtuous and enlightened, we must look for strength to the checks provided against the abuse of power in the separate departments of government; not to the agreeable, though poisonous principles of liberty, but to the antidote which is constantly administered against their dangerous effects.

XCIV

DISPUTATIONS.

Disputations are exercises in which parties reason in opposition to each other on some question proposed. They are verbal contests respecting the truth of some fact, opinion, proposition, or argument.

As literary exercises, they are principally of two kinds, Philosophical, and Forensic Disputations.

Philosophical Disputations are those in which some philosophical fact, principle or theory is discussed.

Forensic Disputations are those in which some legal, moral or political subject is argued.

Example 1.

OF A FORENSIC DISPUTATION.

PART I.

Whether Popular Superstitions or Enlightened Opinion, be most favorable to the growth of Poetical Literature.

Fable and superstition form so large a part of the ground-work of ancient poetry, and are so intimately connected with that of all succeeding ages, that a partial investigation of this subject might lead us to very erroneous conclusions. From the bare consideration of this fact, we might be induced to give assent to that opinion, which would make superstition indispensable to the production of poetry, and which would thereby confine its progress to a certain period in the civilization of the world. We might as well, however, consider the dross as a constituent of the virgin gold, as suppose that the imperfections and errors connected with poetry were essential to the divine art.

Homer has left a monument of genius which will be read and admired by remote ages yet to come; but will it be looked upon as one of those prodigies of former times, the history of which alone remains to them, for which, in their time, they can find no parallel or counterpart? Will, then, his poetry be viewed as the production of an art peculiar to former ages, but in those times unknown; a shadow, an illusion, which has vanished before the increasing light of civilization; or will it not rather be admired and venerated, as one of the earliest fountains to which posterity can trace the magnificent stream, which, in their age, may be extending its healthy and invigorating influence through all the channels of society? Yet the idea that superstitious opinions are essentially important to the production of poetry, would exclude the possibility of any great progress in the art. Since error must gradually disappear before knowledge and civilization, and since superstition must vanish wherever Christianity sheds its blessed