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**I**T is no uncommon thing for men to be warm in a cause, and yet not to know why it is that they are warm. The passion of one is lighted up by the passion of another, and the whole circle is on flame; but the mind, in the mean time, is, like a dark chamber, without single ray of light to pervade it. In this case will happen that when the hasty passion shall have spent its force, the generous resolutions which it kindled up shall also die with it.

In the great affairs of religion, a strong flash of ideas on the fancy may excite a combustion of devotion; but, unless the reason is engaged to direct and supply the burning, it will die away, and neither light nor heat will be found remaining in it. It was the commendation of the citizens of Berea, when the gospel was first preached among them, that "they searched the scriptures, whether these things were so." Those who, without examination had received it, without damnation might also give it up; but this "honourable" people had maturely weighed the doctrine, and embracing it, gave ground to believe, that as they were rational, so they would be persevering christians.

The political concerns of our country are equal objects of reflection; and yet men will oftentimes be engaged in a measure, and will push warmly, though they know not the ground on which they have set out. Like the townsmen of Ephesus, the assembly is "confused," and the greater part "know not why it is that they are called together." "Zeal" of this kind without knowledge," as it is commonly extravagant, so it is but of short continuance.

I am therefore greatly happy when I take a view of this country, and consider that, in our contest with Great-Britain, so much light has been thrown upon the minds of the common people. You will scarcely find a man so uninformed as not to be able to explain to you not only the steps only, but the manner in which every step has been taken; on the one side to enslave, and on the other to resist, in the course of the debate. I am fully of opinion, that there are in our country, who will discourse more sensibly on the great principles of our opposition, than any even the most eminent amongst that minority in the British house of commons, who had undertaken to defend our cause. The speeches of these have been a mixture of absurd contradiction, granting the supreme authority of parliament in some cases, and yet not admitting it in all; as if what was supreme and extend in any case could be limited. But the plain mechanic, or the farmer of our country, will inform you that her authority never did extend in any case; and hence all debate about the limits between the authority of Britain, and the legislative right of America, which lay occupied like a wide interval, and was called the "Great Serbonian Bog," vanished at once. It would give me great pleasure to have it in my power to pay the same compliment to the understanding of my countrymen with regard to their accurate and clear knowledge of the nature, extent, and the principles of that treaty into which we have entered with the court of France. There would then be less danger from any attempt of the adversary to seduce us from it. Our passions are as much engaged in its favour as it is possible for the passions of men to be engaged in any matter whatsoever; but I am apprehensive that our reason is not so well informed as it ought to be, and though our attachment is directed strongly towards it; yet we embrace it not with the nobler faculty, or power of the understanding.

Those great men who, in our debate with Britain, drew their pens, and illumined the subject, either weary with a long service, or so engaged that they could not undertake a new task, have been silent with regard to the many and particular advantages of our new connection. The people in the mean time, called off to yield personal service in the field, have not had leisure to attend to what might be said to them, had there had been those who could under-

take to explain it. Hence it is, that though almost every man can give you a good account of the measures, and the injuries of Britain, yet few can note down precisely the spirit, principles, and great extent and glorious nature of our present fate and happy alliance.

Shall not I therefore be thought to deserve thanks, who, amidst a multiplicity of avocations, have endeavoured to obtain some accurate and clear knowledge of the equal nature and reciprocal advantages of this alliance, and do sometimes snatch a moment to note down in a plain manner what I have to say upon the subject. Certainly I shall at least deserve to be heard, more especially, as avoiding all personal reflections that might wound the feelings of particular men, I proceed undeviating from the path in which I had set out, and keeping singly in my view the information of the people, on a subject in which I conceive them to be deeply interested. It is not to be supposed but that I have my feelings as well as other men, and that oftentimes, when a good opportunity presents itself, I am under some temptation to give a slap in the face to one and another as I pass along, and to revenge myself on those whose pride and selfishness I disapprove, or who, from any cause, are pleased to be my enemies. It might be in my power to do this in a manner that all the world would know the originals whose characters I had described, and yet neither the mouths of law nor the tongues of the men could say any thing against me, not being able to affix it certainly that they were the very individuals pointed out by the sarcasm. But as I have in view the good of my country and not the gratification of resentment, however well founded it may be, I shall disdain every thing of this nature, and go on with what I had proposed, the consideration of "the treaty," and of the great good that must flow from it.

To take this matter clearly along, it will be necessary that we go back to that period when first our commissioners at Paris solicited the court of France for assistance in our just and defensive war with Britain. On this occasion it is reasonable to suppose, that the court, by one of her servants, might have entered into a conversation with our commissioners to the following purpose.—Gentlemen, we are not unacquainted with the nature of your debate, and we have been witness of the resolution and the perseverance you have manifested; but were we to place ourselves in the same line with you, and to make your enemies our enemies; what are we to gain by it? The power of Great-Britain, especially by sea, is not contemptible. You are not able to add a single ship of force to our fleets, to enable us to combat her with more advantage, on what she has called her own element. Your privateers may distress her commerce, but you do not inform us that you possess what may deserve the name of a maritime force. Just respiring from a former war shall we then draw upon ourselves the hostility of this power, whom we have experienced to be greatly formidable in her naval strength? Shall we do this without the hope of assistance in the war, and at the same time without the prospect of advantage to be gained by it? Your cause may be just, and you may deserve that liberty for which you have contended; but you are not to apprehend that the whole French nation has taken upon herself a vow of knight-hood, and is about to go through the earth to rescue fair ladies, and to free the world of monsters. The days of chivalry and romance are over; and France embarking in your cause from an heroic principle of doing kind acts, without the least prospect of advantage, might be considered, in future times, as we now consider the dukes of Normandy and the sovereigns of other states of Europe, in their expeditions to the holy land.

But let me see: there are some advantages which it may be in your power to concede to us. We understand, from the history of your connection with Great-Britain, that you had acquiesced in the restriction of your commerce to her shores, and this as a recompense for that protection which her fleets afforded you. It was the ground of your complaints, that even above this, the united power of the sea and land, in all other respects. Are you

willing to grant to France this exclusive right of your commerce for the same protection? Or, if you desire an unrestrained commerce, will you engage a sum of money to be paid at a future day, to indemnify for the expences of a war to which, on your account, she may be in the end exposed?

Or, if this is not agreeable, is there no adjoining territory which you may allow us to reduce, and which you may guarantee to France? Gentlemen, I will take the liberty to call my eye upon that map which you have in your possession. It is the map of the Thirteen United States, which extend from the country washed by the Kennebec and Penobscot on the north, to the savannah on the south and in breadth, from the ocean to the inland country. To the north of these states claimed and possessed by you, is Canada and Nova-Scotia, and to the south is the country of the two Floridas, yet in possession of the crown of Great Britain. To Canada we have a proper claim, as it has been wrested from us in the late war by that very power to whom you are now in opposition. Nova-Scotia could be held conveniently with this, and both would be advantageous to us, on the trade and likewise on account of the situation neighbouring to the fisheries of Newfoundland, to some share of which we have an exclusive right, and to what remains, a common right with all nations. The country of the two Floridas would form a happy district, towards the Mississippi river. Will you guarantee both these states to France, on condition that she takes a decided part in your behalf, in the contest with Great-Britain?

This might have been the language of the court of France; and for my part I do not see what we could have said in answer to it. The conditions were reasonable, and it was every hour before our eyes, that if we did not by some means obtain her assistance, we should be reduced to extreme distress. But France laid our commissioners under no engagements of this nature. She expatiated not upon the risk and the expences of a war, in order that she might have it in her power to renew us up to some hard conditions. She did not insult our poverty by telling us that she knew we had not money to pay for her assistance, and therefore she could not expect it from us. She did not wound our pride by insisting that we should restrict our commerce to her shores, nor did she impose the hard circumstance of suffering her to respect our Canada, and to bend her empire as she did formerly to the west of our plantations. No, I can assure it to have been the reasoning of her counsellors, that it would be neither her interest nor our interest that a compact upon any other than on equal terms should take place between us; and therefore she would not admit that one concession should be made in favour of her commerce, or that any of the expences of a war, which would unavoidably succeed, should be reimbursed to her; or that a foot of territory should be made the stipulation for her service. She well knew that restricted commerce, and money to be paid at a future day, would hang upon the minds of the people of America, and produce discontent, and in the end be the source of debate and disruption. The possession of a neighbouring territory would be particularly dangerous. The disputes that would arise between the subjects of the one dominion and the citizens of the other, on the limits of the two possessions, would claim the attention of the king of France and the states of America; which might involve a war of longer duration than that in which we are engaged with Great-Britain, and from which our only hope now sought to relieve us. Besides, the indignity on our frontiers would now and then, bring the jealousy and suspicion of their nature, or provoked by a just cause, make incursions on the settlements of France, and of these states, in which case the inhabitants on one side, and those on the other would be charged, and perhaps be too often chargeable, with having instigated them to such hostilities. This would be the bottom hope of buildings, not of love and good offices, and wealth and glory to the two dominions, but of hatred, violence, and war, and men's bones whirling on the flags of battle for succeeding generations. To avoid consequences