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[WHOLE No. 138.]

## DISCOURSES ON DAVILA.—No. XVII.

Ses mains, autour du trône, avec confusion,  
Semaient la jalousie, et la division.

THE Guises, in their secret conversations with the King, insinuated, that if the Constable resided at Court, he would be assuming; would think to govern his Majesty like an infant, and even to hold him up to the ferule and the rod. They represented his intimate connections with the Bourbons, the eternal enemies of a crown, to which they had however long aspired. Finally, they suggested, that he could not confide in the Constable, without exposing his life, and the lives of his brothers, to the discretion of people, whose ambition the Kings his predecessors had always dreaded; and whom they had ever held in a state of humiliation, and at a distance from Court. Penetrating genius easily inspires suspicions into contracted minds. Nothing more was wanting to persuade a weak King, to seek a pretext, honourably to dismiss the Constable. As soon as the ceremony of the obsequies of Henry III. was completed, the King overwhelming him with caresses, signified to him, that not being able, with sufficient dignity to acknowledge his merit, nor the value of the services which he had rendered the Kings his ancestors, he had resolved to discharge him from the cares and burthens of government, too disproportionate to his great age: that he would no longer require of him, any excessive application to business, but would reserve him for some occasions of éclat: that he should always consider him, not as a servant and a subject, but as a venerable father: and that he would give him leave to retire, wherever he saw fit. The Constable easily comprehended that this lesson had been taught the King, by the Guises, through the Queen mother and the Queen of Scots: that it would be useless to remonstrate: and that it was better to receive as a recompense, orders, which his resistance might convert into disgrace. He thanked the King; recommended to him his sons and his nephews, and retired to his castle at Chandilly, ten leagues from Paris, where, he had more than once before, supported vicissitudes of fortune.

As soon as the Queen mother and the Guises, had banished the Constable, they studied to embarrass themselves of the Prince de Condé.

It was easy to foresee, that his fiery temper, and animosity against the Guises, would transport him to attempt all the means imaginable, to change the form of government established.

It may be remarked in this place, that these expressions intimate an idea of reformation of government, and regeneration of nations, like those which prevail at this time, in France, and in many other countries after the example of America. One would conjecture that the Prince of Condé, had it in contemplation to establish committees of correspondence, to call a convention, or national assembly; to deliberate on a rational plan of government, to be adopted by the nation at large. There are, indeed, in history, some traces of a party, who wished for a republican government, about this time: but unfortunately, their ideas of a republic, appear to have been the same, with those which prevail too much at present, in France. Two hundred and fifty years of experience, have not yet brought the nation to advert to the true principles in nature, upon which government is founded. The Marquis of Condorcet, the friend of Turgot and Rochefoucault, so great in geometry, is not more accurate in the science of government, than Etienne de la Boetie, the friend of De Thou and Montaigne. The same reformation is wanting now, that was so necessary in 1550. Whether a sovereignty in one single assembly, constituted by a double representation, as the present assembly is, would have answered then or will succeed now, are questions that hereafter may deserve consideration. It ended formerly, after an hundred years of civil wars, in the simple absolute monarchy of Louis XIVth. Time must determine whether the continued deliberations and exertions of the National Assembly, will finally obtain a balance in their government. This is the point, on which their success will turn, if they fail in this, simple monarchy, or what is more to be dreaded, simple despotism, after long struggles will infallibly return. If the wild idea of annihilating the nobility should spread far, and be long persisted in, the men of letters and the National Assembly, as democratical as they

may think themselves, will find no barrier against despotism. The French, as well as the Greeks, at this time our respectable guests, and all other nations, civilized and uncivilized, have their beloved families, and nothing but despotism ever did or ever can prevent them from being distinguished by the people. These beloved families in France are the nobility. Five eighths of the present Nobility is noble. The first fresh election will they would the attachment of the people to those Nobles. In short, the whole power of the nation will fall into their hands, and a commoner will find no chance for an election after a little time, unless he enlist himself under the banner and into the regiment of some nobleman. For the commoners, this project of one assembly, is the most impolitic imaginable. It is the highest flight of aristocracy. To the royal authority it is equally fatal as to the commons. In what manner the nobility ought to be reformed, modified, methodized, and wrought by representation or otherwise, into an independent branch of the legislature? What form of government would have been best for France, under Francis III. and whether the same is not now necessary, under Louis XVIIth, are questions too deep and extensive, perhaps for us to determine. But we are very competent to demonstrate two propositions, first, that a sovereignty in a single assembly, cannot secure the peace, liberty or safety of the people. Secondly, that a federative republic, or in other words, a confederation of the republic of Paris, with the republics of the provinces, will not be sufficient to secure the tranquility, liberty, property or lives of the nation. In some future time, if neither business of more importance, nor amusements more agreeable should engage us, we may throw together a few thoughts, upon these questions. This may be done without the smallest apprehension of ever being confuted: for as we should fail to produce arguments to convince our readers, we know with how great certainty that time will supply all our defects, and demonstrate for us, the truth of both the propositions.

(To be continued.)

### FOR THE GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MR. FENNO,

I HAVE observed, with some concern, a recommendation of Mr. Webster's in the Tablet, No. 137, advising the exercise of Fencing to be used by people of sedentary employments, students, &c. Exercises and amusements in a republican government, should at least, be rational—they should be virtuous—they should be, if possible, useful. I should be glad to know in what the rationale of Fencing consists, or of what use it is? Perhaps we will be told it is of use to enable a man to avenge himself when insulted, or defend himself when attacked. But in all good governments the laws are sufficient to protect all good citizens. I would therefore recommend students and persons engaged in sedentary employments, as a substitute for Fencing, to provide themselves with a few tools of any mechanical branch that they would choose, and which would afford some exercise to the body. No country in the world is better calculated for machinery than America, A student tolerably well versed in Mathematics, and possessed of some of the common tools of a Turner might make some important and useful discoveries in Mechanics—and be of more use to his country than the whole race of Fencers, Cudgellers, and Prize-Fighters, from the creation of the World to the days of Noah Webster.

A disposition to ape the follies and absurdities of Europe has too long prevailed in America; and it is to be lamented that the Instructors of our youth should make such a false estimate of things as to advise recreations inconsistent with the laws and constitution of our country, and inimical to the morals of the people. If our youth learn to fence, they must wear swords; because it is a folly to learn a thing for which they will have no use. Thus provided with swords, they will soon find an opportunity of reducing their theory to practice; either by insulting some other person, or conceiving themselves affronted upon the slightest occasion. Edge tools should not be put in the hands of fools or madmen; they are only safe in the hands of men of years and experience, who have seen enough of the world to despise its vanities; but men of this description do not desire them. They are then only proper in the hands

of those whose profession is War—by such let them be worn; but let us not imitate some parts of Europe, where every Journeyman Barber to be met with has, instead of a Curling Tong, a long Rapier by his side. How contemptible and ridiculous it is to see a nation, in profound peace, with every one his sword to his side, as if they were a nation of Ishmaelites where every man's hand was raised against the hand of his neighbor!

O quantum est in rebus inani.

### FRANCE. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

Saturday, May 22.

THIS day the great question on the right of making peace and war was finally determined. The most remarkable speech previous to passing the decree was that of M. le Comte de Mirabeau, who said, that it was not merely his opinion, nor the plan of his decree, that he rose to defend, but, what was far dearer to him, his character, which had been suspected as unfriendly to liberty.

He said, many reports had been circulated to his prejudice; but he valued them not. In order to be useful, he said, he had searched for truth, and that truth he had spoken, at the hazard of displeasing. He then proceeded to defend his plan, and replied to the principal objections started by M. Barnave.

M. Barnave, M. le Marquis de la Fayette, and several other members, then demanded to be heard, but the majority of the Assembly, thinking there had been enough of speaking on the subject, determined to close the debate. And after a number of plans of decrees had been read, the following plan of M. de Mirabeau, amended, obtained the preference by a great majority.

#### THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DECREE.

1st. That the right of peace and war being vested in the nation, war shall not be resolved upon, but by a decree of the Legislative Body, which shall be made on the explicit notification of the King, and which shall be sanctioned by his Majesty.

2d. That the care of guarding the kingdom from external attacks and impending dangers, the maintaining its rights and possessions, is committed to the King by the constitution of the State—to him also belonged the maintenance of political connexions abroad, the conduct of negotiations, the appointment of Ambassadors, the power of raising armaments, and making preparations for war, in proportion to those made by neighbouring states; the power of distributing the sea and land forces, as he may judge proper, and of directing their operations in time of war.

3d. That in case of hostilities impending, or actually begun, an ally to assist, or a right to preserve by force of arms, the King shall be bound to give notification thereof without delay to the Legislative Body, and to make known the causes and motives thereof. And if the Legislative Body is not sitting at the time, it shall be called immediately by the King.

4th. That if upon such notification being made by the King, the Legislative Body are of opinion that, on the commencing of such hostilities, the Minister, or other agent of the Executive Power, is culpable, the author of such aggression shall be prosecuted as a State criminal. The National Assembly hereby declaring, that the nation renounces for ever all ambition by conquest, and will not employ the forces against the liberties of any people.

5th. That if upon such notification the Legislative Body shall resolve that war ought not to be made, the Executive Power shall be bound immediately to take the necessary steps to prevent or stop hostilities, the Ministers being always held to be responsible for delays.

6th. That in case of an impending war, the Legislative Body shall prolong the Session; and in time of war there shall be no recess. This article is remitted to the Committee of Constitution to be amended.

7th. That every declaration of war shall be made in these terms "By the King, in name of the nation."

8th. That during the course of a war, the Legislative Body shall have a power of requiring the Executive power to negotiate a peace.

9th. That it belongs to the King to negotiate and design all necessary conventions and treaties with foreign Powers for the general good of the State; declaring hereby, that treaties of peace,