

L O N D O N .

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
PETER PORCUPINE,

WITH A FULL AND FAIR ACCOUNT
OF ALL HIS AUTHORIZING TRANS-
ACTIONS.

THE subject of these Memoirs is the Author of several well known Pamphlets in America, some of which have been reprinted in England. As the Adversary of PAINE, his triumph has been very complete, and as the Historian of Dr. FRANKLIN'S reception in America, he has led the Doctor to entertain less favourable opinions of the Inhabitants of that Land of Promise than he did while at home. PETER PORCUPINE'S success, in his own bold, rough, and peculiar style of political writing, entitles him to our notice; and the manner in which he has espoused the British cause in America, to our respect. We shall, as opportunity presents, lay before our Readers his life, as written by himself.

"To be descended from an illustrious family, certainly reflects honour on any man, in spite of the fanciful principle of the present day.—This is, however, an honour that I have no pretension to. All that I can boast of in my birth, is, that I was born in Old England—the country from whence came the men who explored and settled North America—the country of PENN., and of the Father and Mother of Gen. WASHINGTON.

"With respect to my Ancestors, I shall go no further back than my grandfather, and for this plain reason, that I never heard talk of any prior to him. He was a day-labourer, and I have heard my father say, that he worked for one farmer from the day of his marriage to that of his death, upwards of forty years. He died before I was born, but I have often slept beneath the same roof that sheltered him, and where his widow dwelt for several years after his death. It was a little thatched cottage, with a garden before the door. It had but two windows; a damson tree shaded one, and a club of sycamores the other. Here I and my brothers went every Christmas and Whitsuntide, to spend a week or two, and to torment the poor old woman with our noise and delapidations. She used to give us milk and bread for breakfast, an apple pudding for our dinner, and a piece of bread and cheese for supper. Her fire was made of turf, cut from the neighbouring heath, and her evening light was a rush dipped in grease.

"How much better is it thus to tell the naked truth, than to descend to such miserable shifts as Dr. FRANKLIN has had recourse to, in order to persuade people that his forefathers were men of wealth and consideration. Not being able to refer his reader to the Herald's Office for proofs of the fame and antiquity of his family, he appeals to the etymology of his name and points out a passage in an obsolete book, whence he has the confidence to infer on our concluding, that in the Old English language, a Franklin meant a man of good reputation and of consequence. According to Dr. JOHNSON, a Franklin was what we now call a Gentleman's Steward, a Land Bailiff, a personage one degree above a Bum-bailiff, and that's all.

"Every one, will, I hope, have the goodness to believe, that my grandfather, was no philosopher. Indeed he was not. He never made a lightning rod nor bottled up a single quart of fun-shine in the whole course of his life. He was no almanack-maker, nor quack, nor chimney-doctor, nor soap-boiler, nor ambassador, nor printer's devil: neither was he a deist; and all his children were born in wedlock. The legacies he left were his scythe, his reaper-hook, and his flail; he bequeathed no old and irrecoverable debts to a hospital: he never cheated the poor during his life, nor mocked them in his death. He has, it is true been suffered to sleep quietly beneath the green sward; but if his descendants cannot point to his statue over the door of a library, they have not the mortification to hear him daily accused of having been a whoremother, a hypocrite, and an infidel.

"My father, when I was born, was a farmer. The reader will easily believe, that from the poverty of his parents, that he had received no very brilliant education: he was however, learned for a man in his rank of life. When a lit-

tle boy, he drove the plough for twopence a day, and there his earnings were appropriated to the expenses of an evening school. What a village school-master could be expected to teach, he had learnt, and had besides considerably improved himself in several branches of the mathematics. He understood land surveying well, and was often chose to draw the plans of disputed territory; in short, he had the reputation of possessing experience and understanding, which never fails in England to give a man in a country place some little weight with his neighbours. He was honest, industrious, and frugal; it was not, therefore, wonderful that he should be situated in a good farm, and happy in a wife of his own rank, like him, beloved and respected.

"So much for my ancestors, from whom, if I derive no honour, I derive no shame."

I had (and I hope yet have) three brothers: the eldest is a shop-keeper, the second a farmer, and the youngest, if alive, is in the service of the Honourable East-India Company, a private soldier, perhaps, as I have been in the service of the King. I was born on the 9th March, 1766: the exact age of my brothers I have forgotten, but I remember having heard my mother say, that there were three years and three quarters difference between the age of the eldest and that of the youngest.

A father like ours, it will be readily supposed, did not suffer us to eat the bread of idleness. I do not remember the time when I did not earn my living. My first occupation was, driving the small birds from the turnip feed, and the rooks from the peas. When I first trudged a field, with my wooden bottle and my fatchel swung over my shoulders, I was hardly able to climb the gates and stiles, and, at the close of the day, to reach home was a task of infinite difficulty. My next employment was weeding wheat, and leading a single horse at harrowing barley. Hoeing peas followed, and hence I arrived at the honor of joining the reapers in harvest, driving the team, and holding the plough. We were all of us strong, and laborious, and my father used to boast, that he had four boys, the eldest of whom was but fifteen years old, who did as much work as any three men in the Parish of Farham. Honest pride and happy days!

"I have some faint recollection, of going to school to an old woman, who I believe did not succeed in teaching me my letters. In the winter evenings my father taught us all to read and write, and gave us all a pretty tolerable knowledge of arithmetic. Grammar he did not perfectly understand himself, and therefore his endeavours to teach us that, necessarily failed; for though he thought he understood it, and though he made us get the rules by heart we learnt nothing at all of the principles.

"Our religion was that of the Church of England, to which I have ever remained attached; the more so, perhaps, as it bears the name of my country. As my Ancestors were never persecuted for their religious opinions, they never had an opportunity of giving such a singular proof of their faith as Dr. Franklin's Grandfather did when he kept his bible under the lid of a closet-stool. (What a book case!) If I had been in the place of Dr. FRANKLIN, I never would have related this ridiculous circumstance, especially as it must be confuted into a boast of his Grandfather's having an extraordinary degree of veneration for a book, which it is well known, he himself, durst not believe in.

"As to politics, we were like the rest of the country people in England; that is to say, we neither knew or thought any thing about the matter. The shouts of a victory, or the murmurs at a defeat, would now and then break in upon our tranquillity for a moment; but I do not remember ever having seen a Newspaper in the house, and most certainly that privation did not render us less free, happy, or industrious.

"After however the American war had continued for some time, and the cause and nature of it began to be understood, or rather misunderstood, by the lower classes of the People in England, we became a little better acquainted with subjects of this kind. It is well known, that the people were, as to numbers, nearly equally divided in their opinions concerning that war, and their wishes respecting the result of it. My father was a partisan of Americans; he used frequently to dispute on the subject with the gardener of a Nobleman who lived near us. This was generally done

with good humour, over a pot of our best ale; yet the disputes sometimes grew warm, and gave way to language that could not fail to attract our attention. My father was worried without doubt, as he had for antagonist a shrewd and sensible old Scotchman, far his superior in political knowledge; but he pleaded before a partial audience: we thought there was but one wise man in the world, and that one was our father. He who pleaded the cause of the Americans, had an advantage too with young minds: he had only to represent the King's troops as bent to cur the throats of a people, our friends and relations, merely because they would not submit to oppression, and his cause was gained. Speaking on the passions, is ever sure to succeed on the uninformed.

"Men of integrity are generally pretty obstinate in adhering to an opinion once adopted.—Whether it was owing to this, or to the weakness of Mr. MARTIN'S arguments, I will not pretend to say, but he never could make a convert of my father: he continued an American, and so staunch a one, that he would not suffer his best friend to drink success to the King's arms at his table. I cannot give the reader a better idea of his obstinacy in this respect, and of the length to which this difference of sentiment was carried in England than by relating the following instance:

"My father used to take one of us with him every year to the great hop fair at Wey Hill.—The fair was held at Old Michaelmas tide, and the journey was to us a sort of reward for the labours of the summer. It happened to be my turn to go thither the very year that Long-Island was taken by the British. A great company of hop merchants and farmers were just going to sit down to supper as the post arrived, bringing in the Extraordinary Gazette which announced the victory. A hop factor from London took the paper, placed the chair upon the table, and began to read with an audible voice. He was opposed, a dispute ensued, and my father retired, taking me by the hand, to another apartment, where we supped with about a dozen others of the same sentiments. Here Washington's health, and success to the Americans, were repeatedly toasted, and this was the first time, as far as I can recollect, that I ever heard the General's name mentioned. Little did I then dream that I should ever see the man and still less that I should hear some of his own countrymen reviling and execrating him.

"Let not the reader imagine, that I wish to assume any merit from this, perhaps mistaken, prejudice of an honoured and beloved parent.—Whether he was right or wrong is not now worth talking about: that I had had no opinion of my own is certain; for had my father been on the other side, I should have been on the other side too, and should have looked upon the company I then made a part of, as mal contents and rebels. I mention these circumstances merely to show that I was not "nursed in the lap of aristocracy," and that I did not imbibe my principles, or prejudices, from those who were the advocates of blind submission. If my father had any fault, it was not being submissive enough, and I am much afraid my acquaintances, have but too often discovered the same fault in his son.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Latest Foreign Intelligence.

ASIA.

CALCUTTA, JAN. 26, 1797.

ZEMAUN SHAH obtained a complete victory over the Seicks, the 1st instant, and has entered in triumph Lahore, their capital. He was also preparing to march to Delhi with 100,000 men, accompanied by a Frenchman, late Ambassador from the Convention to Constantinople. Previous to the victory, Zemaun Shah formed his army into seven divisions, endeavouring, by different roads, to surprise the rear of the Seicks; but, proving unsuccessful, had again united his forces. A most desperate battle was fought at Umroster. It commenced at eight in the morning; when the Shah opened his *plata renaults*, or wall pieces, mounted on Camels, against the Seicks, and both parties kept up a heavy fire with matchlocks until two o'clock. About this time the Seicks finding they had made no impression on the enemy, gave the signal for a general charge; and, agreeable to their mode of close combat, flung away their turbans, let loose their hair, put their beards in their

mouths, and dashed into the midst of the Abdallah army, sword in hand. The two armies continued thus engaged for four hours, when Zemaun's troops gave way, and were pursued to the very entrance of Lahore. Thirty-five thousand men were killed! 20,000 on the part of the Shah, and 15,000 of the Seicks.

FRANCE.

P A R I S ,
Nov. 8.

Two Polish Nobles, who had sought a refuge in the capital, had their apartments plundered yesterday morning of 11,000 Louis, and of diamonds of the value of 72,000 livres. The miscreants have been apprehended, and nearly all the property recovered.

The wife of Gen. Buonaparte is on her route to Paris, and the General himself is expected in 15 days.

The news of the continental peace was received at Brest with the most lively transports. On the 14th inst. notwithstanding the proclamation of the Directory, no extraordinary preparation had taken place in that port; they even continued the disarming of the ships of the line. They were doing nothing but arming eight frigates, which are to have four months provision on board, but the destination of which was unknown.

The Executive Directory has sent off within these two days a courier to Berlin.

We have reason to believe that that of Petersburg exercises a powerful influence over the cabinet of Berlin: and as his intimate connection with another great monarch is well known, it is thought that the new Prussian monarch will, immediately on his accession to the throne, have various interests to combine, more than one difficulty to overcome; and if his character be as decided as it is said to be, he has more than one danger to encounter.

Nov. 15.

We are assured that the Executive Directory has indirectly informed the court of London, that peace might be concluded if it would consent to the re-establishment on the one part and the other, of the *Status ante Bellum*. They intimated at the same time, that they will never depart from this resolution.

Treillard and Bonnier (d'Arde) will immediately depart for the congress at Rastadt.

Gen. Desaix, whose return to Strasbourg we have announced, is expected at Paris, when he will depart for Rennes, after having concerted with the Directory the commencement of organization of the army of England. This army, it is said, will consist of 60,000 men.

UPPER RHINE, NOV. 4.

General Buonaparte is expected at Strasbourg, on his way to Paris, whence he will go to Rastadt. Every preparation is making to receive him with all possible testimonies of honour and respect. His journey through France to Paris will be continued in triumph.

SCOTLAND.

GLASGOW, NOV. 15.

Letters received here from London mention it as a current report there, that the French had refused to treat with the American Commissioners, unless they would as a preliminary annul their treaty with this country; and the Commissioners having no such powers, had, in consequence, been ordered to quit Paris.

ENGLAND.

LONDON, OCT. 24.

The present situation of public affairs is such, that men of the most opposite political views, and attached in the strongest manner to party prejudice, are now called upon to postpone their particular disputes, and to strengthen with their joint exertions the efficiency of government. We are at length placed in such a state, that the most obstinate profelytes of the Revolution can no longer dissemble the favourite project of the French Republic, which is founded on the primary system of revolutionizing all Europe, and which every day devolves itself in the most alarming manner.

This country is the principal object of its destructive designs; but let us not deceive ourselves. The animosity which the Jacobins of France entertain against us, is less the consequence of that ancient rivalry which has existed between both nations, than the necessary effect of that vigorous resistance, which they experience on our part, to their plan of disorganizing the civilized world. The tyranny which they have recently exer-