

porations are established. The instances of Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield, shew, by contrast, the injury which those Gothic institutions are to property and commerce. A few examples may be found, such as that of London, whose natural and commercial advantage, owing to its situation on the Thames, is capable of bearing up against the political evils of a corporation; but in almost all other cases the fatality is too visible to be doubted or denied.

Though the whole nation is not so directly affected by the depression of property in corporation towns as the inhabitants themselves, it partakes of the consequence. By lessening the value of property, the quantity of national commerce is curtailed. Every man is a customer in proportion to his ability; and as all parts of a nation trade with each other, whatever affects any of the parts, must necessarily communicate to the whole.

As one of the houses of the English parliament is in a great measure, made up of elections from these corporations; and as it is unnatural that a pure stream should flow from a foul fountain, its vices are but a continuation of the vices of its origin. A man of moral honour and good political principles, cannot submit to the mean drudgery and disgraceful arts, by which such elections are carried. To be a successful candidate, he must be destitute of the qualities that constitute a just legislator: and being thus disciplined to corruption by the mode of entering into Parliament, it is not to be expected that the representatives should be better than the man.

#### BURNS'S SONGS.

THE songs of Scots have often been the subject of remark, as they form a strong feature of their national character. Their music, united with song, has the power of kindling their spirits for great enterprises, soothing their pride in the recollection of past glory, or exciting the gentler emotions, by presenting the images, the manners, and incidents of pastoral life. Upon the nature of this music it is useless to remark; for who has not felt the force of Scots melodies? And to those who require explanations—explanations will be vain. To these native airs, transmitted through a long series of years, with what variations cannot now be known, the ardent BURNS was requested by his friend THOMPSON to adapt verses of his own. And surely no one could be better qualified for the task by genius and circumstances, for he brought to its performance the pride of a Caledonian and the enthusiasm of a poet.

The verses are so well adapted; that they seem to be the natural, and almost only expression of the music. The tunes he had been acquainted with from his childhood; they had come down to him invested with the sanctity of years, and were associated with all the circumstances of his life. Hence every recurrence of them must have "opened all the cells where memory slept," and given his spirit that pathetic tone which diffuses itself through so many of his songs.

Under such impressions and from such a poet we might expect to feel the full force of song; and he, who can hear with indifference what BURNS has written, may doubt whether music and poetry were made for him. The variety of his songs is a proof of the versatility of his powers, and if his humorous ones are less admired, it is not, perhaps, so much, that others have written better in the same style, as that he himself has written better in a different style.—His predominating qualities seem to have been strength of imagination and tenderness of feeling. His conceptions were vivid and sometimes sublime, and always free from conceits, and the affectation of novelty, either in the thought or expression.—The song beginning with

"Scots wha hae wi' WALLACE bled;

Scots wham BRUCE has aften led"—&c. &c. is a solemn and elevated strain of poetry; but the songs which are most frequently sung are distinguished for their natural expression of passions. He understood their language, and knew how to give it utterance. In general there is a simple unaffected flow of sentiment and thought, and these are left, without any ambitious ornaments of language, to find their way to the heart. This is not the simplicity that disgusts with nakedness, or becomes ridiculous from stiffness; but the true child of genius, and the constant companion of its sublime as well as its melancholy walks.

Among so many, all possessing some beauties, it is hard to select. There is one to the tune of "Robert Adair," which presents a striking transition of thought in the conclusion of the last stanza

"To thy new lover fly;

Laugh o'er thy perjury;

Then in thy bosom try

What peace is there."

The chorus of another, beginning with "O, why should Fate his pleasures have, Life's dearest bands unwinding" &c. is the principal beauty in the songs; but the music itself would give effect to one less pathetic. The address to the Wood Lark deserves notice for its naivete and pathos.—Of the light and gay songs, the "Estrean Lassie" and "Duntan Gray," are the best; yet some of these, like the "L'Allegro" of MILTON, are not without an infusion of melancholy.

Many of the songs are of the pastoral kind, and abound with those images and allusions, which are appropriate to such scenes. In these, the names of the mountains, streams, woods, &c. are introduced: This particularity to one unacquainted with the scenery of the country, is beautiful; to a native, it is something more.

He sometimes introduces "boggles, warlocks," &c. &c. the beauty and effect of this must depend on the strength and prevalence of popular superstition in the country.

Perhaps rigid criticism might find employment upon the songs of BURNS; but that he has produced so many, with so few faults, in a kind of writing where excellence is so rare, disarms those who had rather be pleased than criticize. There is one general remark to be made in praise of BURNS, and that is, he is always chaste and delicate. If this should appear to be humble praise, let it be remembered how few poets can claim it, and its value will be felt. Songs are not to be regarded as trifles, for whatever pervades or influ-

ences the manners of a people carries its own importance, and he is at least entitled to our good will, who has raised the character or added to the flock of innocent amusements.

#### FROM THE AMERICAN BALANCE.

Observations respecting the invitation of Mr. Jefferson to Thomas Paine to come over to America.

A Public measure so singular, so astonishing, so degrading to executive dignity, and so foreign from the usual business of national diplomacy, as was the letter of invitation to THOMAS PAINE, written by Mr. JEFFERSON, and presented by an Ambassador of the United States, cannot fail to excite, together with indignant sensations, a strong curiosity to investigate its motives. Had Mr. PAINE arrived to our shores, uninvited; or had he even come, invited by individuals of a subordinate grade, his arrival would have been announced among the trivial occurrences of the day. It was the extraordinary manner of his introduction among us, that has attached to this self-degraded man a sufficient degree of importance to render him an object of public notice.

It has lately been stated to the public, in terms of exaltation, by some of the democratic party, that there are already nearly two hundred thousand European emigrants in this country; and every year, and every month brings a large accession to this enormous mass of foreigners. They crowd our cities—they direct our presses—they influence and decide our elections—they sit in our public councils—they govern our finances—they know their own numbers—they feel their own strength; and they speak to the nation, from time to time, in the language of menace and scorn.—Will not their numbers, merely from spontaneous emigrations, be soon sufficient to give us liberty? Was it necessary that the pen of the august President of the United States, in connection with diplomatic agency, should be employed in inviting over European citizens to our shores? or if such a strange necessity really existed, the selection is still more strange.

Among all the men in Europe, who might have been induced, by diplomatic invitation, to come over and help us; was there no man so deserving, so needed as THOMAS PAINE? By what wonderful fatality has it happened, that the man, who is emphatically the scorn of Europe, should be selected and distinguished by Mr. Jefferson, as the object of his high esteem; and should be affectionately invited to incorporate with the people of this country!—or even if it were necessary to make the selection from among the citizens of the Gallic nation, was there none among all those who had waded through the deep and abominable filth of the French revolutions, that might challenge a competition and a preference? Why pitch upon the man, that had excited qualms in the bowels of France herself, and whom she was eager to disgorge? Why pitch upon the man, against whose blasphemies thousands of pious parents, in this country, had, in their dying moments, solemnly warned their children! Why pitch upon the man, that had basely insulted this whole nation, by pouring a torrent of food, abuse and blackguardism upon its venerable Washington, who was emphatically the Father of the country!

Mr. JEFFERSON is the representative of a great nation; a nation, upon which no inconsiderable degree of the attention of the world is fixed.—And what must the world think—what must the wisest and best men in Europe think, while they behold him stooping from his dignified station down, down, down, to a diplomatic correspondence with THOMAS PAINE—to the bestowment upon him of high esteem, and to an affectionate invitation to that French citizen to come over to America.—The whole nation is degraded by such a spectacle. It is exposed to the pointed finger of derision; and must prepare to receive the tribute of contempt.

In the history of nations, a signal mission from the head and representative of a great and respectable people to an unofficial individual of a foreign land, is an unusual thing. It is a species of diplomacy, that rarely happens: and it naturally presupposes an uncommon degree of worth, in the individual who has been thus distinguished. Whenever the sublime head and principal organ of a great nation by a mission in the solemn form of an embassy, calls upon a foreign subject or citizen to migrate, and to vouchsafe to the country of the dignified petitioner the favour of his presence, it presupposes the expectation of important services from the invited foreigner.—What good services can this country expect from THOMAS PAINE?—I pause for a reply.

EUSEBIUS.

#### CHELTENHAM, (ENG.) SEPTEMBER 20. SLIGHT OF HAND TRICKS.

We have been all in an uproar here lately at the trick upon trick and slight of hand of Prince —, a very dark athletic personage, who, stalking up to a white table, where a party had just concluded a rubber, put his fingers, as if in act of snuffing one of the candles, and then laying them on the edge of the table, the counters, as if by magic, ran into his hands. The news of this wonderful event spread like wild-fire, and the ball-room was presently emptied to behold this modern Magician—who, by way of climax, borrowed a left hand glove of a lady, and putting it upon the table, retreated some distance, and ordered the wedding finger to erect itself, which proved obedient to its potent master, and the glove itself moved into his hand. The Prince then turning to some pretty women, said, that if they would allow him only to put a grain of his infallible powder on their shoulders, they would be forced to follow him wherever he went. The ladies replied only with a shriek, and danced out of the room to a much quicker step than they ever entered it.

#### ORIGIN OF THE WORD DUN.

Some have derived this word from the French word *donner*, signifying *give*, implying a demand of something due; and others, amongst whom is the celebrated Dr. Johnson, from the Saxon word *dunan* to *blame*. Both are wrong. The origin of the word, as related in a periodical

From the (London) Universal Magazine.

#### OBSERVATIONS ON CHARTERS AND CORPORATIONS.

IT is a perversion of terms to say, that a charter gives rights. It operates by a contrary effect, that of taking rights away. Rights are inherently in all the inhabitants; but charters, by annulling those rights in the majority, leave the right by exclusion in the hands of a few. If charters were constructed so as to express in direct terms, "that every inhabitant, who is not a member of a corporation, shall not exercise the right of voting," such charters would, in the face, be charters, not of rights, but of exclusion. The effect is the same under the form they now stand; and the only persons on whom they operate, are the persons whom they exclude. Those whose rights are guaranteed, by not being taken away, exercise no other rights than as members of the community they are entitled to without a charter; and, therefore, all charters have no other than an indirect negative operation. They do not give rights to A, but they make a difference in favour of A by taking away the right of B, and consequently are instruments of injustice.

But charters and corporations have a more extensive evil effect, than what relates merely to elections. They are sources of endless contentions in the places where they exist; and they lessen the common rights of national society. A native of England, under the operation of these charters and corporations, cannot be said to be an Englishman in the full sense of the word. He is not free of the nation, in the same manner that a Frenchman is free of France, and an American of America. His rights are circumscribed to the town, and, in some cases, to the parish of his birth; and all other parts, though in his native land, are to him as a foreign country. To acquire a residence, in these, he must undergo a local naturalization by purchase, or he is forbidden or expelled the place. This species of feudality is kept up to aggrandize the corporations at the ruin of towns; and the effect is visible.

The generality of corporation towns are in a state of solitary decay, and prevented from further ruin, only by some circumstance in their situation, such as a navigable river, or a plentiful surrounding country. As population is one of the chief sources of wealth, (for without it land itself has no value) every thing which operates to prevent it must lessen the value of property; and as corporations have not only this tendency, but directly this effect, they cannot but be injurious. If any policy were to be followed, instead of that of general freedom, to every person to settle where he pleased, (as in France or America) it would be more consistent to give encouragement to new comers, than to preclude them by exacting premiums from them.

The persons most immediately interested in the abolition of corporations, are the inhabitants of the towns where corporations are established. It is difficult to account for the origin of charter and corporation towns, unless we suppose them to have arisen, or been connected with, some species of garrison service. The times in which they began justify this idea.—The generalities of those towns have been garrisons; and the corporations were charged with the care of the gates of the towns, when no military garrison was present. Their refusing or granting admission to strangers, which has produced the custom of giving, selling, and buying freedom, has more of the nature of garrison authority than civil government. Soldiers are free of all corporations throughout the nation, by the same propriety that every soldier is free of every garrison, and no other persons are. He can follow any employment, with the permission of his officers, in any corporation town throughout the nation.