

# THE DEMOCRATIC RECORDER,

## AND REFORMERS' GUIDE,

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## TO THE PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

If ever it was the duty of Britons to resort to the use of arms to recover their freedom, and hurl vengeance upon the heads of their tyrants it is now. The most open and undisguised tyranny which ever disgraced any community, ancient or modern was liberty itself, compared with that iron yoke which the Boroug faction by their representatives the ministers and the infamous seest occupiers in the house of the people have fastened upon the neck of the nation.

This yoke is indeed "grievous to be borne;" by its weight it bears down Englishmen till their faces are imprinted in the dust of the earth; and till they are strangled by its cruel and iron-edged pressure. A race of men who from their knowledge, and skill, and taste, and moral endowments, and intellectual qualifications ought to walk erect in all the majesty of unsubdued manhood, are crouching at the feet of a band of oppressors whose existence is to be ascribed only to the want of a will in their slaves to destroy it. The old adage that it is sufficient for a nation to be free that she will it, was never more confirmed than by a fair calculation of the present capacity of the Reformers at this moment, throughout the kingdom. Would they but unite, they would soon be avenged on their relentless enemies. Would they but imitate their ancestors who nobly risked their lives in the cause of Freedom; would they but dare their enemies to the fight, and only exert those mighty energies which the author of all has implanted in their nature; we should not long have to deplore our present degradation. What arguments ought to be used with a people whose boast for ages has been "Britons never shall be slaves." What shall we say to inspire them with the noble spirit which animated their ancestors? Will not the example of the glorious army of patriots, from whom we are descended, flash upon our recollection, and awaken within us every dormant principle of resistance to oppression, which as their descendants must circulate in our veins? Or are we degenerated? Is the high spirit that actuated the Barons of Runnimead extinct? Are the masters of kings, the creators of kings, the transporters of kings, the executors of kings, to submit to a vile faction which is destitute of every passion but that of avarice and tyranny. Awake Englishmen! Awake, or be for ever fallen. Will no arguments, no facts bring the blush of shame into your cheeks? Reflect, what are men to whom you submit yourselves; what is their conduct? look to that cold-blooded, impatriotic man; see cruelty severed from all the checks and agitations of conscience; see murder personified

under a visage, smooth as glassy wave when unruffled by a breeze; look at that face which ought to be deeply engraven with all lines which the hand of time could mark upon a long produced villain's physiognomy. Turn to the horrid history of Ireland's woes; see it stained with blood, and disfigured with all the images of torturing instruments: of ropes, and racks, and whips, and daggers. Turn to the horrid page, where is recorded the sale of a whole country by one of her soas, into the hands of a foreign foe. Read all the horrid story, and then turn your eyes upon an Irish villain.

Would to God this were the only tyrant which at this hour curses the fairest country in the world! Look there, see that saintish hypocrite, who under the mask of religion conceals a face of cowardly villainy. He talks of *Christ*, of him who wept at the miseries of man; who toiled to liberate his countrymen not only from the yoke of moral and spiritual, but also from the degrading servitude of civil tyrants. Such is his hatred of every species of freedom, that he is unceasingly employed in its destruction; he is equally opposed to the liberty of the religious and the political. Who has forgotten his base attempt to rob the Dissenters of their immunities? Then indeed the Dissenters felt the evils of oppression and resisted it. Then they arose as one man; they soon discovered their real strength by their union. They exhibited their thousands and tens of thousands, all roused like the lion of the forest by the spear of the hunter: they did not forget to remind the sovereign of the contract between him and the people of these realms. They let him know that he was no longer to receive the duty of their allegiance unless he fulfilled his oath. They let him know that a king of England was a really responsible man, responsible to the whole country; and that if he dared in defiance of them to sport with their rights and liberties, they should not fail to drag him to the same tribunal as his predecessors, James and Charles; and adjudge him to the punishment of transportation, or death according to the magnitude of his offence. And this sanctified hypocrite, this smiling villain, was then "the genius of the storm." He was then the tool of that faction which is at all times as at the present, the unrelenting destroyer of the liberty of the people.

But it may be said of the Dissenters as it was said of Cæsar, *veni, vidi, vici*, "they came, they say, they conquered." As soon as they appeared in the face of the enemy his power dwindled away. The cause of the Religious reformers was sus-

cessful; their numbers and union terrified the unprincipled monster, and he was compelled to give up the contest in disgrace. This same man is now displaying his malice against political Reformers. But he will find as with respect to the Dissenters, that the Reformers are too numerous, and that he can no more vanquish the latter than the former. And shall we allow this mixture of hypocrisy, and cruelty, and tyranny, to dispose of our lives and liberty? Look at his infamous conduct before and during the Suspension Act—see him seizing, and imprisoning, and torturing Englishmen—see him rattling the keys of all the prisons in the country, and grinning with a malignant satisfaction at the sufferings of the multitude of innocent men whom he had imprisoned. See poor Ogden bending under the load of his chains; see him sinking under their weight; hear him groaning from the inflammation of his injured body; and in all the madness of agony, see him lie unpitied in the damp and darkness of a lone dungeon.

But look again to that poor maniac, who in the paroxysms of despair has turned his hand upon himself. See him madly gashing his own frame, and look at the calmness of the infamous man who mercilessly inflicts such punishment as overpower reason and confound the understanding. Such is another of that infamous body of men called ministers, who if they escape the most marked and condign punishment, will furnish the strongest argument yet invented against the existence of a Moral Governor—a Divine Providence.

But who is this mixture of the statesmen and the buffoon; this alpha and omega of human insignificance and respectability, this chance bastard and illegitimate minister; this man-monkey, this monkey-minister; this monster with the heart of a wolf and the head of a fop; this compound of every thing mean and vain: this

Oh, what must England be under the management of such a trinity of gods as these. What can complete them but the addition of one of the most stupid of the hacks of office, in the shape of a chancellor of the exchequer? And will Englishmen submit to the dictation of such a junto of impostors as these? Men, whose only recommendation is their fidelity to their employers, the cruel and oppressive Borough Faction. But let us look at their recent acts at Manchester. Their bloody and treacherous conduct is without example: never did a callous and insensible murderer more deliberately, more reflectingly, more intentionally project the destruction of one fellow creature than they did that of thousands, whom they attempted to assassinate in open day-light. But the blood of these men will yet be avenged. The day of retribution is at hand: time will speedily roll on; and then we shall see who are the principals and who the auxiliaries; and I trust we shall see the guilty pay the atonement of his fault, although ministers themselves or another great personage should be brought to the block. Let the people of England unite, and then we are free!!

#### DISMISSAL OF MINISTERS.

*Let every Reformer do his duty.*

The leaders of the Reformers in the kingdom have determined upon a simultaneous Meeting of the Friends of Liberty, in every Town and City throughout the country, for the purpose of demanding the dismissal of Ministers, and a Radical Reform in the Representation of the people in Parliament.

It is also stated, and we think the report deserving of credit, that the different Meetings will assemble every seventh day, until their demands are granted. What the consequence of a refusal on the part of the Regent would be, we know not; but this we know, that 3 or 4 Millions of persons assembled to demand their Freedom, must not be trifled with, for although they petition for their rights, let it be remembered; they have the power to take possession of them when they will.

#### REFORM.

From the Autumn of 1816, when Mr Cobbett first began to print his Register without a stamp, until the present hour, the march of Reform has been uniformly progressive. Even during the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus; when public Meetings were almost relinquished, our cause gathered strength and obtained a mighty victory. Instead of suppressing the "Two-penny Trash" (as the cheap Weekly Publications were foolishly called) by the power of an obsequious Parliament, Ministers attempted to silence the writers by Prosecutions for Libel; and Mr Wooller, who, after the migration of Mr. Cobbett, stood first in the field, was brought into the King's Bench.

The consequences of this Prosecution were such as the most sanguine friend of Reform could hardly have anticipated. The Advocate of Ministers, a man chosen from the whole bar for his learning and eloquence, was foiled by a Journeyman Printer, and almost without effort.

Hitherto, whatever might have been the imbecility of their advocates, or the sophistry of their Judges, Ministers had been rescued from utter insignificance by the verdicts of Juries. Power, however it may be hated, cannot be despised; but folly combined with weakness, always produces contempt. The partizans of the system now became the croakers, and all the feelings and impulse of triumph were enjoyed by their adversaries. But the most important consequence of this Trial remains to be considered. Mr. Pearson, the Solicitor employed by Mr. Wooller was not satisfied with merely doing his duty to his client; he determined to attempt a revision of the Lists from which the Special Juries of the City of London were struck. The opinions of Counsel were against him; fortunately for his Country, Mr. Pearson had an opinion of his own; he brought the question before the Common Council, proved himself right, and was successful. Thus was the Press of London set at liberty

The victory was confirmed by the three acquittals of Mr. Hone, and from that time to the present we do not recollect that a single Prosecution for Libel has been brought to trial before a Jury of the City of London.

Nor have the good effects of this Reformation of the City Juries been confined to the Metropolis. The Political Writers in the country have taken their tone from their coadjutors in London, and hitherto with almost perfect safety.

The confined influence of the bold open doctrine and extended circulation of the Periodical Writings, have wrought a change in the People of England for which there is no parallel in History. It is five, and it ought never to be forgotten, that this ultimate cause of our mental regeneration is to be found in the improved education of the poorer classes; but the effects had scarcely begun to show themselves at the commencement of the period from which we commenced our review.

In the course of these three years, the People have assumed a new character; they have shown themselves independent of either advisers or leaders, they can assemble without tumult, and conduct all the business of public Meetings with the most perfect order; prepare Addresses and Resolutions founded upon the soundest positions of political philosophy; support them by well-selected facts and undentable arguments; and then, notwithstanding the irritation of want, and the insults of their adversaries, separate as peaceable as if they were retiring from a place of worship; nor have they confined their efforts to the assembling of public meetings. Aware of the inefficacy of petitions, they have looked around for other methods of peaceably accomplishing their objects; and this brings us to the consideration of the present era. Ministers at length discovered that although they had been shamefully driven out of their own courts, there was no immediate appearance of any power arising to drive them from their places. The fear of remote consequences sat easy on their minds, and they prided themselves on their obedience to at least one divine injunction. "Take no heed, for the morrow sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." But a new state of things was at hand; that essay in the Black Dwarf to which Ministers had kindly given so much publicity by their prosecution of it, was in ridicule of the boasted right of petition. It might appear strange, that the same individuals who were almost daily employed in rejecting with contempt the petitions of the people, should become the champions of the right of petition; but experience has shown that however they may treat petitions, they are by no means sorry to see the public indignation exhaust itself in efforts which portend so little immediate effect; no sooner did the inhabitants of Birmingham proceed to act for themselves instead of begging for assistance, than the Borough faction roused itself from its lethargy; the election of Sir Charles Wolsey produced the Regent's proclamation, the indictment at Warwick, the denunciations against the Meeting at Manchester, and finally the MASSACRE itself.

These are the means which the Faction has employed to pre-

vent us from performing acts which can have no validity but in public opinions; no power but what is conceded to reason and justice. These are the means to which the Borough-mongers resort to to prevent the people of England, not from enforcing, but even from expressing their will!

What do these things prove? nothing but the cruelty, the impotence, and the fears of our enemies. "THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS IS THE SEED OF THE CHURCH." Let us never forget this consolation; while mourning over the massacre of St. Peter's, we cannot forget it; for that seed is already springing up. Public Meetings instead of being prevented, as the Borough-mongers and their adherents foolishly expected they would be by the exertion of a "vigour beyond the law," have increased beyond all measure. Mr. Hunt, the great object of their hatred, is exalted into a demi-god. The whole metropolis poured out to meet him, and he is received with acclamations which might well excite the envy of sovereigns. Nor is this all; the enthusiasm of the people for Reform is turned into a new channel. By abstaining from execrable articles, they strike a blow at the revenue, which must sooner or later be fatal; but the advantage in point of money is twofold; for all that is taken from the revenue is applicable to some great purpose of Reform. We do not spike our enemy's battery, we do more; we turn his guns upon himself. We need not dwell upon these points, nor upon the improvement in health and spirits which the Reformers will experience, because neither these nor pecuniary considerations are so important in our eyes as that lofty feeling induced by honourable sacrifice.

It is by submitting to privations, and only thus, that we can prove to ourselves the potency of our own conviction, the sincerity of our self devotion; and our power of withstanding temptations; to swerve from our duty, under whatever shape they may present themselves.

#### MANCHESTER MURDERS.

THE blood-hounds of Manchester are now in a fair way, we think, of receiving their due (and devils should have their due) upon the gallows. Had not those who applauded this foul and wholesale murder ought to be dragged to the block, (however exalted their situation) by an indignant and cruelly oppressed people? True Englishmen will be glad to find that an expression of the most deep abhorrence of the bloody deeds at Manchester, is echoed from every town and city in the kingdom, and unless justice is done to the British Nation, from the state of the public pulse we have no hesitation in saying, that, the time is at hand when every man will buckle his weapon to his side and unite with his fellow countrymen to obtain what reason and justice so long has denied to him.

The following places have recorded their sentiments of this ferocious and sanguinary butchery.