

Conville
EXPLA
Bromfield

Bromfield

only one of Bromfield's sons and my father's eldest brother
gave this strange book to my mother Catherine Bromfield

CB


AN
HISTORICAL AND MORAL VIEW
OF THE
ORIGIN AND PROGRESS
OF THE
FRENCH REVOLUTION;
AND THE
EFFECT IT HAS PRODUCED
IN
EUROPE.
BY MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED FOR PAT. BYRNE, WILLIAM JONES, JAMES
MOORE, JOHN RICE, NICHOLAS KELLY,
JOHN MILLIKEN, GEORGE
FOLINGSBY.

1795.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS history, taking in such a variety of facts and opinions, has grown under my hand ; especially as in writing I cannot avoid entering into some desultory disquisitions, and descriptions of manners and things which, though not strictly necessary to elucidate the events, are intimately connected with the main object ; I have also been led into several theoretical investigations, whilst marking the political effects that naturally flow from the progress of knowledge. It is probable, therefore, that this work will be extended to two or three more volumes, a considerable part of which is already written.

PREFACE.

cobwebs to catch small flies. Accustomed to be punished themselves for every trifle, and often for only being in the way of the rich, or their parasites; when, in fact, had the Parisians seen the execution of a noble, or priest, though convicted of crimes beyond the daring of vulgar minds?—When justice or the law is so partial, the day of retribution will come with the red sky of vengeance, to confound the innocent with the guilty. The mob were barbarous beyond the tiger's cruelty: for how could they trust a court that had so often deceived them, or expect to see its agents punished, when the same measures were pursuing?

Let us cast our eyes over the history of man, and we shall scarcely find a page that is not tarnished by some foul deed, or bloody transaction. Let us examine the catalogue of the vices of men in a savage state, and contrast them with those of men civilized; we shall find, that a barbarian, considered as a moral being, is an angel, compared with the refined villain of artificial life. Let us investigate the causes which have produced this degeneracy, and we shall discover, that they are those unjust plans of government, which have been formed by peculiar circumstances in every part of the globe. — Then let us coolly and impartially contemplate the improvements, which are gaining ground in the formation of principles of policy; and I flatter myself it will be allowed by every humane and considerate being, that a political system more simple than has hitherto existed would effectually check those aspiring follies, which, by imitation, leading to vice, have banished from governments the very shadow of justice and magnanimity.

Thus had France grown up, and sickened on the corruption of a state diseased. But, as in
medicine

there is a species of complaint in the bowels which works its own cure, and, leaving the body healthy, gives an invigorated tone to the system, so there is in politics: and whilst the agitation of its regeneration continues, the excrementitious humours exuding from the contaminated body will excite a general dislike and contempt for the nation; and it is only the philosophical eye, which looks into the nature and weighs the consequences of human actions, that will be able to discern the cause, which has produced so many dreadful effects.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

8068