

Over Hutcheson

III p 426. The Scotch divines, who preceded him, were the libellers of their species; they calumniated the whole human race. It is the peculiar glory of Hutcheson that he was the first man in Scotland who publicly combated these degrading notions. With a noble and lofty aim ~~he~~ did he undertake his task. Venerating the human mind, he was bent on vindicating its dignity against those who disputed its titles. Unhappily he could not succeed; the prejudices of his time were too strong. Still, he did all that was in his power. He opposed the tide which he was unable to stem; he attacked what it was impossible to destroy; and he cast from his philosophy; with vehement scorn, those base prejudices which had long blinded the eyes of their contemporaries.

II 151 Over Spang

In the most civilized countries, the tendency always is, to obey even unjust laws, but while obeying them, to insist on their repeal. This is because we perceive that it is better to remove grievances than to resist them. While we submit to the particular hardships, we assail the system from which the hardship flows. ----- But, since the sixteenth century, local insurrections, provoked by immediate <sup>in</sup>justice; are diminishing, and are superseded by revolutions, which strike at once at the source from which whence the injustice proceeds. There can be no doubt that this change is beneficial; partly because it is always good to rise from effects to causes, and partly because revolutions being less frequent than insurrections, the peace of society would be more rarely disturbed, if men confined themselves entirely to the larger remedy. At the same time, insurrections are generally wrong; revolutions are always right. An insurrection is too often the mad and passionate effort of ignorant persons, who are impatient under some immediate injury, and never stop to investigate its remote and general causes.



But a revolution, when it is the work of the nation itself, is a splendid and imposing spectacle, because to the <sup>quality of</sup> moral indignation produced by the presence of evil, it adds the intellectual qualities of foresight and combination; and, uniting in the same act some of the highest properties of our nature, it achieves a double purpose, not only punishing the oppressor, but also relieving the oppressed.

In Spain, however, there never has been a revolution, properly so called; there never has even been one grand-national rebellion. The people, though often lawless, are never free. Among them, we find still preserved that peculiar taint of barbarism, which makes men prefer occasional disobedience to systematic liberty. Certain feelings there are of our common nature, which even their slavish loyalty cannot eradicate --- such instincts are happily the inalienable lot of humanity ---- And this is all that Spain now possesses ---- While they will rise up against a vexatious impost, they crouch before a system, of which the impost is the smallest evil --

Over England ± 1800

I. 451 For the upper classes not only refused to the rest of the nation the reforms which were urgently required, but compelled the country to pay for the precautions which, in consequence of the refusal, it was thought necessary to take

455 The truth is that in England the course of affairs .... had diffused among the people a knowledge of their own resources, and a skill and independence in the use of them, imperfect, indeed, but still far superior to that possessed by any other of the great European countries. --- imparting to it that sturdy boldness, and, at the same time, those habits of foresight, and of cautious reserve, to which the English mind owes its leading peculiarities --- the love of liberty has been tempered by a spirit of prudence, which has softened its violence, without impairing its strength.