

ANTIPOLEMUS;

OR, THE

PLEA OF REASON, RELIGION, AND HUMANITY,

AGAINST WAR.

IF there is in the affairs of mortal men any one thing which it is proper uniformly to explode; which it is incumbent on every man, by every lawful means, to avoid, to deprecate, to oppose, that one thing is doubtless war. There is nothing more unnaturally wicked, more productive of misery, more extensively destructive, more obstinate in mischief, more unworthy of man as formed by nature, much more of man professing Christianity.

Yet, wonderful to relate! in these times, war is every where rashly, and on the slightest pretext, undertaken; cruelly and savagely conducted, not only by unbelievers, but by Christians; not only by laymen, but by priests and bishops; not only by the young and inexperienced, but even by men far advanced in life, who must have seen and felt its dreadful consequences; not only by the lower order, the rude rabble, fickle in their nature, but, above all, by princes, whose duty it is to compose the rash passions of the unthinking multitude by superior wisdom and the force of reason. Nor are there ever wanting men learned in the law, and even divines, who are

ready to furnish firebrands for the nefarious work, and to fan the latent sparks into a flame.

Whence it happens, that war is now considered so much a thing of course, that the wonder is, how any man can disapprove of it; so much sanctioned by authority and custom, that it is deemed impious, I had almost said heretical, to have borne testimony against a practice in its principle most profligate, and in its effects pregnant with every kind of calamity.

How much more justly might it be matter of wonder, what evil genius, what accursed fiend, what hell-born fury first suggested to the mind of man, a propensity so brutal, such as instigates a gentle animal, formed by nature for peace and good-will, formed to promote the welfare of all around him, to rush with mad ferocity on the destruction of himself and his fellow-creatures!

Still more wonderful will this appear, if, laying aside all vulgar prejudices, and accurately examining the real nature of things, we contemplate with the eyes of philosophy, the portrait of man on one side, and on the other the picture of war!

In the first place then, if any one considers a moment the organization and external figure of the body, will he not instantly perceive, that nature, or rather the God of nature, created the human animal not for war, but for love and friendship; not for mutual destruction, but for mutual service and safety; not to commit injuries, but for acts of reciprocal beneficence.

To all other animals, nature, or the God of nature, has given appropriate weapons of offence. The in-born violence of the bull is seconded by weapons of pointed horn; the rage of the lion with claws. On the wild boar-are fixed terrible tusks. The elephant,

in addition to the toughness of his hide and his enormous size, is defended with a proboscis. The crocodile is covered with scales as with a coat of mail. Fins serve the dolphin for arms; quills the porcupine; prickles the thornback; and the gallant chanticleer, in the farm-yard, crows defiance, conscious of his spur. Some are furnished with shells, some with hides, and others with external teguments, resembling, in strength and thickness, the rind of a tree. Nature has consulted the safety of some of her creatures, as of the dove, by velocity of motion. To others she has given venom as a substitute for a weapon; and added a hideous shape, eyes that beam terror, and a hissing noise. She has also given them antipathies and discordant dispositions corresponding with this exterior, that they might wage an offensive or defensive war with animals of a different species.

But man she brought into the world naked from his mother's womb, weak, tender, unarmed; his flesh of the softest texture, his skin smooth and delicate, and susceptible of the slightest injury. There is nothing observable in his limbs adapted to fighting, or to violence; not to mention that other animals are no sooner brought forth, than they are sufficient of themselves to support the life they have received; but man alone, for a long period, totally depends on extraneous assistance. Unable either to speak, or walk, or help himself to food, he can only implore relief by tears and wailing; so that from this circumstance alone might be collected, that man is an animal born for that love and friendship which is formed and cemented by the mutual interchange of benevolent offices. Moreover, nature evidently intended that man should consider himself indebted for the boon of life, not so much to herself as to the

kindness of his fellow man; that he might perceive himself designed for social affections, and the attachments of friendship and love. Then she gave him a countenance, not frightful and forbidding, but mild and placid, intimating by external signs the benignity of his disposition. She gave him eyes full of affectionate expression, the indexes of a mind delighting in social sympathy. She gave him arms to embrace his fellow-creatures. She gave him lips to express an union of heart and soul. She gave him alone the power of laughing; a mark of the joy of which he is susceptible. She gave him alone tears, the symbol of clemency and compassion. She gave him also a voice; not a menacing and frightful yell, but bland, soothing, and friendly. Not satisfied with these marks of her peculiar favour, she bestowed on him alone the use of speech and reason; a gift which tends more than any other to conciliate and cherish benevolence, and a desire of rendering mutual services; so that nothing among human creatures might be done by violence. She implanted in man a hatred of solitude, and a love of company. She sowed in his heart the seeds of every benevolent affection; and thus rendered what is most salutary, at the same time most agreeable. For what is more agreeable than a friend? what so necessary? Indeed if it were possible to conduct life conveniently without mutual intercourse, yet nothing could be pleasant without a companion, unless man should have divested himself of humanity, and degenerated to the rank of a wild beast. Nature has also added a love of learning, an ardent desire of knowledge; a circumstance which at once contributes in the highest degree to distinguish man from the ferocity of inferior animals, and to endear him cordially to his fellow-creature: for neither the relationship of af-