

THEOPHILA CAMPBELL

THE BATTLE
OF THE PRESS

Theophila Campbell
The Battle of The Press

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PREFACE

In presenting to the present generation of England and America the comprehensive though necessarily condensed history of the life and work of the great pioneer in the cause of mental freedom, I am actuated by two principal motives, the foremost of which is the desirable duty of presenting to the people of to-day a faithful account of the work done by Carlile and the enormous sacrifices he made, as well as the terrible imprisonments he endured in the accomplishment of the task he set himself to do, namely, to establish for his countrymen a really Free Press, and the right of free oral discussion, as, up to his time, neither right had ever been accorded to any of the peoples

of Europe by either Church or State.

In the prosecution of his self-appointed task he was assailed by the reigning powers with all the malignity and religious fury that characterised the days of the Inquisition. No lie was too black to be hurled at him, no motive too low to be imputed to him, the minds of his countrymen were purposely influenced against him in order that they might not understand his real object – that of benefiting them – and to divert attention from his enemies' misdoing. So he was given the horns, hoofs, and tail of Satan himself, and invested with all the attributes of this fallen angel. It is not to be wondered at that the majority of the people at that time were so influenced, when we consider the very limited resources of the times in regard to information. Almost all of this was carried and given by word of mouth, and it was naturally colored by the views or feelings of those who gave it out.

To rescue the name of a true friend of the people from the undeserved obloquy or silence under which it has been so long obscured, and to place his memory and name where it truly belongs in the list of the honored dead of his country, and in the hearts of his countrymen, there to dwell as long as English history lasts, is the second motive. In doing this we may turn upon all the evidences, both public and private, the modern searchlight of critical investigation, and I am satisfied that when the clouds of malignant abuse and the mass of unsubstantiated charges that were heaped upon his name and fame by those who were interested in doing so are cleared away, his name and the

record of his life will stand out from the past as a star of the first magnitude stands out from the darkened sky of night – bright, clear, and pure.

I therefore, with confidence, commit the record of Carlile, as a man with the highest aims, unselfish purpose, and finest motives, who gave the efforts of a noble life and high moral purpose for the advancement of truth and the benefit of his fellow-men, to an enlightened and unbiassed generation, not doubting that it will recognise the true merit of the man and appreciate the value of his accomplishments for the benefit not only of his countrymen but of the world at large.

THEOPHILA CARLILE CAMPBELL.

PART I.

THE BATTLE OF THE PRESS, AS TOLD IN THE LIFE OF RICHARD CARLILE

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTORY

"Yet shall remembrance from oblivion's veil,
Relieve your scene and sigh with grief sincere,
And soft compassion at your tragic tale,
In silent tribute pay her kindred tear."

We who rejoice in a Free Press to-day can hardly realise the condition of the Press in Europe at the opening of the nineteenth century. In England, eighty years ago, he who dared to express opinions in opposition to the Established Church, or in any way offensive to the government of the day, rendered himself liable to heavy fines and severe imprisonment. The following extract will show better, perhaps, than anything else what a deplorable state the Press was in when Richard Carlile entered upon his great fight, and the obstacles he had to encounter: —

"It is difficult to imagine a more degraded and dangerous

position than that in which every political writer was placed in the year 1817. In the first place, he was subject by a Secretary of State's warrant to be imprisoned upon suspicion under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Secondly he was open to an *ex-officio* information under which he would be compelled to find bail or be imprisoned. The power of *ex-officio* information had been extended so as to compel bail by an Act of 1808; but from 1808 to 1811, during which three years forty such informations were laid, only one person was held to bail."¹

This was the time and this the state of affairs which greeted Carlile when he first entered into public life. He did not then see a man who had the courage to stand up boldly against such formidable odds. He, therefore, resolved to raise the standard of an absolutely Free Press, and be himself the bearer of the colors. This he knew involved possibilities of imprisonment, of exile, losses and suffering. He believed that his example would rally the weak and scattered forces of the writers of the day, and rouse the people to a sense of their degradation and dangerous condition, and to a recognition of the oppressive character of the rulers then in power.

In gathering materials for the life of Richard Carlile, I have drawn freely from his own publications, and also from a mass of correspondence extending over many years of his life. These letters were in most cases strictly private, yet every one of them would bear publication as far as Carlile is concerned. He,

¹ Larned's "Encyclopaedia and Topical History".

however, was the recipient of many confidences on the part of his friends – their sorrows were always his by sympathy. The claims of friendship, long since past, still hold good, though he would profit and not lose by the publication of the whole correspondence.

Chief amongst his publications were the fourteen volumes of the *Republican*, a weekly paper of thirty-two pages, ten or more volumes of which were edited in Dorchester Gaol. The very name of Republican in those days was a challenge to combat. This publication was the direct outcome of the Manchester massacre. The name had once before been adopted, but was withdrawn by Mr. Sherwin, the proprietor, as too dangerous.

After the rash and brutal conduct of the Government at Peter's Fields – or "Peterloo", as it came to be called – Carlile took up the paper, restored the name *Republican*, and, raising the war-cry of "a Free Press", kept it up through five of his six years of imprisonment in Dorchester Gaol and for one year after.

The horrors of the French Revolution, and the declaration of independence of the Colonial States of America, were yet too fresh in memory for the authorities of the time to see without alarm what seemed to be the flag of Republicanism flaunted in their very faces, and they sought to put it down at all hazards. The story of the battle between the authorities and Carlile will be found in the story of his life. It lasted for many years, but Carlile lived to come off a victor. The Government finally declared themselves defeated by him in his mode of moral warfare in the

struggle for the freedom of the Press, pronouncing him invincible in the course he had taken.

It was said of the *Republican* that the only section of the British Press which could be said to be free at that time, was that which was issued from Dorchester Prison!

Before his six years of imprisonment had expired, Carlile was informed that it was Lord Castlereagh, the then Prime Minister, who was so determined to crush him, and also that it was his publication of the horrors of the Manchester massacre and his open letters to the King and Lord Sidmouth that gave the offence – Castlereagh himself having given the order for the massacre, and being solely responsible for it.

The charge of blasphemous libel was decided upon, after much consultation, as the strongest that could be brought to bear upon Carlile, as in that case the help and strength of the Church could be had, and the minds of the people could be turned from the contemplation of that bloody affair at Manchester. So our hero was marked for slaughter. The fiat had gone forth! Judge, Attorney-General, and all the prosecutors were whipped into line and made to try this case and find this verdict, however reluctant they might have been, and *were*, to do so.

With this view of the case, which I believe to be the correct one, the reader will more readily comprehend how those stingingly sarcastic letters to Gifford must have stung and rankled in the wounds.

Carlile may be said to have travelled his native isle like the

champion of old – always mounted on his charger of fearlessness, and armed cap-a-pie for the encounter of his enemies. They always knew where to find him, and he was always ready to do battle for the right and against wrong. He never skulked nor concealed himself, nor took ship to avoid his enemies. He wore his colors in his helmet in plain sight of all, with proud defiance, and if, as sometimes happened, he was for the time worsted in an encounter, he neither cringed nor fawned, nor asked for quarter. He nursed his wounds as best he might, and never wavered in his determination to fight for the right while life endured.

The names of the various publications brought out by Carlile indicated in a measure the attitude he assumed. They were the *Republican*, the *Deist*, the *Moralist*, the *Lion*, the *Prompter*, the *Gauntlet*, the *Christian Warrior*, the *Phoenix*, the *Scourge*, and the *Church*.

Carlile never changed the character of a paper to suit the times, but always stopped the old paper and started a new one whenever he felt that the old one had accomplished the purpose for which he had started it.

In the matter of praise and blame Carlile ran the whole gamut, from the highest *crescendo* of approval to the *basso profundo* of malediction. He was called "the intellectual Saviour" and the "moral regenerator of mankind" by his friends, and "the great Satan of the day" by his enemies; and he was equally unmoved by the extravagance of either. During the whole course of his public life he did not turn aside for one instant nor stray one foot from

the path he had marked out for himself. Fines, confiscations, or imprisonments could not crush him, and we find him saying, on entering into the tenth year of imprisonment, that "he was now well seasoned for the fight"!

He was warned by a faithful friend, previous to his sentence of imprisonment in 1830, that a measure had been discussed in the private councils of the Government, that the old law of flogging should be revived for his suppression, fines, confiscations, and imprisonments having failed to accomplish it. On hearing that the measure had been abandoned and a further imprisonment agreed upon, he "confessed to having drawn a long breath ". He never despaired, however, but was always confident of success, and never had any misgiving as to the future outcome of the fight.

And now I come to the close of this introductory chapter, and ask the readers of the present day to turn over the pages of the life of this much misrepresented man.

If to map out a plan of duty in youth and to follow it out till death through good and evil report, unspoiled by praise, unmoved by assaults the most ferocious; if to endure losses and the sacrifice of all domestic comforts and apparently unending imprisonment, and never to lose courage or be cast down in spirit; if to bear every evil unshaken and to keep his eyes steadily fixed on the object to be attained, though that object be no selfish one, but for the benefit of down-trodden humanity; if to stand at the helm through storm and fire, through adverse winds and tides, and at last to pilot the barque of a noble purpose to a sure haven

– if this be evidence of greatness of mind, then he was great, for this he *did!*

He was great, too, in his ability to lead the people. He was a great educator of the people; he taught them to think for themselves. He started hundreds of young men, taught them to read, to think, to compare. No man ever did more of this work than Carlyle. He taught the working men to be cleanly in their habits, to shun liquor and tobacco, and to dress well.

All his followers, at least all the young men he acknowledged as such, were models of intelligence and upright conduct, and all who survived him did credit to his teaching, and lent valuable aid in the struggle for a Free Press. And so he kept on till death came, all too soon; but not till he had seen above him the bow of promise on the clouds of ignorance, which promised for all a brighter and more beautiful day – the day of mental freedom.

"Who noble deeds by noble means obtains,
Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,
Like good Aurelius let him reign
Or die like Socrates,
That man is great indeed!" – Pope.

CHAPTER II. HIS BIRTH, YOUTH, AND EARLY MANHOOD

R. C. to E. S. C.²

"Enfield Highway,

"*December 7th*, 1842.

"Love, – This is calculated to reach you at Ashburton on my birthday. In the year 1790, fifty-two years ago, I first drew breath at three in the morning of the eighth day, in an upper room of a large barrack-like house, the lower corner of Steave-ahead Lane. The manger of Bethlehem was not more humble. I was born into much the same conditions I now find my children. With a father much too talented to apply himself to any of the ordinary business of life, my subsistence depended on the industry of a mother, and the kindness of relatives. I was in this condition till five years of age, when a shop at the corner of Lawrence Lane, given up to my mother by an old uncle, for ten years furnished moderate supplies for subsistence. In this respect I was brought up, like yourself, on the side of a mother, save that you had a better father as a family man. I lost my father at four and a half years old, but I cannot see that he ever ministered to my subsistence, though he was a man of much talent; at last he profligately enlisted for a soldier, under which discipline he soon

² Eliza Sharples Carlile ("Isis").

died at the age of thirty-four. In the chapel of Lawrence Lane, where, from nine to twelve years of age, I got some Latin, you will probably find my name cut in the boards, if it be worth looking for. At 'Lads-Well, at the bottom of that lane, you will see the scene of some early exploits of mine, one of which was, 'Julian like',³ with a new suit of clothes on, trying to jump over this well.

I jumped in! and on a Sunday, too! The stile of the first meadow was a leaping bar, and in the church-yard you cannot see a tomb or headstone, forty years old, but I have jumped over it. Should you see the centre of the town flooded in its drains, you may see my picture as a boy (Julian like, again) beating through it. I have bathed and fished in every brook, and stolen apples from every tree within a mile of the town. Julian is not near as excitable over his paper cap, embellished on and before the 5th of November, than I was then in scouring the hedges for miles around, from daylight till dark, to gather a faggot wherewith to burn the effigy of 'old Tom Paine', my now venerated political father! I have played at hoop through every crick and corner of the shambles and market-place, have well pelted both towers with tennis-balls, and the flagstones of the street with peg-tops, and have often formed one of the troops of rag-a-muffins of old 'Stoaf Jeffery'. I have hooted Bob Nicholls because he was a little man; and have 'dabbed' at, instead of eating, cakes and treacle on Brim Park. As a boy I had neither father nor master, nor can

³ Carlile's son.

I bear anything of the kind as a man. With me the rights of the boys and the rights of men are one and the same thing, and you know how much I advocate the rights of woman. [At another time he tells of his early efforts at school, which we will let him do in his own way, and shall prefer this method throughout the entire history wherever it is practicable.] My first schoolmistress was old 'Cherry Chalk', who taught me the alphabet on a horn book, and performed all sorts of cures without medicine by the potent power of charms. She was a witch, but much respected as one who performed wonderful cures. There was another old woman who had the title of 'Witch', and one in a town is enough on whom Christian ignorance might vent its spleen. It happened that I escaped all injury from the witch, as I was a favorite boy with her until I grew old enough to be mischievous to her. Whether old 'Cherry Chalk' perfected me in the alphabet I cannot now say, but I perfectly well remember that I was taught about Christ, Cross, or Criss-Cross; now, I dare say that this emblem of the Christian religion was at the bottom of all her charms and spells. I had two other school mistresses of a more respectable stamp than old 'Cherry Chalk'. I believe the first taught for three half-pence a week and the other for twopence. When I got to a five-penny school it was considered an extravagant affair, too expensive to be borne, and a successful effort was made to put me upon the list of free scholars. From the age of six to nine I was at writing and arithmetic; from nine to twelve at Latin. But the sum of all this narrative is that though at twelve years of age I left school, with

a knowledge of writing, arithmetic, and the Latin language, and a pretty good knowledge of words and the tact of spelling them, I was wholly ignorant of grammar. I remember well when my severe old writing and ciphering master was told that I was about to leave him to learn Latin, he said, 'Hi, hi! you had better learn English first'. This old man never gave me a chastisement without saying, 'There, you larned rascal, take that! You will thank me for it by the time you are twenty years old.' For my part, I had no more idea of school education than that it was a pastime for boys, and I sought an exchange from old Hanaford's to the Latin school with no idea but that of more play and less punishment, and because all the better dressed boys *were* there; but I found after that this smattering of Latin gave me everywhere an air of superiority, and among such company as I was able to keep I passed for a scholar. The very vanity and flattery attached to this state of mind, I believe, induced me to seek further knowledge. It is a singular circumstance, but I can trace both the *Quarterly Review* and the *Republican* to the free schools of Ashburton. Wm. Gifford⁴ and Dr. Ireland, the Dean of Westminster, both received the rudiments of their education at these free schools, and I came after them to undo, I hope, all the mischief that they as politicians

⁴ William Gifford was the Attorney-General who entered into the prosecution of Carlile with such unaccountable and unusual malignity as to call forth the bitter satire of the latter, who in return teased and taunted "His Majesty's Attorney-General", addressing to him the most sarcastic and open letters; sporting with his name and reputation till he became to be called his (C.'s) "own Gifford". He most assuredly deserved all the punishment he received from Carlile.

have done. These free schools of Ashburton were not so free for the poor as for the rich; one of them was a school for Latin and Greek wholly, free by endowment, and here only the children of the richer people were admitted. Here, also, I followed Dr. Ireland and Wm. Gifford.

Having a knowledge of Latin, Carlile was placed with a chemist and druggist, a Mr. Lee, of Exeter, but stayed there only four months owing to the actions of a young man, a brother of Mrs. Lee, who assumed a mastership over him, and dominated him in a manner that young Carlile could not endure. The next four months were spent in his mother's shop, where he occupied himself in drawing and coloring pictures – which were sold to his mother's customers. Subsequently, to please his mother, of whom he was very fond, and very much against his own inclinations, he consented to be apprenticed to a tin-smith for seven years. Of this apprenticeship he spoke very bitterly in after life. The work was hard and the hours very long – fifteen or sixteen hours a day – the food was neither good nor plentiful, nor was his master an agreeable one in any respect. Carlile however, kept to it until he mastered the trade, and near the close of the term fought himself free of his home and table. He succeeded in earning the respect of his master, and later this same man put himself to considerable trouble, unasked, to go to London from Exeter, and testify to the excellent moral and personal character of his former apprentice, at which Carlile was pleasantly surprised. He often asserted that after

such an apprenticeship as he had experienced for seven years, imprisonment was no punishment. In Exeter, while still in his apprenticeship, he became acquainted with several young men who were bookbinders. This led to conversations about books, and in turn to book reading. Young as these companions were, they avowed themselves *Deists*; but he received no impression as to the word, and was wholly ignorant as to what a Deist signified. These young men were Painites, but they failed entirely in making any impression upon him as to their principles of religion or politics. He says of himself: —

"My first attraction to politics was in 1816, in consequence of the general distress then prevalent and the noise made at public meetings. Then for the first time I began to read the *Examiner*, *News*, and independent 'Whig' papers. I was pleased with their general tone, but thought they did not go far enough with it. I had the same notion of Mr. Cobbett's papers, his 'twopenny sheets' and of *Hone's Register*, and indeed of all that were published in 1816. In the manufactories where I was employed, nothing was talked of but revolution, and I soon became so far fired as to begin to build castles in the air. My first ambition was to write something for the papers that should be printed. I tried several, but from one only could I get a notice. I remember I felt highly honored with a couple of 'notices to correspondents' — "'A Half-employed Mechanic" is too violent'; and an answer to 'Cincinnatus' about the propriety and existence of political tract societies. I wrote something for Mr. Hone's *Register* with the

motto, 'Gold and silver have I none, but such as I have I give unto thee'. These were my first steps toward fame. I was an enthusiast, but with the best intentions, and with an anxiety to do more good than I saw being done. As soon as the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended in 1817, I saw nearly all the political tract-sellers of 1816 shrink from the sale of even *Cobbet's Register*, This was a matter of great astonishment to me, as I looked upon it as a mere milk-and-water paper compared to the *Black Dwarf* and some of the other newspapers. Mr. Cobbett's own writings even exhibited evident alarm, and this made me indignant. I then resolved to get into the front of the battle and to set the best possible example. These were the reasonings of my individual mind, then unconnected with and unknown to every public man. Of imprisonment I made quite sure, but felt inclined to court it rather than to shrink from it. Amidst these thoughts I was delighted to see Mr. William Sherwin start a weekly paper under the title of the *Republican*. Here, surely, thought I, I can find a congenial mind, and I at once sought his acquaintance. I was particularly shy about personal intrusion, though bold enough to run every risk and kind of danger, and the way I sought an acquaintance was by offering to carry the publications round to the shops for sale. I did not put it as a matter of trust, but purchased them for that purpose. I soon found myself a most welcome hand to Mr. Sherwin and to Mr. Wooler's publishers, and here I can give a proof of my singular spirit on this occasion. Though I knew that *Cobbet's Register* outdid the other publications beyond all

comparison.

I refused to carry it, or did not apply for it, because it was not strong enough and did not come up to my notions of right. 'Why don't you bring us *Cobbett's Register*?' the dealers asked; 'you will make much more by that than any of the others.' No, I said, I will not touch it; nor did I till I had a shop of my own. Mr. Sherwin, though a much younger man than myself, being only eighteen years old, had a better education, and though unpractised as a public writer, was a fair grammarian, having aspired to authorship for some two or three years. He had read Paine's works, avowed his admiration of them, and got turned out of his situation. Nothing daunted, he wrote a pamphlet and came to London to find a publisher; but all were afraid of it. Disappointed, but not discouraged, and having some money, he resolved to get a shop and print and publish it himself. Thus originated Mr. Sherwin's, who was most certainly my coadjutor in getting myself fairly before the public. After Mr. Sherwin had made himself fully acquainted with my temper and disposition, he came to the manufactory where I spent part of my time, there not being work enough to occupy it fully, and offered to give up his shop to me and make me his publisher. This I felt was a great point gained, and I embraced the offer without hesitation, and henceforth I saw my way quite clearly. Fairly before the public as a publisher, I cared less about writing myself, seeing that I was in a fair way to improvement and ultimate success. During 1817 and 1818 I wrote nothing but a few papers and placards, and a few

articles for Mr. Sherwin's *Register*. I had not an idea of becoming a regular public writer before my imprisonment, for publishing the "Age of Reason" and the "Principles of Nature"; the starting of the *Republican* was the work of a moment. Mr. Sherwin, seeing me likely to go to prison, and himself being likely to be more exposed, and having just been married, was induced to give up all the most dangerous part of his business to me, and when matters began to look serious after the Manchester massacre, he came to me to say that he should give up his *Register*, and I might take it up with the same title or any other that I might think best. I did not hesitate a moment, but gave it the title of the *Republican*, I may look upon myself as the author of all of Mr. Sherwin's bold writings, for it was always the work of my responsibility, and he was always encouraged by me to go his full length, under a pledge that I would never give him up as the author unless he wished it. This fearless responsibility on my part brought out the 'Gorgons' and led to many other spirited publications; and I may, I think, without vanity, consider myself the author of all the excitement of 1819, and verily think that but for my coming forward as I did in the spring of 1817, none of the previous publishers would have stood out against Lord Sidmouth's circular letter and suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. All would have become as quiet as Castlereagh, Eldon, and Sidmouth wished. Cobbett had fled to America. Hone had flinched, and it was a question as to the propriety of strangling the *Black Dwarf* at birth."

This brings us to the commencement of the *Republican*, and

also to Carlile's entrance into the public arena.

One of those fatal mistakes which so many men make in their youth, i.e., an unfortunate marriage, was made by Carlile. At the early age of twenty-three he united himself to a woman of thirty. He had been staying at the little town of Gosport for a short time, and there became acquainted with this very good-looking woman, who was capable, well connected, and possessed of a considerable talent for business. After a courtship of only two months' duration, they joined the ranks of those who "marry in haste and repent at leisure". It is an ungrateful task to criticise adversely the character of a woman who did good service (however unwillingly) on behalf of intellectual freedom; but in the cause of truth individuals must suffer, and Truth and Justice should ever go hand in hand.

Carlile had not been married a week before he realised the great mistake he had made, and years after he told of it in this way: —

"I was in a dilemma the very first week of my marriage. I had but two responsibilities in life. The first was to assist my mother, who had now become infirm and poor, the other was to finish the apprenticeship of a son of a real friend. Neither of these engagements could be ignored or set aside. My wife knew of these before marriage and tacitly approved them, but set herself directly against both of them immediately after. I can truly say that as far as mental peace makes happiness I had never one day's happiness during the honeymoon or any other

moon during the entire continuation of that marriage. I cannot pronounce her a bad woman, or of being the possessor of any particular vice. She was as variable as the atmosphere, and was in herself a complete 'System of Nature' both as a microcosm and macrocosm. The social as well as the moral evil was that her temper could never be relied on, and was often both terrible and dangerous. I have known her to exhibit for days together such appearances than which none could be more amiable or agreeable, more generous or more affable, and then on the most frivolous grounds – for merely *imagined* wrongs – become tempestuous to delirium and hysterics. It was her physical rather than her moral properties that were the seat of the disorder. Her violence generally fell on my immediate friends, man or woman, and a mere act of kindness shown to my mother or sisters has endangered my life as far as threats and preparations were appearances of danger. I never considered my life safe, and lived for years in almost daily apprehension of some terrible domestic tragedy. The wonder is that I ever accomplished anything under such a state of feeling, and I confess, what I have often told her, that to me imprisonment was a great relief; and this is part of the secret why I bore it so well. During the whole of my married life I felt the annoying condition of being without a home to which I could proceed in peace, and introduce a friend with the ordinary rites of hospitality and required civility from the mistress of the house. This necessarily drove me from home and caused me to form associations that I otherwise would not have

done. As early as-1819, a separation took place (as was always the conversation through every year of our association) and was continued for some time, and during our united imprisonment in Dorchester Gaol – it was a matter of constant and sober conversation and future prospect – it was mutually understood that it was to be whenever I should be in a condition to make a sufficient settlement upon her. It was carried out at precisely that time, the moment at which the annuity of £50 a year, left me by Mr. Morrison, of Chelsea, was cleared of legacy duty. It was not till the month of May, 1832, that the first clear quarterly payment became due, but I anticipated it by the advance of a quarter's money in the February of that year, Mrs. Carlile was allowed to take everything in the way of furniture that she desired, and £100 (\$500) worth of books from the stock which was at her mercy when she left. She did take every article of furniture, every bed, table, and chair in the house, even the chairs which had been purchased for the lecture room. She left me nothing but the business, its stock and debts, and she took the nearest shop she could wherein to oppose and injure me. At that time I had not seen her for a year, though I was in prison; nor would she send me so much as a Sunday dinner. We had separated from all pretences of being man and wife for nearly two years before that. She was only fit for what she now possesses, viz., single retirement with a competency to secure her from the cares and turmoils of life."

So much for the unpleasant details which are necessary to the understanding and justification of later events. It is more

pleasant to record the manner in which this wife helped in the business, and how well she withstood the assaults of their common enemy. On the whole, and considering that she had absolutely no sympathy with Carlile's aims and ideas, and that her sole idea of a cause was the profits to be made by it, remembering also that she suffered a two years' imprisonment and bore two children to him in prison, that she fought for him as well as at him, also bearing in mind that to be the wife of a reformer one must suffer toil and privation, loss and sorrow of every kind, then we must feel she did her part in the good cause and bore her trials well. Whatever may have been her faults she is entitled to her share of the gratitude and remembrance of those who now enjoy the blessings of a Free Press.

She bore her husband five children in all, only three of whom reached maturity. These were Richard, Alfred, and Thomas Paine Carlile. It cannot be said that any of these sons followed in their father's footsteps. Though they were associated with him, by turns, in the practical part of the publishing business, they seemed not to have inherited either their mother's thrift or their father's talents, and were the source of much uneasiness to him. It would appear as if the uncongeniality of the parents had affected their children unfavorably. Carlile set them up in business several times, but always with unpleasant results; the unpopularity of the name.

Carlile at that time may have had much to do with their non-success, but not all. Carlile was at all times a most patient and

kind parent. Always a great lover of little children, he contrived to have one or more of them with him as much as possible during his imprisonment. Again and again did he try them in business as they grew to manhood, and made many sacrifices for them. In a letter addressed to Mr. Thomas Turton, March 6th, 1838, after relating his anxiety and efforts for their welfare, he said:

"I begin to feel that there can never be any advantageous union whatever between me and any portion of that family. I can see no other purpose in them than the aim to get from me whatever they can, without regard to doing themselves or me any good. In this they have been trained by their mother from their infancy, and that training remains in them. Alfred is the best of them, but even he has exhibited too much of that feeling. The whole family has dealt with me as though they had a secret interest to provide for distinct from mine; and I must meet them accordingly, for their own benefit as well as mine."

In another letter to the same gentleman, condoling with him on the loss of a very bright and intellectual son, he writes:

"Be assured of my sympathy and condolence, for indeed 'I mourn with you'. Neither of my own boys promising to be anything, I had pictured yours as being one of my future aids. I had formed high hopes of him, he was one of the brightest youths I had ever met. I had often wished that my boys were like him."

At another date, after some more unpleasant experiences with his own boys, he writes again to Mr.

Turton, who for more than twenty years was his bosom friend

and shared all his secrets, if he had any. "The only idea that my boys entertain of a father is that he is a person to be fleeced. They sell my goods and make no return of the money." And then in a burst of feeling he concludes: "Such a family as I have neither God nor devil could manage." But enough of these unpleasant matters, which would not be given but that it is necessary to do so to serve their purpose in the cause of truth. Carlile's patience and forbearance with the unfortunate peculiarities of this wife earned for him the sobriquet of a noted sage. The Rev. Robert Taylor complimented him many a time and oft, and said, "that it was a Xantippe alone who could have made him into such a perfect resemblance in manner and character to Socrates".

Richard, the eldest son, emigrated to America soon after his father's death, and settled in Wisconsin, near Milwaukee; and was elected to the House of Assembly from that State. He died of ship fever on his return to America after paying a visit to London in 1855.

CHAPTER III. THE MANCHESTER MASSACRE

The following account of the memorable and terrible Manchester massacre is given by Carlile himself. It was his escape from this, and his subsequent publishing of the particulars concerning it, that drew down upon him the vengeful malice of the then Prime Minister, Lord Castlereagh, who was thereafter bent on Carlile's undoing.

"Early in the month of August, 1819, I was invited by John Knight, in the name of the committee, to attend an open-air meeting in Manchester, to take place on August 16th, 1819, at St. Peter's Field, the object being to meet and discuss their grievances publicly, and to unite upon a plan to be submitted to the House of Commons for the purpose of seeking and demanding the restoration of those political rights of which they had recently been unlawfully deprived by the passage of the Six Acts Bill, and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; and to take action with a view or endeavor to procure other reforms from a notably corrupt Parliament. There had been rumors of the military being called out if the meeting should be held as proposed. I wrote the Chairman of the committee saying that as the advocates of reform were threatened with military execution at that meeting, I felt it my duty to be there, as a matter of example, at the post of danger. It was announced in the *New*

Times before I left London that General Byng had reviewed the troops on St. Peter's Plain, and that they were in fine condition for coping with the Radicals, at the coming meeting, on the 16th August. I travelled from Birmingham to Manchester. There was a general expectation of an attack from the military, and some of the leaders were anxious to arm themselves, and there was a proposition afoot that fifteen thousand men should be there armed with pikes as a precautionary measure, but it was vetoed by some one of the leaders. About eleven o'clock in the morning the people began to assemble at the cottage where Mr. Henry Hunt had taken up his residence. At twelve Mr. Hunt, myself, and others entered the barouche that was to convey us to the place of meeting. We had not proceeded far when we were met by a committee of women from the Women's Reform Committee, one of whom bore a standard with the figure of a woman holding a flag in her hand, surmounted by a cap of liberty. She was requested to take a seat on the box of the carriage, which she did, and sat waving her flag and her handkerchief till we arrived at the hustings, when she took her stand at the corner of the hustings in front. Bodies of men were seen everywhere marching in military order with music, and colors flying, and carrying mottoes inscribed on them such as 'No Corn Laws', 'Liberty or Death' 'Taxation without Representation is Tyranny', 'We will have Liberty', etc., etc. Such cheering was never before heard! Women from the age of 16 to 80 years were seen with their caps in their hands waving and cheering, and their

hair consequently dishevelled, the whole scene exceeding the powers of description. In passing through the streets the crowds were very great, and word was brought to Mr. Hunt that there were 300,000 people at and about the place of meeting. As the carriage moved along and reached the shops and warehouses of Mr. Johnson, of Smedley, three times three were given, also at the Police Court and at the Exchange. We arrived at the place of destination about one o'clock. Mr. Hunt expressed his disapprobation of the hustings as arranged, and feared that there would be some accident happen, they not appearing to be very secure. After some hesitation he ascended, and the proposition being made that he should be chairman, he was made so by acclamation. There were five women upon the hustings; four of them took a stand in the bottom of the waggons that formed the hustings, the other, who was Mary Fildes, I believe, was elevated on one corner of the front with her banner in her hand and resting on a large chain. A most singular and interesting situation for a woman at such a meeting; Joan of Arc could not have been more interesting. Mr. Hunt had just begun his speech by thanking the people for the favor conferred on him, and made some ironical remarks on the conduct of the magistrates, when a cart or waggon, which evidently took its start from that part of the field where the police and magistrates were assembled in a house, was driven through the middle of the field, to the great annoyance and danger of the people assembled, who quietly made way for it to pass. The waggon had no sooner made its way through,

when the Yeoman Cavalry made its appearance from the side on which the waggon had gone out. The meeting at the entrance of the cavalry and from the commencement was most orderly. The appearance of the women on the platform made the occasion particularly interesting, and everyone present wore bright and happy faces; but as the waggon drove out the cavalry made their appearance, and charged upon the defenceless people with the utmost fury, riding down everyone who could not get out of the way, and cutting down men, women, and children, commencing their premeditated attack with the most insatiable thirst for blood and destruction! The police, too, were as expert in applying their clubs to the heads and shoulders of the people as the cavalry their sabres. The brutality of the police equalled in ferocity the blood-thirstiness of the soldiers. On the first appearance of the cavalry I was standing by Mary Fildes, but I found her above everything like fear. I turned to cheer the other four women, and found them too in good spirits. Many people were rushing on the hustings, and many others getting off, and an opening between the two waggons enabled them to pass down through. After many others had done so, and just as Mr. Hunt was arrested, I passed down through the aperture and had a very narrow escape of my life in so doing, for the pressure of the crowd was so great that, just as I jumped down, the two waggons came together with a crash; and I lost my hat by its being jammed off my head, between the two waggons, in such a manner that I could not extricate it. I was no sooner under the hustings than I found the

horses' feet up close to me; but the hustings being cleared, they moved around and followed the crowd who were driven from the hustings, and I then walked out without a hat and was seized by the police. Their first question was, 'Who are you? What business have you here?' I told them that if they thought proper to take me in charge I would soon let them know who I was and how I came there. 'Damn you!' says one; 'let him go about his business'; and I lost no time in doing so. And I found no further interruption except a few blows from their truncheons. I, being a perfect stranger in that city, made to the nearest houses, which I believe were called Hall's Buildings, Windmill Row. Here I found a number of people sheltered. The place formed a little inlet from St. Peter's Plain, but no thoroughfare. All houses were close shut, and on no account would people open them, until there was one woman who looked out of window, and seeing me, a well-dressed man without a hat, supporting a woman who had received a severe contusion on the breast, she was moved with sympathy, and under the idea that I was a doctor and could assist her, she came down and let us in, when there was a rush of about a dozen persons, mostly young people of both sexes. I could not move from the house till six in the evening, when the husband came home from his work. On his arrival I commissioned him to purchase me a hat, which he had great difficulty in doing, as all shops were closed. He at last succeeded, and then I got him to pilot me through the town to the 'Star' Inn, where I had slept the night before, and left my portmanteau. On coming to the inn

and finding it surrounded by the cavalry who had done all the mischief in the morning, I thought it prudent not to enter. I then made my way to Mr. Wroe's house, as he was the only man I knew in Manchester, and on consulting with him I concluded that I could do no good in Manchester, but might do much good in London by an early publication of what I had witnessed. I resolved to leave by the first mail, but my portmanteau was still in the enemies' quarters. A person in Mr. Wroe's house undertook to bring me to a coach stand, and having got into a coach, I ordered the man to drive me to the 'Star' Inn, to the door of which we had great difficulty in getting owing to the pressure of so many mounted yeomanry. I got out boldly, and told the coachman to wait, and went into the travellers' room. I made sure of being known, as we had driven past the inn in the morning in the open barouche, and were seen by all the servants, who did not fail to hiss a little as their house was the rendezvous for the enemy, a circumstance I did not know when I went there. On calling the waiter he was quite sullen, saying they had kept me a bed at a great inconvenience to other customers. I pacified him by telling him to charge for it, but I had to ring again and again before the bill and the portmanteau were brought, and all the time I thought there was something brewing for me. At last a different waiter came, and then my things were soon brought and bill settled. Having pleased the waiter beyond his expectations, I slipped on a great coat and a pair of white gaiters, and he ushered me to the coach with a great deal of ceremony, and the

yeomanry in front were requested to make way for one whom they had been sent to kill in the morning. While I had been waiting so long for my bill, etc., my coach had to move on to make way for another, and so I was shown to the wrong coach and drove off to the 'Bridgewater Arms', from whence the mail coach started. I had just got out and paid the man when there was a hue and cry after me by the first coachman I had hired, and unknowingly left behind at the 'Star' door. My first impression was that the police had scent of me, but I soon found my mistake, paid the man, and all was right. At three in the morning the coach left, and great was the terror of the coachman, guard, and passengers that it would be stopped by the Reformers before it got to Stockport. I had nothing to fear on this head, but was not free of apprehension that one of my fellow-travellers was a police officer in disguise set to watch me, or to keep at my heels at any rate. He was despatched from Manchester as an express agent to London, either to the Government or to some mercantile house. There were four of us in the mail, two were friends of the master of the 'Bridgewater Arms', and had been there on a visit, and appeared to be coach-masters themselves living somewhere between Macclesfield and Derby. Those two worthies were well filled with wine, but a bottle was brought to the coach door by the master to have a parting glass, when to every glass was the toast, 'Down with Hunt!' One of them would insist on my taking a glass as a fellow-traveller to join in the sentiment of 'Down with Hunt!' To pacify the fools and disarm suspicion as far as

possible, I drank the glass of wine with 'Down with Hunt!' which was considered the proof of my being a good fellow and a fit companion for them. The panic which prevailed in all the towns from Manchester to Northampton can scarcely be conceived, and it fell to my lot to detail the particulars of the massacre at each town we passed through, as nothing but post-horse expresses had passed through till the arrival of our mail coach."

Mr. Hunt received a sentence of two years' imprisonment in Dorchester Gaol for his part in this affair. The reader is spared the details of the bloody onslaught. The instances which came under Carlile's immediate observation were sickening in the extreme, and drew from him immediately on his arriving in London a spirited letter to Lord Sidmouth, describing the whole affair, and calling on him to call the Manchester authorities to account for their dastardly conduct. The letter itself gave great umbrage, and a council of three, consisting of Lord Sidmouth, Sir John Silvester, Recorder, and John Atkins, Mayor of London, studied over it for several days to see if it could not be made out to be itself a treasonable affair. In the meantime, the Prince Regent had directed Lord Sidmouth to return the magistrates of Manchester, and all the officers and privates concerned in the attack, "Their thanks to them for having so promptly preserved the peace and tranquillity of the country."

This drew from Carlile two more letters of the same kind as the first, but stronger, one to the Prince Regent, George, afterwards George IV, and another to Lord Sidmouth. The

boldness of this proceeding was something very unusual and not to be tolerated; but Carlile never knew what fear was when he had a pen in his hand, or indeed at any other time. Moreover, he could not believe that the Prince Regent could have been properly informed, or he would not have done this, and he was boiling with indignation at the treatment of peaceable citizens.

This letter of Sir Francis Burdett on the Manchester massacre was adjudged libellous, and procured for Sir Francis a fine of £1,500 or a year's imprisonment, in the usual manner of those days. (Sir Francis preferred paying the fine.) It ran as follows: —

"To the Electors of Westminster,

"Aug. 18th, 1819.

"Gentlemen,

"This, then, is the answer of the boroughmongers to the petitioning people — this is the proof of our standing in no need of reform — these the practical blessings of our glorious boroughmongers' domination — this the use of a standing army in time of peace. It seems our fathers were not such fools as some would make believe in opposing the establishment of a standing army and sending King William's Dutch guards out of the country! Yet would to heaven they had been Dutchmen or Switzers, or Hessians, or Hanoverians, or anything rather than Englishmen who have done such deeds! What? Kill men unarmed and unresisting, and, gracious God, women too, disfigured, maimed, cut down, and trampled on by dragoons? Is this England? Is this a Christian land? A land of freedom?

Can such things be and pass us by like a summer's cloud, unheeded? Forbid it; every drop of English blood in every vein that does not proclaim its owner bastard. Will the gentlemen of England support or wink at such proceedings? They have a great stake in their country; they hold great estates, and they are bound in duty and in honor to consider them as retaining fees on the part of their country for upholding its rights and privileges. Surely they will at length awake and find they have duties to perform. They never can stand tamely by as lookers-on whilst bloody Neros rip open their mothers's womb; they must join the general voice, loudly demanding justice and redress, and head public meetings throughout the United Kingdom to put a stop in its commencement to a reign of terror and of blood, to afford consolation as far as it can be afforded and legal redress to the widows and orphans – mutilated victims of this unparalleled and barbarous outrage. For this purpose I propose that a meeting shall be called in Westminster, which the gentlemen of the committee will arrange, and whose summons I would hold myself in readiness to attend. Whether the penalty of our meeting will be death by military execution I know not; but this I know – a man can die but once, and never better than in vindicating the laws and liberties of his country. Excuse this hasty address. I can scarcely tell what I have written; it may be a libel, or the Attorney-General may call it one, just as he pleases. When the seven bishops were tried for libel, for the support of arbitrary power, the army of James II, then encamped on

Hounslow Heath, gave three cheers on hearing of their acquittal. The King, startled at the noise, asked, 'What's that?' 'Nothing, sire,' was the answer, 'but the soldiers shouting at the acquittal of the seven bishops.' 'Do you call *that* nothing?' said the misgiving tyrant; and shortly after abdicated the Government. 'Tis true, James could not inflict the tortures on his soldiers – could not tear their living flesh from their shoulders with the cat-o'-ninetails – could not flay them alive! Be this as it may, our duty is to meet, and England expects every man to do his duty.

"I remain, Gentlemen,

"Most truly and faithfully

"Your most obedient servant,

"Francis Burdett."

CHAPTER IV. RECORD OF PERSECUTION

Under the administration of Lords Liverpool, Castlereagh, Canning, Sidmouth, etc., Richard Carlile, of Fleet Street, London, publisher, was arrested on the 14th of August, 1817, on three warrants granted by Mr. Justice Holroyd on the oath of one Griffin Swanson, a common informer, for publishing a book called "The Parodies",⁵ the sale of which had been suppressed by Mr. William Hone, but for which Mr. Hone was afterwards put on three several trials and as often acquitted, to the great joy of the people, to the great grief of the administration and Sir Samuel Shepherd, Attorney-General, to the acceleration of the death of the then Chief Justice (Ellenborough), and to the mortification of the succeeding Chief Justice, who saw his great prototype defeated as well as himself. On the 15th Carlile was committed to the King's Bench prison by Mr. Justice Holroyd in default of bail to the amount of £800 (\$4,000) on three several warrants. On the 13th of November, being called to plead, he was surprised with a fourth information by the aforesaid Attorney-General, founded on the 18th No. of Vol. I of Sherwin's Political Register.

On the 20th of December he was liberated after an

⁵ Parodies on the Book of Common Prayer.

imprisonment of eighteen weeks by entering into recognizances of £300 (\$1,500) without either of the four informations being submitted to a jury then or ever afterwards. On the 16th day of January, 1819, he was informed that "The Society for the Suppression of Vice" had presented a bill to the Grand Jury, then sitting at the Old Bailey, on a charge of blasphemous libel for the publication of Thomas Paine's theological works. Bail was immediately presented and the arrest prevented. The indictment was removed by a writ of *certiorari* to the Court of King's Bench at the instance of the Society, and further bail required on the first day of Hilary term, when an information was also filed and presented to the court by the Attorney-General (Shepherd) against the same publication. To both the indictment and information the defendant imparled under an order to plead within the first eight days of Easter term. On the 11th day of February a warrant was granted by Chief Justice Abbott against the defendant, on an oath made by George Pritchard and Thomas Fair, that the defendant had continued the sale of Paine's works, and that the said George Pritchard intended to prosecute. The warrant was put in force at 8 o'clock in the evening, and by 10 o'clock defendant was lodged within the walls of Newgate. On the 15th day of February, he was brought from Newgate by a writ of *habeas corpus* to the chambers of Mr. Justice Bailey, and bail was tendered and taken a third time to appear and answer to the charge against the same publication. On the first day of Easter term, Carlile pleaded to an information and indictment, and in

addition to these had presented to him *another* information at the instance of the Attorney-General, founded on No. 6, vol. 4, of *Sherwin's Weekly Political Register*, and another indictment at the instance of the Society for the Suppression of Vice founded on that part of the 1st vol. of the *Deist* entitled "Palmer's Principles of Nature". To these last two he again imparled, and on the first day of Trinity term he prayed the court to stay this accumulation of informations and indictments until those to which he had already pleaded and was prepared to defend were disposed of. But the lenient and impartial judges of the Court of King's Bench could see no need of this, and he must stand prepared to defend five or perhaps nine informations and indictments at the same time, should it be the pleasure of the Attorney-General. The sittings after the terms of both Easter and Trinity had been allowed to pass without bringing the question to an issue, whilst the publications had been invariably kept on sale.

On Saturday, the 21st of August, Carlile was arrested on a warrant issued by John Atkins, Lord Mayor of the City of London, and lodged in the Giltspur Street Compter. The warrant set forth that defendant had published a malicious, seditious, and inflammatory libel, tending to create disaffection in the minds of his Majesty's subjects, and breaches of the peace. On the Monday he was conducted to the Mansion House and brought before the Lord Mayor, who, on finding bail ready, said that he should require twenty-four, if not forty-eight hours' notice of bail. This was evidently for the purpose of annoyance and to gratify a

malicious caprice, for the names tendered were unexceptionable. On the Tuesday he was again brought before the Lord Mayor, and was *committed for want of sureties*. The person objected to was a Mr. Wooler, who owned several large houses and offices in the City, and who was as wealthy a man as the Lord Mayor himself. A Mr. Lindsay then offered to deposit the amount of bail required at once, when Lord Mayor Atkins refused and committed Carlile *for want of sureties!* On Thursday Carlile was again brought before him, and not being able to carry his caprices any further, he at length accepted the bail, but with the threat that if he continued the sale of the letters (to Sidmouth and the Prince) he would do so at his peril. Thus the reader will see that it was not the articles mentioned in these indictments and informations that were the real cause of these persecutions, but the letters to the Prince Regent and the Home Secretary, which Carlile had so indignantly and fearlessly addressed to them, immediately after he reached London, on his return from the scene of the Manchester massacre. He not only dared to write them such letters in which he appealed to and arraigned them, as man to man, but he published them and they were read. That was the sore that smarted and rankled and would not heal, though they dare not make this the ground of these indictments.

On the 16th of September, 1819, Carlile addressed the following letter to Attorney-General Sir Robert Gifford.

"Sir, – As the adjourned sittings of the Court of King's Bench are near at hand, I beg leave to enquire whether it is your

intention as his Majesty's Attorney-General to prosecute in the ensuing sittings in the month of October those informations filed against me by the late Attorney-General, Sir Samuel Shepherd, and should such be your intention, which of them you will be pleased to take up first? Flattering myself that I shall find in you a generous opponent, I would entreat the earliest notice that might possibly be given, as it is my intention to serve with subpoenas several persons of rank and distinction, eminent in the theological, literary and scientific world, for whose convenience and accommodation I am solicitous to obtain the earliest notice, as many of them are resident in distant parts of the country, and would wish at least a week's notice for attendance. "I am, Sir,

"Your obliged and obedient servant,

"Richard Carlile."

To which he received the following reply.

"Sir, – In answer to your enquiry, I have to state that it is certainly my intention that the informations against you, which stand for trial at the adjourned sittings in October, should be tried at those sittings, and that the informations against you for publishing a blasphemous libel which stands prior in order in the list of causes, will first come on for trial.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"R. Gifford

"Lincoln's Inn, September 7th, 1819."

This made the publication of the theological works of Thomas

Paine the first cause to be tried, and one of the first persons to be subpoenaed was the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the following letter was written after receiving one from the Archbishop's lawyers signifying his willingness to be present at the trial.

"Fleet Street, September, 1819.

"My Lord, – I feel it my duty to express to you the warmest approbation I felt on receiving the candid reply from Messrs.

Foster, Cooke, and Frere, where your grace may be found in the month of October, should the presence of your grace be required on my trial. I beg to assure your grace that my motive for serving your grace with a subpoena was neither idle nor frivolous, and shall deem the presence of your grace to be of the highest importance, not only to my own interest, but in the interest of Truth and Justice, and consequently the interest of mankind in general. In conjunction with your grace, it is also my intention to serve with a subpoena those persons in this country most eminent in theology, astronomy, and oriental literature. I beg leave to assure your grace that such questions for such evidence as I may find necessary to elicit shall be put by me with a due impression of the importance and rank of those to whom I shall be addressing myself. I beg leave to subscribe myself,

"Your grace's most obliged and most obedient servant,

"Richard Carlile."

These letters being published in the *Republican* gave the authorities an inkling of the elaborate defence he intended to

prepare for his trial. Such presumption and boldness amazed them, and was such as they never had to cope with before Carlile's time. William Cobbett escaped to America when he saw danger of prosecution, and Mr. Hone, though thrice tried and thrice acquitted, yet had given up the publication of the book of contention as a matter of general policy. But in Carlile's case the authorities encountered a man who had no idea of yielding a single point in the cause he felt to be just. He prepared to fight them on their own ground. He knew before he entered the court that the verdict would be against him; no matter how strong a defence he might make, conviction was, in his mind, a foregone conclusion. Those letters to Sidmouth and the Prince were not to be forgotten or forgiven. They must not be allowed to become a precedent for some future occasion.

Carlile resolved to do all that could possibly be done to set the subject of establishing the freedom of the Press fairly and squarely before the thousands that would read the account of the trials. He hoped by this means to reach a large body of thinking people, and arouse them to a sense of the danger of allowing to go unchallenged such actions on the part of the authorities as the last two years had witnessed. The simple reading of the newspaper accounts of his trial and defence would of itself, he argued, educate people and make them cognisant of his ends and aims, therefore he set himself to do what he could do for himself and the cause at this momentous epoch of his life.

The following article appeared in the 7th No., Vol. I, of the

Republican, October 8th, 1819, written by Carline.

"To the Public.

"The important moment has arrived when the trials which have attracted so much of the public attention and curiosity have been determined upon, and before another issue of this publication will be entered upon. The general expression of feeling that has been displayed on both sides of the question evinces that these trials are looked forward to with more than usual anxiety. I feel myself but as an insignificant being at this crisis, the mere instrument with which despotism in the background is playing its game. I should not feel anxious for, or value my personal liberty, did I not know that its preservation by an upright and inflexible and discriminating jury is of the utmost importance at the present eventful moment. A verdict of *guilty* will be hailed by the ministers as a cloak and sanction of all their late actions. They will triumph and go on in their destructive career; they will assume that an unlimited confidence has been placed in them, and there will be no bounds to their already frightful oppression. A verdict of *not guilty* will stagger and shake them from their holds, will destroy the remains of ignorance and superstition, and establish the liberty of the Press and free discussion with all its valued influence. Every stratagem will be used by my persecutors and by that portion of the Press which adheres to them to excite a feeling of prejudice against me. I was informed nearly a month ago that a loyal declaration would be ready for signatures in the City of London expressive

of its abhorrence of seditious and blasphemous publications, about a week or ten days before my trial would take place. This declaration has been made, and however directly it may have been levelled at me, I cannot plead guilty to being its object, but do most heartily concur in its premises, and consequently I attended at the London Coffee House on Ludgate Hill and placed my name and address to it, which I shall expect to see published with the list of signatures. To such sentiments as are there set forth no honest man would hesitate to subscribe, but it becomes a question as to which part of the community they are applicable; I feel no connection with them. Because I have witnessed the existing privations and sufferings of certain classes of my fellow countrymen with the feelings of deepest concern, and because I feel sensible that all the treasonable and turbulent attempts to subvert the wholesome laws and regulations of the country emanate from the Cabinet, these are the reasons for my placing my signature to this declaration, and I would recommend everyone who is prominent for reform to go and do the same. As many persons and perhaps many of the readers of the *Republican* are ignorant of the contents of the 'Age of Reason', and led away by the general clamor of blasphemy against its author, I will give them a specimen of what is the subject of this false and absurd charge.

"On the Deity.

"Do we want to contemplate his power? We see it in the immensity of the Creation.

"Do we want to contemplate his wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed.

"Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth.

"Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his notwithholding that abundance even from the unthankful.'

"Thus by searching has Paine found out God, and I call on all the priests of Europe to produce, in the same space, quotations from all the sermons that ever were published, anything like this grand demonstrative proof of the power, wisdom, goodness and mercy of the great proprietor of nature. Those are the blasphemers of his name and attributes who first inflict on mankind all the miseries that human nature can endure, and then attribute it to an angry, implacable and offended God! The pulpits of this country are resounding with the assertion that all the miseries that have been and are now inflicted on the people arise from their own wickedness. It is a gross falsehood! they arise from the wickedness of the rulers of this country, who, like a dissolute and debauched father, squanders everything that can be converted into money, and leaves his family to starve in misery and wretchedness. Let us hope that an honest jury can be found to do justice to the writings of Paine, and in so doing they will do justice to their fellowmen."

CHAPTER V. THE TRIAL

An article in No. 8, Vol. I, of the *Republican*, written by Mr. William Sherwin, the partner and friend of Carlile, gives a very good idea of the status of the case as it appeared to him and his friends. The trial had then been in progress two days: —

"The Trial of Mr. Carlile.

"Before this number of the *Republican* is issued to the world the fate of Mr. Carlile will probably be decided, whether the verdict of the jury who are to decide upon his case shall consign him to a dungeon for the next two or three years, or perhaps for life, or whether it will restore him to his family, his friends, and his business. In either case he will carry with him the greatest satisfaction an honest man can enjoy — the consciousness of having done right in the first instance, and of having bravely defended himself in the hour of trial and difficulty. When Socrates was about to be deprived of his life, one of his friends expressed his regret that he should die innocent of the charge against him. 'What,' said the sage, 'do you wish me to die guilty?' The greatest consolation a man can receive while suffering beneath the iron rod of persecution is the confidence which results from his injustice being undeserved, and should the jury give a verdict against Mr. Carlile, he will receive this consolation in a great degree. The unprecedented interest and sympathy which his case has excited is a proof that public opinion

is with him; that the mass of the people are his friends and the enemies of religious persecution, intolerance, bigotry, and tyranny. The question with the public is not whether Mr. Carlile is right or wrong in his opinions, but whether he has acted from purity of motive? whether he is a malicious person, in short, whether he has published the 'Age of Reason' with a view to corrupt the morals of society? If the parties engaged in this prosecution are unable to prove this, their case cannot be made out, for where there is no bad intention there is no crime. It is in vain that a servile tool in the garb of a judge declares in the accustomed jargon of the Bar and the Bench that 'Christianity is part of the law of the land'. Mr. Carlile has proved over and over again that the Act of Parliament, usually called Mr. Smith's Bill, has completely destroyed the protection which the Christian religion received from the laws of the country. That Mr. Justice Abbott should wish to explain away the application of the statute is not surprising when it is considered that the Act authorised any person to deny the existence of the Trinity. The conduct of the judge and of the Attorney-General has been partial and malignant in the extreme during the proceedings. The only mode of defence by which Mr. Carlile could hope to escape the vulture-fangs of the law was by showing that he had no evil intention in publishing the work, and he could not do this better than by showing that it contained nothing immoral, and that the objections which Paine makes to the divine origin of the Bible were well founded. This was his only defence, and the only one

he could have which would be likely to justify his conduct to the jury and to the world. He was permitted to read the 'Age of Reason' through, but the moment he began to comment upon the various passages of the Bible he was interrupted by the judge, who declared that he would not suffer any observations to be made that would impugn the divinity of the Christian religion. By means of this sweeping declaration he deprived Carlile of the greater part of his defence, and as the latter very justly observed, showed the determination to confine him in a dungeon without even the privilege of a hearing! One of the most arbitrary practices in a trial of this description is the privilege which the Attorney-General is allowed of interrupting the defendant when the latter happens to make any observation which may be considered by the Attorney-General too harsh for the delicate ear of his opponent. During the first day's proceedings there was no room for the exercise for this tyrannical mode of annoyance, but to-day has afforded several opportunities for the harpies of the law to interpose their malignant objections. Whenever Mr. Carlile was entering upon anything that was likely to show that he had published nothing that had not been published many times before without exposing the authors to the notice of the law officers of the Crown, nay, that several of these authors themselves had actually been pensioners and parasites of the present government; whenever Mr. Carlile was attempting to do this he was immediately interrupted by the Attorney-General, whose appeal was directly answered by a prohibition from the

judge. When we consider the powerful array of talent and learning that the defendant has to contend against, when we see three or four of the most dexterous, diligent, and cunning sycophants the Bar can produce selected to oppose him, and to watch for any false and faulty step he may make for the purpose of throwing him into confusion, it is almost impossible that a fair trial can be expected. Is it not enough that a wily hypocrite in the character of a judge should be watching for opportunities to interrupt him and to lead him off his guard, without being exposed to the impertinent intrusion of men who are officially employed to pursue him to destruction? But in the English Government of to-day everything is of a piece, everything tends to despotism. The judge in what should be a Court of Justice explains the law as he pleases, which is always on the side of his employers and if the law is in any case doubtful, instead of allowing a defendant the benefit of the doubt he turns it against him, by giving an opinion which is at once recorded and observed as a solemn legislative decision. In such a state of things it is impossible to look for anything but tyranny from the Bench, and the only chance the defendant has is the probability that an honest jury will set the dictum of a wicked judge at defiance. The folly of this prosecution is equal to its malignity. The proceedings of the trial will make more Deists than Carlile would have done in selling the 'Age of Reason' during the remainder of his life. Every interruption he has received will be considered by the public as a proof that his prosecutors apprehended that he was going to say

something that would be unanswerable. Besides which there will be the publicity which will be given to the work by means of the trial, a publicity that will far exceed that of any other work on the same side of the question that ever was written. In the next number there will be room for making some observations on the results of the trial, a result which will be of more consequence than any event which has ever taken place in the history of the criminal jurisprudence of this country."

Carlile had reason to believe that Lord Chief Justice Abbott was very unwilling to have the trial take place in his Court, and had had a correspondence with Lord Castlereagh on the subject. He opposed the whole proceeding from the filing of the first information down to the trials themselves; but he was over-ruled; by what argument or proffered reward does not appear. Then as to the jury. It was a special jury, but Carlile was not allowed to challenge the jurors, although even while in court he received warning that at least five of them had publicly declared that they would hang him if they could, or give him at least five years' imprisonment on bread and water, and they went so far as to say to him in open court "that his defence would not help him". They were allowed to separate and go to their homes, and mingle with everybody and anybody the night before the verdict was rendered, which all goes to show that the case, as Carlile said, was predetermined, and the whole proceeding on the part of Judge and advocates a travesty and mockery of justice.

His defence on the second day was momentarily interrupted,

and on the third day was completely suppressed. In this connection may be mentioned the case of a man who had been summoned on this jury, and who had left a sick bed to sit with them at the trial. This man was of the same belief as Carlile, and had said to friends that he had no doubt at all of the sincerity of heart of the defendant, and that he, the juror, knew that Carlile would go to the scaffold if need be in defence of those opinions as *he* would. This man had left a sick bed to do what he could for Carlile on the jury, yet at last, and for some unknown reason, he allowed the verdict to be given without a dissenting word on his part.

At the close of each day's proceedings, Carlile issued a full report and sold it in twopenny sheets. These sheets were headed, "A Full Account of Richard Carlile's *Mock Trials*", and were sold with marvellous rapidity. They were immediately condemned by the authorities as indictable, and Mrs. Carlile was threatened with prosecution for selling them in the shop; but the sale kept on, and the trade at the Fleet Street shop exceeded anything that was so far known in the annals of the bookselling business.⁶ Besides this, Carlile addressed open letters to his judge and jury, arraigning them for the illegality of their conduct, and spread them broadcast. He also continued a series of articles in the

⁶ On the way to and from the scene of the trials Carlile was followed by multitudes of people, who cheered him lustily. There was always a large crowd of sympathetic people around the shop in Fleet Street, and at the close of each day's proceedings the rush to purchase the prosecuted volumes was something marvellous. Everything in sight found ready sale.

Republican— called the "Crisis" — of the most daring character. They show the indomitable spirit and fearlessness of Carlile even while under heavy bail and, later, under conviction. Even while in prison he never faltered, no matter what the consequences to himself. Feeling that he was *right* in the position he had taken, he threw caution and diplomacy to the winds, and dared and defied the enemy to do their worst! One parallel only can I recall, and one which comes up in memory often as the daring deeds of this unconquerable spirit are recounted. It occurs in a little book called "The Bridge of the Gods". It is an Indian story, and the epoch is also far distant, in William Penn's time, I think. A scout, a white man, has fallen into the hands of his enemies, the Indians, and they prepare to torture him to death in their extremely horrible fashion, but he laughs at their devices, and even as they heap coals of fire upon his breast, he laughs at and derides them, and taunts his murderers by reminding them of all he has done against them, some of which acts they had seemed to forget, and while the coals of fire are (literally) burning their way to his heart he laughs and jeers them on to fresh horrors, never flinching, but daring and defying them till the last moment. Carlile's case was a civilised counterpart of this Indian story, yet with a happier result. The reader will realise the force of this comparison better as he reads further of Carlile's many encounters with his enemies and the enemies of intellectual freedom.

What would be thought in America of a President, who occupies about the same relative position as a Prime Minister

of England, who would instruct a judge on the Bench as to his conduct of a case to be brought before him? The sun would not set before an impeachment committee would be organised for active work. That is, if a judge could be found base enough to be dictated to, and we do not think a judge could be found in either country to-day who would lend himself to such a thing. But in former days in England things were in such a servile state, that place and power were freely, almost openly, given for services, menial and degrading. It was only necessary for an aspiring barrister to relieve himself of his conscience and place it in a hermetically sealed vault, and he was ready for any amount of official climbing (by the backstairs) and the forthcoming reward of promotion.

The second day's proceedings were very interesting, and make excellent reading, even in this busy age. They will be found in the appendix, and are copied verbatim from a leading daily paper of the time. Having copies of all the papers of that date, I choose the *British Press* for its more general fairness in its report, although its editorial at the conclusion of the trial was bitter and severe on the defendant. In those days it was something gained, as even now, when one could get a fair report. The other papers were too palpably influenced by fear or discretion to give anything approaching to an unbiassed report.

Scores, nay hundreds of letters poured in upon Carlile before and after the sentence. The verdict of guilty shocked many of his friends for the moment, and made everyone feel unsafe and

uneasy, none knowing what would be the outcome or where these prosecutions might end. But this state of feeling did not last, and the rebound came, and with it such an awakening and mental uprising as was never before known in any country. And though Carlile felt, as he says in his letter to Mr. Morrison, deserted by some who had been officious enough before the sentence, yet he was in no way deserted, it was merely that his friends were suffering from the shock. The circulation soon started, letters and encouragements and money poured in upon him with the highest encomiums upon his bravery and fearlessness, and admiration of his wonderful defence, wonderful indeed when his youth (still in his twenties) and former condition of life are taken into consideration, and the very short time – only two years – he had been before the public. It must have taken an immense amount of nerve and backbone to stand up alone and confront that array of clever but unscrupulous men! He was entirely unassisted except by what Mr. Hone prepared for the third day. He had to defend his own case, for it is doubtful whether any lawyer could have been obtained, or, if obtained, whether he could have been relied upon to be proof against all the temptations that would have been thrown in his way to betray his client. And so great was the amount of prejudice and fear of offending the powers that were, at that time, that it would have had to be a very strong lawyer that would dare to risk doing so, and where was such to be found? The following extract from a letter will show to what an extent prejudice had been created against Carlile, and how it had

separated even members of the same family from each other, so that many who had espoused his cause, and were anxious to prove their sympathy, had to do so in secret from their own nearest relatives: —

"Compassion and justice have been refused to you without the precincts of the Royal Tribunal; you cannot therefore expect either within the verge of the modern star chamber, and are no doubt prepared for the worst, for I am sorry to observe that the hue and cry of Atheism, though founded on the most malignant calumny and falsehood, has become so prevalent as to oblige me to write this address to you in stealth from every individual member of my family and fireside, lest one and all might tear me to pieces for heaving one generous sigh on your behalf, or for the ghost of freedom's sake, now vanished from her wonted haunts in your infidel train which has frightened many foolish reformers into fits.

"All the papers of the Empire groaned under the load of his humane Anti-Christian, if not Atheistical principles, at an expense to Mr. Robert Owen of a thousand pounds including profits to this very Government, and the whole identical band of editors who are this season employed in hunting you, a poor plain, upright Deist, to perdition! If this be fair play, I know not what can be stigmatised as foul, base, and infamous from every point of view, and if the notice of it in your pleading does not tend to mollify the oracles of the law into a very lenient sentence for you, the public will estimate their integrity and legitimate

equity accordingly. You must excuse this long communication, which as a work of intended mercy has engrossed so completely the Lord's Day that I have been able to think of nothing else. The truth is, since it must be out, I have been dreaming about you and your forlorn wife and children all night, and awoke very early this morning under a species of impulse which forced me from my bed to take pen and ink in this unequal contest against the powers and principalities of the darkest ages, arrayed to annihilate the man with whom they are afraid to argue in the face of the people. Yesterday, the news of the resurrection and transmission of the bones of the persecuted Thomas Paine⁷ to their native soil struck me very forcibly as an extraordinary, almost a miraculous coincidence with the decree that, in the same breath, will probably bury you alive amidst your fellow slaves, for promulgating those same political doctrines for which Paine is on the eve of being canonised by the brave sons of liberty, returning like giants refreshed (after a short sleep) from the shores of America to support radical reform or perish in the attempt. To 'Common Sense' and the 'Crisis', both written by the intelligent Paine, the free Americans are much more indebted for liberation from unrepresented thralldom than to the sword or the genius of Washington, and our posterity may yet owe as precious a debt to Carlile, Hunt, and Cobbett, should you all suffer the martyrdom of captivity, either on the score of

⁷ William Cobbett disinterred the bones of Thomas Paine and carried them to England.

political or religious publications, which I think cannot be of long duration, and never will extend so far as death whatever your enemies may intend shall be the result."

One of the most gratifying incidents, if not, indeed, the only one pleasant to dwell upon at this time, is the manner in which Carlile's friends, his bodyguard, so to speak, rallied around him. Mr. W. T. Sherwin and Mr. Julian Augustus St. John assumed the responsibility of the publication of the *Republican*. Mr. William Hone, who had been lately acquitted of a similar charge, assisted Carlile in the construction of the third day's defence, and in this connection the following letter from the *Morning Chronicle*, October 15th, 1819, becomes amusing: —

"Sir, — Perceiving in your paper of this morning that my name is introduced in a manner calculated to lead the public to believe that I was instrumental in preparing the defence of Mr. Carlile, on his trial for publishing 'Paine's Age of Reason', I request that you will afford your readers an opportunity of knowing the true state of the case. Having been present in court as an auditor, I was earnestly solicited at the close of the second day, by several friends to the liberty of the Press, to point out, in conjunction with two literary gentlemen, those authors who had written the most ably in defence of toleration and unrestricted freedom of opinion on religious subjects, and to mark the passages. This I assented to, nor do I apprehend that such a request would have been refused by a liberal-minded man, or that the most scrupulous would have found fault with me for so

doing. I accordingly arranged, as well as I could in a few hours the next morning, a connected series of quotations from Archbishop Tillotson, 'Bishop Squire', Doctor Furneaux, Bishop Watson, Professor Limborch, Professor Campbell, Mr. Locke, Doctor Enfield, the Rev. Mr. Wyvil, Rev. Mr. Aspland, 'the Christian Reformer,' and other authorities of equal weight and tendency. This was read by Mr. Carlile on the third day with interpolations of his own, and this with the loan of 'Erasmus', Milton's sermons and pamphlets, constituted the whole of my exertions on this n's 'Areopagitica', De Laune on Non-conformity, a volume of 'Blackstone', a tract by Lord Somers, and a few extraordinary occasions.

"Your obedient servant,

"45, Ludgate Hill.

"William Hone."

One would naturally ask what more he could have done. However, what he did was equally creditable to his heart as to his head. The original documents are in my possession. Most of them are in Mr. Hone's handwriting, the rest are in a beautiful text, evidently that of "the literary gentlemen" who assisted in the hurried task.

At the time of the sentence a threat was conveyed to Carlile that his wife would be informed against, to which he responded:

—
"Your threats, my lords, to file a criminal information against Mrs. Carlile, cannot change my course, sorry as I am that I cannot

take the responsibility and the consequent pains and penalties on myself. I am satisfied that my wife possesses sufficient virtue and good sense to realise my wishes, and pursue my directions, and these are that she should proceed in the usual manner as I have done, and suppress nothing."

At the conclusion of the trial and previous to the sentence, a bishop (name not given) sent a petition, an open petition to the authorities, to the editor of the *Observer*, a Mr. Clement, accompanied by a hundred pounds. This paper was published in two or three parts on as many Sundays, previous to the sentencing of Carlile, and which no doubt had its effect on the Christian Judge Bailey. One of the recommendations of that petition was the following: "The patient is maddened by a slow poison, is below human nature, and beyond human remedy; his language is raving, and for the common safety of mankind he must be fettered till he dies." One of the Dorchester clerical magistrates was anxious to proceed practically with this recommendation. This petition also recommended the fining of the prisoner £3,000, by way of making the real fine of £1,500 look like a mere trifle.

The Rev. George Somers Clarke, D.D., Vicar of Great Waltham, was confined in the old jail of Essex for contempt of the Ecclesiastical Court, and insisted on remaining there the rest of his life. This gentleman sent Carlile a ten pound note (\$50) just before the trial, and volunteered the following evidence, "That having been the tutor at college of the Lord Chief Justice

Abbott, would testify that he himself was a Deist; and that as the Bible was now translated and received, Thomas Paine was justified in writing his 'Age of Reason'." This learned reverend came into court with rolls of Hebrew, Arabic, and all sorts of ancient Scriptures, but the wily Chief Justice would not allow him to be examined.

Carlile's knowledge of the fact that the Attorney-General was himself an acknowledged Deist gives point to the sarcasm that Carlile addressed to him which otherwise would be tame; he actually helped to prosecute a man for professing the same doctrines which he himself held.

"Letters from St. Petersburg to the 30th of November state that the Emperor Alexander of Russia, apprehensive that the morals of his people would be injured by their reading the account of Carlile's Trials, had given directions to the police to prevent the introduction of all the English newspapers containing it." —*London Times*, Dec. 29th, 1819.

As a straw shows the way the wind blows, so this little report shows the apprehension of crowned heads that some one or more of their subjects might see something to admire and follow in Carlile's example. Else why such measures?

CHAPTER VI. TAKEN TO PRISON

Carlile was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and a fine of £1,500. Almost as soon as the sentence was passed, Carlile was handcuffed and taken in the dead of night to Dorchester Gaol, some 130 miles from London. He was not allowed to see his wife or children, nor to communicate with his friends. As soon as they had him safely locked up, the authorities made a descent upon the Fleet Street shop, seized upon the entire stock and furniture, and closed it from business. This seizure was made ostensibly to secure the fines, but really to cripple Carlile so that he could never pay them, and thus they could keep him in perpetual imprisonment. For if he had been allowed to retain his stock and profitable business, he could have paid his fine of £1,500 (\$7,500) before his term of imprisonment expired; but the plan was to cripple him past recovery. The goods seized were mostly books and pamphlets, which would have brought him £2,000 (\$10,000) in the ordinary way of sale. This confiscation was no part of his sentence, be it remembered, but an afterthought, and was performed by the power of might over right. This stock was thrown into a damp cellar or warehouse, and practically ruined. His wife and children would have been rendered helpless and impoverished had not Carlile cautioned his wife some time before to prepare for the worst, and to reserve a portion of the money resulting from the large sales during the

trials for herself and children. They would have been reduced to actual want, for the officers even took the money found in the money-drawer, although not one dollar resulting from this seizure was ever allowed in mitigation of his fines. The most trying part of the sentence to Carlile was that he was only allowed to take exercise in the open air for half an hour each day, or one hour every other day, at the discretion of the jailer; and even for this half-hour he was to be taken out by the jailer as an animal might be led out at a show for outsiders to gaze at. This was too much for the spirit of Carlile to endure; he absolutely refused to leave his room in any such a manner, and as a consequence remained in his room for two years and a half without ever leaving it, rather than submit to such an insult. This will give the reader an idea of the indomitable spirit of the man. After this length of time he succeeded in getting this part of the sentence set aside, and he was allowed to walk out into the prison enclosure at his pleasure and very much to the improvement of his health. About a year after his incarceration, on reading of the treatment of Henry Hunt in Ilchester Gaol, he writes: —

"I have seen enough of gaols to be fully alive to the painful situation of Mr. Hunt, and since I have read of his present restrictions, I begin to feel myself in a palace, instead of a prison, or Bastille, as I occasionally call it. I am the better pleased with my treatment at this moment, as yesterday I was allowed to see a friend in my room for the first time, and I may add that now my sisters and my wife and children are allowed to visit me during

the hours of nine to four each day. My room is large, light and airy, and far excels the state rooms of the King's Bench Prison. I have a sink and water-pipe and complete water-closet attached to the room, so that having provided myself with the necessary apparatus for both hot and cold baths, I have the enjoyment, nay, the luxury of these at pleasure; but when I mention my room and my baths, I can go no further, for the way in which I am locked up seems to me to be ridiculous, and I have had the honor to be a prisoner in the King's Bench Prison, in Newgate, in Giltspur Street Compter, and in the houses of the sheriffs officers (not for debt, but for libel). On entering the prison I told the keeper that as far as money would go to make me comfortable I would spend, but I was immediately informed that all money would do for me was to obtain me a good dinner *from*, not *at* the Governor's table. I viewed this as a secondary object, as I was ever careless about my food so that it was wholesome and sufficient. I also learned that all the fear was that of my corrupting the inmates of this most respectable place. I resolved then to economise and to teach temperance by example, and this I have done to their surprise, for I have shown them that a man with a contented mind and no labor, has need of but a small quantity of food to keep fat and in good health. Such has been the solitude of my confinement in this prison, and so little conversation have I had, that, on attempting to speak, I have in a manner found my voice gone, and have been obliged to make a great effort to be heard. I have a couch which forms a sofa-chair, and on which I consider

that I lie sleeping, reading or thinking on an average sixteen hours a day, and I walk about the room or sit in a chair as a relief, excepting the few hours I spend at the writing desk. I am sensible that this is a bad habit, but I have no alternative. As my situation is at present I am quite comfortable, and I attribute the closeness of my confinement to the pretended horror which clerical and fanatical magistrates profess to feel at what they call sedition and blasphemy."

To add to the sorrows of this time came the news of the death of his mother. Carlile had always been a most loving and dutiful son, and he was deeply grieved. He realised fully that her death had been hastened if not caused by his present situation, and in the following letter one can trace the deep concern and regret which he felt. "The bravest are the tenderest. The loving are the daring."

"Dorchester Gaol, March 27th, 1820.

"Mr. A. Morrison,

"Dear Sir, – Soon after I received your parcel, and before I had determined how or when I should convey an answer to you, the post brought me the painful intelligence of the death of my mother. I was in a measure prepared for it, as I felt certain her vital energies were quite exhausted. On perceiving the letter sealed with black I threw it aside, and for four hours could not summon resolution enough to open it. But that painful moment has passed, and I shall only look back to express my gratitude to you and to Mrs. Morrison for the well-timed relief

and consolation my mother has received at your hands since my confinement. I had hoped that her life might have extended a few years, that she might have witnessed the result of my present career, as I fear that as far as it has gone it has given her nothing but pain. I feel it to be a duty I owe you to thus publicly, as I have the means, to say that it is my firm belief that my mother would not have survived the first shock of my sentence and its consequence had you not poured the balm of consolation into her bosom. She could see no other source of dependence than myself, and I do not think she would have survived the first few hours that were necessary to convince her that all was not lost. Your kindness to me was more than friendship; you were not of the many hundreds who came to me in my prosperity to shake hands, to hold out specious promises, that I might command your services if ever I had need of them. You, of all my professed friends, you alone held out your hand to me when in prison, where our first interview took place. When I fell among thieves you were the good Samaritan. As my prospects began to look more cheerful, I had hoped that my mother would have lived a few years longer, that she might have felt the pleasure of that filial affection I have always felt disposed to extend to her both as my duty and my pride whenever I have had the means. It gives me pleasure to know that she fell calmly asleep, untortured by priests or superstitious notions. I consider it a duty not to look back except for gratitude or experience, and in doing this I feel that I am rivetted in my esteem of your friendship, and while we

live I shall consider myself your debtor.

"I am, Sir,

"Yours with respect,

"Richard Carlile."

This gentleman and his wife were the first to send a contribution to Carlile in prison of £10 (\$50), and continued their subscription under the name of "Alexander and Jane Littlehelp". These two most generous friends helped almost everyone who was persecuted for opinion's sake in the same bountiful manner. Mr. Morrison and Carlile were still corresponding as late as 1840, when Mr. Morrison died.

Carlile improved the opportunity of his life, i.e., his prison life, by a very thorough study of the origin of religions, more particularly that of the Christian religion. He procured by purchase or loan every known authority, and made himself the master of the subject. He perfected himself in grammar and in handwriting, having a complete system of this sent to him at Dorchester Gaol; and later when he was allowed visitors, had a writing-master come to the prison to instruct him. Some of his letters still extant, and which were written before his final illness, look almost like copperplate engraving. He also studied theology, political economy, history, phrenology, literature, etc. He turned the quiet and solitude of the gaol to good account. He conducted two weekly papers through the greater part of his term, and kept up a large and varied correspondence, besides making a thorough and critical digest and condensation of the old

and new Testament in reply to the Rev. Thomas Hartwell Home's pamphlet on "Deism Refuted". This digest is to-day as useful and time-saving as ever to the student and seeker after truth. It was during the early year of this, his memorable imprisonment, that the disgraceful attempt to destroy Queen Caroline was made. This was the blackest of all the many villainies which were allowed to disgrace the reign of the Georges 3rd and 4th. Carlile espoused her cause from the first, not because she was a queen, but because she was a grossly maligned and persecuted woman. There were few who dared to declare themselves openly to be her defenders. Carlile used his pen with fearless vigor in her behalf, and did not hesitate to use the words of forceful truth against her persecutors. Having the confidence of many thousands of his own readers, he could, and did, do much to create the popular feeling and uprising of the people in her defence, to the everlasting dismay of her enemies, and of whom, next to her husband, the notorious Castlereagh was at the head. The story of this unhappy Queen is most pathetic as portrayed from week to week in the *Republican*, and of itself would, and no doubt has, filled the pages of more than one book. Yet the open defeat of her enemies and the complete exoneration of herself from all the villainous charges brought against her, did not ensure her either a peaceful or a long life. There were more ways than one of disposing of a person who stood in the way, however innocently, of designing persons, and she paid the penalty of her position in spite of her popularity.

The events occurring in Spain at that time, and the attempts that were then and there made for a free and representative government, gave subject and opportunity for many lively editorials on Carlile's favorite subject, "Republicanism", and left him, as he said, "neither an idle nor a dull moment, nor one to spare". To add to his duties and anxieties came frequent annoyances to Mrs. Carlile from the authorities in the form of threats of prosecution. She was frequently arrested, but her trials were as frequently postponed from time to time, only making matters more aggravating by their uncertainty. They were finally brought to an issue, and were laconically announced in the *Republican* thus: – "Trial of Mrs. Carlile. Verdict, as usual, Guilty!"

All these publications for which she was sentenced had been on sale for a long time without interference, except the twopenny "Mock Trial" sheets, and thousands were sold without any complaints being heard about them. The trouble was that Carlile's persecutors had fondly and foolishly thought that they had effectually silenced him for ever; and when the place at Fleet Street was reopened, and the business revived and carried on as briskly as ever, they were really at a loss to know what to do at first. It would never do to keep him in prison and allow the business for which he was punished to go on unmolested; so they proceeded against the wife as we have seen, and got judgment against her. Next they proceeded against the shopman, Mr. Davison, and got a judgment against him and sentence of

imprisonment. But now comes Carlile's sister, Mary Ann Carlile, who had been quietly at work making herself familiar with the details of the business, so as to be able to take *her* place in the list of persecutions for opinion's sake, and letters began to pour in upon Carlile from scores of young people offering to supply the place of those removed, and in a very short time he had a long list of names of volunteers, ready for business or prosecution, it mattered not which.

CHAPTER VI. SIR ROBERT GIFFORD AND THE ODIOUS "SIX ACTS"

As briefly set forth in a letter to Sir Robert Gifford, January 14th, 1820, on the new Acts of the Legislature intended to expel even the shade of liberty from this country (England): —

"My Learned Friend,

"I venture to address you by that common epithet so-much in vogue with those who profess to be opposed to each other in courts of law, and I pledge my word to you with just the same feeling. My views are not so confined, nor my mind so narrow, as to imagine that you have inflicted an injury upon me beyond the period of my confinement; on the contrary, I reflect with pleasure on all that is past, and congratulate myself that by your assistance I have sown the seeds of my future prosperity. The prominent part you have taken in bringing forward and supporting the late Acts of Parliament under the auspices of your patron and preceptor, Lord Castlereagh, has induced me to address you on their several bearings, and to show you how far they may be nullified. Let me first premise that, under the present state of public opinion, their nature and character is such as to render them short-lived. I will commence with 'The Traverse Bill', which is admitted on all hands to be the least obnoxious, as one clause of it has enacted a real benefit by taking away from your office that arbitrary and capricious power of

suspending prosecutions over the heads of individuals to any length of time. In consequence of this Act, I shall have the satisfaction of making you acknowledge the abandonment of at least four informations that have been suspended over my head ever since the Michaelmas term 1817, or of bringing them immediately to trial. How far I shall succeed in making you give up or proceed with those half-dozen, or dozen others of later date, remains to be seen. I cannot quit this subject without saying that it will give me much pleasure to meet you often in the Court of King's Bench, and hope that your known dissent from the hypocritical professions of the day will further induce you to promulgate those sentiments that *you* privately and I publicly espouse. With respect to the intended effect of the Traverse Bill. As to accelerating trials for misdemeanors, there is some ground for complaint, because equal justice is not given to plaintiff and defendant to hasten on his trial, and for this the Bill has not provided; whilst on the other hand, he is debarred from the benefit of a delay. The excuse set up for this part of the Bill was, that I had protracted the time of my trial for near twelve months. This, Sir Robert, you know to be false, the delay was on your part, and on the part of your predecessor. I am inclined to believe that prior to the 16th of August, my prosecution was in some measure abandoned. Having been present at the Manchester meeting and narrowly escaped the sabres of the yeomanry, and got better through the truncheons of Nadin and his gang than some of the other attendants of that meeting; and lastly, having eluded

the vigilance and search of the magistrates of that lawless town, I came to London and told the plain, unvarnished tale of the massacre committed by the yeomanry at the instigation of the magistrates. The necessity for getting rid of me was immediately resolved upon, that I might not in any instance give evidence on that subject. First, the project of bringing a charge of high treason against me was discussed and as soon abandoned, and the trial for the high-sounding charge of 'Blasphemy' agreed on, for the double purpose of getting rid of me as an evidence and of drawing the public attention from the Manchester affair. The Traverse Bill, considered in its proper character, is merely a clause of 'the Blasphemous and seditious Libel Bill' put into a different shape, to hide the severity of the latter. 'The search for Arms Bill' and the 'Drilling and Training Bill' are enactments of the most hideous character, which nothing but the guilty fears of its projectors could have produced. The latter should have been entitled 'An Act for the encouragement of private malice'. 'The Seditious Meeting Bill' is another of those destructive measures that has brought England on a level with Algiers. The Bills relating to the Press are now to be considered. It is with those, Sir Robert, you have given us a specimen of your disposition to annihilate the liberty of the Press altogether, for we must look on those Bills, not as the act of Parliament, but as the act of the Attorney-General. I shall therefore proceed to make my observations on them, and begin with that which is intended to increase the punishment for whatever you may be pleased to call

blasphemous or seditious libel."

After giving the first, second, and third clauses of the Bill, he comes to the fourth clause, which empowers the judges or magistrates who shall preside at the second conviction of the individuals for either blasphemous or seditious libel to use their discretion (!) in fining and imprisoning such individuals or of banishing them from the country.

The fifth clause enacts that a person so sentenced to banishment shall leave the country within thirty days, or in default thereof he will be seized and sent to such a place as the Government may propose.

The sixth clause makes liable to transportation to Botany Bay, the Hulks, or to similar penalty the individual who should be found in any part of the British dominions within the term of his banishment. The letter continues: —

"The last and most important Act is now to be considered, which is entitled, 'An act to subject certain publications to the duties of stamps upon newspapers, and to make other regulations for restraining the abuses arising from the publication of blasphemous and seditious libels', but is, in fact, an imposition of a duty on political knowledge and information, for the better preservation of ignorance amongst the laboring classes. There are some very unfair exceptions in this Act; for instance, every pamphlet written in defence of the Christian religion is exempt from the duty imposed by this Act, whilst every answer coming within the quantity of paper and price prescribed, is subject to it.

For instance, Dr. Rudge⁸ might address me on the evidences of the Christian religion in the *Christian Champion* for fourpence (8 cents), but I could not answer him in the *Republican* for less than sixpence (12 cents). These, Sir Robert, are your deeds, and they are worthy of you, for apostasy is always desperate and vicious in proportion to its former profession, while consistency at the same time becomes its mirror and object of attack.

What view your former patron had in pushing you forward is not for me to say, whether he was anxious to find an Attorney-General who should outstrip him in infamy whilst filling that office is best known to himself; but certainly, if that was his object, he has succeeded well. Your profession is certainly one that gives native genius an opportunity of displaying itself, and with a corresponding degree of spirit to reach the highest and most important offices of the State. Perhaps there never was an instance before of so young a man as yourself, or one who has been so short a time at the Bar, reaching the office you now fill, and on hearing your name announced for the office of Attorney-General I, with many others, was astonished at the promotion, knowing you by name only, as the man who was horsewhipped by Mr. Gurney, of Stannery Court notoriety, and your bringing a suit against him. In London you certainly were a briefless barrister. It was supposed that some one had discovered some lurking talent

⁸ Dr. Rudge was a clergyman of the Established Church who sent Carlile Soame Jenyns' "View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion" shortly before his sentence. A long correspondence was kept up between Carlile and the Doctor, which was published in the *Republican*.

in you, and had been generous enough to push you forward. But how great was the surprise to find that you were destitute of talent as a lawyer, of grace as an orator, and of dignity as an officer of State. There are those who have affirmed that noble minds can proceed only from noble birth; as far as you are the object in view, this maxim is certainly verified, but it must be admitted that history affords us many exceptions to this rule. You, Sir Robert, in the absence of talent and of every requisite for your office and profession, have been fortunate enough to make up the deficiency by the assistance of a powerful friend. If Sir Vicary Gibbs had possessed no other personal means of bringing him out of Devonshire, and the western circuit, than Sir Robert Gilford possesses, both would have remained there to this day, the one a worn-out barrister, the other an attorney's clerk. But fortunately for you, your father had the means as a tradesman of assisting Sir Vicary Gibbs when in a state of penury, and a part of the contract was that you should be pinned on to his tail.

"R. Carlile.

"Dorchester Gaol,

"Jan. 10th 1820."

In a later letter to Sir Robert Gifford, Carlile says in a postscript: —

"I begin to fear that you and I shall never meet again in Guildhall. I mean to occupy the whole time of my imprisonment in preparing myself for the next defence of the 'Age of Reason'. If ever we meet again (in Court), I shall certainly detain you

a month. I had calculated on at least ten days before, instead of three. But I had not studied my subject in the slightest degree; I kept everything to my natural feelings and a few hours' arrangement of books. I suffered myself, and foolishly, to be brow-beaten by Abbott. But the next time I will either make my defence or drive him out of Court, or he shall remove *me* from Court to finish the case."

Carlile dedicated the second volume of the *Republican* to Sir Robert in the sarcastic style which he always used in addressing him. I will give the dedication complete, as it is short, and so dismiss Sir Robert from our pages: —

"Dedication to Sir Robert Gifford, Knight, His Majesty's Attorney-General.

"Gratitude being one of the noblest traits in the character of animals, both rational and irrational, to whichever you may deem me allied, I feel that I owe it to you. I therefore embrace the earliest opportunity of dedicating a volume to you, in which I have had frequent occasion, most respectfully, to make allusions to your name and office. If I had followed the old and beaten track of troubling you with an adulatory application, begging your permission to accept this dedication, I am certain that it would have excited your ire to such a degree as to have occasioned a foaming at the mouth; equal to that which I lately witnessed in the Court of King's Bench. Therefore, considering that the soil of Devon has nurtured us both; that we sprang up at nearly the same time and under very similar circumstances,

and that our relative situations in London has united us in an indissoluble tie, assuming a frank and friendly conduct, I have presumed to inscribe this second volume of the *Republican* to you as a token of my esteem and my sense of the high honor and benefit you have graciously bestowed on me. Should the Attorney-General be angry and think me over presumptuous, I am satisfied that Sir Robert Gifford will be pleased to have a volume dedicated to him which is replete with matter akin to his own feelings. You, Sir Robert, are amongst those who have taught us that a man, in office and out of office, forms two distinct beings, opposite both in nature and in principle; and I should not be surprised if, in the course of the revolutions of all that is natural, this country should adopt a representative system of government, or, in other words, a republican form, to find you filling some office to which your abilities shall be commensurate on the ground of your former boasted principles. It is a fact, daily demonstrated, that men who are eager to fill official situations never make principle a bar to obtaining them. It is but fair to say that when such men have a principle or attachment to a particular form of government, they are calculated to fill such a situation or office under that system with more satisfaction both to themselves and the public, but they are ever ready to sacrifice principle to interest. Since, Sir Robert, you cannot lay claim to eminence in this or any other degree, I am sufficiently charitable to lay aside the weapon of censure, and grateful to confine myself more to acknowledgment of the utility of your tergiversation

towards him who prays that you may fill the office of Attorney-General as long as his Majesty or his heirs and successors shall grace the throne of Great Britain."

CHAPTER VIII. THE VICE SOCIETY

"A letter to the Society for the Suppression of Vice (self-styled, and by no one else) on their prosecution of the editor and his wife, and the object they have gained by it, namely, an exhausted fund.

"Lords, Ladies, Gentlemen, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, composing the secret society commonly called 'The Society for the Suppression of Vice'.

"It appears that you and I have come off like all other persons who go to law for justice: one with a ragged coat, the other with none at all, only with this difference, that I who am supposed to have been defeated have got the ragged coat, and you who crow on having defeated me have none at all. I did not attempt to notice your first advertisement begging for relief, and the means of proceeding in your warfare, and setting forth your pretensions and claims to public charity in glowing colors. I thought it probable from the nervous debility of poor John Bull that your warfare on what you call blasphemy, and about which you have made so much noise, might have so far terrified him as to fill your empty coffers, particularly as your advertisement was not repeated for the moment; but it now appears that your bait has not taken. To show you that I am really sensible of the benefit you have conferred on me, and the community at large, by the circulation of such an immense number of Deistical volumes and

pamphlets, I shall give your advertisement a gratuitous insertion, and then proceed to compliment you a little further on your meritorious conduct towards myself and wife.

"Advertisement.

""Society for the Suppression of Vice," Committee Room, January, 1820. – The Committee beg leave to state that within the last four years they have been compelled, in order to preserve the public morals from further contamination, to institute no less than eighty-five prosecutions against offenders of various descriptions, all of which have led to conviction or to recognizances by the respective parties, and must prevent the repetition of similar crimes. They have checked the sale of toys and snuff-boxes with abominable devices, which were imported from France and other countries, they have caused the whole stock in trade of some of the most shameless and abandoned traffickers in obscene books and prints, amounting to some thousands, to be seized, and have also destroyed no less than fifty extensive copper plates, from which impressions were from time to time supplied. And lastly, they have brought to condign punishment that most audacious offender, Carlile, who, notwithstanding repeated indictments found against him, still persisted in selling works of the foulest sedition and the most horrible blasphemy that ever disgraced a free press, or outraged the feelings and principles of a British public. The necessary expenses attendant on these measures have greatly exhausted the funds of this Society, but the Committee, etc., etc.

"Subscriptions and donations are thankfully received by the treasurer, Henry Hoare, Esq., 37, Fleet Street, and by the secretary, Mr. George Pritchard, 31, Essex Street, Strand.'

"It appears that your Society, the names of the members of which you once published annually and ostentatiously, is now reduced to a mere cabal whose names you are ashamed to publish, and that all your business is transacted at the office of your secretary, Pritchard, the lawyer, who, next to myself, has gained more by your charges than any other person. It is notorious that all prosecutions emanate from that office at the instigation of that man, who condescends to drop further proceedings whenever the victim of the prosecution will pay him about £30, which is termed *expenses incurred*. It is further known that this accommodation has taken place more than once with the same individual, so that the preservation of the public morals is evidently but a secondary object with this secretary of yours. The first avowed object of your Society was to seek out the persons who were instrumental in disseminating obscene books and pictures. Had you confined yourself to this, no honest or moral man would have complained of or objected to your conduct as a Society. But you studiously endeavor to connect my publications with those which are justly termed obscene, for after enumerating exertions in putting a stop to the sale of those truly objectionable articles, and while I solemnly swear I never sold anything of the description or in any way connected with them, you in the very same sentence add: 'and lastly,

they have brought to condign punishment that most audacious offender, Carlile'. Now what does all this argue? Why, that I, notwithstanding the indictments you obtained against me, could put my books fearlessly and openly in my window for sale, and that the most distinguished and the most virtuous women could come into my shop and put down their money for the 'Age of Reason' or Palmer's 'Principles of Nature', and publicly express their approbation of my perseverance. It was no sooner opened by the sheriffs officer to remove the goods six weeks after the seizure than a gentleman stepped in and said, 'I will give you twelve guineas for twelve copies of the "Age of Reason."' Then I ask what part of the British public I have corrupted? or whose feelings I have outraged? It is your province to war with obscenity, mine with idolatry. I will now endeavor to show you where the advantage and disadvantage of your conduct towards me lies. I calculate that in consequence of the persecution I sold more Deistical volumes and tracts last year than I should have done in seven years in the ordinary course of business. The consequence was that I was prepared to meet all the violence that has been used on my property; and I leave you to judge whether it is not more than probable that, before the end of seven years, I or some other person shall be able to renew the publication of those works which are for the moment suppressed. Where will *you* be then? You will have to fight the same battle over again at a considerable expense on your part and a considerable profit on mine; besides, if once a jury pronounces a verdict of 'not guilty'

on this question – and this requires but one honest man free from superstition to do this – the principle will spread like wildfire. But even admitting that none shall venture to publish those two volumes for which I am at present confined, what do we lose whilst the works of Gibbon, Hume, Voltaire, Volney, and fifty other authors of similar opinions are in full and rapid circulation? Your attempt to lay the pruning-hook to those publications will only redouble the vigor of the roots and remaining branches. Your attempt to impede the progress of truth and liberal opinion will have no other tendency than to detract from that merit and applause you would otherwise have obtained if you had confined yourself to the objects for which your Society was instituted. But your efforts to make blasphemy, or what you call blasphemy, a part of your game will only hold you up to public scorn as bigoted persecutors. In taking my leave of you I have to advise you not to remain under the scandal of being a secret society. Why do you not publish your names and the names of those subscribers of high rank and character you mention in your advertisement? You make profession of your own utility and laudable exertions; surely you cannot feel shame in publishing your names? I have been informed that Mr. Hedgher, who kept that celebrated brothel and sink of vice in St. George's Fields, for so many years called the 'Dog and Duck', is endeavoring to expiate his former conduct by becoming one of the most active and leading members of your Society. I have received this information from many different persons who are strangers to

me, and who think it strange that such a man should be one of my prosecutors after living with and encouraging everything that was vicious and vile. The slight notice that I took last week of one of your right reverend Presidents must suffice for awhile.

"I remain

"Your grateful protege,

"Dorchester Gaol,

"R. Carlile.

"February 20th, 1820."

CHAPTER IX. THE CATO STREET PLOT

We gather from the published statements of Carlile – statements which were never denied as far as we have been able to ascertain, and which were published within a few days of the occurrences having taken place – an inside view of this "alarming conspiracy", and interested readers will be able to draw their own conclusions. The story itself would trench upon the ridiculous were it not that the lives of several men were sacrificed to give coloring to its pretended genuineness. The occupation which Carlile found for the spy Edwards was comical when considered in the light of the supposed cause of Carlile's fines and imprisonment, i.e., the publication of Paine's "Age of Reason". The modelling of the statue of Paine was probably the most honorable work Edwards was ever engaged in. But here is the story as told by Carlile himself:

"A verdict has been obtained by the law officers of the Crown against Thistlewood on a charge of high treason arising out of what has been called the 'Cato Street Plot'. In taking notice of the affair at its rupture, I observed that the trials would prove that the ministers were the instigators of the entire business. I think this assertion has been fully borne out by the evidence adduced on the trial. Here are the particulars. Lord Harrowby' asserted that 'he had received an intimation of the projected assassination

a month before the time of explosion'. An annunciation of a grand cabinet dinner appeared in the *New Times*, and that paper only. Edwards the modeller, who has been the spy and the agent of the Government, produced this announcement on the day of its publication to Thistlewood and others of the party, and recommended it as a good opportunity for their object. This Edwards attended all their meetings, and was very active in preparing all the weapons of destruction. Whether Edwards was present in the loft or not at the time of the capture has not appeared, but it appears that he was the only individual who knew the retreat of Thistlewood, as he accompanied him to that retreat, and must have immediately made his communication to the police. In the list of witnesses Edwards was described as a resident of Ranelagh Place, whereas he has resided in Fleet Street for over the twelve months last past, and an apartment there has been taken for no other purpose than to mislead. The wife and children having continued to live on the third floor of the bookseller's at the corner of Johnson's Court,' Fleet Street, where he has resided since midsummer last, while he and some Bow Street officers have gone to Ranelagh Place in the daytime and just boiled a few eggs, etc., by the way of keeping possession of it. However, there is something too black between the ministers and Edwards to have him produced as a witness. The principal accomplice produced was Adams, who, it appeared, in conjunction with Edwards, lodged the weapons and ammunition at the lodgings of Tidd on the morning after

the parties were arrested, and who no doubt were acting in conjunction with the police officers, as the latter reached there within a quarter of an hour of them. It appears that Adams had lately been discharged from the army to follow his business as a shoemaker the better to adapt him as a spy, or an instigator. Of Monument I shall say nothing, as it really appears that he was decoyed to Cato Street ignorant of the object about to be pursued. I am assured that if the manner in which this Cato Street conspiracy had been made to burst and to petrify the minds of the people, had not raised such a strong prejudice against the accused, the juries would have rejected the evidence adduced by the Crown with indignation. Thistlewood's counsel himself could not palliate some of his projects, and could give him no hope of escape from death on one of the indictments, but the charge of high treason should have required more respectable evidence of the plans and intentions of the parties. Another circumstance is much to be lamented, and that is that any other man should fall a victim to the insanity of Thistlewood. It may not be amiss to give a sketch of Thistlewood's career, which has been one of folly and madness. In the early part of the French Revolution he held a lieutenancy in the militia; from thence he exchanged into some regular regiment and went to the West Indies. He left the army and went to the United States; from this time can be dated the origin of those principles which have brought him to his present hapless state. From the United States he embarked for France, and remained in Paris during the whole of the career of the

Robespierreian party, and has unfortunately shown himself, ever since, to be deeply impregnated with all the principles and the worst passions that disgraced the French Revolution and finally tended to destroy its benefits. From Paris he returned to London, and being quite a stranger to the political characters of that day, his return from France formed a groundwork of an introduction to many of them who were in the habit of assembling at the shop and house of Daniel Isaac Eaton, a bookseller in Newgate Street. I have met many of the old friends of Mr. Eaton, but could never learn anything of the general tenor of Thistlewood's conduct at that time, so that it appears to me that he was never sufficiently countenanced by any of them to form any intimacies. From this time up to the Spa Fields Meeting, I have no knowledge of how he spent his time, further than that he spent a considerable part of it, and considerable property, at the gaming table, and reduced himself to a state of indigence. I now proceed to notice the character of Edwards, and this I feel capable of doing, because I employed him as a modeller for several figures in the course of the last year or so. On my entering the house at 55 Fleet Street, I became the neighbor of Edwards, who previously held the little shop which Mr. Hone had occupied, and which bore the No. 55 1/2, as being part of 56. Edwards had no sooner become aware that I had taken 55 than he strenuously applied himself to become a tenant or lodger of mine, before I had the least idea of letting any part of the house. I had a strong dislike to his appearance, and gave him no hope of my receiving him

as a lodger. The Attorney-General and the Vice Society soon enabled me to support the place without any lodgers, and I put Mr. Edwards off with the assurance that I should not rent any part of it. He was in the habit of coming into the shop to purchase my pamphlets, and I soon conceived the idea of having him model for me a figure of Thomas Paine. He expressed himself as quite anxious for the job, and observed that, being a great admirer of Paine's principles, he would be satisfied with a small price for it. On my wishing him to set a price, he proposed £5, which would just cover the expense he would be at, without including his time or abilities. This happened in the latter part of February or March. A few days later Edwards expressed a wish to have the money beforehand, and observed that it was usual with modellers. I hesitated, refused, and then offered him £1, which he accepted. A head, or bust, was soon ready, and I gave him three guineas extra for the copyright; but I could get him no further with the figure, although I had gone to the expense of the pedestal and other requisites for it, until the fall of the year. During the whole of this time he seemed to be in the most abject poverty, was obliged to give up his shop, and was never to be found at home. I urged him by continued messages to proceed with the figure, and in the month of September I got him to finish it, much to my satisfaction, and that of every other person who loved and revered the principles of Paine. Edwards was paid for the figure long before it was finished and set up, and altogether considerably in addition to the first agreement. From this time

he stuck very close to me on one pretence or another, followed me twice to Blackheath for the purpose of modelling my likeness on his own account, which he completed in the King's Bench Prison, without any apparent idea of making anything out of it. He pleaded great poverty, and twice solicited the loan of money from me. After finishing the figure of Paine, I as often refused, because his whole conduct had convinced me that he was both dishonest and ill-disposed. I had never the smallest idea that he was a spy. And as I knew him to be in the habit of running after Thistlewood and his party, I often asked him 'what project they had on foot', by way of a joke. It was Edwards who informed me that the person who visited me in the King's Bench Prison, in company with Davidson, was a spy, and that it was he who conveyed all the information to Lord Sidmouth and the Lord Mayor. Edwards was the fourth person who entered the room, and it struck me forcibly that there was a strange coolness and distance between these three, who had often met before. I never for a moment suspected Edwards to be anything further than an idle and dissolute fellow. I have some recollection of being accosted by Adams, the other spy. I was in the company of a Mr. Watling of the Strand, close by Mr. Sherwin's printing office, where I had been on business, when a tall shoemaker, with pieces of leather and other articles in his hand, accosted us, and said that nothing would afford him as much pleasure as our going to drink a glass with him, and hoped that his workman-like appearance would not disparage him in our eyes. I answered

him that his appearance was by no means a disgrace to him, but that I never drank malt or spirituous liquors. If we would only sit in his company for a few minutes he would be satisfied. We entered the 'Shakespeare Tavern' at the corner of Smith Street, Northampton Square, when Adams introduced himself as having lately left the Horse Guards, and wishing to find out a society of good fellows, that he was a Yorkshire man, and had learnt of his friends the distress of the country, and the disposition of the people. He knew Mr. Watling and myself, but neither of us had ever seen *him*

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