

death himself, was some months ago brought before the Council of state at Versailles, at which were present the Ministers of state, the Chancellor, &c. The case was reported by Mons. de Crosne, Master of Requests, with the impartiality of an upright judge, the accuracy of one perfectly well informed, and that affecting eloquence that the dreadful circumstances of this unparalleled story so naturally dictate to a humane orator. After a long examination of this horrid affair, it appeared with the clearest evidence, that the son of John Calas had never formed the most distant notion of turning Roman Catholick—that he had hanged himself in a fit of melancholy—that the aged father and mother knew nothing of the matter until they found him dead to their inexpressible surprise and sorrow—that they had been remarkable for the excellence of their characters, during the space of forty years and upwards, that they had lived at Toulouse, and had been peculiarly eminent for their paternal tenderness—and that besides the dictates of natural affection (which forms such a strong presumption of the innocence of this aged and worthy father) every circumstance concurred to clear him of the horrid crime for which he was put to death in the most painful and ignominious manner by the Parliament of Toulouse. In consequence of this the members of the Council unanimously agreed in forming a resolution, by which the Parliament of Toulouse was ordered to send them an account of the proceedings against John Calas, and the reasons of their severe and bloody sentence. The King gave his royal approbation to this resolution of the Council, and all those who were not deaf to the voice of humanity and justice (and who had beheld with just sentiments of horror, in the Parliament of Toulouse, falsehood and cruelty, armed and set on by bigotry, to involve a widow and five children in the deepest distress by the murder of a father and a husband committed under the form of law) hoped to see satisfaction made to the memory of Calas, and thereby some comfort administered to his afflicted family. It was at least imagined, that the Parliament of Toulouse would have been called to justify their conduct before the tribunal of their Sovereign, and to clear themselves in the eyes of Europe, and of the human race, who are all interested in this unparalleled cause. It was hoped that the members of this Parliament, who con-

demned, without proof, to the rack and wheel, a father for murdering his son; and the infamous Sheriff David, who insulted upon the wheel this aged and innocent father, expiring under the rage of Monkish bigotry, would have been obliged to acknowledge their temerity and precipitation at least, and to make honourable amends to the afflicted family, by confessing that they were deceived by Monks and false witnesses, and by granting their protection (if it would be accepted) to the children they have rendered fatherless by an unjust judgment. All this was expected, several pamphlets have been published at Paris, demanding justice, and yet hitherto justice has been suspended, and the voice of humanity has pleaded in vain for innocent blood. The insinuations of Monks and Bigots have, it is to be feared, stopped the execution of justice, and been employed to persuade a humane monarch, that it was more expedient to abandon the cause of an innocent Calvinist who had been unjustly broken on the wheel, than expose eight Councillors of Toulouse to the shame of acknowledging that they had been mistaken. *A new instance this of the spirit of a Popish government, and its horrid influence, even in a country, whose inhabitants (excepting those of Toulouse) are naturally inclined to humanity and clemency.*

“I except Toulouse, because the dark, gloomy, and cruel effects of superstition and bigotry reign there in a particular manner, and have given a barbarous and sanguinary cast to the temper of its inhabitants, naturally tinged with Spanish severity. *Voltaire* tells, in his last production, that the inhabitants of Toulouse thanked God publicly for the assassination of Henry IV. and it is well known they have an annual festival, on which they celebrate in the most pompous manner, by processions, bonfires, and other demonstrations of joy, the anniversary of that *glorious* day, in which four thousand protestants, their fellow-citizens, were massacred without distinction of age or sex in their city. The Year 1762, in which Calas was executed, was the *secular* year of that horrible massacre, and as the festival above-mentioned was just approaching, when this unfortunate man was cast into prison, *Voltaire* thinks that this circumstance might have contributed to his condemnation. It was, indeed, agreeable to the spirit of such a holiday to have a protestant victim to sacrifice to the sanguinary genius