

serve, but of contributing to  
 cannot call by a gentler name.  
 our Saviour to commemorate  
 y, and a qualification of rakes  
 they succeed—but perhaps I  
 ss. And, indeed, when I con-  
 defended by no such test—  
 great neighbouring country it  
 all citizens to be equally eli-  
 in a professed Dissenter from  
 the state—that in the Emper-  
 to the enjoyment of equal  
 s very country, a Dissenter,  
 he laws, yet is allowed to be  
 der such facts as these, I am  
 es of the repeal of the Test  
 e up their opposition.

fect state in which the Revo-  
 our representation. I think  
 and so palpable, as to make it  
 remember that a representa-  
 of constitutional liberty in it,  
 ut it a government is nothing  
 fair and equal, and at the  
 se of Commons possesses, a  
 equently to possess true lib-  
 gdom possesses liberty only  
 semblance of liberty; but if  
 and under corrupt influence  
 d produces the worst of all  
 on, a government carried on  
 cy through a kingdom. May  
 o dreadful! It is the point of  
 ment as ours naturally tend  
 are, at present, I hope, at a  
 d that there are no advances  
 nsion and alarm.

that I have lived to it; and I  
 nt depart in peace, for mine  
 ve lived to see a diffusion of  
 and error—I have lived to  
 er; and nations panting for  
 —I have lived to see THIRTY  
 ing at slavery, and demand-  
 ed in triumph, and an arbi-  
 tracts.—After sharing in the  
 o be a witness to two other  
 ks, I see the ardour for lib-  
 ment beginning in human

affairs; the dominion of kings changed for the dominion of laws, and the  
 dominion of priests giving way to the dominion of reason and conscience.

Be encouraged, all ye friends of freedom, and writers in its defence! The  
 times are auspicious. Your labours have not been in vain. Behold kingdoms,  
 admonished by you, starting from sleep, breaking their fetters, and claiming  
 justice from their oppressors! Behold, the light you have struck out, after  
 setting *America* free, reflected to *France*, and there kindled into a blaze that  
 lays despotism in ashes, and warms and illuminates *Europe*!

Tremble all ye oppressors of the world! Take warning all ye supporters of  
 slavish governments, and slavish hierarchies! Call no more (absurdly and  
 wickedly) REFORMATION, innovation. You cannot now hold the world in dark-  
 ness. Struggle no longer against increasing light and liberality. Restore to  
 mankind their rights; and consent to the correction of abuses, before they  
 and you are destroyed together.

1789

## EDMUND BURKE

The great statesman and political theorist Edmund Burke (1729–1797) read  
 Price's *Discourse* in January 1790 and immediately began drafting his *Reflec-  
 tions on the Revolution in France* as a reply in the form of a letter (as the lengthy  
 subtitle describes it) "Intended to Have Been Sent to a Gentleman in Paris" (a  
 Frenchman who had written to Burke soliciting the British parliamentarian's opinion  
 of events in his country). The work was published at the beginning of November and  
 was an instant bestseller: thirteen thousand copies were purchased in the first five  
 weeks, and by the following September it had gone through eleven editions. Clearly,  
 part of its appeal to contemporary readers lay in the highly wrought accounts of the  
 mob's violent treatment of the French king and queen (who at the time Burke was  
 writing were imprisoned in Paris and would be executed three years later, in January  
 and October 1793). *Reflections* has become the classic, most eloquent statement of  
 British conservatism favoring monarchy, aristocracy, property, hereditary succession,  
 and the wisdom of the ages. Earlier in his career Burke had championed many liberal  
 causes and sided with the Americans in their war for independence; opponents and  
 allies alike were surprised at the strength of his conviction that the French Revolu-  
 tion was a disaster and the revolutionists "a swinish multitude."

### From *Reflections on the Revolution in France*

All circumstances taken together, the French revolution is the most  
 astonishing that has hitherto happened in the world. The most wonderful  
 things are brought about in many instances by means the most absurd and  
 ridiculous; in the most ridiculous modes; and apparently, by the most con-  
 temptible instruments. Every thing seems out of nature in this strange chaos  
 of evity and ferocity, and of all sorts of crimes jumbled together with all sorts  
 of follies. In viewing this monstrous tragi-comic scene, the most opposite