

marked "T.P.," so that they could trample upon Paine and his principles, and a great outcry was organized against "the notorious Tom Paine." A Royal Proclamation against seditious writings was issued on May 21, 1792, and on June 8 Paine himself was charged with sedition and his trial was set for December 18.

While British royalty was persecuting Paine, the French nation hailed him as their champion and claimed him for herself. During the first week of September he was elected to represent Calais, Oise, Somme, and Puy de Dome in the National Assembly. "Come, friend of the people," they wrote him, "to swell the number of patriots in an assembly which will decide the destiny of the human race. The happy period you have predicted for the nation has arrived. Come! do not deceive their hopes."

On September 12 Paine made a revolutionary speech to the society of the "Friends of Liberty." The next day, warned by the poet William Blake to flee at once to avoid arrest, Paine went to Dover. There he was able to get by the customs officials and depart for France by showing a letter from Washington. Twenty minutes after he got out to sea the authorities arrived to arrest him. He left behind in the hands of a customs officer at Dover "a printed proof copy" of his *Letter to the Addressers* which he wrote in the summer of 1792 in reply to the charges of seditious libel. In this pamphlet he boldly proceeded to inform his persecutors:

"If to expose the fraud and imposition of monarchy and every species of hereditary government—to lessen the oppression of taxes—to propose plans for the education of helpless infancy, and the comfortable support of the aged and distressed—to endeavor to conciliate nations to each other—to extirpate the horrid practice of war—to promote universal peace, civilization, and commerce—and to break the chains of political superstition, and raise degraded man to his proper rank;—if these things be libellous, let me live the life of a libeller, and let the name of *libeller* be engraven on my tomb!"

On December 18 Paine's *Rights of Man* was prosecuted in England. The author was found guilty of seditious libel before a pensioned judge and a packed jury in London. Since the defendant was absent, the English ruling classes had to content themselves with outlawing him.

The defendant at this very time was receiving a rousing reception in France. Soon after his arrival at Calais, Paine took his seat in the Convention. He speedily discovered that much had happened in France