remained the maſter of a field, or being driven from a ground on which he encountered his enemy. A man with whom he can aſſociate in all his purſuits, whom he can embrace as his friend; in whom he finds an object to his affections, and an aid in his ſtruggles, is to him the moſt precious acceſſion of fortune.

Even where the friendſhip of particular men is out of the queſtion, the ſociety, being occupied in forming a party that may defend itſelf, or annoy its enemy, finds no object of greater moment than the increaſe of its numbers. Captives who may be adopted, or children of either ſex who may be reared for the public, are accordingly conſidered as the richeſt ſpoil of an enemy. The practice of the Romans in admitting the vanquiſhed to ſhare in the privileges of their city, the rape of the Sabines, and the ſubſequent coalition with that people, were not ſingular or uncommon examples in the hiſtory of mankind. The ſame policy has been followed, and was natural and obvious wherever the ſtrength of a ſtate conſiſted in the arms of a few, and where men were valued in themſelves, without regard to eſtate or fortune.

In rude ages, therefore, while mankind ſubſiſt in ſmall diviſions, it ſhould appear, that if the earth be thinly peopled, this defect does not ariſe from the negligence of thoſe who ought to repair it. It is even probable, that the moſt effectual

courſe that could be taken to increaſe the ſpecies, would be, to prevent the coalition of nations, and to oblige mankind to act in ſuch ſmall bodies as would make the preſervation of their numbers a principal object of their care. This alone, it is true, would not be ſufficient: we muſt probably add the encouragement for rearing families, which mankind enjoy under a favourable policy, and the means of ſubſiſtence which they owe to the practice of arts.

The mother is unwilling to increaſe her offſpring, and is ill provided to rear them, where ſhe herſelf is obliged to undergo great hardſhips in the ſearch of her food. In North America we are told, that ſhe joins to the reſerves of a cold or a moderate temperament, the abſtinencies to which ſhe ſubmits, from the conſideration of this difficulty. In her apprehenſion, it is matter of prudence, and of conſcience to bring one child to the condition of feeding on veniſon, and of following on foot, before ſhe will hazard a new burden in travelling the woods.

In warmer latitudes, by the different temperament, perhaps, which the climate beſtows, and by a greater facility in procuring ſubſiſtence, the numbers of mankind increaſe, while the object itſelf is neglected; and the commerce of the ſexes, without any concern for population, is made a ſubject of mere debauch. In ſome places, we are told,

told, it is even made the object of a barbarous policy, to defeat or to reſtrain the intentions of nature. In the iſland of Formoſa, the males are prohibited to marry before the age of forty; and females, if pregnant before the age of thirty-ſix, have an abortion procured by order of the magiſtrate, who employs a violence that endangers the life of the mother, together with that of the child*.

In China, the permiſſion given to parents to kill or to expoſe their children, was probably meant as a relief from the burden of a numerous offspring. But notwithſtanding what we hear of a practice ſo repugnant to the human heart, it has not, probably, the effects in reſtraining population, which it ſeems to threaten; but, like many other inſtitutions, has an influence the reverſe of what it ſeemed to portend. The parents marry with this means of relief in their view, and the children are ſaved.

However important the object of population may be held by mankind, it will be difficult to find, in the hiſtory of civil policy, any wiſe or effectual eſtabliſhments ſolely calculated to obtain it. The practice of rude or feeble nations is inadequate, or cannot ſurmount the obſtacles which are found in their manner of life. The growth of induſtry, the endeavours of men to improve their arts, to extend their commerce, to ſecure their poſſeſſions, and to eſtabliſh their rights, are indeed the moſt effectual

* Collection of Dutch Voyages.

means to promote population: but they ariſe from a different motive; they ariſe from regards to intereſt and perſonal ſafety. They are intended for the benefit of thoſe who exiſt, not to procure the increaſe of their numbers.

It is, in the mean time, of importance to know, that where a people are fortunate in their political eſtabliſhments, and ſucceſsful in the purſuits of induſtry, their population is likely to grow in proportion. Moſt of the other devices thought of for this purpoſe, only ſerve to fruſtrate the expectations of mankind, or to miſlead their attention.

In *planting a colony, in ſtriving to repair the* occaſional waſtes of peſtilence or war, the immediate contrivance of ſtateſmen may be uſeful; but if, in reaſoning on the increaſe of mankind in general, we overlook their freedom and their happineſs, our aids to population become weak and ineffectual. They only lead us to work on the ſurface, or to purſue a ſhadow, while we neglect the ſubſtantial concern; and in a decaying ſtate, make us tamper with palliatives, while the roots of an evil are ſuffered to remain. Octavius revived or inforced the laws that related to population at Rome: But it may be ſaid of him, and of many ſovereigns in a ſimilar ſituation, that they adminiſter the poiſon, while they are deviſing the remedy; and bring a damp and a palſy on the principles of life, while they endeavour, by external applications

applications to the ſkin, to reſtore the bloom of a decayed and ſickly body.

It is indeed happy for mankind, that this important object is not always dependent on the wiſdom of ſovereigns, or the policy of ſingle men. A people intent on freedom, find for themſelves a condition in which they may follow the propenſities of nature with a more ſignal effect, than any which the councils of ſtate could deviſe. When ſovereigns, or projectors, are the ſuppoſed maſters of this ſubject, the beſt they can do, is to be cautious of hurting an intereſt they cannot greatly promote, and of making breaches they cannot repair.

"When nations were divided into ſmall territories, and petty commonwealths, where each man had his houſe and his field to himſelf, and each county had its capital free and independent; what a happy ſituation for mankind," ſays Mr. Hume; "how favourable to induſtryand agriculture, to marriage and to population!" Yet here were probably no ſchemes of the ſtateſman for rewarding the married, or for puniſhing the ſingle; for inviting foreigners to ſettle, or for prohibiting the departure of natives. Every citizen finding a poſſeſſion ſecure, and a proviſion for his heirs, was not diſcouraged by the gloomy fears of oppreſſion or want: and where every other function of nature was free, that which furniſhed

the nurſery could not be reſtrained. Nature has required the powerful to be juſt; but ſhe has not otherwiſe intruſted the preſervation of her works to their viſionary plans. What fewel can the ſtateſman add to the fires of youth? Let him only not ſmother it, and the effect is ſecure. Where we oppreſs or degrade mankind with one hand, it is vain, like Octavius, to hold out in the other, the baits of marriage, or the whip to barrenneſs. It is vain to invite new inhabitants from abroad, while thoſe we already poſſeſs are made to hold their tenure with uncertainty, and to tremble, not only under the proſpect of a numerous family, but even under that of a precarious and doubtful ſubſiſtence for themſelves. The arbitrary ſovereign who has made this the condition of his ſubjects, owes the remains of his people to the powerful inſtincts of nature, not to any device of his own.

Men will crowd where the ſituation is tempting, and, in a few generations, will people every country to the meaſure of its means of ſubſiſtence. They will even increaſe under circumſtances that portend a decay. The frequent wars of the Romans, and of many a thriving community, even the peſtilence, and the market for ſlaves, find their ſupply, if, without deſtroying the ſource, the drain become regular; and if an iſſue is made for the offspring, without unſettling the families from which they ariſe. Where a happier proviſion is made for mankind, the ſtateſman, who by premiums

miums to marriage, by allurements to foreigners, or by confining the natives at home, apprehends, that he has made the numbers of his people to grow, is often like the fly in the fable, who admired its ſucceſs in turning the wheel, and in moving the carriage: he has only accompanied what was already in motion; he has daſhed with his oar, to haſten the cataract; and waved with his fan, to give ſpeed to the winds.

PROJECTS of mighty ſettlement, and of ſudden population, however ſucceſsful in the end, are always expenſive to mankind. Above a hundred thouſand peaſants, we are told, were yearly driven, like ſo many cattle, to Peterſburgh, in the firſt attempts to repleniſh that ſettlement, and yearly periſhed for want of ſubſiſtence*. The Indian only attempts to ſettle in the neighbourhood of the plantain †, and while his family increaſes, he adds a tree to the walk.

IF the plantain, the cocoa, or the palm, were ſufficient to maintain an inhabitant, the race of men in the warmer climates might become as numerous as the trees of the foreſt. But in many parts of the earth, from the nature of the climate, and the ſoil, the ſpontaneous produce being next to nothing, the means of ſubſiſtence are the fruits only of labour and ſkill. If a people, while they retain their frugality, increaſe their induſtry, and

* Strachlenberg. † Dampier.

improve

improve their arts, their numbers muſt grow in proportion. Hence it is, that the cultivated fields of Europe are more peopled than the wilds of America, or the plains of Tartary.

But even the increaſe of mankind which attends the accumulation of wealth, has its limits. The *neceſſary of life* is a vague and a relative term: It is one thing in the opinion of the ſavage; another in that of the poliſhed citizen: It has a reference to the fancy, and to the habits of living. While arts improve, and riches increaſe; while the poſſeſſions of individuals, or their proſpects of gain, come up to their opinion of what is required to ſettle a family, they enter on its cares with alacrity. But when the poſſeſſion, however redundant, falls ſhort of the ſtandard, and a fortune ſuppoſed ſufficient for marriage is attained with difficulty, population is checked, or begins to decline. The citizen, in his own apprehenſion, returns to the ſtate of the ſavage; his children, he thinks, muſt periſh for want; and he quits a ſcene overflowing with plenty, becauſe he has not the fortune which his ſuppoſed rank, or his wiſhes require. No ultimate remedy is applied to this evil, by merely accumulating wealth; for rare and coſtly materials, whatever theſe are, continue to be ſought; and if ſilks and pearl are made common, men will begin to covet ſome new decorations, which the wealthy alone can procure. If they are indulged in their humour, their demands are repeated:

repeated: For it is the continual increaſe of riches, not any meaſure attained, that keeps the craving imagination at eaſe.

MEN are tempted to labour, and to practiſe lucrative arts, by motives of intereſt. Secure to the workman the fruit of his labour, give him the proſpects of independence or freedom, the public has found a faithful miniſter in the acquiſition of wealth, and a faithful ſteward in hoarding what he has gained. The ſtateſman, in this, as in the caſe of population itſelf, can do little more than avoid doing miſchief. It is well, if, in the beginnings of commerce, he knows how to repreſs the frauds to which it is ſubject. Commerce, if continued, is the branch in which men, committed to the effects of their own experience, are leaſt apt to go wrong.

THE trader, in rude ages, is ſhort-ſighted, fraudulent, and mercenary; but in the progreſs and advanced ſtate of his art, his views are enlarged, his maxims are eſtabliſhed: He becomes punctual, liberal, faithful, and enterpriſing; and in the period of general corruption, he alone has every virtue, except the force to defend his acquiſitions. He needs no aid from the ſtate, but its protection; and is often in himſelf its moſt intelligent and reſpectable member. Even in China, we are informed, where pilfering, fraud, and corruption, are the reigning practice with all the other orders of men, the great merchant is ready to give, and to

to procure confidence: While his countrymen act on the plans, and under the reſtrictions of a police adjuſted to knaves, he acts on the reaſons of trade, and the maxims of mankind.

If population be connected with national wealth, liberty and perſonal ſecurity is the great foundation of both: And if this foundation be laid in the ſtate, nature has ſecured the increaſe and induſtry of its members; the one by deſires the moſt ardent in the human frame, the other by a conſideration the moſt uniform and conſtant of any that poſſeſſes the mind. The great object of policy, therefore, with reſpect to both, is, to ſecure to the family its means of ſubſiſtence and ſettlement; to protect the induſtrious in the purſuit of his occupation; to reconcile the reſtrictions of police, and the ſocial affections of mankind, with their ſeparate and intereſted purſuits.

In matters of particular profeſſion, induſtry, and trade, the experienced practitioner is the maſter, and every general reaſoner is a novice. The object in commerce is to make the individual rich; the more he gains for himſelf, the more he augments the wealth of his country. If a protection be required, it muſt be granted; if crimes and frauds be committed, they muſt be repreſſed; and government can pretend to no more. When the refined politician would lend an active hand, he only multiplies interruptions and grounds of complaint;

complaint; when the merchant forgets his own intereſt to lay plans for his country, the period of viſion and chimera is near, and the ſolid baſis of commerce withdrawn. He might be told, that while he purſues his advantage, and gives no cauſe of complaint, the intereſt of commerce is ſafe.

The general police of France, proceeding on a ſuppoſition that the exportation of corn muſt drain the country where it has grown, had, till of late, laid that branch of commerce under a ſevere prohibition. The Engliſh landholder and the farmer had credit enough to obtain a premium for exportation, to favour the ſale of their commodity; and the event has ſhewn, that private intereſt is a better patron of commerce and plenty, than the refinements of ſtate. One nation lays the refined plan of a ſettlement on the continent of North America, and truſts little to the conduct of traders and ſhort-ſighted men; another leaves men to find their own poſition in a ſtate of freedom, and to think for themſelves. The active induſtry and the limited views of the one, made a thriving ſettlement; the great projects of the other were ſtill in idea.

But I willingly quit a ſubject in which I am not much converſant, and ſtill leſs engaged by the object for which I write. Speculations on commerce and wealth have been delivered by the ableſt writers; and the public will probably ſoon

be furniſhed with a theory of national œconomy, equal to what has ever appeared on any ſubject of ſcience whatever *. But in the view which I have taken of human affairs, nothing ſeems more important than the general caution which the authors to whom I refer ſo well underſtand, not to conſider theſe articles as making the ſum of national felicity, or the principal object of any ſtate. In ſcience we conſider our objects apart; in practice it were an error not to have them all in our view at once.

One nation, in ſearch of gold and of precious metals, neglect the domeſtic ſources of wealth, and become dependent on their neighbours for the neceſſaries of life: Another ſo intent on improving their internal reſources, and on increaſing their commerce, that they become dependent on foreigners for the defence of what they acquire. It is even painful in converſation to find the intereſt of merchants give the tone to our reaſonings, and to find a ſubject perpetually offered as the great buſineſs of national councils, to which any interpoſition of government is ſeldom, with propriety, applied, or never beyond the protection it affords.

We complain of a want of public ſpirit; but whatever may be the effect of this error in prac-

* By Mr. Smith, author of the Theory of Moral Sentiments.

tice,

tice, in ſpeculation it is none of our faults: We reaſon perpetually for the public; but the want of national views were frequently better than the poſſeſſion of thoſe we expreſs: We would have nations, like a company of merchants, think of nothing but monopolies, and the profit of trade; and, like them too, intruſt their protection to a force which they do not poſſeſs in themſelves.

Because men, like other animals, are maintained in multitudes, where the neceſſaries of life are amaſſed, and the ſtore of wealth is enlarged, we drop our regards for the happineſs, the moral and political character of a people; and, anxious for the herd we would propagate, carry our views no farther than the ſtall and the paſture. We forget that the few have often made a prey of the many; that to the poor there is nothing ſo enticing as the coffers of the rich; and that when the price of freedom comes to be paid, the heavy ſword of the victor may fall into the oppoſite ſcale.

Whatever be the actual conduct of nations in this matter, it is certain, that many of our arguments would hurry us, for the ſake of wealth and of population, into a ſcene where mankind, being expoſed to corruption, are unable to defend their poſſeſſions; and where they are, in the end, ſubject to oppreſſion and ruin. We cut off the roots, while we would extend the branches, and thicken the foliage.

It is poſſibly from an opinion that the virtues of men are ſecure, that ſome, who turn their attention to publick affairs, think of nothing but the numbers and wealth of a people: It is from a dread of corruption, that others think of nothing but how to preſerve the national virtues. Human ſociety has great obligations to both. They are oppoſed to one another only by miſtake; and even when united, have not ſtrength ſufficient to combat the wretched party, that refers every object to perſonal intereſt, and that cares not for the ſafety or increaſe of any ſtock but its own.

SECT.

SECT. V.

Of National Defence and Conqueſt.

IT is impoſſible to aſcertain how much of the policy of any ſtate has a reference to war, or to national ſafety. "Our legiſlator, "ſays the Cretan in Plato, "thought that nations were "by nature in a ſtate of hoſtility: He took his "meaſures accordingly; and obſerving that all "the poſſeſſions of the vanquiſhed pertain to the "victor, he held it ridiculous to propoſe any be-"nefit to his country, before he had provided "that it ſhould not be conquered."

CRETE, which is ſuppoſed to have been a model of military policy, is commonly conſidered as the original from which the celebrated laws of Lycurgus were copied. Mankind, it ſeems, in every inſtance, muſt have ſome palpable object to direct their proceedings, and muſt have a view to ſome point of external utility, even in the choice of their virtues. The diſcipline of Sparta was military; and a ſenſe of its uſe in the field, more than the force of unwritten and traditionary laws, or the ſuppoſed engagement of the public faith obtained by the lawgiver, may have induced this people to perſevere in the obſervance of many rules, which to other nations do not appear neceſſary, except in the preſence of an enemy.

Every inſtitution of this ſingular people gave a leſſon of obedience, of fortitude, and of zeal for the public: But it is remarkable that they choſe to obtain, by their virtues alone, what other nations are fain to buy with their treaſure; and it is well known, that, in the courſe of their hiſtory, they came to regard their diſcipline merely on account of its moral effects. They had experienced the happineſs of a mind courageous, diſintereſted, and devoted to its beſt affections; and they ſtudied to preſerve this character in themſelves, by reſigning the intereſts of ambition, and the hopes of military glory, even by ſacrificing the numbers of their people.

It was the fate of Spartans who eſcaped from the field, not of thoſe who periſhed with Cleombrotus at Leuctra, that filled the cottages of Lacedemon with mourning and ſerious reflection*: It was the fear of having their citizens corrupted abroad, by intercourſe with ſervile and mercenary men, that made them quit the ſtation of leaders in the Perſian war, and leave Athens, during fifty years, to purſue, unrivalled, that career of ambition and profit, by which ſhe made ſuch acquiſitions of power and of wealth†.

We have had occaſion to obſerve, that in every rude ſtate the great buſineſs is war; and that in

* Xenophon. † Thucydides, Book I.

barbarous

barbarous times, mankind being generally divided into ſmall parties, are engaged in almoſt perpetual hoſtilities. This circumſtance gives the military leader a continued aſcendant in his country, and inclines every people, during warlike ages, to monarchical government.

THE conduct of an army can leaſt of all ſubjects be divided: and we may be juſtly ſurpriſed to find, that the Romans, after many ages of military experience, and after having recently felt the arms of Hannibal in many encounters, aſſociated two leaders at the head of the ſame army, and left them to adjuſt their pretenſions, by taking the command, each a day in his turn. The ſame people, however, on other occaſions, thought it expedient to ſuſpend the exerciſe of every ſubordinate magiſtracy, and in the time of great alarms, to intruſt all the authority of the ſtate in the hands of one perſon.

REPUBLICS have generally found it neceſſary, in the conduct of war, to place great confidence in the executive branch of their government. When a conſul at Rome had proclaimed his levies, and adminiſtered the military oath, he became from that moment maſter of the public treaſury, and of the lives of thoſe who were under his command*. The axe and the rods were no longer a mere badge of magiſtracy, or an empty pageant,

* Polybius.

in the hand of the ſector: They were, at the command of the father, ſtained with the blood of his own children; and fell, without appeal, on the mutinous and the diſobedient of every condition.

In every free ſtate, there is a perpetual neceſſity to diſtinguiſh the maxims of martial law from thoſe of the civil; and he who has not learned to give an implicit obedience, where the ſtate has given him a military leader, and to reſign his perſonal freedom in the field, from the ſame magnanimity with which he maintains it in the political deliberations of his country, has yet to learn the moſt important leſſon of civil ſociety, and is only fit to occupy a place in a rude, or in a corrupted ſtate, where the principles of mutiny and of ſervility being joined, the one or the other is frequently adopted in the wrong place.

From a regard to what is neceſſary in war, nations inclined to popular or ariſtocratical government, have had recourſe to eſtabliſhments that bordered on monarchy. Even where the higheſt office of the ſtate was in common times adminiſtered by a plurality of perſons, the whole power and authority belonging to it was, on particular occaſions, committed to one; and upon great alarms, when the political fabric was ſhaken or endangered, a monarchical power has been applied, like a prop, to ſecure the ſtate againſt the rage of the tempeſt. Thus were the dictators occaſion-

occaſionally named at Rome, and the ſtadtholders in the United Provinces; and thus, in mixed governments, the royal prerogative is occaſionally enlarged, by the temporary ſuſpenſion of laws*, and the barriers of liberty appear to be removed, in order to veſt a dictatorial power in the hands of the king.

Had mankind, therefore, no view but to warfare, it is probable that they would continue to prefer monarchical government to any other; or at leaſt that every nation, in order to procure ſecret and united councils, would intruſt the executive power with unlimited authority. But, happily for civil ſociety, men have objects of a different ſort: and experience has taught, that although the conduct of armies requires an abſolute and undivided command; yet a national force is beſt formed, where numbers of men are inured to equality; and where the meaneſt citizen may conſider himſelf, upon occaſion, as deſtined to command as well as to obey. It is here that the dictator finds a ſpirit and a force prepared to ſecond his council; it is here too that the dictator himſelf is formed, and that numbers of leaders are preſented to the public choice; it is here that the proſperity of a ſtate is independent of ſingle men, and that a wiſdom which never dies, with a ſyſtem of military arrangments permanent and regular, can, even un-

* In Britain, by the ſuſpenſion of the *Habeas Corpus*.

der

der the greateſt misfortunes, prolong the national ſtruggle. With this advantage, the Romans, finding a number of diſtinguiſhed leaders ariſe in ſucceſſion, were at all times almoſt equally prepared to contend with their enemies of Aſia or Africa; while the fortune of thoſe enemies, on the contrary, depended on the caſual appearance of ſingular men, of a Mithridates, or of a Hannibal.

The ſoldier, we are told, has his point of honour, and a faſhion of thinking, which he wears with his ſword. This point of honour, in free and uncorrupted ſtates, is a zeal for the public; and war to them is an operation of paſſions, not the mere purſuit of a calling. Its good and its ill effects are felt in extremes: The friend is made to experience the warmeſt proofs of attachment, the enemy the ſevereſt effects of animoſity. On this ſyſtem the celebrated nations of antiquity made war under their higheſt attainments of civility, and under their greateſt degrees of refinement.

In ſmall and rude ſocieties, the individual finds himſelf attacked in every national war; and none can propoſe to devolve his defence on another. "The king of Spain is a great prince," ſaid an American chief to the governor of Jamaica, who was preparing a body of troops to join in an enterpriſe againſt the Spaniards: "do you propoſe to "make war upon ſo great a king with ſo ſmall a "force?"

" force?" Being told that the forces he ſaw were to be joined by troops from Europe, and that the governor could then command no more: " Who " are theſe then," ſaid the American, " who form " this crowd of ſpectators? are they not your " people? and why do you not all go forth to ſo " great a war?" He was anſwered, That the ſpectators were merchants, and other inhabitants, who took no part in the ſervice: " Would they " be merchants ſtill," continued this ſtateſman, " if the King of Spain was to attack you here? " For my part, I do not think that merchants " ſhould be permitted to live in any country: " when I go to war, I leave no body at home " but the women." It ſhould ſeem that this ſimple warrior conſidered merchants as a kind of neutral perſons, who took no part in the quarrels of their country; and that he did not know how much war itſelf may be made a ſubject of traffic; what mighty armies may be put in motion from behind the counter; how often human blood is, without any national animoſity, bought and ſold for bills of exchange; and how often the prince, the nobles, and the ſtateſmen, in many a poliſhed nation, might, in his account, be conſidered as merchants.

In the progreſs of arts and of policy, the members of every ſtate are divided into claſſes; and in the commencement of this diſtribution, there is no diſtinction more ſerious than that of the warrior

and the pacific inhabitant; no more is required to place men in the relation of maſter and ſlave. Even when the rigours of an eſtabliſhed ſlavery abate, as they have done in modern Europe, in conſequence of a protection, and a property, allowed to the mechanic and labourer, this diſtinction ſerves ſtill to ſeparate the noble from the baſe, and to point out that claſs of men who are deſtined to reign and to domineer in their country.

It was certainly never foreſeen by mankind, that, in the purſuit of refinement, they were to reverſe this order; or even that they were to place the government, and the military force of nations, in different hands. But is it equally unforeſeen, that the former order may again take place? and that the pacific citizen, however diſtinguiſhed by privilege and rank, muſt one day bow to the perſon with whom he has intruſted his ſword? If ſuch revolutions ſhould actually follow, will this new maſter revive in his own order the ſpirit of the noble and the free? Will he renew the characters of the warrior and the ſtateſman? Will he reſtore to his country the civil and military virtues? I am afraid to reply. Monteſquieu obſerves, that the government of Rome, even under the emperors, became, in the hands of the troops, elective and republican: But the Fabii or the Bruti were heard of no more, after the prætorian bands became the republic.

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We have enumerated ſome of the heads under which a people, as they emerge from barbarity, may come to be claſſed. Such are, the nobility, the people, the adherents of the prince; and even the prieſthood have not been forgotten: When we arrive at times of refinement, the army muſt be joined to the liſt. The departments of civil government and of war being ſevered, and the preeminence being given to the ſtateſman, the ambitious will naturally devolve the military ſervice on thoſe who are contented with a ſubordinate ſtation. They who have the greateſt ſhare in the diviſion of fortune, and the greateſt intereſt in defending their country, having reſigned the ſword, *muſt pay for what they have ceaſed to* perform; and armies, not only at a diſtance from home, but in the very boſom of their country, are ſubſiſted by pay. A diſcipline is invented to inure the ſoldier to perform, from habit, and from the fear of puniſhment, thoſe hazardous duties, which the love of the public, or a national ſpirit, no longer inſpire.

When we conſider the breach that ſuch an eſtabliſhment makes in the ſyſtem of national virtues, it is unpleaſant to obſerve, that moſt nations who have run the career of civil arts, have, in ſome degree, adopted this meaſure. Not only ſtates, which either have wars to maintain, or precarious poſſeſſions to defend at a diſtance; not only a prince jealous of his authority, or in haſte to gain the advantage

advantage of diſcipline, are diſpoſed to employ foreign troops, or to keep ſtanding armies; but even republics, with little of the former occaſion, and none of the motives which prevail in monarchy, have been found to tread in the ſame path.

If military arrangements occupy ſo conſiderable a place in the domeſtic policy of nations, the actual conſequences of war are equally important in the hiſtory of mankind. Glory and ſpoil were the earlieſt ſubject of quarrels; a conceſſion of ſuperiority, or a ranſom, were the prices of peace. The love of ſafety, and the deſire of dominion, equally lead mankind to wiſh for acceſſions of ſtrength. Whether as victors or as vanquiſhed, they tend to a coalition; and powerful nations conſidering a province, or a fortreſs acquired on their frontier, as ſo much gained, are perpetually intent on extending the limits.

The maxims of conqueſt are not always to be diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of ſelf-defence. If a neighbouring ſtate be dangerous, if it be frequently troubleſome, it is a maxim founded in the conſideration of ſafety, as well as of conqueſt, That it ought to be weakened or diſarmed: If, being once reduced, it be diſpoſed to renew the conteſt, it muſt from thenceforward be governed in form. Rome never avowed any other maxims of conqueſt; and ſhe every where ſent her inſolent armies, under the ſpecious pretence of procuring

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to herſelf and her allies a laſting peace, which ſhe alone would reſerve the power to diſturb.

The equality of thoſe alliances which the Grecian ſtates formed againſt each other, maintained, for a time, their independence and ſeparation; and that time was the ſhining and the happy period of their ſtory. It was prolonged more by the vigilance and conduct which they ſeverally applied, than by the moderation of their councils, or by any peculiarities of domeſtic policy which arreſted their progreſs. The victors were ſometimes contented, with merely changing to a reſemblance of their own forms, the government of the ſtates they ſubdued. What the next ſtep might have been in the progreſs of impoſitions, is hard to determine. But when we conſider, that one party fought for the impoſition of tributes, another for the aſcendant in war, it cannot be doubted, that the Athenians, from a national ambition, and from the deſire of wealth; and the Spartans, though they originally only meant to defend themſelves, and their allies, were both, at laſt, equally willing to become the maſters of Greece; and were preparing for each other at home that yoke, which both, together with their confederates, were obliged to receive from abroad.

In the conqueſts of Philip, the deſire of ſelf-preſervation and ſecurity ſeemed to be blended with the ambition natural to princes. He turned his

his arms ſucceſſively to the quarters on which he found himſelf hurt, from which he had been alarmed or provoked: And when he had ſubdued the Greeks, he propoſed to lead them againſt their ancient enemy of Perſia. In this he laid the plan which was carried into execution by his ſon.

The Romans, become the maſters of Italy, and the conquerors of Carthage, had been alarmed on the ſide of Macedon, and were led to croſs a new ſea in ſearch of a new field, on which to exerciſe their military force. In proſecution of their wars, from the earlieſt to the lateſt date of their hiſtory, without intending the very conqueſt they made, perhaps without foreſeeing what advantage they were to reap from the ſubjection of diſtant provinces, or in what manner they were to govern their new acquiſitions, they ſtill proceeded to ſeize what came ſucceſſively within their reach; and, ſtimulated by a policy which engaged them in perpetual wars, which led to perpetual victory and acceſſions of territory, they extended the frontier of a ſtate, which, but a few centuries before, had been confined within the ſkirts of a village, to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Weſer, the Forth, and the Ocean.

It is vain to affirm, that the genius of any nation is adverſe to conqueſt. Its real intereſts indeed moſt commonly are ſo; but every ſtate, which is prepared to defend itſelf, and to obtain victories,

victories, is likewiſe in hazard of being tempted to conquer.

In Europe, where mercenary and diſciplined armies are every where formed, and ready to traverſe the earth, where, like a flood pent up by ſlender banks, they are only reſtrained by political forms, or a temporary balance of power; if the ſluices ſhould break, what inundations may we not expect to behold? Effeminate kingdoms and empires are ſpread from the ſea of Corea to the Atlantic ocean. Every ſtate, by the defeat of its troops, may be turned into a province; every army oppoſed in the field to-day may be hired to-morrow; and every victory gained, may give the acceſſion of a new military force to the victor.

The Romans, with inferior arts of communication both by ſea and land, maintained their dominion in a conſiderable part of Europe, Aſia, and Africa, over fierce and intractable nations: What may not the fleets and armies of Europe, with the acceſs they have by commerce to every part of the world, and the facility of their conveyance, effect, if that ruinous maxim ſhould prevail, That the grandeur of a nation is to be eſtimated from the extent of its territory; or, That the intereſt of any particular people conſiſts in reducing their neighbours to ſervitude?

SECTION VI.

Of Civil Liberty.

IF war, either for depredation or defence, were the principal object of nations, every tribe would, from its earlieſt ſtate, aim at the condition of a Tartar horde; and in all its ſucceſſes would haſten to the grandeur of a Tartar empire. The military leader would ſuperſede the civil magiſtrate; and preparations to fly with all their poſſeſſions, or to purſue with all their forces, would in every ſociety make the ſum of their public arrangements.

HE who firſt, on the banks of the Wolga, or the Jeniſca, had taught the Scythian to mount the horſe, to move his cottage on wheels, to haraſs his enemy alike by his attacks and his flights, to handle at full ſpeed the lance and the bow, and when beat from his ground, to leave his arrows in the wind to meet his purſuer; he who had taught his countrymen to uſe the ſame animal for every purpoſe of the dairy, the ſhambles, and the field of battle; would be eſteemed the founder of his nation; or like Ceres and Bacchus among the Greeks, would be inveſted with the honours of a god, as the reward of his uſeful inventions. Amidſt ſuch inſtitutions, the names and atchievements of Hercules and Jaſon might have been tranſmitted to poſterity; but thoſe of Lycurgus or Solon, the heroes

heroes of political ſociety, could have gained no reputation, either fabulous or real, in the records of fame.

Every tribe of warlike barbarians may entertain among themſelves the ſtrongeſt ſentiments of affection and honour, while they carry to the reſt of mankind the aſpect of banditti and robbers *. They may be indifferent to intereſt, and ſuperior to danger; but our ſenſe of humanity, our regard to the rights of nations, our admiration of civil wiſdom and juſtice, even our effeminacy itſelf, make us turn away with contempt, or with horror, from a ſcene which exhibits ſo few of our good qualities, and which ſerves, ſo much to reproach our weakneſs.

It is in conducting the affairs of civil ſociety, that mankind find the exerciſe of their beſt talents, as well as the object of their beſt affections. It is in being grafted on the advantages of civil ſociety, that the art of war is brought to perfection; that the reſources of armies, and the complicated ſprings to be touched in their conduct, are beſt underſtood. The moſt celebrated warriors were alſo citizens: Oppoſed to a Roman, or a Greek, the chieftain of Thrace, of Germany, or Gaul, was a novice. The native of Pella learned the principles of his art from Epaminondas and Pelopidas.

* D'Arvieux's Hiſtory of the Arabs.

If nations, as hath been obſerved in the preceding ſection, muſt adjuſt their policy on the proſpect of war from abroad, they are equally bound to provide for the attainment of peace at home. But there is no peace in the abſence of juſtice. It may ſubſiſt with diviſions, diſputes, and contrary opinions; but not with the commiſſion of wrongs. The injurious, and the injured, are, as implied in the very meaning of the terms, in a ſtate of hoſtility.

Where men enjoy peace, they owe it either to their mutual regards and affections, or to the reſtraints of law. Thoſe are the happieſt ſtates which procure peace to their members by the firſt of theſe methods: But it is ſufficiently uncommon to procure it even by the ſecond. The firſt would with-hold the occaſions of war and of competition: The ſecond adjuſts the pretenſions of men by ſtipulations and treaties. Sparta taught her citizens not to regard intereſt: Other free nations ſecure the intereſt of their members, and conſider this as a principal part of their rights.

Law is the treaty to which members of the ſame community have agreed, and under which the magiſtrate and the ſubject continue to enjoy their rights, and to maintain the peace of ſociety. The deſire of lucre is the great motive to injuries: law therefore has a principal reference to property. It would aſcertain the different methods by which property

property may be acquired, as by preſcription, conveyance, and ſucceſſion; and it makes the neceſſary proviſions for rendering the poſſeſſion of property ſecure.

Beside avarice, there are other motives from which men are unjuſt; ſuch as pride, malice, envy, and revenge. The law would eradicate the principles themſelves, or at leaſt prevent their effects.

From whatever motive wrongs are committed, there are different particulars in which the injured may ſuffer. He may ſuffer in his goods, in his perſon, or in the freedom of his conduct. Nature has made him maſter of every action which is not injurious to others. The laws of his particular ſociety intitle him perhaps to a determinate ſtation, and beſtow on him a certain ſhare in the government of his country. An injury, therefore, which in this reſpect puts him under any unjuſt reſtraint, may be called an infringement of his political rights.

Where the citizen is ſuppoſed to have rights of property and of ſtation, and is protected in the exerciſe of them, he is ſaid to be free; and the very reſtraints by which he is hindered from the commiſſion of crimes, are a part of his liberty. No perſon is free, where any perſon is ſuffered to do wrong with impunity. Even the deſpotic prince

on his throne, is not an exception to this general rule. He himſelf is a ſlave, the moment he pretends that force ſhould decide any conteſt. The diſregard he throws on the rights of his people recoils on himſelf; and in the general uncertainty of all conditions, there is no tenure more precarious than his own.

From the different particulars to which men refer, in ſpeaking of liberty, whether to the ſafety of the perſon and the goods, the dignity of rank, or the participation of political importance, as well as from the different methods by which their rights are ſecured, they are led to differ in the interpretation of the term; and every free nation is apt to ſuppoſe, that freedom is to be found only among themſelves; they meaſure it by their own peculiar habits and ſyſtem of manners.

Some having thought, that the unequal diſtribution of wealth is a grievance, required a new diviſion of property as the foundation of public juſtice. This ſcheme is ſuited to democratical government; and in ſuch only it has been admitted with any degree of effect.

New ſettlements, like that of the people of Iſrael, and ſingular eſtabliſhments, like thoſe of Sparta and Crete, have furniſhed examples of its actual execution; but in moſt other ſtates, even the democratical ſpirit could attain no more than

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to prolong the ſtruggle for Agrarian laws; to procure, on occaſion, the expunging of debts; and to keep the people in mind, under all the diſtinctions of fortune, that they ſtill had a claim to equality.

THE citizen at Rome, at Athens, and in many republics, contended for himſelf, and his order. The Agrarian law was moved and debated for ages: It ſerved to awaken the mind; it nouriſhed the ſpirit of equality, and furniſhed a field on which to exert its force; but was never eſtabliſhed with any of its other and more formal effects.

MANY of the eſtabliſhments which ſerve to defend the weak from oppreſſion, contribute, by ſecuring the poſſeſſion of property, to favour its unequal diviſion, and to increaſe the aſcendant of thoſe from whom the abuſes of power may be feared. Thoſe abuſes were felt very early both at Athens and Rome *.

IT has been propoſed to prevent the exceſſive accumulation of wealth in particular hands, by limiting the increaſe of private fortunes, by prohibiting intails, and by with-holding the right of primogeniture in the ſucceſſion of heirs. It has been propoſed to prevent the ruin of moderate eſtates, and to reſtrain the uſe, and conſequently

* Plutarch in the life of Solon.——Livy.

the deſire of great ones, by ſumptuary laws. Theſe different methods are more or leſs conſiſtent with the intereſts of commerce, and may be adopted, in different degrees, by a people whoſe national object is wealth: And they have their degree of effect, by inſpiring moderation, or a ſenſe of equality, and by ſtifling the paſſions by which mankind are prompted to mutual wrongs.

It appears to be, in a particular manner, the object of ſumptuary laws, and of the equal diviſion of wealth, to prevent the gratification of vanity, to check the oſtentation of ſuperior fortune, and, by this means, to weaken the deſire of riches, and to preſerve, in the breaſt of the citizen, that moderation and equity which ought to regulate his conduct.

This end is never perfectly attained in any ſtate where the unequal diviſion of property is admitted, and where fortune is allowed to beſtow diſtinction and rank. It is indeed difficult, by any methods whatever, to ſhut up this ſource of corruption. Of all the nations whoſe hiſtory is known with certainty, the deſign itſelf, and the manner of executing it, appear to have been underſtood in Sparta alone.

There property was indeed acknowledged by law; but in conſequence of certain regulations and practices, the moſt effectual, it ſeems, that mankind

mankind have hitherto found out. The manners that prevail among ſimple nations before the eſtabliſhment of property, were in ſome meaſure preſerved *; the paſſion for riches was, during many ages, ſuppreſſed; and the citizen was made to conſider himſelf as the property of his country, not as the owner of a private eſtate.

It was held ignominious either to buy or to ſell the patrimony of a citizen. Slaves were, in every family, intruſted with the care of its effects, and freemen were ſtrangers to lucrative arts; juſtice was eſtabliſhed on a contempt of the ordinary allurement to crimes; and the preſervatives of civil liberty applied by the ſtate, were the diſpoſitions that were made to prevail in the hearts of its members.

The individual was relieved from every ſolicitude that could ariſe on the head of his fortune; he was educated, and he was employed for life in the ſervice of the public; he was fed at a place of common reſort, to which he could carry no diſtinction but that of his talents and his virtues; his children were the wards and the pupils of the ſtate; he himſelf was thought to be a parent, and a director to the youth of his country, not the anxious father of a ſeparate family.

* See Part II. Sect. 2.

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THIS people, we are told, beſtowed ſome care in adorning their perſons, and were known from afar by the red or the purple they wore; but could not make their equipage, their buildings, or their furniture, a ſubject of fancy, or what we call *taſte*. The carpenter and the houſe-builder were reſtricted to the uſe of the axe and the ſaw: Their workmanſhip muſt have been ſimple, and probably, in reſpect to its form, continued for ages the ſame. The ingenuity of the artiſt was employed in cultivating his own nature, not in adorning the habitations of his fellow-citizens.

ON this plan, they had ſenators, magiſtrates, leaders of armies, and miniſters of ſtate, but no men of fortune. Like the heroes of Homer, they diſtributed honours by the meaſure of the cup and the platter. A citizen who, in his political capacity, was the arbiter of Greece, thought himſelf honoured by receiving a double portion of plain entertainment at ſupper. He was active, penetrating, brave, diſintereſted, and generous; but his eſtate, his table, and his furniture might, in our eſteem, have marred the luſtre of all his virtues. Neighbouring nations, however, applied for commanders to this nurſery of ſtateſmen and warriors, as we apply for the practitioners of every art to the countries in which they excel; for cooks to France, and for muſicians to Italy.

AFTER

After all, we are, perhaps, not ſufficiently inſtructed in the nature of the Spartan laws and inſtitutions, to underſtand in what manner all the ends of this ſingular ſtate were obtained; but the admiration paid to its people, and the conſtant reference of contemporary hiſtorians to their avowed ſuperiority, will not allow us to queſtion the facts. "When I obſerved," ſays Xenophon, "that this nation, though not the moſt populous, "was the moſt powerful ſtate of Greece, I was "ſeized with wonder, and with an earneſt deſire to "know by what arts it attained its pre-eminence; "but when I came to the knowledge of its inſti-"tutions, my wonder ceaſed. — As one man ex-"cels another, and as he who is at pains to cul-"tivate his mind, muſt ſurpaſs the perſon who "neglects it; ſo the Spartans ſhould excel every "nation, being the only ſtate in which virtue is "ſtudied as the object of government."

The ſubjects of property, conſidered with a view to ſubſiſtence, or even to enjoyment, have little effect in corrupting mankind, or in awakening the ſpirit of competition and of jealouſy; but conſidered with a view to diſtinction and honour, where fortune conſtitutes rank, they excite the moſt vehement paſſions, and abſorb all the ſentiments of the human ſoul: They reconcile avarice and meanneſs with ambition and vanity; and lead men through the practice of ſordid and mercenary arts,

arts, to the poſſeſſion of a ſuppoſed elevation and dignity.

WHERE this ſource of corruption, on the contrary, is effectually ſtopped, the citizen is dutiful, and the magiſtrate upright; any form of government may be wiſely adminiſtered, places of truſt are likely to be well ſupplied, and by whatever rule office and power are beſtowed, it is likely that all the capacity and force that ſubſiſts in the ſtate will come to be employed in its ſervice: For on this ſuppoſition, experience and abilities are the only guides, and the only titles to public confidence; and if citizens be ranged into ſeparate claſſes, they become mutual checks by the difference of their opinions, not by the oppoſition of their intereſted deſigns.

WE may eaſily account for the cenſures beſtowed on the government of Sparta, by thoſe who conſidered it merely on the ſide of its forms. It was not calculated to prevent the practice of crimes, by balancing againſt each other the ſelfiſh and partial diſpoſitions of men; but to inſpire the virtues of the ſoul, to procure innocence by the abſence of criminal inclinations, and to derive its internal peace from the indifference of its members to the ordinary motives of ſtrife and diſorder. It were trifling to ſeek for its analogy to any other conſtitution of ſtate, in which its principal characteriſtic

racteriſtic and diſtinguiſhing feature is not to be found. The collegiate ſovereignty, the ſenate, and the ephori, had their counterparts in other republics, and a reſemblance has been found in particular to the goverament of Carthage *: But what affinity of conſequence can be found between a ſtate whoſe ſole object was virtue, and another whoſe principal object was wealth; between a people whoſe aſſociated Kings, being lodged in the ſame cottage, had no fortune but their daily food; and a commercial republic, in which a proper eſtate was required as a neceſſary qualification for the higher offices of ſtate?

Other petty commonwealths expelled Kings, when they became jealous of their deſigns, or after having experienced their tyranny, here the hereditary ſucceſſion of Kings was preſerved: Other ſtates were afraid of the intrigues and cabals of their members in competition for dignities; here ſolicitation was required as the only condition upon which a place in the ſenate was obtained. A ſupreme inquiſitorial power was, in the perſons of the ephori, ſafely committed to a few men, who were drawn by lot, and without diſtinction, from every order of the people: And if a contraſt to this, as well as to many other articles of the Spartan policy, be required, it may be found in the general hiſtory of mankind.

* Ariſtotle.

But

But Sparta, under every ſuppoſed error of its form, proſpered for ages, by the integrity of its manners, and by the character of its citizens. When that integrity was broken, this people did not languiſh in the weakneſs of nations ſunk in effeminacy. They fell into the ſtream by which other ſtates had been carried in the torrent of violent paſſions, and in the outrage of barbarous times. They ran the career of other nations, after that of ancient Sparta was finiſhed: They built walls, and began to improve their poſſeſſions, after they ceaſed to improve their people; and on this new plan, in their ſtruggle for political life, they ſurvived the ſyſtem of ſtates that periſhed under the Macedonian dominion: They lived to act with another which aroſe in the Achæan league; and were the laſt community of Greece that became a village in the empire of Rome.

If it ſhould be thought we have dwelt too long on the hiſtory of this ſingular people, it may be remembered, in excuſe, that they alone, in the language of Xenophon, made virtue an object of ſtate.

We muſt be contented to derive our freedom from a different ſource; to expect juſtice from the limits which are ſet to the powers of the magiſtrate, and to rely for protection on the laws which are made to ſecure the eſtate and the perſon

ſon of the ſubject. We live in ſocieties, where men muſt be rich, in order to be great; where pleaſure itſelf is often purſued from vanity; where the deſire of a ſuppoſed happineſs ſerves to inflame the worſt of paſſions, and is itſelf the foundation of miſery; where public juſtice, like fetters applied to the body, may, without inſpiring the ſentiments of candour and equity, prevent the actual commiſſion of crimes.

MANKIND come under this deſcription the moment they are ſeized with their paſſions for riches and power. But their deſcription in every inſtance is mixed: In the beſt there is an alloy of evil; in the worſt a mixture of good. Without any eſtabliſhments to preſerve their manners, beſides penal laws, and the reſtraints of police, they derive, from inſtinctive feelings, a love of integrity and candour, and from the very contagion of ſociety itſelf, an eſteem for what is honourable and praiſe-worthy. They derive, from their union, and joint oppoſition to foreign enemies, a zeal for their own community, and courage to maintain its rights. If the frequent neglect of virtue, as a political object, tend to diſcredit the underſtandings of men, its luſtre, and its frequency, as a ſpontaneous offspring of the heart, will reſtore the honours of our nature.

IN every caſual and mixed ſtate of the national manners, the ſafety of every individual, and his

political conſequence, depends much on himſelf, but more on the party to which he is joined. For this reaſon, all who feel a common intereſt, are apt to unite in parties; and, as far as that intereſt requires, mutually ſupport each other.

Where the citizens of any free community are of different orders, each order has a peculiar ſet of claims and pretenſions: relatively to the other members of the ſtate, it is a party; relatively to the differences of intereſt among its own members, it may admit of numberleſs ſubdiviſions. But in every ſtate there are two intereſts very readily apprehended; that of a prince and his adherents, that of a nobility, or of any temporary faction, oppoſed to the people.

Where the ſovereign power is reſerved by the collective body, it appears unneceſſary to think of additional eſtabliſhments for ſecuring the rights of the citizen. But it is difficult, if not impoſſible, for the collective body to exerciſe this power in a manner that ſuperſedes the neceſſity of every other political caution.

If popular aſſemblies aſſume every function of government; and if, in the ſame tumultuous manner in which they can, with great propriety, expreſs their feelings, the ſenſe of their rights, and their animoſity to foreign or domeſtic enemies, they pretend to deliberate on points of

national conduct, or to decide queſtions of equity and juſtice; the public is expoſed to manifold inconveniences; and popular governments would, of all others, be the moſt ſubject to errors in adminiſtration, and to weakneſs in the execution of public meaſures.

To avoid theſe diſadvantages, the people are always contented to delegate part of their power. They eſtabliſh a ſenate to debate, and to prepare, if not to determine, queſtions that are brought to the collective body for a final reſolution. They commit the executive power to ſome council of this ſort, or to a magiſtrate who preſides in their meetings. Under the uſe of this neceſſary and common expedient, even while democratical forms are moſt carefully guarded, there is one party of the few, another of the many. One attacks, the other defends; and they are both ready to aſſume in their turns. But though, in reality, a great danger to liberty ariſes on the part of the people themſelves, who, in times of corruption, are eaſily made the inſtruments of uſurpation and tyranny; yet, in the ordinary aſpect of government, the executive carries an air of ſuperiority, and the rights of the people ſeem always expoſed to incroachment.

Though, on the day that the Roman people were aſſembled, the ſenators mixed with the crowd, and the conſul was no more than the

ſervant of the multitude; yet, when this awful meeting was diſſolved, the ſenators met to preſcribe buſineſs for their ſovereign, and the conſul went armed with the axe and the rods, to teach every Roman, in his ſeparate capacity, the ſubmiſſion which he owed to the ſtate.

Thus, even where the collective body is ſovereign, they are aſſembled only occaſionally: and though, on ſuch occaſions, they determine every queſtion relative to their rights and their intereſts as a people, and can aſſert their freedom with irreſiſtible force; yet they do not think themſelves, nor are they in reality, ſafe, without a more conſtant and more uniform power operating in their favour.

The multitude is every where ſtrong; but requires, for the ſafety of its members, when ſeparate as well as when aſſembled, a head to direct and to employ its ſtrength. For this purpoſe, the ephori, we are told, were eſtabliſhed at Sparta, the council of a hundred at Carthage, and the tribunes at Rome. So prepared, the popular party has, in many inſtances, been able to cope with its adverſaries, and has even trampled on the powers, whether ariſtocratical or monarchical, with which it would have been otherwiſe unable to contend. The ſtate, in ſuch caſes, commonly ſuffered by the delays, interruptions, and confuſions, which popular leaders, from private

private envy, or a prevailing jealouſy of the great, ſeldom failed to create in the proceedings of government.

WHERE the people, as in ſome larger communities, have only a ſhare in the legiſlature, they cannot overwhelm the collateral powers, who having likewiſe a ſhare, are in condition to defend themſelves: where they act only by their repreſentatives, their force may be uniformly employed. And they may make part in a conſtitution of government more laſting than any of thoſe in which the people, poſſeſſing or pretending to the entire legiſlature, are, when aſſembled, the tyrants, and, when diſperſed, the ſlaves of a diſtempered ſtate. In governments properly mixed, the popular intereſt, finding a counterpoiſe in that of the prince or of the nobles, a balance is actually eſtabliſhed between them, in which the public freedom and the public order are made to conſiſt.

FROM ſome ſuch caſual arrangement of different intereſts, all the varieties of mixed government proceed; and on that degree of conſideration which every ſeparate intereſt can procure to itſelf, depends the equity of the laws they enact, and the neceſſity they are able to impoſe, of adhering ſtrictly to the terms of law in its execution. States are accordingly unequally qualified to conduct the buſineſs of legiſlation, and unequally

fortunate in the completeneſs, and regular obſervance, of their civil code.

In democratical eſtabliſhments, citizens, feeling themſelves poſſeſſed of the ſovereignty, are not equally anxious, with the ſubjects of other governments, to have their rights explained, or ſecured, by actual ſtatute. They truſt to perſonal vigour, to the ſupport of party, and to the ſenſe of the public.

If the collective body perform the office of judge, as well as of legiſlator, they ſeldom think of deviſing rules for their own direction, and are found ſtill more ſeldom to follow any determinate rule, after it is made. They diſpenſe, at one time, with what they enacted at another; and in their judicative, perhaps even more than in their legiſlative, capacity, are guided by paſſions and partialities that ariſe from circumſtances of the caſe before them.

But under the ſimpleſt governments of a different ſort, whether ariſtocracy or monarchy, there is a neceſſity for law, and there are a variety of intereſts to be adjuſted in framing every ſtatute. The ſovereign wiſhes to give ſtability and order to adminiſtration, by expreſs and promulgated rules. The ſubject wiſhes to know the conditions and limits of his duty. He acquieſces, or he revolts, according as the terms on which he

he is made to live with the ſovereign, or with his fellow ſubjects, are, or are not, conſiſtent with the ſenſe of his rights.

NEITHER the monarch, nor the council of nobles, where either is poſſeſſed of the ſovereignty, can pretend to govern, or to judge at diſcretion. No magiſtrate, whether temporary or hereditary, can with ſafety neglect that reputation for juſtice and equity, from which his authority, and the reſpect that is paid to his perſon, are in a great meaſure derived. Nations, however, have been fortunate in the tenor, and in the execution of their laws, in proportion as they have admitted every order of the people, by repreſentation or otherwiſe, to an actual ſhare of the legiſlature. Under eſtabliſhments of this ſort, law is literally a treaty, to which the parties concerned have agreed, and have given their opinion in ſettling its terms. The intereſts to be affected by a law, are likewiſe conſulted in making it. Every claſs propounds an objection, ſuggeſts an addition or an amendment of its own. They proceed to adjuſt, by ſtatute, every ſubject of controverſy: And while they continue to enjoy their freedom, they continue to multiply laws, and to accumulate volumes, as if they could remove every poſſible ground of diſpute, and were ſecure of their rights, merely by having put them in writing.

Rome and England, under their mixed governments, the one inclining to democracy, and the other to monarchy, have proved the great legiſlators among nations. The firſt has left the foundation, and great part of the ſuperſtructure of its civil code, to the continent of Europe: The other, in its iſland, has carried the authority and government of law to a point of perfection, which they never before attained in the hiſtory of mankind.

Under ſuch favourable eſtabliſhments, known cuſtoms, the practice and deciſions of courts, as well as poſitive ſtatutes, acquire the authority of laws; and every proceeding is conducted by ſome fixed and determinate rule. The beſt and moſt effectual precautions are taken for the impartial application of rules to particular caſes; and it is remarkable, that, in the two examples we have mentioned, a ſurpriſing coincidence is found in the ſingular methods of their juriſdiction. The people in both reſerved in a manner the office of judgment to themſelves, and brought the deciſion of civil rights, or of criminal queſtions, to the tribunal of peers, who, in judging of their fellow-citizens, preſcribed a condition of life for themſelves.

It is not in mere laws, after all, that we are to look for the ſecurities to juſtice, but in the powers by which thoſe laws have been obtained, and

and without whoſe conſtant ſupport they muſt fall to diſuſe. Statutes ſerve to record the rights of a people, and ſpeak the intention of parties to defend what the letter of the law has expreſſed: But without the vigour to maintain what is acknowledged as a right, the mere record, or the feeble intention, is of little avail.

A POPULACE rouſed by oppreſſion, or an order of men poſſeſſed of temporary advantage, have obtained many charters, conceſſions, and ſtipulations, in favour of their claims; but where no adequate preparation was made to preſerve them, the written articles were often forgotten, together with the occaſion on which they were framed.

THE hiſtory of England, and of every free country, abounds with the example of ſtatutes enacted when the people or their repreſentatives aſſembled, but never executed when the crown or the executive was left to itſelf. The moſt equitable laws on paper are conſiſtent with the utmoſt deſpotiſm in adminiſtration. Even the form of trial by juries in England had its authority in law, while the proceedings of courts were arbitrary and oppreſſive.

WE muſt admire, as the key-ſtone of civil liberty, the ſtatute which forces the ſecrets of every priſon to be revealed, the cauſe of every commitment to be declared, and the perſon of the ac-

cuſed to be produced, that he may claim his enlargement, or his trial, within a limited time. No wiſer form was ever oppoſed to the abuſes of power. But it requires a fabric no leſs than the whole political conſtitution of Great Britain, a ſpirit no leſs than the refractory and turbulent zeal of this fortunate people, to ſecure its effects.

If even the ſafety of the perſon, and the tenure of property, which may be ſo well defined in the words of a ſtatute, depend, for their preſervation, on the vigour and jealouſy of a free people, and on the degree of conſideration which every order of the ſtate maintains for itſelf; it is ſtill more evident, that what we have called the political freedom, or the right of the individual to act in his ſtation for himſelf and the public, cannot be made to reſt on any other foundation. The eſtate may be ſaved, and the perſon releaſed, by the forms of a civil procedure; but the rights of the mind cannot be ſuſtained by any other force but its own.

SEC-

SECTION VII.

Of the Hiſtory of Arts.

WE have already obſerved, that art is natural to man; and that the ſkill he acquires after many ages of practice, is only the improvement of a talent he poſſeſſed at the firſt. Vitruvius finds the rudiments of architecture in the form of a Scythian cottage. The armourer may find the firſt productions of his calling in the ſling and the bow, and the ſhipwright of his in the canoe of the ſavage. Even the hiſtorian and the poet may find the original eſſays of their arts in the tale, and the ſong, which celebrate the wars, the loves, and the adventures of men in their rudeſt condition.

DESTINED to cultivate his own nature, or to mend his ſituation, man finds a continual ſubject of attention, ingenuity, and labour. Even where he does not propoſe any perſonal improvement, his faculties are ſtrengthened by thoſe very exerciſes in which he ſeems to forget himſelf: His reaſon and his affections are thus profitably engaged in the affairs of ſociety; his invention and his ſkill are exerciſed in procuring his accommodations and his food; his particular purſuits are preſcribed to him by circumſtances of the age, and of the country in which he lives. In one ſituation, he is occupied with wars and political deliberations;

tions; in another, with the care of his intereſt, of his perſonal eaſe, or conveniency. He ſuits his means to the ends he has in view; and, by multiplying contrivances, proceeds, by degrees, to the perfection of his arts. In every ſtep of his progreſs, if his ſkill be increaſed, his deſire muſt likewiſe have time to extend: And it would be as vain to ſuggeſt a contrivance of which he ſlighted the uſe, as it would be to tell him of bleſſings which he could not command.

Ages are generally ſuppoſed to have borrowed from thoſe who went before them, and nations to have received their portion of learning or of art from abroad. The Romans are thought to have learned from the Greeks, and the moderns of Europe from both. From a few examples of this ſort, we learn to conſider every ſcience or art as derived, and admit of nothing original in the practice or manners of any people. The Greek was a copy of the Egyptian, and even the Egyptian was an imitator, though we have loſt ſight of the model on which he was formed.

It is known, that men improve by example and converſe; but in the caſe of nations, whoſe members excite and direct each other, why ſeek from abroad the origin of arts, of which every ſociety, having the principles in itſelf, only requires a favourable occaſion to bring them to light? When ſuch occaſion preſents itſelf to any people

people they generally ſeize it; and while it continues, they improve the inventions to which it gave riſe among themſelves, or they willingly copy from others: But they never employ their own invention, nor look abroad, for inſtruction on ſubjects that do not lie in the way of their common purſuits; they never adopt a refinement of which they have not diſcovered the uſe.

INVENTIONS, we frequently obſerve, are accidental; but it is probable, that an accident which eſcapes the artiſt in one age, may be ſeized by one who ſucceeds him, and who is better apprized of its uſe. Where circumſtances are favourable, and where a people is intent on the objects of any art, every invention is preſerved, by being brought into general practice; every model is ſtudied, and every accident is turned to account. If nations actually borrow from their neighbours, they probably borrow only what they are nearly in a condition to have invented themſelves.

ANY ſingular practice of one country, therefore, is ſeldom transferred to another, till the way be prepared by the introduction of ſimilar circumſtances. Hence our frequent complaints of the dulneſs or obſtinacy of mankind, and of the dilatory communication of arts from one place to another. While the Romans adopted the arts of Greece, the Thracians and Illyrians continued

to

to behold them with indifference. Thoſe arts were, during one period, confined to the Greek colonies, and during another, to the Roman. Even where they were ſpread by a viſible intercourſe, they were ſtill received by independent nations with the ſlowneſs of invention. They made a progreſs not more rapid at Rome than they had done at Athens; and they paſſed to the extremities of the Roman empire, only in company with new colonies, and joined to Italian policy.

THE modern race, who came abroad to the poſſeſſion of cultivated provinces, retained the arts they had practiſed at home: the new maſter hunted the boar, or paſtured his herds, where he might have raiſed a plentiful harveſt: he built a cottage in the view of a palace: he buried, in one common ruin, the edifices, ſculptures, paintings, and libraries, of the former inhabitant: he made a ſettlement upon a plan of his own, and opened anew the ſource of inventions, without perceiving from a diſtance to what length their progreſs might lead his poſterity. The cottage of the preſent race, like that of the former, by degrees enlarged its dimenſions; public buildings acquired a magnificence in a new taſte. Even this taſte came, in a courſe of ages, to be exploded, and the people of Europe recurred to the models which their fathers deſtroyed, and wept over the ruins which they could not reſtore.

THE literary remains of antiquity were ſtudied and imitated, only after the original genius of modern nations had broke forth: the rude efforts of poetry in Italy and Provence, reſembled thoſe of the Greeks and the ancient Romans. How far the merits of our works might, without the aid of their models, have riſen by ſucceſſive improvements, or whether we have gained more by imitation than we have loſt by quitting our native ſyſtem of thinking, and our vein of fable, muſt be left to conjecture. We are certainly indebted to them for the materials, as well as the form of many of our compoſitions; and without their example, the ſtrain of our literature, together with that of our manners and policy, would have been different from what they at preſent are. This much, however, may be ſaid with aſſurance, that although the Roman and the modern literature favour alike of the Greek original, yet mankind, in either inſtance, would not have drank of this fountain, unleſs they had been haſtening to open ſprings of their own.

SENTIMENT and fancy, the uſe of the hand or the head, are not inventions of particular men; and the flouriſhing of arts that depend on them, are, in the caſe of any people, a proof rather of political felicity at home, than of any inſtruction received from abroad, or of any natural ſuperiority in point of induſtry or talents.

WHEN

When the attentions of men are turned toward particular ſubjects, when the acquiſitions of one age are left entire to the next, when every individual is protected in his place, and left to purſue the ſuggeſtion of his wants, inventions accumulate; and it is difficult to find the original of any art. The ſteps which lead to perfection are many; and we are at a loſs on whom to beſtow the greateſt ſhare of our praiſe; on the firſt, or on the laſt, who may have borne a part in the progreſs.

SEC.

SECTION VIII.

Of the Hiſtory of Literature.

IF we may rely on the general obſervations contained in the laſt ſection, the literary, as well as mechanical arts, being a natural produce of the human mind, will riſe ſpontaneouſly wherever men are happily placed; and in certain nations it is not more neceſſary to look abroad for the origin of literature, than it is for the ſuggeſtion of any of the pleaſures or exerciſes in which mankind, under a ſtate of proſperity and freedom, are ſufficiently inclined to indulge themſelves.

WE are apt to conſider arts as foreign and adventitious to the nature of man: But there is no art that did not find its occaſion in human life, and that was not, in ſome one or other of the ſituations in which our ſpecies is found, ſuggeſted as a means for the attainment of ſome uſeful end. The mechanic and commercial arts took their riſe from the love of property, and were encouraged by the proſpects of ſafety and of gain: The literary and liberal arts took their riſe from the underſtanding, the fancy, and the heart. They are mere exerciſes of the mind in ſearch of its peculiar pleaſures and occupations; and are promoted by circumſtances that ſuffer the mind to enjoy itſelf.

MEN are equally engaged by the paſt, the preſent, and the future, and are prepared for every occupation

occupation that gives ſcope to their powers. Productions, therefore, whether of narration, fiction, or reaſoning, that tend to employ the imagination, or move the heart, continue for ages a ſubject of attention, and a ſource of delight. The memory of human tranſactions being preſerved in tradition or writing, is the natural gratification of a paſſion that conſiſts of curioſity, admiration, and the love of amuſement.

Before many books are written, and before ſcience is greatly advanced, the productions of mere genius are ſometimes complete: The performer requires not the aid of learning where his deſcription of ſtory relates to near and contiguous objects; where it relates to the conduct and characters of men with whom he himſelf has acted, and in whoſe occupations and fortunes he himſelf has borne a part.

With this advantage, the poet is the firſt to offer the fruits of his genius, and to lead in the career of thoſe arts by which the mind is deſtined to exhibit its imaginations, and to expreſs its paſſions. Every tribe of barbarians have their paſſionate or hiſtoric rhymes, which contain the ſuperſtition, the enthuſiaſm, and the admiration of glory, with which the breaſts of men, in the earlieſt ſtate of ſociety, are poſſeſſed. They delight in verſification, either becauſe the cadence of numbers is natural to the language of ſentiment,

ment, or becauſe, not having the advantage of writing, they are obliged to bring the ear in aid of the memory, in order to facilitate the repetition, and inſure the preſervation of their works.

When we attend to the language which ſavages employ on any ſolemn occaſion, it appears that man is a poet by nature. Whether at firſt obliged by the mere defects of his tongue, and the ſcantineſs of proper expreſſions, or ſeduced by a pleaſure of the fancy in ſtating the analogy of its objects, he clothes every conception in image and metaphor. "We have planted the tree of peace," ſays an American orator; "we have buried the "axe under its roots: We will henceforth repoſe "under its ſhade, we will join to brighten the "chain that binds our nations together." Such are the collections of metaphor which thoſe nations employ in their public harangues. They have likewiſe already adopted thoſe lively figures, and that daring freedom of language, which the learned have afterwards found ſo well fitted to expreſs the rapid tranſitions of the imagination, and the ardours of a paſſionate mind.

If we are required to explain, how men could be poets, or orators, before they were aided by the learning of the ſcholar and the critic? we may inquire, in our turn, how bodies could fall by their weight, before the laws of gravitation were recorded in books? Mind, as well as body, has

laws, which are exemplified in the courſe of nature, and which the critic collects only after the example has ſhewn what they are.

Occasioned, probably, by the phyſical connection we have mentioned, between the emotions of a heated imagination, and the impreſſions received from muſic and pathetic ſounds, every tale among rude nations is repeated in verſe, and is made to take the form of a ſong. The early hiſtory of all nations is uniform in this particular. Prieſts, ſtateſmen, and philoſophers, in the firſt ages of Greece, delivered their inſtructions in poetry, and mixed with the dealers in muſic and heroic fable.

It is not ſo ſurpriſing, however, that poetry ſhould be the firſt ſpecies of compoſition in every nation, as it is that a ſtyle, apparently ſo difficult, and ſo far removed from ordinary uſe, ſhould be almoſt as univerſally the firſt to attain its maturity. The moſt admired of all poets lived beyond the reach of hiſtory, almoſt of tradition. The artleſs ſong of the ſavage, the heroic legend of the bard, have ſometimes a magnificent beauty, which no change of language can improve, and no refinements of the critic reform *.

Under the ſuppoſed diſadvantage of a limited knowledge, and a rude apprehenſion, the ſimple poet has impreſſions that more than compenſate

* See Tranſlations of Gallic Poetry, by James M'Pherſon.

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the defects of his ſkill. The beſt ſubjects of poetry, the characters of the violent and the brave, the generous and the intrepid, great dangers, trials of fortitude and fidelity, are exhibited within his view, or are delivered in traditions which animate like truth, becauſe they are equally believed. He is not engaged in recalling, like Virgil or Taſſo, the ſentiments or ſcenery of an age remote from his own: he needs not be told by the critic †, to recollect what another would have thought, or in what manner another would have expreſſed his conception. The ſimple paſſions, friendſhip, reſentment, and love, are the movements of his own mind, and he has no occaſion to copy. Simple and vehement in his conceptions and feelings, he knows no diverſity of thought, or of ſtyle, to miſlead or to exerciſe his judgment. He delivers the emotions of the heart, in words ſuggeſted by the heart: for he knows no other. And hence it is, that while we admire the judgment and invention of Virgil, and of other later poets, theſe terms appear miſapplied to Homer. Though intelligent, as well as ſublime, in his conceptions, we cannot anticipate the lights of his underſtanding, nor the movements of his heart: he appears to ſpeak from inſpiration, not from invention; and to be guided in the choice of his thoughts and expreſſions by a ſupernatural inſtinct, not by reflection.

The language of early ages is, in one reſpect, ſimple and confined; in another, it is varied and

† See Longinus.

free: it allows liberties, which, to the poet of after-times, are denied.

In rude ages men are not ſeparated by diſtinctions of rank or profeſſion. They live in one manner, and ſpeak one dialect. The bard is not to chuſe his expreſſion among the ſingular accents of different conditions. He has not to guard his language from the peculiar errors of the mechanic, the peaſant, the ſcholar, or the courtier, in order to find that elegant propriety, and juſt elevation, which is free from the vulgar of one claſs, the pedantic of the ſecond, or the flippant of the third. The name of every object, and of every ſentiment, is fixed; and if his conception has the dignity of nature, his expreſſion will have a purity which does not depend on his choice.

With this apparent confinement in the choice of his words, he is at liberty to break through the ordinary modes of conſtruction; and in the form of a language not eſtabliſhed by rules, may find for himſelf a cadence agreeable to the tone of his mind. The liberty he takes, while his meaning is ſtriking, and his language is raiſed, appears an improvement, not a treſpaſs on grammar. He delivers a ſtyle to the ages that follow, and becomes a model from which his poſterity judge.

But whatever may be the early diſpoſition of mankind to poetry, or the advantages they poſ-

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ſeſs in cultivating this ſpecies of literature; whether the early maturity of poetical compoſitions ariſe from their being the firſt ſtudied, or from their having a charm to engage perſons of the livelieſt genius, who are beſt qualified to improve the eloquence of their native tongue, it is a remarkable fact, that, not only in countries where every vein of compoſition was original, and was opened in the order of natural ſucceſſion, but even at Rome, and in modern Europe, where the learned began early to practiſe on foreign models, we have poets of every nation, who are peruſed with pleaſure, while the proſe writers of the ſame ages are neglected.

As Sophocles and Euripides preceded the hiſtorians and moraliſts of Greece, not only Nævius and Ennius, who wrote the Roman hiſtory in verſe, but Lucilius, Plautus, Terence, and we may add Lucretius, were prior to Cicero, Salluſt, or Cæſar. Dante and Petrarch went before any good proſe writer in Italy, Corneille and Racine brought on the fine age of proſe compoſitions in France; and we had in England, not only Chaucer and Spenſer, but Shakeſpear and Milton, while our attempts in hiſtory or ſcience were yet in their infancy, and deſerve our attention, only for the ſake of the matter they treat.

Hellanicus, who is reckoned among the firſt proſe writers in Greece, and who immediately preceded,

ceded, or was the contemporary of Herodotus, ſet out with declaring his intention to remove from hiſtory the wild repreſentations, and extravagant fictions, with which it had been diſgraced by the poets *. The want of records or authorities, relating to any diſtant tranſactions, may have hindered him, as it did his immediate ſucceſſor, from giving truth all the advantage it might have reaped from this tranſition to proſe. There are, however, ages in the progreſs of ſociety, when ſuch a propoſition muſt be favourably received. When men become occupied on the ſubjects of policy, or commercial arts, they wiſh to be informed and inſtructed, as well as moved. They are intereſted by what was real in paſt tranſactions. They build on this foundation the reflections and reaſonings they apply to preſent affairs, and wiſh to receive information on the ſubject of different purſuits, and of projects in which they begin to be engaged. The manners of men, the practice of ordinary life, and the form of ſociety furniſh their ſubjects to the moral and political writer. Mere ingenuity, juſtneſs of ſentiment, and correct repreſentation, though conveyed in ordinary language, are underſtood to conſtitute literary merit, and by applying to reaſon more than to the imagination and paſſions, meet with a reception that is due to the inſtruction they bring.

* Quoted by Demetrius Phalerius.

THE talents of men come to be employed in a variety of affairs, and their inquiries directed to different ſubjects. Knowledge is important in every department of civil ſociety, and requiſite to the practice of every art. The ſcience of nature, morals, politics, and hiſtory, find their ſeveral admirers; and even poetry itſelf, which retains its former ſtation in the region of warm imagination and enthuſiaſtic paſſion, appears in a growing variety of forms.

MATTERS have proceeded ſo far, without the aid of foreign examples, or the direction of ſchools. The cart of Theſpis was changed into a theatre, *not to gratify the learned, but to pleaſe* the Athenian populace: And the prize of poetical merit was decided by this populace equally before and after the invention of rules. The Greeks were unacquainted with every language but their own; and if they became learned, it was only by ſtudying what they themſelves had produced: The childiſh mythology, which they are ſaid to have copied from Aſia, was equally of little avail in promoting their love of arts, or their ſucceſs in the practice of them.

WHEN the hiſtorian is ſtruck with the events he has witneſſed, or heard; when he is excited to relate them by his reflections or his paſſions; when the ſtateſman, who is required to ſpeak in public, is obliged to prepare for every remarkable ap-

pearance in ſtudied harangues; when converſation becomes extenſive and refined; and when the ſocial feelings and reflections of men are committed to writing, a ſyſtem of learning may ariſe from the buſtle of an active life. Society itſelf is the ſchool, and its leſſons are delivered in the practice of real affairs. An author writes from obſervations he has made on his ſubject, not from the ſuggeſtion of books; and every production carries the mark of his character as a man, not of his mere proficiency as a ſtudent or ſcholar. It may be made a queſtion, whether the trouble of ſeeking for diſtant models, and of wading for inſtruction, through dark alluſions and languages unknown, might not have quenched his fire, and rendered him a writer of a very inferior claſs.

If ſociety may thus be conſidered as a ſchool for letters, it is probable that its leſſons are varied in every ſeparate ſtate, and in every age. For a certain period, the ſevere applications of the Roman people to policy and war ſuppreſſed the literary arts, and appear to have ſtifled the genius even of the hiſtorian and the poet. The inſtitutions of Sparta gave a profeſſed contempt for whatever was not connected with the practical virtues of a vigorous and reſolute ſpirit: The charms of imagination, and the parade of language, were by this people claſſed with the arts of the cook and the perfumer: Their ſongs in praiſe of fortitude are mentioned by ſome writers; and collections

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of their witty ſayings and repartees are ſtill preſerved: They indicate the virtues and the abilities of an active people, not their proficiency in ſcience or literary taſte. Poſſeſſed of what was eſſential to happineſs in the virtues of the heart, they had a diſcernment of its value, unembarraſſed by the numberleſs objects on which mankind in general are ſo much at a loſs to adjuſt their eſteem: Fixed in their own apprehenſion, they turned a ſharp edge on the follies of mankind. "When "will you begin to practiſe it?" was the queſtion of a Spartan to a perſon who, in an advanced age of life, was ſtill occupied with queſtions on the nature of virtue.

WHILE this people confined their ſtudies to one queſtion, how to improve and to preſerve the courage and the diſintereſted affections of the human heart? their rivals, the Athenians, gave a ſcope to refinement on every object of reflection or paſſion. By the rewards, either of profit or of reputation, which they beſtowed on every effort of ingenuity employed in miniſtering to the pleaſure, the decoration, or the conveniency of life; by the variety of conditions in which their citizens were placed; by their inequalities of fortune, and their ſeveral purſuits in war, politics, commerce, and lucrative arts, they awakened whatever was either good or bad in the natural diſpoſitions of men. Every road to eminence was opened: Eloquence, fortitude, military ſkill, envy, detraction, faction, and treaſon,

ſon, even the muſe herſelf, was courted to beſtow importance among a buſy, acute, and turbulent people.

FROM this example, we may ſafely conclude, that although buſineſs is ſometimes a rival to ſtudy, retirement and leiſure are not the principal requiſites to the improvement, perhaps not even to the exerciſe, of literary talents. The moſt ſtriking exertions of imagination and ſentiment have a reference to mankind: They are excited by the preſence and intercourſe of men: They have moſt vigour when actuated in the mind by the operation of its principal ſprings, by the emulations, the friendſhips, and the oppoſitions which ſubſiſt among a forward and aſpiring people. Amidſt the great occaſions which put a free, and even a licentious ſociety in motion, its members become capable of every exertion, and the ſame ſcenes which gave employment to Themiſtocles and Thraſybulus, inſpired, by contagion, the genius of Sophocles and Plato. The petulant and the ingenious find an equal ſcope to their talents; and literary monuments become the repoſitories of envy and folly, as well as of wiſdom and virtue.

GREECE, divided into many little ſtates, and agitated, beyond any ſpot on the globe, by domeſtic contentions and foreign wars, ſet the example in every ſpecies of literature. The fire was communicated to Rome; not when the ſtate ceaſed

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to be warlike, and had diſcontinued her political agitations, but when ſhe mixed the love of refinement and of pleaſure with her national purſuits, and indulged an inclination to ſtudy in the midſt of ferments, occaſioned by the wars and pretenſions of oppoſite factions. It was revived in modern Europe among the turbulent ſtates of Italy, and ſpread to the North, together with the ſpirit which ſhook the fabrick of the Gothic policy: It roſe while men were divided into parties, under civil or religious denominations, and when they were at variance on ſubjects held the moſt important and ſacred.

We may be ſatisfied, from the example of many ages, that liberal endowments beſtowed on learned ſocieties, and the leiſure with which they were furniſhed for ſtudy, are not the likelieſt means to excite the exertions of genius: Even ſcience itſelf, the ſuppoſed offspring of leiſure, pined in the ſhade of monaſtic retirement. Men at a diſtance from the objects of uſeful knowledge, untouched by the motives that animate an active and a vigorous mind, could produce only the jargon of a technical language, and accumulate the impertinence of academical forms.

To ſpeak or to write juſtly from an obſervation of nature, it is neceſſary to have felt the ſentiments of nature. He who is penetrating and ardent in the conduct of life, will probably exert a proportional

proportional force and ingenuity in the exerciſe of his literary talents: and although writing may become a trade, and require all the application and ſtudy which are beſtowed on any other calling; yet the principal requiſites in this calling are, the ſpirit and ſenſibility of a vigorous mind.

In one period, the ſchool may take its light and direction from active life; in another, it is true, the remains of an active ſpirit are greatly ſupported by literary monuments, and by the hiſtory of tranſactions that preſerve the examples and the experience of former and of better times. But in whatever manner men are formed for great efforts of elocution or conduct, it appears the moſt glaring of all deceptions, to look for the accompliſhments of a human character in the mere attainments of ſpeculation, whilſt we neglect the qualities of fortitude and public affection, which are ſo neceſſary to render our knowledge an article of happineſs or of uſe.

PART

PART FOURTH.

Of CONSEQUENCES that reſult from the Advancement of CIVIL and COMMERCIAL ARTS.

SECTION I.

Of the Separation of Arts and Profeſſions.

IT is evident, that, however urged by a ſenſe of neceſſity, and a deſire of convenience, or favoured by any advantages of ſituation and policy, a people can make no great progreſs in cultivating the arts of life, until they have ſeparated, and committed to different perſons, the ſeveral taſks which require a peculiar ſkill and attention. The ſavage, or the barbarian, who muſt build and plant, and fabricate for himſelf, prefers, in the interval of great alarms and fatigues, the enjoyments of ſloth to the improvement of his fortune: he is, perhaps, by the diverſity of his wants, diſcouraged from induſtry; or, by his divided attention, prevented from acquiring ſkill in the management of any particular ſubject.

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The enjoyment of peace, however, and the proſpect of being able to exchange one commodity for another, turns, by degrees, the hunter and the warrior into a tradeſman and a merchant. The accidents which diſtribute the means of ſubſiſtence unequally, inclination, and favourable opportunities, aſſign the different occupations of men; and a ſenſe of utility leads them, without end, to ſubdivide their profeſſions.

The artiſt finds, that the more he can confine his attention to a particular part of any work, his productions are the more perfect, and grow under his hands in the greater quantities. Every undertaker in manufacture finds, that the more he can ſubdivide the taſks of his workmen, and the more hands he can employ on ſeparate articles, the more are his expences diminiſhed, and his profits increaſed. The conſumer too requires, in every kind of commodity, a workmanſhip more perfect than hands employed on a variety of ſubjects can produce; and the progreſs of commerce is but a continued ſubdiviſion of the mechanical arts.

Every craft may engroſs the whole of a man's attention, and has a myſtery which muſt be ſtudied or learned by a regular apprenticeſhip. Nations of tradeſmen come to conſiſt of members, who, beyond their own particular trade, are ignorant of all human affairs, and who may contribute

tribute to the preſervation and enlargement of their common-wealth, without making its intereſt an object of their regard or attention. Every individual is diſtinguiſhed by his calling, and has a place to which he is fitted. The ſavage, who knows no diſtinction but that of his merit, of his ſex, or of his ſpecies, and to whom his community is the ſovereign object of affection, is aſtoniſhed to find, that in a ſcene of this nature, his being a man does not qualify him for any ſtation whatever: he flies to the woods with amazement, diſtaſte, and averſion.

By the ſeparation of arts and profeſſions, the ſources of wealth are laid open; every ſpecies of material is wrought up to the greateſt perfection, and every commodity is produced in the greateſt abundance. The ſtate may eſtimate its profits and its revenues by the number of its people. It may procure, by its treaſure, that national conſideration and power, which the ſavage maintains at the expence of his blood.

The advantage gained in the inferior branches of manufacture by the ſeparation of their parts, ſeem to be equalled by thoſe which ariſe from a ſimilar device in the higher departments of policy and war. The ſoldier is relieved from every care but that of his ſervice; ſtateſmen divide the buſineſs of civil government into ſhares; and the ſervants of the public, in every office, without be-

ing ſkilful in the affairs of ſtate, may ſucceed, by obſerving forms which are already eſtabliſhed on the experience of others. They are made, like the parts of an engine, to concur to a purpoſe, without any concert of their own: and equally blind with the trader to any general combination, they unite with him, in furniſhing to the ſtate its reſources, its conduct, and its force.

THE artifices of the beaver, the ant, and the bee, are aſcribed to the wiſdom of nature. Thoſe of poliſhed nations are aſcribed to themſelves, and are ſuppoſed to indicate a capacity ſuperior to that of rude minds. But the eſtabliſhments of men, like thoſe of every animal, are ſuggeſted by nature, and are the reſult of inſtinct, directed by the variety of ſituations in which mankind are placed. Thoſe eſtabliſhments aroſe from ſucceſſive improvements that were made, without any ſenſe of their general effect; and they bring human affairs to a ſtate of complication, which the greateſt reach of capacity with which human nature was ever adorned, could not have projected; nor even when the whole is carried into execution, can it be comprehended in its full extent.

WHO could anticipate, or even enumerate, the ſeparate occupations and profeſſions by which the members of any commercial ſtate are diſtinguiſhed; the variety of devices which are practiſed in

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ſeparate cells, and which the artiſt, attentive to his own affair, has invented, to abridge or to facilitate his ſeparate taſk? In coming to this mighty end, every generation, compared to its predeceſſors, may have appeared to be ingenious; compared to its followers, may have appeared to be dull: And human ingenuity, whatever heights it may have gained in a ſucceſſion of ages, continues to move with an equal pace, and to creep in making the laſt, as well as the firſt, ſtep of commercial or civil improvement.

It may even be doubted, whether the meaſure of national capacity increaſes with the advancement of arts. Many mechanical arts, indeed, require no capacity; they ſucceed beſt under a total ſuppreſſion of ſentiment and reaſon; and ignorance is the mother of induſtry as well as of ſuperſtition. Reflection and fancy are ſubject to err; but a habit of moving the hand, or the foot, is independent of either. Manufactures, accordingly, proſper moſt, where the mind is leaſt conſulted, and where the workſhop may, without any great effort of imagination, be conſidered as an engine, the parts of which are men.

The foreſt has been felled by the ſavage without the uſe of the axe, and weights have been raiſed without the aid of the mechanical powers. The merit of the inventor, in every branch, probably deſerves a preference to that of the per-

former; and he who invented a tool, or could work without its aſſiſtance, deſerved the praiſe of ingenuity in a much higher degree than the mere artiſt, who, by its aſſiſtance, produces a ſuperior work.

But if many parts in the practice of every art, and in the detail of every department, require no abilities, or actually tend to contract and to limit the views of the mind, there are others which lead to general reflections, and to enlargement of thought. Even in manufacture, the genius of the maſter, perhaps, is cultivated, while that of the inferior workman lies waſte. The ſtateſman may have a wide comprehenſion of human affairs, while the tools he employs are ignorant of the ſyſtem in which they are themſelves combined. The general officer may be a great proficient in the knowledge of war, while the ſkill of the ſoldier is confined to a few motions of the hand and the foot. The former may have gained what the latter has loſt; and being occupied in the conduct of diſciplined armies, may practiſe on a larger ſcale all the arts of preſervation, of deception, and of ſtratagem, which the ſavage exerts in leading a ſmall party, or merely in defending himſelf.

The practitioner of every art and profeſſion may afford matter of general ſpeculation to the man of ſcience; and thinking itſelf, in this age of ſeparations, may become a peculiar craft. In the

the buſtle of civil purſuits and occupations, men appear in variety of lights, and ſuggeſt matter of inquiry and fancy, by which converſation is enlivened, and greatly enlarged. The productions of ingenuity are brought to the market; and men are willing to pay for whatever has a tendency to inform or amuſe. By this means the idle, as well as the buſy, contribute to forward the progreſs of arts, and beſtow on poliſhed nations that air of ſuperior ingenuity, under which they appear to have gained the ends that were purſued by the ſavage in his foreſt, knowledge, order, and wealth.

SECTION II.

Of the Subordination conſequent to the Separation of Arts and Profeſſions.

THERE is one ground of ſubordination in the difference of natural talents and diſpoſitions; a ſecond in the unequal diviſion of property; and a third, not leſs ſenſible, in the habits which are acquired by the practice of different arts.

SOME employments are liberal, others mechanic. They require different talents, and inſpire different ſentiments; and whether or not this be the cauſe of the preference we actually give, it is certainly reaſonable to form our opinion of the rank that is due to men of certain profeſſions and ſtations, from the influence of their manner of life in cultivating the powers of the mind, or in preſerving the ſentiments of the heart.

THERE is an elevation natural to man, by which he would be thought, in his rudeſt ſtate, however urged by neceſſity, to riſe above the conſideration of mere ſubſiſtence, and the regards of intereſt: He would appear to act only from the heart, in its engagements of friendſhip or oppoſition; he would ſhew himſelf only upon occaſions of danger or difficulty, and leave ordinary cares to the weak or the ſervile.

The ſame apprehenſions, in every ſituation, regulate his notions of meanneſs or of dignity. In that of poliſhed ſociety, his deſire to avoid the character of ſordid, makes him conceal his regard for what relates merely to his preſervation or his livelihood. In his eſtimation, the beggar, who depends upon charity; the labourer, who toils that he may eat; the mechanic, whoſe art requires no exertion of genius, are degraded by the object they purſue, and by the means they employ to attain it. Profeſſions requiring more knowledge and ſtudy; proceeding on the exerciſe of fancy, and the love of perfection; leading to applauſe as well as to profit, place the artiſt in a ſuperior claſs, and bring him nearer to that ſtation in which men, becauſe they are bound to no taſk, becauſe they are left to follow the diſpoſition of the mind, and to take that part in ſociety, to which they are led by the ſentiments of the heart, or by the calls of the public, are ſuppoſed to be higheſt.

This laſt was the ſtation, which, in the diſtinction betwixt freemen and ſlaves, the citizens of every ancient republic ſtrove to gain, and to maintain for themſelves. Women, or ſlaves, in the earlieſt ages, had been ſet apart for the purpoſes of domeſtic care, or bodily labour; and in the progreſs of lucrative arts, the latter were bred to mechanical profeſſions, and were even intruſted with merchandiſe for the benefit of

their maſters. Freemen would be underſtood to have no object beſide thoſe of politics and war. In this manner, the honours of one half of the ſpecies were ſacrificed to thoſe of the other; as ſtones from the ſame quarry are buried in the foundation, to ſuſtain the blocks which happen to be hewn for the ſuperior parts of the pile. In the midſt of our encomiums beſtowed on the Greeks and the Romans, we are, by this circumſtance, made to remember, that no human inſtitution is perfect.

In many of the Grecian ſtates, the benefits ariſing to the free from this cruel diſtinction, were not conferred equally on all the citizens. Wealth being unequally divided, the rich alone were exempted from labour; the poor were reduced to work for their own ſubſiſtence: intereſt was a reigning paſſion in both, and the poſſeſſion of ſlaves, like that of any other lucrative property, became an object of avarice, not an exemption from ſordid attentions. The entire effects of the inſtitution were obtained, or continued to be enjoyed for any conſiderable time, at Sparta alone. We feel its injuſtice; we ſuffer for the helot, under the ſeverities and unequal treatment to which he was expoſed: but when we think only of the ſuperior order of men in this ſtate; when we attend to that elevation and magnanimity of ſpirit, for which danger had no terror, intereſt no means to corrupt; when we conſider them as friends,

friends, or as citizens, we are apt to forget, like themſelves, that ſlaves have a title to be treated like men.

We look for elevation of ſentiment, and liberality of mind, among thoſe orders of citizens, who, by their condition, and their fortunes, are relieved from ſordid cares and attentions. This was the deſcription of a free man at Sparta; and if the lot of a ſlave among the ancients was really more wretched than that of the indigent labourer and the mechanic among the moderns, it may be doubted whether the ſuperior orders, who are in poſſeſſion of conſideration and honours, do not proportionally fail in the dignity which befits their condition. If the pretenſions to equal juſtice and freedom ſhould terminate in rendering every claſs equally ſervile and mercenary, we make a nation of helots, and have no free citizens.

In every commercial ſtate, notwithſtanding any pretenſion to equal rights, the exaltation of a few muſt depreſs the many. In this arrangement, we think that the extreme meanneſs of ſome claſſes muſt ariſe chiefly from the defect of knowledge, and of liberal education; and we refer to ſuch claſſes, as to an image of what our ſpecies muſt have been in its rude and uncultivated ſtate. But we forget how many circumſtances, eſpecially in populous cities, tend to corrupt the loweſt orders of men. Ignorance is the leaſt of their failings.

An admiration of wealth unpoſſeſſed, becoming a principle of envy, or of ſervility; a habit of acting perpetually with a view to profit, and under a ſenſe of ſubjection; the crimes to which they are allured, in order to feed their debauch, or to gratify their avarice, are examples, not of ignorance, but of corruption and baſeneſs. If the ſavage has not received our inſtructions, he is likewiſe unacquainted with our vices. He knows no ſuperior, and cannot be ſervile; he knows no diſtinctions of fortune, and cannot be envious; he acts from his talents in the higheſt ſtation which human ſociety can offer, that of the counſellor, and the ſoldier of his country. Toward forming his ſentiments, he knows all that the heart requires to be known; he can diſtinguiſh the friend whom he loves, and the public intereſt which awakens his zeal.

THE principal objections to democratical or popular government, are taken from the inequalities which ariſe among men in the reſult of commercial arts. And it muſt be confeſſed, that popular aſſemblies, when compoſed of men whoſe diſpoſitions are ſordid, and whoſe ordinary applications are illiberal, however they may be intruſted with the choice of their maſters and leaders, are certainly, *in their own perſons, unfit to command.* How can he who has confined his views to his own ſubſiſtence or preſervation, be intruſted with the conduct of nations? Such men, when admitted

admitted to deliberate on matters of ſtate, bring to its councils confuſion and tumult, or ſervility and corruption; and ſeldom ſuffer it to repoſe from ruinous factions, or the effect of reſolutions ill formed or ill conducted.

THE Athenians retained their popular government under all theſe defects. The mechanic was obliged, under a penalty, to appear in the public market-place, and to hear debates on the ſubjects of war, and of peace. He was tempted by pecuniary rewards, to attend on the trial of civil and criminal cauſes. But, notwithſtanding an exerciſe tending ſo much to cultivate their talents, the indigent came always with minds intent upon profit, or with the habits of an illiberal calling. Sunk under the ſenſe of their perſonal diſparity and weakneſs, they were ready to reſign themſelves entirely to the influence of ſome popular leader, who flattered their paſſions, and wrought on their fears; or, actuated by envy, they were ready to baniſh from the ſtate whomſoever was reſpectable and eminent in the ſuperior order of citizens; and whether from their neglect of the public at one time, or their mal-adminiſtration at another, the ſovereignty was every moment ready to drop from their hands.

THE people, in this caſe, are, in fact, frequently governed by one, or a few, who know how to conduct them. Pericles poſſeſſed a ſpecies of princely authority

authority at Athens; Craſſus, Pompey, and Cæſar, either jointly or ſucceſſively, poſſeſſed for a conſiderable period the ſovereign direction at Rome.

WHETHER in great or in ſmall ſtates, democracy is preſerved with difficulty, under the diſparities of condition, and the unequal cultivation of the mind, which attend the variety of purſuits, and applications, that ſeparate mankind in the advanced ſtate of commercial arts. In this, however, we do but plead againſt the form of democracy, after the principle is removed; and ſee the abſurdity of pretenſions to equal influence and conſideration, after the characters of men have ceaſed to be ſimilar.

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SECTION III.

Of the Manners of Poliſhed and Commercial Nations.

MANKIND, when in their rude ſtate, have a great uniformity of manners; but when civilized, they are engaged in a variety of purſuits; they tread on a larger field, and ſeparate to a greater diſtance. If they be guided, however, by ſimilar diſpoſitions, and by like ſuggeſtions of nature, they will probably in the end, as well as in the beginning of their progreſs, continue to agree in many particulars; and while communities admit, in their members, that diverſity of ranks and profeſſions which we have already deſcribed as the conſequence or the foundation of commerce, they will reſemble each other in many effects of this diſtribution, and of other circumſtances in which they nearly concur.

UNDER every form of government, ſtateſmen endeavour to remove the dangers by which they are threatened from abroad, and the diſturbances which moleſt them at home. By this conduct, if ſucceſsful, they in a few ages gain an aſcendant for their country; eſtabliſh a frontier at a diſtance from its capital; they find, in the mutual deſires of tranquillity, which come to poſſeſs mankind, and in thoſe public eſtabliſhments which tend to keep the peace of ſociety, a reſpite from foreign wars, and a relief from domeſtic diſorders. They

learn to decide every conteſt without tumult, and to ſecure, by the authority of law, every citizen in the poſſeſſion of his perſonal rights.

In this condition, to which thriving nations aſpire, and which they in ſome meaſure attain, mankind having laid the baſis of ſafety, proceed to erect a ſuperſtructure ſuitable to their views. The conſequence is various in different ſtates; even in different orders of men of the ſame community; and the effect to every individual correſponds with his ſtation. It enables the ſtateſman and the ſoldier to ſettle the forms of their different procedure; it enables the practitioner in every profeſſion to purſue his ſeparate advantage; it affords the man of pleaſure a time for refinement, and the ſpeculative, leiſure for literary converſation or ſtudy.

In this ſcene, matters that have little reference to the active purſuits of mankind, are made ſubjects of enquiry, and the exerciſe of ſentiment and reaſon itſelf becomes a profeſſion. The ſongs of the bard, the harangues of the ſtateſman and the warrior, the tradition and the ſtory of ancient times, are conſidered as the models, or the earlieſt production, of ſo many arts, which it becomes the object of different profeſſions to copy or to improve. The works of fancy, like the ſubjects of natural hiſtory, are diſtinguiſhed into claſſes and ſpecies; the rules of every particular kind are diſtinctly

diſtinctly collected; and the library is ſtored, like the warehouſe, with the finiſhed manufacture of different artiſts, who, with the aids of the grammarian and the critic, aſpire, each in his particular way, to inſtruct the head, or to move the heart.

EVERY nation is a motley aſſemblage of different characters, and contains, under any political form, ſome examples of that variety, which the humours, tempers, and apprehenſions of men, ſo differently employed, are likely to furniſh. Every profeſſion has its point of honour, and its ſyſtem of manners; the merchant his punctuality and fair dealing; the ſtateſman his capacity and addreſs; the man of ſociety his good breeding and wit. Every ſtation has a carriage, a dreſs, a ceremonial, by which it is diſtinguiſhed, and by which it ſuppreſſes the national character under that of the rank, or of the individual.

THIS deſcription may be applied equally to Athens and Rome, to London and Paris. The rude, or the ſimple obſerver, would remark the variety he ſaw in the dwellings and in the occupations of different men, not in the aſpect of different nations. He would find, in the ſtreets of the ſame city, as great a diverſity, as in the territory of a ſeparate people. He could not pierce through the cloud that was gathered before him, nor ſee how the tradeſman, mechanic, or ſcholar, of one country, ſhould differ from thoſe of another.

other. But the native of every province can diſtinguiſh the foreigner, and when he himſelf travels, is ſtruck with the aſpect of a ſtrange country, the moment he paſſes the bounds of his own. The air of the perſon, the tone of the voice, the idiom of language, and the ſtrain of converſation, whether pathetic or languid, gay or ſevere, are no longer the ſame.

Many ſuch differences may ariſe among poliſhed nations, from the effects of climate, or from ſources of faſhion, that are ſtill more hidden or unobſerved; but the principal diſtinctions on which we can reſt, are derived from the part a people are obliged to act in their national capacity; from the objects placed in their view by the ſtate; or from the conſtitution of government, which, preſcribing the terms of ſociety to its ſubjects, had a great influence in forming their apprehenſions and habits.

The Roman people, deſtined to acquire wealth by conqueſt, and by the ſpoil of provinces; the Carthaginians, intent on the returns of merchandiſe, and the produce of commercial ſettlements, muſt have filled the ſtreets of their ſeveral capitals with men of a different diſpoſition and aſpect. The Roman laid hold of his ſword when he wiſhed to be great, and the ſtate found her armies prepared in the dwellings of her people. The Carthaginian retired to his counter on a ſimilar

ſimilar project; and, when the ſtate was alarmed, or had reſolved on a war, lent of his profits to purchaſe an army abroad.

The member of a republic, and the ſubject of a monarchy, muſt differ: becauſe they have different parts aſſigned to them by the forms of their country: The one deſtined to live with his equals, or to contend by his perſonal talents and character, for pre-eminence; the other, born to a determinate ſtation, where any pretence to equality creates a confuſion, and where nought but precedence is ſtudied. Each, when the inſtitutions of his country are mature, may find in the laws a protection to his perſonal rights; but thoſe rights themſelves are differently underſtood, and with a different ſet of opinions give riſe to a different temper of mind. The republican muſt act in the ſtate, to ſuſtain his pretenſions; he muſt join a party, in order to be ſafe; he muſt lead one, in order to be great. The ſubject of monarchy refers to his birth for the honour he claims; he waits on a court, to ſhew his importance; and holds out the enſigns of dependence and favour, to gain him eſteem with the public.

If national inſtitutions, calculated for the preſervation of liberty, inſtead of calling upon the citizen to act for himſelf, and to maintain his rights, ſhould give a ſecurity, requiring, on his part, no perſonal attention or effort; this ſeeming

ing perfection of government might weaken the bands of ſociety, and, upon maxims of independence, ſeparate and eſtrange the different ranks it was meant to reconcile. Neither the parties formed in republics, nor the county aſſemblies which meet in monarchical governments, could take place, where the ſenſe of a mutual dependence ſhould ceaſe to ſummon their members together. The reſorts for commerce might be frequented, and mere amuſement might be purſued in the crowd, while the private dwelling became a retreat for reſerve, averſe to the trouble ariſing from regards and attentions, which it might be part of the political creed to believe of no conſequence, and a point of honour to hold in contempt.*

This humour is not likely to grow either in republics or monarchies: It belongs more properly to a mixture of both; where the adminiſtration of juſtice may be better ſecured; where the ſubject is tempted to look for equality, but where he finds only independence in its place; and where he learns, from a ſpirit of equality, to hate the very diſtinctions to which, on account of their real importance, he pays a remarkable deference.

In either of the ſeparate forms of republic or monarchy, or in acting on the principles of either, men are obliged to court their fellow-citizens, and to employ parts and addreſs to improve their fortunes,

tunes, or even to be ſafe. They find in both ſchool for diſcernment and penetration; but in the one, are taught to overlook the merits of a private character, for the ſake of abilities that have weight with the public; and in the other to overlook great and reſpectable talents, for the ſake of qualities engaging or pleaſant in the ſcene of entertainment and private ſociety. They are obliged, in both, to adapt themſelves with care to the faſhion and manners of their country. They find no place for caprice or ſingular humours. The republican muſt be popular, and the courtier polite. The firſt muſt think himſelf well placed in every company; the other muſt chuſe his reſorts, and deſire to be diſtinguiſhed only where the ſociety itſelf is eſteemed. With his inferiors, he takes an air of protection; and ſuffers, in his turn, the ſame air to be taken with himſelf. It did not, perhaps, require in a Spartan, who feared nothing but a failure in his duty, who loved nothing but his friend and the ſtate, ſo conſtant a guard on himſelf to ſupport his character, as it frequently does in the ſubject of a monarchy, to adjuſt his expence and his fortune to the deſires of his vanity, and to appear in a rank as high as his birth, or ambition, can poſſibly reach.

There is no particular, in the mean time, in which we are more frequently unjuſt, than in applying to the individual the ſuppoſed character of his country; or more frequently miſled, than in

taking our notion of a people from the example of one, or a few of their members. It belonged to the conſtitution of Athens, to have produced a Cleon, and a Pericles; but all the Athenians were not, therefore, like Cleon, or Pericles. Themiſtocles and Ariſtides lived in the ſame age; the one adviſed what was profitable, the other told his country what was juſt.

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SECTION IV.

The ſame Subject continued.

THE law of nature, with reſpect to nations, is the ſame that it is with reſpect to individuals: It gives to the collective body a right to preſerve themſelves; to employ undiſturbed the means of life; to retain the fruits of labour; to demand the obſervance of ſtipulations and contracts. In the caſe of violence, it condemns the aggreſſor, and eſtabliſhes, on the part of the injured, the right of defence, and a claim to retribution. Its applications, however, admit of diſputes, and give riſe to variety in the apprehenſion, as well as the practice of mankind.

NATIONS have agreed univerſally, in diſtinguiſhing right from wrong; in exacting the reparation of injuries by conſent or by force. They have always repoſed, in a certain degree, on the faith of treaties; but have acted as if force were the ultimate arbiter in all their diſputes, and the power to defend themſelves, the ſureſt pledge of their ſafety. Guided by theſe common apprehenſions, they have differed from one another, not merely in points of form, but in points of the greateſt importance, reſpecting the uſage of war, the effects of captivity, and the rights of conqueſt and victory.

WHEN a number of independent communities have been frequently involved in wars, and have

had their ſtated alliances and oppoſitions, they adopt cuſtoms which they make the foundation of rules, or of laws, to be obſerved, or alledged, in all their mutual tranſactions. Even in war itſelf, they would follow a ſyſtem, and plead for the obſervance of forms in their very operations for mutual deſtruction.

THE ancient ſtates of Greece and Italy derived their manners in war from the nature of their republican government; thoſe of modern Europe, from the influence of monarchy, which, by its prevalence in this part of the world, has a great effect on nations, even where it is not the form eſtabliſhed. Upon the maxims of this government, we apprehend a diſtinction between the ſtate and its members, as that between the King and the people, which renders war an operation of policy, not of popular animoſity. While we ſtrike at the public intereſt, we would ſpare the private; and we carry a reſpect and conſideration for individuals, which often ſtops the iſſues of blood in the ardour of victory, and procures to the priſoner of war a hoſpitable reception in the very city which he came to deſtroy. Theſe practices are ſo well eſtabliſhed, that ſcarcely any provocation on the part of an enemy, or any exigence of ſervice, can excuſe a treſpaſs on the ſuppoſed rules of humanity, or ſave the leader who commits it from becoming an object of deteſtation and horror.

To this, the general practice of the Greeks and the Romans was oppoſite. They endeavoured to

wound the ſtate by deſtroying its members, by deſolating its territory, and by ruining the poſſeſſions of its ſubjects. They granted quarter only to enſlave, or to bring the priſoner to a more ſolemn execution; and an enemy, when diſarmed, was, for the moſt part, either ſold in the market or killed, that he might never return to ſtrengthen his party. When this was the iſſue of war, it was no wonder that battles were fought with deſperation, and that every fortreſs was defended to the laſt extremity. The game of human life went upon a high ſtake, and was played with a proportional zeal.

The term *barbarian*, in this ſtate of manners, could not be employed by the Greeks or the Romans in that ſenſe in which we uſe it: To characterize a people regardleſs of commercial arts; profuſe of their own lives, and of thoſe of others; vehement in their attachment to one ſociety, and implacable in their antipathy to another. This, in a great and ſhining part of their hiſtory, was their own character, as well as that of ſome other nations, whom, upon this very account, we diſtinguiſh by the appellations of *barbarous* or *rude*.

It has been obſerved, that thoſe celebrated nations are indebted, for a great part of their eſtimation, not to the matter of their hiſtory, but to the manner in which it has been delivered, and to the capacity of their hiſtorians, and other writers. Their ſtory has been told by men who knew how

to draw our attention on the proceedings of the underſtanding and of the heart, more than on external effects, and who could exhibit characters to be admired and loved, in the midſt of actions which we ſhould now univerſally hate or condemn. Like Homer, the model of Grecian literature, they could make us forget the horrors of a vindictive, cruel, and remorſeleſs treatment of an enemy, in behalf of the ſtrenuous conduct, the courage, and vehement affections, with which the hero maintained the cauſe of his friend and of his country.

Our manners are ſo different, and the ſyſtem upon which we regulate our apprehenſions, in many things ſo oppoſite, that no leſs could make us endure the practice of ancient nations. Were that practice recorded by the mere journaliſt, who retains only the detail of events, without throwing any light on the character of the actors, who, like the Tartar hiſtorian, tells us only what blood was ſpilt in the field, and how many inhabitants were maſſacred in the city; we ſhould never have diſtinguiſhed the Greeks from their barbarous neighbours, nor have thought, that the character of civility pertained even to the Romans, till very late in their hiſtory, and in the decline of their empire.

It would, no doubt, be pleaſant to ſee the remarks of ſuch a traveller as we ſometimes ſend abroad to inſpect the manners of mankind, left, unaſſiſted by hiſtory, to collect the character of the Greeks from the ſtate of their country, or from their

their practice in war. "This country," he might ſay, "compared to ours, has an air of barrenneſs "and deſolation. I ſaw upon the road troops of "labourers, who were employed in the fields; "but no where the habitations of the maſter and "the landlord. It was unſafe, I was told, to reſide "in the country; and the people of every diſtrict "crowded into towns to find a place of defence. "It is, indeed, impoſſible, that they can be more "civilized, till they have eſtabliſhed ſome regular "government, and have courts of juſtice to hear "their complaints. At preſent every town, nay, "I may ſay, every village, acts for itſelf, and the "greateſt diſorders prevail. I was not indeed "moleſted; for you muſt know, that they call "themſelves nations, and do all their miſchief "under the pretence of war.

"I DO not mean to take any of the liberties of "travellers, nor to vie with the celebrated au-"thor of the voyage to Lilliput; but cannot help "endeavouring to communicate what I felt on "hearing them ſpeak of their territory, their ar-"mies, their revenues, treaties, and alliances. "Only imagine the church-wardens and conſta-"bles of Highgate or Hampſtead turned ſtateſ-"men and generals, and you will have a tolerable "conception of this ſingular country. I paſſed "through one ſtate, where the beſt houſe in the "capital would not lodge the meaneſt of your "labourers, and where your very beggars would "not chuſe to dine with the King; and yet they

" are thought a great nation, and have no leſs
" than two Kings. I ſaw one of them; but ſuch
" a potentate! he had ſcarcely cloaths to his
" back, and for his Majeſty's table, he was
" obliged to go to the eating-houſe with his ſub-
" jects. They have not a ſingle farthing of mo-
" ney; and I was obliged to get food at the pub-
" lic expence, there being none to be had in the
" market. You will imagine, that there muſt have
" been a ſervice of plate, and great attendance,
" to wait on the illuſtrious ſtranger; but my fare
" was a meſs of ſorry pottage, brought me by a
" naked ſlave, who left me to deal with it as I
" thought proper: and even this I was in conti-
" nual danger of having ſtolen from me by the
" children, who are as vigilant to ſeize opportu-
" nities, and as dextrous in ſnatching their food,
" as any ſtarved greyhound you ever ſaw. The
" miſery of the whole people, in ſhort, as well as
" my own, while I ſtaid there, was beyond deſcrip-
" tion. You would think that their whole atten-
" tion were to torment themſelves as much as they
" can: they are even diſpleaſed with one of their
" Kings for being well-liked. He had made a
" preſent, while I was there, of a cow to one fa-
" vourite, and of a waiſtcoat to another *, and
" it was publickly ſaid, that this method of gain-
" ing friends was robbing the public. My land-
" lord told me very gravely, that a man ſhould
" come under no obligation that might weaken

* Plutarch in the life of Ageſilaus.

" the

" the love which he owes to his country; nor
" form any perſonal attachment beyond the mere
" habit of living with his friend, and of doing
" him a kindneſs when he can.

" I ASKED him once, Why they did not, for
" their own ſakes, enable their Kings to aſſume a
" little more ſtate? Becauſe, ſays he, we intend
" them the happineſs of living with men. When
" I found fault with their houſes, and ſaid, in
" particular, that I was ſurpriſed they did not
" build better churches. What would you be then,
" ſays he, if you found religion in ſtone walls?
" This will ſuffice for a ſample of our converſa-
" tion; and ſententious as it was, you may be-
" lieve I did not ſtay long to profit by it.

" THE people of this place are not quite ſo
" ſtupid. There is a pretty large ſquare of a
" market-place, and ſome tolerable buildings;
" and, I am told, they have ſome barks and
" lighters employed in trade, which they like-
" wiſe, upon occaſion, muſter into a fleet, like
" Lord Mayor's ſhew. But what pleaſes me moſt
" is, that I am likely to get a paſſage from hence,
" and bid farewell to this wretched country. I
" have been at ſome pains to obſerve their cere-
" monies of religion, and to pick up curioſities.
" I have copied ſome inſcriptions, as you will
" ſee when you come to peruſe my journal, and
" will then judge, whether I have met with
" enough to compenſate the fatigues and bad en-
" tertainment

" tertainment to which I have ſubmitted. As " for the people, you will believe, from the ſpe- " cimen I have given you, that they could not " be very engaging company: Though poor " and dirty, they ſtill pretend to be proud; and " a fellow, who is not worth a groat, is above " working for his livelihood. They come abroad " barefooted, and without any cover to the head, " wrapt up in the coverlets under which you " would imagine they had ſlept. They throw all " off, and appear like ſo many naked Cannibals, " when they go to violent ſports and exerciſes; at " which they highly value feats of dexterity and " ſtrength. Brawny limbs, and muſcular arms, " the faculty of ſleeping out all nights, of faſt- " ing long, and of putting up with any kind of " food, are thought genteel accompliſhments. " They have no ſettled government that I could " learn; ſometimes the mob, and ſometimes the " better ſort, do what they pleaſe: They meet " in great crowds in the open air, and ſeldom " agree about any thing. If a fellow has pre- " ſumption enough, and a loud voice, he can " make a great figure. There was a tanner " here, ſome time ago, who, for a while, car- " ried every thing before him. He cenſured ſo " loudly what others had done, and talked ſo big " of what might be performed, that he was ſent " out at laſt to make good his words, and to " curry the enemy inſtead of his leather *. You

* Thucydides, lib. 4. —— Ariſtophanes.

" will imagine, perhaps, that he was preſſed for " a recruit; no;—he was ſent to command the " army. They are indeed ſeldom long of one " mind, except in their readineſs to haraſs their " neighbours. They go out in bodies, and rob, " pillage, and murder wherever they come." So far may we ſuppoſe our traveller to have written; and upon a recollection of the reputation which thoſe nations have acquired at a diſtance, he might have added, perhaps, " That he could not " underſtand how ſcholars, fine gentlemen, and " even women, ſhould combine to admire a peo- " ple, who ſo little reſemble themſelves."

To form a judgment of the character from which they acted in the field, and in their competitions with neighbouring nations, we muſt obſerve them at home. They were bold and fearleſs in their civil diſſenſions; ready to proceed to extremities, and to carry their debates to the deciſion of force. Individuals ſtood diſtinguiſhed by their perſonal ſpirit and vigour, not by the valuation of their eſtates, or the rank of their birth. They had a perſonal elevation founded on the ſenſe of equality, not of precedence. The general of one campaign was, during the next, a private ſoldier, and ſerved in the ranks. They were ſolicitous to acquire bodily ſtrength; becauſe, in the uſe of their weapons, battles were a trial of the ſoldier's ſtrength, as well as of the leader's conduct.* The remains of their ſtatuary ſhews a manly grace, an air of ſimplicity and eaſe, which being

being frequent in nature, were familar to the artiſt. The mind, perhaps, borrowed a confidence and force, from the vigour and addreſs of the body; their eloquence and ſtyle bore a reſemblance to the carriage of the perſon. The underſtanding was chiefly cultivated in the practice of affairs. The moſt reſpectable perſonages were obliged to mix with the crowd, and derived their degree of aſcendency only from their conduct, their eloquence, and perſonal vigour. They had no forms of expreſſion, to mark a ceremonious and guarded reſpect. Invective proceeded to railing, and the groſſeſt terms were often employed by the moſt admired and accompliſhed orators. Quarrelling had no rules but the immediate dictates of paſſion, which ended in words of reproach, in violence and blows. They fortunately went always unarmed; and to wear a ſword in times of peace, was among them the mark of a barbarian. When they took arms in the diviſions of faction, the prevailing party ſupported itſelf by expelling their opponents, by proſcriptions, and bloodſhed. The uſurper endeavoured to maintain his ſtation by the moſt violent and prompt executions. He was oppoſed, in his turn, by conſpiracies and aſſaſſinations, in which the moſt reſpectable citizens were ready to uſe the dagger.

Such was the character of their ſpirit, in its occaſional ferments at home; and it burſt commonly with a ſuitable violence and force, againſt their foreign rivals and enemies. The amiable plea

plea of humanity was little regarded by them in the operations of war. Cities were razed, or inſlaved; the captive ſold, mutilated, or condemned to die.

When viewed on this ſide, the ancient nations have but a ſorry plea for eſteem with the inhabitants of modern Europe, who profeſs to carry the civilities of peace into the practice of war; and who value the praiſe of indiſcriminate lenity at a higher rate than even that of military proweſs, or the love of their country. And yet they have, in other reſpects, merited and obtained our praiſe. Their ardent attachment to their country; their contempt of ſuffering, and of death, in its cauſe; their manly apprehenſions of perſonal independence, which rendered every individual, even under tottering eſtabliſhments and imperfect laws, the guardian of freedom to his fellow-citizens, their activity of mind; in ſhort, their penetration, the ability of their conduct, and force of their ſpirit, have gained them the firſt rank among nations.

If their animoſities were great, their affections were proportionate: they, perhaps, loved, where we only pity; and were ſtern and inexorable, where we are not merciful, but only irreſolute. After all, the merit of a man is determined by his candour and generoſity to his aſſociates, by his zeal for national objects, and by his vigour in

in maintaining political rights; not by moderation alone, which proceeds frequently from indifference to national and public intereſt, and which ſerves to relax the nerves on which the force of a private, as well as a public, character depends.

When under the Macedonian and the Roman monarchies, a nation came to be conſidered as the eſtate of a prince, and the inhabitants of a province to be regarded as a lucrative property, the poſſeſſion of territory, not the deſtruction of its people, became the object of conqueſt. The pacific citizen had little concern in the quarrels of ſovereigns; the violence of the ſoldier was reſtrained by diſcipline. He fought, becauſe he was taught to carry arms, and to obey: he ſometimes ſhed unneceſſary blood in the ardour of victory; but, except in the caſe of civil wars, had no paſſions to excite his animoſity beyond the field and the day of battle. Leaders judged of the objects of an enterpriſe, and they arreſted the ſword when theſe were obtained.

In the modern nations of Europe, where extent of territory admits of a diſtinction between the ſtate and its ſubjects, we are accuſtomed to think of the individual with compaſſion, ſeldom of the public with zeal. We have improved on the laws of war, and on the lenitives which have been deviſed to ſoften its rigours; we have mingled

gled politeneſs with the uſe of the ſword; we have learned to make war under the ſtipulations of treaties and cartels, and truſt to the faith of an enemy whoſe ruin we meditate. Glory is more ſucceſsfully obtained by ſaving and protecting, than by deſtroying the vanquiſhed: and the moſt amiable of all objects is, in appearance, attained; the employing of force, only for the obtaining of juſtice, and for the preſervation of national rights.

THIS is, perhaps, the principal characteriſtic, on which, among modern nations, we beſtow the epithets of *civilized* or of *poliſhed*. But we have ſeen, that it did not accompany the progreſs of arts among the Greeks, nor keep pace with the advancement of policy, literature, and philoſophy. It did not await the returns of learning and politeneſs among the moderns; it was found in an early period of our hiſtory, and diſtinguiſhed, perhaps more than at preſent, the manners of the ages otherwiſe rude and undiſciplined. A King of France, priſoner in the hands of his enemies, was treated, about four hundred years ago, with as much diſtinction and courteſy as a crowned head, in the like circumſtances, could poſſibly expect in this age of politeneſs *. The Prince of Conde, defeated and taken in the battle of Dreux, ſlept at night in the ſame bed with his enemy the Duke of Guiſe †.

* Hume's Hiſtory of England. † Davila.

IF

If the moral of popular traditions, and the taſte of fabulous legends, which are the productions or entertainment of particular ages, are likewiſe ſure indications of their notions and characters, we may preſume, that the foundation of what is now held to be the law of war, and of nations, was laid in the manners of Europe, together with the ſentiments which are expreſſed in the tales of chivalry, and of gallantry. Our ſyſtem of war differs not more from that of the Greeks, than the favourite characters of our early romance differed from thoſe of the Iliad, and of every ancient poem. The hero of the Greek fable, endued with ſuperior force, courage, and addreſs, takes every advantage of an enemy, to kill with ſafety to himſelf; and, actuated by a deſire of ſpoil, or by a principle of revenge, is never ſtayed in his progreſs by interruptions of remorſe or compaſſion. Homer, who, of all poets, knew beſt how to exhibit the emotions of a vehement affection, ſeldom attempts to excite commiſeration. Hector falls unpitied, and his body is inſulted by every Greek.

Our modern fable, or romance, on the contrary, generally couples an object of pity, weak, oppreſſed, and defenceleſs, with an object of admiration, brave, generous, and victorious; or ſends the hero abroad in ſearch of mere danger, and of occaſions to prove his valour. Charged with the maxims of a refined courteſy, to be obſerved even towards an enemy; and of a ſcrupulous

pulous honour, which will not ſuffer him to take any advantages by artifice or ſurpriſe; indifferent to ſpoil, he contends only for renown, and employs his valour to reſcue the diſtreſſed, and to protect the innocent. If victorious, he is made to riſe above nature as much in his generoſity and gentleneſs, as in his military proweſs and valour.

It may be difficult, upon ſtating this contraſt between the ſyſtem of ancient and modern fable, to aſſign, among nations, equally rude, equally addicted to war, and equally fond of military glory, the origin of apprehenſions on the point of honour, ſo different, and ſo oppoſite. The hero of Greek poetry proceeds on the maxims of animoſity and hoſtile paſſion. His maxims in war are like thoſe which prevail in the woods of America. They require him to be brave, but they allow him to practiſe againſt his enemy every ſort of deception. The hero of modern romance profeſſes a contempt of ſtratagem, as well as of danger, and unites in the ſame perſon, characters and diſpoſitions ſeemingly oppoſite; ferocity with gentleneſs, and the love of blood with ſentiments of tenderneſs and pity.

The ſyſtem of chivalry, when completely formed, proceeded on a marvellous reſpect and veneration to the fair ſex, on forms of combat eſtabliſhed, and on a ſuppoſed junction of the heroic and ſanctified character. The formalities of the

duel, and a kind of judicial challenge, were known among the ancient Celtic nations of Europe*. The Germans, even in their native forefts, paid a kind of devotion to the female ſex. The Chriſtian religion enjoined meekneſs and compaſſion to barbarous ages. Theſe different principles combined together, may have ſerved as the foundation of a ſyſtem, in which courage was directed by religion and love, and the warlike and gentle were united together. When the characters of the hero and the ſaint were mixed, the mild ſpirit of Chriſtianity, though often turned into venom by the bigotry of oppoſite parties, though it could not always ſubdue the ferocity of the warrior, nor ſuppreſs the admiration of courage and force, may have confirmed the apprehenſions of men in what was to be held meritorious and ſplendid in the conduct of their quarrels.

In the early and traditionary hiſtory of the Greeks and the Romans, rapes were aſſigned as the moſt frequent occaſions of war; and the ſexes were, no doubt, at all times, equally important to each other. The enthuſiaſm of love is moſt powerful in the neighbourhood of Aſia and Africa; and beauty, as a poſſeſſion, was probably more valued by the countrymen of Homer, than it was by thoſe of Amadis de Gaul, or by the authors of modern gallantry. "What wonder," ſays the old Priam, when Helen appeared, "that nations

* Liv. lib. 28. c. 21.

"ſhould

" ſhould contend for the poſſeſſion of ſo much " beauty?" This beauty, indeed, was poſſeſſed by different lovers; a ſubject on which the modern hero had many refinements, and ſeemed to ſoar in the clouds. He adored at a reſpectful diſtance, and employed his valour to captivate the admiration, not to gain the poſſeſſion of his miſtreſs. A cold and unconquerable chaſtity was ſet up, as an idol to be worſhipped, in the toils, the ſufferings, and the combats of the hero and the lover.

THE feudal eſtabliſhments, by the high rank to which they elevated certain families, no doubt, greatly favoured this romantic ſyſtem. Not only the luſtre of a noble deſcent, but the ſtately caſtle beſet with battlements and towers, ſerved to inflame the imagination, and to create a veneration for the daughter and the ſiſter of gallant chiefs, whoſe point of honour it was to be inacceſſible and chaſte, and who could perceive no merit but that of the high-minded and the brave, nor be approached in any other accents than thoſe of gentleneſs and reſpect.

WHAT was originally ſingular in theſe apprehenſions, was, by the writer of romance, turned to extravagance; and under the title of chivalry was offered as a model of conduct, even in common affairs: The fortunes of nations were directed by gallantry; and human life, on its greateſt

occaſions, became a ſcene of affectation and folly. Warriors went forth to realize the legends they had ſtudied; princes and leaders of armies dedicated their moſt ſerious exploits to a real or to a fancied miſtreſs.

But whatever was the origin of notions, often ſo lofty and ſo ridiculous, we cannot doubt of their laſting effects on our manners. The point of honour, the prevalence of gallantry in our converſations, and on our theatres, many of the opinions which the vulgar apply even to the conduct of war; their notion, that the leader of an army, being offered battle upon equal terms, is diſhonoured by declining it, are undoubtedly remains of this antiquated ſyſtem: And chivalry, uniting with the genius of our policy, has probably ſuggeſted thoſe peculiarities in the law of nations, by which modern ſtates are diſtinguiſhed from the ancient. And if our rule in meaſuring degrees of politeneſs and civilization is to be taken from hence, or from the advancement of commercial arts, we ſhall be found to have greatly excelled any of the celebrated nations of antiquity.

PART

PART FIFTH.

OF THE

DECLINE OF NATIONS.

SECTION I.

Of ſuppoſed National Eminence, and of the Viciſſitudes of Human Affairs.

NO nation is ſo unfortunate as to think itſelf inferior to the reſt of mankind: Few are even willing to put up with the claim to equality. The greater part having choſen themſelves, as at once, the judges and the models of what is excellent in their kind, are firſt in their own opinion, and give to others conſideration or eminence, ſo far only as they approach to their own condition. One nation is vain of the perſonal character, or of the learning of a few of its members; another of its policy, its wealth, its tradeſmen, its gardens, and its buildings; and they who have nothing to boaſt are vain, becauſe they are ignorant. The Ruſſians, before the reign of Peter the Great, thought themſelves

poſſeſſed of every national honour, and held the *Nemei*, or *dumb nations* (the name which they beſtowed on their weſtern neighbours of Europe), in a proportional degree of contempt *. The map of the world, in China, was a ſquare plate, the greater part of which was occupied by the provinces of this great empire, leaving on its ſkirts a few obſcure corners, into which the wretched remainder of mankind were ſuppoſed to be driven. "If you have not the uſe of our letters, nor the "knowledge of our books," ſaid the learned Chineſe to the European miſſionary, "what li-"terature, or what ſcience can you have †?"

THE term *poliſhed*, if we may judge from its etymology, originally referred to the ſtate of nations in reſpect to their laws and government; and men civilized were men practiſed in the duty of citizens. In its later applications, it refers no leſs to the proficiency of nations in the liberal and mechanical arts, in literature, and in commerce; and men civilized are ſcholars, men of faſhion and traders. But whatever may be its application, it appears, that if there were a name ſtill more reſpectable than this, every nation, even the moſt barbarous, or the moſt corrupted, would aſſume it; and beſtow its reverſe where they conceived a diſlike, or apprehended a difference. The names of *alien* or *foreigner*, are ſeldom pronounced without ſome degree of in-

* Strahlenberg. † Gemelli Carceri.

tended

tended reproach. That of *barbarian*, in uſe with one arrogant people, and that of *gentile*, with another, only ſerved to diſtinguiſh the ſtranger, whoſe language and pedigree differed from theirs.

Even where we pretend to found our opinions on reaſon, and to juſtify our preference of one nation to another, we frequently beſtow our eſteem on circumſtances which do not relate to national character, and which have little tendency to promote the welfare of mankind. Conqueſt, or great extent of territory, however peopled, and great wealth, however diſtributed or employed, are titles upon which we indulge our own, and the vanity of other nations, as we do that of private men on the ſcore of their fortunes and honours. We even ſometimes contend, whoſe capital is the moſt overgrown; whoſe king has the moſt abſolute powers; and at whoſe court the bread of the ſubject is conſumed in the moſt ſenſeleſs riot. Theſe indeed are the notions of vulgar minds; but it is impoſſible to determine, how far the notions of vulgar minds may lead mankind.

There have certainly been very few examples of ſtates, who have, by arts or policy, improved the original diſpoſitions of human nature, or endeavoured, by wiſe and effectual precautions, to prevent its corruption. Affection, and force of

mind, which are the band and the ſtrength of communities, were the inſpiration of God, and original attributes in the nature of man. The wiſeſt policy of nations, except in a few inſtances, has tended, we may ſuſpect, rather to maintain the peace of ſociety, and to repreſs the external effects of bad paſſions, than to ſtrengthen the diſpoſition of the heart itſelf to juſtice and goodneſs. It has tended, by introducing a variety of arts, to exerciſe the ingenuity of men, and by engaging them in a variety of purſuits, inquiries, and ſtudies, to inform, but frequently to corrupt the mind. It has tended to furniſh matter of diſtinction and vanity; and by incumbering the individual with new ſubjects of perſonal care, to ſubſtitute the anxiety he entertains for a ſeparate fortune, inſtead of the confidence and the affection with which he ſhould unite with his fellow-creatures, for their joint preſervation.

WHETHER this ſuſpicion be juſt or no, we are come to point at circumſtances tending to verify, or to diſprove it: and if to underſtand the real felicity of nations be of importance, it is certainly ſo likewiſe, to know what are thoſe weakneſſes, and thoſe vices, by which men not only mar this felicity, but in one age forfeit all the external advantages they had gained in a former.

THE

THE wealth, the aggrandizement, and power of nations, are commonly the effects of virtue; the loſs of theſe advantages is often a conſequence of vice. Were we to ſuppoſe men to have ſucceeded in the diſcovery and application of every art by which ſtates are preſerved and governed; to have attained, by efforts of wiſdom and magnanimity, the admired eſtabliſhments and advantages of a civilized and flouriſhing people; the ſubſequent part of their hiſtory containing, according to vulgar apprehenſion, a full diſplay of thoſe fruits in maturity, of which they had till then carried only the bloſſom, and the firſt formation, ſhould, ſtill more than the former, merit our attention, and excite our admiration.

THE event, however, has not correſponded to this expectation. The virtues of men have ſhone moſt during their ſtruggles, not after the attainment of their ends. Thoſe ends themſelves, though attained by virtue, are frequently the cauſes of corruption and vice. Mankind, in aſpiring to national felicity, have ſubſtituted arts which increaſe their riches, inſtead of thoſe which improve their nature. They have entertained admiration of themſelves, under the titles of *civilized* and of *poliſhed*, where they ſhould have been affected with ſhame; and even where they have, for a while, acted on maxims tending to raiſe, to invigorate, and to preſerve the national character, they have, ſooner or later, been diverted from their object,

and

and fallen a prey to misfortune, or to the neglects which proſperity itſelf had encouraged.

WAR, which furniſhes mankind with a principal occupation of their reſtleſs ſpirit, ſerves, by the variety of its events, to diverſify their fortunes. While it opens to one tribe or ſociety, the way to eminence, and leads to dominion, it brings another to ſubjection, and cloſes the ſcene of their national efforts. The celebrated rivalſhip of Carthage and Rome was, in both parties, the natural exerciſe of an ambitious ſpirit, impatient of oppoſition, or even of equality. The conduct and the fortune of leaders held the balance for ſome time in ſuſpence; but to whichever ſide it had inclined, a great nation was to fall; a ſeat of empire, and of policy, was to be removed from its place; and it was then to be determined, whether the Syriac or the Latin ſhould contain the erudition that was, in future ages, to occupy the ſtudies of the learned.

STATES have been thus conquered from abroad, before they gave any ſigns of internal decay, even in the midſt of proſperity, and in the period of their greateſt ardour for national objects. Athens, in the height of her ambition, and of her glory, received a fatal wound, in ſtriving to extend their maritime power beyond the Grecian ſeas. And nations of every deſcription, formidable by their rude ferocity, reſpected for their diſcipline and military

military experience, when advancing, as well as when declining, in their ſtrength, ſell a prey by turns to the ambition and arrogant ſpirit of the Romans. Such examples may excite and alarm the jealouſy and caution of ſtates; the preſence of ſimilar dangers may exerciſe the talents of politicians and ſtateſmen; but mere reverſes of fortune are the common materials of hiſtory, and muſt long ſince have ceaſed to create our ſurpriſe.

Did we find, that nations advancing from ſmall beginnings, and arrived at the poſſeſſion of arts which lead to dominion, became ſecure of their advantages, in proportion as they were qualified to gain them; that they proceeded in a courſe of uninterrupted felicity, till they were broke by external calamities; and that they retained their force, till a more fortunate or vigorous power aroſe to depreſs them; the ſubject in ſpeculation could not be attended with many difficulties, nor give riſe to many reflections. But when we obſerve, among many nations, a kind of ſpontaneous return to obſcurity and weakneſs; when, in ſpite of perpetual admonitions of the danger they run, they ſuffer themſelves to be ſubdued, in one period, by powers which could not have entered into competition with them in a former, and by forces which they had often baffled and deſpiſed, the ſubject becomes more curious, and its explanation more difficult.

The

The fact itſelf is known in a variety of different examples. The empire of Aſia was, more than once, transferred from the greater to the inferior power. The ſtates of Greece, once ſo warlike, felt a relaxation of their vigour, and yielded the aſcendant they had diſputed with the monarchs of the eaſt, to the forces of an obſcure principality, become formidable in a few years, and raiſed to eminence under the conduct of a ſingle man. The Roman empire, which ſtood alone for ages, which had brought every rival under ſubjection, and ſaw no power from whom a competition could be feared, ſunk at laſt before an artleſs and contemptible enemy. Abandoned to inroad, to pillage, and at laſt to conqueſt, on her frontier, ſhe decayed in all her extremities, and ſhrunk on every ſide. Her territory was diſmembered, and whole provinces gave way, like branches fallen down with age, not violently torn by ſuperior force. The ſpirit with which Marius had baffled and repelled the attacks of barbarians in a former age, the civil and military force with which the conſul and his legions had extended this empire, were now no more. The Roman greatneſs doomed to ſink as it roſe, by ſlow degrees, was impaired in every encounter. It was reduced to its original dimenſions, within the compaſs of a ſingle city; and depending for its preſervation on the fortune of a ſiege, it was extinguiſhed at a blow; and the brand, which had filled the world with its flames, ſunk like a taper in the ſocket.

Such

Such appearances have given riſe to a general apprehenſion, that the progreſs of ſocieties to what we call the heights of national greatneſs, is not more natural, than their return to weakneſs and obſcurity is neceſſary and unavoidable. The images of youth, and of old age, are applied to nations; and communities, like ſingle men, are ſuppoſed to have a period of life, and a length of thread, which is ſpun by the fates in one part uniform and ſtrong, in another weakened and ſhattered by uſe; to be cut, when the deſtined æra is come, and to make way for a renewal of the emblem in the caſe of thoſe who ariſe in ſucceſſion. Carthage, being ſo much older than Rome, had felt her decay, ſays Polybius, ſo much the ſooner: and the ſurvivor too, he foreſaw, carried in her boſom the ſeeds of mortality.

The image indeed is appoſite, and the hiſtory of mankind renders the application familiar. But it muſt be obvious, that the caſe of nations, and that of individuals, are very different. The human frame has a general courſe: It has in every individual a frail contexture and limited duration, it is worn by exerciſe, and exhauſted by a repetition of its functions: But in a ſociety, whoſe conſtituent members are renewed in every generation, where the race ſeems to enjoy perpetual youth, and accumulating advantages, we cannot, by any parity of reaſon, expect to find imbecilities connected with mere age and length of days.

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THE ſubject is not new, and reflections will crowd upon every reader. The notions, in the mean time, which we entertain, even in ſpeculation, upon a ſubject ſo important, cannot be entirely fruitleſs to mankind; and however little the labours of the ſpeculative may influence the conduct of men, one of the moſt pardonable errors a writer can commit, is to believe that he is about to do a great deal of good. But, leaving the care of effects to others, we proceed to conſider the grounds of inconſtancy among mankind, the ſources of internal decay, and the ruinous corruptions to which nations are liable, in the ſuppoſed condition of accompliſhed civility.

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SECTION II.

Of the Temporary Efforts and Relaxations of the National Spirit.

FROM what we have already obſerved on the general characteriſtics of human nature, it has appeared that man is not made for repoſe. In him, every amiable and reſpectable quality is an active power, and every ſubject of commendation an effort. If his errors and his crimes are the movements of an active being, his virtues and his happineſs conſiſt likewiſe in the employment of his mind; and all the luſtre which he caſts around him, to captivate or engage the attention of his fellow-creatures, like the flames of a meteor, ſhines only while his motion continues: The moments of reſt and obſcurity are the ſame. We know, that the taſks aſſigned him frequently may exceed, as well as come ſhort of, his powers; that he may be agitated too much, as well as too little; but cannot aſcertain a preciſe medium between the ſituations in which he would be haraſſed, and thoſe in which he would fall into languor. We know that he may be employed on a great variety of ſubjects, which occupy different paſſions; and that, in conſequence of habit, he becomes reconciled to very different ſcenes. All we can determine in general is, that whatever be the ſubjects with which he is engaged, the frame of

of his nature requires him to be occupied, and his happineſs requires him to be juſt.

We are now to inquire, why nations ceaſe to be eminent; and why ſocieties which have drawn the attention of mankind by great examples of magnanimity, conduct, and national ſucceſs, ſhould ſink from the height of their honours, and yield, in one age, the palm which they had won in a former. Many reaſons will probably occur. One may be taken from the fickleneſs and inconſtancy of mankind, who become tired of their purſuits and exertions, even while the occaſions that gave riſe to thoſe purſuits, in ſome meaſure, continue: Another, from the change of ſituations, and the removal of objects which ſerved to excite their ſpirit.

The public ſafety, and the relative intereſts of ſtates; political eſtabliſhments, the pretenſions of party, commerce, and arts, are ſubjects which engage the attention of nations. The advantages gained in ſome of theſe particulars, determine the degree of national proſperity. The ardour and vigour with which they are at any one time purſued, is the meaſure of a national ſpirit. When thoſe objects ceaſe to animate, nations may be ſaid to languiſh; when they are, during a conſiderable time neglected, ſtates muſt decline, and their people degenerate.

In the moſt forward, enterpriſing, inventive, and induſtrious nations, this ſpirit is fluctuating; and they who continue longeſt to gain advantages, or to preſerve them, have periods of remiſſneſs, as well as of ardour. The deſire of public ſafety is, at all times, a powerful motive of conduct; but it operates moſt when combined with occaſional paſſions, when provocations inflame, when ſucceſſes encourage, or mortifications exaſperate.

A WHOLE people, like the individuals of whom they are compoſed, act under the influence of temporary humours, ſanguine hopes, or vehement animoſities. They are diſpoſed, at one time, to enter on national ſtruggles with vehemence; at another, to drop them from mere laſſitude and diſguſt. In their civil debates and contentions at home, they are occaſionally ardent or remiſs. Epidemical paſſions ariſe or ſubſide on trivial as well as important grounds. Parties are ready, at one time, to take their names, and the pretence of their oppoſitions, from mere caprice or accident; at another time, they ſuffer the moſt ſerious occaſions to paſs in ſilence. If a vein of literary genius be caſually opened, or a new ſubject of diſquiſition be ſtarted, real or pretended diſcoveries ſuddenly multiply, and every converſation is inquiſitive and animated. If a new ſource of wealth be found, or a proſpect of conqueſt be offered, the imaginations of men are inflamed, and whole

quarters of the globe are ſuddenly engaged in ruinous or in ſucceſsful adventures.

Could we recall the ſpirit that was exerted, or enter into the views that were entertained, by our anceſtors, when they burſt, like a deluge, from their ancient ſeats, and poured into the Roman empire, we ſhould probably, after their firſt ſucceſſes, at leaſt, find a ferment in the minds of men, for which no attempt was too arduous, no difficulties inſurmountable.

The ſubſequent ages of enterpriſe in Europe, were thoſe in which the alarm of enthuſiaſm was rung, and the followers of the croſs invaded the Eaſt, to plunder a country, and to recover a ſepulchre; thoſe in which the people in different ſtates contended for freedom, and aſſaulted the fabric of civil or religious uſurpation; that in which having found means to croſs the Atlantic, and to double the Cape of Good Hope, the inhabitants of one half the world were let looſe on the other, and parties from every quarter, wading in blood, and at the expence of every crime, and of every danger, traverſed the earth in ſearch of gold.

Even the weak and the remiſs are rouſed to enterpriſe, by the contagion of ſuch remarkable ages; and ſtates, which have not in their form the principles of a continued exertion, either favourable or adverſe to the welfare of mankind, may have

have paroxyſms of ardour, and a temporary appearance of national vigour. In the caſe of ſuch nations, indeed, the returns of moderation are but a relapſe to obſcurity, and the preſumption of one age is turned to dejection in that which ſucceeds.

But in the caſe of ſtates that are fortunate in their domeſtic policy, even madneſs itſelf may, in the reſult of violent convulſions, ſubſide into wiſdom, and a people return to their ordinary mood, cured of their follies, and wiſer by experience: or, with talents improved, in conducting the very ſcenes which frenzy had opened, they may then appear beſt qualified to purſue with ſucceſs the object of nations. Like the ancient republics, immediately after ſome alarming ſedition, or like the kingdom of Great Britain, at the cloſe of its civil wars, they retain the ſpirit of activity, which was recently awakened, and are equally vigorous in every purſuit, whether of policy, learning, or arts. From having appeared on the brink of ruin, they paſs to the greateſt proſperity.

Men engage in purſuits with degrees of ardour not proportioned to the importance of their object. When they are ſtated in oppoſition, or joined in confederacy, they only wiſh for pretences to act. They forget, in the heat of their animoſities, the ſubject of their controverſy; or they ſeek, in their formal reaſonings concerning it, only a diſguiſe for their paſſions. When the heart is in-

flamed, no conſideration can repreſs its ardour; when its fervour ſubſides, no reaſoning can excite, and no eloquence awaken, its former emotions.

THE continuance of emulation among ſtates, muſt depend on the degree of equality by which their forces are balanced; or on the incentives by which either party, or all, are urged to continue their ſtruggles. Long intermiſſions of war, ſuffer, equally in every period of civil ſociety, the military ſpirit to languiſh. The reduction of Athens by Lyſander, ſtruck a fatal blow at the inſtitutions of Lycurgus; and the quiet poſſeſſion of Italy, happily, perhaps, for mankind, had almoſt put an end to the military progreſs of the Romans. After ſome years repoſe, Hannibal found Italy unprepared for his onſet, and the Romans in a diſpoſition likely to drop, on the banks of the Po, that martial ambition, which being rouſed by the ſenſe of a new danger, afterwards carried them to the Euphrates and the Rhine.

STATES, even diſtinguiſhed for military proweſs, ſometimes lay down their arms from laſſitude, and are weary of fruitleſs contentions: but if they maintain the ſtation of independent communities, they will have frequent occaſions to recall, and to exert their vigour. Even under popular governments, men ſometimes drop the conſideration of their political rights, and appear at times remiſs

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or ſupine; but if they have reſerved the power to defend themſelves, the intermiſſion of its exerciſe cannot be of long duration. Political rights, when neglected, are always invaded; and alarms from this quarter muſt frequently come to renew the attention of parties. The love of learning, and of arts, may change its purſuits, or droop for a ſeaſon; but while men are poſſeſſed of freedom, and while the exerciſes of ingenuity are not ſuperſeded, the public may proceed, at different times, with unequal fervour; but its progreſs is ſeldom altogether diſcontinued, or the advantages gained in one age are ſeldom entirely loſt to the following.

If we would find the cauſes of final corruption, we muſt examine thoſe revolutions of ſtate that remove, or withhold the objects of every ingenious ſtudy or liberal purſuit; that deprive the citizen of occaſions to act as the member of a public; that cruſh his ſpirit; that debaſe his ſentiments, and diſqualify his mind for affairs.

SECTION III.

Of Relaxations in the National Spirit incident to Poliſhed Nations.

IMPROVING nations, in the courſe of their advancement, have to ſtruggle with foreign enemies, to whom they bear an extreme animoſity, and with whom, in many conflicts, they contend for their exiſtence as a people. In certain periods, too, they feel in their domeſtic policy inconveniencies and grievances, which beget an eager impatience; and they apprehend reformations and new eſtabliſhments, from which they have ſanguine hopes of national happineſs. In early ages, every art is imperfect, and ſuſceptible of many improvements. The firſt principles of every ſcience are yet ſecrets to be diſcovered, and to be ſucceſſively publiſhed with applauſe and triumph.

WE may fancy to ourſelves, that in ages of progreſs, the human race, like ſcouts gone abroad on the diſcovery of fertile lands, having the world open before them, are preſented at every ſtep with the appearance of novelty. They enter on every new ground with expectation and joy: They engage in every enterprize with the ardour of men, who believe they are going to arrive at national felicity, and permanent glory; and forget paſt diſappointments amidſt the hopes

of future ſucceſs. From mere ignorance, rude minds are intoxicated with every paſſion; and, partial to their own condition, and to their own purſuits, they think that every ſcene is inferior to that in which they are placed. Rouſed alike by ſucceſs and by misfortune, they are ſanguine, ardent, and precipitant; and leave, to the more knowing ages which ſucceed them, monuments of imperfect ſkill, and of rude execution of every art; but they leave likewiſe the marks of a vigorous and ardent ſpirit, which their ſucceſſors are not always qualified to ſuſtain, or to imitate.

THIS may be admitted, perhaps, as a fair deſcription of proſperous ſocieties, at leaſt during certain periods of their progreſs. The ſpirit with which they advance may be unequal in different ages, and may have its paroxyſms and intermiſſions, ariſing from the inconſtancy of human paſſions, and from the caſual appearance or removal of occaſions that excite them. But does this ſpirit, which for a time continues to carry on the project of civil and commercial arts, find a natural pauſe in the termination of its own purſuits? May the buſineſs of civil ſociety be accompliſhed, and may the occaſion of farther exertion be removed? Do continued diſappointments reduce ſanguine hopes, and familiarity with objects blunt the edge of novelty? Does experience itſelf cool the ardour of the mind? May the ſociety be again compared to the individual? And may it

be ſuſpected, although the vigour of a nation, like that of a natural body, does not waſte by a phyſical decay, that yet it may ſicken for want of exerciſe, and die in the cloſe of its own exertions? May ſocieties, in the completion of all their deſigns, like men in years, who diſregard the amuſements, and are inſenſible to the paſſions of youth, become cold and indifferent to objects that uſed to animate in a ruder age? And may a poliſhed community be compared to a man who, having executed his plan, built his houſe, and made his ſettlement; who having, in ſhort, exhauſted the charms of every ſubject, and waſted all his ardour, ſinks into languor and liſtleſs indifference? If ſo, we have found at leaſt another ſimile to our purpoſe. But it is probable, that here too the reſemblance is imperfect, and the inference that would follow, like that of moſt arguments drawn from analogy, tends rather to amuſe the fancy, than to give any real information on the ſubject to which it refers.

The materials of human art are never entirely exhauſted, and the applications of induſtry are never at an end. The national ardour is not, at any particular time, proportioned to the occaſion there is for activity; nor the curioſity of the learned to the extent of ſubject that remains to be ſtudied.

The ignorant and the artleſs, to whom objects of ſcience are new, and whoſe manner of life is moſt

moſt ſimple, inſtead of being more active and more curious, are commonly more quieſcent, and leſs inquiſitive, than thoſe who are beſt furniſhed with knowledge and the conveniencies of life. When we compare the particulars which occupy mankind in the beginning and in the advanced age of commercial arts, theſe particulars will be found greatly multiplied and enlarged in the laſt. The queſtions we have put, however, deſerve to be anſwered; and if, in the reſult of commerce, we do not find the objects of human purſuit removed, or greatly diminiſhed, we may find them at leaſt changed; and in eſtimating the national ſpirit, we may find a negligence in one part, but ill compenſated by the growing attention which is paid to another.

It is true, in general, that in all our purſuits, there is a termination of trouble, and a point of repoſe to which we aſpire. We would remove this inconvenience, or gain that advantage that our labours may ceaſe. When I have conquered Italy and Sicily, ſays Pyrrhus, I ſhall then enjoy my repoſe. This termination is propoſed in our national, as well as in our perſonal exertions; and, in ſpite of frequent experience to the contrary, is conſidered, at a diſtance, as the height of felicity. But nature has wiſely, in moſt particulars, baffled our project; and placed no where within our reach this viſionary bleſſing of abſolute eaſe. The attainment of one end is but the beginning

beginning of a new purſuit; and the diſcovery of one art is but a prolongation of the thread by which we are conducted to further inquiries, and while we hope to eſcape from the labyrinth, are led to its moſt intricate paths.

Among the occupations that may be enumerated, as tending to exerciſe the invention, and to cultivate the talents of men, are the purſuits of accommodation and wealth, including all the different contrivances which ſerve to increaſe manufactures, and to perfect the mechanical arts. But it muſt be owned, that as the materials of commerce may continue to be accumulated without any determinate limit, ſo the arts which are applied to improve them, may admit of perpetual refinements. No meaſure of fortune, or degree of ſkill, is found to diminiſh the ſuppoſed neceſſities of human life; refinement and plenty foſter new deſires; while they furniſh the means, or practiſe the methods, to gratify them.

In the reſult of commercial arts, inequalities of fortune are greatly increaſed, and the majority of every people are obliged by neceſſity, or at leaſt ſtrongly incited by ambition and avarice, to employ every talent they poſſeſs. After a hiſtory of ſome thouſand years employed in manufacture and commerce, the inhabitants of China are ſtill the moſt laborious and induſtrious of any people on earth.

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Some part of this obſervation may be extended to the elegant and literary arts. They too have their materials which cannot be exhauſted, and proceed from deſires which cannot be ſatiated. But the reſpect paid to literary merit is fluctuating, and matter of tranſient faſhion. When learned productions accumulate, the acquiſition of knowledge occupies the time that might be beſtowed on invention. The object of mere learning is attained with moderate or inferior talents, and the growing liſt of pretenders diminiſhes the luſtre of the few who are eminent. When we only mean to learn what others have taught, it is probable, that even our knowledge will be leſs than that of our maſters. Great names continue to be repeated with admiration, after we have ceaſed to examine the foundations of our praiſe; and new pretenders are rejected, not becauſe they fall ſhort of their predeceſſors, but becauſe they do not excel them; or becauſe in reality we have, without examination, taken for granted the merit of the firſt, and cannot judge of either.

After libraries are furniſhed, and every path of ingenuity is occupied, we are, in proportion to our admiration of what is already done, prepoſſeſſed againſt farther attempts. We become ſtudents and admirers, inſtead of rivals; and ſubſtitute the knowledge of books, inſtead of the inquiſitive or animated ſpirit in which they were written.

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THE commercial and the lucrative arts may continue to proſper, but they gain an aſcendant at the expence of other purſuits. The deſire of profit ſtifles the love of perfection. Intereſt cools the imagination, and hardens the heart; and, recommending employments in proportion as they are lucrative, and certain in their gains, it drives ingenuity, and ambition itſelf, to the counter and the workſhop.

BUT, apart from theſe conſiderations, the ſeparation of profeſſions, while it ſeems to promiſe improvement of ſkill, and is actually the cauſe why the productions of every art become more perfect as commerce advances; yet, in its termination and ultimate effects, ſerves, in ſome meaſure, to break the bands of ſociety, to ſubſtitute mere forms and rules of art in place of ingenuity, and to withdraw individuals from the common ſcene of occupation, on which the ſentiments of the heart, and the mind, are moſt happily employed.

UNDER the *diſtinction* of callings, by which the members of poliſhed ſociety are ſeparated from each other, every individual is ſuppoſed to poſſeſs his ſpecies of talent, or his peculiar ſkill, in which the others are confeſſedly ignorant; and ſociety is made to conſiſt of parts, of which none is animated with the ſpirit that ought to prevail in the conduct of nations. "We ſee in the ſame per-

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" ſons," ſaid Pericles, " an equal attention to " private and to public affairs; and in men who " have turned to ſeparate profeſſions, a compe- " tent knowledge of what relates to the com- " munity; for we alone conſider thoſe who are " inattentive to the ſtate, as perfectly inſignifi- " cant." This encomium on the Athenians, was probably offered under an apprehenſion, that the contrary was likely to be charged by their enemies, or might ſoon take place. It happened, accordingly, that the buſineſs of ſtate, as well as of war, came to be worſe adminiſtered at Athens, when theſe, as well as other applications, became the object of ſeparate profeſſions; and the hiſtory of this people abundantly ſhewed, that men ceaſed to be citizens, even to be good poets and orators, in proportion as they came to be diſtinguiſhed by the profeſſion of theſe, and other ſeparate crafts.

ANIMALS leſs honoured than we, have ſagacity enough to procure their food, and to find the means of their ſolitary pleaſures; but it is reſerved for man to conſult, to perſuade, to oppoſe, to kindle in the ſociety of his fellow-creatures, and to loſe the ſenſe of his perſonal intereſt or ſafety, in the ardour of his friendſhips and his oppoſitions.

WHEN we are involved in any of the diviſions into which mankind are ſeparated under the denominations of a country, a tribe, or an order of men

men any way affected by common intereſts, and guided by communicating paſſions, the mind recogniſes its natural ſtation; the ſentiments of the heart, and the talents of the underſtanding, find their natural exerciſe. Wiſdom, vigilance, fidelity, and fortitude, are the characters requiſite in ſuch a ſcene, and the qualities which it tends to improve.

In ſimple or barbarous ages, when nations are weak and beſet with enemies, the love of a country, of a party, or a faction, are the ſame. The public is a knot of friends, and its enemies are the reſt of mankind. Death, or ſlavery, are the ordinary evils which they are concerned to ward off; victory and dominion, the objects to which they aſpire. Under the ſenſe of what they may ſuffer from foreign invaſions, it is one object, in every proſperous ſociety, to increaſe its force, and to extend its limits. In proportion as this object is gained, ſecurity increaſes. They who poſſeſs the interior diſtricts, remote from the frontier, are unuſed to alarms from abroad. They who are placed on the extremities, remote from the ſeats of government, are unuſed to hear of political intereſts; and the public becomes an object perhaps too extenſive for the conceptions of either. They enjoy the protection of its laws, or of its armies; and they boaſt of its ſplendor, and its power; but the glowing ſentiments of public affection, which, in ſmall ſtates, mingle with the tenderneſs

tenderneſs of the parent and the lover, of the friend and the companion, merely by having their object enlarged, loſe great part of their force.

THE manners of rude nations require to be reformed. Their foreign quarrels, and domeſtic diſſenſions, are the operations of extreme and ſanguinary paſſions. A ſtate of greater tranquillity hath many happy effects. But if nations purſue the plan of enlargement and pacification, till their members can no longer apprehend the common ties of ſociety, nor be engaged by affection in the cauſe of their country, they muſt err on the oppoſite ſide, and by leaving too little to agitate the ſpirits of men, bring on ages of languor, if not of decay.

THE members of a community may, in this manner, like the inhabitants of a conquered province, be made to loſe the ſenſe of every connection, but that of kindred or neighbourhood; and have no common affairs to tranſact, but thoſe of trade: Connections, indeed, or tranſactions, in which probity and friendſhip may ſtill take place; but in which the national ſpirit, whoſe ebbs and flows we are now conſidering, cannot be exerted.

WHAT we obſerve, however, on the tendency of enlargement to looſen the bands of political union, cannot be applied to nations who, being originally narrow, never greatly extended their limits;

limits; nor to thoſe who, in a rude ſtate, had already the extenſion of a great kingdom.

In territories of conſiderable extent, ſubject to one government, and poſſeſſed of freedom, the national union, in rude ages, is extremely imperfect. Every diſtrict forms a ſeparate party; and the deſcendents of different families are oppoſed to each other, under the denomination of *tribes* or of *clans:* they are ſeldom brought to act with a ſteady concert; their feuds and animoſities give more frequently the appearance of ſo many nations at war, than of a people united by connections of policy. They acquire a ſpirit, however, in their private diviſions, and in the midſt of a diſorder, otherwiſe hurtful, of which the force, on many occaſions, redounds to the power of the ſtate.

Whatever be the national extent, civil order, and regular government, are advantages of the greateſt importance; but it does not follow, that every arrangement made to obtain theſe ends, and which may, in the making, exerciſe and cultivate the beſt qualities of men, is therefore of a nature to produce permanent effects, and to ſecure the preſervation of that national ſpirit from which it aroſe.

We have reaſon to dread the political refinements of ordinary men, when we conſider that repoſe, or inaction itſelf, is in a great meaſure

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their object; and that they would frequently model their governments, not merely to prevent injuſtice and error, but to prevent agitation and buſtle; and by the barriers they raiſe againſt the evil actions of men, would prevent them from *acting at all. Every diſpute of a free people, in* the opinion of ſuch politicians, amounts to diſorder, and a breach of the national peace. What heart burnings? What delay to affairs? What want of ſecrecy and diſpatch? What defect of police? Men of ſuperior genius ſometimes ſeem to imagine, that the vulgar have no title to act, or to think. A great prince is pleaſed to ridicule the precaution by which judges in a free country are confined to the ſtrict interpretation of law *.

We eaſily learn to contract our opinions of what men may, in conſiſtence with public order, be ſafely permitted to do. The agitations of a republic, and the licence of its members, ſtrike the ſubjects of monarchy with averſion and diſguſt. The freedom with which the European is left to traverſe the ſtreets and the fields, would appear to a Chineſe a ſure prelude to confuſion and anarchy. "Can men behold their ſuperior and "not tremble? Can they converſe without a pre-"ciſe and written ceremonial? What hopes of "peace, if the ſtreets are not barricaded at an "hour? What wild diſorder, if men are permit-"ted in any thing to do what they pleaſe?"

* Memoirs of Brandenburg.

If the precautions which men thus take againſt each other, be neceſſary to repreſs their crimes, and do not ariſe from a corrupt ambition, or from cruel jealouſy in their rulers, the proceeding itſelf muſt be applauded, as the beſt remedy of which the vices of men will admit. The viper muſt be held at a diſtance, and the tyger chained. But if a rigorous policy, applied to enſlave, not to reſtrain from crimes, has an actual tendency to corrupt the manners, and to extinguiſh the ſpirit of nations; if its ſeverities be applied to terminate the agitations of a free people, not to remedy their corruptions; if forms be often applauded as ſalutary, becauſe they tend merely to ſilence the voice of mankind, or be condemned as pernicious, becauſe they allow this voice to be heard; we may expect that many of the boaſted improvements of civil ſociety, will be mere devices to lay the political ſpirit at reſt, and will chain up the active virtues more than the reſtleſs diſorders of men.

If to any people it be the avowed object of policy in all its internal refinements to ſecure only the perſon and the property of the ſubject, without any regard to his political character, the conſtitution indeed may be free, but its members may likewiſe become unworthy of the freedom they poſſeſs, and unfit to preſerve it. The effects of ſuch a conſtitution may be to immerſe all orders of men in their ſeparate purſuits of pleaſure, which

which they may on this ſuppoſition enjoy with little diſturbance; or of gain, which they may preſerve without any attention to the commonwealth.

If this be the end of political ſtruggles, the deſign, when executed, in ſecuring to the individual his eſtate, and the means of ſubſiſtence, may put an end to the exerciſe of thoſe very virtues that were required in conducting its execution. A man who, in concert with his fellow-ſubjects, contends with uſurpation in defence of his eſtate or his perſon, may in that very ſtruggle have found an exertion of great generoſity, and of a vigorous ſpirit; but he who, under political eſtabliſhments, ſuppoſed to be fully confirmed, betakes him, becauſe he is ſafe, to the mere enjoyment of fortune, has in fact turned to a ſource of corruption the advantages which the virtues of the other procured. Individuals, in certain ages, derive their protection chiefly from the ſtrength of the party to which they adhere; but in times of corruption they flatter themſelves, that they may continue to derive from the public that ſafety which, in former ages, they muſt have owed to their own vigilance and ſpirit, to the warm attachment of their friends, and to the exerciſe of every talent which could render them reſpected, feared, or beloved. In one period, therefore, mere circumſtances ſerve to excite the ſpirit, and to preſerve the manners of men; in another, great wiſdom and zeal for

the good of mankind on the part of their leaders, are required for the ſame purpoſes.

ROME, it may be thought, did not die of a lethargy, nor periſh by the remiſſion of her political ardours at home. Her diſtemper appeared of a nature more violent and acute. Yet if the virtues of Cato and of Brutus found an exerciſe in the dying hour of the republic, the neutrality, and the cautious retirement of Atticus, found its ſecurity in the ſame tempeſtuous ſeaſon, and the great body of the people lay undiſturbed below the current of a ſtorm, by which the ſuperior ranks of men were deſtroyed. In the minds of the people, the ſenſe of a public was defaced; and even the animoſity of faction had ſubſided; they only could ſhare in the commotion, who were the ſoldiers of a legion, or the partiſans of a leader. But this ſtate fell not into obſcurity for want of eminent men. If at the time, of which we ſpeak, we look only for a few names diſtinguiſhed in the hiſtory of mankind, there is no period at which the liſt was more numerous. But thoſe names became diſtinguiſhed in the conteſt for dominion, not in the exerciſe of equal rights: the people was corrupted; ſo great an empire ſtood in need of a maſter.

REPUBLICAN governments, in general, are in hazard of ruin from the aſcendant of particular factions, and from the mutinous ſpirit of a populace,

pulace, who, being corrupted, are no longer fit to ſhare in the adminiſtration of ſtate. But under other eſtabliſhments, where liberty may be more ſucceſsfully attained if men are corrupted, the national vigour declines from the abuſe of that very ſecurity which is procured by the ſuppoſed perfection of public order.

A DISTRIBUTION of power and office; an execution of law, by which mutual incroachments and moleſtations are brought to an end; by which the perſon and the property are, without friends, without cabal, without obligation, perfectly ſecured to individuals, does honour to the genius of a nation; and could not have been fully eſtabliſhed, without thoſe exertions of underſtanding and integrity, thoſe trials of a reſolute and vigorous ſpirit, which adorn the annals of a people, and leave to future ages a ſubject of juſt admiration and applauſe. But if we ſuppoſe that the end is attained, and that men no longer act, in the enjoyment of liberty, from liberal ſentiments, or with a view to the preſervation of public manners; if individuals think themſelves ſecure without any attention or effort of their own; this boaſted advantage may be found only to give them an opportunity of enjoying, at leiſure, the conveniencies and neceſſaries of life; or, in the language of Cato, teach them to value their houſes, their villas, their ſtatues, and their pictures, at a higher rate than they do the re-

public. They may be found to grow tired in ſecret of a free conſtitution, of which they never ceaſe to boaſt in their converſation, and which they always neglect in their conduct.

THE dangers to liberty are not the ſubject of our preſent conſideration; but they can never be greater from any cauſe than they are from the ſuppoſed remiſſneſs of a people, to whoſe perſonal vigour every conſtitution, as it owed its eſtabliſhment, ſo muſt continue to owe its preſervation. Nor is this bleſſing ever leſs ſecure than it is in the poſſeſſion of men who think that they enjoy it in ſafety, and who therefore conſider the public only as it preſents to their avarice a number of lucrative employments; for the ſake of which, they may ſacrifice thoſe very rights which render themſelves objects of management or of conſideration.

FROM the tendency of theſe reflections, then, it ſhould appear, that a national ſpirit is frequently tranſient, not on account of any incurable diſtemper in the nature of mankind, but on account of their voluntary neglects and corruptions. This ſpirit ſubſiſted ſolely, perhaps, in the execution of a few projects, entered into for the acquiſition of territory or wealth; it comes, like a uſeleſs weapon, to be laid aſide after its end is attained.

ORDINARY eſtabliſhments terminate in a relaxation of vigour, and ineffectual to the preſerva-

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tion of ſtates; becauſe they lead mankind to rely on their arts, inſtead of their virtues; and to miſtake for an improvement of human nature, a mere acceſſion of accommodation, or of riches*. Inſtitutions that fortify the mind, inſpire courage, and promote national felicity, can never tend to national ruin.

Is it not poſſible, amidſt our admiration of arts, to find ſome place for theſe? Let ſtateſmen, who are intruſted with the government of nations, reply for themſelves. It is their buſineſs to ſhew, whether they climb into ſtations of eminence, merely to diſplay a paſſion of intereſt, which they had better indulge in obſcurity; and whether they have capacity to underſtand the happineſs of a people, the conduct of whoſe affairs they are ſo willing to undertake.

* Adeo in quæ laboramus ſola crevimus
Divitias luxuriamque. Liv. lib. vii. c. 25.

SECTION IV.

The ſame Subject continued.

MEN frequently, while they are engaged in what is accounted the moſt ſelfiſh of all purſuits, the improvement of fortune, then moſt neglect themſelves; and while they reaſon for their country, forget the conſiderations that moſt deſerve their attention. Numbers, riches, and the other reſources of war, are highly important: But nations conſiſt of men; and a nation conſiſting of degenerate and cowardly men, is weak; a nation conſiſting of vigorous, public-ſpirited, and reſolute men, is ſtrong. The reſources of war, where other advantages are equal, may decide a conteſt; but the reſources of war, in hands that cannot employ them, are of no avail.

VIRTUE is a neceſſary conſtituent of national ſtrength: Capacity, and a vigorous underſtanding, are no leſs neceſſary to ſuſtain the fortune of ſtates. Both are improved by diſcipline, and by the exerciſes in which men are engaged. We deſpiſe, or we pity, the lot of mankind, while they lived under uncertain eſtabliſhments, and were obliged to ſuſtain in the ſame perſon, the character of the ſenator, the ſtateſman, and the ſoldier. Commercial nations diſcover, that any one of theſe characters is ſufficient in one perſon; and that the ends of each, when diſjoined, are more eaſily accompliſhed. The firſt, however, were circumſtances

ſtances under which nations advanced and proſpered; the ſecond were thoſe in which the ſpirit relaxed, and the nation went to decay.

We may, with good reaſon, congratulate our ſpecies on their having eſcaped from a ſtate of barbarous diſorder and violence, into a ſtate of domeſtic peace and regular policy; when they have ſheathed the dagger, and diſarmed the animoſities of civil contention; when the weapons with which they contend are the reaſonings of the wiſe, and the tongue of the eloquent. But we cannot, mean time, help to regret, that they ſhould ever proceed, in ſearch of perfection, to place every branch of adminiſtration behind the counter, and come to employ, inſtead of the ſtateſman and warrior, the mere clerk and accountant.

By carrying this ſyſtem to its height, men are educated, who could copy for Cæſar his military inſtructions, or even execute a part of his plans; but none who could act in all the different ſcenes for which the leader himſelf muſt be qualified, in the ſtate, and in the field, in times of order or of tumult, in times of diviſion or of unanimity; none who could animate the council when deliberating on domeſtic affairs, or when alarmed by attacks from abroad.

The policy of China is the moſt perfect model of an arrangement at which the ordinary refinements of government are aimed; and the inhabitants

bitants of that empire poſſeſs, in the higheſt degree, thoſe arts on which vulgar minds make the felicity and greatneſs of nations to depend. The ſtate has acquired, in a meaſure unequalled in the hiſtory of mankind, numbers of men, and the other reſources of war. They have done what we are very apt to admire; they have brought national affairs to the level of the meaneſt capacity; they have broke them into parts, and thrown them into ſeparate departments; they have clothed every proceeding with ſplendid ceremonies, and majeſtical forms; and where the reverence of forms cannot repreſs diſorder, a rigorous and ſevere police, armed with every ſpecies of corporal puniſhment, is applied to the purpoſe. The whip, and the cudgel, are held up to all orders of men; they are at once employed, and they are dreaded by every magiſtrate. A mandarine is whipped, for having ordered a pickpocket to receive too few or too many blows.

Every department of ſtate is made the object of a ſeparate profeſſion, and every candidate for office muſt have paſſed through a regular education; and, as in the graduations of the univerſity, muſt have obtained by his proficiency, or his ſtanding, the degree to which he aſpires. The tribunals of ſtate, of war, and of the revenue, as well as of literature, are conducted by graduates in their different ſtudies: But while learning is the great road to preferment, it terminates in being able to read, and to write; and the great object

ject of government conſiſts in raiſing, and in conſuming the fruits of the earth. With all theſe reſources, and this learned preparation, which is made to turn theſe reſources to uſe, the ſtate is in reality weak; has repeatedly given the example which we ſeek to explain; and among the doctors of war or of policy, among the millions who are ſet apart for the military profeſſion, can find none of its members who are fit to ſtand forth in the dangers of their country, or to form a defence againſt the repeated inroads of an enemy reputed to be artleſs and mean.

It is difficult to tell how long the decay of ſtates might be ſuſpended, by the cultivation of arts on which their real felicity and ſtrength depend; by cultivating in the higher ranks thoſe talents for the council and the field, which cannot, without great diſadvantage, be ſeparated; and in the body of a people, that zeal for their country, and that military character, which enable them to take a ſhare in defending its rights.

Times may come, when every proprietor muſt defend his own poſſeſſions, and every free people maintain their own independence. We may imagine, that, againſt ſuch an extremity, an army of hired troops is a ſufficient precaution; but their own troops are the very enemy againſt which a people is ſometimes obliged to fight. We may flatter ourſelves, that extremities of this ſort, in any particular caſe, are remote; but we cannot,

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in reaſoning on the general fortunes of mankind, avoid putting the caſe, and referring to the examples in which it has happened. It has happened in every inſtance where the poliſhed have fallen a prey to the rude, and where the pacific inhabitant has been reduced to ſubjection by military force.

If the defence and government of a people be made to depend on a few, who make the conduct of ſtate or of war their profeſſion; whether theſe be foreigners or natives; whether they be called away of a ſudden, like the Roman legion from Britain; whether they turn againſt their employers, like the army of Carthage, or be overpowered and diſperſed by a ſtroke of fortune, the multitude of a cowardly and undiſciplined people muſt, on ſuch an emergence, receive a foreign or a domeſtic enemy, as they would a plague or an earthquake, with hopeleſs amazement and terror, and by their numbers, only ſwell the triumphs, and enrich the ſpoil of a conqueror.

Statesmen and leaders of armies, accuſtomed to the mere obſervance of forms, are diſconcerted by a ſuſpenſion of cuſtomary rules; and on ſlight grounds deſpair of their country. They were qualified only to go the rounds of a particular track; and when forced from their ſtations, are in reality unable to act with men. They only took part in formalities, of which they underſtood not the tendency; and together with the modes

modes of procedure, even the very ſtate itſelf, in their apprehenſion, has ceaſed to exiſt. The numbers, poſſeſſions, and reſources of a great people, only ſerve, in their view, to conſtitute a ſcene of hopeleſs confuſion and terror.

In rude ages, under the appellations of *a community*, *a people*, or *a nation*, was underſtood a number of men; and the ſtate, while its members remained, was accounted entire. The Scythians, while they fled before Darius, mocked at his childiſh attempt; Athens ſurvived the devaſtations of Xerxes; and Rome, in its rude ſtate, thoſe of the Gauls. With poliſhed and mercantile ſtates, the caſe is ſometimes reverſed. The nation is a territory, cultivated and improved by its owners; deſtroy the poſſeſſion, even while the maſter remains, the ſtate is undone.

That weakneſs and effeminacy of which poliſhed nations are ſometimes accuſed, has its place probably in the mind alone. The ſtrength of animals, and that of man in particular, depends on his feeding, and the kind of labour to which he is uſed. Wholeſome food, and hard labour, the portion of many in every poliſhed and commercial nation, ſecure to the publick a number of men endued with bodily ſtrength, and inured to hardſhip and toil.

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Even delicate living, and good accommodation, are not found to enervate the body. The armies of Europe have been obliged to make the experiment;

experiment; and the children of opulent families, bred in effeminacy, or nurſed with tender care, have been made to contend with the ſavage. By imitating his arts, they have learned, like him, to traverſe the foreſt, and, in every ſeaſon, to ſubſiſt in the deſert. They have, perhaps, recovered a leſſon, which it has coſt civilized nations many ages to unlearn, That the fortune of a man is entire while he remains poſſeſſed of himſelf.

It may be thought, however, that few of the celebrated nations of antiquity, whoſe fate has given riſe to ſo much reflection on the viciſſitudes of human affairs, had made any great progreſs in thoſe enervating arts we have mentioned; or made thoſe arrangements from which the danger in queſtion could be ſuppoſed to ariſe. The Greeks, in particular, at the time they received the Macedonian yoke, had certainly not carried the commercial arts to ſo great a height as is common with the moſt flouriſhing and proſperous nations of Europe. They had ſtill retained the form of independent republics, the people were generally admitted to a ſhare in the government; and not being able to hire armies, they were obliged, by neceſſity, to bear a part in the defence of their country. By their frequent wars and domeſtic commotions, they were accuſtomed to danger, and were familiar with alarming ſituations: they were accordingly ſtill accounted the beſt ſoldiers and the beſt ſtateſmen of the known

known world. The younger Cyrus promiſed him ſelf the empire of Aſia by means of their aid and after his fall, a body of ten thouſand, although bereft of their leaders, baffled, in their retreat, all the military force of the Perſian empire. The victor of Aſia did not think himſelf prepared for that conqueſt, till he had formed an army from the ſubdued republics of Greece.

It is, however, true, that in the age of Philip, the military and political ſpirit of thoſe nations appears to have been conſiderably impaired, and to have ſuffered, perhaps, from the variety of intereſts and purſuits, as well as of pleaſures, with which their members came to be occupied; they even made a kind of ſeparation between the civil and military character. Phocion, we are told by Plutarch, having obſerved that the leading men of his time followed different courſes, that ſome applied themſelves to civil, others to military affairs, determined rather to follow the examples of Themiſtocles, Ariſtides, and Pericles, the leaders of a former age, who were equally prepared for either.

We find in the orations of Demoſthenes, a perpetual reference to this ſtate of manners. We find him exhorting the Athenians not only to declare war, but to arm themſelves for the execution of their own military plans. We find that there was an order of military men, who eaſily paſſed from the ſervice of one ſtate to that of another

other; and who, when they were neglected from home, turned away to enterprifes on their own account. There were not, perhaps, better warriors in any former age; but thofe warriors were not attached to any ftate; and the fettled inhabitants of every city thought themfelves difqualified for military fervice. The difcipline of armies was perhaps improved; but the vigour of nations was gone to decay. When Philip, or Alexander, defeated the Grecian armies, which were chiefly compofed of foldiers of fortune, they found an eafy conqueft with the other inhabitants; and when the latter, afterwards fupported by thofe foldiers, invaded the Perfian empire, he feems to have left little martial fpirit behind him; and by removing the military men, to have taken precaution enough, in his abfence, to fecure his dominion over this mutinous and refractory people.

The fubdivifion of arts and profeffions, in certain examples, tends to improve the practice of them, and to promote their ends. By having feparated the arts of the clothier and the tanner, we are the better fupplied with fhoes and with cloth. But to feparate the arts which form the citizen and the ftatefman, the arts of policy and war, is an attempt to difmember the human character, and to deftroy thofe very arts we mean to improve. By this feparation, we in effect deprive a free people of what is neceffary to their fafety; or we prepare a defence againft invafions from abroad, which gives a profpect of ufurpation, and threatens

threatens the eſtabliſhment of military government at home.

We may be ſurprized to find the beginning of certain military inſtructions at Rome, referred to a time no earlier than that of the Cimbric war. It was then, we are told by Valerius Maximus, that Roman ſoldiers were made to learn from gladiators the uſe of a ſword: And the Antagoniſts of Pyrrhus and of Hannibal were, by the account of this writer, ſtill in need of inſtruction in the *firſt rudiments of their trade. They had already*, by the order and choice of their incampments, impreſſed the Grecian invader with awe and reſpect; they had already, not by their victories, but by their national vigour and firmneſs, under repeated defeats, induced him to ſue for peace. But the haughty Roman, perhaps, knew the advantage of order and of union, without having been broke to the inferior arts of the mercenary ſoldier; and had the courage to face the enemies of his country, without having practiſed the uſe of his weapon under the fear of being whipped. He could ill be perſuaded that a time might come, when refined and intelligent nations would make the art of war to conſiſt in a few technical forms; that citizens and ſoldiers might come to be diſtinguiſhed as much as women and men; that the citizen would become poſſeſſed of a property which he would not be able, or required, to defend; that the ſoldier would be appointed to keep for another what he would be taught to deſire, and what he

alone would be enabled to ſeize and to keep for himſelf; that, in ſhort, one ſet of men were to have an intereſt in the preſervation of civil eſtabliſhments, without the power to defend them; that the other were to have this power, without either the inclination or the intereſt.

THIS people, however, by degrees came to put their military force on the very footing to which this deſcription alludes. Marius made a capital change in the manner of levying ſoldiers at Rome: He filled his legions with the mean and the indigent, who depended on military pay for ſubſiſtence, he created a force which reſted on mere diſcipline alone, and the ſkill of the gladiator; he taught his troops to employ their ſwords againſt the conſtitution of their country, and ſet the example of a practice which was ſoon adopted and improved by his ſucceſſors.

THE Romans only meant by their armies to incroach on the freedom of other nations, while they preſerved their own. They forgot, that in aſſembling ſoldiers of fortune, and in ſuffering any leader to be maſter of a diſciplined army, they actually reſigned their political rights, and ſuffered a maſter to ariſe for the ſtate. This people, in ſhort, whoſe ruling paſſion was depredation and conqueſt, periſhed by the recoil of an engine which they themſelves had erected againſt mankind.

THE boaſted refinements, then, of the poliſhed age, are not diveſted of danger. They open a door,

door, perhaps, to diſaſter, as wide and acceſſible as any of thoſe they have ſhut. If they build walls and ramparts, they enervate the minds of thoſe who are placed to defend them; if they form diſciplined armies, they reduce the military ſpirit of entire nations; and by placing the ſword where they have given a diſtaſte to civil eſtabliſhments, they prepare for mankind the government of force.

It is happy for the nation of Europe, that the diſparity between the ſoldier and the pacific citizen can never be ſo great as it became among the Greeks and the Romans. In the uſe of modern arms, the novice is made to learn, and to practiſe with eaſe, all that the veteran knows; and if to teach him were a matter of real difficulty, happy are they who are not deterred by ſuch difficulties, and who can diſcover the arts which tend to fortify and preſerve, not to enervate and ruin their country.

SECTION V.

Of National Waſte.

THE ſtrength of nations conſiſts in the wealth, the numbers, and the character of their people. The hiſtory of their progreſs from a ſtate of rudeneſs, is, for the moſt part, a detail of the ſtruggles they have maintained, and of the arts they have practiſed, to ſtrengthen, or to ſecure themſelves. Their conqueſts, their population, and their commerce, their civil and military arrangements, their ſkill in the conſtruction of weapons, and in the methods of attack and defence; the very diſtribution of taſks, whether in private buſineſs or in public affairs, either tend to beſtow, or promiſe to employ with advantage, the conſtituents of a national force, and the reſources of war.

IF we ſuppoſe that, together with theſe advantages, the military character of a people remains, or is improved, it muſt follow, that what is gained in civilization, is a real increaſe of ſtrength; and that the ruin of nations could never take its riſe from themſelves. Where ſtates have ſtopped ſhort in their progreſs, or have actually gone to decay, we may ſuſpect, that however diſpoſed to advance, they have found a limit, beyond which they could not proceed; or from a remiſſion of the national ſpirit, and a weakneſs of character, were unable to make the moſt of their

their reſources, and natural advantages. On this ſuppoſition, from being ſtationary, they may begin to relapſe, and by a retrograde motion in a ſucceſſion of ages, arrive at a ſtate of greater weakneſs, than that which they quitted in the beginning of their progreſs; and with the appearance of better arts, and ſuperior conduct, expoſe themſelves to become a prey to barbarians, whom, in the attainment, or the height of their glory, they had eaſily baffled or deſpiſed.

WHATEVER may be the natural wealth of a people, or whatever may be the limits beyond which they cannot improve on their ſtock, it is probable, that no nation has ever reached thoſe limits, or has been able to poſtpone its misfortunes, and the effects of miſconduct, until its fund of materials, and the fertility of its ſoil, were exhauſted, or the numbers of its people were greatly reduced. The ſame errors in policy, and weakneſs of manners, which prevent the proper uſe of reſources, likewiſe check their increaſe, or improvement.

THE wealth of the ſtate conſiſts in the fortune of its members. The actual revenue of the ſtate is that ſhare of every private fortune, which the public has been accuſtomed to demand for national purpoſes. This revenue cannot be always proportioned to what may be ſuppoſed redundant in the private eſtate, but to what is, in ſome

meaſure, thought ſo by the owner; and to what he may be made to ſpare, without intrenching on his manner of living, and without ſuſpending his projects of expence, or of commerce. It ſhould appear, therefore, that any immoderate increaſe of private expence is a prelude to national weakneſs: government, even while each of its ſubjects conſumes a princely eſtate, may be ſtraitened in point of revenue, and the parodox be explained by example, That the public is poor, while its members are rich.

We are frequently led into error by miſtaking money for riches; we think that a people cannot be impoveriſhed by a waſte of money which is ſpent among themſelves. The fact is, that men are impoveriſhed only in two ways; either by having their gains ſuſpended, or by having their ſubſtance conſumed; and money expended at home, being circulated, and not conſumed, cannot, any more than the exchange of a tally, or a counter, among a certain number of hands, tend to diminiſh the wealth of the company among whom it is handed about. But while money circulates at home, the neceſſaries of life, which are the real conſtituents of wealth, may be idly conſumed; the induſtry which might be employed to increaſe the ſtock of a people, may be ſuſpended, or turned to abuſe.

Great armies, maintained either at home or abroad, without any national object, are ſo many

5 mouths

mouths unneceſſarily opened to waſte the ſtores of the public, and ſo many hands with-held from the arts by which its profits are made. Unſucceſsful enterpriſes are ſo many ventures thrown away, and loſſes ſuſtained, proportioned to the capital employed in the ſervice. The Helvetii, in order to invade the Roman province of Gaul, burnt their habitations, dropt their inſtruments of huſbandry, and conſumed, in one year, the ſavings of many. The enterpriſe failed of ſucceſs, and the nation was undone.

STATES have endeavoured, in ſome inſtances, by pawning their credit, inſtead of employing their capital, to diſguiſe the hazards they ran. They have found, in the loans they raiſed, a caſual reſource, which encouraged their enterpriſes. They have ſeemed, by their manner of erecting transferrable funds, to leave the capital for purpoſes of trade, in the hands of the ſubject, while it is actually expended by the government. They have, by theſe means, proceeded to the execution of great national projects, without ſuſpending private induſtry, and have left future ages to anſwer, in part, for debts contracted with a view to future emolument. So far the expedient is plauſible, and appears to be juſt. The growing burden too, is thus gradually laid; and if a nation be to ſink in ſome future age, every miniſter hopes it may ſtill keep afloat in his own. But the meaſure, for this very

reaſon, is, with all its advantages, extremely dangerous, in the hands of a precipitant and ambitious adminiſtration, regarding only the preſent occaſion, and imagining a ſtate to be inexhauſtible, while a capital can be borrowed, and the intereſt be paid.

We are told of a nation who, during a certain period, rivalled the glories of the ancient world, threw off the dominion of a maſter armed againſt them with the powers of a great kingdom, broke the yoke with which they had been oppreſſed, and almoſt within the courſe of a century raiſed, by their induſtry and national vigour, a new and formidable power, which ſtruck the former potentates of Europe with awe and ſuſpence, and turned the badges of poverty with which they ſet out, into the enſigns of war and dominion. This end was attained by the great efforts of a ſpirit awakened by oppreſſion, by a ſucceſsful purſuit of national wealth, and by a rapid anticipation of future revenue. But this illuſtrious ſtate is ſuppoſed not only in the language of a former ſection, to have pre-occupied the buſineſs; they have ſequeſtered the inheritance of many ages to come.

Great national expence, however, does not imply the neceſſity of any national ſuffering. While revenue is applied with ſucceſs, to obtain ſome valuable end, the profits of every adven-

ture,

ture, being more than ſufficient to repay its coſts, the public ſhould gain and its reſources ſhould continue to multiply. But an expence, whether ſuſtained at home or abroad, whether a waſte of the preſent, or an anticipation of future, revenue, if it bring no proper return, is to be reckoned among the cauſes of national ruin.

PART

PART SIXTH.

OF

CORRUPTION and POLITICAL Slavery.

SECTION I.

Of Corruption in General.

IF the fortune of nations, and their tendency to aggrandiſement, or to ruin, were to be eſtimated by merely balancing, on the principles of laſt ſection, articles of profit and loſs, every argument in politics would reſt on a compariſon of national expence with national gain; on a compariſon of the numbers who conſume, with thoſe who produce or amaſs the neceſſaries of life. The columns of the induſtrious, and the idle, would include all orders of men; and the ſtate itſelf, being allowed as many magiſtrates, politicians, and warriors, as were barely ſufficient for its defence and its government, ſhould place, on the ſide of its loſs, every name that is ſupernumerary on the civil or the military liſt; all thoſe orders of men, who, by the poſſeſſion of fortune, ſubſiſt on the gains of others, and by the nicety of their choice, require great

a great expence of time and of labour, to ſupply their conſumption; all thoſe who are idly employed in the train of perſons of rank, all thoſe who are engaged in the profeſſions of law, phyſic, or divinity, together with all the learned who do not, by their ſtudies, promote or improve the practice of ſome lucrative trade. The value of every perſon, in ſhort, ſhould be computed from his labour; and that of labour itſelf, from its tendency to procure and amaſs the means of ſubſiſtence. The arts employed on mere ſuperfluities ſhould be prohibited, except when their produce could be exchanged with foreign nations, for commodities that might be employed to maintain uſeful men for the public.

These appear to be the rules by which a miſer would examine the ſtate of his own affairs, or thoſe of his country; but ſchemes of perfect corruption are at leaſt as impracticable as ſchemes of perfect virtue. Men are not univerſally miſers; they will not be ſatisfied with the pleaſure of hoarding; they muſt be ſuffered to enjoy their wealth, in order that they may take the trouble of becoming rich. Property, in the common courſe of human affairs, is unequally divided: We are therefore obliged to ſuffer the wealthy to ſquander, that the poor may ſubſiſt; we are obliged to tolerate certain orders of men, who are above the neceſſity of labour, in order that, in their condition, there may be an object of ambition, and a rank to which the buſy aſpire. We are not only obliged

obliged to admit numbers, who, in ſtrict œconomy, may be reckoned ſuperfluous, on the civil, the military, and the political liſt; but becauſe we are men, and prefer the occupation, improvement, and felicity of our nature, to its mere exiſtence, we muſt even wiſh, that as many members as poſſible, of every community, may be admitted to a ſhare of its defence and its government.

Men, in fact, while they purſue in ſociety different objects, or ſeparate views, procure a wide diſtribution of power, and by a ſpecies of chance, arrive at a poſture for civil engagement, more favourable to human nature than what human wiſdom could ever calmly deviſe.

If the ſtrength of a nation, in the mean time, conſiſts in the men on whom it may rely, and who are fortunately or wiſely combined for its preſervation, it follows, that manners are as important as either numbers or wealth; and that corruption is to be accounted a principal cauſe of the national declenſion and ruin.

Whoever perceives what are the qualities of man in his excellence, may eaſily, by that ſtandard, diſtinguiſh his defects or corruptions. If an intelligent, a courageous, and an affectionate mind, conſtitutes the perfection of his nature, remarkable failings in any of thoſe particulars, muſt proportionally ſink or debaſe his character.

We

WE have obſerved, that it is the happineſs of the individual to make a right choice of his conduct; that this choice will lead him to loſe in ſociety the ſenſe of a perſonal intereſt; and, in the conſideration of what is due to the whole, to ſtifle thoſe anxieties which relate to himſelf as a part.

THE natural diſpoſition of man to humanity, and the warmth of his temper, may raiſe his character to this fortunate pitch. His elevation, in a great meaſure, depends on the form of his ſociety; but he can, without incurring the charge of corruption, accommodate himſelf to great variations in the conſtitutions of government. The ſame *integrity, and vigorous ſpirit, which, in democratical* ſtates, renders him tenacious of his equality, may, under ariſtocracy or monarchy, lead him to maintain the ſubordinations eſtabliſhed. He may entertain, towards the different ranks of men with whom he is yoked in the ſtate, maxims of reſpect and of candour: he may, in the choice of his actions follow a principle of juſtice, and of honour, which the conſiderations of ſafety, preferment, or profit, cannot efface.

FROM our complaints of national depravity, it ſhould, notwithſtanding, appear, that whole bodies of men are ſometimes infected with an epidemical weakneſs of the head, or corruption of heart, by which they become unfit for the ſtations they occupy, and threaten the ſtates they compoſe, however

however flouriſhing, with a proſpect of decay, and of ruin.

A CHANGE of national manners for the worſe, may ariſe from a diſcontinuance of the ſcenes in which the talents of men were happily cultivated, and brought into exerciſe; or from a change in the prevailing opinions relating to the conſtituents of honour or of happineſs. When mere riches, or court-favour, are ſuppoſed to conſtitute rank; the mind is miſled from the conſideration of qualities on which it ought to rely. Magnanimity, courage, and the love of mankind, are ſacrificed to avarice and vanity, or ſuppreſſed under a ſenſe of dependance. The individual conſiders his community ſo far only as it can be rendered ſubſervient to his perſonal advancement or profit: he ſtates himſelf in competition with his fellow-creatures; and, urged by the paſſions of emulation, of fear and jealouſy, of envy and malice, he follows the maxims of an animal deſtined to preſerve his ſeparate exiſtence, and to indulge his caprice or his appetite, at the expence of his ſpecies.

ON this corrupt foundation, men become either rapacious, deceitful, and violent, ready to treſpaſs on the rights of others; or ſervile, mercenary, and baſe, prepared to relinquiſh their own. Talents, capacity, and force of mind, poſſeſſed by a perſon of the firſt deſcription, ſerve to plunge him the deeper in miſery, and to ſharpen the agony of cruel paſſions, which lead him to wreak on his fellow-

fellow-creatures the torments that prey on himſelf. To a perſon of the ſecond, imagination, and reaſon itſelf, only ſerve to point out falſe objects of fear or deſire, and to multiply the ſubjects of diſappointment, and of momentary joy. In either caſe, and whether we ſuppoſe that corrupt men are urged by covetouſneſs, or betrayed by fear, and without ſpecifying the crimes which from either diſpoſition they are prepared to commit, we may ſafely affirm, with Socrates, "That every "maſter ſhould pray he may not meet with ſuch "a ſlave; and every ſuch perſon, being unfit for "liberty, ſhould implore that he may meet with "a merciful maſter."

MAN, under this meaſure of corruption, although he may be bought for a ſlave by thoſe who know how to turn his faculties and his labour to profit; and although, when kept under proper reſtraints, his neighbourhood may be convenient or uſeful; yet is certainly unfit to act on the footing of a liberal combination or concert with his fellow-creatures: His mind is not addicted to friendſhip or confidence; he is not willing to act for the preſervation of others, nor deſerves that any other ſhould hazard his own ſafety for his.

THE actual character of mankind, mean time, in the worſt, as well as the beſt condition, is undoubtedly mixed: And nations of the beſt deſcription are greatly obliged for their preſervation, not only to the good diſpoſition of their members, but

but likewiſe to thoſe political inſtitutions, by which the violent are reſtrained from the commiſſion of crimes, and the cowardly, or the ſelfiſh, are made to contribute their part to the public defence or proſperity. By means of ſuch inſtitutions, and the wiſe precautions of government, nations are enabled to ſubſiſt, and even to proſper, under very different degrees of corruption, or of public integrity.

So long as the majority of a people are ſuppoſed to act on maxims of probity, the example of the good, and even the caution of the bad, give a general appearance of integrity, and of innocence. Where men are to one another objects of affection and of confidence, where they are generally diſpoſed not to offend, government may be remiſs; and every perſon may be treated as innocent, till he is found to be guilty. As the ſubject, in this caſe, does not hear of the crimes, ſo he need not be told of the puniſhments inflicted on perſons of a different character. But where the manners of a people are conſiderably changed for the worſe, every ſubject muſt ſtand on his guard, and government itſelf muſt act on ſuitable maxims of fear and diſtruſt. The individual, no longer fit to be indulged in his pretenſions to perſonal conſideration, independence, or freedom, each of which he would turn to abuſe, muſt be taught, by external force, and from motives of fear, to counterfeit thoſe effects of innocence, and of duty, to which he is not diſpoſed:

He muſt be referred to the whip, or the gibbet, for arguments in ſupport of a caution, which the ſtate now requires him to aſſume, on a ſuppoſition that he is inſenſible to the motives which recommend the practice of virtue.

THE rules of deſpotiſm are made for the government of corrupted men. They were indeed followed on ſome remarkable occaſions, even under the Roman commonwealth; and the bloody axe, to terrify the citizen from his crimes, and to repel the caſual and temporary irruptions of vice, was repeatedly committed to the arbitrary will of the dictator. They were finally eſtabliſhed on the ruins of the republic itſelf, when either the people became too corrupted for freedom, or when the magiſtrate became too corrupted to reſign his dictatorial power. This ſpecies of government comes naturally in the termination of a continued and growing corruption; but has, no doubt, in ſome inſtances, come too ſoon, and has ſacrificed remains of virtue, that deſerved a better fate, to the jealouſy of tyrants, who were in haſte to augment their power. This method of government cannot, in ſuch caſes, fail to introduce that meaſure of corruption, againſt whoſe external effects it is deſired as a remedy. When fear is ſuggeſted as the only motive to duty, every heart becomes rapacious or baſe. And this medicine, if applied to a healthy body, is ſure to create the diſtemper, which in other caſes it is deſtined to cure.

THIS

This is the manner of government into which the covetous, and the arrogant, to ſatiate their unhappy deſires, would hurry their fellow-creatures: It is a manner of government to which the timorous and the ſervile ſubmit at diſcretion; and when theſe characters of the rapacious and the timid divide mankind, even the virtues of Antoninus or Trajan can do no more than apply, with candour and with vigour, the whip and the ſword; and endeavour, by the hopes of reward, or the fear of puniſhment, to find a ſpeedy and a temporary cure for the crimes, or the imbecilities of men.

Other ſtates may be more or leſs corrupted: This has corruption for its baſis. Here juſtice may ſometimes direct the arm of the deſpotical ſovereign; but the name of juſtice is moſt commonly employed to ſignify the intereſt, or the caprice of a reigning power. Human ſociety, ſuſceptible of ſuch a variety of forms, here finds the ſimpleſt of all. The toils and poſſeſſions of many are deſtined to aſſwage the paſſions of one or a few; and the only parties that remain among mankind, are the oppreſſor who demands, and the oppreſſed who dare not refuſe.

Nations, while they were intitled to a milder fate, as in the caſe of the Greeks, repeatedly conquered, have been reduced to this condition by military force. They have reached it too in the maturity of their own depravations; when, like

the Romans, returned from the conqueſt, and loaded with the ſpoils of the world, they give looſe to faction, and to crimes too bold and too frequent for the correction of ordinary government; and when the ſword of juſtice, dropping with blood, and perpetually required to ſuppreſs accumulating diſorders on every ſide, could no longer await the delays and precautions of an adminiſtration fettered by laws *.

It is, however, well known from the hiſtory of mankind, that corruption of this, or of any other degree, is not peculiar to nations in their decline, or in the reſult of ſignal proſperity, and great advances in the arts of commerce. The bands of ſociety, indeed, in ſmall and infant eſtabliſhments, are generally ſtrong; and their ſubjects, either by an ardent devotion to their own tribe, or a vehement animoſity againſt enemies, and by a vigorous courage founded on both, are well qualified to urge, or to ſuſtain, the fortune of a growing community. But the ſavage and the barbarian have given, notwithſtanding, in the caſe of entire nations, ſome examples of a weak and timorous character †. They have, in more inſtances, fallen into that ſpecies of corruption which we have already deſcribed in treating of barbarous nations; they have made rapine their trade, not merely as a ſpecies of warfare, or with a view to enrich

* Saluſt. Bell. Catalinarium.

† The barbarous nations of Siberia, in general, are ſervile and timid.

their

their community, but to poſſeſs, in property, what they learned to prefer even to the ties of affection or of blood.

In the loweſt ſtate of commercial arts, the paſſions for wealth, and for dominion, have exhibited ſcenes of oppreſſion or ſervility, which the moſt finiſhed corruption of the arrogant, the cowardly, and the mercenary, founded on the deſire of procuring, or the fear of loſing, a fortune, could not exceed. In ſuch caſes, the vices of men, unreſtrained by forms, and unawed by police, are ſuffered to riot at large, and to produce their entire effects. Parties accordingly unite, or ſeparate, on the maxims of a gang of robbers: they ſacrifice to intereſt the tendereſt affections of human nature. The parent ſupplies the market for ſlaves, even by the ſale of his own children; the cottage ceaſes to be a ſanctuary for the weak and the defenceleſs ſtranger; and the rites of hoſpitality, often ſo ſacred among nations in their primitive ſtate, come to be violated, like every other tie of humanity, without fear or remorſe *.

Nations which, in later periods of their hiſtory, became eminent for civil wiſdom and juſtice, had, perhaps, in a former age, paroxyſms of lawleſs diſorder, to which this deſcription might in part be applied. The very policy by which they arrived at their degree of national felicity,

* Chardin's travels through Mingrelia into Perſia.

was deviſed as a remedy for outrageous abuſe. The eſtabliſhment of order was dated from the commiſſion of rapes and murders, indignation, and private revenge, were the principles on which nations proceeded to the expulſion of tyrants, to the emancipation of mankind, and the full explanation of their political rights.

Defects of government and of law may be, in ſome caſes, conſidered as a ſymptom of innocence and of virtue. But where power is already eſtabliſhed, where the ſtrong are unwilling to ſuffer reſtraint, or the weak unable to find a protection, the defects of law are marks of the moſt perfect corruption.

Among rude nations, government is often defective; both becauſe men are not yet acquainted with all the evils for which poliſhed nations have endeavoured to find a redreſs; and becauſe, even where evils of the moſt flagrant nature have long afflicted the peace of ſociety, they have not yet been able to apply the cure. In the progreſs of civilization, new diſtempers break forth, and new remedies are applied: but the remedy is not always applied the moment the diſtemper appears; and laws, though ſuggeſted by the commiſſion of crimes, are not the ſymptom of a recent corruption, but of a deſire to find a remedy that may cure, perhaps, ſome inveterate evil which has long afflicted the ſtate.

There

THERE are corruptions, however, under which men ſtill poſſeſs the vigour and the reſolution to correct themſelves. Such are the violence and the outrage which accompany the colliſion of fierce and daring ſpirits, occupied in the ſtruggles which ſometimes precede the dawn of civil and commercial improvements. In ſuch caſes, men have frequently diſcovered a remedy for evils, of which their own miſguided impetuoſity, and ſuperior force of mind, were the principal cauſes. But if to a depraved diſpoſition, we ſuppoſe to be joined a weakneſs of ſpirit; if to an admiration and deſire of riches, be joined an averſion to danger or buſineſs; if thoſe orders of men whoſe valour is required by the public, ceaſe to be brave; if the members of ſociety in general have not thoſe perſonal qualities which are required to fill the ſtations of equality, or of honour, to which they are invited by the forms of the ſtate; they muſt ſink to a depth from which their imbecility, even more than their depraved inclinations, may prevent their riſe.

SECTION II.

Of Luxury.

WE are far from being agreed on the application of the term *luxury*, or on that degree of its meaning which is conſiſtent with national proſperity, or with the moral rectitude of our nature. It is ſometimes employed to ſignify a manner of life which we think neceſſary to civilization, and even to happineſs. It is, in our panegyric of poliſhed ages, the parent of arts, the ſupport of commerce, and the miniſter of national greatneſs, and of opulence. It is, in our cenſure of degenerate manners, the ſource of corruption, and the preſage of national declenſion and ruin. It is admired, and it is blamed; it is treated as ornamental and uſeful, and it is proſcribed as a vice.

WITH all this diverſity in our judgments, we are generally uniform in employing the term to ſignify that complicated apparatus which mankind deviſe for the eaſe and convenience of life. Their buildings, furniture, equipage, cloathing, train of domeſtics, refinement of the table, and, in general, all that aſſemblage which is rather intended to pleaſe the fancy, than to obviate real wants, and which is rather ornamental than uſeful.

When we are diſpoſed, therefore, under the appellation of *luxury*, to rank the enjoyment of theſe things among the vices, we either tacitly refer to the habits of ſenſuality, debauchery, prodigality, vanity, and arrogance, with which the poſſeſſion of high fortune is ſometimes attended; or we apprehend a certain meaſure of what is neceſſary to human life, beyond which all enjoyments are ſuppoſed to be exceſſive and vicious. When, on the contrary, luxury is made an article of national luſtre and felicity, we only think of it as an innocent conſequence of the unequal diſtribution of wealth, and as a method by which different ranks are rendered mutually dependent, and mutually uſeful. The poor are made to practiſe arts, and the rich to reward them. The public itſelf is made a gainer by what ſeems to waſte its ſtock, and it receives a perpetual increaſe of wealth, from the influence of thoſe growing appetites, and delicate taſtes, which ſeem to menace conſumption and ruin.

It is certain, that we muſt either, together with the commercial arts, ſuffer their fruits to be enjoyed, and even in ſome meaſure admired; or, like the Spartans, prohibit the art itſelf, while we are afraid of its conſequences, or while we think that the conveniencies it brings exceed what nature requires. But we may propoſe to ſtop the advancement of arts at any ſtage of their progreſs, and ſtill incur the cenſure of luxury from

from thoſe who have not advanced ſo far. The houſe-builder and the carpenter at Sparta were limited to the uſe of the axe and the ſaw; but a Spartan cottage might have paſſed for a palace in Thrace: and if the diſpute were to turn on the knowledge of what is phyſically neceſſary to the preſervation of human life, as the ſtandard of what is morally lawful, the faculties of phyſic, as well as of morality, would probably divide on the ſubject, and leave every individual, as at preſent, to find ſome rule for himſelf. The caſuiſt, for the moſt part, conſiders the practice of his own age and condition as a ſtandard for mankind. If in one age or condition he condemn the uſe of a coach, in another he would have no leſs cenſured the wearing of ſhoes; and the very perſon who exclaims againſt the firſt, would probably not have ſpared the ſecond, if it had not been already familiar in ages before his own. A cenſor born in a cottage, and accuſtomed to ſleep upon ſtraw, does not propoſe that men ſhould return to the woods and the caves for ſhelter; he admits the reaſonableneſs and the utility of what is already familiar; and apprehends an exceſs and corruption, only in the neweſt refinement of the riſing generation.

The clergy of Europe have preached ſucceſſively againſt every new faſhion, and every innovation in dreſs. The modes of youth are a ſubject of cenſure to the old; and modes of the laſt age,

age, in their turn, are matter of ridicule to the flippant, and the young. Of this there is not always a better account to be given, than that the old are diſpoſed to be ſevere, and the young to be merry.

THE argument againſt many of the conveniencies of life, drawn from the mere conſideration of their not being neceſſary, was equally proper in the mouth of the ſavage, who diſſuaded from the firſt applications of induſtry, as it is in that of the moraliſt, who inſiſts on the vanity of the laſt. "Our anceſtors," he might ſay, "found "their dwelling under this rock; they gathered "their food in the foreſt; they allayed their "thirſt from the fountain, and they were cloathed "in the ſpoils of the beaſt they had ſlain. Why "ſhould we indulge a falſe delicacy, or require "from the earth fruits which ſhe is not accuſ-"tomed to yield? The bow of our father is "already too ſtrong for our arms; and the wild "beaſt begins to lord it in the woods."

THUS the moraliſt may have found, in the proceedings of every age, thoſe topics of blame, from which he is ſo much diſpoſed to arraign the manners of his own; and our embarraſſment on the ſubject is, perhaps, but a part of that general perplexity which we undergo, in trying to define moral characters by external circumſtances, which may, or may not, be attended with faults in the

mind and the heart. One man finds a vice in the wearing of linen; another does not, unleſs the fabric be fine: and if, mean-time, it be true, that a perſon may be dreſſed in manufacture either coarſe or fine; that he may ſleep in the fields, or lodge in a palace; tread upon carpet, or plant his foot on the ground; while the mind either retains, or has loſt its penetration, and its vigour, and the heart its affection to mankind, it is vain, under any ſuch circumſtance, to ſeek for the diſtinctions of virtue and vice, or to tax the poliſhed citizen with weakneſs for any part of his equipage, or for his wearing a fur, in which, perhaps, ſome ſavage was dreſſed before him. Vanity is not diſtinguiſhed by any peculiar ſpecies of dreſs. It is betrayed by the Indian in the phantaſtic aſſortments of his plumes, his ſhells, his party-coloured furs, and in the time he beſtows at the glaſs and the toilet. Its projects in the woods and in the town are the ſame: in the one, it ſeeks, with the viſage bedaubed, and with teeth artificially ſtained, for that admiration, which it courts in the other with a gilded equipage, and liveries of ſtate.

Poliſhed nations, in their progreſs, often come to ſurpaſs the rude in moderation, and ſeverity of manners. "The Greeks," ſays Thucydides, not "long ago, like barbarians, wore golden ſpangles in the hair, and went armed in times of "peace." Simplicity of dreſs in this people, became

came a mark of politeneſs; and the mere materials with which the body is nouriſhed or cloathed, are probably of little conſequence to any people. We muſt look for the characters of men in the qualities of the mind, not in the ſpecies of their food, or in the mode of their apparel. What are now the ornaments of the grave and ſevere; what is owned to be a real conveniency, were once the fopperies of youth, or were deviſed to pleaſe the effeminate. The new faſhion, indeed, is often the mark of the coxcomb; but we frequently change our faſhions without multiplying coxcombs, or increaſing the meaſures of our vanity and folly.

Are the apprehenſions of the ſevere, therefore, in every age, equally groundleſs and unreaſonable? Are we never to dread any error in the article of a refinement beſtowed on the means of ſubſiſtence, or the conveniencies of life? The fact is, that men are perpetually expoſed to the commiſſion of error in this article, not merely where they are accuſtomed to high meaſures of accommodation, or to any particular ſpecies of food, but wherever theſe objects, in general, may come to be preferred to their character, to their country, or to mankind; they actually commit ſuch error, wherever they admire paultry diſtinctions or frivolous advantages; wherever they ſhrink from ſmall inconveniencies, and are incapable of diſcharging their duty with vigour

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The uſe of morality on this ſubject, is not to limit men to any particular ſpecies of lodging, diet, or cloaths; but to prevent their conſidering theſe conveniencies as the principal objects of human life. And if we are aſked, Where the purſuit of trifling accommodations ſhould ſtop, in order that a man may devote himſelf entirely to the higher engagements of life? we may anſwer, That it ſhould ſtop where it is. This was the rule followed at Sparta: The object of the rule was, to preſerve the heart entire for the public, and to occupy men in cultivating their own nature, not in accumulating wealth, and external conveniencies. It was not expected otherwiſe, that the axe or the ſaw ſhould be attended with greater political advantage, than the plane and the chiſel. When Cato walked the ſtreets of Rome without his robe, and without ſhoes, he did ſo, moſt probably, in contempt of what his countrymen were ſo prone to admire; not in hopes of finding a virtue in one ſpecies of dreſs, or a vice in another.

Luxury, therefore, conſidered as a predilection in favour of the objects of vanity, and the coſtly materials of pleaſure, is ruinous to the human character; conſidered as the mere uſe of accommodations and conveniencies which the age has procured, rather depends on the progreſs which the mechanical arts have made, and on the degree in which the fortunes of men are unequally parcelled, than on the diſpoſitions of particular men either to vice or to virtue.

Different

DIFFERENT meaſures of luxury are, however, variouſly ſuited to different conſtitutions of government. The advancement of arts ſuppoſes an unequal diſtribution of fortune; and the means of diſtinction they bring, ſerve to render the ſeparation of ranks more ſenſible. Luxury is, upon this account, apart from all its moral effects, adverſe to the form of democratical government; and, in any ſtate of ſociety, can be ſafely admitted in that degree only in which the members of a community are ſuppoſed of unequal rank, and conſtitute public order by the relations of ſuperior and vaſſal. High degrees of it appear ſalutary, and even neceſſary, in monarchical and mixed governments; where, beſides the encouragement to arts and commerce, it ſerves to give luſtre to thoſe hereditary or conſtitutional dignities which have a place of importance in the political ſyſtem. Whether even here luxury leads to abuſe peculiar to ages of high refinement and opulence, we ſhall proceed to conſider in the following ſections.

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SECTION III.

Of the Corruption incident to Poliſhed Nations.

LUXURY and corruption are frequently coupled together, and even paſs for ſynonymous terms. But, in order to avoid any diſpute about words, by the firſt we may underſtand that accumulation of wealth, and that refinement on the ways of enjoying it, which are the objects of induſtry, or the fruits of mechanic and commercial arts: And by the ſecond a real weakneſs, or depravity of the human character, which may accompany any ſtate of thoſe arts, and be found under any external circumſtances or condition whatſoever. It remains to inquire, what are the corruptions incident to poliſhed nations, arrived at certain meaſures of luxury, and poſſeſſed of certain advantages, in which they are generally ſuppoſed to excel?

We need not have recourſe to a parallel between the manners of entire nations, in the extremes of civilization and rudeneſs, in order to be ſatisfied, that the vices of men are not proportioned to their fortunes; or that the habits of avarice, or of ſenſuality, are not founded on any certain meaſures of wealth, or determinate kind of enjoyment. Where the ſituations of particular men are varied as much by their perſonal ſtations,

tions, as they can be by the ſtate of national refinements, the ſame paſſions for intereſt, or pleaſure, prevail in every condition. They ariſe from temperament, or an acquired admiration of property; not from any particular manner of life in which the parties are engaged, nor from any particular ſpecies of property which may have occupied their cares and their wiſhes.

TEMPERANCE and moderation are, at leaſt, as frequent among thoſe whom we call the ſuperior, as they are among the lower claſſes of men; and however we may affix the character of ſobriety to mere cheapneſs of diet, and other accommodations with which any particular age, or rank of men, appear to be contented, it is well known, that coſtly materials are not neceſſary to conſtitute a debauch, nor profligacy leſs frequent under the thatched roof, than under the lofty ceiling. Men grow equally familiar with different conditions, receive equal pleaſure, and are equally allured to ſenſuality in the palace and in the cave. Their acquiring in either, habits of intemperance or ſloth, depends on the remiſſion of other purſuits, and on the diſtaſte of the mind to other engagements. If the affections of the heart be awake, and the paſſions of love, admiration, or anger, be kindled, the coſtly furniture of the palace, as well as the homely accommodations of the cottage, are neglected. And men, when rouſed, reject their repoſe;

poſe; or, when fatigued, embrace it alike on the ſilken bed, or on the couch of ſtraw.

We are not, however, from hence to conclude, that luxury, with all its concomitant circumſtances, which either ſerve to favour its increaſe, or which, in the arrangements of civil ſociety, follow it as conſequences, can have no effect to the diſadvantage of national manners. If that reſpite from public dangers and troubles which gives a leiſure for the practice of commercial arts, be continued, or increaſed, into a diſuſe of national efforts; if the individual, not called to unite with his country, be left to purſue his private advantage; we may find him become effeminate, mercenary, and ſenſual; not becauſe pleaſures and profits are become more alluring, but becauſe he has fewer calls to attend to other objects; and becauſe he has more encouragement to ſtudy his perſonal advantages, and purſue his ſeparate intereſts.

If the diſparities of rank and fortune, which are neceſſary to the purſuit or enjoyment of luxury, introduce falſe grounds of precedency and eſtimation; if, on the mere conſiderations of being rich or poor, one order of men are, in their own apprehenſion, elevated, another debaſed, if one be criminally proud, another meanly dejected; and every rank in its place, like the tyrant, who thinks that nations are made for himſelf, be diſ-

poſed

poſed to aſſume on the rights of mankind: although, upon the compariſon, the higher order may be leaſt corrupted; or from education, and a ſenſe of perſonal dignity, have moſt good qualities remaining, yet the one becoming mercenary and ſervile; the other imperious and arrogant; both regardleſs of juſtice and of merit; the whole maſs is corrupted, and the manners of a ſociety changed for the worſe, in proportion as its members ceaſe to act on principles of equality, independence, or freedom.

Upon this view, and conſidering the merits of men in the abſtract, a mere change from the habits of a republic to thoſe of a monarchy, from the love of equality, to the ſenſe of a ſubordination founded on birth, titles, and fortune, is a ſpecies of corruption to mankind. But this degree of corruption is ſtill conſiſtent with the ſafety and proſperity of ſome nations; it admits of a vigorous courage, by which the rights of individuals, and of kingdoms, may be long preſerved.

Under the form of monarchy, while yet in its vigour, ſuperior fortune is, indeed, one mark by which the different orders of men are diſtinguiſhed; but there are ſome other ingredients, without which wealth is not admitted as a foundation of precedency, and in favour of which it is often deſpiſed, and laviſhed away. Such are birth and titles, the reputation of courage, courtly manners,

and a certain elevation of mind. If we ſuppoſe that theſe diſtinctions are forgotten, and nobility itſelf only to be known by the ſumptuous retinue which money alone may procure; and by a laviſh expence, which the more recent fortunes can generally beſt ſuſtain, luxury muſt then be allowed to corrupt the monarchical as much as the republican ſtate, and to introduce a fatal diſſolution of manners, under which men of every condition, although they are eager to acquire, or to diſplay their wealth, have no remains of real ambition. They have neither the elevation of nobles, nor the fidelity of ſubjects; they have changed into effeminate vanity, that ſenſe of honour which gave rules to the perſonal courage; and into a ſervile baſeneſs that loyalty, which bound each in his place to his immediate ſuperior, and the whole to the throne.

Nations are moſt expoſed to corruption from this quarter, when the mechanical arts, being greatly advanced, furniſh numberleſs articles to be applied in ornament to the perſon, in furniture, entertainment, or equipage; when ſuch articles as the rich alone can procure are admired; and when conſideration, precedence, and rank, are accordingly made to depend on fortune.

In a more rude ſtate of the arts, although wealth be unequally divided, the opulent can amaſs only the ſimple means of ſubſiſtence: They can only fill

fill the granary, and furnish the stall; reap from more extended fields, and drive their herds over a larger pasture. To enjoy their magnificence, they must live in a crowd, and to secure their possessions, they must be surrounded with friends that espouse their quarrels. Their honour, as well as their safety, consist in the numbers who attend them; and their personal distinctions are taken from their liberality, and supposed elevation of mind. In this manner, the possession of riches serves only to make the owner assume a character of magnanimity to become the guardian of numbers, or the public object of respect and affection. But when the bulky constituents of wealth, and of rustic magnificence, can be exchanged for refinements, and when the produce of the soil may be turned into equipage, and mere decoration; when the combination of many is no longer required for personal safety; the master may become the sole consumer of his own estate: he may refer the use of every subject to himself; he may employ the materials of generosity to feed a personal vanity, or to indulge a sickly and effeminate fancy, which has learned to enumerate the trappings of weakness or folly among the necessaries of life.

The Persian satrape, we are told, when he saw the King of Sparta at the place of their conference stretched on the grass with his soldiers, blushed at the provision he made for the accom-

modation of his own perſon; he ordered the furs and the carpets to be withdrawn; he felt his own inferiority; and recollected, that he was to treat with a man, not to vie with a pageant in coſtly attire and magnificence.

When, amidſt circumſtances that make no trial of the virtues or talents of men, we have been accuſtomed to the air of ſuperiority which people of fortune derive from their retinue, we are apt to loſe every ſenſe of diſtinction ariſing from merit, or even from abilities. We rate our fellow-citizens by the *figure* they are able to make; by their buildings, their dreſs, their equipage, and the train of their followers. All theſe circumſtances make a part in our eſtimate of what is excellent; and if the maſter himſelf is known to be a pageant in the midſt of his fortune, we nevertheleſs pay our court to his ſtation, and look up with an envious, ſervile, or dejected mind, to what is, in itſelf, ſcarcely fit to amuſe children; though, when it is worn as a badge of diſtinction, it inflames the ambition of thoſe we call the great, and ſtrikes the multitude with awe and reſpect.

We judge of entire nations by the productions of a few mechanical arts, and think we are talking of men, while we are boaſting of their eſtates, their dreſs, and their palaces. The ſenſe in which we apply the terms, *great*, and *noble*, *high rank*, and *high life*, ſhew that we have, on ſuch occa-

ſions, transferred the idea of perfection from the character to the equipage; and that excellence itſelf is, in our eſteem, a mere pageant, adorned at a great expence by the labours of many workmen.

To thoſe who overlook the ſubtle tranſitions of the imagination, it might appear, ſince wealth can do no more than furniſh the means of ſubſiſtence, and purchaſe animal pleaſures, that covetouſneſs and venality itſelf, ſhould keep pace with our fears of want, or with our appetite for ſenſual enjoyments; and that where the appetite is ſatiated, and the fear of want is removed, the mind ſhould be at eaſe on the ſubject of fortune. But they are not the mere pleaſures that riches procure, nor the choice of viands which cover the board of the wealthy, that inflame the paſſions of the covetous and the mercenary. Nature is eaſily ſatisfied in all her enjoyments. It is an opinion of eminence, connected with fortune; it is a ſenſe of debaſement attending on poverty, which renders us blind to every advantage, but that of the rich; and inſenſible to every diſgrace, but that of the poor. It is this unhappy apprehenſion, that occaſionally prepares us for the deſertion of every duty, for a ſubmiſſion to every indignity, and for the commiſſion of every crime that can be accompliſhed in ſafety.

AURENGZEBE was not more renowned for ſobriety in his private ſtation, and in the conduct

of a ſuppoſed diſſimulation, by which he aſpired to ſovereign power, than he continued to be, even on the throne of Indoſtan. Simple, abſtinent, and ſevere in his diet, and other pleaſures, he ſtill led the life of a hermit, and occupied his time with a ſeemingly painful application to the affairs of a great empire *. He quitted a ſtation in which, if pleaſure had been his object, he might have indulged his ſenſuality without reſerve; he made his way to a ſcene of diſquietude and care; he aimed at the ſummit of human greatneſs, in the poſſeſſion of imperial fortune, not at the gratifications of animal appetite, or the enjoyment of eaſe. Superior to ſenſual pleaſure, as well as to the feelings of nature, he dethroned his father, and he murdered his brothers, that he might roll on a carriage incruſted with diamond and pearl; that his elephants, his camels, and his horſes, on the march, might form a line extending many leagues; might preſent a glittering harneſs to the ſun; and, loaded with treaſure, uſher to the view of an abject and admiring crowd that awful majeſty, in whoſe preſence they were to ſtrike the forehead on the ground, and be overwhelmed with the ſenſe of his greatneſs, and with that of their own debaſement.

As theſe are the objects which prompt the deſire of dominion, and excite the ambitious to aim the maſtery of their fellow-creatures; ſo they in-

* Gemelli Careri.

ſpire

ſpire the ordinary race of men with a ſenſe of infirmity and meanneſs, that prepares them to ſuffer indignities, and to become the property of perſons, whom they conſider as of a rank and a nature ſo much ſuperior to their own.

THE chains of perpetual ſlavery, accordingly, appear to be rivetted in the Eaſt, no leſs by the pageantry which is made to accompany the poſſeſſion of power, than they are by the fears of the ſword, and the terrors of a military execution. In the Weſt, as well as the Eaſt, we are willing to bow to the ſplendid equipage, and ſtand at an awful diſtance from the pomp of a princely eſtate. We too may be terrified by the frowns, or won by the ſmiles, of thoſe whoſe favour is riches and honour, and whoſe diſpleaſure is poverty and neglect. We too may overlook the honours of the human ſoul, from an admiration of the pageantries that accompany fortune. The proceſſion of elephants harneſſed with gold might dazzle into ſlaves, the people who derive corruption and weakneſs from the effect of their own arts and contrivances, as well as thoſe who inherit ſervility from their anceſtors, and are enfeebled by their natural temperament, and the enervating charms of their ſoil and their climate.

IT appears, therefore, that although the mere uſe of materials which conſtitute luxury, may be diſtinguiſhed from actual vice; yet nations under

a high ſtate of the commercial arts, are expoſed to corruption, by their admitting wealth, unſupported by perſonal elevation and virtue, as the great foundation of diſtinction, and by having their attention turned on the ſide of intereſt, as the road to conſideration and honour.

With this effect, luxury may ſerve to corrupt democratical ſtates, by introducing a ſpecies of monarchical ſubordination, without that ſenſe of high birth and hereditary honours which render the boundaries of rank fixed and determinate, and which teach men to act in their ſtations with force and propriety. It may prove the occaſion of political corruption, even in monarchical governments, by drawing reſpect towards mere wealth; by caſting a ſhade on the luſtre of perſonal qualities, or family-diſtinctions; and by infecting all orders of men with equal venality, ſervility, and cowardice.

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SECTION IV.

The ſame Subject continued.

THE increaſing regard with which men appear, in the progreſs of commercial arts, to ſtudy their profit, or the delicacy with which they refine on their pleaſures; even induſtry itſelf, or the habit of application to a tedious employment, in which no honours are won, may, perhaps, be conſidered as indications of a growing attention to intereſt, or of effeminacy, contracted in the enjoyment of eaſe and conveniency. Every ſucceſſive art, by which the individual is taught to improve on his fortune, is, in reality, an addition to his private engagements, and a new avocation of his mind from the public.

CORRUPTION, however, does not ariſe from the abuſe of commercial arts alone; it requires the aid of political ſituation; and is not produced by the objects that occupy a ſordid and a mercenary ſpirit, without the aid of circumſtances that enable men to indulge in ſafety any mean diſpoſition they have acquired.

PROVIDENCE has fitted mankind for the higher engagements which they are ſometimes obliged to fulfil; and it is in the midſt of ſuch engagements that they are moſt likely to acquire or to preſerve their virtues. The habits of a vigorous mind are formed in contending with difficulties, not in enjoying

joying the repoſe of a pacific ſtation; penetration and wiſdom are the fruits of experience, not the leſſons of retirement and leiſure; ardour and generoſity are the qualities of a mind rouſed and animated in the conduct of ſcenes that engage the heart, not the gifts of reflection or knowledge. The mere intermiſſion of national and political efforts is, notwithſtanding, ſometimes miſtaken for public good; and there is no miſtake more likely to foſter the vices, or to flatter the weakneſs, of feeble and intereſted men.

If the ordinary arts of policy, or rather, if a growing indifference to objects of a public nature, ſhould prevail, and, under any free conſtitution, put an end to thoſe diſputes of party, and ſilence that noiſe of diſſenſion which generally accompany the exerciſe of freedom, we may venture to prognoſticate corruption to the national manners, as well as remiſſneſs to the national ſpirit. The period is come, when no engagement, remaining on the part of the public, private intereſt, and animal pleaſure, become the ſovereign objects of care. When men, being relieved from the preſſure of great occaſions, beſtow their attention on trifles; and having carried what they are pleaſed to call *ſenſibility* and *delicacy*, on the ſubject of eaſe or moleſtation, as far as real weakneſs or folly can go, have recourſe to affectation, in order to enhance the pretended demands, and accumulate the anxieties, of a ſickly fancy, and enfeebled mind.

In,

In this condition, mankind generally flatter their own imbecility under the name of *politeneſs*. They are perſuaded, that the celebrated ardour, generoſity, and fortitude of former ages bordered on frenzy, or were the mere effects of neceſſity, on men who had not the means of enjoying their eaſe, or their pleaſure. They congratulate themſelves on having eſcaped the ſtorm which required the exerciſe of ſuch arduous virtues; and with that vanity which accompanies the human race in their meaneſt condition, they boaſt of a ſcene of affectation, of languor, or of folly, as the ſtandard of human felicity, and as furniſhing the propereſt exerciſe of a rational nature.

It is none of the leaſt menacing ſymptoms of an age prone to degeneracy, that the minds of men become perplexed in the diſcernment of merit, as much as the ſpirit becomes enfeebled in conduct, and the heart miſled in the choice of its objects. The care of mere fortune is ſuppoſed to conſtitute wiſdom; retirement from public affairs, and real indifference to mankind, receive the applauſes of moderation, and of virtue.

Great fortitude, and elevation of mind, have not always, indeed, been employed in the attainment of valuable ends; but they are always reſpectable, and they are always neceſſary when we would act for the good of mankind, in any of the more arduous ſtations of life. While, therefore, we blame their miſapplication, we ſhould beware of

of depreciating their value. Men of a ſevere and ſententious morality have not always ſufficiently obſerved this caution; nor have they been duly aware of the corruptions they flattered, by the ſatire they employed againſt what is aſpiring and prominent in the character of the human ſoul.

It might have been expected, that, in an age of hopeleſs debaſement, the talents of Demoſthenes and Tully, even the ill-governed magnanimity of a Macedonian, or the daring enterpriſe of a Carthaginian leader, might have eſcaped the acrimony of a ſatiriſt*, who had ſo many objects of correction in his view, and who poſſeſſed the arts of declamation in ſo high a degree.

I, demens, et ſævos curre per Alpes,
Ut pueris placeas, et declamatio fias,

is part of the illiberal cenſure which is thrown by this poet on the perſon and action of a leader, who, by his courage and conduct, in the very ſervice to which the ſatire referred, had well nigh ſaved his country from the ruin with which it was at laſt overwhelmed.

Heroes are much the ſame, the point's agreed,
From Macedonia's madman to the Swede,

is a diſtich, in which another poet of beautiful talents has attempted to depreciate a name, to which, probably, few of his readers are found to aſpire.

* Juvenal's 10th ſatire.

If,

If men must go wrong, there is a choice of their errors, as well as of their virtues. Ambition, the love of personal eminence, and the desire of fame, although they sometimes lead to the commission of crimes, yet always engage men in pursuits that require to be supported by some of the greatest qualities of the human soul; and if eminence is the principal object of pursuit, there is at least a probability, that those qualities may be studied on which a real elevation of mind is raised. But when public alarms have ceased, and contempt of glory is recommended as an article of wisdom, the sordid habits, and mercenary dispositions to which, under a general indifference to national objects, the members of a polished or commercial state are exposed, must prove at once the most effectual suppression of every liberal sentiment, and the most fatal reverse of all those principles from which communities derive their strength and their hopes of preservation.

It is noble to possess happiness and independence, either in retirement, or in public life. The characteristic of the happy, is to acquit themselves well in every condition; in the court, or in the village; in the senate, or in the private retreat. But if they affect any particular station, it is surely that in which their actions may be rendered most extensively useful. Our considering mere retirement, therefore, as a symptom of moderation and of virtue, is either a remnant

nant of that ſyſtem, under which monks and anchorets, in former ages, have been canonized; or proceeds from a habit of thinking, which appears equally fraught with moral corruption, from our conſidering public life as a ſcene for the gratification of mere vanity, avarice, and ambition; never as furniſhing the beſt opportunity for a juſt and a happy engagement of the mind and the heart.

Emulation, and the deſire of power, are but ſorry motives to public conduct; but if they have been, in any caſe, the principal inducements from which men have taken part in the ſervice of their country, any diminution of their prevalence or force is a real corruption of national manners; and the pretended moderation aſſumed by the higher orders of men, has a fatal effect in the ſtate. The diſintereſted love of the public is a principle, without which ſome conſtitutions of government cannot ſubſiſt: but when we conſider how ſeldom this has appeared a reigning paſſion, we have little reaſon to impute the proſperity or preſervation of nations, in every caſe, to its influence.

It is ſufficient, perhaps, under one form of government, that men ſhould be fond of their independence; that they ſhould be ready to oppoſe uſurpation, and to repel perſonal indignities: Under another, it is ſufficient, that they ſhould be tenacious of their rank, and of their honours; and inſtead of a zeal for the public, entertain a vigilant jealouſy of the rights which pertain

pertain to themselves. When numbers of men retain a certain degree of elevation and fortitude; they are qualified to give a mutual check to their several errors, and are able to act in that variety of situations which the different constitutions of government have prepared for their members: But, under the disadvantages of a feeble spirit, however directed, and however informed, no national constitution is safe, nor can any degree of enlargement, to which a state has arrived, secure its political welfare.

In states where property, distinction, and pleasure, are thrown out as baits to the imagination, and incentives to passion, the public seems to rely for the preservation of its political life, on the degree of emulation and jealousy with which parties mutually oppose and restrain each other. The desires of preferment and profit in the breast of the citizen, are the motives from which he is excited to enter on public affairs, and are the considerations which direct his political conduct. The suppression, therefore, of ambition, of party-animosity, and of public envy, is probably, in every such case, not a reformation, but a symptom of weakness, and a prelude to more sordid pursuits, and ruinous amusements.

On the eve of such a revolution in manners, the higher ranks, in every mixed or monarchical government, have need to take care of themselves. Men of business, and of industry, in the inferior stations of life, retain their occupations,

and are ſecured by a kind of neceſſity, in the poſſeſſion of thoſe habits on which they rely for their quiet, and for the moderate enjoyments of life. But the higher orders of men, if they relinquiſh the ſtate, if they ceaſe to poſſeſs that courage and elevation of mind, and to exerciſe thoſe talents which are employed in its defence and in its government, are, in reality, by the ſeeming advantages of their ſtation, become the refuſe of that ſociety of which they once were the ornament, and from being the moſt reſpectable, and the moſt happy, of its members, are become the moſt wretched and corrupt. In their approach to this condition, and in the abſence of every manly occupation, they feel a diſſatisfaction and languor which they cannot explain: They pine in the midſt of apparent enjoyments; or, by the variety and caprice of their different purſuits and amuſements, exhibit a ſtate of agitation, which, like the diſquiet of ſickneſs, is not a proof of enjoyment or pleaſure, but of ſuffering and pain. The care of his buildings, his equipage, or his table, is choſen by one, literary amuſement, or ſome frivolous ſtudy, by another. The ſports of the country, and the diverſions of the town; the gaming-table *, dogs, horſes, and wine, are em-

* Theſe different occupations differ from each other, in reſpect to their dignity and their innocence; but none of them are the ſchools from which men are brought to ſuſtain the tottering fortune of nations; they are equally avocations from what ought to be the principal purſuit of man, the good of mankind.

ployed

ployed to fill up the blank of a liſtleſs and unprofitable life. They ſpeak of human purſuits, as if the whole difficulty were to find ſomething to do: They fix on ſome frivolous occupation, as if there was nothing that deſerved to be done: They conſider what tends to the good of their fellow-creatures, as a diſadvantage to themſelves: They fly from every ſcene in which any efforts of vigour are required, or in which they might be allured to perform any ſervice to their country. We miſapply our compaſſion in pitying the poor; it were much more juſtly applied to the rich, who become the firſt victims of that wretched inſignificance, into which the members of every corrupted ſtate, by the tendency of their weakneſſes and their vices, are in haſte to plunge themſelves.

It is in this condition, that the ſenſual invent all thoſe refinements on pleaſure, and deviſe thoſe incentives to a ſatiated appetite, which tend to foſter the corruptions of a diſſolute age. The effects of brutal appetite, and the mere debauch, are more flagrant, and more violent, perhaps, in rude ages, than they are in the later periods of commerce and luxury: But that perpetual habit of ſearching for animal pleaſure where it is not to be found, in the gratifications of an appetite that is cloyed, and among the ruins of an animal conſtitution, is not more fatal to the virtues of the ſoul, than it is even to the enjoyment of

ſloth, or of pleaſure; it is not a more certain avocation from public affairs, or a ſurer prelude to national decay, than it is a diſappointment to our hopes of private felicity.

In theſe reflections, it has been the object not to aſcertain a preciſe meaſure to which corruption has riſen in any of the nations that have attained to eminence, or that have gone to decay; but to deſcribe that remiſſneſs of ſpirit, that weakneſs of ſoul, that ſtate of national debility, which is likely to end in political ſlavery; an evil which remains to be conſidered as the laſt object of caution, and beyond which there is no ſubject of diſquiſition in the periſhing fortunes of nations.

SEC-

SECT. V.

Of Corruption, as it tends to Political Slavery.

LIBERTY, in one ſenſe, appears to be the portion of poliſhed nations alone. The ſavage is perſonally free, becauſe he lives unreſtrained, and acts with the members of his tribe on terms of equality. The barbarian is frequently independent from a continuance of the ſame circumſtances, or becauſe he has courage and a ſword. But good policy alone can provide for the regular adminiſtration of juſtice, or conſtitute a force in the ſtate, which is ready on every occaſion to defend the rights of its members.

IT has been found, that, except in a few ſingular caſes, the commercial and political arts have advanced together. Theſe arts have been in modern Europe ſo interwoven, that we cannot determine which were prior in the order of time, or derived moſt advantage from the mutual influences with which they act and re-act on each other. It has been obſerved, that in ſome nations the ſpirit of commerce, intent on ſecuring its profits, has led the way to political wiſdom. A people, poſſeſſed of wealth, and become jealous of their properties, have formed the project of emancipation, and have proceeded, under favour of an importance recently gained, ſtill farther to enlarge their pretenſions, and to diſpute the prerogatives which their ſovereign had been in uſe to

employ. But it is in vain that we expect in one age, from the poſſeſſion of wealth, the fruit which it is ſaid to have borne in a former. Great acceſſions of fortune, when recent, when accompanied with frugality, and a ſenſe of independence, may render the owner confident in his ſtrength, and ready to ſpurn at oppreſſion. The purſe which is open, not to perſonal expence, or to the indulgence of vanity, but to ſupport the intereſts of a faction, to gratify the higher paſſions of party, render the wealthy citizen formidable to thoſe who pretend to dominion; but it does not follow, that in a time of corruption, equal, or greater, meaſures of wealth ſhould operate to the ſame effect.

On the contrary, when wealth is accumulated only in the hands of the miſer, and runs to waſte from thoſe of the prodigal; when heirs of family find themſelves ſtraitened and poor in the midſt of affluence; when the cravings of luxury ſilence even the voice of party and faction; when the hopes of meriting the rewards of compliance, or the fear of loſing what is held at diſcretion, keep men in a ſtate of ſuſpence and anxiety; when fortune, in ſhort, inſtead of being conſidered as the inſtrument of a vigorous ſpirit, becomes the idol of a covetous or a profuſe, of a rapacious or a timorous mind, the foundation on which freedom was built may ſerve to ſupport a tyranny; and what, in one age, raiſed the pretenſions, and foſtered the confidence of the ſubject, may, in another,

ther, incline him to ſervility, and furniſh the price to be paid for his proſtitutions. Even thoſe who, in a vigorous age, gave the example of wealth, in the hands of the people, becoming an occaſion of freedom, may, in times of degeneracy, verify likewiſe the maxim of Tacitus, That the admiration of riches leads to deſpotical government *.

Men who have taſted of freedom, and who have felt their perſonal rights, are not eaſily taught to bear with encroachments on either, and cannot, without ſome preparation, come to ſubmit to oppreſſion. They may receive this unhappy preparation under different forms of government, from different hands, and arrive at the ſame end by different ways. They follow one direction in republics, another in monarchies, and in mixed governments. But wherever the ſtate has, by means that do not preſerve the virtue of the ſubject, effectually guarded his ſafety; remiſſneſs, and neglect of the public, are likely to follow; and poliſhed nations of every deſcription, appear to encounter a danger, on this quarter, proportioned to the degree in which they have, during any continuance, enjoyed the uninterrupted poſſeſſion of peace and proſperity.

Liberty reſults, we ſay, from the government of laws; and we are apt to conſider ſtatutes, not

* Eſt apud illos et opibus honos; eoque unus imperitat, nullis jam exceptionibus, non precario jure parendi. Nec arma ut apud ceteros Germanos in promiſcuo ſed clauſa ſub cuſtode; et quidem ſervo: &c. *Tacitus de Mor. Ger. c.* 44.

merely as the reſolutions and maxims of a people determined to be free, not as the writings by which their rights are kept on record; but as a power erected to guard them, and as a barrier which the caprice of men cannot tranſgreſs.

When a baſha, in Aſia, pretends to decide every controverſy by the rules of natural equity, we allow that he is poſſeſſed of diſcretionary powers. When a judge in Europe is left to decide, according to his own interpretation of written laws, is he in any ſenſe more reſtrained than the former? Have the multiplied words of a ſtatute an influence over the conſcience, and the heart, more powerful than that of reaſon and nature? Does the party, in any judicial proceeding, enjoy a leſs degree of ſafety, when his rights are diſcuſſed, on the foundation of a rule that is open to the underſtandings of mankind, than when they are referred to an intricate ſyſtem, which it has become the object of a ſeparate profeſſion to ſtudy and to explain?

If forms of proceeding, written ſtatutes, or other conſtituents of law, ceaſe to be enforced by the very ſpirit from which they aroſe, they ſerve only to cover, not to reſtrain, the iniquities of power: They are poſſibly reſpected even by the corrupt magiſtrate, when they favour his purpoſe; but they are contemned or evaded, when they ſtand in his way: And the influence of laws, where they have any real effect in the preſervation of liberty,

is

is not any magic power deſcending from ſhelves that are loaded with books, but is, in reality, the influence of men reſolved to be free; of men, who, having adjuſted in writing the terms on which they are to live with the ſtate, and with their fellow-ſubjects, are determined, by their vigilance and ſpirit, to make theſe terms be fulfilled.

We are taught, under every form of government, to apprehend uſurpations, from the abuſe, or from the extenſion of the executive power. In pure monarchies, this power is commonly hereditary, and made to deſcend in a determinate line. In elective monarchies, it is held for life. In republics, it is exerciſed during a limited time. Where men, or families, are called by election to the poſſeſſion of temporary dignities, it is more the object of ambition to perpetuate, than to extend their powers. In hereditary monarchies, the ſovereignty is already perpetual; and the aim of every ambitious prince is to enlarge his prerogative. Republics, and, in times of commotion, communities of every form, are expoſed to hazard, not from thoſe only who are formally raiſed to places of truſt, but from every perſon whatſoever, who is incited by ambition, and who is ſupported by faction.

It is no advantage to a prince, or other magiſtrate, to enjoy more power than is conſiſtent with the good of mankind; nor is it of any benefit to a man to be unjuſt: But theſe maxims are a feeble

ſecurity

ſecurity againſt the paſſions and follies of men. Thoſe who are intruſted with power in any degree, are diſpoſed, from a mere diſlike of conſtraint, to remove oppoſition. Not only the monarch who wears a hereditary crown, but the magiſtrate who holds his office for a limited time, grows fond of his dignity. The very miniſter, who depends for his place on the momentary will of his prince, and whoſe perſonal intereſts are, in every reſpect, thoſe of a ſubject, ſtill has the weakneſs to take an intereſt in the growth of prerogative, and to reckon as gain to himſelf the incroachments he has made on the rights of a people, with whom he himſelf and his family are ſoon to be numbered.

Even with the beſt intentions towards mankind, we are inclined to think that their welfare depends, not on the felicity of their own inclinations, or the happy employment of their own talents, but on their ready compliance with what we have deviſed for their good. Accordingly, the greateſt virtue of which any ſovereign has hitherto ſhown an example, is not a deſire of cheriſhing in his people the ſpirit of freedom and of independence; but what is in itſelf ſufficiently rare, and highly meritorious, a ſteady regard to the diſtribution of juſtice in matters of property, a diſpoſition to protect and to oblige, to redreſs the grievances, and to promote the intereſt of his ſubjects. It was from a reference to theſe objects that Titus computed the value of his time, and judged

judged of its application. But the ſword, which in this beneficent hand was drawn to protect the ſubject, and to procure a ſpeedy and effectual diſtribution of juſtice, was likewiſe ſufficient, in the hands of a tyrant, to ſhed the blood of the innocent, and to cancel the rights of men. The temporary proceedings of humanity, though they ſuſpended the exerciſe of oppreſſion, did not break the national chains: The prince was even the better enabled to procure that ſpecies of good which he ſtudied; becauſe there was no freedom remaining, and becauſe there was no where a force to diſpute his decrees, or to interrupt their execution.

Was it in vain, that Antoninus became acquainted with the characters of Thracea, Helvidius, Cato, Dion, and Brutus? Was it in vain, that he learned to underſtand the form of a free community, raiſed on the baſis of equality and juſtice; or of a monarchy, under which the liberties of the ſubject were held the moſt ſacred object of adminiſtration*? Did he miſtake the means of procuring to mankind what he points out as a bleſſing? Or did the abſolute power with which he was furniſhed, in a mighty empire, only diſable him from executing what his mind had perceived as a national good? In ſuch a caſe, it were vain to flatter the monarch or his people. The firſt cannot beſtow liberty without raiſing a ſpirit, which may, on occaſion, ſtand in oppoſition to his own deſigns; nor the latter receive this

* M. Antoninus, lib. 1.

bleſſing,

bleſſing, while they own that it is in the right of a maſter to give or to withhold it. The claim of juſtice is firm and peremptory. We receive favours with a ſenſe of obligation and kindneſs; but we would inforce our rights, and the ſpirit of freedom in this exertion cannot take the tone of ſupplication or of thankfulneſs, without betraying itſelf. "You have intreated Octavius," ſays Brutus to Cicero, "that he would ſpare thoſe who "ſtand foremoſt among the citizens of Rome. "What if he will not? Muſt we periſh? Yes, "rather than owe our ſafety to him."

Liberty is a right which every individual muſt be ready to vindicate for himſelf, and which he who pretends to beſtow as a favour, has by that very act in reality denied. Even political eſtabliſhments, though they appear to be independent of the will and arbitration of men, cannot be relied on for the preſervation of freedom; they may nouriſh, but ſhould not ſuperſede that firm and reſolute ſpirit, with which the liberal mind is always prepared to reſiſt indignities, and to refer its ſafety to itſelf.

Were a nation, therefore, given to be moulded by a ſovereign, as the clay is put into the hands of the potter, this project of beſtowing liberty on a people who are actually ſervile, is, perhaps, of all others the moſt difficult, and requires moſt to be executed in ſilence, and with the deepeſt reſerve. Men are qualified to receive this bleſſing, only

only in proportion as they are made to apprehend their own rights; and are made to reſpect the juſt pretenſions of mankind, in proportion as they are willing to ſuſtain, in their own perſons, the burden of government, and of national defence; and are willing to prefer the engagements of a liberal mind to the enjoyment of ſloth, or the deluſive hopes of a ſafety purchaſed by ſubmiſſion and fear.

I SPEAK with reſpect, and, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, even with indulgence, to thoſe who are intruſted with high prerogatives in the political ſyſtem of nations. It is, indeed, ſeldom their fault that ſtates are inſlaved. What ſhould be expected from them, but that being actuated by human deſires, they ſhould be averſe to diſappointment, or even to delay; and in the ardour with which they purſue their object, that they ſhould break through the barriers that would ſtop their career? If millions recede before ſingle men, and ſenates are paſſive, as if compoſed of members who had no opinion or ſenſe of their own; on whoſe ſide have the defences of freedom given way, or to whom ſhall we impute their fall? To the ſubject, who has deſerted his ſtation; or to the ſovereign, who has only remained in his own; and who, if the collateral or ſubordinate members of government ſhall ceaſe to queſtion his power, muſt continue to govern without reſtraint?

It

It is well known, that conſtitutions framed for the preſervation of liberty, muſt conſiſt of many parts; and that ſenates, popular aſſemblies, courts of juſtice, magiſtrates of different orders, muſt combine to balance each other, while they exerciſe, ſuſtain, or check the executive power. If any part is ſtruck out, the fabrick muſt totter, or fall; if any member is remiſs, the others muſt encroach. In aſſemblies conſtituted by men of different talents, habits, and apprehenſions, it were ſomething more than human that could make them agree in every point of importance; having different opinions and views, it were want of integrity to abſtain from diſputes: Our very praiſe of unanimity, therefore, is to be conſidered, as a danger to liberty. We wiſh for it at the hazard of taking in its place the remiſſneſs of men grown indifferent to the public; the venality of thoſe who have ſold the rights of their country; or the ſervility of others, who give implicit obedience to a leader by whom their minds are ſubdued. The love of the public, and reſpect to its laws, are the points in which mankind are bound to agree; but if, in matters of controverſy, the ſenſe of any individual or party is invariably purſued, the cauſe of freedom is already betrayed.

He whoſe office it is to govern a ſupine or an abject people, cannot, for a moment, ceaſe to extend his powers. Every execution of law, every

every movement of the ſtate, every civil and military operation, in which his power is exerted, muſt ſerve to confirm his authority, and preſent him to the view of the public as the ſole object of conſideration, fear, and reſpect. Thoſe very eſtabliſhments which were deviſed, in one age, to limit or to direct the exerciſe of an executive power, will ſerve, in another, to remove obſtructions, and to ſmooth its way; they will point out the channels in which it may run, without giving offence, or without exciting alarms, and the very councils which were inſtituted to check its incroachments, will, in a time of corruption, furniſh an aid to its uſurpations.

THE paſſion for independence, and the love of dominion, frequently ariſe from a common ſource: There is, in both, an averſion to controul, and he who, in one ſituation, cannot brook a ſuperior, may, in another, diſlike to be joined with an equal.

WHAT the prince, under a pure or limited monarchy, is, by the conſtitution of his country, the leader of a faction would willingly become in republican governments. If he attains to this envied condition, his own inclination, or the tendency of human affairs, ſeem to open before him the career of a royal ambition: but the circumſtances in which he is deſtined to act, are very different from thoſe of a king. He encounters with

with men who are unuſed to diſparity; he is obliged, for his own ſecurity, to hold the dagger continually unſheathed. When he hopes to be ſafe, he poſſibly means to be juſt; but is hurried, from the firſt moment of his uſurpation, into every exerciſe of deſpotical power. The heir of a crown has no ſuch quarrel to maintain with his ſubjects: his ſituation is flattering; and the heart muſt be uncommonly bad that does not glow with affection to a people, who are at once his admirers, his ſupport, and the ornaments of his reign. In him, perhaps, there is no explicit deſign of treſpaſſing on the rights of his ſubjects; but the forms intended to preſerve their freedom are not, on this account, always ſafe in his hands.

Slavery has been impoſed upon mankind in the wantonneſs of a depraved ambition, and tyrannical cruelties have been committed in the gloomy hours of jealouſy and terror: yet theſe demons are not neceſſary to the creation, or to the ſupport of an arbitrary power. Although no policy was ever more ſucceſsful than that of the Roman republic in maintaining a national fortune; yet ſubjects, as well as their princes, frequently imagine that freedom is a clog on the proceedings of government: they imagine, that deſpotical power is beſt fitted to procure diſpatch and ſecrecy in the execution of public councils; to maintain what they are pleaſed to

call *political order* *, and to give a ſpeedy redreſs of complaints. They even ſometimes acknowledge, that if a ſucceſſion of good princes could be found, deſpotical government is beſt calculated for the happineſs of mankind. While they reaſon thus, they cannot blame a ſovereign, who, in the confidence that he is to employ his power for good purpoſes, endeavours to extend its limits; and, in his own apprehenſion, ſtrives only to ſhake off the reſtraints which ſtand in the way of reaſon, and which prevent the effect of his friendly intentions.

THUS prepared for uſurpation, let him, at the head of a free ſtate, employ the force with which he is armed, to cruſh the ſeeds of apparent diſorder in every corner of his dominions; let him effectually curb the ſpirit of diſſenſion and variance among his people; let him remove the inter-

* Our notion of order in civil ſociety being taken from the analogy of ſubjects inanimate and dead, is frequently falſe; we conſider commotion and action as contrary to its nature; we think that obedience, ſecrecy, and the ſilent paſſing of affairs through the hands of a few, are its real conſtituents. The good order of ſtones in a wall, is their being properly fixed in the places for which they are hewn; were they to ſtir, the building muſt fall: but the good order of men in ſociety, is their being placed where they are properly qualified to act. The firſt is a fabrick made of dead and inanimate parts, the ſecond is made of living and active members. When we ſeek in ſociety for the order of mere inaction and tranquillity, we forget the nature of our ſubject, and find the order of ſlaves, not that of freemen.

ſubjections to government, ariſing from the refractory humours and the private intereſts of his ſubjects; let him collect the force of the ſtate againſt its enemies, by availing himſelf of all it can furniſh in the way of taxation and perſonal ſervice: it is extremely probable that, even under the direction of wiſhes for the good of mankind, he may break through every barrier of liberty, and eſtabliſh a deſpotiſm, while he flatters himſelf that he only follows the dictates of ſenſe and propriety.

When we ſuppoſe government to have beſtowed a degree of tranquillity which we ſometimes hope to reap from it, as the beſt of its fruits, and public affairs to proceed, in the ſeveral departments of legiſlation and execution, with the leaſt poſſible interruption to commerce and lucrative arts; ſuch a ſtate, like that of China, by throwing affairs into ſeparate offices, where conduct conſiſts in detail, and in the obſervance of forms, by ſuperſeding all the exertions of a great or a liberal mind, is more akin to deſpotiſm than we are apt to imagine.

Whether oppreſſion, injuſtice, and cruelty, are the only evils which attend on deſpotical government, may be conſidered apart. In the mean time it is ſufficient to obſerve, that liberty is never in greater danger than it is when we meaſure national felicity by the bleſſings which a prince may beſtow,

beſtow, or by the mere tranquillity which may attend on equitable adminiſtration. The ſovereign may dazzle with his heroic qualities; he may protect his ſubjects in the enjoyment of every animal advantage or pleaſure. but the benefits ariſing from liberty are of a different ſort, they are not the fruits of a virtue, and of a goodneſs, which operate in the breaſt of one man, but the communication of virtue itſelf to many; and ſuch a diſtribution of functions in civil ſociety, as gives to numbers the exerciſes and occupations which pertain to their nature.

The beſt conſtitutions of government are attended with inconvenience, and the exerciſe of liberty may, on many occaſions, give riſe to complaints. When we are intent on reforming abuſes, the abuſes of freedom may lead us to encroach on the ſubject from which they are ſuppoſed to ariſe. Deſpotiſm itſelf has certain advantages, or at leaſt, in times of civility and moderation, may proceed with ſo little offence, as to give no public alarm. Theſe circumſtances may lead mankind, in the very ſpirit of reformation, or by mere inattention, to apply or to admit of dangerous innovations in the ſtate of their policy.

Slavery, however, is not always introduced by miſtake; it is ſometimes impoſed in the ſpirit of violence and rapine. Princes become corrupt as well as their people, and whatever may have

been the origin of deſpotical government, its pretenſions, when fully declared, give riſe between the ſovereign and his ſubjects to a conteſt which force alone can decide. Theſe pretenſions have a dangerous aſpect to the perſon, the property, or the life of every ſubject; they alarm every paſſion in the human breaſt; they diſturb the ſupine; they deprive the venal of his hire; they declare war on the corrupt as well as the virtuous; they are tamely admitted only by the coward; but even to him muſt be ſupported by a force that can work on his fears. This force the conqueror brings from abroad; and the domeſtic uſurper endeavours to find in his faction at home.

When a people is accuſtomed to arms, it is difficult for a part to ſubdue the whole; or before the eſtabliſhment of diſciplined armies, it is difficult for any uſurper to govern the many by the help of a few. Theſe difficulties, however, the policy of civilized and commercial nations has ſometimes removed, and by forming a diſtinction between civil and military profeſſions, by committing the keeping and the enjoyment of liberty to different hands, has prepared the way for the dangerous alliance of faction with military power, in oppoſition to mere political forms, and the rights of mankind.

A people who are diſarmed in compliance with this fatal refinement, have reſted their ſafety on the pleadings of reaſon and of juſtice at the tri-

hunal of ambition and of force. In ſuch an extremity laws are quoted, and ſenators are aſſembled in vain. They who compoſe a legiſlature, or who occupy the civil departments of ſtate, may deliberate on the meſſages they receive from the camp or the court; but if the bearer, like the centurion who brought the petition of Octavius to the Roman ſenate, ſhew the hilt of the ſword *, they find that petitions are become commands, and that they themſelves are become the pageants, not the repoſitories of ſovereign power.

The reflections of this ſection may be unequally applied to nations of unequal extent. Small communities, however corrupted, are not prepared for deſpotical government: Their members, crowded together, and contiguous to the ſeats of power, never forget their relation to the public; they pry, with habits of familiarity and freedom, into the pretenſions of thoſe who would rule; and where the love of equality, and the ſenſe of juſtice, have failed, they act on motives of faction, emulation, and envy. The exiled Tarquin had his adherents at Rome; but if by their means he had recovered his ſtation, it is probable that, in the exerciſe of his royalty, he muſt have entered on a new ſcene of contention with the very party that reſtored him to power.

* Sueton.

In proportion as territory is extended, its parts loſe their relative importance to the whole. Its inhabitants ceaſe to perceive their connection with the ſtate, and are ſeldom united in the execution of any national, or even of any factious deſigns. Diſtance from the ſeats of adminiſtration, and indifference to the perſons who contend for preferment, teach the majority to conſider themſelves as the ſubjects of a ſovereignty, not as the members of a political body. It is even remarkable, that enlargement of territory, by rendering the individual of leſs conſequence to the public, and leſs able to intrude with his counſel, actually tends to reduce national affairs within a narrower compaſs, as well as to diminiſh the numbers who are conſulted in legiſlation, or in other matters of government.

The diſorders to which a great empire is expoſed, require ſpeedy prevention, vigilance, and quick execution. Diſtant provinces muſt be kept in ſubjection by military force; and the dictatorial powers, which, in free ſtates, are ſometimes raiſed to quell inſurrections, or to oppoſe other occaſional evils, appear, under a certain extent of dominion, at all times equally neceſſary to ſuſpend the diſſolution of a body, whoſe parts were aſſembled, and muſt be cemented, by meaſures forcible, deciſive, and ſecret. Among the circumſtances, therefore, which, in the event of national proſperity, and in the reſult of commercial arts, lead to the eſtabliſhment of deſpotiſm, there

there is none, perhaps, that arrives at this termination with ſo ſure an aim, as the perpetual enlargement of territory. In every ſtate, the freedom of its members depends on the balance and adjuſtment of its interior parts; and the exiſtence of any ſuch freedom among mankind, depends on the balance of nations. In the progreſs of conqueſt, thoſe who are ſubdued are ſaid to have loſt their liberties; but from the hiſtory of mankind, to conquer, or to be conquered, has appeared, in effect, the ſame.

SECTION VI.

Of the Progreſs and Termination of Deſpotiſm.

MANKIND, when they degenerate, and tend to their ruin, as well as when they improve, and gain real advantages, frequently proceed by ſlow, and almoſt inſenſible ſteps. If, during ages of activity and vigour, they fill up the meaſure of national greatneſs to a height which no human wiſdom could at a diſtance foreſee; they actually incur, in ages of relaxation and weakneſs, many evils which their fears did not ſuggeſt, and which, perhaps, they had thought far removed by the tide of ſucceſs and proſperity.

We have already obſerved, that where men are remiſs or corrupted, the virtue of their leaders, or the good intention of their magiſtrates, will not always ſecure them in the poſſeſſion of political freedom. Implicit ſubmiſſion to any leader, or the uncontrouled exerciſe of any pwer, even when it is intended to operate for the good of mankind, may frequently end in the ſubverſion of legal eſtabliſhments. This fatal revolution, by whatever means it is accompliſhed, terminates in military government; and this, though the ſimpleſt of all governments, is rendered complete by degrees. In the firſt period of its exerciſe over men who have acted as members of a free community, it can have only laid the foundation,

dation, not completed the fabric, of a deſpotical policy. The uſurper who has poſſeſſed, with an army, the centre of a great empire, ſees around him, perhaps, the ſhattered remains of a former conſtitution; he may hear the murmurs of a reluctant and unwilling ſubmiſſion; he may even ſee danger in the aſpect of many, from whoſe hands he may have wreſted the ſword, but whoſe minds he has not ſubdued, nor reconciled to his power.

The ſenſe of perſonal rights, or the pretenſion to privilege and honours, which remain among certain orders of men, are ſo many bars in the way of a recent uſurpation. If they are not ſuffered to decay with age, and to wear away in the progreſs of a growing corruption, they muſt be broken with violence, and the entrance to every new acceſſion of power muſt be ſtained with blood. The effect, even in this caſe, is frequently tardy. The Roman ſpirit, we know, was not entirely extinguiſhed under a ſucceſſion of maſters, and under a repeated application of bloodſhed and poiſon. The noble and reſpectable family ſtill aſpired to its original honours: The hiſtory of the republic, the writings of former times, the monuments of illuſtrious men, and the leſſons of philoſophy fraught with heroic conceptions, continued to nouriſh the ſoul in retirement, and formed thoſe eminent characters, whoſe elevation, and whoſe fate, are, perhaps, the moſt affecting

ſubjects

ſubjects of human ſtory. Though unable to oppoſe the general bent to ſervility, they became, on account of their ſuppoſed inclinations, objects of diſtruſt and averſion, and were made to pay with their blood, the price of a ſentiment which they foſtered in ſilence, and which glowed only in the heart.

While deſpotiſm proceeds in its progreſs, by what principle is the ſovereign conducted in the choice of meaſures that tend to eſtabliſh his government? By a miſtaken apprehenſion of his own good, ſometimes even that of his people, and by the deſire which he feels on every particular occaſion, to remove the obſtructions which impede the execution of his will. When he has fixed a reſolution, whoever reaſons or remonſtrates againſt it is an enemy; when his mind is elated, whoever pretends to eminence, and is diſpoſed to act for himſelf, is a rival. He would leave no dignity in the ſtate, but what is dependent on himſelf; no active power, but what carries the expreſſion of his momentary pleaſure *. Guided by a perception as unerring as that of inſtinct, he never fails to ſelect the proper objects of his antipathy or of his favour. The aſpect of independence repels him; that of ſervility attracts. The tendency of his adminiſtration is to quiet every reſtleſs ſpirit, and to aſſume every function of

* Inſurgere paulatim, munia ſenatus, magiſtratuum, legum in ſe trahere.

government,

government to himſelf*. When the power is adequate to the end, it operates as much in the hands of thoſe who do not perceive the termination, as it does in the hands of others by whom it is beſt underſtood: The mandates of either, when juſt, ſhould not be diſputed, when erroneous or wrong, they are ſupported by force.

You muſt die, was the anſwer of Octavius to every ſuit from a people that implored his mercy. It was the ſentence which ſome of his ſucceſſors pronounced againſt every citizen that was eminent for his birth or his virtues. But are the evils of deſpotiſm confined to the cruel and ſanguinary methods, by which a recent dominion over a refractory and a turbulent people is eſtabliſhed or maintained? And is death the greateſt calamity which can afflict mankind under an eſtabliſhment by which they are diveſted of all their rights? They are, indeed, frequently ſuffered to live; but diſtruſt and jealouſy, the ſenſe of perſonal meanneſs, and the anxieties which ariſe from the care of a wretched intereſt, are made to poſſeſs the ſoul; every citizen is reduced to a ſlave; and every charm by which the community engaged its members, has ceaſed to exiſt. Obedience is

* It is ridiculous to hear men of a reſtleſs ambition, who would be the only actors in every ſcene, ſometimes complain of a refractory ſpirit in mankind; as if the ſame diſpoſition, from which they deſire to uſurp every office, did not incline every other perſon to reaſon and to act at leaſt for himſelf.

the

the only duty that remains, and this is exacted by force. If, under ſuch an eſtabliſhment, it be neceſſary to witneſs ſcenes of debaſement and horror, at the hazard of catching the infection, death becomes a relief; and the libation which Thraſea was made to pour from his arteries, is to be conſidered as a proper ſacrifice of gratitude to Jove the Deliverer *.

OPPRESSION and cruelty are not always neceſſary to deſpotical government; and even when preſent, are but a part of its evils. It is founded on corruption, and on the ſuppreſſion of all the civil and the political virtues; it requires its ſubjects to act from motives of fear; it would aſſwage the paſſions of a few men at the expence of mankind; and would erect the peace of ſociety itſelf on the ruins of that freedom and confidence from which alone the enjoyment, the force, and the elevation of the human mind, are found to ariſe.

DURING the exiſtence of any free conſtitution, and whilſt every individual poſſeſſed his rank and his privilege, or had his apprehenſion of perſonal rights, the members of every community were,

* Porrectiſque utriuſque brachii venis, poſtquam cruorem effudit, humum ſuper ſpargens, proprius vocato Quæſtore, *Libemus*, inquit, *Jovi Liberatori*. Spectа juvenis; et omen quidem Dii prohibeant; ceterum in ea tempora natus es, quibus firmare animum deceat conſtantibus exemplis. *Tacit. Ann. lib.* 16.

to

to one another, objects of conſideration and of reſpect; every point to be carried in civil ſociety required the exerciſe of talents, of wiſdom, perſuaſion, and vigour, as well as of power. But it is the higheſt refinement of a deſpotical government, to rule by ſimple commands, and to exclude every art but that of compulſion. Under the influence of this policy, therefore, the occaſions which employed and cultivated the underſtandings of men, which awakened their ſentiments, and kindled their imaginations, are gradually removed; and the progreſs by which mankind attained to the honours of their nature, in being engaged to act in ſociety upon a liberal footing, was not more uniform, or leſs interrupted, than that by which they degenerate in this unhappy condition.

When we hear of the ſilence which reigns in the ſeraglio, we are made to believe, that ſpeech itſelf is become unneceſſary; and that the ſigns of the mute are ſufficient to carry the moſt important mandates of government. No arts, indeed, are required to maintain an aſcendant where terror alone is oppoſed to force, where the powers of the ſovereign are delegated entire to every ſubordinate officer: Nor can any ſtation beſtow a liberality of mind in a ſcene of ſilence and dejection, where every breaſt is poſſeſſed with jealouſy and caution, and where no object, but animal pleaſure, remains to balance the ſufferings.

.ings of the ſovereign himſelf, or thoſe of his ſubjects.

In other ſtates, the talents of men are ſometimes improved by the exerciſes which belong to an eminent ſtation: but here the maſter himſelf is probably the rudeſt and leaſt cultivated animal of the herd; he is inferior to the ſlave whom he raiſes from a ſervile office to the firſt places of truſt or of dignity in his court. The primitive ſimplicity which formed ties of familiarity and affection betwixt the ſovereign and the keeper of his herds *, appears, in the abſence of all affections, to be reſtored, or to be counterfeited amidſt the ignorance and brutality which equally characteriſe all orders of men, or rather which level the ranks, and deſtroy the diſtinction of perſons in a deſpotical court.

Caprice and paſſion are the rules of government with the prince. Every delegate of power is left to act by the ſame direction; to ſtrike when he is provoked; to favour when he is pleaſed. In what relates to revenue, juriſdiction or police, every governor of a province acts like a leader in an enemy's country; comes armed with the terrors of fire and ſword; and inſtead of a tax, levies a contribution by force: he ruins or ſpares as either may ſerve his purpoſe. When the clamours of the oppreſſed, or the reputation of a treaſure, amaſſed at the expence of a pro-

* See Odyſſey.

vince

vince, have reached the ears of the ſovereign, the extortioner is indeed made to purchaſe impunity by imparting a ſhare, or by forfeiting the whole of his ſpoil; but no reparation is made to the injured; nay, the crimes of the miniſter are firſt employed to plunder the people, and afterwards puniſhed to fill the coffers of the ſovereign.

In this total diſcontinuance of every art that relates to juſt government and national policy, it is remarkable, that even the trade of the ſoldier is itſelf greatly neglected. Diſtruſt and jealouſy, on the part of the prince, come in aid of his ignorance and incapacity; and theſe cauſes operating together, ſerve to deſtroy the very foundation on which his power is eſtabliſhed. Any undiſciplined rout of armed men paſſes for an army, whilſt a weak, diſperſed, and unarmed people are ſacrificed to military diſorder, or expoſed to depredation on the frontier from an enemy, whom the deſire of ſpoil, or the hopes of conqueſt, may have drawn to their neighbourhood.

The Romans extended their empire till they left no poliſhed nation to be ſubdued, and found a frontier which was every where ſurrounded by fierce and barbarous tribes; they even pierced through uncultivated deſerts, in order to remove to a greater diſtance the moleſtation of ſuch troubleſome neighbours, and in order to poſſeſs the avenues through which they feared their attacks

tacks. But this policy put the finiſhing hand to the internal corruption of the ſtate. A few years of tranquillity were ſufficient to make even the government forget its danger; and, in the cultivated province, prepared for the enemy a tempting prize and an eaſy victory.

When, by the conqueſt and annexation of every rich and cultivated province, the meaſure of empire is full, two parties are ſufficient to comprehend mankind; that of the pacific and the wealthy, who dwell within the pale of empire; and that of the poor, the rapacious, and the fierce, who are inured to depredation and war. The laſt bear to the firſt nearly the ſame relation which the wolf and the lion bear to the fold; and they are naturally engaged in a ſtate of hoſtility.

Were deſpotic empire, mean-time, to continue for ever unmoleſted from abroad, while it retains that corruption on which it was founded, it appears to have in itſelf no principle of new life, and preſents no hope of reſtoration to freedom and political vigour. That which the deſpotical *maſter has ſown, cannot quicken unleſs it die*; it muſt languiſh and expire by the effect of its own abuſe, before the human ſpirit can ſpring up anew, or bear thoſe fruits which conſtitute the honour and the felicity of human nature. In times of the greateſt debaſement, indeed, commotions are felt; but very unlike the agitations of

of a free people: they are either the agonies of nature, under the ſufferings to which men are expoſed; or mere tumults, confined to a few who ſtand in arms about the prince, and who, by their conſpiracies, aſſaſſinations, and murders, ſerve only to plunge the pacific inhabitant ſtill deeper in the horrors of fear or deſpair. Scattered in the provinces, unarmed, unacquainted with the ſentiments of union and confederacy, reſtricted by habit to a wretched œconomy, and dragging a precarious life on thoſe poſſeſſions which the extortions of government have left; the people can no where, under theſe circumſtances, aſſume the ſpirit of a community, nor form any liberal combination for their own defence. The injured may complain; and while he cannot obtain the mercy of government, he may implore the commiſeration of his fellow ſubject. But that fellow-ſubject is comforted, that the hand of oppreſſion has not ſeized on himſelf: he ſtudies his intereſt, or ſnatches his pleaſure, under that degree of ſafety which obſcurity and concealment beſtow.

The commercial arts, which ſeem to require no foundation in the minds of men, but the regard to intereſt; no encouragement, but the hopes of gain, and the ſecure poſſeſſion of property, muſt periſh under the precarious tenure of ſlavery, and under the apprehenſion of danger ariſing from the reputation of wealth. National

poverty, however, and the ſuppreſſion of commerce, are the means by which deſpotiſm comes to accompliſh its own deſtruction. Where there are no longer any profits to corrupt, or fears to deter, the charm of dominion is broken, and the naked ſlave, as awake from a dream, is aſtoniſhed to find he is free. When the fence is deſtroyed, the wilds are open, and the herd breaks looſe. The paſture of the cultivated field is no longer preferred to that of the deſert. The ſufferer willingly flies where the extortions of government cannot overtake him: where even the timid and the ſervile may recollect they are men; where the tyrant may threaten, but where he is known to be no more than a fellow-creature; where he can take nothing but life, and even this at the hazard of his own.

AGREEABLY to this deſcription, the vexations of tyranny have overcome, in many parts of the Eaſt, the deſire of ſettlement. The inhabitants of a village quit their habitations, and infeſt the public ways; thoſe of the valleys fly to the mountains, and, equipt for flight, or poſſeſſed of a ſtrong hold, ſubſiſt by depredation, and by the war they make on their former maſters.

THESE diſorders conſpire with the impoſitions of government to render the remaining ſettlements ſtill leſs ſecure: But while devaſtation and ruin appear on every ſide, mankind are forced anew

upon thoſe confederacies, acquire again that perſonal confidence and vigour, that ſocial attachment, that uſe of arms, which, in former times, rendered a ſmall tribe the ſeed of a great nation; and which may again enable the emancipated ſlave to begin the career of civil and commercial arts. When human nature appears in the utmoſt ſtate of corruption, it has actually begun to reform.

In this manner, the ſcenes of human life have been frequently ſhifted. Security and preſumption forfeit the advantages of proſperity; reſolution and conduct retrieve the ills of adverſity; and mankind while they have nothing on which to rely but their virtue, are prepared to gain every advantage; and while they confide moſt in their good fortune, are moſt expoſed to feel its reverſe. We are apt to draw theſe obſervations into rule; and when we are no longer willing to act for our country, we plead, in excuſe of our own weakneſs or folly, a ſuppoſed fatality in human affairs.

The inſtitutions of men, if not calculated for the preſervation of virtue, are, indeed, likely to have an end as well as a beginning: But ſo long as they are effectual to this purpoſe, they have at all times an equal principle of life, which nothing but an external force can ſuppreſs; no nation ever ſuffered internal decay but from the vice of its members. We are ſometimes willing

to

to acknowledge this vice in our countrymen; but who ever was willing to acknowledge it in himſelf? It may be ſuſpected, however, that we do more than acknowledge it, when we ceaſe to oppoſe its effects, and when we plead a fatality, which, at leaſt, in the breaſt of every individual, is dependent on himſelf. Men of real fortitude, integrity, and ability, are well placed in every ſcene; they reap, in every condition, the principal enjoyments of their nature; they are the happy inſtruments of Providence employed for the good of mankind; or, if we muſt change this language, they ſhow, that while they are deſtined to live, the ſtates they compoſe are likewiſe doomed by the fates to ſurvive, and to proſper.

THE END.