AN ESSAY ON THE HISTORY OF CIVIL SOCIETY.

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PART FIRST.

Of the General Characteriſtics of Human Nature.

SECTION I.

Of the queſtion relating to the State of Nature.

NATURAL productions are generally formed by degrees. Vegetables are raiſed from a tender ſhoot, and animals from an infant ſtate. The latter, being active, extend together their operations and their powers, and have a progreſs in what they perform, as well as in the faculties they acquire. This progreſs in the caſe of man is continued

tinued to a greater extent than in that of any other animal. Not only the individual advances from infancy to manhood, but the ſpecies itſelf from rudeneſs to civilization. Hence the ſuppoſed departure of mankind from the ſtate of their nature; hence our conjectures and different opinions of what man muſt have been in the firſt age of his being. The poet, the hiſtorian, and the moraliſt frequently allude to this ancient time, and under the emblems of gold, or of iron, repreſent a condition, and a manner of life, from which mankind have either degenerated, or on which they have greatly improved. On either ſuppoſition, the firſt ſtate of our nature muſt have borne no reſemblance to what men have exhibited in any ſubſequent period; hiſtorical monuments, even of the earlieſt date, are to be conſidered as novelties; and the moſt common eſtabliſhments of human ſociety are to be claſſed among the encroachments which fraud, oppreſſion, or a buſy invention, have made upon the reign of nature, by which the chief of our grievances or bleſſings were equally with-held.

Among the writers who have attempted to diſtinguiſh, in the human character, its original qualities, and to point out the limits between nature and art, ſome have repreſented mankind in their firſt condition, as poſſeſſed of mere animal ſenſibility, without any exerciſe of the faculties that render them ſuperior to the brutes, without any political union, without any means of explaining their ſentiments,

timents, and even without poſſeſſing any of the apprehenſions and paſſions which the voice and the geſture are ſo well fitted to expreſs. Others have made the ſtate of nature to conſiſt in perpetual wars kindled by competition for dominion and intereſt, where every individual had a ſeparate quarrel with his kind, and where the preſence of a fellow-creature was the ſignal of battle.

The deſire of laying the foundation of a favourite ſyſtem, or a fond expectation, perhaps, that we may be able to penetrate the ſecrets of nature, to the very ſource of exiſtence, have, on this ſubject, led to many fruitleſs inquiries, and given riſe to many wild ſuppoſitions. Among the various qualities which mankind poſſeſs, we ſelect one or a few particulars on which to eſtabliſh a theory, and in framing our account of what man was in ſome imaginary ſtate of nature, we overlook what he has always appeared within the reach of our own obſervation, and in the records of hiſtory.

In every other inſtance, however, the natural hiſtorian thinks himſelf obliged to collect facts, not to offer conjectures. When he treats of any particular ſpecies of animals, he ſuppoſes that their preſent diſpoſitions and inſtincts are the ſame which they originally had, and that their preſent manner of life is a continuance of their firſt deſtination. He admits, that his knowledge of the material ſyſtem of the world conſiſts in a collection of facts,

or at moſt, in general tenets derived from particular obſervations and experiments. It is only in what relates to himſelf, and in matters the moſt important and the moſt eaſily known, that he ſubſtitutes hypotheſis inſtead of reality, and confounds the provinces of imagination and reaſon, of poetry and ſcience.

But without entering any further on queſtions either in moral or phyſical ſubjects, relating to the manner or to the origin of our knowledge; without any diſparagement to that ſubtilty which would analyſe every ſentiment, and trace every mode of being to its ſource; it may be ſafely affirmed, That the character of man, as he now exiſts, that the laws of his animal and intellectual ſyſtem, on which his happineſs now depends, deſerve our principal ſtudy; and that general principles relating to this or any other ſubject, are uſeful only ſo far as they are founded on juſt obſervation, and lead to the knowledge of important conſequences, or ſo far as they enable us to act with ſucceſs when we would apply either the intellectual or the phyſical powers of nature, to the purpoſes of human life.

If both the earlieſt and the lateſt accounts collected from every quarter of the earth, repreſent mankind as aſſembled in troops and companies; and the individual always joined by affection to party; while he is poſſibly oppoſed to another; employed in the exerciſe of recollection and foreſight;

ſight; inclined to communicate his own ſentiments, and to be made acquainted with thoſe of others; theſe facts muſt be admitted as the foundation of all our reaſoning relative to man. His mixed diſpoſition to friendſhip or enmity, his reaſon, his uſe of language and articulate ſounds, like the ſhape and the erect poſition of his body, are to be conſidered as ſo many attributes of his nature: they are to be retained in his deſcription, as the wing and the paw are in that of the eagle and the lion, and as different degrees of fierceneſs, vigilance, timidity, or ſpeed, have a place in the natural hiſtory of different animals.

If the queſtion be put, What the mind of man could perform, when left to itſelf, and without the aid of any foreign direction? we are to look for our anſwer in the hiſtory of mankind. Particular experiments which have been found ſo uſeful in eſtabliſhing the principles of other ſciences, could probably, on this ſubject, teach us nothing important, or new: We are to take the hiſtory of every active being from his conduct in the ſituation to which he is formed, not from his appearance in any forced or uncommon condition; a wild man therefore, caught in the woods, where he had always lived apart from his ſpecies, is a ſingular inſtance, not a ſpecimen of any general character. As the anatomy of the eye which had never received the impreſſions of light, or that of an ear which had never felt the impulſe of ſounds, would probably

exhibit defects in the very ſtructure of the organs themſelves, ariſing from their not being applied to their proper functions; ſo any particular caſe of this ſort would only ſhew in what degree the powers of apprehenſion and ſentiment could exiſt where they had not been employed, and what would be the defects and imbecilities of a heart in which the emotions that ariſe in ſociety had never been felt.

MANKIND are to be taken in groupes, as they have always ſubſiſted. The hiſtory of the individual is but a detail of the ſentiments and the thoughts he has entertained in the view of his ſpecies: and every experiment relative to this ſubject ſhould be made with entire ſocieties, not with ſingle men. We have every reaſon, however, to believe, that in the caſe of ſuch an experiment made, we ſhall ſuppoſe, with a colony of children tranſplanted from the nurſery, and left to form a ſociety apart, untaught, and undiſciplined, we ſhould only have the ſame things repeated, which, in ſo many different parts of the earth, have been tranſacted already. The members of our little ſociety would feed and ſleep, would herd together and play, would have a language of their own, would quarrel and divide, would be to one another the moſt important objects of the ſcene, and, in the ardour of their friendſhips and competitions, would overlook their perſonal danger, and ſuſpend the care of their ſelf-preſervation. Has not the human race been planted like the colony in queſtion?

Who

Who has directed their courſe? whoſe inſtruction have they heard? or whoſe example have they followed?

NATURE, therefore, we ſhall preſume, having given to every animal its mode of exiſtence, its diſpoſitions and manner of life, has dealt equally with the human race, and the natural hiſtorian who would collect the properties of this ſpecies, may fill up every article now as well as he could have done in any former age. The attainments of the parent do not deſcend in the blood of his children, nor is the progreſs of man to be conſidered as a phyſical mutation of the ſpecies. The individual, in every age, has the ſame race to run from infancy to manhood, and every infant, or ignorant perſon, now, is a model of what man was in his original ſtate. He enters on his career with advantages peculiar to his age; but his natural talent is probably the ſame. The uſe and application of this talent is changing, and men continue their works in progreſſion through many ages together: They build on foundations laid by their anceſtors; and in a ſucceſſion of years, tend to a perfection in the application of their faculties, to which the aid of long experience is required, and to which many generations muſt have combined their endeavours. We obſerve the progreſs they have made; we diſtinctly enumerate many of its ſteps; we can trace them back to a diſtant antiquity; of which no record remains, nor any monument is preſerved, to

inform us what were the openings of this wonderful ſcene. The conſequence is, that inſtead of attending to the character of our ſpecies, where the particulars are vouched by the ſureſt authority, we endeavour to trace it through ages and ſcenes unknown; and, inſtead of ſuppoſing that the beginning of our ſtory was nearly of a piece with the ſequel, we think ourſelves warranted to reject every circumſtance of our preſent condition and frame, as adventitious, and foreign to our nature. The progreſs of mankind, from a ſuppoſed ſtate of animal ſenſibility, to the attainment of reaſon, to the uſe of language, and to the habit of ſociety, has been accordingly painted with a force of imagination, and its ſteps have been marked with a boldneſs of invention, that would tempt us to admit, among the materials of hiſtory, the ſuggeſtions of fancy, and to receive, perhaps, as the model of our nature in its original ſtate, ſome of the animals whoſe ſhape has the greateſt reſemblance to ours

It would be ridiculous to affirm, as a diſcovery, that the ſpecies of the horſe was probably never the ſame with that of the lion; yet, in oppoſition to what has dropped from the pens of eminent writers, we are obliged to obſerve, that men have always appeared among animals a diſtinct and a ſuperior race; that neither the poſſeſſion of ſimilar organs, nor the approximation of ſhape, nor the uſe

Rouſſeau ſur l'origine de l'inegalité parmi les hommes.

of

of the hand *, nor the continued intercourſe with this ſovereign artiſt, has enabled any other ſpecies to blend their nature or their inventions with his; that, in his rudeſt ſtate, he is found to be above them; and in his greateſt degeneracy, never deſcends to their level. He is, in ſhort, a man in every condition; and we can learn nothing of his nature from the analogy of other animals. If we would know him, we muſt attend to himſelf, to the courſe of his life, and the tenour of his conduct. With him the ſociety appears to be as old as the individual, and the uſe of the tongue as univerſal as that of the hand or the foot. If there was a time in which he had his acquaintance with his own ſpecies to make, and his faculties to acquire, it is a time of which we have no record, and in relation to which our opinions can ſerve no purpoſe, and are ſupported by no evidence.

We are often tempted into theſe boundleſs regions of ignorance or conjecture, by a fancy which delights in creating rather than in merely retaining the forms which are preſented before it: we are the dupes of a ſubtilty, which promiſes to ſupply every defect of our knowledge, and, by filling up a few blanks in the ſtory of nature, pretends to conduct our apprehenſion nearer to the ſource of exiſtence. On the credit of a few obſervations, we are apt to preſume, that the ſecret may ſoon be laid open,

* Traité de l'eſprit.

and

and that what is termed *wiſdom* in nature, may be referred to the operation of phyſical powers. We forget that phyſical powers employed in ſucceſſion or together, and combined to a ſalutary purpoſe, conſtitute thoſe very proofs of deſign from which we infer the exiſtence of God; and that this truth being once admitted, we are no longer to ſearch for the ſource of exiſtence; we can only collect the laws which the Author of nature has eſtabliſhed; and in our lateſt as well as our earlieſt diſcoveries, only perceive a mode of creation or providence before unknown.

We ſpeak of art as diſtinguiſhed from nature; but art itſelf is natural to man. He is in ſome meaſure the artificer of his own frame, as well as of his fortune, and is deſtined, from the firſt age of his being, to invent and contrive. He applies the ſame talents to a variety of purpoſes, and acts nearly the ſame part in very different ſcenes. He would be always improving on his ſubject, and he carries this intention wherever he moves, through the ſtreets of the populous city, or the wilds of the foreſt. While he appears equally fitted to every condition, he is upon this account unable to ſettle in any. At once obſtinate and fickle, he complains of innovations, and is never ſated with novelty. He is perpetually buſied in reformations, and is continually wedded to his errors. If he dwell in a cave, he would improve it into a cottage; if he has already built, he would ſtill build to a greater extent.

extent. But he does not propoſe to make rapid and haſty tranſitions; his ſteps are progreſſive and ſlow; and his force, like the power of a ſpring, ſilently preſſes on every reſiſtance; an effect is ſometimes produced before the cauſe is perceived; and with all his talent for projects, his work is often accompliſhed before the plan is deviſed. It appears, perhaps, equally difficult to retard or to quicken his pace; if the projector complain he is tardy, the moraliſt thinks him unſtable; and whether his motions be rapid or ſlow, the ſcenes of human affairs perpetually change in his management: His emblem is a paſſing ſtream, not a ſtagnating pool. We may deſire to direct his love of improvement to its proper object, we may wiſh for ſtability of conduct; but we miſtake human nature, if we wiſh for a termination of labour, or a ſcene of repoſe.

The occupations of men, in every condition, beſpeak their freedom of choice, their various opinions, and the multiplicity of wants by which they are urged: but they enjoy, or endure, with a ſenſibility, or a phlegm, which are nearly the ſame in every ſituation. They poſſeſs the ſhores of the Caſpian, or the Atlantic, by a different tenure, but with equal eaſe. On the one they are fixed to the ſoil, and ſeem to be formed for ſettlement, and the accommodation of cities: The names they beſtow on a nation, and on its territory, are the ſame. On the other they are mere animals of paſſage, prepared to roam on the face of the earth, and with their

their herds, in ſearch of new paſture and favourable ſeaſons, to follow the ſun in his annual courſe.

MAN finds his lodgment alike in the cave, the cottage, and the palace; and his ſubſiſtence equally in the woods, in the dairy, or the farm. He aſſumes the diſtinction of titles, equipage, and dreſs; he deviſes regular ſyſtems of government, and a complicated body of laws; or naked in the woods has no badge of ſuperiority but the ſtrength of his limbs and the ſagacity of his mind; no rule of conduct but choice, no tie with his fellow-creatures but affection, the love of company, and the deſire of ſafety. Capable of a great variety of arts, yet dependent on none in particular for the preſervation of his being; to whatever length he has carried his artifice, there he ſeems to enjoy the conveniences that ſuit his nature, and to have found the condition to which he is deſtined. The tree which an American, on the banks of the Oroonoko *, has choſen to climb for the retreat, and the lodgment of his family, is to him a convenient dwelling. The ſopha, the vaulted dome, and the colonade, do not more effectually content their native inhabitant.

IF we are aſked therefore, Where the ſtate of nature is to be found? we may anſwer, It is here; and it matters not whether we are underſtood to ſpeak in the iſland of Great Britain, at the Cape of

* Lafiau mœurs des ſauvages.

Good

Good Hope, or the Straits of Magellan. While this active being is in the train of employing his talents, and of operating on the ſubjects around him, all ſituations are equally natural. If we are told, That vice, at leaſt, is contrary to nature; we may anſwer, It is worſe; it is folly and wretchedneſs. But if nature is only oppoſed to art, in what ſituation of the human race are the footſteps of art unknown? In the condition of the ſavage, as well as in that of the citizen, are many proofs of human invention; and in either is not in any permanent ſtation, but a mere ſtage through which this travelling being is deſtined to paſs. If the palace be unnatural, the cottage is ſo no leſs; and the higheſt refinements of political and moral apprehenſion, are not more artificial in their kind, than the firſt operations of ſentiment and reaſon.

If we admit that man is ſuſceptible of improvement, and has in himſelf a principle of progreſſion, and a deſire of perfection, it appears improper to ſay, that he has quitted the ſtate of his nature, when he has begun to proceed; or that he finds a ſtation for which he was not intended, while, like other animals, he only follows the diſpoſition, and employs the powers that nature has given.

The lateſt efforts of human invention are but a continuation of certain devices which were practiſed in the earlieſt ages of the world, and in the rudeſt ſtate of mankind. What the ſavage projects,

jects, or obſerves, in the foreſt, are the ſteps which led nations, more advanced, from the architecture of the cottage to that of the palace, and conducted the human mind from the perceptions of ſenſe, to the general concluſions of ſcience.

Acknowledged defects are to man in every condition matter of diſlike. Ignorance and imbecility are objects of contempt: penetration, and conduct give eminence, and procure eſteem. Whither ſhould his feelings and apprehenſions on theſe ſubjects lead him? To a progreſs, no doubt, in which the ſavage, as well as the philoſopher, is engaged; in which they have made different advances, but in which their ends are the ſame. The admiration which Cicero entertained for literature, eloquence, and civil accompliſhments, was not more real than that of a Scythian for ſuch a meaſure of ſimilar endowments as his own apprehenſion could reach. "Were I to boaſt," ſays a Tartar prince*, "it would be of that wiſdom I have re-
"ceived from God. For as, on the one hand, I
"yield to none in the conduct of war, in the diſ-
"poſition of armies, whether of horſe or of foot,
"and in directing the movements of great or ſmall
"bodies; ſo, on the other, I have my talent in
"writing, inferior perhaps only to thoſe who in-
"habit the great cities of Perſia or India. Of other
"nations, unknown to me, I do not ſpeak."

* Abulgaze Bahadur Chan; Hiſtory of the Tartars.

Man

Man may miſtake the objects of his purſuit; he may miſapply his induſtry, and miſplace his improvements. If, under a ſenſe of ſuch poſſible errors, he would find a ſtandard by which to judge of his own proceedings, and arrive at the beſt ſtate of his nature, he cannot find it perhaps in the practice of any individual, or of any nation whatever; not even in the ſenſe of the majority, or the prevailing opinion of his kind. He muſt look for it in the beſt conceptions of his underſtanding, in the beſt movements of his heart; he muſt thence diſcover what is the perfection and the happineſs of which he is capable. He will find, on the ſcrutiny, that the proper ſtate of his nature, taken in this ſenſe, is not a condition from which mankind are for ever removed, but one to which they may now attain; not prior to the exerciſe of their faculties, but procured by their juſt application.

Of all the terms that we employ in treating of human affairs, thoſe of *natural* and *unnatural* are the leaſt determinate in their meaning. Oppoſed to affectation, frowardneſs, or any other defect of the temper or character, the natural is an epithet of praiſe; but employed to ſpecify a conduct which proceeds from the nature of man, can ſerve to diſtinguiſh nothing: for all the actions of men are equally the reſult of their nature. At moſt, this language can only refer to the general and prevailing ſenſe or practice of mankind; and the purpoſe of every important inquiry on this ſubject

may be ſerved by the uſe of a language equally familiar and more preciſe. What is juſt, or unjuſt? What is happy or wretched, in the manners of men? What, in their various ſituations, is favourable or adverſe to their amiable qualities? are queſtions to which we may expect a ſatisfactory anſwer; and whatever may have been the original ſtate of our ſpecies, it is of more importance to know the condition to which we ourſelves ſhould aſpire, than that which our anceſtors may be ſuppoſed to have left.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of the principles of Self-preſervation.

IF in human nature there are qualities by which it is diſtinguiſhed from every other part of the animal creation, this nature itſelf is in different climates and in different ages greatly diverſified. The varieties merit our attention, and the courſe of every ſtream into which this mighty current divides, deſerves to be followed to its ſource. It appears neceſſary, however, that we attend to the univerſal qualities of our nature, before we regard its varieties, or attempt to explain differences conſiſting in the unequal poſſeſſion or application of diſpoſitions and powers that are in ſome meaſure common to all mankind.

MAN, like the other animals, has certain inſtinctive propenſities, which, prior to the perception of pleaſure or pain, and prior to the experience of what is pernicious or uſeful, lead him to perform many functions which terminate in himſelf, or have a relation to his fellow-creatures. He has one ſet of diſpoſitions which tend to his animal preſervation, and to the continuance of his race; another which lead to ſociety, and by inliſting him on the ſide of one tribe or community, frequently engage him in war and contention with the reſt of mankind. His powers of diſcernment, or

his intellectual faculties, which, under the appellation of *reaſon*, are diſtinguiſhed from the analogous endowments of other animals, refer to the objects around him, either as they are ſubjects of mere knowledge, or as they are ſubjects of approbation or cenſure. He is formed not only to know, but likewiſe to admire and to contemn; and theſe proceedings of his mind have a principal reference to his own character, and to that of his fellow-creatures, as being the ſubjects on which he is chiefly concerned to diſtinguiſh what is right from what is wrong. He enjoys his felicity likewiſe on certain fixed and determinate conditions; and either as an individual apart, or as a member of civil ſociety, muſt take a particular courſe, in order to reap the advantages of his nature. He is, withal, in a very high degree ſuſceptible of habits; and can, by forbearance or exerciſe, ſo far weaken, confirm, or even diverſify his talents, and his diſpoſitions, as to appear, in a great meaſure, the arbiter of his own rank in nature, and the author of all the varieties which are exhibited in the actual hiſtory of his ſpecies. The univerſal characteriſtics, in the mean time, to which we have now referred, muſt, when we would treat of any part of this hiſtory, conſtitute the firſt ſubject of our attention; and they require not only to be enumerated, but to be diſtinctly conſidered.

The diſpoſitions which tend to the preſervation of the individual, while they continue to operate in

in the manner of inſtinctive deſires, are nearly the ſame in man that they are in the other animals: But in him they are ſooner or later combined with reflection and foreſight; they give riſe to his apprehenſions on the ſubject of property, and make him acquainted with that object of care which he calls his intereſt. Without the inſtincts which teach the beaver and the ſquirrel, the ant and the bee, to make up their little hoards for winter, at firſt improvident, and, where no immediate object of paſſion is near, addicted to ſloth, he becomes, in proceſs of time, the great ſtoremaſter among animals. He finds in a proviſion of wealth, which he is probably never to employ, an object of his greateſt ſolicitude, and the principal idol of his mind. He apprehends a relation between his perſon and his property, which renders what he calls his own in a manner a part of himſelf, a conſtituent of his rank, his condition, and his character, in which, independent of any real enjoyment, he may be fortunate or unhappy; and, independent of any perſonal merit, he may be an object of conſideration or neglect; and in which he may be wounded and injured, while his perſon is ſafe, and every want of his nature is completely ſupplied.

In theſe apprehenſions, while other paſſions only operate occaſionally, the intereſted find the object of their ordinary cares; their motive to the practice of mechanic and commercial arts; their temptation to treſpaſs on the laws of juſtice; and,

when extremely corrupted, the price of their proſtitutions, and the ſtandard of their opinions on the ſubject of good and of evil. Under this influence, they would enter, if not reſtrained by the laws of civil ſociety, on a ſcene of violence or meanneſs, which would exhibit our ſpecies, by turns, under an aſpect more terrible and odious, or more vile and contemptible, than that of any animal which inherits the earth.

ALTHOUGH the conſideration of intereſt is founded on the experience of animal wants and deſires, its object is not to gratify any particular appetite, but to ſecure the means of gratifying all; *and it impoſes frequently a reſtraint on the very* deſires from which it aroſe, more powerful and more ſevere than thoſe of religion or duty. It ariſes from the principles of ſelf-preſervation in the human frame; but is a corruption, or at leaſt a partial reſult, of thoſe principles, and is upon many accounts very improperly termed *ſelf-love.*

LOVE is an affection which carries the attention of the mind beyond itſelf, and is the ſenſe of a relation to ſome fellow-creature as to its object. Being a complacency and a continued ſatisfaction in this object, it has, independent of any external event, and in the midſt of diſappointment and ſorrow, pleaſures and triumphs unknown to thoſe who are guided by mere conſiderations of intereſt; in every change of condition, it continues entirely diſtinct

diſtinct from the ſentiments which we feel on the ſubject of perſonal ſucceſs or adverſity. But as the care a man entertains for his own intereſt, and the attention his affection makes him pay to that of another, may have ſimilar effects, the one on his own fortune, the other on that of his friend, we confound the principles from which he acts; we ſuppoſe that they are the ſame in kind, only referred to different objects; and we not only miſapply the name of love, in conjunction with ſelf, but, in a manner tending to degrade our nature, we limit the aim of this ſuppoſed ſelfiſh affection to the ſecuring or accumulating the conſtituents of intereſt, or the means of mere animal life.

It is ſomewhat remarkable, that notwithſtanding men value themſelves ſo much on qualities of the mind, on parts, learning and wit, on courage, generoſity, and honour, thoſe men are ſtill ſuppoſed to be in the higheſt degree ſelfiſh or attentive to themſelves, who are moſt careful of animal life, and who are leaſt mindful of rendering that life an object worthy of care. It will be difficult, however, to tell why a good underſtanding, a reſolute and generous mind, ſhould not, by every man in his ſenſes, be reckoned as much parts of himſelf, as either his ſtomach or his palate, and much more than his eſtate or his dreſs. The epicure, who conſults his phyſician, how he may reſtore his reliſh for food, and, by creating an appetite, renew his enjoyment, might at leaſt with an equal regard to

himſelf, conſult how he might ſtrengthen his affection to a parent or a child, to his country or to mankind; and it is probable that an appetite of this ſort would prove a ſource of enjoyment not leſs than the former.

By our ſuppoſed ſelfiſh maxims, notwithſtanding, we generally exclude from among the objects of our perſonal cares, many of the happieſt and more reſpectable qualities of human nature. We conſider affection and courage as mere follies, that lead us to neglect or expoſe ourſelves; we make wiſdom conſiſt in a regard to our intereſt; and without explaining what intereſt means, we would have it underſtood as the only reaſonable motive of action with mankind. There is even a ſyſtem of philoſophy founded upon tenets of this ſort, and ſuch is our opinion of what men are likely to do upon ſelfiſh principles, that we think it muſt have a tendency very dangerous to virtue. But the errors of this ſyſtem do not conſiſt ſo much in general principles, as in their particular applications; not ſo much in teaching men to regard themſelves, as in leading them to forget, that their happieſt affections, their candour, and their independence of mind, are in reality parts of themſelves. And the adverſaries of this ſuppoſed ſelfiſh philoſophy, where it makes ſelf-love the ruling paſſion with mankind, have had reaſon to find fault, not ſo much with its general repreſentations of human nature,

nature, as with the obtruſion of a mere innovation in language for a diſcovery in ſcience.

When the vulgar ſpeak of their different motives, they are ſatisfied with ordinary names, which refer to known and obvious diſtinctions. Of this kind are the terms *benevolence* and *ſelfiſhneſs*, by the firſt of which they expreſs their friendly affections, and by the ſecond their intereſt. The ſpeculative are not always ſatisfied with this proceeding; they would analyze, as well as enumerate the principles of nature; and the chance is, that, merely to gain the appearance of ſomething new, without any proſpect of real advantage, they will attempt to change the application of words. In the caſe before us, they have actually found, that benevolence is no more than a ſpecies of ſelf-love; and would oblige us, if poſſible, to look out for a new ſet of names, by which we may diſtinguiſh the ſelfiſhneſs of the parent when he takes care of his child, from his ſelfiſhneſs when he only takes care of himſelf. For, according to this philoſophy, as in both caſes he only means to gratify a deſire of his own, he is in both caſes equally ſelfiſh. The term *benevolent*, in the mean time, is not employed to characteriſe perſons who have no deſires of their own, but perſons whoſe own deſires prompt them to procure the welfare of others. The fact is, that we ſhould need only a freſh ſupply of language, inſtead of that which by this ſeeming diſcovery we ſhould have loſt, in order to make our reaſonings

proceed as they formerly did. But it is certainly impoſſible to live and to act with men, without employing different names to diſtinguiſh the humane from the cruel, and the benevolent from the ſelfiſh.

These terms have their equivalents in every tongue; they were invented by men of no refinement, who only meant to expreſs what they diſtinctly perceived, or ſtrongly felt. And if a man of ſpeculation ſhould prove, that we are ſelfiſh in a ſenſe of his own, it does not follow that we are ſo in the ſenſe of the vulgar; or, as ordinary men would underſtand his concluſion, that we are condemned in every inſtance to act on motives of intereſt; covetouſneſs, puſillanimity, and cowardice; for ſuch is conceived to be the ordinary import of ſelfiſhneſs in the character of man.

An affection or paſſion of any kind is ſometimes ſaid to give us an intereſt in its object; and humanity itſelf gives an intereſt in the welfare of mankind. This term *intereſt*, which commonly implies little more than our property, is ſometimes put for utility in general, and this for happineſs; inſomuch, that, under theſe ambiguities, it is not ſurpriſing we are ſtill unable to determine, whether intereſt is the only motive of human action, and the ſtandard by which to diſtinguiſh our good from our ill.

So much is ſaid in this place, not from a deſire to partake in any ſuch controverſy, but merely

to

to confine the meaning of the term *intereſt* to its moſt common acceptation, and to intimate a deſign to employ it in expreſſing thoſe objects of care which refer to our external condition, and the preſervation of our animal nature. When taken in this ſenſe, it will not ſurely be thought to comprehend at once all the motives of human conduct. If men be not allowed to have diſintereſted benevolence, they will not be denied to have diſintereſted paſſions of another kind. Hatred, indignation, and rage, frequently urge them to act in oppoſition to their known intereſt, and even to hazard their lives, without any hopes of compenſation in any future returns of preferment or profit.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Of the principles of Union among Mankind.

MANKIND have always wandered or ſettled, agreed or quarrelled, in troops and companies. The cauſe of their aſſembling, whatever it be, is the principle of their alliance or union.

IN collecting the materials of hiſtory, we are ſeldom willing to put up with our ſubject merely as we find it. We are loth to be embarraſſed with a multiplicity of particulars, and apparent inconſiſtencies. In theory we profeſs the inveſtigation of general principles; and in order to bring the matter of our inquiries within the reach of our comprehenſion, are diſpoſed to adopt any ſyſtem. Thus in treating of human affairs, we would draw every conſequence from a principle of union, or a principle of diſſenſion. The ſtate of nature is a ſtate of war, or of amity, and men are made to unite from a principle of affection, or from a principle of fear, as is moſt ſuitable to the ſyſtem of different writers. The hiſtory of our ſpecies indeed abundantly ſhews, that they are to one another mutual objects both of fear and of love; and they who would prove them to have been originally either in a ſtate of alliance, or of war, have arguments in ſtore to maintain their aſſertions. Our attachment to one diviſion, or to one ſect, ſeems often to derive much of its force from an animoſity

animoſity conceived to an oppoſite one: And this animoſity in its turn, as often ariſes from a zeal in behalf of the ſide we eſpouſe, and from a deſire to vindicate the rights of our party.

"MAN is born in ſociety," ſays Monteſquieu, "and there he remains." The charms that detain him are known to be manifold. Together with the parental affection, which, inſtead of deſerting the adult, as among the brutes, embraces more cloſe, as it becomes mixed with eſteem, and the memory of its early effects; we may reckon a propenſity common to man and other animals, to mix with the herd, and, without reflection, to follow the croud of his ſpecies. What this propenſity was in the firſt moment of its operation, we know not; but with men accuſtomed to company, its enjoyments and diſappointments are reckoned among the principal pleaſures or pains of human life. Sadneſs and melancholy are connected with ſolitude; gladneſs and pleaſure with the concourſe of men. The track of a Laplander on the ſnowy ſhore, gives joy to the lonely mariner; and the mute ſigns of cordiality and kindneſs which are made to him, awaken the memory of pleaſures which he felt in ſociety. In fine, ſays the writer of a voyage to the North, after deſcribing a mute ſcene of this ſort, "We were extremely pleaſed to "converſe with men, ſince in thirteen months we "had ſeen no human creature*." But we need

* Collection of Dutch voyages.

no

no remote obſervation to confirm this poſition: The wailings of the infant, and the languors of the adult, when alone; the lively joys of the one, and the chearfulneſs of the other, upon the return of company, are a ſufficient proof of its ſolid foundations in the frame of our nature.

In accounting for actions we often forget that we ourſelves have acted; and inſtead of the ſentiments which ſtimulate the mind in the preſence of its object, we aſſign as the motives of conduct with men, thoſe conſiderations which occur in the hours of retirement and cold reflection. In this mood frequently we can find nothing important, beſides the deliberate proſpects of intereſt; and a great work, like that of forming ſociety, muſt in our apprehenſion ariſe from deep reflections, and be carried on with a view to the advantages which mankind derive from commerce and mutual ſupport. But neither a propenſity to mix with the herd, nor the ſenſe of advantages enjoyed in that condition, comprehend all the principles by which men are united together. Thoſe bands are even of a feeble texture, when compared to the reſolute ardour with which a man adheres to his friend, or to his tribe, after they have for ſome time run the career of fortune together. Mutual diſcoveries of generoſity, joint trials of fortitude, redouble the ardours of friendſhip, and kindle a flame in the human breaſt, which the conſiderations of perſonal intereſt or ſafety cannot ſuppreſs. The moſt lively

tranſports of joy are ſeen, and the loudeſt ſhrieks of deſpair are heard, when the objects of a tender affection are beheld in a ſtate of triumph or of ſuffering. An Indian recovered his friend unexpectedly on the iſland of Juan Fernandes: He proſtrated himſelf on the ground, at his feet: "We "ſtood gazing in ſilence," ſays Dampier, "at this "tender ſcene." If we would know what is the religion of a wild American, what it is in his heart that moſt reſembles devotion: it is not his fear of the ſorcerer, nor his hope of protection from the ſpirits of the air or the wood; it is the ardent affection with which he ſelects and embraces his friend; with which he clings to his ſide in every ſeaſon of peril; and with which he invokes his ſpirit from a diſtance, when dangers ſurpriſe him alone*. Whatever proofs we may have of the ſocial diſpoſition of man in familiar and contiguous ſcenes, it is poſſibly of importance, to draw our obſervations from the examples of men who live in the ſimpleſt condition, and who have not learned to affect what they do not actually feel.

MERE acquaintance and habitude nouriſh affection, and the experience of ſociety brings every paſſion of the human mind upon its ſide. Its triumphs and proſperities, its calamities and diſtreſſes, bring a variety and a force of emotion, which can only have place in the company of our fellow-creatures. It is here that a man is made to forget his

* Charlevoix; Hiſt. of Canada.

weakneſs,

weakneſs, his cares of ſafety, and his ſubſiſtence; and to act from thoſe paſſions which make him diſcover his force. It is here he finds that his arrows fly ſwifter than the eagle, and his weapons wound deeper than the paw of the lion, or the tooth of the boar. It is not alone his ſenſe of a ſupport which is near, nor the love of diſtinction in the opinion of his tribe, that inſpire his courage, or ſwell his heart with a confidence that exceeds what his natural force ſhould beſtow. Vehement paſſions of animoſity or attachment are the firſt exertions of vigour in his breaſt; under their influence, every conſideration, but that of his object, is forgotten; dangers and difficulties only excite him the more.

THAT condition is ſurely favourable to the nature of any being, in which his force is increaſed; and if courage be the gift of ſociety to man, we have reaſon to conſider his union with his ſpecies as the nobleſt part of his fortune. From this ſource are derived, not only the force, but the very exiſtence of his happieſt emotions; not only the better part, but almoſt the whole of his rational character. Send him to the deſert alone, he is a plant torn from his roots: the form indeed may remain, but every faculty droops and withers; the human perſonage and the human character ceaſe to exiſt.

MEN are ſo far from valuing ſociety on account of its mere external conveniencies, that they are commonly moſt attached where thoſe convenien-

cies are leaſt frequent; and are there moſt faithful, where the tribute of their allegiance is paid in blood. Affection operates with the greateſt force, where it meets with the greateſt difficulties: In the breaſt of the parent, it is moſt ſolicitous amidſt the dangers and diſtreſſes of the child: In the breaſt of a man, its flame redoubles where the wrongs or ſufferings of his friend, or his country, require his aid. It is, in ſhort, from this principle alone that we can account for the obſtinate attachment of a ſavage to his unſettled and defenceleſs tribe, when temptations on the ſide of eaſe and of ſafety might induce him to fly from famine and danger, to a ſtation more affluent, and more ſecure. Hence the ſanguine affection which every Greek bore to his country, and hence the devoted patriotiſm of an early Roman. Let thoſe examples be compared with the ſpirit which reigns in a commercial ſtate, where men may be ſuppoſed to have experienced, in its full extent, the intereſt which individuals have in the preſervation of their country. It is here indeed, if ever, that man is ſometimes found a detached and a ſolitary being: he has found an object which ſets him in competition with his fellow-creatures, and he deals with them as he does with his cattle and his ſoil, for the ſake of the profits they bring. The mighty engine which we ſuppoſe to have formed ſociety, only tends to ſet its members at variance, or to continue their intercourſe after the bands of affection are broken.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Of the principles of War and Diſſenſion.

"THERE are ſome circumſtances in the lot of mankind," ſays Socrates, "that ſhew "them to be deſtined to friendſhip and amity: "Thoſe are, their mutual need of each other; "their mutual compaſſion; their ſenſe of mutual "benefits; and the pleaſures ariſing in company. "There are other circumſtances which prompt "them to war and diſſenſion; the admiration and "the deſire which they entertain for the ſame "ſubjects; their oppoſite pretenſions; and the "provocations which they mutually offer in the "courſe of their competitions."

WHEN we endeavour to apply the maxims of natural juſtice to the ſolution of difficult queſtions, we find that ſome caſes may be ſuppoſed, and actually happen, where oppoſitions take place, and are lawful, prior to any provocation, or act of injuſtice; that where the ſafety and preſervation of numbers are mutually inconſiſtent, one party may employ his right of defence, before the other has begun an attack. And when we join with ſuch examples, the inſtances of miſtake, and miſunderſtanding, to which mankind are expoſed, we may be ſatisfied that war does not always proceed from an intention to injure; and that even the beſt qualities

lities of men, their candour, as well as their reſolution, may operate in the midſt of their quarrels.

THERE is ſtill more to be obſerved on this ſubject. Mankind not only find in their condition the ſources of variance and diſſenſion; they appear to have in their minds the ſeeds of animoſity, and to embrace the occaſions of mutual oppoſition, with alacrity and pleaſure. In the moſt pacific ſituation, there are few who have not their enemies, as well as their friends; and who are not pleaſed with oppoſing the proceedings of one, as much as with favouring the deſigns of another. Small and ſimple tribes, who in their domeſtic ſociety have the firmeſt union, are in their ſtate of oppoſition as ſeparate nations, frequently animated with the moſt implacable hatred. Among the citizens of Rome, in the early ages of that republic, the name of a foreigner, and that of an enemy, were the ſame. Among the Greeks, the name of Barbarian, under which that people comprehended every nation that was of a race, and ſpoke a language, different from their own, became a term of indiſcriminate contempt and averſion. Even where no particular claim to ſuperiority is formed, the repugnance to union, the frequent wars, or rather the perpetual hoſtilities which take place among rude nations and ſeparate clans, diſcover how much our ſpecies is diſpoſed to oppoſition, as well as to concert.

LATE diſcoveries have brought to our knowledge almoſt every ſituation in which mankind are placed. We have found them ſpread over large and extenſive continents, where communications are open, and where national confederacy might be eaſily formed. We have found them in narrower diſtricts, circumſcribed by mountains, great rivers, and arms of the ſea. They have been found in ſmall iſlands, where the inhabitants might be eaſily aſſembled, and derive an advantage from their union. But in all thoſe ſituations, alike, they were broke into cantons, and affected a diſtinction of name and community. The titles of *fellow-citizen* and *countryman*, unoppoſed to thoſe of *alien* and *foreigner*, to which they refer, would fall into diſuſe, and loſe their meaning. We love individuals on account of perſonal qualities; but we love our country, as it is a party in the diviſions of mankind; and our zeal for its intereſt, is a predilection in behalf of the ſide we maintain.

IN the promiſcuous concourſe of men, it is ſufficient that we have an opportunity of ſelecting our company. We turn away from thoſe who do not engage us, and we fix our reſort where the ſociety is more to our mind. We are fond of diſtinctions; we place ourſelves in oppoſition, and quarrel under the denominations of faction and party, without any material ſubject of controverſy. Averſion, like affection, is foſtered by a continued direction to its particular object. Separation and eſtrangement, as well

well as oppoſition, widen a breach which did not owe its beginnings to any offence. And it would ſeem, that till we have reduced mankind to the ſtate of a family, or found ſome external conſideration to maintain their connection in greater numbers, they will be for ever ſeparated into bands, and form a plurality of nations.

THE ſenſe of a common danger, and the aſſaults of an enemy, have been frequently uſeful to nations, by uniting their members more firmly together, and by preventing the receſſions and actual ſeparations in which their civil diſcord might otherwiſe terminate. And this motive to union which is offered from abroad, may be neceſſary, not only in the caſe of large and extenſive nations, where coalitions are weakened by diſtance, and the diſtinction of provincial names; but even in the narrow ſociety of the ſmalleſt ſtates. Rome itſelf was founded by a ſmall party, which took its flight from Alba, her citizens were often in danger of ſeparating, and if the villages and cantons of the Volſci had been further removed from the ſcene of their diſſenſions, the Mons Sacer might have received a new colony before the mother-country was ripe for ſuch a diſcharge. She continued long to feel the quarrels of her nobles and her people; and kept open the gates of Janus, to remind thoſe parties of the duties they owed to their country.

SOCIETIES, as well as individuals, being charged with the care of their own preſervation, and having ſeparate intereſts, which give riſe to jealouſies and competitions, we cannot be ſurprized to find hoſtilities ariſe from this ſource. But were there no angry paſſions of a different ſort, the animoſities which attend an oppoſition of intereſt, ſhould bear a proportion to the ſuppoſed value of the ſubject. "The Hottentot nations," ſays Kolben, "treſpaſs on each other by thefts of cattle and "of women; but ſuch injuries are ſeldom com-"mitted, except with a view to exaſperate their "neighbours, and bring them to a war." Such depredations, then, are not the foundation of a war, but the effects of a hoſtile intention already conceived. The nations of North America, who have no herds to preſerve, nor ſettlements to defend, are yet engaged in almoſt perpetual wars, for which they can aſſign no reaſon, but the point of honour, and a deſire to continue the ſtruggle their fathers maintained. They do not regard the ſpoils of an enemy; and the warrior who has ſeized any booty, eaſily parts with it to the firſt perſon who comes in his way *.

BUT we need not croſs the Atlantic to find proofs of animoſity, and to obſerve, in the colliſion of ſeparate ſocieties, the influence of angry paſſions, that do not ariſe from an oppoſition of

* See Charlevoix's Hiſtory of Canada.

intereſt.

intereſt. Human nature has no part of its character of which more flagrant examples are given on this ſide of the globe. What is it that ſtirs in the breaſts of ordinary men when the enemies of their country are named? Whence are the prejudices that ſubſiſt between different provinces, cantons, and villages, of the ſame empire and territory? What is it that excites one half of the nations of Europe againſt the other? The ſtateſman may explain his conduct on motives of national jealouſy and caution, but the people have diſlikes and antipathies, for which they cannot account. Their mutual reproaches of perfidy and injuſtice, like the Hottentot depredations, are but ſymptoms of an animoſity, and the language of a hoſtile diſpoſition, aleady conceived. The charge of cowardice and puſillanimity, qualities which the intereſted and cautious enemy ſhould, of all others, like beſt to find in his rival, is urged with averſion, and made the ground of diſlike. Hear the peaſants on different ſides of the Alps, and the Pyrenees, the Rhine, or the Britiſh channel, give vent to their prejudices and national paſſions; it is among them that we find the materials of war and diſſenſion laid without the direction of government, and ſparks ready to kindle into a flame, which the ſtateſman is frequently diſpoſed to extinguiſh. The fire will not always catch where his reaſons of ſtate would direct, nor ſtop where the concurrence of intereſt has produced an alli-

ance. "My father," ſaid a Spaniſh peaſant, "would riſe from his grave, if he could foreſee a "war with France." What intereſt had he, or the bones of his father, in the quarrels of princes?

THESE obſervations ſeem to arraign our ſpecies, and to give an unfavourable picture of mankind; and yet the particulars we have mentioned are conſiſtent with the moſt amiable qualities of our nature, and often furniſh a ſcene for the exerciſe of our greateſt abilities. They are ſentiments of generoſity and ſelf-denial that animate the warrior in defence of his country; and they are diſpoſitions moſt favourable to mankind, that become the principles of apparent hoſtility to men. Every animal is made to delight in the exerciſe of his natural talents and forces: The lion and the tyger ſport with the paw; the horſe delights to commit his mane to the wind, and forgets his paſture to try his ſpeed in the field; the bull even before his brow is armed, and the lamb while yet an emblem of innocence, have a diſpoſition to ſtrike with the forehead, and anticipate, in play, the conflicts they are doomed to ſuſtain. Man too is diſpoſed to oppoſition, and to employ the forces of his nature againſt an equal antagoniſt; he loves to bring his reaſon, his eloquence, his courage, even his bodily ſtrength to the proof. His ſports are frequently an image of war; ſweat and blood are freely expended in play; and fractures or death are often made to terminate the paſtime of idleneſs

idleneſs and feſtivity. He was not made to live for ever, and even his love of amuſement has opened a way to the grave.

WITHOUT the rivalſhip of nations, and the practice of war, civil ſociety itſelf could ſcarcely have found an object, or a form. Mankind might have traded without any formal convention, but they cannot be ſafe without a national concert. The neceſſity of a public defence, has given riſe to many departments of ſtate, and the intellectual talents of men have found their buſieſt ſcene in wielding their national forces. To overawe, or intimidate, or, when we cannot perſuade with reaſon, to reſiſt with fortitude, are the occupations which give its moſt animating exerciſe, and its greateſt triumphs, to a vigorous mind; and he who has never ſtruggled with his fellow-creatures, is a ſtranger to half the ſentiments of mankind.

THE quarrels of individuals, indeed, are frequently the operations of unhappy and deteſtable paſſions; malice, hatred, and rage. If ſuch paſſions alone poſſeſs the breaſt, the ſcene of diſſenſion becomes an object of horror; but a common oppoſition maintained by numbers, is always allayed by paſſions of another ſort. Sentiments of affection and friendſhip mix with animoſity; the active and ſtrenuous become the guardians of their ſociety; and violence itſelf is, in their caſe,

an exertion of generoſity, as well as of courage. We applaud, as proceeding from a national or party ſpirit, what we could not endure as the effect of a private diſlike; and, amidſt the competitions of rival ſtates, think we have found, for the patriot and the warrior, in the practice of violence and ſtratagem, the moſt illuſtrious career of human virtue. Even perſonal oppoſition here does not divide our judgment on the merits of men. The rival names of Ageſilaus and Epaminondas, of Scipio and Hannibal, are repeated with equal praiſe; and war itſelf, which in one view appears ſo fatal, in another is the exerciſe of a liberal ſpirit, and in the very effects which we regret, is but one diſtemper more, by which the Author of nature has appointed our exit from human life.

These reflections may open our view into the ſtate of mankind; but they tend to reconcile us to the conduct of Providence, rather than to make us change our own: where, from a regard to the welfare of our fellow-creatures, we endeavour to pacify their animoſities, and unite them by the ties of affection. In the purſuit of this amiable intention, we may hope, in ſome inſtances, to diſarm the angry paſſions of jealouſy and envy; we may hope to inſtil into the breaſts of private men ſentiments of candour towards their fellow-creatures, and a diſpoſition to humanity and juſtice. But it is vain to expect that we can give to the multitude of a people a ſenſe of union among them-

themſelves, without admitting hoſtility to thoſe who oppoſe them. Could we at once, in the caſe of any nation, extinguiſh the emulation which is excited from abroad, we ſhould probably break or weaken the bands of ſociety at home, and cloſe the buſieſt ſcenes of national occupations and virtues.

SECT.

SECT. V.

Of Intellectual Powers.

MANY attempts have been made to analyſe the diſpoſitions which we have now enumerated; but one purpoſe of ſcience, perhaps the moſt important, is ſerved, when the exiſtence of a diſpoſition is eſtabliſhed. We are more concerned in its reality, and in its conſequences, than we are in its origin, or manner of formation.

THE ſame obſervation may be applied to the other powers and faculties of our nature. Their exiſtence and uſe are the principal objects of our ſtudy. Thinking and reaſoning, we ſay, are the operations of ſome faculty; but in what manner the faculties of thought or reaſon remain, when they are not exerted, or by what difference in the frame they are unequal in different perſons, are queſtions which we cannot reſolve. Their operations alone diſcover them: When unapplied, they lie hid even from the perſon to whom they pertain; and their action is ſo much a part of their nature, that the faculty itſelf, in many caſes, is ſcarcely to be diſtinguiſhed from a habit acquired in its frequent exertion.

PERSONS who are occupied with different ſubjects, who act in different ſcenes, generally appear

to

to have different talents, or at leaſt to have the ſame faculties variouſly formed, and ſuited to different purpoſes. The peculiar genius of nations, as well as of individuals, may in this manner ariſe from the ſtate of their fortunes. And it is proper that we endeavour to find ſome rule, by which to judge of what is admirable in the capacities of men, or fortunate in the application of their faculties, before we venture to paſs a judgment on this branch of their merits, or pretend to meaſure the degree of reſpect they may claim by their different attainments.

To receive the informations of ſenſe, is perhaps the earlieſt function of an animal combined with an intellectual nature, and one great accompliſhment of the living agent conſiſts in the force and ſenſibility of his animal organs. The pleaſures or pains to which he is expoſed from this quarter, conſtitute to him an important difference between the objects which are thus brought to his knowledge, and it concerns him to diſtinguiſh well, before he commits himſelf to the direction of appetite. He muſt ſcrutinize the objects of one ſenſe by the perceptions of another; examine with the eye, before he ventures to touch; and employ every means of obſervation, before he gratifies the appetites of thirſt and of hunger. A diſcernment acquired by experience, becomes a faculty of his mind; and the inferences of thought are ſometimes not to be diſtinguiſhed from the perceptions of ſenſe.

The objects around us, beſide their ſeparate appearances, have their relations to each other. They ſuggeſt, when compared, what would not occur when they are conſidered apart; they have their effects, and mutual influences; they exhibit, in like circumſtances, ſimilar operations, and uniform conſequences. When we have found and expreſſed the points in which the uniformity of their operations conſiſts, we have aſcertained a phyſical law. Many ſuch laws, and even the moſt important, are known to the vulgar, and occur upon the ſmalleſt degrees of reflection: But others are hid under a ſeeming confuſion, which ordinary talents cannot remove; and are therefore the objects of ſtudy, long obſervation, and ſuperior capacity. The faculties of penetration and judgment, are, by men of buſineſs, as well as of ſcience, employed to unravel intricacies of this ſort; and the degree of ſagacity with which either is endowed, is to be meaſured by the ſucceſs with which they are able to find general rules, applicable to a variety of caſes that ſeemed to have nothing in common, and to diſcover important diſtinctions between ſubjects which the vulgar are apt to confound.

To collect a multiplicity of particulars under general heads, and to refer a variety of operations to their common principle, is the object of ſcience. To do the ſame thing, at leaſt within the range of his active engagements, is requiſite to the man of pleaſure, or buſineſs: And it would ſeem, that the ſtudious

ſtudious and the active are ſo far employed in the ſame taſk, from obſervation and experience, to find the general views under which their objects may be conſidered, and the rules which may be uſefully applied in the detail of their conduct. They do not always apply their talents to different ſubjects; and they ſeem to be diſtinguiſhed chiefly by the unequal reach and variety of their remarks, or by the intentions which they ſeverally have in collecting them.

WHILST men continue to act from appetites and paſſions, leading to the attainment of external ends, they ſeldom quit the view of their objects in detail, to go far in the road of general inquiries. They meaſure the extent of their own abilities, by the promptitude with which they apprehend what is important in every ſubject, and the facility with which they extricate themſelves on every trying occaſion. And theſe, it muſt be confeſſed, to a being who is deſtined to act in the midſt of difficulties, are the proper teſt of capacity and force. The parade of words and general reaſonings, which ſometimes carry an appearance of ſo much learning and knowledge, are of little avail in the conduct of life. The talents from which they proceed, terminate in mere oſtentation, and are ſeldom connected with that ſuperior diſcernment which the active apply in times of perplexity; much leſs with that intrepidity and force of mind which are required in paſſing through difficult ſcenes.

The abilities of active men, however, have a variety correſponding to that of the ſubjects on which they are occupied. A ſagacity applied to external and inanimate nature, forms one ſpecies of capacity; that which is turned to ſociety and human affairs, another. Reputation for parts in any ſcene is equivocal, till we know by what kind of exertion that reputation is gained. No more can be ſaid, in commending men of the greateſt abilities, than that they underſtand well the ſubjects to which they have applied: And every department, every profeſſion, would have its great men, if there were not a choice of objects for the underſtanding, and of talents for the mind, as well as of ſentiments for the heart, and of habits for the active character.

The meaneſt profeſſions, indeed, ſo far ſometimes forget themſelves, or the reſt of mankind, as to arrogate, in commending what is diſtinguiſhed in their own way, every epithet the moſt reſpectable claim as the right of ſuperior abilities. Every mechanic is a great man with the learner, and the humble admirer, in his particular calling; and we can, perhaps, with more aſſurance pronounce what it is that ſhould make a man happy and amiable, than what ſhould make his abilities reſpected, and his genius admired. This, upon a view of the talents themſelves, may perhaps be impoſſible. The effect, however, will point out the rule and the ſtandard of our judgment. To be admired and reſpected, is to have an aſcendant among

among men. The talents which moſt directly procure that aſcendant, are thoſe which operate on mankind, penetrate their views, prevent their wiſhes, or fruſtrate their deſigns. The ſuperior capacity leads with a ſuperior energy, where every individual would go, and ſhews the heſitating and irreſolute a clear paſſage to the attainment of their ends.

THIS deſcription does not pertain to any particular craft or profeſſion; or perhaps it implies a kind of ability, which the ſeparate application of men to particular callings, only tends to ſuppreſs or to weaken. Where ſhall we find the talents which are fit to act with men in a collective body, if we break that body into parts, and confine the obſervation of each to a ſeparate track?

To act in the view of his fellow-creatures, to produce his mind in public, to give it all the exerciſe of ſentiment and thought, which pertain to man as a member of ſociety, as a friend, or an enemy, ſeems to be the principal calling and occupation of his nature. If he muſt labour, that he may ſubſiſt, he can ſubſiſt for no better purpoſe than the good of mankind, nor can he have better talents than thoſe which qualify him to act with men. Here, indeed, the underſtanding appears to borrow very much from the paſſions, and there is a felicity of conduct in human affairs, in which it is difficult to diſtinguiſh the promptitude of the head from the ardour and ſenſibility of the heart. Where both

both are united, they conſtitute that ſuperiority of mind, the frequency of which among men, in particular ages and nations, much more than the progreſs they have made in ſpeculation, or in the practice of mechanic and liberal arts, ſhould determine the rate of their genius, and aſſign the palm of diſtinction and honour.

When nations ſucceed one another in the career of diſcoveries and inquiries, the laſt is always the moſt knowing. Syſtems of ſcience are gradually formed. The globe itſelf is traverſed by degrees, and the hiſtory of every age, when paſt, is an acceſſion of knowledge to thoſe who ſucceed. The Romans were more knowing than the Greeks; and every ſcholar of modern Europe is, in this ſenſe, more learned than the moſt accompliſhed perſon that ever bore either of thoſe celebrated names. But is he on that account their ſuperior?

Men are to be eſtimated, not from what they know, but from what they are able to perform; from their ſkill in adapting materials to the ſeveral purpoſes of life; from their vigour and conduct in purſuing the objects of policy, and in finding the expedients of war and national defence. Even in literature, they are to be eſtimated from the works of their genius, not from the extent of their knowledge. The ſcene of mere obſervation was extremely limited in a Grecian republic; and the buſtle of an active life appeared inconſiſtent with ſtudy: But there

there the human mind, notwithſtanding, collected its greateſt abilities, and received its beſt informations, in the midſt of ſweat and of duſt.

It is peculiar to modern Europe, to reſt ſo much of the human character on what may be learned in retirement, and from the information of books. A juſt admiration of ancient literature, an opinion that human ſentiment, and human reaſon, without this aid, were to have vaniſhed from the ſocieties of men, have led us into the ſhade, where we endeavour to derive from imagination and ſtudy, what is in reality matter of experience and ſentiment: and we endeavour, through the grammar of dead languages, and the channel of commentators, to arrive at the beauties of thought and elocution, which ſprang from the animated ſpirit of ſociety, and were taken from the living impreſſions of an active life. Our attainments are frequently limited to the elements of every ſcience, and ſeldom reach to that enlargement of ability and power which uſeful knowledge ſhould give. Like mathematicians, who ſtudy the Elements of Euclid, but never think of menſuration; we read of ſocieties, but do not propoſe to act with men: we repeat the language of politics, but feel not the ſpirit of nations; we attend to the formalities of a military diſcipline, but know not how to employ numbers of men to obtain any purpoſe by ſtratagem or force.

But for what end, it may be ſaid, point out an evil that cannot be remedied? If national affairs

called for exertion, the genius of men would awake; but in the receſs of better employment, the time which is beſtowed on ſtudy, if even attended with no other advantage, ſerves to occupy with innocence the hours of leiſure, and ſet bounds to the purſuit of ruinous and frivolous amuſements. From no better reaſon than this, we employ ſo many of our early years, under the rod, to acquire, what it is not expected we ſhould retain beyond the threſhold of the ſchool, and whilſt we carry the ſame frivolous character in our ſtudies that we do in our amuſements, the human mind could not ſuffer more from a contempt of letters, than it does from the falſe importance which is given to literature, as a buſineſs for life, not as a help to our conduct, and the means of forming a character that may be happy in itſelf, and uſeful to mankind.

If that time which is paſſed in relaxing the powers of the mind, and in with-holding every object but what tends to weaken and to corrupt, were employed in fortifying thoſe powers, and in teaching the mind to recogniſe its objects, and its ſtrength, we ſhould not, at the years of maturity, be ſo much at a loſs for occupation; nor, in attending the chances of a gaming-table, miſemploy our talents, or waſte the fire which remains in the breaſt. They, at leaſt, who by their ſtations have a ſhare in the government of their country, might believe themſelves capable of buſineſs; and, while

the ſtate had its armies and councils, might find objects enough to amuſe, without throwing a perſonal fortune into hazard, merely to cure the yawnings of a liſtleſs and inſignificant life. It is impoſſible for ever to maintain the tone of ſpeculation; it is impoſſible not ſometimes to feel that we live among men.

SECT. VI.

Of Moral Sentiment.

UPON a ſlight obſervation of what paſſes in human life, we ſhould be apt to conclude, that the care of ſubſiſtence is the principal ſpring of human actions. This conſideration leads to the invention and practice of mechanical arts; it ſerves to diſtinguiſh amuſement from buſineſs, and, with many, ſcarcely admits into competition any other ſubject of purſuit or attention. The mighty advantages of property and fortune, when ſtript of the recommendations they derive from vanity, or the more ſerious regards to independence and power, only mean a proviſion that is made for animal enjoyment; and if our ſolicitude on this ſubject were removed, not only the toils of the mechanic, but the ſtudies of the learned, would ceaſe; every department of public buſineſs would become unneceſſary; every ſenate-houſe would be ſhut up, and every palace deſerted.

Is man therefore, in reſpect to his object, to be claſſed with the mere brutes, and only to be diſtinguiſhed by faculties that qualify him to multiply contrivances for the ſupport and convenience of animal life, and by the extent of a fancy that renders the care of animal preſervation to him more burthenſome than it is to the herd with which he ſhares in the bounty of nature? If this were

his

his caſe, the joy which attends on ſucceſs, or the griefs which ariſe from diſappointment, would make the ſum of his paſſions. The torrent that waſted, or the inundation that enriched, his poſſeſſeſſions, would give him all the emotion with which he is ſeized, on the occaſion of a wrong by which his fortunes are impaired, or of a benefit by which they are preſerved and enlarged. His fellow-creatures would be conſidered merely as they affected his intereſt. Profit or loſs would ſerve to mark the event of every tranſaction; and the epithets *uſeful* or *detrimental* would ſerve to diſtinguiſh his mates in ſociety, as they do the tree which bears plenty of fruit, from that which only cumbers the ground, or intercepts his view.

THIS, however, is not the hiſtory of our ſpecies. What comes from a fellow-creature is received with peculiar emotion; and every language abounds with terms that expreſs ſomewhat in the tranſactions of men, different from ſucceſs and diſappointment. The boſom kindles in company, while the point of intereſt in view has nothing to inflame; and a matter frivolous in itſelf, becomes important, when it ſerves to bring to light the intentions and characters of men. The foreigner, who believed that Othello, on the ſtage, was enraged for the loſs of his handkerchief, was not more miſtaken, than the reaſoner who imputes any of the more vehement paſſions of men to the impreſſions of mere profit or loſs.

Men aſſemble to deliberate on buſineſs; they ſeparate from jealouſies of intereſt; but in their ſeveral colliſions, whether as friends or as enemies, a fire is ſtruck out which the regards to intereſt or ſafety cannot confine. The value of a favour is not meaſured when ſentiments of kindneſs are perceived; and the term *misfortune* has but a feeble meaning, when compared to that of *inſult* and *wrong*.

As actors or ſpectators, we are perpetually made to feel the difference of human conduct, and from a bare recital of tranſactions which have paſſed in ages and countries remote from our own, are moved with admiration and pity, or tranſported with indignation and rage. Our ſenſibility on this ſubject gives their charm in retirement, to the relations of hiſtory and to the fictions of poetry; ſends forth the tear of compaſſion, gives to the blood its briſkeſt movement, and to the eye its livelieſt glances of diſpleaſure or joy. It turns human life into an intereſting ſpectacle, and perpetually ſolicits even the indolent to mix, as opponents or friends, in the ſcenes which are acted before them. Joined to the powers of deliberation and reaſon, it conſtitutes the baſis of a moral nature; and, whilſt it dictates the terms of praiſe and of blame, ſerves to claſs our fellow-creatures, by the moſt admirable and engaging, or the moſt odious and contemptible, denominations.

It is pleaſant to find men, who in their ſpeculations deny the reality of moral diſtinctions, for-

get

get in detail the general poſitions they maintain, and give looſe to ridicule, indignation, and ſcorn, as if any of theſe ſentiments could have place, were the actions of men indifferent; or with acrimony pretend to detect the fraud by which moral reſtraints have been impoſed, as if to cenſure a fraud were not already to take a part on the ſide of morality *.

Can we explain the principles upon which mankind adjudge the preference of characters, and upon which they indulge ſuch vehement emotions of admiration or contempt? If it be admitted that we cannot, are the facts leſs true? or muſt we ſuſpend the movements of the heart, until they who are employed in framing ſyſtems of ſcience have diſcovered the principle from which thoſe movements proceed? If a finger burn, we care not for information on the properties of fire: If the heart be torn, or the mind overjoyed, we have not leiſure for ſpeculations on the ſubjects of moral ſenſibility.

It is fortunate in this, as in other articles to which ſpeculation and theory are applied, that nature proceeds in her courſe, whilſt the curious are buſied in the ſearch of her principles. The peaſant, or the child, can reaſon, and judge, and ſpeak his language, with a diſcernment, a conſiſtency, and a regard to analogy, which perplex the logician, the moraliſt, and the grammarian, when

* Mandeville.

they would find the principle upon which the proceeding is founded, or when they would bring to general rule, what is ſo familiar, and ſo well ſuſtained in particular caſes. The felicity of our conduct is more owing to the talent we poſſeſs for detail, and to the ſuggeſtion of particular occaſions, than it is to any direction we can find in theory and general ſpeculations.

We muſt, in the reſult of every inquiry, encounter with facts which we cannot explain; and to bear with this mortification would ſave us frequently a great deal of fruitleſs trouble. Together with the ſenſe of our exiſtence, we muſt admit many circumſtances which come to our knowledge at the ſame time, and in the ſame manner; and which do, in reality, conſtitute the mode of our being. Every peaſant will tell us, that a man hath his rights; and that to treſpaſs on thoſe rights is injuſtice. If we aſk him farther, what he means by the term *right?* we probably force him to ſubſtitute a leſs ſignificant, or leſs proper term, in the place of this; or require him to account for what is an original mode of his mind, and a ſentiment to which he ultimately refers, when he would explain himſelf upon any particular application of his language.

The rights of individuals may relate to a variety of ſubjects, and be comprehended under different heads. Prior to the eſtabliſhment of property, and the diſtinction of ranks, men have a right

right to defend their perſons, and to act with freedom; they have a right to maintain the apprehenſions of reaſon, and the feelings of the heart; and they cannot for a moment aſſociate together, without feeling that the treatment they give or receive may be juſt or unjuſt. It is not, however, our buſineſs here to carry the notion of right into its ſeveral applications, but to reaſon on the ſentiment of favour with which that notion is entertained in the mind.

If it be true, that men are united by inſtinct, that they act in ſociety from affections of kindneſs and friendſhip; if it be true, that even prior to acquaintance and habitude, men, as ſuch, are commonly to each other objects of attention, and ſome degree of regard; that while their proſperity is beheld with indifference, their afflictions are conſidered with commiſeration; if calamities be meaſured by the numbers and the qualities of men they involve; and if every ſuffering of a fellow-creature draws a crowd of attentive ſpectators; if, even in the caſe of thoſe to whom we do not habitually wiſh any poſitive good, we are ſtill averſe to be the inſtruments of harm; it ſhould ſeem, that in theſe various appearances of an amicable diſpoſition, the foundations of a moral apprehenſion are ſufficiently laid, and the ſenſe of a right which we maintain for ourſelves, is by a movement of humanity and candour extended to our fellow-creatures.

What

WHAT is it that prompts the tongue when we cenſure an act of cruelty or oppreſſion? What is it that conſtitutes our reſtraint from offences that tend to diſtreſs our fellow-creatures? It is probably, in both caſes, a particular application of that principle, which, in preſence of the ſorrowful, ſends forth the tear of compaſſion; and a combination of all thoſe ſentiments, which conſtitute a benevolent diſpoſition; and if not a reſolution to do good, at leaſt an averſion to be the inſtrument of harm *

* Mankind, we are told, are devoted to intereſt; and this, in all commercial nations, is undoubtedly true: But it does not follow, that they are, by their natural diſpoſitions, averſe to ſociety and mutual affection. Proofs of the contrary remain, even where intereſt triumphs moſt. What muſt we think of the force of that diſpoſition to compaſſion, to candour, and good-will, which, notwithſtanding the prevailing opinion that the happineſs of a man conſiſts in poſſeſſing the greateſt poſſible ſhare of riches, preferments, and honours, ſtill keeps the parties who are in competition for thoſe objects, on a tolerable footing of amity, and leads them to abſtain even from their own ſuppoſed good, when their ſeizing it appears in the light of a detriment to others? What might we not expect from the human heart in circumſtances which prevented this apprehenſion on the ſubject of fortune, or under the influence of an opinion as ſteady and general as the former, that human felicity does not conſiſt in the indulgences of animal appetite, but in thoſe of a benevolent heart; not in fortune or intereſt, but in the contempt of this very object, in the courage and freedom which ariſe from this contempt, joined to a reſolute choice of conduct, directed to the good of mankind, or to the good of that particular ſociety to which the party belongs?

IT

It may be difficult, however, to enumerate the motives of all the cenſures and commendations which are applied to the actions of men. Even while we moralize, every diſpoſition of the human mind may have its ſhare in forming the judgment, and in prompting the tongue. As jealouſy is often the moſt watchful guardian of chaſtity, ſo malice is often the quickeſt to ſpy the failings of our neighbour. Envy, affectation, and vanity, may dictate the verdicts we give, and the worſt principles of our nature may be at the bottom of our pretended zeal for morality; but if we only mean to inquire, why they who are well diſpoſed to mankind, apprehend, in every inſtance, certain rights pertaining to their fellow-creatures, and why they applaud the conſideration that is paid to thoſe rights, we cannot aſſign a better reaſon, than that the perſon who applauds, is well diſpoſed to the welfare of the parties to whom his applauſes refer. Applauſe, however, is the expreſſion of a peculiar ſentiment; an expreſſion of eſteem the reverſe of contempt. Its object is perfection, the reverſe of defect. This ſentiment is not the love of mankind; it is that by which we eſtimate the qualities of men, and the objects of our purſuit; that which doubles the force of every deſire or averſion, when we conſider its object as tending to raiſe or to ſink our nature.

When we conſider, that the reality of any amicable propenſity in the human mind has been frequently conteſted; when we recollect the prevalence

lence of intereſted competitions, with their attendant paſſions of jealouſy, envy, and malice; it may ſeem ſtrange to allege, that love and compaſſion are, next to the deſire of elevation, the moſt powerful motives in the human breaſt: That they urge, on many occaſions, with the moſt irreſiſtible vehemence; and if the deſire of ſelf-preſervation be more conſtant, and more uniform, theſe are a more plentiful ſource of enthuſiaſm, ſatisfaction, and joy. With a power not inferior to that of reſentment and rage, they hurry the mind into every ſacrifice of intereſt, and bear it undiſmayed through every hardſhip and danger.

The diſpoſition on which friendſhip is grafted, glows with ſatisfaction in the hours of tranquillity, and is pleaſant, not only in its triumphs, but even in its ſorrows. It throws a grace on the external air, and, by its expreſſion on the countenance, compenſates for the want of beauty, or gives a charm which no complexion or features can equal. From this ſource the ſcenes of human life derive their principal felicity; and their imitations in poetry, their principal ornament. Deſcriptions of nature, even repreſentations of a vigorous conduct, and a manly courage, do not engage the heart, if they be not mixed with the exhibition of generous ſentiments, and the pathetic, which is found to ariſe in the ſtruggles, the triumphs, or the misfortunes of a tender affection. The death of Polites, in the Æneid, is not more affecting than

than that of many others who periſhed in the ruins of Troy; but the aged Priam was preſent when this laſt of his ſons was ſlain; and the agonies of grief and ſorrow force the parent from his retreat, to fall by the hand that ſhed the blood of his child. The pathetic of Homer conſiſts in exhibiting the force of affections, not in exciting mere terror and pity; paſſions he has never perhaps, in any inſtance, attempted to raiſe.

With this tendency to kindle into enthuſiaſm, with this command over the heart, with the pleaſure that attends its emotions, and with all its effects in meriting confidence, and procuring eſteem, it is not ſurpriſing, that a principle of humanity ſhould give the tone to our commendations and our cenſures, and even where it is hindered from directing our conduct, ſhould ſtill give to the mind, on reflection, its knowledge of what is deſirable in the human character. *What haſt thou done with thy brother Abel?* was the firſt expoſtulation in behalf of morality; and if the firſt anſwer has been often repeated, mankind have notwithſtanding, in one ſenſe, ſufficiently acknowledged the charge of their nature. They have felt, they have talked, and even acted, as the keepers of their fellow-creatures: They have made the indications of candour and mutual affection the teſt of what is meritorious and amiable in the characters of men: They have made cruelty and oppreſſion the principal objects of their indignation and rage: Even while the head is occupied

cupied with projects of intereſt, the heart is often ſeduced into friendſhip; and while buſineſs proceeds on the maxims of ſelf-preſervation, the careleſs hour is employed in generoſity and kindneſs.

HENCE the rule by which men commonly judge of external actions, is taken from the ſuppoſed influence of ſuch actions on the general good. To abſtain from harm, is the great law of natural juſtice; to diffuſe happineſs, is the law of morality; and when we cenſure the conferring a favour on one or a few at the expence of many, we refer to public utility, as the great object at which the actions of men ſhould be aimed.

AFTER all, it muſt be confeſſed, that if a principle of affection to mankind be the baſis of our moral approbation and diſlike, we ſometimes proceed in diſtributing applauſe or cenſure, without preciſely attending to the degree in which our fellow-creatures are hurt or obliged; and that, beſides the virtues of candour, friendſhip, generoſity, and public ſpirit, which bear an immediate reference to this principle, there are others which may ſeem to derive their commendation from a different ſource. Temperance, prudence, fortitude, are thoſe qualities likewiſe admired from a principle of regard to our fellow-creatures? Why not, ſince they render men happy in themſelves, and uſeful to others? He who is qualified to promote

mote the welfare of mankind, is neither a ſot, a fool, nor a coward. Can it be more clearly expreſſed, that temperance, prudence, and fortitude, are neceſſary to the character we love and admire? I know well why I ſhould wiſh for them in myſelf; and why likewiſe I ſhould wiſh for them in my friend, and in every perſon who is an object of my affection. But to what purpoſe ſeek for reaſons of approbation, where qualities are ſo neceſſary to our happineſs, and ſo great a part in the perfection of our nature? We muſt ceaſe to eſteem ourſelves, and to diſtinguiſh what is excellent, when ſuch qualifications incur our neglect.

A perſon of an affectionate mind, poſſeſſed of a maxim, That he himſelf, as an individual, is no more than a part of the whole that demands his regard, has found, in that principle, a ſufficient foundation for all the virtues; for a contempt of animal pleaſures, that would ſupplant his principal enjoyment; for an equal contempt of danger or pain, that come to ſtop his purſuits of public good. "A vehement and ſteady affection magnifies its object, and leſſens every difficulty or danger that ſtands in the way." "Aſk thoſe who have been in love," ſays Epictetus, "they will know that I ſpeak truth."

"I have before me," ſays another eminent moraliſt*, "an idea of juſtice, which if I could

* Perſian Letters.

"follow

" follow in every inſtance, I ſhould think myſelf " the moſt happy of men." And it is of conſequence to their happineſs, as well as to their conduct, if thoſe can be disjoined, that men ſhould have this idea properly formed: It is perhaps but another name for that good of mankind, which the virtuous are engaged to promote. If virtue be the ſupreme good, its beſt and moſt ſignal effect is, to communicate and diffuſe itſelf.

To diſtinguiſh men by the difference of their moral qualities, to eſpouſe one party from a ſenſe of juſtice, to oppoſe another even with indignation when excited by iniquity, are the common indications of probity, and the operations of an animated, upright, and generous ſpirit. To guard againſt unjuſt partialities, and ill-grounded antipathies; to maintain that compoſure of mind, which, without impairing its ſenſibility or ardour, proceeds in every inſtance with diſcernment and penetration, are the marks of a vigorous and cultivated ſpirit. To be able to follow the dictates of ſuch a ſpirit through all the varieties of human life, and with a mind always maſter of itſelf, in proſperity or adverſity, and poſſeſſed of all its abilities, when the ſubjects in hazard are life, or freedom, as much as in treating ſimple queſtions of intereſt, are the triumphs of magnanimity, and true elevation of mind. " The event of the day is decided. " Draw this javelin from my body now," ſaid Epaminondas, " and let me bleed."

In

In what ſituation, or by what inſtruction, is this wonderful character to be formed? Is it found in the nurſeries of affectation, pertneſs, and vanity, from which faſhion is propagated, and the genteel is announced? in great and opulent cities, where men vie with each other in equipage, dreſs, and the reputation of fortune? Is it within the admired precincts of a court, where we may learn to ſmile without being pleaſed, to careſs without affection, to wound with the ſecret weapons of envy and jealouſy, and to reſt our perſonal importance on circumſtances which we cannot always with honour command? No: But in a ſituation where the great ſentiments of the heart are awakened; where the characters of men, not their ſituations and fortunes, are the principal diſtinction; where the anxieties of intereſt, or vanity, periſh in the blaze of more vigorous emotions; and where the human ſoul, having felt and recogniſed its objects, like an animal who has taſted the blood of his prey, cannot deſcend to purſuits that leave its talents and its force unemployed.

Proper occaſions alone operating on a raiſed and a happy diſpoſition, may produce this admirable effect, whilſt mere inſtruction may always find mankind at a loſs to comprehend its meaning, or inſenſible to its dictates. The caſe, however, is not deſperate, till we have formed our ſyſtem of politics, as well as manners; till we have ſold our freedom for titles, equipage, and diſtinctions; till we ſee no merit but proſperity

and power, no diſgrace but poverty and neglect. What charm of inſtruction can cure the mind that is tainted with this diſorder? What ſyren voice can awaken a deſire of freedom, that is held to be meanneſs, and a want of ambition? or what perſuaſion can turn the grimace of politeneſs into real ſentiments of humanity and candour?

SECT.

SECT. VII.

Of Happineſs.

HAVING had under our conſideration the active powers and the moral qualities which diſtinguiſh the nature of man, is it ſtill neceſſary that we ſhould treat of his happineſs apart? This ſignificant term, the moſt frequent, and the moſt familiar, in our converſation, is, perhaps, on reflection, the leaſt underſtood. It ſerves to expreſs our ſatisfaction, when any deſire is gratified: It is pronounced with a ſigh, when our object is diſtant: It means what we wiſh to obtain, and what we ſeldom ſtay to examine. We eſtimate the value of every ſubject by its utility, and its influence on happineſs; but we think that utility itſelf, and happineſs, require no explanation.

THOSE men are commonly eſteemed the happieſt, whoſe deſires are moſt frequently gratified. But if, in reality, the poſſeſſion of what they deſire, and a continued fruition, were requiſite to happineſs, mankind for the moſt part would have reaſon to complain of their lot. What they call their enjoyments, are generally momentary; and the object of ſanguine expectation, when obtained, no longer continues to occupy the mind: A new paſſion ſucceeds, and the imagination, as before, is intent on a diſtant felicity.

How many reflections of this ſort are ſuggeſted by melancholy, or by the effects of that very languor and inoccupation into which we would willingly ſink, under the notion of freedom from care and trouble?

When we enter on a formal computation of the enjoyments or ſufferings which are prepared for mankind, it is a chance but we find that pain, by its intenſeneſs, its duration, or frequency, is greatly predominant. The activity and eagerneſs with which we preſs from one ſtage of life to another, our unwillingneſs to return on the paths we have trod, our averſion in age to renew the frolicks of youth, or to repeat in manhood the amuſements of children, have been accordingly ſtated as proofs, that our memory of the paſt, and our feeling of the preſent, are equal ſubjects of diſlike and diſpleaſure *.

This concluſion, however, like many others, drawn from our ſuppoſed knowledge of cauſes, does not correſpond with experience. In every ſtreet, in every village, in every field, the greater number of perſons we meet, carry an aſpect that is cheerful or thoughtleſs, indifferent, compoſed, buſy, or animated. The labourer whiſtles to his team, and the mechanic is at eaſe in his calling; the frolicſome and gay feel a ſeries of pleaſures, of which we know not the ſource; even they who demonſtrate the miſeries of human life, when in-

* Maupertuis; Eſſai de Morale.

tent

tent on their argument, eſcape from their ſorrows, and find a tolerable paſtime in proving that men are unhappy.

THE very terms *pleaſure* and *pain*, perhaps, are equivocal; but if they are confined, as they appear to be in many of our reaſonings, to the mere ſenſations which have a reference to external objects, either in the memory of the paſt, the feeling of the preſent, or the apprehenſion of the future, it is a great error to ſuppoſe, that they comprehend all the conſtituents of happineſs or miſery; or that the good-humour of an ordinary life is maintained by the prevalence of thoſe pleaſures, which have their ſeparate names, and are, on reflection, diſtinctly remembered.

THE mind, during the greater part of its exiſtence, is employed in active exertions, not in merely attending to its own feelings of pleaſure or pain; and the liſt of its faculties, underſtanding, memory, foreſight, ſentiment, will, and intention, only contains the names of its different operations.

IF, in the abſence of every ſenſation to which we commonly give the names either of *enjoyment* or *ſuffering*, our very exiſtence may have its oppoſite qualities of *happineſs* or *miſery*; and if what we call *pleaſure* or *pain*, occupies but a ſmall part of human life, compared to what paſſes in contrivance and execution, in purſuits and expectations, in conduct, reflection, and ſocial engagements;

it muſt appear, that our active purſuits, at leaſt on account of their duration, deſerve the greater part of our attention. When their occaſions have failed, the demand is not for pleaſure, but for ſomething to do; and the very complaints of a ſufferer are not ſo ſure a mark of diſtreſs, as the ſtare of the languid.

We ſeldom, however, reckon any taſk, which we are bound to perform, among the bleſſings of life. We always aim at a period of pure enjoyment, or a termination of trouble; and overlook the ſource from which moſt of our preſent ſatisfactions are really drawn. Aſk the buſy, Where is the happineſs to which they aſpire? they will anſwer, perhaps, That it is to be found in the object of ſome preſent purſuit. If we aſk, why they are not miſerable in the abſence of that happineſs? they will ſay, That they hope to attain it. But is it hope alone that ſupports the mind in the midſt of precarious and uncertain proſpects? and would aſſurance of ſucceſs fill the intervals of expectation with more pleaſing emotions? Give the huntſman his prey, give the gameſter the gold which is ſtaked on the game, that the one may not need to fatigue his perſon, nor the other to perplex his mind, and both will probably laugh at our folly: The one will ſtake his money anew, that he may be perplexed; the other will turn his ſtag to the field, that he may hear the cry of the dogs, and follow through danger and hardſhip. Withdraw the occupations of men, terminate their deſires, exiſt-

ence

ence is a burden, and the iteration of memory is a torment.

THE men of this country, ſays one lady, ſhould learn to ſow and to knit; it would hinder their time from being a burden to themſelves, and to other people. That is true, ſays another; for my part, though I never look abroad, I tremble at the proſpect of bad weather; for then the gentlemen come moping to us for entertainment; and the ſight of a huſband in diſtreſs, is but a melancholy ſpectacle.

THE difficulties and hardſhips of human life are ſuppoſed to detract from the goodneſs of God; yet many of the paſtimes men deviſe for themſelves are fraught with difficulty and danger. The great inventor of the game of human life, knew well how to accommodate the players. The chances are matter of complaint: But if theſe were removed, the game itſelf would no longer amuſe the parties. In deviſing, or in executing a plan, in being carried on the tide of emotion and ſentiment, the mind ſeems to unfold its being, and to enjoy itſelf. Even where the end and the object are known to be of little avail, the talents and the fancy are often intenſely applied, and buſineſs or play may amuſe them alike. We only deſire repoſe to recruit our limited and our waſting force: When buſineſs fatigues, amuſement is often but a change of occupation. We are not always unhappy, even when we complain. There

is a kind of affliction which makes an agreeable ſtate of the mind; and lamentation itſelf is ſometimes an expreſſion of pleaſure. The painter and the poet have laid hold of this handle, and find, among the means of entertainment, a favourable reception for works that are compoſed to awaken our ſorrows.

To a being of this deſcription, therefore, it is a bleſſing to meet with incentives to action, whether in the deſire of pleaſure, or the averſion to pain. His activity is of more importance than the very pleaſure he ſeeks, and languor a greater evil than the ſuffering he ſhuns.

The gratifications of animal appetite are of ſhort duration; and ſenſuality is but a diſtemper of the mind, which ought to be cured by remembrance, if it were not perpetually inflamed by hope. The chace is not more ſurely terminated by the death of the game, than the joys of the voluptuary by the means of completing his debauch. As a band of ſociety, as a matter of diſtant purſuit, the objects of ſenſe make an important part in the ſyſtem of human life. They lead us to fulfil the purpoſes of nature, in preſerving the individual, and in perpetuating the ſpecies: but to rely on their uſe as a principal conſtituent of happineſs, were an error in ſpeculation, and would be ſtill more an error in practice. Even the maſter of the ſeraglio, for whom all the treaſures of empire are extorted from the hoards of its

its frighted inhabitants, for whom alone the choiceſt emerald and the diamond are drawn from the mine, for whom every breeze is enriched with perfumes, for whom beauty is aſſembled from every quarter, and, animated by paſſions that ripen under the vertical ſun, is confined to the grate for his uſe, is ſtill, perhaps, more wretched than the very herd of the people, whoſe labours and properties are devoted to relieve him of trouble, and to procure him enjoyment.

SENSUALITY is eaſily overcome by any of the habits of purſuit which uſually engage an active mind. When curioſity is awake, or when paſſion is excited, even in the midſt of the feaſt when converſation grows warm, grows jovial, or ſerious, the pleaſures of the table we know are forgotten. The boy contemns them for play, and the man of age declines them for buſineſs.

WHEN we reckon the circumſtances that correſpond to the nature of any animal, or to that of man in particular, ſuch as ſafety, ſhelter, food, and the other means of enjoyment or preſervation, we ſometimes think that we have found a ſenſible and a ſolid foundation on which to reſt his felicity. But thoſe who are leaſt diſpoſed to moralize, obſerve, that happineſs is not connected with fortune, although fortune includes at once all the means of ſubſiſtence, and the means of ſenſual indulgence. The circumſtances that require abſtinence, courage, and conduct, expoſe us to hazard,

zard, and are in deſcription of the painful kind; yet the able, the brave, and the ardent, ſeem moſt to enjoy themſelves when placed in the midſt of difficulties, and obliged to employ the powers they poſſeſs.

SPINOLA being told, that Sir Francis Vere died of having nothing to do, ſaid, "That was enough "to kill a general *." How many are there to whom war itſelf is a paſtime, who chuſe the life of a ſoldier, expoſed to dangers and continued fatigues; of a mariner, in conflict with every hardſhip, and bereft of every conveniency; of a politician, whoſe ſport is the conduct of parties and factions; and who, rather than be idle, will do the buſineſs of men and of nations for whom he has not the ſmalleſt regard. Such men do not chuſe pain as preferable to pleaſure, but they are incited by a reſtleſs diſpoſition to make continued exertions of capacity and reſolution; they triumph in the midſt of their ſtruggles; they droop, and they languiſh, when the occaſion of their labour has ceaſed.

WHAT was enjoyment, in the ſenſe of that youth, who, according to Tacitus, loved danger itſelf, not the rewards of courage? What is the proſpect of pleaſure, when the ſound of the horn or the trumpet, the cry of the dogs, or the ſhout of war, awaken the ardour of the ſportſman and the ſoldier? The moſt animating occaſions of

* Life of Lord Herbert.

himſelf

human life, are calls to danger and hardſhip, not invitations to ſafety and eaſe: and man himſelf, in his excellence, is not an animal of pleaſure, nor deſtined merely to enjoy what the elements bring to his uſe; but like his aſſociates, the dog and the horſe, to follow the exerciſes of his nature, in preference to what are called its enjoyments; to pine in the lap of eaſe and of affluence, and to exult in the midſt of alarms that ſeem to threaten his being, in all which, his diſpoſition to action only keeps pace with the variety of powers with which he is furniſhed; and the moſt reſpectable attributes of his nature, magnanimity, fortitude, and wiſdom, carry a manifeſt reference to the difficulties with which he is deſtined to ſtruggle.

If animal pleaſure becomes inſipid when the ſpirit is rouſed by a different object, it is well known, likewiſe, that the ſenſe of pain is prevented by any vehement affection of the ſoul. Wounds received in a heat of paſſion, in the hurry, the ardour, or conſternation of battle, are never felt till the ferment of the mind ſubſides. Even torments, deliberately applied, and induſtriouſly prolonged, are born with firmneſs, and with an appearance of eaſe, when the mind is poſſeſſed with ſome vigorous ſentiment, whether of religion, enthuſiaſm, or love to mankind. The continued mortifications of ſuperſtitious devotees in ſeveral ages of the Chriſtian church; the wild penances, ſtill voluntarily borne, during many years, by the religioniſts of the eaſt; the contempt in which famine

famine and torture are held by moſt ſavage nations; the cheerful or obſtinate patience of the ſoldier in the field; the hardſhips endured by the ſportſman in his paſtime, ſhow how much we may err in computing the miſeries of men, from the meaſures of trouble and of ſuffering they ſeem to incur. And if there be a refinement in affirming, that their happineſs is not to be meaſured by the contrary enjoyments, it is a refinement which was made by Regulus and Cincinnatus before the date of philoſophy. Fabricius knew it while he had heard arguments only on the oppoſite ſide*: It is a refinement, which every boy knows at his play, and every ſavage confirms, when he looks from his foreſt on the pacific city, and ſcorns the plantation, whoſe maſter he cares not to imitate.

Man, it muſt be confeſſed, notwithſtanding all this activity of his mind, is an animal in the full extent of that deſignation. When the body ſickens, the mind droops; and when the blood ceaſes to flow, the ſoul takes its departure. Charged with the care of his preſervation, admoniſhed by a ſenſe of pleaſure or pain, and guarded by an inſtinctive fear of death, nature has not intruſted his ſafety to the mere vigilance of his underſtanding, nor to the government of his uncertain reflections.

The diſtinction betwixt mind and body is followed by conſequences of the greateſt importance; but the facts to which we now refer, are

* Plutarch in Vit. Pyrrh.

not

not founded on any tenets whatever. They are equally true, whether we admit or reject the diſtinction in queſtion, or whether we ſuppoſe, that this living agent is formed of one, or is an aſſemblage of ſeparate natures. And the materialiſt, by treating of man as of an engine, cannot make any change in the ſtate of his hiſtory. He is a being, who, by a multiplicity of viſible organs, performs a variety of functions. He bends his joints, contracts or relaxes his muſcles in our ſight. He continues the beating of the heart in his breaſt, and the flowing of the blood to every part of his frame. He performs other operations which we cannot refer to any corporeal organ. He perceives, he recollects, and forecaſts; he deſires, and he ſhuns; he admires, and contemns. He enjoys his pleaſures, or he endures his pain. All theſe different functions, in ſome meaſure, go well or ill together. When the motion of the blood is languid, the muſcles relax, the underſtanding is tardy, and the fancy is dull: when diſtemper aſſails him, the phyſician muſt attend no leſs to what he thinks, than to what he eats, and examine the returns of his paſſion, together with the ſtrokes of his pulſe.

With all his ſagacity, his precautions, and his inſtincts, which are given to preſerve his being, he partakes in the fate of other animals, and ſeems to be formed only that he may die. Myriads periſh before they reach the perfection of their kind; and the individual, with an option to owe the

the prolongation of his temporary courſe to reſolution and conduct, or to abject fear, frequently chuſes the latter, and, by a habit of timidity, embitters the life he is ſo intent to preſerve.

MAN, however, at times, exempted from this mortifying lot, ſeems to act without any regard to the length of his period. When he thinks intenſely, or deſires with ardour, pleaſures and pains from any other quarter aſſail him in vain. Even in his dying hour, the muſcles acquire a tone from his ſpirit, and the mind ſeems to depart in its vigour, and in the midſt of a ſtruggle to obtain the recent aim of its toils. Muley Moluck, borne on his litter, and ſpent with diſeaſe, ſtill fought the battle, in the midſt of which he expired; and the laſt effort he made, with a finger on his lips, was a ſignal to conceal his death *: The precaution, perhaps, of all which he had hitherto taken, the moſt neceſſary to prevent a defeat.

CAN no reflections aid us in acquiring this habit of the ſoul, ſo uſeful in carrying us through many of the ordinary ſcenes of life? If we ſay, that they cannot, the reality of its happineſs is not the leſs evident. The Greeks and the Romans conſidered contempt of pleaſure, endurance of pain, and neglect of life, as eminent qualities of a man, and a principal ſubject of diſcipline. They truſted, that the vigorous ſpirit would find worthy objects on which to employ its force; and that the firſt ſtep

* Vertot's Revolutions of Portugal.

towards a reſolute choice of ſuch objects, was to ſhake off the meanneſs of a ſolicitous and timorous mind.

MANKIND, in general, have courted occaſions to diſplay their courage, and frequently, in ſearch of admiration, have preſented a ſpectacle, which to thoſe who have ceaſed to regard fortitude on its own account, becomes a ſubject of horror. Scevola held his arm in the fire, to ſhake the ſoul of Porſenna. The ſavage inures his body to the torture, that in the hour of trial he may exult over his enemy. Even the Muſſulman tears his fleſh to win the heart of his miſtreſs, and comes in gaiety ſtreaming with blood, to ſhew that he *deſerves her eſteem* *.

SOME nations carry the practice of inflicting, or of ſporting with pain, to a degree that is either cruel or abſurd; others regard every proſpect of bodily ſuffering as the greateſt of evils; and in the midſt of their troubles, imbitter every real affliction, with the terrors of a feeble and dejected imagination. We are not bound to anſwer for the follies of either, nor, in treating a queſtion which relates to the nature of man, make an eſtimate of its ſtrength or its weakneſs, from the habits or apprehenſions peculiar to any nation or age.

* Letters of the Right Honourable Lady M—y W—— M——e.

SECT.

SECT. VIII.

The ſame ſubject continued.

WHOEVER has compared together the different conditions and manners of men, under varieties of education or fortune, will be ſatisfied, that mere ſituation does not conſtitute their happineſs or miſery; nor a diverſity of external obſervances imply any oppoſition of ſentiments on the ſubject of morality. They expreſs their kindneſs and their enmity in different actions; but kindneſs or enmity is ſtill the principal article of conſideration in human life. They engage in different purſuits, or acquieſce in different conditions; but act from paſſions nearly the ſame. There is no preciſe meaſure of accommodation required to ſuit their conveniency, nor any degree of danger or ſafety under which they are peculiarly fitted to act. Courage and generoſity, fear and envy, are not peculiar to any ſtation or order of men; nor is there any condition in which ſome of the human race have not ſhewn, that it is poſſible to employ, with propriety, the talents and virtues of their ſpecies.

WHAT, then, is that myſterious thing called *Happineſs* which may have place in ſuch a variety of ſtations, and to which circumſtances, in one age or nation thought neceſſary, are in another held to be deſtructive or of no effect? It is not the ſucceſſion

ceſſion of mere animal pleaſures, which, apart from the occupation or the company in which they engage us, can fill up but a few moments in human life. On too frequent a repetition, thoſe pleaſures turn to ſatiety and diſguſt; they tear the conſtitution to which they are applied in exceſs, and, like the lightning of night, only ſerve to darken the gloom through which they occaſionally break. Happineſs is not that ſtate of repoſe, or that imaginary freedom from care, which at a diſtance is ſo frequent an object of deſire, but with its approach brings a tedium, or a languor, more unſupportable than pain itſelf. If the preceding obſervations on this ſubject be juſt, it ariſes more from the purſuit, than from the attainment of any end whatever; and in every new ſituation to which we arrive, even in the courſe of a proſperous life, it depends more on the degree in which our minds are properly employed, than it does on the circumſtances in which we are deſtined to act, on the materials which are placed in our hands, or the tools with which we are furniſhed.

If this be confeſſed in reſpect to that claſs of purſuits which are diſtinguiſhed by the name of *amuſement*, and which, in the caſe of men who are commonly deemed the moſt happy, occupy the greater part of human life, we may apprehend, that it holds, much more than is commonly ſuſpected, in many caſes of buſineſs, where the end to be

gained, and not the occupation, is ſuppoſed to have the principal value.

THE miſer himſelf, we are told, can ſometimes conſider the care of his wealth as a paſtime, and has challenged his heir, to have more pleaſure in ſpending, than he in amaſſing his fortune. With this degree of indifference to what may be the conduct of others; with this confinement of his care to what he has choſen as his own province, more eſpecially if he has conquered in himſelf the paſſions of jealouſy and envy, which tear the covetous mind; why may not the man whoſe object is money, be underſtood to lead a life of amuſement and pleaſure, not only more entire than that of the ſpendthrift, but even as much as the virtuoſo, the ſcholar, the man of taſte, or any of that claſs of perſons who have found out a method of paſſing their leiſure without offence, and to whom the acquiſitions made, or the works produced, in their ſeveral ways, perhaps, are as uſeleſs as the bag to the miſer, or the counter to thoſe who play from mere diſſipation at any game of ſkill or of chance?

WE are ſoon tired of diverſions that do not approach to the nature of buſineſs; that is, that do not engage ſome paſſion, or give an exerciſe proportioned to our talents, and our faculties. The chace and the gaming-table have each their dangers and difficulties, to excite and employ the mind. All games of contention animate our emulation,

emulation, and give a ſpecies of party-zeal. The mathematician is only to be amuſed with intricate problems, the lawyer and the caſuiſt with caſes that try their ſubtilty, and occupy their judgment.

The deſire of active engagements, like every other natural appetite, may be carried to exceſs; and men may debauch in amuſements, as well as in the uſe of wine, or other intoxicating liquors. At firſt, a trifling ſtake, and the occupation of a moderate paſſion, may have ſerved to amuſe the gameſter; but when the drug becomes familiar, it fails to produce its effect: The play is made deep, and the intereſt increaſed, to awaken his attention; he is carried on by degrees, and in the end comes to ſeek for amuſement, and to find it only in thoſe paſſions of anxiety, hope, and deſpair, which are rouſed by the hazard into which he has thrown the whole of his fortunes.

If men can thus turn their amuſements into a ſcene more ſerious and intereſting than that of buſineſs itſelf, it will be difficult to aſſign a reaſon, why buſineſs, and many of the occupations of human life, independent of any diſtant conſequences or future events, may not be choſen as an amuſement, and adopted on account of the paſtime they bring. This is, perhaps, the foundation on which, without the aid of reflection, the contented and the cheerful have reſted the gaiety of their tempers. It is, perhaps, the moſt ſolid baſis of fortitude which any reflection

can lay; and happineſs itſelf is ſecured by making a certain ſpecies of conduct our amuſement; and, by conſidering life in the general eſtimate of its value, as well on every particular occaſion, as a mere ſcene for the exerciſe of the mind, and the engagements of the heart. "I will try and attempt every thing," ſays Brutus; "I will never ceaſe to recall my country from this ſtate "of ſervility. If the event be favourable, it will "prove matter of joy to us all; if not, yet I, "notwithſtanding, ſhall rejoice." Why rejoice in a diſappointment? Why not be dejected, when his country was overwhelmed? Becauſe ſorrow, perhaps, and dejection, can do no good. Nay, but they muſt be endured when they come. And whence ſhould they come to me? might the Roman ſay; I have followed my mind, and can follow it ſtill. Events may have changed the ſituation in which I am deſtined to act; but can they hinder my acting the part of a man? Shew me a ſituation in which a man can neither act nor die, and I will own he is wretched.

Whoever has the force of mind ſteadily to view human life under this aſpect, has only to chuſe well his occupations, in order to command that ſtate of enjoyment, and freedom of ſoul, which probably conſtitute the peculiar felicity to which his active nature is deſtined.

The diſpoſitions of men, and conſequently their occupations, are commonly divided into two principal

cipal claſſes; the ſelfiſh, and the ſocial. The firſt are indulged in ſolitude; and if they carry a reference to mankind, it is that of emulation, competition, and enmity. The ſecond incline us to live with our fellow-creatures, and to do them good; they tend to unite the members of ſociety together; they terminate in a mutual participation of their cares and enjoyments, and render the preſence of men an occaſion of joy. Under this claſs may be enumerated the paſſions of the ſexes, the affections of parents and children, general humanity, or ſingular attachments; above all, that habit of the ſoul by which we conſider ourſelves as but a part of ſome beloved community, and as but individual members of ſome ſociety, whoſe general welfare is to us the ſupreme object of zeal, and the great rule of our conduct. This affection is a principle of candour, which knows no partial diſtinctions, and is confined to no bounds: it may extend its effects beyond our perſonal acquaintance; it may, in the mind, and in thought, at leaſt, make us feel a relation to the univerſe, and to the whole creation of God. "Shall "any one," ſays Antoninus, "love the city of "Cecrops, and you not love the city of God?"

No emotion of the heart is indifferent. It is either an act of vivacity and joy, or a feeling of ſadneſs; a tranſport of pleaſure, or a convulſion of anguiſh: and the exerciſes of our different diſpoſitions, as well as their gratifications, are likely

to prove matter of the greateſt importance to our happineſs or miſery.

THE individual is charged with the care of his animal preſervation. He may exiſt in ſolitude, and, far removed from ſociety, perform many functions of ſenſe, imagination, and reaſon. He is even rewarded for the proper diſcharge of thoſe functions; and all the natural exerciſes which relate to himſelf, as well as to his fellow-creatures, not only occupy without diſtreſſing him, but, in many inſtances, are attended with poſitive pleaſures, and fill up the hours of life with agreeable occupation.

THERE is a degree, however, in which we ſuppoſe that the care of ourſelves becomes a ſource of painful anxiety and cruel paſſions; in which it degenerates into avarice, vanity, or pride, and in which, by foſtering habits of jealouſy and envy, of fear and malice, it becomes as deſtructive of our own enjoyments, as it is hoſtile to the welfare of mankind. This evil, however, is not to be charged upon any exceſs in the care of ourſelves, but upon a mere miſtake in the choice of our objects. We look abroad for a happineſs which is to be found only in the qualities of the heart: We think ourſelves dependent on accidents; and are therefore kept in ſuſpenſe and ſolicitude: We think ourſelves dependent on the will of other men; and are therefore ſervile and timid:

timid: We think our felicity is placed in ſubjects for which our fellow-creatures are rivals and competitors; and in purſuit of happineſs, we engage in thoſe ſcenes of emulation, envy, hatred, animoſity, and revenge, that lead to the higheſt pitch of diſtreſs. We act, in ſhort, as if to preſerve ourſelves were to retain our weakneſs, and perpetuate our ſufferings. We charge the ills of a diſtempered imagination, and a corrupt heart, to the account of our fellow-creatures, to whom we refer the pangs of our diſappointment or malice; and while we foſter our miſery, are ſurpriſed that the care of ourſelves is attended with no better effects. But he who remembers that he is by nature a rational being, and a member of ſociety; that to preſerve himſelf, is to preſerve his reaſon, and to preſerve the beſt feelings of his heart; will encounter with none of theſe inconveniencies; and in the care of himſelf, will find ſubjects only of ſatisfaction and triumph.

The diviſion of our appetites into benevolent and ſelfiſh, has probably, in ſome degree, helped to miſlead our apprehenſion on the ſubject of perſonal enjoyment and private good, and our zeal to prove that virtue is diſintereſted, has not greatly promoted its cauſe. The gratification of a ſelfiſh deſire, it is thought, brings advantage or pleaſure to ourſelves, that of benevolence terminates in the pleaſure or advantage of others: Whereas, in reality, the gratification of every

deſire is a perſonal enjoyment, and its value being proportioned to the particular quality or force of the ſentiment, it may happen that the ſame perſon may reap a greater advantage from the good fortune he has procured to another, than from that he has obtained for himſelf.

While the gratifications of benevolence, therefore, are as much our own as thoſe of any other deſire whatever, the mere exerciſes of this diſpoſition are, on many accounts, to be conſidered as the firſt and the principal conſtituent of human happineſs. Every act of kindneſs, or of care, in the parent to his child; every emotion of the heart, in friendſhip or in love, in public zeal, or general humanity, are ſo many acts of enjoyment and ſatisfaction. Pity itſelf, and compaſſion, even grief and melancholy, when grafted on ſome tender affection, partake of the nature of the ſtock; and if they are not poſitive pleaſures, are at leaſt pains of a peculiar nature, which we do not even wiſh to exchange but for a very real enjoyment, obtained in relieving our object. Even extremes in this claſs of our diſpoſitions, as they are the reverſe of hatred, envy, and malice, ſo they are never attended with thoſe excruciating anxieties, jealouſies, and fears, which tear the intereſted mind; or if, in reality, any ill paſſion ariſe from a pretended attachment to our fellow-creatures, that attachment may be ſafely condemned, as not genuine. If we be diſtruſtful

or

or jealous, our pretended affection is probably no more than a deſire of attention and perſonal conſideration, a motive which frequently inclines us to be connected with our fellow-creatures; but to which we are as frequently willing to ſacrifice their happineſs. We conſider them as the tools of our vanity, pleaſure, or intereſt; not as the parties on whom we may beſtow the effects of our good-will, and our love.

A MIND devoted to this claſs of its affections, being occupied with an object that may engage it habitually, is not reduced to court the amuſements or pleaſures with which perſons of an ill temper are obliged to repair their diſguſts: And temperance becomes an eaſy taſk when gratifications of ſenſe are ſupplanted by thoſe of the heart. Courage, too, is moſt eaſily aſſumed, or is rather inſeparable from that ardour of the mind, in ſociety, friendſhip, or in public action, which makes us forget ſubjects of perſonal anxiety or fear, and attend chiefly to the object of our zeal or affection, not to the trifling inconveniencies, dangers, or hardſhips, which we ourſelves may encounter in ſtriving to maintain it.

IT ſhould ſeem, therefore, to be the happineſs of man, to make his ſocial diſpoſitions the ruling ſpring of his occupations; to ſtate himſelf as the member of a community, for whoſe general good his heart may glow with an ardent zeal, to the ſuppreſſion

ſuppreſſion of thoſe perſonal cares which are the foundation of painful anxieties, fear, jealouſy, and envy; or, as Mr. Pope expreſſes the ſame ſetiment,

" Man, like the generous vine, ſupported lives;
" The ſtrength he gains, is from th'embrace he
" gives *."

We commonly apprehend, that it is our duty to do kindneſſes, and our happineſs to receive them: but if, in reality, courage, and a heart devoted to the good of mankind, are the conſtituents of human felicity, the kindneſs which is done infers a happineſs in the perſon from whom it proceeds, not in him on whom it is beſtowed; and the greateſt good which men poſſeſſed of fortitude and generoſity can procure to their fellow-creatures, is a participation of this happy character.

If this be the good of the individual, it is likewiſe that of mankind, and virtue no longer impoſes a taſk by which we are obliged to beſtow upon others that good from which we ourſelves refrain; but ſuppoſes, in the higheſt degree, as poſſeſſed by ourſelves, that ſtate of felicity which we are required to promote in the world. " You " will confer the greateſt benefit on your city," ſays Epictetus, " not by raiſing the roofs, but by " exalting the ſouls of your fellow-citizens; for

* The ſame maxim will apply throughout every part of nature. *To love, is to enjoy pleaſure: To hate, is to be in pain.*

" it

" it is better that great ſouls ſhould live in ſmall
" habitations, than that abject ſlaves ſhould bur-
" row in great houſes †."

To the benevolent, the ſatisfaction of others is a ground of enjoyment; and exiſtence itſelf, in a world that is governed by the wiſdom of God, is a bleſſing. The mind, freed from cares that lead to puſillanimity and meanneſs, becomes calm, active, fearleſs, and bold; capable of every enterpriſe, and vigorous in the exerciſe of every talent, by which the nature of man is adorned. On this foundation was raiſed the admirable character, which, during a certain period of their ſtory, diſtinguiſhed the celebrated nations of antiquity, and rendered familiar and ordinary in their manners, examples of magnanimity, which, under governments leſs favourable to the public affections, rarely occur; or which, without being much practiſed, or even underſtood, are made ſubjects of admiration and ſwelling panegyric. " Thus," ſays Xenophon, " died Thraſybulus;
" who indeed appears to have been a good man."
What valuable praiſe, and how ſignificant to thoſe who know the ſtory of this admirable perſon! The members of thoſe illuſtrious ſtates, from the habit of conſidering themſelves as part of a community, or at leaſt as deeply involved with ſome order of men in the ſtate, were regardleſs

† Mrs. Carter's tranſlation of the works of Epictetus.

of

of perſonal conſiderations: they had a perpetual view to objects which excite a great ardour in the ſoul; which led them to act perpetually in the view of their fellow-citizens, and to practiſe thoſe arts of deliberation, elocution, policy, and war, on which the fortunes of nations, or of men, in their collective body, depend. To the force of mind collected in this career, and to the improvements of wit which were made in purſuing it, theſe nations owed, not only their magnanimity, and the ſuperiority of their political and military conduct, but even the arts of poetry and literature, which among them were only the inferior appendages of a genius otherwiſe excited, cultivated, and refined.

To the ancient Greek, or the Roman, the individual was nothing, and the public every thing. To the modern, in too many nations of Europe, the individual is every thing, and the public nothing. The ſtate is merely a combination of departments, in which conſideration, wealth, eminence, or power, are offered as the reward of ſervice. It was the nature of modern government, even in its firſt inſtitution, to beſtow on every individual a fixed ſtation and dignity, which he was to maintain for himſelf. Our anceſtors, in rude ages, during the receſs of wars from abroad, fought for their perſonal claims at home, and by their competitions, and the balance of their powers, maintained a kind of political freedom in the

the ſtate, while private parties were ſubject to continual wrongs and oppreſſions. Their poſterity, in times more poliſhed, have repreſſed the civil diſorders in which the activity of earlier ages chiefly conſiſted; but they employ the calm they have gained, not in foſtering a zeal for thoſe laws, and that conſtitution of government, to which they owe their protection, but in practiſing apart, and each for himſelf, the ſeveral arts of perſonal advancement, or profit, which their political eſtabliſhments may enable them to purſue with ſucceſs. Commerce, which may be ſuppoſed to comprehend every lucrative art, is accordingly conſidered as the great object of nations, and the principal ſtudy of mankind.

So much are we accuſtomed to conſider perſonal fortune as the ſole object of care, that even under popular eſtabliſhments, and in ſtates where different orders of men are ſummoned to partake in the government of their country, and where the liberties they enjoy cannot be long preſerved, without vigilance and activity on the part of the ſubject; ſtill they, who, in the vulgar phraſe, have not their fortunes to make, are ſuppoſed to be at a loſs for occupation, and betake themſelves to ſolitary paſtimes, or cultivate what they are pleaſed to call a taſte for gardening, building, drawing, or muſick. With this aid, they endeavour to fill up the blanks of a liſtleſs life, and avoid the neceſſity of curing their languors

guors by any poſitive ſervice to their country, or to mankind.

THE weak or the malicious are well employed in any thing that is innocent, and are fortunate in finding any occupation which prevents the effects of a temper that would prey upon themſelves, or upon their fellow-creatures. But they who are bleſſed with a happy diſpoſition, with capacity and vigour, incur a real debauchery, by having any amuſement that occupies an improper ſhare of their time; and are really cheated of their happineſs, in being made to believe, that any occupation or paſtime is better fitted to amuſe themſelves, than that which at the ſame time produces ſome real good to their fellow-creatures.

THIS ſort of entertainment, indeed, cannot be the choice of the mercenary, the envious, or the malicious. Its value is known only to perſons of an oppoſite temper; and to their experience alone we appeal. Guided by mere diſpoſition, and without the aid of reflection, in buſineſs, in friendſhip, and in public life, they often acquit themſelves well; and borne with ſatisfaction on the tide of their emotions and ſentiments, enjoy the preſent hour, without recollection of the paſt, or hopes of the future. It is in ſpeculation, not in practice, they are made to diſcover, that virtue is a taſk of ſeverity and ſelf-denial.

SECT.

SECT. IX.

Of National Felicity.

MAN is, by nature, the member of a community; and when conſidered in this capacity, the individual appears to be no longer made for himſelf. He muſt forego his happineſs and his freedom, where theſe interfere with the good of ſociety. He is only part of a whole; and the praiſe we think due to his virtue, is but a branch of that more general commendation we beſtow on the member of a body, on the part of a fabric, or engine, for being well fitted to occupy its place, and to produce its effect.

IF this follow from the relation of a part to its whole, and if the public good be the principal object with individuals, it is likewiſe true, that the happineſs of individuals is the great end of civil ſociety: for, in what ſenſe can a public enjoy any good, if its members, conſidered apart, be unhappy?

THE intereſts of ſociety, however, and of its members, are eaſily reconciled. If the individual owe every degree of conſideration to the public, he receives, in paying that very conſideration, the greateſt happineſs of which his nature is capable;

pable; and the greateſt bleſſing the public can beſtow on its members, is to keep them attached to itſelf. That is the moſt happy ſtate, which is moſt beloved by its ſubjects; and they are the moſt happy men, whoſe hearts are engaged to a community, in which they find every object of generoſity and zeal, and a ſcope to the exerciſe of every talent, and of every virtuous diſpoſition.

After we have thus found general maxims, the greater part of our trouble remains, their juſt application to particular caſes. Nations are different in reſpect to their extent, numbers of people, and wealth; in reſpect to the arts they practiſe, and the accommodations they have procured. Theſe circumſtances may not only affect the manners of men; they even, in our eſteem, come into competition with the article of manners itſelf; are ſuppoſed to conſtitute a national felicity, independent of virtue; and give a title, upon which we indulge our own vanity, and that of other nations, as we do that of private men, on the ſcore of their fortunes and honours.

But if this way of meaſuring happineſs, when applied to private men, be ruinous and falſe, it is ſo no leſs when applied to nations. Wealth, commerce, extent of territory, and the knowledge of arts, are, when properly employed, the means of preſervation, and the foundations of power. If they fail in part, the nation is weakened; if they were entirely

entirely with-held, the race would periſh: Their tendency is to maintain numbers of men, but not to conſtitute happineſs. They will accordingly maintain the wretched as well as the happy. They anſwer one purpoſe, but are not therefore ſufficient for all; and are of little ſignificance, when only employed to maintain a timid, dejected, and ſervile people.

GREAT and powerful ſtates are able to overcome and ſubdue the weak; poliſhed and commercial nations have more wealth, and practiſe a greater variety of arts, than the rude: But the happineſs of men, in all caſes alike, conſiſts in the bleſſings of a candid, an active, and ſtrenuous mind. And if we conſider the ſtate of ſociety merely as that into which mankind are led by their propenſities, as a ſtate to be valued from its effect in preſerving the ſpecies, in ripening their talents, and exciting their virtues, we need not enlarge our communities, in order to enjoy theſe advantages. We frequently obtain them in the moſt remarkable degree, where nations remain independent, and are of a ſmall extent.

To increaſe the numbers of mankind, may be admitted as a great and important object: But to extend the limits of any particular ſtate, is not, perhaps, the way to obtain it; while we deſire that our fellow-creatures ſhould multiply, it does not follow, that the whole ſhould, if poſſible, be

united under one head. We are apt to admire the empire of the Romans, as a model of national greatneſs and ſplendour: But the greatneſs we admire in this caſe, was ruinous to the virtue and the happineſs of mankind; it was found to be inconſiſtent with all the advantages which that conquering people had formerly enjoyed in the articles of government and manners.

THE emulation of nations proceeds from their *diviſion. A cluſter of ſtates, like a company of men,* find the exerciſe of their reaſon, and the teſt of their virtues, in the affairs they tranſact, upon a foot of equality, and of ſeparate intereſt. The meaſures taken for ſafety, including great part of the national policy, are relative in every ſtate to what is apprehended from abroad. Athens was neceſſary to Sparta in the exerciſe of her virtue, as ſteel is to flint in the production of fire; and if the cities of Greece had been united under one head, we ſhould never have heard of Epaminondas or Thraſybulus, of Lycurgus or Solon.

WHEN we reaſon in behalf of our ſpecies, therefore, although we may lament the abuſes which ſometimes ariſe from independence, and oppoſition of intereſt; yet, whilſt any degrees of virtue remain with mankind, we cannot wiſh to crowd, under one eſtabliſhment, numbers of men who may ſerve to conſtitute ſeveral; or to

commit affairs to the conduct of one ſenate, one legiſlative or executive power, which, upon a diſtinct and ſeparate footing, might furniſh an exerciſe of ability, and a theatre of glory to many.

THIS may be a ſubject upon which no determinate rule can be given; but the admiration of boundleſs dominion is a ruinous error, and in no inſtance, perhaps, is the real intereſt of mankind more entirely miſtaken.

THE *meaſure of enlargement to be wiſhed for* in any particular ſtate, is often to be taken from the condition of its neighbours. Where a number of ſtates are contiguous, they ſhould be near an equality, in order that they may be mutually objects of reſpect and conſideration, and in order that they may poſſeſs that independence in which the political life of a nation conſiſts.

WHEN the kingdoms of Spain were united, when the great fiefs in France were annexed to the crown, it was no longer expedient for the nations of Great Britain to continue disjoined.

THE ſmall republics of Greece, indeed, by their ſubdiviſions, and the balance of their power, found almoſt in every village the object of nations. Every little diſtrict was a nurſery of excellent men, and what is now the wretched corner of a great empire, was the field on which

mankind have reaped their principal honours. But in modern Europe, republics of a ſimilar extent are like ſhrubs, under the ſhade of a taller wood, choaked by the neighbourhood of more powerful ſtates. In their caſe, a certain diſproportion of force fruſtrates, in a great meaſure, the advantage of ſeparation. They are like the trader in Poland, who is the more deſpicable, and the leſs ſecure, that he is neither maſter nor ſlave.

INDEPENDENT communities, in the mean time, however weak, are averſe to a coalition, not only where it comes with an air of impoſition, or unequal treaty, but even where it implies no more than the admiſſion of new members to an equal ſhare of conſideration with the old. The citizen has no intereſt in the annexation of kingdoms; he muſt find his importance diminiſhed, as the ſtate is enlarged: But ambitious men, under the enlargement of territory, find a more plentiful harveſt of power, and of wealth, while government itſelf is an eaſier taſk. Hence the ruinous progreſs of empire; and hence free nations, under the ſhew of acquiring dominion, ſuffer themſelves, in the end, to be yoked with the ſlaves they had conquered.

OUR deſire to augment the force of a nation is the only pretext for enlarging its territory; but this meaſure, when purſued to extremes, ſeldom fails to fruſtrate itſelf.

NOTWITH-

NOTWITHSTANDING the advantage of numbers, and ſuperior reſources in war, the ſtrength of a nation is derived from the character, not from the wealth, nor from the multitude of its people. If the treaſure of a ſtate can hire numbers of men, erect ramparts, and furniſh the implements of war; the poſſeſſions of the fearful are eaſily ſeized; a timorous multitude falls into rout of itſelf, ramparts may be ſcaled where they are not defended by valour; and arms are of conſequence only in the hands of the brave. The band to which Ageſilaus pointed as the wall of his city, made a defence for their country more permanent, and more effectual, than the rock and the cement with which other cities were fortified.

WE ſhould owe little to that ſtateſman who were to contrive a defence that might ſuperſede the external uſes of virtue. It is wiſely ordered for man, as a rational being, that the employment of reaſon is neceſſary to his preſervation; it is fortunate for him, in the purſuit of diſtinction, that his perſonal conſideration depends on his character; and it is fortunate for nations, that, in order to be powerful and ſafe, they muſt ſtrive to maintain the courage, and cultivate the virtues, of their people. By the uſe of ſuch means, they at once gain their external ends, and are happy.

PEACE and unanimity are commonly conſidered as the principal foundations of public felicity;

yet the rivalſhip of ſeparate communities, and the agitations of a free people, are the principles of political life, and the ſchool of men. How ſhall we reconcile theſe jarring and oppoſite tenets? It is, perhaps, not neceſſary to reconcile them. The pacific may do what they can to allay the animoſities, and to reconcile the opinions, of men; and it will be happy if they can ſucceed in repreſſing their crimes, and in calming the worſt of their paſſions. Nothing, in the mean time, but corruption or ſlavery can ſuppreſs the debates that ſubſiſt among men of integrity, who bear an equal part in the adminiſtration of ſtate.

A PERFECT agreement in matters of opinion is not to be obtained in the moſt ſelect company, and if it were, what would become of ſociety? "The "Spartan legiſlator," ſays Plutarch, "appears "to have ſown the ſeeds of variance and diſſen- "tion among his countrymen: he meant that "good citizens ſhould be led to diſpute; he "conſidered emulation as the brand by which "their virtues were kindled; and ſeemed to ap- "prehend, that a complaiſance, by which men "ſubmit their opinions without examination, is "a principal ſource of corruption."

FORMS of government are ſuppoſed to decide of the happineſs or miſery of mankind. But forms of government muſt be varied, in order to ſuit the extent, the way of ſubſiſtence, the character, and

and the manners of different nations. In ſome caſes, the multitude may be ſuffered to govern themſelves; in others they muſt be ſeverely reſtrained. The inhabitants of a village, in ſome primitive age, may have been ſafely intruſted to the conduct of reaſon, and to the ſuggeſtion of their innocent views; but the tenants of Newgate can ſcarcely be truſted, with chains locked to their bodies, and bars of iron fixed to their legs. How is it poſſible, therefore, to find any ſingle form of government that would ſuit mankind in every condition?

We proceed, however, in the following ſection, to point out the diſtinctions, and to explain the language which occurs in this place, on the head of different models for ſubordination and government.

SECT. X.

The ſame Subject continued.

IT is a common obſervation, That mankind were originally equal. They have indeed by nature equal rights to their preſervation, and to the uſe of their talents; but they are fitted for different ſtations; and when they are claſſed by a rule taken from this circumſtance, they ſuffer no injuſtice on the ſide of their natural rights. It is obvious, that ſome mode of ſubordination is as neceſſary to men as ſociety itſelf; and this, not only to attain the ends of government, but to comply with an order eſtabliſhed by nature.

PRIOR to any political inſtitution whatever, men are qualified by a great diverſity of talents, by a different tone of the ſoul, and ardour of the paſſions, to act a variety of parts. Bring them together, each will find his place. They cenſure or applaud in a body; they conſult and deliberate in more ſelect parties; they take or give an aſcendant as individuals; and numbers are by this means fitted to act in company, and to preſerve their communities, before any formal diſtribution of office is made.

WE are formed to act in this manner; and if we have any doubts with relation to the rights of government

government in general, we owe our perplexity more to the ſubtilties of the ſpeculative, than to any uncertainty in the feelings of the heart. Involved in the reſolutions of our company, we move with the crowd before we have determined the rule by which its will is collected. We follow a leader, before we have ſettled the ground of his pretenſions, or adjuſted the form of his election: and it is not till after mankind have committed many errors in the capacities of magiſtrate and ſubject, that they think of making government itſelf a ſubject of rules.

If, therefore, in conſidering the variety of forms under which ſocieties ſubſiſt, the caſuiſt is pleaſed to inquire, What title one man, or any number of men, have to controul his actions? he may be anſwered, None at all, provided that his actions have no effect to the prejudice of his fellow-creatures; but if they have, the rights of defence, and the obligation to repreſs the commiſſion of wrongs, belong to collective bodies, as well as to individuals. Many rude nations, having no formal tribunals for the judgment of crimes, aſſemble, when alarmed by any flagrant offence, and take their meaſures with the criminal as they would with an enemy.

But will this conſideration, which confirms the title to ſovereignty, where it is exerciſed by the ſociety in its collective capacity, or by thoſe to

whom the powers of the whole are committed, likewiſe ſupport the claim to dominion, wherever it is caſually lodged, or even where it is only maintained by force?

THIS queſtion may be ſufficiently anſwered, by obſerving, that a right to do juſtice, and to do good, is competent to every individual, or order of men; and that the exerciſe of this right has no limits but in the defect of power. Whoever, therefore, has power, may employ it to this extent; and no previous convention is required to juſtify his conduct. But a right to do wrong, or to commit injuſtice, is an abuſe of language, and a contradiction in terms. It is no more competent to the collective body of a people, than it is to any ſingle uſurper. When we admit ſuch a prerogative in the caſe of any ſovereign, we can only mean to expreſs the extent of his power, and the force with which he is enabled to execute his pleaſure. Such a prerogative is aſſumed by the leader of banditti at the head of his gang, or by a deſpotic prince at the head of his troops. When the ſword is preſented by either, the traveller or the inhabitant may ſubmit from a ſenſe of neceſſity or fear; but he lies under no obligation from a motive of duty or juſtice.

THE multiplicity of forms, in the mean time, which different ſocieties offer to our view, is almoſt infinite. The claſſes into which they diſtribute

bute their members, the manner in which they eſtabliſh the legiſlative and executive powers, the imperceptible circumſtances by which they are led to have different cuſtoms, and to confer on their governors unequal meaſures of power and authority, give riſe to perpetual diſtinctions between conſtitutions the moſt nearly reſembling each other, and give to human affairs a variety in detail, which, in its full extent, no underſtanding can comprehend, and no memory retain.

In order to have a general and comprehenſive knowledge of the whole, we muſt be determined on this, as on every other ſubject, to overlook many particulars and ſingularities, diſtinguiſhing different governments; to fix our attention on certain points, in which many agree; and thereby eſtabliſh a few general heads, under which the ſubject may be diſtinctly conſidered. When we have marked the characteriſtics which form the general points of co-incidence, when we have purſued them to their conſequences in the ſeveral modes of legiſlation, execution, and judicature, in the eſtabliſhments which relate to police, commerce, religion, or domeſtic life; we have made an acquiſition of knowledge, which, though it does not ſuperſede the neceſſity of experience, may ſerve to direct our inquiries, and, in the midſt of affairs, give an order and a method for the arrangement of particulars that occur to our obſervation.

When

When I recollect what the Preſident Monteſquieu has written, I am at a loſs to tell, why I ſhould treat of human affairs: But I too am inſtigated by my reflections, and my ſentiments; and I may utter them more to the comprehenſion of ordinary capacities, becauſe I am more on the level of ordinary men. If it be neceſſary to pave the way for what follows on the general hiſtory of nations, by giving ſome account of the heads under which various forms of government may be conveniently ranged, the reader ſhould perhaps be referred to what has been already delivered on the ſubject by this profound politician and amiable moraliſt. In his writings will be found, not only the original of what I am now, for the ſake of order, to copy from him, but likewiſe probably the ſource of many obſervations, which, in different places, I may, under the belief of invention, have repeated, without quoting their author.

The ancient philoſophers treated of government commonly under three heads; the Democratic, the Ariſtocratic, and the Deſpotic. Their attention was chiefly occupied with the varieties of republican government, and they paid little regard to a very important diſtinction, which Mr. Monteſquieu has made, between deſpotiſm and monarchy. He too has conſidered government as reducible to three general forms; and, "to underſtand the nature of each," he obſerves, "it is "ſufficient to recal ideas which are familiar with

"men

" men of the leaſt reflection, who admit three " definitions, or rather three facts: That a re- " public is a ſtate in which the people in a col- " lective body, or a part of the people, poſſeſs " the ſovereign power: That monarchy is that " in which one man governs, according to fixed " and determinate laws: And a deſpotiſm is that " in which one man, without law, or rule of ad- " miniſtration, by the mere impulſe of will or ca- " price, decides, and carries every thing before " him."

REPUBLICS admit of a very material diſtinction, which is pointed out in the general definition, that between democracy and ariſtocracy. In the firſt, ſupreme power remains in the hands of the collective body. Every office of magiſtracy, at the nomination of this ſovereign, is open to every citizen; who, in the diſcharge of his duty, becomes the miniſter of the people, and accountable to them for every object of his truſt.

IN the ſecond, the ſovereignty is lodged in a particular claſs, or order of men; who, being once named, continue for life; or, by the hereditary diſtinctions of birth and fortune, are advanced to a ſtation of permanent ſuperiority. From this order, and by their nomination, all the offices of magiſtracy are filled; and in the different aſſemblies which they conſtitute, whatever relates to the legiſlation, the execution, or juriſdiction, is finally determined.

MR.

Mr. Monteſquieu has pointed out the ſentiments or maxims from which men muſt be ſuppoſed to act under theſe different governments.

In democracy, they muſt love equality; they muſt reſpect the rights of their fellow-citizens; they muſt unite by the common ties of affection to the ſtate. In forming perſonal pretenſions, they muſt be ſatisfied with that degree of conſideration they can procure by their abilities fairly meaſured with thoſe of an opponent; they muſt labour for the public without hope of profit; they muſt reject every attempt to create a perſonal dependence. Candour, force, and elevation of mind, in ſhort, are the props of democracy; and virtue is the principle of conduct required to its preſervation.

How beautiful a pre-eminence on the ſide of popular government! and how ardently ſhould mankind wiſh for the form, if it tended to eſtabliſh the principle, or were, in every inſtance, a ſure indication of its preſence!

But perhaps we muſt have poſſeſſed the principle, in order, with any hopes of advantage, to receive the form; and where the firſt is entirely extinguiſhed, the other may be fraught with evil, if any additional evil deſerves to be ſhunned where men are already unhappy.

At

At Conſtantinople or Algiers, it is a miſerable ſpectacle when men pretend to act on a foot of equality: They only mean to ſhake off the reſtraints of government, and to ſeize as much as they can of that ſpoil, which, in ordinary times, is ingroſſed by the maſter they ſerve.

It is one advantage of democracy, that the principal ground of diſtinction being perſonal qualities, men are claſſed according to their abilities, and to the merit of their actions. Though all have equal pretenſions to power, yet the ſtate is actually governed by a few. The majority of the people, even in their capacity of ſovereign, only pretend to employ their ſenſes; to feel, when preſſed by national inconveniences, or threatened by public dangers, and with the ardour which is apt to ariſe in crowded aſſemblies, to urge the purſuits in which they are engaged, or to repel the attacks with which they are menaced.

The moſt perfect equality of rights can never exclude the aſcendant of ſuperior minds, nor the aſſemblies of a collective body govern without the direction of ſelect councils. On this account, popular government may be confounded with ariſtocracy. But this alone does not conſtitute the character of ariſtocratical government. Here the members of the ſtate are divided, at leaſt, into two claſſes; of which one is deſtined to command, the other to obey. No merits or defects can raiſe

raiſe or ſink a perſon from one claſs to the other. The only effect of perſonal character is, to procure to the individual a ſuitable degree of conſideration with his own order, not to vary his rank. In one ſituation he is taught to aſſume, in another to yield the pre-eminence. He occupies the ſtation of patron or client, and is either the ſovereign or the ſubject of his country. The whole citizens may unite in executing the plans of ſtate, but never in deliberating on its meaſures, or enacting its laws. What belongs to the whole people under democracy, is here confined to a part. Members of the ſuperior order, are among themſelves, poſſibly, claſſed according to their abilities, but retain a perpetual aſcendant over thoſe of inferior ſtation. They are at once the ſervants and the maſters of the ſtate, and pay, with their perſonal attendance and with their blood, for the civil or military honours they enjoy.

To maintain for himſelf, and to admit in his fellow-citizen, a perfect equality of privilege and ſtation, is no longer the leading maxim of the member of ſuch a community. The rights of men are modified by their condition. One order claims more than it is willing to yield; the other muſt be ready to yield what it does not aſſume to itſelf: and it is with good reaſon that Mr. Monteſquieu gives to the principle of ſuch governments the name of *moderation*, not of *virtue*.

THE

The elevation of one claſs is a moderated arrogance, the ſubmiſſion of the other a limited deference. The firſt muſt be careful, by concealing the invidious part of their diſtinction, to palliate what is grievous in the public arrangement, and by their education, their cultivated manners, and improved talents, to appear qualified for the ſtations they occupy. The other muſt be taught to yield, from reſpect and perſonal attachment, what could not otherwiſe be extorted by force. When this moderation fails on either ſide, the conſtitution totters. A populace enraged to mutiny, may claim the right of equality to which they are admitted in democratical ſtates; or a nobility bent on dominion, may chuſe among themſelves, or find already pointed out to them, a ſovereign, who, by advantages of fortune, popularity, or abilities, is ready to ſeize for his own family, that envied power which has already carried his order beyond the limits of moderation, and infected particular men with a boundleſs ambition.

Monarchies have accordingly been found with the recent marks of ariſtocracy. There, however, the monarch is only the firſt among the nobles; he muſt be ſatisfied with a limited power; his ſubjects are ranged into claſſes; he finds on every quarter a pretence to privilege that circumſcribes his authority; and he finds a force ſufficient to confine his adminiſtration within certain bounds of equity, and determinate laws.

UNDER ſuch governments, however, the love of equality is prepoſterous, and moderation itſelf is unneceſſary. The object of every rank is precedency, and every order may diſplay its advantages to their full extent. The ſovereign himſelf owes great part of his authority to the ſounding titles and the dazzling equipage which he exhibits in public. The ſubordinate ranks lay claim to importance by a like exhibition, and for that purpoſe carry in every inſtant the enſigns of their birth, or the ornaments of their fortune. What elſe could mark out to the individual the relation in which he ſtands to his fellow-ſubjects, or diſtinguiſh the numberleſs ranks that fill up the interval between the ſtate of the ſovereign and that of the peaſant? Or what elſe could, in ſtates of a great extent, preſerve any appearance of order, among members diſunited by ambition and intereſt, and deſtined to form a community, without the ſenſe of any common concern?

MONARCHIES are generally found, where the ſtate is enlarged, in population and in territory, beyond the numbers and dimenſions that are conſiſtent with republican government. Together with theſe circumſtances, great inequalities ariſe in the diſtribution of property; and the deſire of pre-eminence becomes the predominant paſſion. Every rank would exerciſe its prerogative, and the ſovereign is perpetually tempted to enlarge his own; if ſubjects, who deſpair of precedence,

plead for equality, he is willing to favour their claims, and to aid them in reducing pretenſions, with which he himſelf is, on many occaſions, obliged to contend. In the event of ſuch a policy, many invidious diſtinctions and grievances peculiar to monarchical government, may, in appearance, be removed; but the ſtate of equality to which the ſubjects approach is that of ſlaves, equally dependent on the will of a maſter, not that of freemen, in a condition to maintain their own.

THE principle of monarchy, according to Monteſquieu, is honour. Men may poſſeſs good qualities, elevation of mind, and fortitude; but the ſenſe of equality, that will bear no incroachment on the perſonal rights of the meaneſt citizen; the indignant ſpirit, that will not court a protection, nor accept as a favour what is due as a right; the public affection, which is founded on the neglect of perſonal conſiderations, are neither conſiſtent with the preſervation of the conſtitution, nor agreeable to the habits acquired in any ſtation aſſigned to its members.

EVERY condition is poſſeſſed of peculiar dignity, and points out a propriety of conduct, which men of ſtation are obliged to maintain. In the commerce of ſuperiors and inferiors, it is the object of ambition, and of vanity, to refine on the advantages of rank; while, to facilitate the intercourſe of polite ſociety, it is the aim of good breeding to diſguiſe, or reject them.

THOUGH the objects of conſideration are rather the dignities of ſtation than perſonal qualities; though friendſhip cannot be formed by mere inclination, nor alliances by the mere choice of the heart; yet men ſo united, and even without changing their order, are highly ſuſceptible of moral excellence, or liable to many different degrees of corruption. They may act a vigorous part as members of the ſtate, an amiable one in the commerce of private ſociety, or they may yield up their dignity as citizens, even while they raiſe their arrogance and preſumption as private parties.

IN monarchy, all orders of men derive their honours from the crown; but they continue to hold them as a right, and they exerciſe a ſubordinate power in the ſtate, founded on the permanent rank they enjoy, and on the attachment of thoſe whom they are appointed to lead and protect. Though they do not force themſelves into national councils and public aſſemblies, and though the name of ſenate is unknown, yet the ſentiments they adopt muſt have weight with the ſovereign; and every individual, in his ſeparate capacity, in ſome meaſure, deliberates for his country. In whatever does not derogate from his rank, he has an arm ready to ſerve the community; in whatever alarms his ſenſe of honour, he has averſions and diſlikes, which amount to a negative on the will of his prince.

INTANGLED

INTANGLED together by the reciprocal ties of dependence and protection, though not combined by the ſenſe of a common intereſt, the ſubjects of monarchy, like thoſe of republics, find themſelves occupied as the members of an active ſociety, and engaged to treat with their fellow-creatures on a liberal footing. If thoſe principles of honour which ſave the individual from ſervility in his own perſon, or from becoming an engine of oppreſſion in the hands of another, ſhould fail; if they ſhould give way to the maxims of commerce, to the refinements of a ſuppoſed philoſophy, or to the miſplaced ardours of a republican ſpirit; if they are betrayed by the cowardice of ſubjects, or ſubdued by the ambition of princes, what muſt become of the nations of Europe?

DESPOTISM is monarchy corrupted, in which a court and a prince in appearance remain, but in which every ſubordinate rank is deſtroyed, in which the ſubject is told, that he has no rights; that he cannot poſſeſs any property, nor fill any ſtation, independent of the momentary will of his prince. Theſe doctrines are founded on the maxims of conqueſt, they muſt be inculcated with the whip and the ſword; and are beſt received under the terror of chains and impriſonment. Fear, therefore, is the principle which qualifies the ſubject to occupy his ſtation: and the ſovereign, who holds out the enſigns of terror ſo freely to others, has abundant reaſon to give

this paſſion a principal place with himſelf. That tenure which he has deviſed for the rights of others, is ſoon applied to his own; and from his eager deſire to ſecure, or to extend his power, he finds it become, like the fortunes of his people, a creature of mere imagination and unſettled caprice.

WHILST we thus, with ſo much accuracy, can aſſign the ideal limits that may diſtinguiſh conſtitutions of government, we find them, in reality, both in reſpect to the principle and the form, variouſly blended together. In what ſociety are not men claſſed by external diſtinctions, as well as perſonal qualities? In what ſtate are they not actuated by a variety of principles; juſtice, honour, moderation, and fear? It is the purpoſe of ſcience not to diſguiſe this confuſion in its object, but, in the multiplicity and combination of particulars, to find the principal points which deſerve our attention; and which, being well underſtood, ſave us from the embarraſſment which the varieties of ſingular caſes might otherwiſe create. In the ſame degree in which governments require men to act from principles of virtue, of honour, or of fear, they are more or leſs fully compriſed under the heads of republic, monarchy, or deſpotiſm, and the general theory is more or leſs applicable to their particular caſe.

FORMS of government, in fact, mutually approach or recede by many, and often inſenſible gradations.

gradations. Democracy, by admitting certain inequalities of rank, approaches to ariſtocracy. In popular, as well as ariſtocratical governments, particular men, by their perſonal authority, and ſometimes by the credit of their family, have maintained a ſpecies of monarchical power. The monarch is limited in different degrees: even the deſpotic prince is only that monarch whoſe ſubjects claim the feweſt privileges, or who is himſelf beſt prepared to ſubdue them by force. All theſe varieties are but ſteps in the hiſtory of mankind, and mark the fleeting and tranſient ſituations through which they have paſſed, while ſupported by virtue, or depreſſed by vice.

Perfect democracy and deſpotiſm appear to be the oppoſite extremes at which conſtitutions of government fartheſt recede from each other. Under the firſt, a perfect virtue is required; under the ſecond, a total corruption is ſuppoſed: yet, in point of mere form, there being nothing fixed in the ranks and diſtinctions of men beyond the caſual and temporary poſſeſſion of power, ſocieties eaſily paſs from a condition in which every individual has an equal title to reign, into one in which they are equally deſtined to ſerve. The ſame qualities in both, courage, popularity, addreſs, and military conduct, raiſe the ambitious to eminence. With theſe qualities, the citizen or the ſlave eaſily paſſes from the ranks to the command of an army, from an obſcure to an il-

luſtrious ſtation. In either, a ſingle perſon may rule with unlimited ſway; and in both, the populace may break down every barrier of order, and reſtraint of law.

If we ſuppoſe that the equality eſtabliſhed among the ſubjects of a deſpotic ſtate has inſpired its members with confidence, intrepidity, and the love of juſtice, the deſpotic prince, having ceaſed to be an object of fear, muſt ſink among the crowd. If, on the contrary, the perſonal equality which is enjoyed by the members of a democratical ſtate, ſhould be valued merely as an equal pretenſion to the objects of avarice and ambition, the monarch may ſtart up anew, and be ſupported by thoſe who mean to ſhare in his profits. When the rapacious and mercenary aſſemble in parties, it is of no conſequence under what leader they inliſt, whether Cæſar or Pompey, the hopes of rapine or pay are the only motives from which they become attached to either.

In the diſorder of corrupted ſocieties, the ſcene has been frequently changed from democracy to deſpotiſm, and from the laſt too, in its turn, to the firſt. From amidſt the democracy of corrupt men, and from a ſcene of lawleſs confuſion, the tyrant aſcends a throne with arms reeking in blood. But his abuſes, or his weakneſſes, in the ſtation he has gained, in their turn awaken and give way to the ſpirit of mutiny and revenge.

The

The cries of murder and deſolation, which in the ordinary courſe of military government terrified the ſubject in his private retreat, ſound through the vaults, and pierce the grates and iron doors of the ſeraglio. Democracy ſeems to revive in a ſcene of wild diſorder and tumult: but both the extremes are but the tranſient fits of paroxyſm or languor in a diſtempered ſtate.

If men be any where arrived at this meaſure of depravity, there appears no immediate hope of redreſs. Neither the aſcendancy of the multitude, nor that of the tyrant, will ſecure the adminiſtration of juſtice: Neither the licence of mere tumult, nor the calm of dejection and ſervitude, will teach the citizen that he was born for candour and affection to his fellow-creatures. And if the ſpeculative would find that habitual ſtate of war which they are ſometimes pleaſed to honour with the name of *the ſtate of nature*, they will find it in the conteſt that ſubſiſts between the deſpotical prince and his ſubjects, not in the firſt approaches of a rude and ſimple tribe to the condition and the domeſtic arrangement of nations.

PART

PART SECOND.

OF THE HISTORY OF

RUDE NATIONS.

SECTION I.

Of the Informations on this Subject which are derived from Antiquity.

THE hiſtory of mankind is confined within a limited period, and from every quarter brings an intimation that human affairs have had a beginning. Nations, diſtinguiſhed by the poſſeſſion of arts, and the felicity of their political eſtabliſhments, have been derived from a feeble original, and ſtill preſerve in their ſtory the indications of a ſlow and gradual progreſs, by which this diſtinction was gained. The antiquities of every people, however diverſified, and however diſguiſed, contain the ſame information on this point.

In

In ſacred hiſtory, we find the parents of the ſpecies, as yet a ſingle pair, ſent forth to inherit the earth, and to force a ſubſiſtence for themſelves amidſt the briars and thorns which were made to abound on its ſurface. Their race, which was again reduced to a few, had to ſtruggle with the dangers that await a weak and infant ſpecies; and after many ages elapſed, the moſt reſpectable nations took their riſe from one or a few families that had paſtured their flocks in the deſert.

The Grecians derive their own origin from unſettled tribes, whoſe frequent migrations are a proof of the rude and infant ſtate of their communities; and whoſe warlike exploits, ſo much celebrated in ſtory, only exhibit the ſtruggles with which they diſputed the poſſeſſion of a country they afterwards, by their talent for fable, by their arts, and their policy, rendered ſo famous in the hiſtory of mankind.

Italy muſt have been divided into many rude and feeble cantons, when a band of robbers, as we are taught to conſider them, found a ſecure ſettlement on the banks of the Tiber, and when a people, yet compoſed only of one ſex, ſuſtained the character of a nation. Rome, for many ages, ſaw, from her walls, on every ſide, the territory of her enemies, and found as little to check or to ſtifle the weakneſs of her infant power, as ſhe did afterwards

afterwards to reſtrain the progreſs of her extended empire. Like a Tartar or a Scythian horde, which had pitched on a ſettlement, this naſcent community was equal, if not ſuperior, to every tribe in its neighbourhood, and the oak which has covered the field with its ſhade, was once a feeble plant in the nurſery, and not to be diſtinguiſhed from the weeds by which its early growth was reſtrained.

THE Gauls and the Germans are come to our knowledge with the marks of a ſimilar condition; and the inhabitants of Britain, at the time of the firſt Róman invaſions, reſembled, in many things, the preſent natives of North America: They were ignorant of agriculture, they painted their bodies, and uſed for clothing the ſkins of beaſts.

SUCH, therefore, appears to have been the commencement of hiſtory with all nations, and in ſuch circumſtances are we to look for the original character of mankind. The inquiry refers to a diſtant period, and every concluſion ſhould build on the facts which are preſerved for our uſe. Our method, notwithſtanding, too frequently, is to reſt the whole on conjecture, to impute every advantage of our nature to thoſe arts which we ourſelves poſſeſs, and to imagine, that a mere negation of all our virtues is a ſufficient deſcription of man in his original ſtate. We are ourſelves the ſuppoſed ſtandards of politeneſs and civilization; and where our own features do not appear,

appear, we apprehend, that there is nothing which deſerves to be known. But it is probable that here, as in many other caſes, we are ill qualified, from our ſuppoſed knowledge of cauſes, to prognoſticate effects, or to determine what muſt have been the properties and operations, even of our own nature, in the abſence of thoſe circumſtances in which we have ſeen it engaged. Who would, from mere conjecture, ſuppoſe, that the naked ſavage would be a coxcomb and a gameſter? that he would be proud or vain, without the diſtinctions of title and fortune? and that his principal care would be to adorn his perſon, and to find an amuſement? Even if it could be ſuppoſed that he would thus ſhare in our vices, and, in the midſt of his foreſt, vie with the follies which are practiſed in the town; yet no one would be ſo bold as to affirm, that he would likewiſe, in any inſtance, excel us in talents and virtues; that he would have a penetration, a force of imagination and elocution, an ardour of mind, an affection and courage, which the arts, the diſcipline, and the policy of few nations would be able to improve. Yet theſe particulars are a part in the deſcription which is delivered by thoſe who have had opportunities of ſeeing mankind in their rudeſt condition: and beyond the reach of ſuch teſtimony, we can neither ſafely take, nor pretend to give, information on the ſubject.

If conjectures and opinions formed at a diſtance, have not ſufficient authority in the hiſtory of

of mankind, the domeſtic antiquities of every nation muſt, for this very reaſon, be received with caution. They are, for moſt part, the mere conjectures or the fictions of ſubſequent ages; and even where at firſt they contained ſome reſemblance of truth, they ſtill vary with the imagination of thoſe by whom they are tranſmitted, and in every generation receive a different form. They are made to bear the ſtamp of the times through which they have paſſed in the form of tradition, not of the ages to which their pretended deſcriptions relate. The information they bring, is not like the light reflected from a mirror, which delineates the object from which it originally came; but, like rays that come broken and diſperſed from an opaque or unpoliſhed ſurface, only give the colours and features of the body from which they were laſt reflected.

When traditionary fables are rehearſed by the vulgar, they bear the marks of a national character; and though mixed with abſurdities, often raiſe the imagination, and move the heart: when made the materials of poetry, and adorned by the ſkill and the eloquence of an ardent and ſuperior mind, they inſtruct the underſtanding, as well as engage the paſſions. It is only in the management of mere antiquaries, or ſtript of the ornaments which the laws of hiſtory forbid them to wear, that they become even unfit to amuſe the fancy, or to ſerve any purpoſe whatever.

It were abſurd to quote the fable of the Iliad or the Odyſſey, the legends of Hercules, Theſeus, or Œdipus, as authorities in matter of fact relating to the hiſtory of mankind; but they may, with great juſtice, be cited to aſcertain what were the conceptions and ſentiments of the age in which they were compoſed, or to characteriſe the genius of that people, with whoſe imaginations they were blended, and by whom they were fondly rehearſed and admired.

In this manner fiction may be admitted to vouch for the genius of nations, while hiſtory has nothing to offer that is intitled to credit. The Greek fable accordingly conveying a character of its authors, throws light on ſome ages of which no other record remains. The ſuperiority of this people is indeed in no circumſtance more evident than in the ſtrain of their fictions, and in the ſtory of thoſe fabulous heroes, poets, and ſages, whoſe tales, being invented or embelliſhed by an imagination already filled with the ſubject for which the hero was celebrated, ſerved to inflame that ardent enthuſiaſm, with which ſo many different republics afterwards proceeded in the purſuit of every national object.

It was no doubt of great advantage to thoſe nations, that their ſyſtem of fable was original, and being already received in popular traditions, ſerved to diffuſe thoſe improvements of reaſon, imagina-

imagination, and ſentiment, which were afterwards, by men of the fineſt talents, made on the fable itſelf, or conveyed in its moral. The paſſions of the poet pervaded the minds of the people, and the conceptions of men of genius, being communicated to the vulgar, became the incentives of a national ſpirit.

A MYTHOLOGY borrowed from abroad, a literature founded on references to a ſtrange country, and fraught with foreign alluſions, are much more confined in their uſe: They ſpeak to the learned alone; and though intended to inform the underſtanding, and to mend the heart, may, by being confined to a few, have an oppoſite effect: They may foſter conceit on the ruins of common ſenſe, and render what was, at leaſt innocently, ſung by the Athenian mariner at his oar, or rehearſed by the ſhepherd in attending his flock, an occaſion of vice, or the foundation of pedantry and ſcholaſtic pride.

OUR very learning, perhaps, where its influence extends, ſerves, in ſome meaſure, to depreſs our national ſpirit. Our literature being derived from nations of a different race, who flouriſhed at a time when our anceſtors were in a ſtate of barbarity, and conſequently, when they were deſpiſed by thoſe who had attained to the literary arts, has given riſe to a humbling opinion, that we ourſelves are the offspring of mean and contemptible

nations, with whom the human imagination and ſentiment had no effect, till the genius was in a manner inſpired by examples, and directed by leſſons that were brought from abroad. The Romans, from whom our accounts are chiefly derived, have admitted, in the rudeneſs of their own anceſtors, a ſyſtem of virtues, which all ſimple nations perhaps equally poſſeſs; a contempt of riches, love of their country, patience of hardſhip, danger, and fatigue. They have, notwithſtanding, vilified our anceſtors for having reſembled their own; at leaſt, in the defect of their arts, and in the neglect of conveniences which thoſe arts are employed to procure.

It is from the Greek and the Roman hiſtorians, however, that we have not only the moſt authentic and inſtructive, but even the moſt engaging repreſentations of the tribes from whom we deſcend. Thoſe ſublime and intelligent writers underſtood human nature, and could collect its features, and exhibit its characters, in every ſituation. They were ill ſucceeded in this taſk by the early hiſtorians of modern Europe; who, generally bred to the profeſſion of monks, and confined to the monaſtic life, applied themſelves to record what they were pleaſed to denominate facts, while they ſuffered the productions of genius to periſh, and were unable, either by the matter they ſelected, or the ſtyle of their compoſitions, to give any repreſentation of the active ſpirit of mankind

mankind in any condition. With them, a narration was ſuppoſed to conſtitute hiſtory, whilſt it did not convey any knowledge of men; and hiſtory itſelf was allowed to be complete, while, amidſt the events and the ſucceſſion of princes that are recorded in the order of time, we are left to look in vain for thoſe characteriſtics of the underſtanding and the heart, which alone, in every human tranſaction, render the ſtory either engaging or uſeful.

We therefore willingly quit the hiſtory of our early anceſtors, where Cæſar and Tacitus have dropped them; and perhaps, till we come within the reach of what is connected with preſent affairs, and makes a part in the ſyſtem on which we now proceed, have little reaſon to expect any ſubject to intereſt or inform the mind. We have no reaſon, however, from hence to conclude, that the matter itſelf was more barren, or the ſcene of human affairs leſs intereſting, in modern Europe, than it has been on every ſtage where mankind were engaged to exhibit the movements of the heart, the efforts of generoſity, magnanimity, and courage.

The trial of what thoſe ages contained, is not even fairly made, when men of genius and diſtinguiſhed abilities, with the accompliſhments of a learned and a poliſhed age, collect the materials they have found, and, with the greateſt ſucceſs,

connect the ſtory of illiterate ages with tranſactions of a later date: It is difficult even for them, under the names which are applied in a new ſtate of ſociety, to convey a juſt apprehenſion of what mankind were, in ſituations ſo different, and in times ſo remote from their own.

In deriving from hiſtorians of this character the inſtruction which their writings are fit to beſtow, we are frequently to forget the general terms that are employed, in order to collect the real manners of an age from the minute circumſtances that are occaſionally preſented. The titles of *Royal* and *Noble* were applicable to the families of Tarquin, Collatinus, and Cincinnatus; but Lucretia was employed in domeſtic induſtry with her maids, and Cincinnatus followed the plough. The dignities, and even the offices, of civil ſociety, were known many ages ago, in Europe, by their preſent appellations; but we find in the hiſtory of England, that a king and his court being aſſembled to ſolemnize a feſtival, an outlaw, who had ſubſiſted by robbery, came to ſhare in the feaſt. The King himſelf aroſe to force this unworthy gueſt from the company; a ſcuffle enſued between them; and the King was killed*. A chancellor and prime miniſter, whoſe magnificence and ſumptuous furniture were the ſubject of admiration and envy, had his apartments covered every day in winter with clean ſtraw and hay, and in ſummer

* Hume's Hiſtory, ch. 8. p. 278.

with

with green ruſhes or boughs. Even the ſovereign himſelf, in thoſe ages, was provided with forage for his bed *. Theſe picturesque features, and characteriſtical ſtrokes of the times, recal the imagination from the ſuppoſed diſtinction of monarch and ſubject, to that ſtate of rough familiarity in which our anceſtors lived, and under which they acted, with a view to objects, and on principles of conduct, which we ſeldom comprehend, when we are employed to record their tranſactions, or to ſtudy their characters.

THUCYDIDES, notwithſtanding the prejudice of his country againſt the name of *Barbarian*, underſtood that it was in the cuſtoms of barbarous nations he was to ſtudy the more ancient manners of Greece.

THE Romans might have found an image of their own anceſtors, in the repreſentations they have given of ours: and if ever an Arab clan ſhall become a civilized nation, or any American tribe eſcape the poiſon which is adminiſtered by our traders of Europe, it may be from the relations of the preſent times, and the deſcriptions which are now given by travellers, that ſuch a people, in after-ages, may beſt collect the accounts of their origin. It is in their preſent condition that we are to behold, as in a mirrour, the features of our own progenitors; and from thence

* Hume's Hiſtory, ch. 8. p. 73.

we are to draw our concluſions with reſpect to the influence of ſituations, in which we have reaſon to believe that our fathers were placed.

WHAT ſhould diſtinguiſh a German or a Briton, in the habits of his mind or his body, in his manners or apprehenſions, from an American, who, like him, with his bow and his dart, is left to traverſe the foreſt; and in a like ſevere or variable climate, is obliged to ſubſiſt by the chace?

IF, in advanced years, we would form a juſt notion of our progreſs from the cradle, we muſt have recourſe to the nurſery; and from the example of thoſe who are ſtill in the period of life we mean to deſcribe, take our repreſentation of paſt manners, that cannot, in any other way, be recalled.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of Rude Nations prior to the Eſtabliſhment of Property.

FROM one to the other extremity of America; from Kamſchatka weſtward to the river Oby; and from the Northern ſea, over that length of country, to the confines of China, of India, and Perſia; from the Caſpian to the Red Sea, with little exception, and from thence over the inland continent and the weſtern ſhores of Africa; we every where meet with nations on whom we beſtow the appellations of barbarous or ſavage. That extenſive tract of the earth, containing ſo great a variety of ſituation, climate, and ſoil, ſhould, in the manners of its inhabitants, exhibit all the diverſities which ariſe from the unequal influence of the ſun, joined to a different nouriſhment and manner of life. Every queſtion, however, on this ſubject, is premature, till we have firſt endeavoured to form ſome general conception of our ſpecies in its rude ſtate, and have learned to diſtinguiſh mere ignorance from dulneſs, and the want of arts from the want of capacity.

OF the nations who dwell in thoſe, or any other of the leſs cultivated parts of the earth, ſome intruſt their ſubſiſtence chiefly to hunting, fiſhing, or the natural produce of the ſoil. They have

little attention to property, and ſcarcely any beginnings of ſubordination or government. Others, having poſſeſſed themſelves of herbs, and depending for their proviſion on paſture, know what it is to be poor and rich. They know the relations of patron and client, of ſervant and maſter, and by the meaſures of fortune determine their ſtation. This diſtinction muſt create a material difference of character, and may furniſh two ſeparate heads, under which to conſider the hiſtory of mankind in their rudeſt ſtate; that of the ſavage, who is not yet acquainted with property; and that of the barbarian, to whom it is, although not aſcertained by laws, a principal object of care and deſire.

It muſt appear very evident, that property is a matter of progreſs. It requires, among other particulars, which are the effects of time, ſome method of defining poſſeſſion. The very deſire of it proceeds from experience; and the induſtry by which it is gained, or improved, requires ſuch a habit of acting with a view to diſtant objects, as may overcome the preſent diſpoſition either to ſloth or to enjoyment. This habit is ſlowly acquired, and is in reality a principal diſtinction of nations in the advanced ſtate of mechanic and commercial arts.

In a tribe which ſubſiſts by hunting and fiſhing, the arms, the utenſils, and the fur, which the individual

dividual carries, are to him the only ſubjects of property. The food of to-morrow is yet wild in the foreſt, or hid in the lake; it cannot be appropriated before it is caught; and even then, being the purchaſe of numbers, who fiſh or hunt in a body, it accrues to the community, and is applied to immediate uſe, or becomes an acceſſion to the ſtores of the public.

Where ſavage nations, as in moſt parts of America, mix with the practice of hunting ſome ſpecies of rude agriculture, they ſtill follow, with reſpect to the ſoil and the fruits of the earth, the analogy of their principal object. As the men hunt, ſo the women labour together; and, after they have ſhared the toils of the ſeed-time, they enjoy the fruits of the harveſt in common. The field in which they have planted, like the diſtrict over which they are accuſtomed to hunt, is claimed as a property by the nation, but is not parcelled in lots to its members. They go forth in parties to prepare the ground, to plant, and to reap. The harveſt is gathered into the public granary, and from thence, at ſtated times, is divided into ſhares for the maintenance of ſeparate families*. Even the returns of the market, when they trade with foreigners, are brought home to the ſtock of the nation †.

As

* Hiſtory of the Caribbees.

† Charlevoix. This account of Rude Nations, in moſt points of importance, ſo far as it relates to the original North-Americans,

As the fur and the bow pertain to the individual, the cabbin and its utenſils are appropriated to the family; and as the domeſtic cares are committed to the women, ſo the property of the houſehold ſeems likewiſe to be veſted in them. The children are conſidered as pertaining to the mother, with little regard to deſcent on the father's ſide. The males, before they are married, remain in the cabbin in which they are born; but after they have formed a new connection with the other ſex, they change their habitation, and become an acceſſion to the family in which they have found their wives. The hunter and the warrior are numbered by the matron as a part of her treaſure; they are reſerved for perils and trying occaſions; and in the receſs of public councils, in the intervals of hunting or war, are maintained by the cares of the women, and loiter about in mere amuſement or ſloth *.

While one ſex continue to value themſelves chiefly on their courage, their talent for policy, and their warlike atchievements, this ſpecies of property which is beſtowed on the other, is, in reality, a mark of ſubjection; not, as ſome writers

Americans, is not founded ſo much on the teſtimony of this or of the other writers cited, as it is on the concurring repreſentations of living witneſſes, who, in the courſe of trade, of war, and of treaties, have had ample occaſion to obſerve the manners of that people. It is neceſſary, however, for the ſake of thoſe who may not have converſed with the living witneſſes, to refer to printed authorities.

Lafitau.

allege,

allege, of their having acquired an aſcendant*. It is the care and trouble of a ſubject with which the warrior does not chuſe to be embarraſſed. It is a ſervitude, and a continual toil, where no honours are won; and they whoſe province it is, are in fact the ſlaves and the helots of their country. If in this deſtination of the ſexes, while the men continue to indulge themſelves in the contempt of ſordid and mercenary arts, the cruel eſtabliſhment of ſlavery is for ſome ages deferred; if, in this tender, though unequal alliance, the affections of the heart prevent the ſeverities practiſed on ſlaves; we have in the cuſtom itſelf, as perhaps in many other inſtances, reaſon to prefer the firſt ſuggeſtions of nature, to many of her after-refinements.

If mankind, in any inſtance, continue the article of property on the footing we have now repreſented, we may eaſily credit what is further reported by travellers, that they admit of no diſtinctions of rank or condition; and that they have in fact no degree of ſubordination different from the diſtribution of function, which follows the differences of age, talents, and diſpoſitions. Perſonal qualities give an aſcendant in the midſt of occaſions which require their exertion; but in times of relaxation, leave no veſtige of power or prerogative. A warrior who has led the youth of his nation to the ſlaughter of their ene-

Lafitau,

mies,

mies, or who has been foremoſt in the chace, returns upon a level with the reſt of his tribe; and when the only buſineſs is to ſleep, or to feed, can enjoy no pre-eminence; for he ſleeps and he feeds no better than they.

WHERE no profit attends dominion, one party is as much averſe to the trouble of perpetual command, as the other is to the mortification of perpetual ſubmiſſion: "I love victory, I love great "actions," ſays Monteſquieu, in the character of Sylla; "but have no reliſh for the languid detail "of pacific government, or the pageantry of "high ſtation." He has touched perhaps what is a prevailing ſentiment in the ſimpleſt ſtate of ſociety, when the weakneſs of motive ſuggeſted by intereſt, and the ignorance of any elevation not founded on merit, ſupplies the place of diſdain.

THE character of the mind, however, in this ſtate, is not founded on ignorance alone. Men are conſcious of their equality, and are tenacious of its rights. Even when they follow a leader to the field, they cannot brook the pretenſions to a formal command: they liſten to no orders; and they come under no military engagements, but thoſe of mutual fidelity, and equal ardour in the enterpriſe*.

THIS deſcription, we may believe, is unequally applicable to different nations, who have made

* Charlevoix.

unequal

unequal advances in the eſtabliſhment of property. Among the Carribbees, and the other natives of the warmer climates in America, the dignity of chieftain is hereditary, or elective, and continued for life: the unequal diſtribution of property creates a viſible ſubordination*. But among the Iroquois, and other nations of the temperate zone, the titles of *magiſtrate* and *ſubject*, of *noble* and *mean*, are as little known as thoſe of *rich* and *poor*. The old men, without being inveſted with any coercive power, employ their natural authority in adviſing or in prompting the reſolutions of their tribe: the military leader is pointed out by the ſuperiority of his manhood and valour: the ſtateſman is diſtinguiſhed only by the attention with which his counſel is heard: the warrior by the confidence with which the youth of his nation follow him to the field: and if their concepts muſt be ſuppoſed to conſtitute a ſpecies of political government, it is one to which no language of ours can be applied. Power is no more than the natural aſcendancy of the mind; the diſcharge of office no more than a natural exerciſe of the perſonal character; and while the community acts with an appearance of order, there is no ſenſe of diſparity in the breaſt of any of its members †.

In theſe happy, though informal proceedings, where age alone gives a place in the council;

* Wafer's Account of the Iſthmus of Darien.

† Colden's Hiſtory of the Five Nations.

where

where youth, ardour, and valour in the field, give a title to the ſtation of leader; where the whole community is aſſembled on any alarming occaſion, we may venture to ſay, that we have found the origin of the ſenate the executive power, and the aſſembly of the people; inſtitutions for which ancient legiſlators have been ſo much renowned. The ſenate among the Greeks, as well as the Latins, appears, from the etymology of its name, to have been originally compoſed of elderly men. The military leader at Rome, in a manner not unlike to that of the American warrior, proclaimed his levies, and the citizen prepared for the field, in conſequence of a voluntary engagement. The ſuggeſtions of nature, which directed the policy of nations in the wilds of America, were followed before on the banks of the Eurotas and the Tyber; and Lycurgus and Romulus found the model of their inſtitutions, where the members of every rude nation find the earlieſt mode of uniting their talents, and combining their forces.

Among the North-American nations, every individual is independent; but he is engaged by his affections and his habits in the cares of a family. Families, like ſo many ſeparate tribes, are ſubject to no inſpection or government from abroad; whatever paſſes at home, even bloodſhed and murder, are only ſuppoſed to concern themſelves. They are, in the mean time, the parts of

of a canton; the women aſſemble to plant their maize; the old men go to council; the huntſman and the warrior joins the youth of his village in the field. Many ſuch cantons aſſemble to conſtitute a national council, or to execute a national enterpriſe. When the Europeans made their firſt ſettlements in America, ſix ſuch nations had formed a league, had their amphyctiones or ſtates-general, and, by the firmneſs of their union and the ability of their councils, had obtained an aſcendant from the mouth of the St. Laurence to that of the Miſſiſſippi*. They appeared to underſtand the objects of the confederacy, as well as thoſe of the ſeparate nation, they ſtudied a balance of power; the ſtateſman of one country watched the deſigns and proceedings of another; and occaſionally threw the weight of his tribe into a different ſcale. They had their alliances and their treaties, which, like the nations of Europe, they maintained, or they broke, upon reaſons of ſtate; and remained at peace from a ſenſe of neceſſity or expediency, and went to war upon any emergence of provocation or jealouſy.

THUS, without any ſettled form of government, or any bond of union, but what reſembled more the ſuggeſtion of inſtinct, than the invention of reaſon, they conducted themſelves with the concert and the force of nations. Foreigners, without being able to diſcover who is the magiſtrate, or

* Lafitau, Charlevoix, Colden, &c.

in

in what manner the ſenate is compoſed, always find a council with whom they may treat, or a band of warriors with whom they may fight. Without police or compulſory laws, their domeſtic ſociety is conducted with order, and the abſence of vicious diſpoſitions, is a better ſecurity than any public eſtabliſhment for the ſuppreſſion of crimes.

Disorders, however, ſometimes occur, eſpecially in times of debauch, when the immoderate uſe of intoxicating liquors, to which they are extremely addicted, ſuſpends the ordinary caution of their demeanour, and, inflaming their violent paſſions, engages them in quarrels and bloodſhed. When a perſon is ſlain, his murderer is ſeldom called to an immediate account: but he has a quarrel to ſuſtain with the family and the friends; or, if a ſtranger, with the countrymen of the deceaſed; ſometimes even with his own nation at home, if the injury committed be of a kind to alarm the ſociety. The nation, the canton, or the family endeavour, by preſents, to atone for the offence of any of their members; and, by pacifying the parties aggrieved, endeavour to prevent what alarms the community more than the firſt diſorder, the ſubſequent effects of revenge and animoſity*. The ſhedding of blood, however, if the guilty perſon remain where he has committed the crime, ſeldom eſcapes unpu-

* Lafitau.

niſhed:

niſhed: The friend of the deceaſed knows how to diſguiſe, though not to ſuppreſs, his reſentment; and even after many years have elapſed, is ſure to repay the injury that was done to his kindred or his houſe.

These conſiderations render them cautious and circumſpect, put them on their guard againſt their paſſions, and give to their ordinary deportment an air of phlegm and compoſure ſuperior to what is poſſeſſed among poliſhed nations. They are, in the mean time, affectionate in their carriage, and in their converſations, pay a mutual attention and regard, ſays Charlevoix, more tender and more engaging, than what we profeſs in the ceremonial of poliſhed ſocieties.

This writer has obſerved, that the nations among whom he travelled in North America, never mentioned acts of generoſity or kindneſs under the notion of duty. They acted from affection, as they acted from appetite, without regard to its conſequences. When they had done a kindneſs, they had gratified a deſire; the buſineſs was finiſhed, and it paſſed from the memory. When they received a favour, it might, or it might not, prove the occaſion of friendſhip: If it did not, the parties appeared to have no apprehenſions of gratitude, as a duty by which the one was bound to make a return, or the other entitled to reproach the perſon who had failed in his

part. The ſpirit with which they give or receive preſents, is the ſame which Tacitus obſerved among the ancient Germans: They delight in them, but do not conſider them as matter of obligation *. Such gifts are of little conſequence, except when employed as the ſeal of a bargain or treaty.

It was their favourite maxim, That no man is naturally indebted to another; that he is not, therefore, obliged to bear with any impoſition, or unequal treatment †. Thus, in a principle apparently ſullen and inhoſpitable, they have diſcovered the foundation of juſtice, and obſerve its rules, with a ſteadineſs and candour which no cultivation has been found to improve. The freedom which they give in what relates to the ſuppoſed duties of kindneſs and friendſhip, ſerves only to engage the heart more entirely, where it is once poſſeſſed with affection. We love to chuſe our object without any reſtraint, and we conſider kindneſs itſelf as a taſk, when the duties of friendſhip are exacted by rule. We therefore, by our demand for attentions, rather corrupt than improve the ſyſtem of morality; and by our exactions of gratitude, and our frequent propoſals to enforce its obſervance, we only ſhew that we have miſtaken its nature; we only give ſymptoms of that growing ſenſibility to intereſt, from which we meaſure the

* Muneribus gaudent, ſed nec data imputant, nec acceptis obligantur. † Chatlevoix.

expe-

expediency of friendſhip and generoſity itſelf; and by which we would introduce the ſpirit of traffic into the commerce of affection. In conſequence of this proceeding, we are often obliged to decline a favour, with the ſame ſpirit that we throw off a ſervile engagement, or reject a bribe. To the unrefined ſavage every favour is welcome, and every preſent received without reſerve or reflection.

The love of equality, and the love of juſtice, were originally the ſame: And although, by the conſtitution of different ſocieties, unequal privileges are beſtowed on their members; and although juſtice itſelf requires a proper regard to be paid to ſuch privileges; yet he who has forgotten that men were originally equal, eaſily degenerates into a ſlave; or, in the capacity of a maſter, is not to be truſted with the rights of his fellow-creatures. This happy principle gives to the mind its ſenſe of independence, renders it indifferent to the favours which are in the power of other men, checks it in the commiſſion of injuries, and leaves the heart open to the affections of generoſity and kindneſs. It gives to the untutored American that ſentiment of candour, and of regard to the welfare of others, which, in ſome degree, ſoftens the arrogant pride of his carriage, and in times of confidence and peace, without the aſſiſtance of government or law, renders the approach and commerce of ſtrangers ſecure.

Among this people, the foundations of honour are eminent abilities, and great fortitude; not the diſtinctions of equipage and fortune: The talents in eſteem are ſuch as their ſituation leads them to employ, the exact knowledge of a country, and ſtratagem in war. On theſe qualifications, a captain among the Caribbees underwent an examination. When a new leader was to be choſen, a ſcout was ſent forth to traverſe the foreſts which led to the enemy's country, and upon his return, the candidate was deſired to find the track in which he had travelled. A brook, or a fountain, was named to him on the frontier, and he was deſired to find the neareſt path to a particular ſtation, and to plant a ſtake in the place*. They can, accordingly, trace a wild beaſt, or the human foot, over many leagues of a pathleſs foreſt, and find their way acroſs a woody and uninhabited continent, by means of refined obſervations, which eſcape the traveller who has been accuſtomed to different aids. They ſteer in ſlender canoes, acroſs ſtormy ſeas, with a dexterity equal to that of the moſt experienced pilot†. They carry a penetrating eye for the thoughts and intentions of thoſe with whom they have to deal; and when they mean to deceive, they cover themſelves with arts which the moſt ſubtile can ſeldom elude. They harangue in their public councils with a nervous and a figurative elocution; and conduct themſelves in the management of their treaties

* Lafitau. † Charlevoix.

with

with a perfect diſcernment of their national intereſts.

THUS being able maſters in the detail of their own affairs, and well qualified to acquit themſelves on particular occaſions, they ſtudy no ſcience, and go in purſuit of no general principles. They even ſeem incapable of attending to any diſtant conſequences, beyond thoſe they have experienced in hunting or war. They intruſt the proviſion of every ſeaſon to itſelf; conſume the fruits of the earth in ſummer; and, in winter, are driven in queſt of their prey, through woods, and over deſerts covered with ſnow. They do not form in one hour thoſe maxims which may prevent the errors of the next; and they fail in thoſe apprehenſions, which, in the intervals of paſſion, produce ingenuous ſhame, compaſſion, remorſe, or a command of appetite. They are ſeldom made to repent of any violence; nor is a perſon, indeed, thought accountable in his ſober mood, for what he did in the heat of a paſſion, or in a time of debauch.

THEIR ſuperſtitions are groveling and mean: And did this happen among rude nations alone, we could not ſufficiently admire the effects of poliſeneſs; but it is a ſubject on which few nations are intitled to cenſure their neighbours. When we have conſidered the ſuperſtitions of one people, we find little variety in thoſe of another. They are but a repetition of ſimilar weakneſſes and abſurdities,

ſurdities, derived from a common ſource, a perplexed apprehenſion of inviſible agents, that are ſuppoſed to guide all precarious events to which *human foreſight cannot extend.*

In what depends on the known or the regular courſe of nature, the mind truſts to itſelf; but in ſtrange and uncommon ſituations, it is the dupe of its own perplexity, and, inſtead of relying on its prudence or courage, has recourſe to divination, and a variety of obſervances, that, for being irrational are always the more revered. Superſtition being founded in doubts and anxiety, is foſtered by ignorance and myſtery. Its maxims, in the mean time, are not always confounded with thoſe of common life; nor does its weakneſs or folly always prevent the watchfulneſs, penetration, and courage, men are accuſtomed to employ in the management of common affairs. A Roman conſulting futurity by the pecking of birds, or a king of Sparta inſpecting the entrails of a beaſt, Mithridates conſulting his women on the interpretation of his dreams, are examples ſufficient to prove, that a childiſh imbecility on this ſubject is conſiſtent with the greateſt military and political conduct.

Confidence in the effect of charms is not peculiar to any age or nation. Few, even of the accompliſhed Greeks and Romans, were able to ſhake off this weakneſs. In their caſe, it was not removed by the higheſt meaſures of civilization.

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It has yielded only to the light of true religion, or to the ſtudy of nature, by which we are led to ſubſtitute a wiſe Providence operating by phyſical cauſes, in the place of phantoms that terrify or amuſe the ignorant.

The principal point of honour among the rude nations of America, as indeed in every inſtance where mankind are not greatly corrupted, is fortitude. Yet their way of maintaining this point of honour, is very different from that of the nations of Europe. Their ordinary method of making war is by ambuſcade; and they ſtrive, by overreaching an enemy, to commit the greateſt ſlaughter, or to make the greateſt number of priſoners, with the leaſt hazard to themſelves. They deem it a folly to expoſe their own perſons in aſſaulting an enemy, and do not rejoice in victories which are ſtained with the blood of their own people. They do not value themſelves, as in Europe, on defying their enemy upon equal terms. They even boaſt, that they approach like foxes, or that they fly like birds, not leſs than they devour like lions. In Europe, to fall in battle is accounted an honour; among the natives of America, it is reckoned diſgraceful*. They reſerve their fortitude for the trials they abide when attacked by ſurprize, or when fallen into their enemies hands; and when they are obliged to maintain their own honour, and that of their own nation, in the

* Charlevoix.

midſt of torments that require efforts of patience more than of valour.

On theſe occaſions, they are far from allowing it to be ſuppoſed that they wiſh to decline the conflict. It is held infamous to avoid it, even by a voluntary death; and the greateſt affront which can be offered to a priſoner, is to refuſe him the honours of a man, in the manner of his execution: "With-hold," ſays an old man, in the midſt of his torture, "the ſtabs of your knife; rather "let me die by fire, that thoſe dogs, your allies, "from beyond the ſeas, may learn to ſuffer like "men*." With terms of defiance, the victim, in thoſe ſolemn trials, commonly excites the animoſity of his tormentors, as well as his own; and whilſt we ſuffer for human nature, under the effect of its errors, we muſt admire its force.

The people with whom this practice prevailed, were commonly deſirous of repairing their own loſſes, by adopting priſoners of war into their families; and even, in the laſt moment, the hand which was raiſed to torment, frequently gave the ſign of adoption, by which the priſoner became the child or the brother of his enemy, and came to ſhare in all the privileges of a citizen. In their treatment of thoſe who ſuffered, they did not appear to be guided by principles of hatred or revenge; they obſerved the point of honour in ap-

* Colden.

plying

plying as well as in bearing their torments; and, by a ſtrange kind of affection and tenderneſs, were directed to be moſt cruel where they intended the higheſt reſpect: the coward was put to immediate death by the hands of women: the valiant was ſuppoſed to be intitled to all the trials of fortitude that men could invent or employ: "It gave me joy," ſays an old man to his captive, "that ſo gallant a youth was allotted "to my ſhare: I propoſed to have placed you on "the couch of my nephew, who was ſlain by "your countrymen; to have transferred all my "tenderneſs to you; and to have ſolaced my "age in your company: But, maimed and mu-"tilated as you now appear, death is better than "life: Prepare yourſelf therefore to die like a "man *."

It is perhaps with a view to theſe exhibitions, or rather in admiration of fortitude, the principle from which they proceed, that the Americans are ſo attentive, in their earlieſt years, to harden their nerves †. The children are taught to vie with each other in bearing the ſharpeſt torments; the youth are admitted into the claſs of manhood, after violent proofs of their patience; and leaders are put to the teſt by famine, burning, and ſuffocation ‡.

* Charlevoix.

† *Ib.* This writer ſays, that he has ſeen a boy and a girl, having bound their naked arms together, place a burning coal between them, to try who could endure it longeſt.

‡ Lafitau.

It might be apprehended, that among rude nations, where the means of ſubſiſtence are procured with ſo much difficulty, the mind could never raiſe itſelf above the conſideration of this ſubject; and that man would, in this condition, give examples of the meaneſt and moſt mercenary ſpirit. The reverſe, however, is true. Directed in this particular by the deſires of nature, men, in their ſimpleſt ſtate, attend to the objects of appetite no further than appetite requires; and their deſires of fortune extend no further than the meal which gratifies their hunger: they apprehend no ſuperiority of rank in the poſſeſſion of wealth, ſuch as might inſpire any habitual principle of covetouſneſs, vanity, or ambition: they can apply to no taſk that engages no immediate paſſion, and take pleaſure in no occupation that affords no dangers to be braved, and no honours to be won.

It was not among the ancient Romans alone that commercial arts, or a ſordid mind, were held in contempt. A like ſpirit prevails in every rude and independent ſociety. "I am a war-"rior, and not a merchant," ſaid an American to the governor of Canada, who propoſed to give him goods in exchange for ſome priſoners he had taken, "your cloaths and utenſils do not tempt "me; but my priſoners are now in your power, "and you may ſeize them: If you do, I muſt go "forth and take more priſoners, or periſh in the "attempt;

" attempt; and if that chance ſhould befal me, " I ſhall die like a man; but remember, that " our nation will charge you as the cauſe of my " death*." With theſe apprehenſions, they have an elevation, and a ſtatelineſs of carriage, which the pride of nobility, where it is moſt revered by poliſhed nations, ſeldom beſtows.

THEY are attentive to their perſons, and employ much time, as well as endure great pain, in the methods they take to adorn their bodies, to give the permanent ſtains with which they are coloured, or preſerve the paint, which they are perpetually repairing, in order to appear with advantage.

THEIR averſion to every ſort of employment which they hold to be mean, makes them paſs great part of their time in idleneſs or ſleep; and a man who, in purſuit of a wild beaſt, or to ſurpriſe his enemy, will traverſe a hundred leagues on ſnow, will not, to procure his food, ſubmit to any ſpecies of ordinary labour. " Strange," ſays Tacitus, " that the ſame perſon ſhould be " ſo much averſe to repoſe, and ſo much ad- " dicted to ſloth †."

GAMES of hazard are not the invention of poliſhed ages; men of curioſity have looked for their

* Charlevoix.

† Mira diverſitas naturæ, ut idem homines ſic ament inertiam & oderint quietem.

origin,

origin, in vain, among the monuments of an obſcure antiquity; and it is probable that they belonged to times too remote and too rude even for the conjectures of antiquarians to reach. The very ſavage brings his furs, his utenſils, and his beads, to the hazard-table: He finds here the paſſions and agitations which the applications of a tedious induſtry could not excite: And while the throw is depending, he tears his hair, and beats his breaſt, with a rage which the more accompliſhed gameſter has ſometimes learned to repreſs: He often quits the party naked and ſtripped of all his poſſeſſions; or where ſlavery is in uſe, ſtakes his freedom to have one chance more to recover his former loſs*.

With all theſe infirmities, vices, or reſpectable qualities, belonging to the human ſpecies in its rudeſt ſtate; the love of ſociety, friendſhip, and public affection, penetration, eloquence, and courage, appear to have been its original properties, not the ſubſequent effects of device or invention. If mankind are qualified to improve their manners, the materials to be improved were furniſhed by nature; and the effect of this improvement is not to inſpire the ſentiments of tenderneſs and generoſity, nor to beſtow the principal conſtituents of a reſpectable character, but to obviate the caſual abuſes of paſſion; and to prevent a mind, which feels the beſt diſpoſitions in their greateſt force, from being at times likewiſe the ſport of brutal appetite, and of ungovernable violence.

* Tacitus, Lafitau, Charlevoix.

Were

Were Lycurgus employed anew to find a plan of government for the people we have deſcribed, he would find them, in many important particulars, prepared by nature herſelf to receive his inſtitutions. His equality in matters of property being already eſtabliſhed, he would have no faction to apprehend from the oppoſite intereſts of the poor and the rich; his ſenate, his aſſembly of the people, is conſtituted; his diſcipline is in ſome meaſure adopted, and the place of his helots is ſupplied by the taſk allotted to one of the ſexes. With all theſe advantages, he would ſtill have had a very important leſſon for civil ſociety to teach, that by which a few learn to command, and the many are taught to obey: He would have all his precautions to take againſt the future intruſion of mercenary arts, the admiration of luxury, and the paſſion for intereſt: He would ſtill perhaps have a more difficult taſk than any of the former, in teaching his citizens the command of appetite, and an indifference to pleaſure, as well as a contempt of pain; in teaching them to maintain in the field the formality of uniform precautions, and as much to avoid being themſelves ſurprized, as they endeavour to ſurprize their enemy.

For want of theſe advantages, rude nations in general, though they are patient of hardſhip and fatigue, though they are addicted to war, and are qualified by their ſtratagem and valour to throw terror into the armies of a more regular enemy; yet,

yet, in the courſe of a continual ſtruggle, always yield to the ſuperior arts, and the diſcipline of more civilized nations. Hence the Romans were able to over-run the provinces of Gaul, Germany, and Britain; and hence the Europeans have a growing aſcendency over the nations of Africa and America.

On the credit of a ſuperiority which certain nations poſſeſs, they think that they have a claim to dominion; and even Cæſar appears to have forgotten what were the paſſions, as well as the rights of mankind, when he complained, that the Britons, after having ſent him a ſubmiſſive meſſage to Gaul, perhaps to prevent his invaſion, ſtill pretended to fight for their liberties, and to oppoſe his deſcent on their iſland *.

There is not, perhaps, in the whole deſcription of mankind, a circumſtance more remarkable than that mutual contempt and averſion which nations, under a different ſtate of commercial arts, beſtow on each other. Addicted to their own purſuits, and conſidering their own condition as the ſtandard of human felicity, all nations pretend to the preference, and in their practice give ſufficient proof of ſincerity. Even the ſavage, ſtill leſs than the citizen, can be made to quit that manner of life in which he is trained:

* Cæſar queſtus, quod quum ultro in continentem legatis miſſis pacem a ſe petiſſent, bellum ſine cauſa intuliſſent. *Lib.* 4.

He

He loves that freedom of mind which will not be bound to any taſk, and which owns no ſuperior: However tempted to mix with poliſhed nations, and to better his fortune, the firſt moment of liberty brings him back to the woods again; he droops and he pines in the ſtreets of the populous city; he wanders diſſatisfied over the open and the cultivated field; he ſeeks the frontier and the foreſt, where, with a conſtitution prepared to undergo the hardſhips and the difficulties of the ſituation, he enjoys a delicious freedom from care, and a ſeducing ſociety, where no rules of behaviour are preſcribed, but the ſimple dictates of the heart.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Of Rude Nations under the Impreſſions of Property and Intereſt.

IT was a proverbial imprecation in uſe among the hunting nations on the confines of Siberia, That their enemy might be obliged to live like a Tartar, and have the folly of troubling himſelf with the charge of cattle *. Nature, it ſeems, in their apprehenſion, by ſtoring the woods and the deſert with game, rendered the taſk of the herdſman unneceſſary, and left to man only the trouble of ſelecting and of ſeizing his prey.

THE indolence of mankind, or rather their averſion to any application in which they are not engaged by immediate inſtinct and paſſion, retards the progreſs of induſtry and of impropriation. It has been found, however, even while the means of ſubſiſtence are left in common, and the ſtock of the public is yet undivided, that property is apprehended in different ſubjects; that the fur and the bow belong to the individual; that the cottage, with its furniture, are appropriated to the family.

WHEN the parent begins to deſire a better proviſion for his children than is found under the pro-

* Abulgaze's Genealogical Hiſtory of the Tartars.

miſcuous management of many copartners, when he has applied his labour and his ſkill apart, he aims at an excluſive poſſeſſion, and ſeeks the property of the ſoil, as well as the uſe of its fruits.

When the individual no longer finds among his aſſociates the ſame inclination to commit every ſubject to public uſe, he is ſeized with concern for his perſonal fortune; and is alarmed by the cares which every perſon entertains for himſelf. He is urged as much by emulation and jealouſy, as by the ſenſe of neceſſity. He ſuffers conſiderations of intereſt to reſt on his mind, and when every preſent appetite is ſufficiently gratified, he can act with a view to futurity, or rather finds an object of vanity in having amaſſed what is become a ſubject of competition, and a matter of univerſal eſteem. Upon this motive, where violence is reſtrained, he can apply his hand to lucrative arts, confine himſelf to a tedious taſk, and wait with patience for the diſtant returns of his labour.

Thus mankind acquire induſtry by many and by ſlow degrees. They are taught to regard their intereſt; they are reſtrained from rapine; and they are ſecured in the poſſeſſion of what they fairly obtain; by theſe methods the habits of the labourer, the mechanic, and the trader, are gradually formed. A hoard, collected from the ſimple productions of nature, or a herd of cattle, are,

in every rude nation, the firſt ſpecies of wealth. The circumſtances of the ſoil, and the climate, determine whether the inhabitant ſhall apply himſelf chiefly to agriculture or paſture; whether he ſhall fix his reſidence, or be moving continually about with all his poſſeſſions.

In the weſt of Europe; in America, from ſouth to north, with a few exceptions; in the torrid zone, and every where within the warmer climates; mankind have generally applied themſelves to ſome ſpecies of agriculture, and have been diſpoſed to ſettlement. In the north and middle region of Aſia, they depended entirely on their herds, and were perpetually ſhifting their ground in ſearch of new paſture. The arts which pertain to ſettlement have been practiſed, and variouſly cultivated, by the inhabitants of Europe. Thoſe which are conſiſtent with perpetual migration, have, from the earlieſt accounts of hiſtory, remained nearly the ſame with the Scythian or Tartar. The tent pitched on a moveable carriage, the horſe applied to every purpoſe of labour, and of war, of the dairy, and of the butcher's ſtall, from the earlieſt to the lateſt accounts, have made up the riches and equipage of this wandering people.

But in whatever way rude nations ſubſiſt, there are certain points in which, under the firſt impreſſions of property, they nearly agree. Homer either lived with a people in this ſtage of their progreſs,

progreſs, or found himſelf engaged to exhibit their character. Tacitus had made them the ſubject of a particular treatiſe; and if this be an aſpect under which mankind deſerve to be viewed, it muſt be confeſſed, that we have ſingular advantages in collecting their features. The portrait has already been drawn by the ableſt hands, and gives, at one view, in the writings of theſe celebrated authors, whatever has been ſcattered in the relations of hiſtorians, or whatever we have opportunities to obſerve in the actual manners of men, who ſtill remain in a ſimilar ſtate.

In paſſing from the condition we have deſcribed, to this we have at preſent in view, mankind ſtill retain many marks of their earlieſt character. They are ſtill averſe to labour, addicted to war, admirers of fortitude, and, in the language of Tacitus, more laviſh of their blood than of their ſweat*. They are fond of fantaſtic ornaments in their dreſs, and endeavour to fill up the liſtleſs intervals of a life addicted to violence, with hazardous ſports, and with games of chance. Every ſervile occupation they commit to women or ſlaves. But we may apprehend, that the individual having now found a ſeparate intereſt, the bands of ſociety muſt become leſs firm, and domeſtic diſorders more frequent. The members of every community, being diſtinguiſhed among

* Pigrum quin immo et inerſ videtur, ſudore acquirere quod poſſis ſanguine parare.

themſelves by unequal poſſeſſions, the ground of a permanent and palpable ſubordination is laid.

THESE particulars accordingly take place among mankind, in paſſing from the ſavage to what may be called the barbarous ſtate. Members of the ſame community enter into quarrels of competition or revenge. They unite in the following leaders, who are diſtinguiſhed by their fortunes, and by the luſtre of their birth. They join the deſire of ſpoil with the love of glory; and from an opinion, that what is acquired by force juſtly pertains to the victor, they become hunters of men, and bring every conteſt to the deciſion of the ſword.

EVERY nation is a band of robbers, who prey without reſtraint, or remorſe, on their neighbours. Cattle, ſays Achilles, may be ſeized in every field; and the coaſts of the Ægean ſea were accordingly pillaged by the heroes of Homer, for no other reaſon than becauſe thoſe heroes choſe to poſſeſs themſelves of the braſs and iron, the cattle, the ſlaves, and the women, which were found among the nations around them.

A TARTAR mounted on his horſe, is an animal of prey, who only inquires where cattle are to be found, and how far he muſt go to poſſeſs them. The monk, who had fallen under the diſpleaſure of Mangu Chan, made his peace, by promiſing, that the Pope, and the Chriſtian

princes, ſhould make a ſurrender of all their herds *.

A SIMILAR ſpirit reigned, without exception, in all the barbarous nations of Europe, Aſia, and Africa. The antiquities of Greece and Italy, and the fables of every ancient poet, contain examples of its force. It was this ſpirit that brought our anceſtors firſt into the provinces of the Roman empire; and that afterward, more perhaps than their reverence for the croſs, led them to the Eaſt, to ſhare with the Tartars in the ſpoils of the Saracen empire.

FROM the deſcriptions contained in the laſt ſection, we may incline to believe, that mankind, in their ſimpleſt ſtate, are on the eve of erecting republics. Their love of equality, their habit of aſſembling in public councils, and their zeal for the tribe to which they belong, are qualifications that fit them to act under that ſpecies of government; and they ſeem to have but a few ſteps to make, in order to reach its eſtabliſhment. They have only to define the numbers of which their councils ſhall conſiſt, and to ſettle the forms of their meeting: They have only to beſtow a permanent authority for repreſſing diſorders, and to enact a few rules in favour of that juſtice they have already acknowledged, and from inclination ſo ſtrictly obſerve.

* Rubruquis.

But theſe ſteps are far from being ſo eaſily made, as they appear on a ſlight or a tranſient view. The reſolution of chuſing, from among their equals, the magiſtrate to whom they give from thenceforward a right to controul their own actions, is far from the thoughts of ſimple men; and no perſuaſion, perhaps, could make them adopt this meaſure, or give them any ſenſe of its uſe.

Even after nations have choſen a military leader they do not intruſt him with any ſpecies of civil authority. The captain, among the Caribbees did not pretend to decide in domeſtic diſputes; the terms *juriſdiction* and *government* were unknown in their tongue *.

Before this important change was admitted, men muſt be accuſtomed to the diſtinction of ranks; and before they are ſenſible that ſubordination is requiſite, they muſt have arrived at unequal conditions by chance. In deſiring property, they only mean to ſecure their ſubſiſtence; but the brave who lead in war, have likewiſe the largeſt ſhare in its ſpoils. The eminent are fond of deviſing hereditary honours; and the multitude, who admire the parent, are ready to extend their eſteem to his offspring.

Poſſeſſions deſcend, and the luſtre of family grows brighter with age. Hercules, who perhaps

* Hiſtory of the Caribbees.

was

was an eminent warrior, became a god with poſterity, and his race was ſet apart for royalty and ſovereign power. When the diſtinctions of fortune and thoſe of birth are conjoined, the chieftain enjoys a pre-eminence, as well at the feaſt as in the field. His followers take their place in ſubordinate ſtations; and inſtead of conſidering themſelves as parts of a community, they rank as the followers of a chief, and take their deſignation from the name of their leader. They find a new object of public affection, in defending his perſon, and in ſupporting his ſtation; they lend of their ſubſtance to form his eſtate; they are guided by his ſmiles and his frowns; and court, as the higheſt diſtinction, a ſhare in the feaſt which their own contributions have furniſhed.

As the former ſtate of mankind ſeemed to point at democracy, this ſeems to exhibit the rudiments of monarchical government. But it is yet far ſhort of that eſtabliſhment which is known in after-ages by the name of *monarchy*. The diſtinction between the leader and the follower, the prince and the ſubject, is ſtill but imperfectly marked: Their purſuits and occupations are not different; their minds are not unequally cultivated; they feed from the ſame diſh; they ſleep together on the ground; the children of the King, as well as thoſe of the ſubject, are employed in tending the flock; and the keeper of the ſwine was a prime counſellor at the court of Ulyſſes.

The chieftain, ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed from his tribe, to excite their admiration, and to flatter their vanity by a ſuppoſed affinity to his noble deſcent, is the object of their veneration, not of their envy: He is conſidered as the common bond of connection, not as their common maſter; is foremoſt in danger, and has a principal ſhare in their troubles: His glory is placed in the number of his attendants, in his ſuperior magnanimity and valour; that of his followers, in being ready to ſhed their blood in his ſervice *.

The frequent practice of war tends to ſtrengthen the bands of ſociety, and the practice of depredation itſelf engages men in trials of mutual attachment and courage. What threatened to ruin and overſet every good diſpoſition in the human breaſt, what ſeemed to baniſh juſtice from the ſocieties of men, tends to unite the ſpecies in clans and fraternities; formidable, indeed, and hoſtile to one another, but, in the domeſtic ſociety of each, faithful, diſintereſted, and generous. Frequent dangers, and the experience of fidelity and valour, awaken the love of thoſe virtues, render them a ſubject of admiration, and endear their poſſeſſors.

Actuated by great paſſions, the love of glory, and the deſire of victory; rouſed by the menaces of an enemy, or ſtung with revenge; in ſuſpenſe

* Tacitus de moribus Germanorum.

between

between the proſpects of ruin or conqueſt, the barbarian ſpends every moment of relaxation in ſloth. He cannot deſcend to the purſuits of induſtry or mechanical labour: The beaſt of prey is a ſluggard; the hunter and the warrior ſleeps, while women or ſlaves are made to toil for his bread. But ſhew him a quarry at a diſtance, he is bold, impetuous, artful, and rapacious: No bar can withſtand his violence, and no fatigue can allay his activity.

EVEN under this deſcription, mankind are generous and hoſpitable to ſtrangers, as well as kind, affectionate, and gentle, in their domeſtic ſociety *. Friendſhip and enmity are to them terms of the greateſt importance: They mingle not their functions together; they have ſingled out their enemy, and they have choſen their friend. Even in depredation, the principal object is glory; and ſpoil is conſidered as the badge of victory. Nations and tribes are their prey: The ſolitary traveller, by whom they can acquire only the reputation of generoſity, is ſuffered to paſs unhurt, or is treated with ſplendid munificence.

THOUGH diſtinguiſhed into ſmall cantons under their ſeveral chieftains, and for the moſt part ſeparated by jealouſy and animoſity; yet when preſſed by wars and formidable enemies, they

* Jean du Plan Carpen. Rubruquis, Cæſar, Tacit.

ſometimes

ſometimes unite in greater bodies. Like the Greeks in their expedition to Troy, they follow ſome remarkable leader, and compoſe a kingdom of many ſeparate tribes. * But ſuch coalitions are merely occaſional; and even during their continuance, more reſemble a republic than monarchy. The inferior chieftains reſerve their importance, and intrude, with an air of equality, into the councils of their leader, as the people of their ſeveral clans commonly intrude upon them *. Upon what motive indeed could we ſuppoſe, that men who live together in the greateſt familiarity, and amongſt whom the diſtinctions of rank are ſo obſcurely marked, would reſign their perſonal ſentiments and inclinations, or pay an implicit ſubmiſſion to a leader who can neither overawe nor corrupt?

MILITARY force muſt be employed to extort, or the hire of the venal to buy, that engagement which the Tartar comes under to his prince, when he promiſes, "That he will go where he ſhall be "commanded; that he will come when he ſhall "be called; that he will kill whoever is pointed "out to him; and, for the future, that he will "conſider the voice of the King as a ſword †."

THESE are the terms to which even the ſtubborn heart of the barbarian has been reduced, in

* Kolbe: Deſcription of the Cape of Good Hope.

† Simon de St. Quintin.

conſequence

conſequence of a deſpotiſm he himſelf had eſtabliſhed; and men have, in that low ſtate of the commercial arts, in Europe, as well as in Aſia, taſted of political ſlavery. When intereſt prevails in every breaſt, the ſovereign and his party cannot eſcape the infection: He employs the force with which he is intruſted, to turn his people into a property, and to command their poſſeſſions for his profit or his pleaſure. If riches are by any people made the ſtandard of good or of evil, let them beware of the powers they intruſt to their prince. "With the Suiones," ſays Tacitus, "riches are in high eſteem; and this people are "accordingly diſarmed, and reduced to ſlavery*."

It is in this woful condition that mankind, being ſlaviſh, intereſted, inſidious, deceitful, and bloody, bear marks, if not of the leaſt curable, ſurely of the moſt lamentable ſort of corruption †. Among them, war is the mere practice of rapine, to enrich the individual; commerce is turned into a ſyſtem of ſnares and impoſitions; and government by turns oppreſſive or weak.

It were happy for the human race, when guided by intereſt, and not governed by laws, that being ſplit into nations of a moderate extent, they found in every canton ſome natural bar to its farther enlargement, and met with occupation

* De moribus Germanorum. † Chardin's Travels.

enough

enough in maintaining their independence, without being able to extend their dominion.

THERE is not diſparity of rank, among men in rude ages, ſufficient to give their communities the form of legal monarchy; and in a territory of conſiderable extent, when united under one head, the warlike and turbulent ſpirit of its inhabitants ſeems to require the bridle of deſpotiſm and military force. Where any degree of freedom remains, the powers of the prince are, as they were in moſt of the rude monarchies of Europe, extremely precarious, and depend chiefly on his perſonal character: Where, on the contrary, the powers of the prince are above the controul of his people, they are likewiſe above the reſtrictions of juſtice. Rapacity and terror become the predominant motives of conduct, and form the character of the only parties into which mankind are divided, that of the oppreſſor, and that of the oppreſſed.

THIS calamity threatened Europe for ages, under the conqueſt and ſettlement of its new inhabitants*. It has actually taken place in Aſia, where ſimilar conqueſts have been made; and even without the ordinary opiates of effeminacy, or a ſervile weakneſs, founded on luxury, it has

* See Hume's Hiſtory of the Tudors.—There ſeemed to be nothing wanting to eſtabliſh a perfect deſpotiſm in that houſe, but a few regiments of troops under the command of the Crown.

ſurprized

ſurprized the Tartar on his wain, in the rear of his herds. Among this people, in the heart of a great continent, bold and enterpriſing warriors aroſe: They ſubdued by ſurprize, or ſuperior abilities, the contiguous hordes; they gained, in their progreſs, acceſſions of numbers and of ſtrength; and, like a torrent increaſing as it deſcends, became too ſtrong for any bar that could be oppoſed to their paſſage. The conquering tribe, during a ſucceſſion of ages, furniſhed the prince with his guards; and while they themſelves were allowed to ſhare in its ſpoils, were the voluntary tools of oppreſſion. In this manner has deſpotiſm and corruption found their way into regions ſo much renowned for the wild freedom of nature: A power which was the terror of every effeminate province is diſarmed, and the nurſery of nations is itſelf gone to decay *.

WHERE rude nations eſcape this calamity, they require the exerciſe of foreign wars to maintain domeſtic peace; when no enemy appears from abroad, they have leiſure for private feuds, and employ that courage in their diſſenſions at home, which, in time of war, is employed in defence of their country.

" AMONG the Gauls," ſays Cæſar, " there are " ſubdiviſions, not only in every nation, and in " every diſtrict and village, but almoſt in every " houſe, every one muſt fly to ſome patron for

* See the *Hiſtory of the Huns.*

" protection.

" protection*. In this diſtribution of parties, not only the feuds of clans, but the quarrels of families, even the differences and competitions of individuals, are decided by force. The ſovereign, when unaſſiſted by ſuperſtition, endeavours in vain to employ his juriſdiction, or to procure a ſubmiſſion to the deciſions of law. By a people who are accuſtomed to owe their poſſeſſions to violence, and who deſpiſe fortune itſelf without the reputation of courage, no umpire is admitted but the ſword. Scipio offered his arbitration to terminate the competition of two Spaniards in a diſputed ſucceſſion: " That," ſaid they, " we " have already refuſed to our relations: We do " not ſubmit our difference to the judgement of " men; and even among the gods, we appeal to " Mars alone †."

It is well known that the nations of Europe carried this mode of proceeding to a degree of formality unheard-of in other parts of the world: The civil and criminal judge could, in moſt caſes, do no more than appoint the liſts, and leave the parties to decide their cauſe by the combat: they apprehended that the victor had a verdict of the gods in his favour: and when they dropped in any inſtance this extraordinary form of proceſs, they ſubſtituted in its place ſome other more capricious appeal to chance; in which they likewiſe thought that the judgment of the gods was declared.

* De Bello Gallico, lib. 6. † Livy.

The fierce nations of Europe were even fond of the combat as an exerciſe and a ſport. In the abſence of real quarrels, companions challenged each other to a trial of ſkill, in which one of them frequently periſhed. When Scipio celebrated the funeral of his father and his uncle, the Spaniards came in pairs to fight, and, by a public exhibition of their duels, to increaſe the ſolemnity *.

In this wild and lawleſs ſtate, where the effects of true religion would have been ſo deſirable, and ſo ſalutary, ſuperſtition frequently diſputes the aſcendant even with the admiration of valour; and an order of men, like the Druids among the ancient Gauls and Britons †, or ſome pretender to divination, as at the Cape of Good Hope, finds, in the credit which is paid to his ſorcery, a way to the poſſeſſion of power: His magic wand comes in competition with the ſword itſelf; and, in the manner of the Druids, gives the firſt rudiments of civil government to ſome, or, like the ſuppoſed deſcendent of the Sun among the Natchez, and the Lama among the Tartars, to others, an early taſte of deſpotiſm and abſolute ſlavery.

We are generally at a loſs to conceive how mankind can ſubſiſt under cuſtoms and manners extremely different from our own; and we are apt to exaggerate the miſery of barbarous times, by an imagination of what we ourſelves ſhould

* Livy, Lib. 3. † Cæſar.

ſuffer

ſuffer in a ſituation to which we are not accuſtomed. But every age hath its conſolations, as well as its ſufferings *. In the interval of occaſional outrages, the friendly intercourſe of men, even in their rudeſt condition, is affectionate and happy †. In rude ages, the perſons and properties of individuals are ſecure; becauſe each has a friend, as well as an enemy; and if the one is diſpoſed to moleſt, the other is ready to protect; and the very admiration of valour, which in ſome inſtances tends to ſanctify violence, inſpires likewiſe certain maxims of generoſity and honour, that tend to prevent the commiſſion of wrongs.

* Priſcus, when employed on an embaſſy to Attila, was accoſted in Greek, by a perſon who wore the dreſs of a Scythian. Having expreſſed ſurprize, and being deſirous to know the cauſe of his ſtay in ſo wild a company, was told, that this Greek had been a captive, and for ſome time a ſlave, till he obtained his liberty in reward of ſome remarkable action. "I "live more happily here," ſays he, "than ever I did under "the Roman government: For they who live with the Scy"thians, if they can endure the fatigues of war, have no"thing elſe to moleſt them; they enjoy their poſſeſſions un"diſturbed: Whereas you are continually a prey to foreign "enemies, or to bad government; you are forbid to carry "arms in your own defence; you ſuffer from the remiſſneſs "and ill conduct of thoſe who are appointed to protect you; "the evils of peace are even worſe than thoſe of war; no "puniſhment is ever inflicted on the powerful or the rich; no "mercy is ſhown to the poor; although your inſtitutions "were wiſely deviſed, yet, in the management of corrupted "men, their effects are pernicious and cruel." *Excerpta de legationibus.*

† D'Arvieux's Hiſtory of the Wild Arabs.

Men

Men bear with the defects of their policy, as they do with hardſhips and inconveniencies in their manner of living. The alarms and the fatigues of war become a neceſſary recreation to thoſe who are accuſtomed to them, and who have the tone of their paſſions raiſed above leſs animating or trying occaſions. Old men, among the courtiers of Attila, wept when they heard of heroic deeds, which they themſelves could no longer perform *. And among the Celtic nations, when age rendered the warrior unfit for his former toils, it was the cuſtom, in order to abridge the languors of a liſtleſs and inactive life, to ſue for death at the hands of his friends †.

With all this ferocity of ſpirit, the rude nations of the Weſt were ſubdued by the policy and more regular warfare of the Romans. The point of honour which the barbarians of Europe adopted as individuals, expoſed them to a peculiar diſadvantage, by rendering them, even in their national wars, averſe to aſſailing their enemy by ſurpriſe, or taking the benefit of ſtratagem; and though ſeparately bold and intrepid, yet, like other rude nations, they were, when aſſembled in great bodies, addicted to ſuperſtition, and ſubject to panics.

* D'Arvieux's Hiſtory of the wild Arabs.

† Ubi tranſcendit florentes viribus annos,
Impatiens ævi ſpernit noviſſe ſenectam.
Silius, lib. 1. 225.

They were, from a conſciouſneſs of their perſonal courage and force, ſanguine on the eve of battle; they were, beyond the bounds of moderation, elated on ſucceſs, and dejected in adverſity; and being diſpoſed to conſider every event as a judgment of the gods, they were never qualified by an uniform application of prudence to make the moſt of their forces, to repair their misfortunes, or to improve their advantages.

Resigned to the government of affection and paſſion, they were generous and faithful where they had fixed an attachment; implacable, froward, and cruel, where they had conceived a diſlike: addicted to debauchery, and the immoderate uſe of intoxicating liquors, they deliberated on the affairs of ſtate in the heat of their riot, and in the ſame dangerous moments, conceived the deſigns of military enterpriſe, or terminated their domeſtic diſſenſions by the dagger or the ſword.

In their wars they preferred death to captivity. The victorious armies of the Romans, in entering a town by aſſault, or in forcing an incampment, have found the mother in the act of deſtroying her children, that they might not be taken; and the dagger of the parent, red with the blood of his family, ready to be plunged at laſt into his own breaſt *.

* Liv. lib. xli. 11. Dio Caſſ.

In

In all theſe particulars, we perceive that vigour of ſpirit, which renders diſorder itſelf reſpectable, and which qualifies men, if fortunate in their ſituation, to lay the baſis of domeſtic liberty, as well as to maintain againſt foreign enemies their national independence and freedom.

PART THIRD.

OF THE HISTORY OF

POLICY AND ARTS.

SECTION I.

Of the Influences of Climate and Situation.

WHAT we have hitherto obſerved on the condition and manners of nations, though chiefly derived from what has paſſed in the temperate climates, may, in ſome meaſure, be applied to the rude ſtate of mankind in every part of the earth: But if we intend to purſue the hiſtory of our ſpecies in its further attainments, we may ſoon enter on ſubjects which will confine our obſervation to narrower limits. The genius of political wiſdom, and of civil arts, appears to have choſen his ſeats in particular tracts of the earth, and to have ſelected his favourites in particular races of men.

MAN, in his animal capacity, is qualified to ſubſiſt in every climate. He reigns with the lion and the tyger under the equatorial heats of the ſun, or he aſſociates with the bear and the rain-deer beyond the polar ſyſtem. His verſatile diſpoſition fits him to aſſume the habits of either condition, or his talent for arts enables him to ſupply its defects. The intermediate climates, however, appear moſt to favour his nature; and in whatever manner we account for the fact, it cannot be doubted, that this animal has always attained to the principal honours of his ſpecies within the temperate zone. The arts, which he has on this ſcene repeatedly invented, the extent of his reaſon, the fertility of his fancy, and the force of his genius in literature, commerce, policy, and war, ſufficiently declare either a diſtinguiſhed advantage of ſituation, or a natural ſuperiority of mind.

THE moſt remarkable races of men, it is true, have been rude before they were poliſhed. They have in ſome caſes returned to rudeneſs again: And it is not from the actual poſſeſſion of arts, ſcience, or policy, that we are to pronounce of their genius.

THERE is a vigour, a reach of capacity, and a ſenſibility of mind, which may characterize as well the ſavage as the citizen, the ſlave as well as the maſter; and the ſame powers of the mind may be turned to a variety of purpoſes. A modern

modern Greek, perhaps, is miſchievous, ſlaviſh, and cunning, from the ſame animated temperament that made his anceſtor ardent, ingenious, and bold, in the camp, or in the council of his nation. A modern Italian is diſtinguiſhed by ſenſibility, quickneſs, and art, while he employs on trifles the capacity of an ancient Roman; and exhibits now, in the ſcene of amuſement, and in the ſearch of a frivolous applauſe, that fire, and thoſe paſſions, with which Gracchus burned in the forum, and ſhook the aſſemblies of a ſeverer people.

The commercial and lucrative arts have been, in ſome climates, the principal object of mankind, and have been retained through every diſaſter; in others, even under all the fluctuations of fortune, they have ſtill been neglected; while in the temperate climates of Europe and Aſia, they have had their ages of admiration as well as contempt.

In one ſtate of ſociety arts are ſlighted, from that very ardour of mind, and principle of activity, by which, in another, they are practiſed with the greateſt ſucceſs. While men are ingroſſed by their paſſions, heated and roufed by the ſtruggles and dangers of their country; while the trumpet ſounds, or the alarm of ſocial engagement is rung, and the heart beats high, it were a mark of dulneſs, or of an abject ſpirit, to find leiſure for the ſtudy of eaſe, or the purſuit of improvements, which have mere convenience or eaſe for their object.

The frequent viciſſitudes and reverſes of fortune, which nations have experienced on that very ground where the arts have proſpered, are probably the effects of a buſy, inventive, and verſatile ſpirit, by which men have carried every national change to extremes. They have raiſed the fabric of deſpotic empire to its greateſt height, where they had beſt underſtood the foundations of freedom. They periſhed in the flames which they themſelves had kindled; and they only, perhaps, were capable of diſplaying, by turns, the greateſt improvements, or the loweſt corruptions, to which the human mind can be brought.

On this ſcene, mankind have twice, within the compaſs of hiſtory, aſcended from rude beginnings to very high degrees of refinement. In every age, whether deſtined by its temporary diſpoſition to build or to deſtroy, they have left the veſtiges of an active and vehement ſpirit. The pavement and the ruins of Rome are buried in duſt, ſhaken from the feet of barbarians, who trod with contempt on the refinements of luxury, and ſpurned thoſe arts, the uſe of which it was reſerved for the poſterity of the ſame people to diſcover and to admire. The tents of the wild Arab are even now pitched among the ruins of magnificent cities; and the waſte fields which border on Paleſtine and Syria, are perhaps become again the nurſery of infant nations. The chieftain of an Arab tribe, like the founder of Rome, may have already fixed the roots of a plant that is

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to flouriſh in ſome future period, or laid the foundations of a fabric, that will attain to its grandeur in ſome diſtant age.

Great part of Africa has been always unknown; but the ſilence of fame, on the ſubject of its revolutions, is an argument, where no other proof can be found, of weakneſs in the genius of its people. The torrid zone, every where round the globe, however known to the geographer, has furniſhed few materials for hiſtory; and though in many places ſupplied with the arts of life in no contemptible degree, has no where matured the more important projects of political wiſdom, nor inſpired the virtues which are connected with freedom, and which are required in the conduct of civil affairs.

It was indeed in the torrid zone that mere arts of mechaniſm and manufacture were found, among the inhabitants of the new world, to have made the greateſt advance: It is in India, and in the regions of this hemiſphere, which are viſited by the vertical ſun, that the arts of manufacture, and the practice of commerce, are of the greateſt antiquity, and have ſurvived, with the ſmalleſt diminution, the ruins of time, and the revolutions of empire.

The ſun, it ſeems, which ripens the pine-apple and the tamarind, inſpires a degree of mildneſs that can even aſſuage the rigours of deſpotical government: and ſuch is the effect of a gentle and pacific

diſpoſition in the natives of the Eaſt, that no conqueſt, no irruption of barbarians, terminates, as they did among the ſtubborn natives of Europe, by a total deſtruction of what the love of eaſe and of pleaſure had produced.

TRANSFERRED, without any great ſtruggle, from one maſter to another, the natives of India are ready, upon every change, to purſue their induſtry, to acquieſce in the enjoyment of life, and the hopes of animal pleaſure: the wars of conqueſt are not prolonged to exaſperate the parties engaged in them, or to deſolate the land for which thoſe parties contend: even the barbarous invader leaves untouched the commercial ſettlement which has not provoked his rage: though maſter of opulent cities, he only incamps, in their neighbourhood, and leaves to his heirs the option of entering, by degrees, on the pleaſures, the vices, and the pageantries which his acquiſitions afford: his ſucceſſors, ſtill more than himſelf, are diſpoſed to foſter the hive, in proportion as they taſte more of its ſweets; and they ſpare the inhabitant, together with his dwelling, as they ſpare the herd or the ſtall, of which they are become the proprietors.

THE modern deſcription of India is a repetition of the ancient, and the preſent ſtate of China is derived from a diſtant antiquity, to which there is no parallel in the hiſtory of mankind. The ſucceſ-

ſion

ſion of monarchs has been changed; but no revolutions have affected the ſtate. The African and the Samoide are not more uniform in their ignorance and barbarity, than the Chineſe and the Indian, if we may credit their own ſtory, have been in the practice of manufacture, and in the obſervance of a certain police, which was calculated only to regulate their traffic, and to protect them in their application to ſervile or lucrative arts.

If we paſs from theſe general repreſentations of what mankind have done, to the more minute deſcription of the animal himſelf, as he has occupied different climates, and is diverſified in his temper, complexion, and character, we ſhall find a variety of genius correſponding to the effects of his conduct, and the reſult of his ſtory.

Man, in the perfection of his natural faculties, is quick and delicate in his ſenſibility; extenſive and various in his imaginations and reflections; attentive, penetrating, and ſubtile, in what relates to his fellow-creatures; firm and ardent in his purpoſes; devoted to friendſhip or to enmity; jealous of his independence and his honour, which he will not relinquiſh for ſafety or for profit: under all his corruptions or improvements, he retains his natural ſenſibility, if not his force; and his commerce is a bleſſing or a curſe, according to the direction his mind has received.

But

But under the extremes of heat or of cold, the active range of the human ſoul appears to be limited; and men are of inferior importance, either as friends, or as enemies. In the one extreme, they are dull and ſlow, moderate in their deſires, regular and pacific in their manner of life; in the other, they are feveriſh in their paſſions, weak in their judgments, and addicted by temperament to animal pleaſure. In both the heart is mercenary, and makes important conceſſions for childiſh bribes: in both the ſpirit is prepared for ſervitude: In the one it is ſubdued by fear of the future; in the other it is not roufed even by its ſenſe of the preſent.

The nations of Europe who would ſettle or conquer on the ſouth or the north of their own happier climates, find little reſiſtance: they extend their dominion at pleaſure, and find no where a limit but in the ocean, and in the ſatiety of conqueſt. With few of the pangs and the ſtruggles that precede the reduction of nations, mighty provinces have been ſucceſſively annexed to the territory of Ruſſia; and its ſovereign, who accounts within his domain, entire tribes, with whom perhaps none of his emiſſaries have ever converſed, diſpatched a few geometers to extend his empire, and thus to execute a project, in which the Romans were obliged to employ their conſuls and their legions *. Theſe modern conquerors complain of

* See Ruſſian Atlas.

rebellion,

rebellion, where they meet with repugnance; and are ſurpriſed at being treated as enemies, where they come to impoſe their tribute.

It appears, however, that on the ſhores of the Eaſtern ſea, they have met with nations † who have queſtioned their title to reign, and who have conſidered the requiſition of a tax as the demand of effects for nothing. Here perhaps may be found the genius of ancient Europe, and under its name of ferocity, the ſpirit of national independence ‡; that ſpirit which diſputed its ground in the Weſt with the victorious armies of Rome, and baffled the attempts of the Perſian monarchs to comprehend the villages of Greece within the bounds of their extenſive dominion.

The great and ſtriking diverſities which obtain betwixt the inhabitants of climates far removed from each other, are, like the varieties of other animals in different regions, eaſily obſerved. The horſe and the rain-deer are juſt emblems of the Arab and the Laplander: the native of Arabia, like the animal for whoſe race his country is famed, whether wild in the woods, or tutored by art, is lively, active, and fervent in the exerciſe on which he is bent. This race of men, in their rude ſtate, fly to the deſert for freedom, and in roving bands

† The Tchutsi.

‡ Notes to the Genealogical Hiſtory of the Tartars, vouched by Strahlenberg.

alarm

alarm the frontiers of empire, and ſtrike a terror in the province to which their moving encampments advance *. When rouſed by the proſpect of conqueſt, or diſpoſed to act on a plan, they ſpread their dominion, and their ſyſtem of imagination, over mighty tracts of the earth: when poſſeſſed of property and of ſettlement, they ſet the example of a lively invention, and ſuperior ingenuity, in the practice of arts, and the ſtudy of ſcience. The Laplander, on the contrary, like the aſſociate of his climate, is hardy, indefatigable, and patient of famine, dull rather than tame; ſerviceable in a particular tract; and incapable of change. Whole nations continue from age to age in the ſame condition, and, with immoveable phlegm, ſubmit to the appellations of *Dane*, of *Swede*, or of *Muſcovite*, according to the land they inhabit; and ſuffer their country to be ſevered like a common, by the line on which thoſe nations have traced their limits of empire.

It is not in the extremes alone that theſe varieties of genius may be clearly diſtinguiſhed. Their continual change keeps pace with the variations of climate with which we ſuppoſe them connected: and though certain degrees of capacity, penetration and ardour, are not the lot of entire nations, nor the vulgar properties of any people; yet their unequal frequency, and unequal meaſure, in different countries,

* D'Arvieux.

are

tries, are ſufficiently manifeſt from the manners, the tone of converſation, the talent for buſineſs, amuſement, and the literary compoſition, which predominate in each.

It is to the Southern nations of Europe, both ancient and modern, that we owe the invention and embelliſhment of that mythology, and thoſe early traditions, which continue to furniſh the materials of fancy, and the field of poetic alluſion. To them we owe the romantic tales of chivalry, as well as the ſubſequent models of a more rational ſtyle, by which the heart and the imagination are kindled, and the underſtanding informed.

The fruits of induſtry have abounded moſt in the North, and the ſtudy of ſcience has here received its moſt ſolid improvements: The efforts of imagination and ſentiment were moſt frequent and moſt ſucceſsful in the South. While the ſhores of the Baltic became famed for the ſtudies of Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, and Kepler, thoſe of the Mediterranean were celebrated for giving birth to men of genius in all its variety, and for having abounded with poets and hiſtorians, as well as with men of ſcience.

On one ſide, learning took its riſe from the heart and the fancy, on the other, it is ſtill confined to the judgment and the memory. A faithful detail of public tranſactions, with little diſcernment of their comparative importance; the treaties

treaties and the claims of nations, the births and genealogies of princes, are, in the literature of Northern nations, amply preſerved; while the lights of the underſtanding, and the feelings of the heart, are ſuffered to periſh. The hiſtory of the human character; the intereſting memoir, founded no leſs on the careleſs proceedings of a private life, than on the formal tranſactions of a public ſtation; the ingenious pleaſantry, the piercing ridicule, the tender, pathetic, or the elevated ſtrain of elocution, have been confined in modern, as well as ancient times, with a few exceptions, to the ſame latitudes with the fig and the vine.

These diverſities of natural genius, if real, muſt have great part of their foundation in the animal frame: And it has been often obſerved, that the vine flouriſhes, where, to quicken the ferments of the human blood, its aids are the leaſt required. While ſpirituous liquors are, among ſouthern nations, from a ſenſe of their ruinous effects, prohibited; or from a love of decency, and the poſſeſſion of a temperament ſufficiently warm, not greatly deſired; they carry in the North a peculiar charm, while they awaken the mind, and give a taſte of that lively fancy and ardour of paſſion, which the climate is found to deny.

The melting deſires, or the fiery paſſions, which in one climate take place between the ſexes, are in another

another changed into a ſober conſideration, or a patience of mutual diſguſt. This change is remarked in croſſing the Mediterranean, in following the courſe of the Miſſiſſippi, in aſcending the mountains of Caucaſus, and in paſſing from the Alps and the Pyrenees to the ſhores of the Baltic.

The female ſex domineers on the frontier of Louiſiana, by the double engine of ſuperſtition, and of paſſion. They are ſlaves among the native inhabitants of Canada, and are chiefly valued for the toils they endure, and the domeſtic ſervice they yield *.

The burning ardours, and the torturing jealouſies of the ſeraglio and the haram, which have reigned ſo long in Aſia and Africa, and which, in the ſouthern parts of Europe, have ſcarcely given way to the difference of religion and civil eſtabliſhments, are found, however, with an abatement of heat in the climate, to be more eaſily changed, in one latitude, into a temporary paſſion which ingroſſes the mind, without enfeebling it, and excites to romantic atchievements: By a farther progreſs to the north, it is changed into a ſpirit of gallantry, which employs the wit and the fancy more than the heart; which prefers intrigue to enjoyment; and ſubſtitutes affectation and vanity, where ſentiment and deſire have failed. As it departs from the ſun, the ſame paſſion is farther

* Charlevoix.

compoſed

compoſed into a habit of domeſtic connection, or frozen into a ſtate of inſenſibility, under which the ſexes at freedom ſcarcely chuſe to unite their ſociety.

THESE variations of temperament and character do not indeed correſpond with the number of degrees that are meaſured from the equator to the pole; nor does the temperature of the air itſelf depend on the latitude. Varieties of ſoil and poſition, the diſtance or neighbourhood of the ſea, are known to affect the atmoſphere, and may have ſignal effects in compoſing the animal frame.

THE climates of America, though taken under the ſame parallel, are obſerved to differ from thoſe of Europe. There, extenſive marſhes, great lakes, aged, decayed, and crouded foreſts, with the other circumſtances that mark an uncultivated country, are ſuppoſed to repleniſh the air with heavy and noxious vapours, that give a double aſperity to the winter; and during many months, by the frequency and continuance of fogs, ſnow, and froſt, carry the inconveniencies of the frigid zone far into the temperate. The Samoiede and the Laplander, however, have their counterpart, though on a lower latitude, on the ſhores of America: The Canadian and the Iroquois bear a reſemblance to the ancient inhabitants of the middling climates of Europe: The Mexican, like the Aſiatic of India, being addicted to pleaſure, was ſunk in effeminacy;

feminacy; and in the neighbourhood of the wild and the free, had ſuffered to be raiſed on his weakneſs a domineering ſuperſtition, and a permanent fabric of deſpotical government.

GREAT part of Tartary lies under the ſame parallels with Greece, Italy, and Spain; but the climates are found to be different; and while the ſhores, not only of the Mediterranean, but even thoſe of the Atlantic, are favoured with a moderate change and viciſſitude of ſeaſons, the eaſtern parts of Europe, and the northern continent of Aſia, are afflicted with all their extremes. In one ſeaſon, we are told, that the plagues of an ardent ſummer reach almoſt to the frozen ſea; and that the inhabitant is obliged to ſcreen himſelf from noxious vermin in the ſame clouds of ſmoke in which he muſt, at a different time of the year, take ſhelter from the rigours of cold. When winter returns, the tranſition is rapid, and with an aſperity, almoſt equal in every latitude, lays waſte the face of the earth, from the northern confines of Siberia, to the deſcents of Mount Caucaſus and the frontier of India.

WITH this unequal diſtribution of climate, by which the lot, as well as the national character, of the northern Aſiatic may be deemed inferior to that of Europeans, who lie under the ſame parallels, a ſimilar gradation of temperament and ſpirit, however, has been obſerved, in following the meridian

on either tract; and the Southern Tartar has over the Tonguſes and the Samoïede the ſame pre-eminence, that certain nations of Europe are known to poſſeſs over their northern neighbours, *ſituations more advantageous to both.*

The ſouthern hemiſphere ſcarcely offers a ſubject of like obſervation. The temperate zone is there ſtill undiſcovered, or is only known in two promontories, the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn; which ſtretch into moderate latitudes on that ſide of the line. But the ſavage of South America, notwithſtanding the interpoſition of the nations of Peru and of Mexico, is found to reſemble his counterpart on the North; and the Hottentot, in many things, the barbarian of Europe: He is tenacious of freedom, has rudiments of policy, and a national vigour, which ſerve to diſtinguiſh his race from the other African tribes, who are expoſed to the more vertical rays of the ſun.

While we have, in theſe obſervations, only thrown out what muſt preſent itſelf on the moſt curſory view of the hiſtory of mankind, or what may be preſumed from the mere obſcurity of ſome nations, who inhabit great tracts of the earth, as well as from the luſtre of others, we are ſtill unable to explain the manner in which climate may affect the temperament, or foſter the genius of its inhabitant.

That

That the temper of the heart, and the intellectual operations of the mind, are, in ſome meaſure, dependent on the ſtate of the animal organs, is well known from experience. Men differ from themſelves in ſickneſs and in health; under a change of diet, of air, and of exerciſe: but we are, even in theſe familiar inſtances, at a loſs how to connect the cauſe with its ſuppoſed effect: and though climate, by including a variety of ſuch cauſes, may, by ſome regular influence, affect the characters of men, we can never hope to explain the manner of thoſe influences till we have underſtood, what probably we ſhall never underſtand, the ſtructure of thoſe finer organs with which operations of the ſoul are connected.

When we point out, in the ſituation of a people, circumſtances which, by determining their purſuits, regulate their habits, and their manner of life; and when, inſtead of referring to the ſuppoſed phyſical ſource of their diſpoſitions, we aſſign their inducements to a determinate conduct; in this we ſpeak of effects and of cauſes whoſe connection is more familiarly known. We can underſtand, for inſtance, why a race of men like the Samoiede, confined, during great part of the year, to darkneſs, or retired into caverns, ſhould differ in their manners and apprehenſions from thoſe who are at liberty in every ſeaſon; or who, inſtead of ſeeking relief from the extremities of cold, are employed in ſearch of precautions

againſt the oppreſſions of a burning ſun. Fire and exerciſe are the remedies of cold; repoſe and ſhade the ſecurities from heat. The Hollander is laborious and induſtrious in Europe; he becomes more languid and ſlothful in India*.

GREAT extremities, either of heat or cold, are, perhaps, in a moral view, equally unfavourable to the active genius of mankind, and by preſenting alike inſuperable difficulties to be overcome, or ſtrong inducements to indolence and ſloth, equally prevent the firſt applications of ingenuity, or limit their progreſs. Some intermediate degrees of inconvenience in the ſituation, at once excite the ſpirit, and, with the hopes of ſucceſs, encourage its efforts. "It is in the leaſt favourable ſitua-"tions," ſays Mr. Rouſſeau, "that the arts have "flouriſhed the moſt. I could ſhow them in "Egypt, as they ſpread with the overflowing of "the Nile; and in Attica, as they mounted up to "the clouds, from a rocky ſoil and from barren "ſands; while, on the fertile banks of the Eu-"rotas, they were not able to faſten their roots."

WHERE mankind from the firſt ſubſiſt by toil, and in the midſt of difficulties, the defects of their ſituation are ſupplied by induſtry: and while dry,

* The Dutch ſailors, who were employed in the ſiege of Malaco, tore or burnt the ſail-cloth which was given them to make tents, that they might not have the trouble of making or pitching them. *Voy. de Mateliff.*

tempting,

tempting, and healthful lands are left uncultivated †, the peſtilent marſh is drained with great labour, and the ſea is fenced off with mighty barriers, the materials and the coſts of which, the ſoil to be gained can ſcarely afford, or repay Harbours are opened, and crouded with ſhipping, where veſſels of burden, if they are not conſtructed with a view to the ſituation, have not water to float. Elegant and magnificent edifices are raiſed on foundations of ſlime; and all the conveniencies of human life are made to abound, where nature does not ſeem to have prepared a reception for men. It is in vain to expect, that the reſidence of arts and commerce ſhould be determined by the poſſeſſion of natural advantages. Men do more when they have certain difficulties to ſurmount, than when they have ſuppoſed bleſſings to enjoy: and the ſhade of the barren oak and the pine are more favourable to the genius of mankind, than that of the palm or the tamarind.

Among the advantages which enable nations to run the career of policy, as well as of arts, it may be expected, from the obſervations already made, that we ſhould reckon every circumſtance which enable them to divide and to maintain themſelves in diſtinct and independent communities. The ſociety and concourſe of other men are not more

† Compare the ſtate of Hungary with that of Holland.

neceſſary to form the individual, than the rivalſhip and competition of nations are to invigorate the principles of political life in a ſtate. Their wars, and their treaties, their mutual jealouſies, and the eſtabliſhments which they deviſe with a view to each other, conſtitute more than half the occupations of mankind, and furniſh materials for their greateſt and moſt improving exertions. For this reaſon, cluſters of iſlands, a continent divided by many natural barriers, great rivers, ridges of mountains, and arms of the ſea, are beſt fitted for becoming the nurſery of independent and reſpectable nations. The diſtinction of ſtates being clearly maintained, a principle of political life is eſtabliſhed in every diviſion, and the capital of every diſtrict, like the heart of an animal body, communicates with eaſe the vital blood and the national ſpirit of its members.

The moſt reſpectable nations have always been found, where at leaſt one part of the frontier has been waſhed by the ſea. This barrier, perhaps the ſtrongeſt of all in the times of ignorance, does not, however, even then ſupercede the cares of a national defence; and in the advanced ſtate of arts, gives the greateſt ſcope and facility to commerce.

Thriving and independent nations were accordingly ſcattered on the ſhores of the Pacific and the Atlantic. They ſurrounded the Red ſea, the

the Mediterranean, and the Baltic; while, a few tribes excepted, who retire among the mountains bordering on India and Perſia, or who have found ſome rude eſtabliſhment among the creeks and the ſhores of the Caſpian and the Euxine, there is ſcarcely a people in the vaſt continent of Aſia who deſerves the name of a nation. The unbounded plain is traverſed at large by hordes, who are in perpetual motion, or who are diſplaced and haraſſed by their mutual hoſtilities. Although they are never perhaps actually blended together in the courſe of hunting, or in the ſearch of paſture, they cannot bear one great diſtinction of nations, which is taken from the territory, and which is deeply impreſſed by an affection to the native ſeat. They move in troops, without the arrangement or the concert of nations, they become eaſy acceſſions to every new empire among themſelves, or to the Chineſe and the Muſcovite, with whom they hold a traffic for the means of ſubſiſtence, and the materials of pleaſure.

Where a happy ſyſtem of nations is formed, they do not rely for the continuance of their ſeparate names, and for that of their political independence, on the barriers erected by nature. Mutual jealouſies lead to the maintenance of a balance of power; and this principle, more than the Rhine and the Ocean, than the Alps and the Pyrenees in modern Europe; more than the ſtraits of Thermopylæ, the mountains of Thrace,

Thrace, or the bays of Salamine and Corinth in ancient Greece, tended to prolong the ſeparation, to which the inhabitants of theſe happy climates have owed their felicity as nations, the luſtre of their fame, and their civil accompliſhments.

If we mean to purſue the hiſtory of civil ſociety, our attention muſt be chiefly directed to ſuch examples, and we muſt here bid farewell to thoſe regions of the earth, on which our ſpecies, by the effects of ſituation or climate, appear to be reſtrained in their national purſuits, or inferior in the powers of the mind.

SECT.

SECT. II.

The Hiſtory of political Eſtabliſhments.

WE have hitherto obſerved mankind, either united together on terms of equality, or diſpoſed to admit of a ſubordination founded merely on the voluntary reſpect and attachment which they paid to their leaders; but, in both caſes, without any concerted plan of government, or ſyſtem of laws.

THE ſavage, whoſe fortune is compriſed in his cabbin, his fur, and his arms, is ſatisfied with that proviſion, and with that degree of ſecurity, he himſelf can procure. He perceives, in treating with his equal, no ſubject of diſcuſſion that ſhould be referred to the deciſion of a judge; nor does he find in any hand the badges of magiſtracy, or the enſigns of a perpetual command.

THE barbarian, though induced by his admiration of perſonal qualities, the luſtre of a heroic race, or a ſuperiority of fortune, to follow the banners of a leader, and to act a ſubordinate part in his tribe, knows not, that what he performs from choice, is to be made a ſubject of obligation. He acts from affections unacquainted with forms; and when provoked, or when engaged in diſputes, he

he recurs to the ſword, as the ultimate means of deciſion, in all queſtions of right.

HUMAN affairs, in the mean time, continue their progreſs. What was in one generation a propenſity to herd with the ſpecies, becomes in the ages which follow, a principle of natural union. What was originally an alliance for common defence, becomes a concerted plan of political force; the care of ſubſiſtence becomes an anxiety for accumulating wealth, and the foundation of commercial arts.

MANKIND, in following the preſent ſenſe of their minds, in ſtriving to remove inconveniencies, or to gain apparent and contiguous advantages, arrive at ends which even their imagination could not anticipate; and paſs on, like other animals, in the tract of their nature, without perceiving its end. He who firſt ſaid, "I will appropriate this "field; I will leave it to my heirs;" did not perceive, that he was laying the foundation of civil laws and political eſtabliſhments. He who firſt ranged himſelf under a leader, did not perceive, that he was ſetting the example of a permanent ſubordination, under the pretence of which, the rapacious were to ſeize his poſſeſſions, and the arrogant to lay claim to his ſervice.

MEN, in general, are ſufficiently diſpoſed to occupy themſelves in forming projects and ſchemes: But

But he who would ſcheme and project for others, will find an opponent in every perſon who is diſpoſed to ſcheme for himſelf. Like the winds that come we know not whence, and blow whitherſoever they liſt, the forms of ſociety are derived from an obſcure and diſtant origin; they ariſe, long before the date of philoſophy, from the inſtincts, not from the ſpeculations of men. The crowd of mankind, are directed in their eſtabliſhments and meaſures, by the circumſtances in which they are placed; and ſeldom are turned from their way, to follow the plan of any ſingle projector.

Every ſtep and every movement of the multitude, even in what are termed enlightened ages, are made with equal blindneſs to the future; and nations ſtumble upon eſtabliſhments, which are indeed the reſult of human action, but not the execution of any human deſign *. If Cromwell ſaid, That a man never mounts higher, than when he knows not whither he is going; it may with more reaſon be affirmed of communities, that they admit of the greateſt revolutions where no change is intended, and that the moſt refined politicians do not always know whither they are leading the ſtate by their projects.

If we liſten to the teſtimony of modern hiſtory, and to that of the moſt authentic parts of the ancient; if we attend to the practice of nations in

* De Retz Memoirs.

every

every quarter of the world, and in every condition, whether that of the barbarian or the poliſhed, we ſhall find very little reaſon to retract this aſſertion. No conſtitution is formed by concert, no government is copied from a plan. The members of a ſmall ſtate contend for equality; the members of a greater, find themſelves claſſed in a certain manner that lays a foundation for monarchy. They proceed from one form of government to another, by eaſy tranſitions, and frequently under old names adopt a new conſtitution. The ſeeds of every form are lodged in human nature; they ſpring up and ripen with the ſeaſon. The prevalence of a particular ſpecies is often derived *from an imperceptible ingredient mingled in the* ſoil.

We are therefore to receive, with caution, the traditionary hiſtories of ancient legiſlators, and founders of ſtates. Their names have long been celebrated; their ſuppoſed plans have been admired; and what were probably the conſequences of an early ſituation, is, in every inſtance, conſidered as an effect of deſign. An author and a work, like cauſe and effect, are perpetually coupled together. This is the ſimpleſt form under which we can conſider the eſtabliſhment of nations: and we aſcribe to a previous deſign, what came to be known only by experience, what no human wiſdom could foreſee, and what, without the concurring humour and diſpoſition of his age, no

no authority could enable an individual to execute.

If men, during ages of extenſive reflection, and employed in the ſearch of improvement, are wedded to their inſtitutions; and, labouring under many acknowledged inconveniencies, cannot break looſe from the trammels of cuſtom; what ſhall we ſuppoſe their humour to have been in the times of Romulus and Lycurgus? They were not ſurely more diſpoſed to embrace the ſchemes of innovators, or to ſhake off the impreſſions of habit: They were not more pliant and ductile, when their knowledge was leſs; not more capable of refinement, when their minds were more circumſcribed.

We imagine, perhaps, that rude nations muſt have ſo ſtrong a ſenſe of the defects under which they labour, and be ſo conſcious that reformations are requiſite in their manners, that they muſt be ready to adopt, with joy, every plan of improvement, and to receive every plauſible propoſal with implicit compliance. And we are thus inclined to believe, that the harp of Orpheus could effect, in one age, what the eloquence of Plato could not produce in another. We miſtake, however, the characteriſtic of ſimple ages: mankind then appear to feel the feweſt defects, and are then leaſt deſirous to enter on reformations.

The reality, in the mean time, of certain eſtabliſhments at Rome and at Sparta, cannot be diſ-

puted: but it is probable, that the government of both theſe ſtates took its riſe from the ſituation and genius of the people, not from the projects of ſingle men; that the celebrated warrior and ſtateſman, who are conſidered as the founders of thoſe nations, only acted a ſuperior part among numbers who were diſpoſed to the ſame inſtitutions; and that they left to poſterity a renown, pointing them out as the inventors of many practices which had been already in uſe, and which helped to form their own manners and genius, as well as thoſe of their countrymen.

It has been formerly obſerved, that, in many particulars, the cuſtoms of ſimple nations coincide with what is aſcribed to the invention of early ſtateſmen; that the model of republican government, the ſenate, and the aſſembly of the people; that even the equality of property, or the community of goods, were not reſerved to the invention or contrivance of ſingular men.

If we conſider Romulus as the founder of the Roman ſtate, certainly he who killed his brother, that he might reign alone, did not deſire to come under reſtraints from the controuling power of the ſenate, nor to refer the councils of his ſovereignty to the deciſion of a collective body. Love of dominion is, by its nature, averſe to reſtraint; and this chieftain, like every leader in a rude age, probably found a claſs of men ready to intrude on his councils, and without whom he could not proceed: He

He met with occaſions, on which, as at the ſound of a trumpet, the body of the people aſſembled, and took reſolutions, which any individual might in vain diſpute, or attempt to controul; and Rome, which commenced on the general plan of every artleſs ſociety, found laſting improvements in the purſuit of temporary expedients, and digeſted her political frame in adjuſting the pretenſions of parties which aroſe in the ſtate.

MANKIND, in very early ages of ſociety, learn to covet riches, and to admire diſtinction: They have avarice and ambition, and are occaſionally led by theſe paſſions to depredations and conqueſt; but in their ordinary conduct, are guided or reſtrained by different motives; by ſloth or intemperance; by perſonal attachments, or perſonal animoſities; which miſlead from the attention to intereſt. Theſe motives or habits render mankind, at times, remiſs or outrageous: They prove the ſource of civil peace or of civil diſorder, but diſqualify thoſe who are actuated by them, from maintaining any fixed uſurpation; ſlavery and rapine, in the caſe of every community, are firſt threatened from abroad, and war, either offenſive or defenſive, is the great buſineſs of every tribe. The enemy occupy their thoughts; they have no leiſure for domeſtic diſſenſions. It is the deſire of every ſeparate community, however, to ſecure itſelf; and in proportion as it gains this object, by ſtrengthening its barrier, by weakening its enemy,

or by procuring allies, the individual at home bethinks him of what he may gain or loſe for himſelf: The leader is diſpoſed to enlarge the advantages which belong to his ſtation; the follower becomes jealous of rights which are open to encroachment, and parties who united before, from affection and habit, or from a regard to their common preſervation, diſagree in ſupporting their ſeveral claims to precedence or profit.

When the animoſities of faction are thus awakened at home, and the pretenſions of freedom are oppoſed to thoſe of dominion, the members of every ſociety find a new ſcene upon which to exert their activity. They had quarrelled, perhaps, on points of intereſt; they had balanced between different leaders; but they had never united as citizens, to withſtand the encroachments of ſovereignty, or to maintain their common rights as a people. If the prince, in this conteſt, finds numbers to ſupport, as well as to oppoſe his pretenſions, the ſword which was whetted againſt foreign enemies, may be pointed at the boſom of fellow-ſubjects, and every interval of peace from abroad, be filled with domeſtic war. The ſacred names of Liberty, Juſtice, and Civil Order, are made to reſound in public aſſemblies; and, during the abſence of other alarms, give to ſociety, within itſelf, an abundant ſubject of ferment and animoſity.

If what is related of the little principalities which, in ancient times, were formed in Greece, in Italy, and over all Europe, agrees with the character we have given of mankind under the firſt impreſſions of property, of intereſt, and of hereditary diſtinctions; the ſeditions and domeſtic wars which followed in thoſe very ſtates, the expulſion of their kings, or the queſtions which aroſe concerning the prerogatives of the ſovereign, or privilege of the ſubject, are agreeable to the repreſentation which we now give of the firſt ſtep toward political eſtabliſhment, and the deſire of a legal conſtitution.

What this conſtitution may be in its earlieſt form, depends on a variety of circumſtances in the condition of nations: It depends on the extent of the principality in its rude ſtate; on the degree of diſparity to which mankind had ſubmitted before they began to diſpute the abuſes of power: It depends likewiſe on what we term *accidents*, the perſonal character of an individual, or the events of a war.

Every community is originally a ſmall one. That propenſity by which mankind at firſt unite, is not the principle from which they afterwards act in extending the limits of empire. Small tribes, where they are not aſſembled by common objects of conqueſt or ſafety, are even averſe to a coalition. If, like the real or fabulous confederacy of

the Greeks for the deſtruction of Troy, many nations combine in purſuit of a ſingle object, they eaſily ſeparate again, and act anew on the maxims of rival ſtates.

THERE is, perhaps, a certain national extent, within which the paſſions of men are eaſily communicated from one, or a few, to the whole; and there are certain numbers of men who can be aſſembled, and act in a body. If, while the ſociety is not enlarged beyond this dimenſion, and while its members are eaſily aſſembled, political contentions ariſe, the ſtate ſeldom fails to proceed on republican maxims, and to eſtabliſh democracy. In moſt rude principalities, the leader derived his prerogative from the luſtre of his race, and from the voluntary attachment of his tribe: The people he commanded were his friends, his ſubjects, and his troops. If we ſuppoſe, upon any change in their manners, that they ceaſe to revere his dignity, that they pretend to equality among themſelves, or are ſeized with a jealouſy of his aſſuming too much, the foundations of his power are already withdrawn. When the voluntary ſubject becomes refractory; when conſiderable parties, or the collective body, chuſe to act for themſelves; the ſmall kingdom, like that of Athens, becomes of courſe a republic.

THE changes of condition, and of manners, which, in the progreſs of mankind, raiſe up to nations

nations a leader and a prince, create, at the ſame time, a nobility, and a variety of ranks, who have, in a ſubordinate degree, their claim to diſtinction. Superſtition, too, may create an order of men, who, under the title of prieſthood, engage in the purſuit of a ſeparate intereſt; who, by their union and firmneſs as a body, and by their inceſſant ambition, deſerve to be reckoned in the liſt of pretenders to power. Theſe different orders of men are the elements of whoſe mixture the political body is generally formed; each draws to its ſide ſome part from the maſs of the people. The people themſelves are a party upon occaſion; and numbers of men, however claſſed and diſtinguiſhed, become, by their jarring pretenſions and ſeparate views, mutual interruptions and checks; and have, by bringing to the national councils the maxims and apprehenſions of a particular order, and by guarding a particular intereſt, a ſhare in adjuſting or preſerving the political form of the ſtate.

The pretenſions of any particular order, if not checked by ſome collateral power, would terminate in tyranny; thoſe of a prince, in deſpotiſm; thoſe of a nobility or prieſthood, in the abuſes of ariſtocracy; of a populace in the confuſions of anarchy. Theſe terminations, as they are never the profeſſed, ſo are they ſeldom even the diſguiſed object of party: But the meaſures which any party purſues, if ſuffered to prevail, will lead, by degrees, to every extreme.

In their way to the aſcendant they endeavour to gain, and in the midſt of interruptions which oppoſite intereſts mutually give, liberty may have a permanent or a tranſient exiſtence; and the conſtitution may bear a form and a character as various as the caſual combination of ſuch multiplied parts can effect.

To beſtow on communities ſome degree of political freedom, it is perhaps ſufficient, that their members, either ſingly, or as they are involved with their ſeveral orders, ſhould inſiſt on their rights; that under republics, the citizen ſhould either maintain his own equality with firmneſs, or reſtrain the ambition of his fellow-citizen within moderate bounds; that under monarchy, men of every rank ſhould maintain the honours of their private or their public ſtations; and ſacrifice neither to the impoſitions of a court, nor to the claims of a populace, thoſe dignities which are deſtined, in ſome meaſure independent of fortune, to give ſtability to the throne, and to procure a reſpect to the ſubject.

Amidst the contentions of party, the intereſts of the public, even the maxims of juſtice and candour, are ſometimes forgotten; and yet thoſe fatal conſequences which ſuch a meaſure of corruption ſeems to portend, do not unavoidably follow. The public intereſt is often ſecure, not becauſe individuals are diſpoſed to regard it as the end of their conduct,

conduct, but becauſe each, in his place, is determined to preſerve his own. Liberty is maintained by the continued differences and oppoſitions of numbers, not by their concurring zeal in behalf of equitable government. In free ſtates, therefore, the wiſeſt laws are never, perhaps, dictated by the intereſt and ſpirit of any order of men: they are moved, they are oppoſed, or amended, by different hands, and come at laſt to expreſs that medium and compoſition which contending parties have forced one another to adopt.

When we conſider the hiſtory of mankind in this view, we cannot be at a loſs for the cauſes which, in ſmall communities, threw the balance on the ſide of democracy, which, in ſtates more enlarged in reſpect to territory and numbers of people, gave the aſcendant to monarchy; and which, in a variety of conditions and of different ages, enabled mankind to blend and unite the characters of different forms; and, inſtead of any of the ſimple conſtitutions we have mentioned *, to exhibit a medley of all.

In emerging from a ſtate of rudeneſs and ſimplicity, men muſt be expected to act from that ſpirit of equality, or moderate ſubordination, to which they have been accuſtomed. When crowded together in cities, or within the compaſs of a ſmall territory, they act by contagious paſſions,

* Part I. Sect. 10.

and every individual feels a degree of importance proportioned to his figure in the crowd, and the ſmallneſs of its numbers. The pretenders to power and dominion appear in too familiar a light to impoſe upon the multitude, and they have no aids at their call, by which they can bridle the refractory humours of a people who reſiſt their pretenſions. Theſeus, King of Attica, we are told, aſſembled the inhabitants of its twelve cantons into one city. In this he took an effectual method to unite into one democracy, what were before the ſeparate members of his monarchy, and to haſten the downfall of the regal power.

THE monarch of an extenſive territory has many advantages in maintaining his ſtation. Without any grievance to his ſubjects, he can ſupport the magnificence of a royal eſtate, and dazzle the imagination of his people, by that very wealth which themſelves have beſtowed. He can employ the inhabitants of one diſtrict againſt thoſe of another; and while the paſſions that lead to mutiny and rebellion, can at any one time ſeize only on a part of his ſubjects, he feels himſelf ſtrong in the poſſeſſion of a general authority. Even the diſtance at which he reſides from many of thoſe who receive his commands, augments the myſterious awe and reſpect which are paid to his government.

WITH theſe different tendencies, accident and corruption, however, joined to a variety of circumſtances,

cumſtances, may throw particular ſtates from their bias, and produce exceptions to every general rule. This has actually happened in ſome of the latter principalities of Greece, and modern Italy, in Sweden, Poland, and the German Empire. But the united ſtates of the Netherlands, and the Swiſs cantons, are perhaps, the moſt extenſive communities, which, maintaining the union of nations, have, for any conſiderable time, reſiſted the tendency to monarchical government; and Sweden is the only inſtance of a republic eſtabliſhed in a great kingdom on the ruins of monarchy.

The ſovereign of a petty diſtrict, or a ſingle city when not ſupported, as in modern Europe, by the contagion of monarchical manners, holds the ſceptre by a precarious tenure, and is perpetually alarmed by the ſpirit of mutiny in his people, is guided by jealouſy, and ſupports himſelf by ſeverity, prevention, and force.

The popular and ariſtocratical powers in a great nation, as in the caſe of Germany and Poland, may meet with equal difficulty in maintaining their pretenſions; and, in order to avoid their danger on the ſide of kingly uſurpation, are obliged to with-hold from the ſupreme magiſtrate even the neceſſary truſt of an executive power.

The ſtates of Europe, in the manner of their firſt ſettlement, laid the foundations of monarchy, and

and were prepared to unite under regular and extenſive governments. If the Greeks, whoſe progreſs at home terminated in the eſtabliſhment of ſo many independent republics, had under Agamemnon effected a conqueſt and ſettlement in Aſia, it is probable, that they might have furniſhed an example of the ſame kind. But the original inhabitants of any country, forming many ſeparate cantons, came by ſlow degrees to that coalition and union into which conquering tribes, in effecting their conqueſts, or in ſecuring their poſſeſſions, are hurried at once. Cæſar encountered ſome hundreds of independent nations in Gaul, whom even their common danger did not ſufficiently unite. The German invaders, who ſettled in the lands of the Romans, made, in the ſame diſtrict, a number of ſeparate eſtabliſhments, but far more extenſive than what the antient Gauls, by their conjunctions and treaties, or in the reſult of their wars, could, after many ages, have reached.

The ſeeds of great monarchies, and the roots of extenſive dominion, were every where planted with the colonies that divided the Roman empire. We have no exact account of the numbers, who, with a ſeeming concert, continued, during ſome ages, to invade and to ſeize this tempting prize. Where they expected reſiſtance, they endeavoured to muſter up a proportional force; and when they propoſed to ſettle, entire nations removed to ſhare

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in the ſpoil. Scattered over an extenſive province, where they could not be ſecure, without maintaining their union, they continued to acknowledge the leader under whom they had fought; and, like an army ſent by diviſions into ſeparate ſtations, were prepared to aſſemble whenever occaſion ſhould require their united operations or counſels.

EVERY ſeparate party had its poſt aſſigned, and every ſubordinate chieftain his poſſeſſions, from which he was to provide his own ſubſiſtence, and that of his followers. The model of government was taken from that of a military ſubordination, and a fief was the temporary pay of an officer proportioned to his rank *. There was a claſs of the people deſtined to military ſervice, another to labour, and to cultivate lands for the benefit of their maſters. The officer improved his tenure by degrees, firſt changing a temporary grant into a tenure for his life; and this alſo, upon the obſervance of certain conditions, into a grant including his heirs.

THE rank of the nobles became hereditary in every quarter, and formed a powerful and permanent order of men in every ſtate. While they held the people in ſervitude, they diſputed the claims of their ſovereign; they withdrew their attendance upon occaſion, or turned their arms againſt him.

* See Dr. Robertſon's Hiſtory of Scotland, B. 1. Dalrymple's Hiſt. of Feudal Tenures.

They formed a ſtrong and inſurmountable barrier againſt a general deſpotiſm in the ſtate; but they were themſelves, by means of their warlike retainers, the tyrants of every little diſtrict, and prevented the eſtabliſhment of order, or any regular applications of law. They took the advantage of weak reigns or minorities, to puſh their incroachments on the ſovereign; or having made the monarchy elective, they, by ſucceſſive treaties and ſtipulations, at every election, limited or undermined the monarchical power. The prerogatives of the prince have been, in ſome inſtances, as in that of the German empire in particular, reduced to a mere title; and the national union itſelf preſerved in the obſervance only of a few inſignificant formalities.

Where the conteſt of the ſovereign, and of his vaſſals, under hereditary and ample prerogatives annexed to the crown, had a different iſſue, the feudal lordſhips were gradually ſtript of their powers, the nobles were reduced to the ſtate of ſubjects, and obliged to hold their honours, and exerciſe their juriſdictions, in a dependence on the prince. It was his ſuppoſed intereſt to reduce them to a ſtate of equal ſubjection with the people, and to extend his own authority, by reſcuing the labourer and the dependent from the oppreſſions of their immediate ſuperiors.

In this project the princes of Europe have variouſly ſucceeded. While they protected the people, and

and thereby encouraged the practice of commercial and lucrative arts, they paved the way for deſpotiſm in the ſtate; and with the ſame policy by which they relieved the ſubject from many oppreſſions, they increaſed the powers of the crown.

But where the people had, by the conſtitution, a repreſentative in the government, and a head, under which they could avail themſelves of the wealth they acquired, and of the ſenſe of their perſonal importance, this policy turned againſt the crown; it formed a new power to reſtrain the prerogative, to eſtabliſh the government of law, and to exhibit a ſpectacle new in the hiſtory of mankind; monarchy mixed with republic, and extenſive territory governed, during ſome ages, without military force.

Such were the ſteps by which the nations of Europe have arrived at their preſent eſtabliſhments: in ſome inſtances, they have come to the poſſeſſion of legal conſtitutions; in others, to the exerciſe of a mitigated deſpotiſm; or they continue to ſtruggle with the tendency which they ſeverally have to theſe different extremes.

The progreſs of empire, in the early ages of Europe, threatened to be rapid, and to bury the independent ſpirit of nations in a grave like that which the Ottoman conquerors found for themſelves, and for the wretched race they had vanquiſhed.

quiſhed. The Romans had by ſlow degrees extended their empire; they had made every new acquiſition in the reſult of a tedious war, and had been obliged to plant colonies, and to employ a variety of meaſures, to ſecure every new poſſeſſion. But the feudal ſuperior being animated, from the moment he gained an eſtabliſhment, with a deſire of extending his territory, and of enlarging the liſt of his vaſſals, procured, by merely beſtowing inveſtiture, the annexation of new provinces, and became the maſter of ſtates, before independent, without making any material innovation in the form of their policy.

SEPARATE principalities were, like the parts of an engine, ready to be joined, and, like the wrought materials of a building, ready to be erected. They were in the reſult of their ſtruggles put together, or taken aſunder with facility. The independence of weak ſtates was preſerved only by the mutual jealouſies of the ſtrong, or by the general attention of all to maintain a balance of power.

THE happy ſyſtem of policy on which European ſtates have proceeded in preſerving this balance; the degree of moderation which is, in adjuſting their treaties, become habitual even to victorious and powerful monarchies, does honour to mankind, and may give hopes of a laſting felicity, to be derived from a prepoſſeſſion, never, perhaps, equally,

equally ſtrong in any former period, or among any number of nations, that the firſt conquering people will ruin themſelves, as well as their rivals.

It is in ſuch ſtates, perhaps, as in a fabric of a large dimenſion, that we can perceive moſt diſtinctly the ſeveral parts of which a political body conſiſts; and obſerve that concurrence or oppoſition of intereſts, which ſerve to unite or to ſeparate different orders of men, and lead them, by maintaining their ſeveral claims, to eſtabliſh a variety of political forms. The ſmalleſt republics, however, conſiſt of parts ſimilar to theſe, and of members who are actuated by a ſimilar ſpirit. They furniſh examples of government diverſified by the caſual combinations of parties, and by the different advantages with which thoſe parties engage in the conflict.

In every ſociety there is a caſual ſubordination, independent of its formal eſtabliſhment, and frequently adverſe to its conſtitution. While the adminiſtration and the people ſpeak the language of a particular form, and ſeem to admit no pretenſions to power, without a legal nomination in one inſtance, or without the advantage of hereditary honours in another, this caſual ſubordination, poſſibly ariſing from the diſtribution of property, or from ſome other circumſtance that beſtows unequal degrees of influence, gives the ſtate its tone, and fixes its character.

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The plebeian order at Rome having been long conſidered as of an inferior condition, and excluded from the higher offices of magiſtracy, had ſufficient force, as a body, to get this invidious diſtinction removed; but the individual ſtill acting under the impreſſions of a ſubordinate rank, gave in every competition his ſuffrage to a patrician, whoſe protection he had experienced, and whoſe perſonal authority he felt. By this means, the aſcendency of the patrician families was, for a certain period, as regular as it could be made by the avowed maxims of ariſtocracy; but the higher offices of ſtate being gradually ſhared by plebeians, the effects of former diſtinctions were prevented or weakened. The laws that were made to adjuſt the pretenſions of different orders were eaſily eluded. The populace became a faction, and their alliance was the ſureſt road to dominion. Clodius, by a pretended adoption into a plebeian family, was qualified to become tribune of the people; and Cæſar, by eſpouſing the cauſe of this faction, made his way to uſurpation and tyranny.

In ſuch fleeting and tranſient ſcenes, forms of government are only modes of proceeding, in which ſucceſſive ages differ from one another. Faction is ever ready to ſeize all occaſional advantages; and mankind, when in hazard from any party, ſeldom find a better protection than that of its rival. Cato united with Pompey in oppoſition to Cæſar, and guarded againſt nothing

thing ſo much as that reconciliation of parties, which was in effect to be a combination of different leaders againſt the freedom of the republic. This illuſtrious perſonage ſtood diſtinguiſhed in his age like a man among children, and was raiſed above his opponents, as much by the juſtneſs of his underſtanding, and the extent of his penetration, as he was by the manly fortitude and diſintereſtedneſs with which he ſtrove to baffle the deſigns of a vain and childiſh ambition, that was operating to the ruin of mankind.

Although free conſtitutions of government ſeldom or never take their riſe from the ſcheme of any ſingle projector, yet are they often preſerved by the vigilance, activity, and zeal of ſingle men. Happy are they who underſtand and who chuſe this object of care; and happy it is for mankind when it is not choſen too late. It has been reſerved to ſignalize the lives of a Cato or a Brutus, on the eve of fatal revolutions; to foſter in ſecret the indignation of Thraſea and Helvidius; and to occupy the reflections of ſpeculative men in times of corruption. But even in ſuch late and ineffectual examples, it was happy to know, and to value, an object which is ſo important to mankind. The purſuit, and the love of it, however unſucceſsful, has thrown its principal luſtre on human nature.

SECTION III.

Of National Objects in general, and of Eſtabliſhments and Manners relating to them.

WHILE the mode of ſubordination is caſual, and forms of government take their riſe, chiefly from the manner in which the members of a ſtate have been originally claſſed,* and from a variety of circumſtances that procure to particular orders of men a ſway in their country, there are certain objects that claim the attention of every government, that lead the apprehenſions and the reaſonings of mankind in every ſociety, and that not only furniſh an employment to ſtateſmen, but in ſome meaſure direct the community to thoſe inſtitutions, under the authority of which the magiſtrate holds his power. Such are the national defence, the diſtribution of juſtice, the preſervation and internal proſperity of the ſtate. If theſe objects be neglected, we muſt apprehend that the very ſcene in which parties contend for power, for privilege, or equality, muſt diſappear, and ſociety itſelf no longer exiſt.

THE conſideration due to theſe objects will be pleaded in every public aſſembly, and will produce, in every political conteſt, appeals to that common ſenſe and opinion of mankind, which, ſtruggling with the private views of individuals, and

and the claims of party, may be conſidered as the great legiſlator of nations.

THE meaſures required for the attainment of moſt national objects are connected together, and muſt be jointly purſued; they are often the ſame. The force which is prepared for defence againſt foreign enemies, may be likewiſe employed to keep the peace at home: The laws made to ſecure the rights and liberties of the people, may ſerve as encouragements to population and commerce: And every community, without conſidering how its objects may be claſſed or diſtinguiſhed by ſpeculative men, is, in every inſtance, obliged to aſſume or to retain that form which is beſt fitted to preſerve its advantages, or to avert its misfortunes.

NATIONS, however, like private men, have their favourite ends, and their principal purſuits, which diverſify their manners, as well as their eſtabliſhments. They even attain to the ſame ends by different means; and, like men who make their fortune by different profeſſions, retain the habits of their principal calling in every condition at which they arrive. The Romans became wealthy in purſuing their conqueſts; and probably, for a certain period, increaſed the numbers of mankind, while their diſpoſition to war ſeemed to threaten the earth with deſolation. Some modern nations proceed to dominion and

enlargement on the maxims of commerce; and while they only intend to accumulate riches at home, continue to gain an imperial aſcendant abroad.

THE characters of the warlike and the commercial are variouſly combined: They are formed in different degrees by the influence of circumſtances, that more or leſs frequently give riſe to war, and excite the deſire of conqueſt; of circumſtances, that leave a people in quiet to improve their domeſtic reſources, or to purchaſe, by the fruits of their induſtry, from foreigners, what their own ſoil and their climate deny.

THE members of every community are more or leſs occupied with matters of ſtate, in proportion as their conſtitution admits them to ſhare in the government, and ſummons up their attention to objects of a public nature. A people are cultivated or unimproved in their talents, in proportion as thoſe talents are employed in the practice of arts, and in the affairs of ſociety: They are improved or corrupted in their manners, in proportion as they are encouraged and directed to act on the maxims of freedom and juſtice, or as they are degraded into a ſtate of meanneſs and ſervitude. But whatever advantages are obtained, or whatever evils are avoided, by nations, in any of theſe important reſpects, are generally conſidered as mere occaſional incidents: They are ſeldom admitted

admitted among the objects of policy, or entered among the reaſons of ſtate.

We hazard being treated with ridicule, when we require political eſtabliſhments, merely to cultivate the talents of men, and to inſpire the ſentiments of a liberal mind: We muſt offer ſome motive of intereſt, or ſome hopes of external advantage, to animate the purſuits, or to direct the meaſures, of ordinary men. They would be brave, ingenious, and eloquent, only from neceſſity, or for the ſake of profit: They magnify the uſes of wealth, population, and the other reſources of war; but often forget that theſe are of no conſequence without the direction of able capacities, and without the ſupports of a national vigour. We may expect, therefore, to find among ſtates the bias to a particular policy taken from the regards to public ſafety; from the deſire of ſecuring perſonal freedom or private property; ſeldom from the conſideration of moral effects, or from a view to the real improvement of mankind.

SECTION IV.

Of Population and Wealth.

WHEN we imagine what the Romans muſt have felt when the tidings came that the flower of their city had periſhed at Cannæ; when we think of what the orator had in his mind when he ſaid, "That the youth among the people was "like the ſpring among the ſeaſons;" when we hear of the joy with which the huntſman and the warrior is adopted, in America, to ſuſtain the honours of the family and the nation; we are made to feel the moſt powerful motives to regard the increaſe and preſervation of our fellow-citizens. Intereſt, affection, and views of policy, combine to recommend this object; and it is treated with entire neglect only by the tyrant who miſtakes his own advantage, by the ſtateſman who trifles with the charge committed to his care, or by the people who are become corrupted, and who conſider their fellow-ſubjects as rivals in intereſt, and competitors in their lucrative purſuits.

AMONG rude ſocieties, and among ſmall communities in general, who are engaged in frequent ſtruggles and difficulties, the preſervation and increaſe of their members is a moſt important object. The American rates his defeat from the numbers of men he has loſt, or he eſtimates his victory from the priſoners he has made; not from his having remained