

STEPHEN DE LA BOETIE,
*Discourse of Voluntary Servitude. Wrote in
French (1735)*

DISCOURSE
OF
VOLUNTARY
SERVITUDE.

Wrote in *FRENCH*

By *Stephen de la Boetie.*

One of the King's Counsellors in the Court of
the Parliament at *Bordeaux*, in the Reign of
Charles IX., King of *France.*

*It is the Man, forsooth, that
is servable, that is, that
shews his Servitude, in being
Author of himself, from God, & from
His goods, as well as from
Justice, absolute: That sheweth
By his Obedience, his Man
is made not free, such Title
is himself, & sheweth
that he is not free.*

M. L. L. Lib. XII.

Vint: Amer. Patriz.

V. 1. 3.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. Smith, and sold by the Bookellers
of *London* and *Westminster.* 1735.

[Created: 27 March, 2023]

[Updated: March 27, 2023]



This is an e-Book from
THE DIGITAL LIBRARY OF LIBERTY & POWER
<davidmhart.com/liberty/Books>

Source

MLA Style

Stephen de la Boetie, Discourse of Voluntary Servitude. Wrote in French by Stephen de la Boetie (London: Printed for T. Smith, 1735). 3/27/2023. <http://davidmhart.com/liberty/Books/1735-Boetie_VoluntaryServitude/Boetie_VoluntaryServitude1735-ebook-enhanced.html>

Editor's Introduction

To make this edition useful to scholars and to make it more readable, I have done the following:

1. inserted and highlighted the page numbers of the original edition
 2. not split a word if it has been hyphenated across a new line or page (this will assist in making word searches)
 3. added unique paragraph IDs (which are used in the "citation tool" which is part of the "enhanced HTML" version of this text)
 4. retained the spaces which separate sections of the text
 5. created a "blocktext" for large quotations
 6. moved the Table of Contents to the beginning of the text
 7. placed the footnotes at the end of the book
 8. formatted short margin notes to float right
 9. inserted Greek and Hebrew words as images
-

Table of Contents

- [Translator's Preface](#)
 - [The Text: Discourse of Voluntary Servitude](#)
 - [Endnotes](#)
 - [\[Note\]](#)
 - [Errata](#)
-

DISCOURSE OF VOLUNTARY SERVITUDE.

Whereto thus *Adam* fatherly displeas'd.
O execrable Son so to aspire
Above his Brethren, to himself assuming [65]
Authoritie usurpt, from God not giv'n:
He gave us onely over Beast, Fish, Fowl
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation; but Man over men
He made not Lord; such title to himself [70]
Reserving, human left from human free.

Milton Lib. XII]

Vincat (Vincit?) Amor Patriae.

Virgil. [Aeneid 6.823]

THE PREFACE ↩

[Editor: I have reversed the use of italic and plain text (used for emphasis here) to be consistent with the rest of the book]

THE following Discourse, intituled, *Voluntary Servitude*, was wrote by *Stephen de la Boetie*, one of the King's Counsellors in the Court of the Parliament at *Bordeaux*, in the Reign of *Charles IX*, King of France. It contains such noble Sentiments, with Respect to the Liberties of Mankind, and is wrote in a Spirit, s truly resembling and old *Greek* or *Roman*, that the Translator judged it well worthy, of being communicated to the Publick in our Language. He has endeavoured to do [iv] Justice to the Original; but if he may have failed therein, he craves some Indulgence from the intelligent and candid Reader, who knows, how difficult it is, not to translate, but to translate well. He hopes it will not be thought improper, by those who may be inclined to peruse this valuable Treatise, if he extract some Passages from *Montagne's* Works, which give an Account both of it and the Author. In his Essay on Friendship, he begins thus:

Reflecting on the Conduct of a Painter which I have in my House, I have resolved to follow his Method. He chuses the finest Situation, and the Middle of each Wall, wherein to place the laboured and principal Pieces, and fills the vacant Space about, with Grotesque Figures; which are fantastical Pieces of Painting, that have no Grace but in their Variety and Oddness. What are these Essays of mine, in Truth, but grotesque and monstrous Figures, made up of divers Members, without any regular Form, having neither End, Connexion [v] nor Proportion, but such as Chance gives them? *Definit in Piscem, mulier formosa superne*. I can keep Pace with my Painter in his secondary Design, but am quite at a Loss in his first and best Part; for, as my Abilities are not so great, as to dare undertake a capital Subject, composed and finished according to the Rules of Art, I have bethought myself of borrowing one from *Stephen de la Boetie*, who will do honour to all the rest of this Chapter. It is a Discourse of his, which he calls VOLUNTARY SERVITUDE, but those who were ignorant of the Title, have very properly since called it, against a single Person. He wrote it by way of Essay in his Youth, for the Honour of Liberty against Tyrants. It has passed formerly through the Hands of Persons of Judgment with great Esteem, it being elegant and finished to the highest Degree of Perfection. And yet, I may well say, that it was not the best he was able to have performed; and if in his riper Years, when I knew him, he had undertaken such a Design as mine, to commit his [vi] Thoughts to Paper, we should have seen many excellent Things, and which would very near have equalled anything of Antiquity; for, as the Gifts of Nature especially, I know none may be compared to him. But there remains only this Discourse of his (and that by Chance, for I do not believe he ever saw it since it first slipt from him) and some Memoirs, upon the Edict of *January*, famous by our Civil Wars, which at some other Time may perhaps appear. These are all I could recover of his Remains, except the little Book of his Works, which I have already published; although he gave me (by his Will) with singular Affection and Esteem, all his Books and Papers: And I am particularly obliged to this Piece, as it was the Occasion of our first Acquaintance, for it was shewn me, long before I had seen him, and gave me the first Knowledge of his Name, and afterwards drew on that Friendship, which we mutually cultivated (as long as God permitted) so entire and perfect, that certainly there are but few such to be read of, [vii] and in our present Days, there is not to be seen the least Trace of such a one in Practice. Such a Concurrence of Incidents is necessary to form it, that it is much if Fortune build up such a one in three Ages.

He concludes that Chapter thus.

Since I have found that this Work has been already made publick, and with a bad Intent, by those who seek to disturb and change the State of our Government, without troubling themselves, whether it would be for the better and that they have joined it to other Writings of that Cast, I have altered my Intentions of inserting it here; and to the End, that the Author's Memory may not suffer with those who could not so intimately know his Opinions and Actions, I must acquaint them, that this Treatise was the Production of his younger Years, by way of Exercise only, as a common Subject, which had been canvassed by many Writers. I make no doubt, but he believed what he wrote, for he was so conscientious, that he would not lie even in Jest; and I [viii] know besides, that if he had been to chuse, he would rather have been born at *Venice* than at *Sarlar*, and with Reason. But he had another Maxim deeply imprinted in his Soul, to obey and religiously submit himself to the Laws under which he was born. There was never a better Citizen, more affectionate to the Quiet of his Country, nor more an Enemy to the Troubles and Seditions of his Time; he would much rather have employed his Talents to extinguish them, than have furnished Matter for inflaming them more; his Genius was rather formed in the Mould of antient Times, than of these in which we live.

The same *Montagne*, in a Letter to a Friend, writes this:

I send you herewith *Xenophon's* Oeconomics, that is to say, the manner of governing well a Family, translated into *French* by the later Monsieur *de la Boetie*, a Present which I judged proper for you, as well because, it came first as you know, from the Hand of a Person of great Reputation, a Man highly [ix] eminent both in War and in Peace, as that it has received it's second Form from one, who, I am sure, was both beloved and esteemed by you during his Life. This will serve always as a Remembrancer, to continue your good Will and Esteem for his Name and Memory. Be not afraid, Sir, to increase either of them; for, as you only knew him by the publick Proofs he had given of himself, I can assure you, his Abilities were so much beyond these, that you was far from having a thorough Knowledge of him. He did me the Honour, whilst he was alive, which I esteem as my greatest good Fortune, to entertain so strict and firm a Friendship with me, that there was not any Byas, Movement or Spring in his Soul, which I might not have discovered and judged of, at least, if my Sight were not too short. But without imposing upon you, he was altogether so near a Miracle, that in writing of him, least I should be thought to exceed the Bounds of Probability, and run the Hazard of being wholly disbelieved, there is a Necessity [x] to check myself, and retrench from what I know to be true. For this Time, Sir, I will content myself with intreating you, for the Honour and Reverence you owe to Truth, to believe and bear witness, that our *Guienne* never expected to see any thing like him amongst those of the Robe.

In another Letter he writes.

So that having loved Monsieur *de la Boetie* more than anything in this World, the greatest Man in my Opinion of this Age, I thought I should grossly fail in my Duty, if, knowingly, I should suffer so great a Name, and a Memory so worthy of Esteem, to vanish and be lost, if I did not endeavour, by these Pieces of his, to raise him up and bring him to Life. I believe he is in some Manner sensible of this, and that these my good Offices touch and rejoice him. In truth, he is yet with me so entire and full of Life, that I cannot possibly think him so rudely buried under Ground, not altogether banished from my Conversation.

[xi]

In another to the Chancellor of *France*, Monsieur *L'Hopital*, he writes thus.

This Consideration, Sir, that Fortune has a greater Share than Reason in the Promotion of Men of Merit, hath often comforted me, when I reflect, that Monsieur *de la Boetie*, one of the fittest and most able Men for the first

Employment in *France*, all his Life languished in Oblivion, and was buried at home, but much to our mutual Advantage. As to him, in particular, I can assure you, Sir, he was so abundantly furnished with the Riches and Treasures which defy Fortune, that never any Man lived more satisfied and contented than he did. I know he was raised to the Dignities of his Province, which are looked upon as great, and know besides, that no Man had more Capacity for them, and that at the Age of Two and thirty when he died, he had acquired more true Reputation in his Charge than any other Person before him. But it is not just to leave in the Condition of a private Soldier, a Man that [xii] deserves the Rank of a Captain, nor to employ in middling Stations, those who would acquit themselves to Advantage in the greatest. In Truth, his Abilities were ill employed, and too much spared. For, besides the Time the Duties of his Office required, he had many leisure Hours, from which the Publick might have reaped Service, and himself Glory. Since then Sir, he has been so backward in making himself known, for unluckily Virtue and Ambition are not joined together, and that he has lived in an Age so barbarous or so envious, that he has been no ways assisted by the Testimony of others, I am vastly desirous, that at least his Memory, to which alone henceforward I owe the Duties of our Friendship, may receive the Recompence of his Merit, and may dwell in the Esteem of Persons of Honour and Virtue. For this Reason, I was willing to bring him to light, and present him to you, in these few *Latin* Verses which remain of his. Acting herein unlike to the Mason, who places the best part of his Building towards the Street, [xiii] and to the Merchant, who shews the richest and finest Patterns of his Goods. For what was most commendable in him, the true Sap and Pith of his Worth, is gone with him, and we have only the Bark and Leaves. If one could set forth the well regulated Sallies of his Soul, his Piety, his Virtue, his Justice, the Vivacity of his Wit, the Weight and Soundness of his Judgment, the Grandeur of his Conceptions, so far elevated above the Vulgar, his Knowledge, the Grace which accompanied all his Actions, the tender Love he bore to his miserable Country, and his sworn and mortal Hatred of all Vice, but principally against that vile Traffick, which shelters itself under the honourable Name of Justice, it would certainly create in all good People a singular Affection towards him, mixed with a marvellous Regret for his Loss. But, Sir, I am far from being able to do this, for he had never once thought of having any Testimony to Posterity of the Fruit of his Studies, and we have only remaining what he wrote sometimes by way of Amusement.

[xiv]

Mr. *Coste*, to whom we are indebted for the new Edition of this Treatise, in his Preface to *Montagne's* Essays, published at the *Hague* in 1727, writes thus.

You will find, besides, in this Edition, the famous Work of Monsieur *de la Boetie*, intituled *Voluntary Servitude*, or against a single Person. Although it hath never been added to *Montagne's* Essays, one may say, that it is an Ornament in some Sort essential to them. *Montagne*, as appears before, had defined it a Place in that excellent Chapter of Friendship, where he make a Panegyric of Mr. *de la Boetie*, and of this little Discourse, which gave Occasion to their first Interview; and by that to the tender and faithful Friendship which grew between them, and of which *Montagne* retained as lively Sense, after the Death of his illustrious Friend, as during his Life. It is true, in finishing the Chapter, he excuses himself of a sudden, from adding this Work as [xv] he had designed; but it was only upon political Considerations, least during the Troubles with which *France* was then agitated, the Principles upon which this Work is raised, might be employed to ill Purposes against the Author's Intentions. Many Years before, *Montagne*, in publishing some posthumous Pieces of Mr. *de la Boetie*, resisted the Temptation of inserting in his Collection the *Voluntary Servitude*, by Reason, as he says himself, that he found the Composition of it too delicate and nice to be abandoned to the gross and heavy Air of so unpleasant a Season, which is in plain Words, that he was afraid the Court of *France* would not look favourably upon a Work wherein the Conduct of wicked Princes, the Cruelty and Extortion of their ministers, etc. were so livelily censured. *Montagne* knew so well the

Dispositions of the Court and People of *France* at that Time. that we may in this Matters with Certainty rely upon him, without having recourse to History; but it is easy to see, by all that he tells us of this his Friend's [xvi] Discourse, and by the Reasons which kept him twice from publishing it, that at present, it is in some Sort fulfilling his Will to add it to his Essays. At present, I say, when *France* enjoys a profound Peace under a young Monarch, [1] who having taken it upon himself the Direction of his Kingdom, is resolved to give himself wholly up to the Love which he owes his People, in the Design of making his Government glorious, by rendring it useful to the State and to the People, whose Happiness shall always be the first Object of his Care. Princes of this Character cannot be any more shocked with the Liberty Mr. *de la Boetie* has taken in decrying the Effeminancy, the Injustice and Cruelty of wicked Kings, than *Alexander* the Great would have been to have heard a Bully turned into Ridicule. The Copy from which I have printed this Discourse of [xvii] Mr *de la Boetie*, is not very correct. It was taken out of the State of *France* under *Charles IX*, and I do not know of any other Copies of it remaining elsewhere. I say nothing in particular concerning the Notes I have made in some Places which seemed to want them. They are of the same Kind with those dispersed through the Essays.

There are several other Passages, particularly one entire Letter from *Montagne* to his Father, containing the Circumstances of Mr. *de la Boetie's* Death, which declare him to have been one of the most extraordinary Men that ever lived, but the Translator was afraid, that if the whole had been inserted, some Particulars would not have been thought of Moment at the present by the Generality of Readers, and those that might have been thought so, would not have been clear, without a Translation of the whole, for which Reason he refers those who are desirous to know more of the great Genius, which shone like a Star of the first Magnitude, and quickly disappeared, to the fifth Volume of the forementioned Edition of *Montagne's* Works, [xviii] and to the 19th Chapter of the first Book of his Essays.

This Discourse was published soon after the Massacre of *Paris*, and the Slaughter of the Protestants throughout most of the Provinces in *France*, altho' wrote several Years before. If any thing could have whetted the Author's Style with keener Darts against Tyranny, to what a Height of Indignation would that detestable and execrable Scene have raised the virtuous Spirit of this young Man. But as the same Causes must ever produce the same Effects, he knew the Nature of Tyranny to be such, that there is nothing so monstrous and wicked, but what is capable of perpetrating, and perhaps might not have been surprized at so prodigious an Event, but might have looked upon it as a very natural Consequence from those Principles upon which Tyranny is founded. As it appears, the Author did not write this Tract as an Attack against legal Government, but against the Abuses of it; so, to every candid Reader, the Translator hopes his Design will evidently appear to be the same, and that his well meaning [xix] Intentions, will not be misrepresented, or maliciously wrested to any Application to the present Times, or the mild Government of so gracious a Prince as now fills the Throne.

Happy are we who live under such a Prince and such a Constitution, that the Subjects are not exposed to any Dangers of this Sort, Liberty and Property being secured by such an equal Balance of Power, and such a Harmony in the Constitution, that no such Excesses can be apprehended here.

But the Translator being warmed by the pious wish of a celebrated Author, whose Writings, as they are the Glory of the present, so they will be the Admiration of future Ages, *That the Liberties of Great Britain may be immortal*, and stimulated by his seasonable Advice.

They will be so, says he, if that Constitution, whose genuine Effects they are, be maintained in Purity and Vigour. A perpetual Attention to this great Point is therefore the Interest and Duty of every Man in *Britain*; and there is scarce any Man, who may not contribute to the Advancement of it in some [xx] Degree.

The old may inform the young, and the young may animate the old. Even they, who are most retired from the Scene of Business may be useful in this Cause, to those who are in it; to those who are heated by the Action, distracted by the Cares, or dissipated by the Pleasures of the World. I say they may be useful; and, I add, that they ought to be so to the utmost, that their Situation allows.

The Translator, I say, being animated by, and approving of this wholesome Counsel, judged it his Duty to keep up in the Minds of his Countrymen, just Notions of Liberty, and a Detestation of Slavery, and that no Time can be unseasonable for this good End. That whilst the Nations round about us groan under the Fetters of Tyranny, and are made Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water; we, who still enjoy this inestimable Jewel, may guard it, and preserve it as the Apple of our Eye, and reverence it as our true *Palladium* sent down to us from Heaven by the divine Mercy and Goodness. To deter any desperate Hand from daring to attack or pull down this holy Ark, this sacred Remnant [xxi] of Liberty, committed and entrusted to the Care of the peculiar and chosen People of this Island. If *Uzzah* was smote with sudden Death, for his Error in putting forth his Hand to sustain the Ark of the Lord, when it was shaken and likely to fall, what sudden Vengeance must that Man expect who will dare to stretch out his Hand against this second Ark of Liberty.

Is there not some chosen Curse,
Some hidden Thunder in the Stores of Heaven,
Red with uncommon Wrath, to blast the Man,
Who owes his Greatness to his Country's Ruin.

But, if some have deserted the sacred Banner of the Goddess,

If some be fallen, to Disobedience fallen,
From what high State of Glory, into what Shame.

Let them haste to appease betimes the incensed Deity, and quickly deprecate her impending Wrath, let them pray, repent, and bring Obedience due,

To Prayer, Repentance, and Obedience due,
Tho' but endeavour'd with sincere Intent,
Her Ear shall not be slow, her Eye not shut.

Let them not thro' private Feuds and [xxii] Animositities, and out of obstinacy and opposition to those, who perhaps they do not love, act contrary to common Sense, and against what they once made their loudest Boasts of, and thought it their greatest Honour publicly to profess and avow. Let them not be revenged of their Enemies, destroy themselves with them. Let them not be more implacable than the Jews were, that stiff-necked and perverse People, who when Danger was at their Gates, sacrificed their private Resentments to unite against the common Enemy. I am persuaded, that if in any future Time, the Foundations of our Liberties should be attempted to be undermined and sapped by slow, altho' very perceptible Degrees, that there would still be left some choice

Spirits, who would never become tame in Servitude, nor would relish it, how finely soever it might be dressed up: Who having clear Understandings, and sharp-sighted Wits, improved by Study and Knowledge, were Liberty entirely lost and out of this World, would conceive it, and bring it forth from their own Ideas, and form it's fair Plan from the similar Image of it in their own [xiii] Breasts.

They would think that they owed more to their Country, than from any Favours conferred, or Flatteries or false Confidences imposed upon them by an artful Deceiver, to be by them induced to concur with him in Measures pernicious to it, and tending to destroy it.

But they would say with *Brutus*, what was our *End* in getting rid of the Tyrant but to be free from Tyranny. A ridiculous Motive and a vain Exploit; if our Slavery survive him! — Oh, who is it that makes Liberty his Care? Liberty, which ought to be the Care of all Men, as it is the Benefit and Blessing of All! For myself, rather than give it up, I will stand single in it's Defence. I cannot lose, but with my Life, my Resolution to maintain in Freedom, my Country, which I have made free: I have destroyed a Veteran Tyrant, and shall I suffer in a raw Youth, his Heir, a Power to controul the Senate, supersede the Laws, and put Chains on *Rome*? A Power, which no personal Favours, nor even the Ties of Blood could ever sanctify to me; a Power, which I could not bear in Caesar, [xxiv] nor if my Father had usurped it, could I have born him.

Remember, O my friends, the Laws, the Rights,
The generous Plan of Power, delivered down
From Age to Age, by your renown'd Forefathers,
So dearly bought, the Price of so much Blood,
O let it never perish in your Hands,
But piously transmit it to your Children.

These Sentiments, which inspired the Heroes of old, and of later Times, and were productive of such Godlike Actions, that Time shall never obliterate, having inflamed the Breast of the Translator with an Ardour for Liberty inferior to no one's, and being conscious to himself that he was not able from his own Stores to produce any thing worthy the Attention of the Publick, he was ambitious of contributing at least his Mite in this glorious Cause, by publishing the Labours of others, and in a Country of Liberty, where so many admirable Treatises have been formerly, and now lately wrote, for Support of it, that this zealous Advocate might be brought to take his Part, and appear in our Language as one of it's illustrious Defenders.

[1]

OF VOLUNTARY SERVITUDE ↩

*Be silent, wretch, and think not here allowed
That worst of tyrants, an usurping crowd.
To one sole monarch Jove commits the sway,
His are the laws, and him let all obey.*

Ulysses says this in *Homer*, speaking in Public. If only he had said:

*Be silent, Wretch, and think not here allow'd
That worst of Tyrants, an usurping Crowd.*

Nothing could have been better. But to have talked according to Reason, [2] he ought to have said that the Rule of many cannot be good, since the Power of a single Person, from the Time that he assumes the Title of Master, is hard and unreasonable. Yet he preposterously adds:

*To one sole Monarch Jove commits the Sway,
His are the Laws, and him let all obey. [2]*

But perhaps *Ulysses* ought to be excused, who possibly then was under a [3] Necessity of using that Language and to employ it as the Means to calm the Mutiny of the Army, conforming his Discourse more, I think, to the Circumstance of Time than to Truth. But to speak in good earnest, it is a great Misfortune to be subject to a Master of whom you can never be assured that he will be good, since it is always in his Power to be bad when he pleases. To have many Masters, that is the same as to be so many Times extremely unfortunate. At present I will not enter into the Debate [4] of that Question so much canvassed, Whether the other Sorts of Republics are better than Monarchy; which, if I should consider, I would first know, before I put it as a Question, what Rank Monarchy ought to have amongst Republics, if it ought to have any at all : since it is very difficult to believe, that there is any Thing public in that Government where all depends upon a single Person. But this Question is reserved for another Time, and may well deserve a Treatise apart, or rather may indeed include all political Disputes.

For the present, I would only understand how it is possible and how it can be that so many Men, so many Cities, so many Nations, tolerate sometimes a single Tyrant, who has no Power but what they give him; who has no Power to hurt them but only so far as they have the Will to suffer him; who can do them no Harm except when they chuse rather to bear him than contradict him. A wonderful Thing, certainly, and nevertheless [5] so common, that we ought to have more Grief and less Astonishment, to see a Million of Millions of Men serve miserably, their Necks under the Yoke, not constrained by a greater Force but, as it were, enchanted and charmed by the single Name of one, whose Power they ought not to be afraid of, since he is alone, nor love his Qualities, since he is with regard to them inhuman and savage. Such is the Weakness of Mankind. It often happens that we are obliged to obey by Force. There is a Necessity then of temporizing; one cannot always be the strongest. If then a Nation be constrained by the Fate of War to become the Slaves of one Person, as the City of *Athens* was to thirty Tyrants, we ought not to be surprized at their Servitude, but to bewail, the Accident; or rather, neither to be surprized nor bewail, but to bear the Evil patiently, and reserve ourselves for a future and better fortune. Our Nature is such, that the common Duties of Friendship, engross a great Part of the Course of our Lives. [6] It is reasonable to love

Virtue, to esteem good Actions, to acknowledge the Good we receive, and often to diminish our own Ease, to augment the Honour and Advantage of those we love when they deserve it. If therefore the Inhabitants of a Country have met with some great Personage, who has shown by Proof, great Foresight in preserving, great Courage in defending, and great Care in governing them : If from thenceforward they accustom themselves to obey him, and to confide so much in him, as to give him some Prerogatives, I do not know whether it ought to be called an Act of Wisdom, insomuch that he is taken from that station in which he did good to be advanced to a Dignity in which he may do harm; but certainly it may be called Honesty and Sincerity, in not being afraid of receiving ill from him from, whom they had received only Good.

BUT, good God!—what can this be? How shall we call this? What Misfortune [7] is this? What sort of unhappy Vice is it, to see an infinite Number, not only obey, but serve, not governed but tyrannised, having neither Goods, Parents, Children, nor Life itself which can be called theirs? To bear the Robberies, the Debaucheries, the Cruelties, not of an Army, not of a barbarous Camp, against which we ought to spend Blood, nay even our Lives, but of one Man : not a *Hercules* or *Sampson*, but a little Creature, and very often the most cowardly and effeminate of the whole Nation : One not accustomed to the Smoak of Battles, but scarcely to the Dust of Tilts and Tournaments : Not one, who can by Force command Men, but wholly employed in poorly serving the meanest Woman. Shall we call this Cowardice? Shall we say that they who so abjectly serve are Cowards and Fainthearted? If two, three, or four do not defend themselves from one, it is strange, but nevertheless possible : We may safely say, that it is want of Courage. But if a Hundred, a Thousand bear with one, it [8] cannot be said, that they dare not attack him, for it is not Cowardice, but rather Contempt and Disdain. If we see not a hundred, not a thousand Men, but a hundred Provinces, a thousand Cities, a Million of Men not attack one Man, whose greatest Favourite has yet the Misfortune to be made his Slave and Vassal : What can we call this? Can it be cowardice? But there is in all Vices naturally some Boundary and Degree, beyond which they cannot pass. Two and perhaps Ten may be afraid of one, but if a Thousand, a Million of Men, if a Thousand of Cities do not defend themselves from one Man, that is not Cowardice. Cowardice cannot extend so far, no more than any Valour can be so great, that one alone should scale a Fortress, attack an Army, or conquer a Kingdom. Then what Monster of Vices is this, that does not deserve the Name of Cowardice? Which cannot find a Name bad enough for it, which Nature disowns, and the Tongue refuses to pronounce? Let fifty thousand [9] Men in Arms be placed on one Side, and as many on the other, let them be ranged in Order, let the Battle begin, one Side fighting for their Liberties, the other to take them away : To which Side shall we by Conjecture promise the Victory? Which can we think will go with most Courage to battle, whether they, who as a Reward of their Danger, hope for the Preservation of their Liberty, or those who can expect no other Recompense for the Blows they give or receive, but the enslaving of others? One Side has always before their Eyes the Happiness of their past Life, and the Expectation of like Ease for the Time to come. They do not so much consider what they endure, the short Time the Battle lasts, as that which must for ever be borne by them, their Children and all their Posterity. The others have nothing which emboldens them but a Degree of Covetousness, which recoils when Danger approaches, and cannot be so ardent, but that it ought and must be extinguished by the least Drop [10] of Blood which issues from their Wounds. In those so renowned Battles of *Miltiades*, *Leonidas*, and *Themistocles*, which were fought two thousand Years ago, and live as fresh in the Memory of Books and Men, as if they had been but of yesterday, which were fought in *Greece*, for the Good of *Greece*, and for the example of all the World : What think we was it, which gave to such a handful as the *Greeks* were, not the Power, but the Courage to sustain the Shock of so many Ships, that the Sea itself seemed to labour under them? To defeat so many Nations and so numerous, that the Squadron of the *Greeks* could not have furnished, if there had been Occasion, Captains for their Fleet?

But that in those glorious Days, it was not so much a Battle of *Greeks* against *Persians*, as the Victory of LIBERTY over TYRANNY, and IMMUNITY over AVARICE. The Valour which Liberty inspires in the Breasts of those who defend her, is worthy of [11] Admiration. But that which is done in all Countries, and every Day, that one Man alone should Lord it over a hundred Cities and deprive them of their Liberty; who would believe it, if it were only hearsay, that he did not see it? And if it were only seen in foreign and distant Countries and reported here, who would not think that it were rather a Fiction and imaginary, than real? But yet there is no need of attacking this single Tyrant, there is no Necessity of defending ones self against him, he is defeated of himself, provided only the Country does not submit to Servitude : There is no need of taking any thing from him, only give him nothing. There is no Occasion that the Country should put itself to the Trouble of doing any thing for itself, if it do nothing against itself. It is the People themselves who suffer, or rather give themselves up to be devoured, since in ceasing to obey him they would be free. It is the People who enslave themselves, who cut their own Throats : Who [12] having the Choice of being Vassals or Freemen, reject their Liberty and submit to the Yoke, who consent to their own Evil, or rather procure it. If the Recovery of their Liberty were to cost them any thing, I would not press it : Although the replacing himself in his natural Right, and, as I may say of a Beast to become a Man, is what everyone ought to hold most dear. But still I do not require so much Courage in him. I do not allow, indeed, that he should prefer an uncertain precarious Security of living at his Ease. What! if to obtain his Liberty, he need only desire it : If there be only wanting a bare Volition, can there be found a Nation in the World who would think it too dear, being able to gain it by a single Wish? Who would grudge the Will of recovering a Good, which we ought to purchase at the Price of our Blood? And which lost, every Man of Honour ought to look upon Life itself as a Burden, and Death a Deliverance. Certainly, just as the Fire of a little Spark becomes great, [13] and always increases, and the more Fuel it finds, the readier it is to burn, but if no Fuel be added to it, it consumes itself and is extinguished. Even so Tyrants, the more they plunder, the more they require; the more they ruin and destroy, the more is given them, the more they are obeyed, so much the more do they fortify themselves, become stronger and more able to annihilate and destroy all. If nothing be given them, if they be not obeyed, without fighting, without striking a Blow, they remain naked, disarmed, and are nothing : Like as the Root of a Tree, receiving no Moisture or Nourishment, becomes dry and dead.

THE Bold, to acquire the Good fought for, fear no Danger, the Prudent no Labour. The cowardly and stupid can neither support the Evil, nor recover the Good. They content themselves with the bare Desire of it, and the Virtue of endeavouring to procure it, is lost by their Cowardice, although the Desire of having it remains [14] with them by Nature. This Desire, this Will to obtain all Things, the Possession of which would make them happy, is common to the Wise and to the Foolish, to the Brave and to the Pusillanimous. I know not how it is, but Nature seems to have been wanting in one thing alone to Mankind, in not giving them the Desire of Liberty ; and yet Liberty is so great a Good and so lovely, that where it is lost, all Evils follow one upon another ; and even the Good which may remain, entirely loses its Gust and Flavour, being spoiled by Servitude. Liberty alone Men do not desire ; for no other Reason, it seems to me, than that if they should desire it they might have it : as if they refused to make this great Acquisition only because it is too easy.

Poor and miserable Creatures, People infatuated, Nations obstinate in your own Evil, and blind to your own Good, you permit the finest and clearest of your Revenues to be carried off [15] before your Eyes, your Fields to be pillaged, your Houses to be robbed and despoiled of your ancient and paternal Furniture. You live in such a Manner that you cannot say anything is your own. Does it seem so great a Happiness, henceforward to possess by Halves only your Goods, your Families, and your Lives. And all this Destruction, Havock and Ruin came upon you not from Enemies, but certainly from the ENEMY, from a Man, whom you

yourselves make so great as he is; for whom you go so courageously to War, and for whose Grandeur you do not refuse to lose your Lives. He who so domineers over you has only two Eyes, two Hands, and one Body, and has nothing but what the least Man of the infinite Number of your own Cities has as well as he, except it be the Power you yourselves give him for your own Destruction. From whence has he so many Eyes to watch you, if you do not give them? How has he so many Hands to strike you, if he does not take them from [16] you? The Feet with which he tramples upon your Cities, whence hath he them if they be not yours? How can he have any Power over you but from yourselves? How would he dare so furiously to invade you, if he had not Intelligence with you? What could he do to you, if you did not protect the Robber that pillages you? You are Accomplices of the Murtherer who kills you, and Traitors to yourselves. You sow and plant that he may destroy: You furnish your Houses to be a Supply for his Robberies: You bring up your Daughters that he may have wherewithal to satiate his Lust. You educate your Sons that he may train them to his Wars, that he may send them to Slaughter, and make them the Instruments of his Rapine, and Executors of his Vengeance: You wear out your own Bodies, that he may sooth himself in his Enjoyments, and wallow in his filthy and beastly Pleasures. You weaken yourselves to make him stronger and more able to bridle and keep you under. You might deliver [17] yourselves from so many Indignities, which the Beasts themselves, if they felt them, would not endure, if you had but the Will to attempt it. Resolve not to obey, and you are free. I do not advise you to shake or overturn him, forbear only to support him, and you will see him, like a great Colossus from which the Base is taken away, fall with his own Weight, and be broken in pieces.

But certainly Physicians advise well, not to tamper with incurable Wounds, and I do not act wisely in giving Advice to People concerning theirs, who have lost long ago all Knowledge of it, and whose Insensibility alone shows it to be mortal. Let us then endeavour to conjecture, if we can, how this obstinate Desire of Slavery has so far taken Root, that it would seem at present the Love itself of Liberty were not so natural.

FIRST, then, I believe it is past doubt, that if we lived in Possession of [18] the Rights Nature has given us, and followed her Dictates, we would naturally be obedient to our Parents, subject to Reason, and Slaves only, in so far as Nature, without any other Advertisement points out to us Obedience to our Father or Mother. All men are Witnesses, every one in himself and for himself, if Reason be born with us or not; which is a Question thoroughly discussed by the Academics, and touched by every different School of the Philosophers. At present I shall take it for granted that there is in our Souls some natural Seed of Reason, which being nourished by good Advice and Custom, in time flourishes in Virtue; and which, on the contrary, being often not able to resist Vices that surround it, is choaked up and perishes. But, surely, if there be anything clear and certain in Nature, and of which there is no Excuse for Ignorance, it is this, that Nature, the Minister of God, and Governour of Men, has made us all of the same Form and, as it would seem, in the [19] same Mould, to the End we should all know each other for Companions, or rather Brothers. And if, in distributing the Presents she has made, she has bestowed some Advantages, either in Mind or Body, to some more than others: she did not therefore intend to send us into this World, as it were into a Place for Combat, and has not sent down here below the strongest and most able, as Robbers armed into a Forest to spoil the weakest; but rather we ought to believe, that by thus assigning to some the greater Parts, to others the lesser, she would thereby make way for brotherly Affection to exercise itself, some having Ability to give aid, and others need of receiving it. Since then this good Mother has given all of us this Earth for a Habitation, has lodged all of us in some manner or other in the same House, has made us all of the same Paste, that everyone might behold himself, and, as it were, see his own Image in his Neighbour: If she have given to all of us in common that great Present of [20] Voice and Speech, to unite us in brotherly Affection, and to make by the common and mutual Declaration of our Thoughts, a Communication of Wills; and if she have endeavoured by all

means to bind and tie closer the Knot of our Alliance and Society: If she have shown in all things, that she did not mean to make us all united, as to make us all one: We ought not to doubt but that we are all naturally free, since we are all Companions; and it cannot enter into the Thought of anyone that Nature has placed us in Servitude, having made us all equal.

BUT, in truth, it is idle to dispute whether Liberty be natural, since no one can be held in Slavery, without having Injustice done him, and there is nothing in the World so contrary to Nature, she being altogether reasonable, as Injustice. We may then truly affirm that Liberty is natural, and for the same Reason, in my Opinion, that we are not only born in Possession of [21] our Freedom, but with an Affection to defend it. But if it so happen, that we make any Doubt of this, and are so degenerated, that we are not able to know our own Good, nor likewise our true Affections, it is fitting that I show Mankind the Dignity of their Nature, and made the brute Beasts themselves teach them their true Condition. The Beasts, if Men are not too deaf to hear, cry aloud to them, LIBERTY. There are many amongst them who die as soon as they are taken. As the Fish lose their Life as soon as they are taken out of the Water, so likewise those leave the Light and will not survive their natural Freedom. If the Animals had amongst them Orders and Degrees, they would make, in my opinion, their Nobility consist in Freedom. Others, from the greatest to the smallest, when they are taken make so great a Resistance with their Nails, Claws, Hoofs, Feet, and Bills, that they sufficiently show how dearly they prize what they lose. Then when they are taken, they give so many [22] apparent Signs of the Sense they have of their Misfortune, that it is a Pleasure to observe they rather languish afterwards than live, and that they continue their Life more to bewail their lost Happiness, than to please themselves in their Bondage. What does the Elephant give us to understand, who when he has defended himself so long as he is able, seeing no Remedy, and just upon the Point of being taken, dashes his Jaws and breaks his Teeth against the Trees, but that the great Desire he has to remain free as he was born, gives him the Wit and the Thought of merchandising with the Hunters, and to try, if at the expense of his Teeth he may get free, and if he may be allowed to truck his Ivory and pay that Ransom for his Liberty? We train the Horse from the Time he is foaled to accustom him to Servitude, and yet we cannot sooth him so much, but that when we come to break him, he will bite the Bit, and kick at the Spur, to shew as it were his Nature, and testify at least, that if he do [23] serve it is not willingly but by Constraint. What ought we then to say?

*Beneath the Yoke the patient Oxen groan,
And Birds in Cage imprison'd make their moan.*

As I have formerly said some where, diverting myself with our *French* Poetry. For I am not afraid, in writing to you, O *Longa*, to insert some of my Verses, which whenever I read to you, I grow vain by your appearing to be satisf'd with them. Since then all things that have Sentiment, from the time they have it perceive the Evil of Subjection, and run greedily after Liberty: Since the Beasts which are even made for the Service of Man, cannot accustom themselves to serve but with Reluctance, what Fatality is it, which has been able so far to unnaturalize Man, alone born to live free, as to make him lose the very Remembrance of his first State, and the Desire of recovering it

[24]

THERE are three Sorts of Tyrants. Some obtain the Kingdom by Election of the People, some by Conquest, and others by Succession. Those who have acquired it by Right of War behave themselves in such manner, that it is well known they are, as one may say, in a Land won by Conquest. Those who are born Kings, are commonly little better, but being nourished from their Infancy with the Milk of Tyranny, look upon the People as their hereditary Slaves; and according to that Complexion to which they are most inclined, Avarice or Prodigality, such as it is, use the Kingdom as their Patrimony. He, to whom the people have given the

Sovereignty, ought to be, I should think, more supportable; and would be so, as I believe, were it not, that from the Time he sees himself elevated above the rest into that Station, flattered by I know not what, they call it Grandeur, he resolves not to suffer the least Diminution of it. Commonly such a one [25] makes account to transmit to his Children, the Power which he himself had received from the People. From the Time he entertains this Notion, it is incredible how far he surpasses in all sorts of Vices, and even Cruelty, other Tyrants. He sees no other way to secure this new Tyranny, but by spreading wide the Yoke, and alienating the Subjects so much from Liberty, although the Memory of it be yet fresh, that at length he may make them entirely forget it. Therefore, to say Truth, I see there is some Difference between them, as to the means by which they come to reign, but which to prefer I know not, their manner of reigning being still the same. Those that are elected, treat the People as wild Bulls which they would tame: The Conquerors think they have a Right as over their Prey: Those by Succession use them as their natural Slaves.

BUT to the Purpose. If by chance some People should be born now, quite new, neither accustomed to Subjection [26] nor charmed with Liberty, and that they knew not either the one or the other, and scarcely their Names: If it were offered to them either to be Subjects or to live free, which would they choose? We can make no doubt but they would love much better to obey only Reason, than serve any Man : excepting perhaps the People of *Israel*, who without Constraint, without any Need, made themselves a Tyrant : The history of which People I scarce ever read, but I conceive such a Rage against them, as even to become inhuman enough to rejoice at the Evils which befell them. But certainly to all Men, so long as they have any thing of Man, before they suffer themselves to be enslaved, one of these two Things must happen, either that they are forced or deceived : Forced by foreign Arms, as *Sparta* and *Athens*, were by the Arms of *Alexander*; or by Faction, as the government of *Athens* had some time before come into the hands of *Pisistratus*. By Deceit they often lose their Liberty; and in that they are not so [27] often seduced by others as deceived by themselves. Thus the People of *Syracuse*, the Capital of *Sicily*, being pressed by Wars, inconsiderately reflecting only on the present Danger, advanced *Dionysius* I, and made him General of the Army; and took no heed, till they had made him so great, that this their General, returning victorious, as if he had not vanquished his Enemies, but his Citizens, from Captain made himself King, and from King, Tyrant. It is incredible, how suddenly the People, the Moment they are enslaved, fall into so profound a Forgetfulness of their Freedom, that it is not possible for them to rouse themselves up to regain it, serving so easily and so willingly, that one who sees them would be tempted to say, that they had not lost their Liberty, but their Servitude. It is true, at first, they serve by Constraint, subdued by Force; but those who come afterwards, having never seen Liberty, and not knowing what it is, obey without Regret, and do willingly that which their Forefathers did [28] by Constraint. So it is, that when Men are born under the Yoke, and being afterwards brought up and educated in Slavery, without looking forward, contenting themselves to live in the Condition in which they were born, and thinking they have no other Right or other Good but what they found at first, they look upon the State of their Birth as their natural State. Nevertheless, there is scarcely any Heir so prodigal and careless, but sometimes he peruses his Deeds, to see if he enjoy all the Rights of his Succession, or whether any Person has encroached upon him or his Ancestors. But certainly Custom, which has in everything great Power over us, is in no Point so prevalent, as in this, of teaching us to serve, and (as is reported of *Mithridates*, who accustomed himself to drink Poison) of learning us to swallow, and not perceive the Bitterness of the Venom of Servitude. We cannot deny but that Nature has a great Share in us, to draw us which way she pleases, and that we may be [29] said to be either well or ill born: But it must be likewise confessed, that she has less Power over us than Custom : Since with Regard to our natural Disposition, how good soever it be, it is lost, if it be not encouraged; and Education forms us always after her own Fashion, whatsoever it be, in Spight of Nature. The Seeds of Good which Nature sows in us are so small and slippery, that they do not resist

the least Shock of a contrary Nurture. They are not so easily preserved as they degenerate, perish, and come to nothing, just as Fruit Trees, which all have their peculiar Nature, which they keep if encouraged, but leave it immediately, to bear foreign Fruits, and not their own, according as they are engrafted. The Herbs have each their Propriety and Nature : Nevertheless, the Frost, the Weather, the Soil, or the Hand of the Hardener, either improves or diminishes much of their Virtue. The Plant which is seen in one Place can be scarce known in another.

[30]

To observe the *Venetians*, and handful of People, living in such *Freedom*, that the most wicked among them would not be King, and all of them so born and bred, that they know no other Ambition, except who shall be most careful and circumspect in maintaining their Liberty : Ss brought up and educated from the Cradle, they would not take all the other Enjoyments on Earth to lose the least Point of their Freedom. Whoever shall have seen, I say, these great Men, and departing from thence, go into Territories of him we call the Grand Seignior, seeing there a People, which is only born to serve and to support him, contentedly resign their Lives : Could he think that these two People were of the same Nature, or would he not rather judge, that coming from a City of Men, he had entered into a Park of Beasts? *Lycurgus*, the Law-giver of *Sparta*, having brought up, as it is reported, two Dogs of the same Litter, both suckled with the same [31] Milk, [3] the one grown Fat in the Kitchen, the other accustomed in the Fields to the Sound of the Trumpet and Horn; being desirous to shew the *Lacedemonians* that Men are such as Education makes them, brought out the two Dogs into the open Market-Place, and set between them a Dish of Soup and a Hare: The one one run to the Dish, and the other to the Hare. And yet, says he, they are Brothers. Thus did this great Man, with his Laws and Regulations, educate and form so well the *Lacedemonians*, that every one of them would rather have died a thousands Deaths than acknowledge any other Lord but the Law and the King.

IT is with Pleasure I mention a Conversation, which a Favourite of *Xerxes*, the great Kinig of *Persia*, formerly held concerning the *Spartans*. When *Xerxes* made Preparations of so mighty [32] an Army to conquer *Greece*, he sent his Ambassadors through the *Grecian* Cities to demand Water and Earth, which was the Custom of the *Persians* when they summoned Cities, but to *Sparta* and *Athens* he sent none; because when his father *Darius* had sent to make the like Demand, the *Spartans* and the *Athenians* had thrown some of them into Ditches, and others into Wells, telling them, they might take Water and Earth and carry to their Prince. Those People could not suffer their Liberty to be called in Question even by the least Word. The *Spartans* were sensible, that by their having acted in this Manner, they had incurred the Hatred of the Gods themselves, especially of *Talthybius*, God of the Heralds. They bethought themselves of sending to *Xerxes*, to appease them, two of their Citizens, to present themselves to him, that he might use them as he should think fit; and, by that means, take Satisfaction for his Father's Ambassadors, which they had killed. Two [33] *Spartans*, the one called *Sperthies*, the other *Bulis*, willingly offered themselves to make this Attonement. They went thither, and in their way arrived at the Palace of a *Persian* called *Hydarnes*, who was Lieutenant for the King over all the Cities of *Asia* upon the Sea-Coast. He received them with great Honour. After several Discourses, following one after another, he asked them, wherefore they so obstinately refused the King's Friendship, Beleave, said he, *Spartans*, and see by me, how the King knows to honour those who deserve, and think that if you belonged to him, he would use you in the like manner. If you were his Subjects, and that he once knew you, there would not be a Man amongst you who would not be Lord of a City of *Greece* : In this, *Hydarnes*, reply'd the *Lacedemonians*, because the Good you promise us you have indeed tasted, but that which we enjoy, you know not what it is : You have experienced the King's Favour, but you are entirely ignorant [34] what relish Liberty has, and how sweet it is.

But if yourself had tasted of it, you would advise us to defend it, not only with the Lance and the Shield, but with our Teeth and Nails. The *Spartans* alone spoke what they ought, but certainly each of them spoke as they had been brought up. For it could not possibly be, that the *Persian* would regret Liberty, having never enjoyed it, not that the *Lacedemonians* could bear Subjection, having tasted of Freedom.

CATO of *Utica*, being yet a Child, and under the Rod, very much frequented the House of *Sylla* the Dictator, where, as well on Account of his Rank and Family, as they were near Relations, the Doors were never shut to him. He had always his Master with him when he went thither, as was the Custom for Children well born. He perceived, that in the Palace of *Sylla*, in his Preference, or by his Command, some were imprisoned, others condemned, one was banished, [35] another strangled, one demanded the Confiscation of a Citizen, and another his Head. In fine, every thing was done, not as by an Officer of the City, but a Tyrant of the People, and it was not a Seat of Justice, but a Dungeon of Tyranny. This noble Child said to his Master : [4] Why do not you give me a Dagger? I will hide it under my Gown. I go often into *Sylla's* Chamber before he rises. I have an Arm strong enough to rid the City of him. Here is a saying worthy of *Cato*. This was a Beginning of the great Personage agreeable to his Death. Nevertheless, though neither his Name nor Country was mentioned, let the Fact be only related such as it is, the thing will speak itself, and we must certainly conclude, that he was a *Roman*, and born in *Rome*, but in the true *Rome*, and when it was free. To what purpose is all this? Not [36] certainly that I think the Country and Soil signify any thing, for in all Countries and in every Climate Servitude is disagreeable, and Liberty sweet.

BUT I am of Opinion, that we should pity those who at their Birth find the Yoke about their Necks, and that we ought either to excuse or pardon them if, having never seen so much as the Shadow of Liberty, and not being advertised of it, they are not sensible of the Misfortune they labour under in being Slaves. If there be some Countries, as *Homer* relates of the *Cimmerians*, where the Sun appears otherwise than to us, and after having shone on them six Months without Intermission, he leaves them sleeping in Obscurity, without coming to revisit them the other half Year. Would one wonder that those who should be born during this long Night, and had never seen the Day, nor heard any mention of Light, should accustom themselves to the Darkness in which they were bred, without desiring the Light? [37] We never pine for what we never had; Regret never comes but after Pleasure, and the Remembrance of past Joy is ever accompanied with the Knowledge of the Good once possessed. The natural Disposition of Man is to be free, and to desire to be so; but likewise his Nature is such, that he always retains the Byas which Education gives him.

LET us conclude, then, although all things may be said to be natural to Man in which he has been brought up, and to which he has been accustomed, yet only that is truly so to which his pure and unchanged Nature calls him: So the first Reason of this voluntary Servitude is Custom, like the generous Steeds who at first bite the Bitt, but afterwards play with it; and whereas not long ago they would not endure the Saddle, they now patiently submit to the Harness, and full of Pride march stately under their Trappings. The People, say they have always been Subjects, that their Fathers lived so. [38] They think they are bound patiently to endure the Curb, and make themselves believe it by Examples, and ground their Opinion upon the Length of Time, and the Possession of those who tyrannize over them. But, certainly, Length of Time gives no Right to do ill, but rather heightens the Injury. There are always some, better born than the rest, who are sensible of the Weight of the Yoke, and cannot refrain from throwing it off, who can never become tame in Subjection, but always, like *Ulysses*, who by Sea and by Land was continually endeavouring to see the Smoak of his own Chimney, cannot help reflecting on their natural Privileges and remembering their Predecessors and former Condition. These are the Men, who having clear Understandings, and sharp sighted Wits, are not satisfied with the Bulk of the People, in looking only where

they step, but likewise take a view both of what is before and behind them, and recall the Memory of Things past to compare with the present, and [39] make a Judgement of the future. These are they, who having good Heads of their own, have, besides that, improved them by Study and Knowledge. These Men, were Liberty entirely lost and out of the World, conceiving it and finding it in their own Minds, and charmed with its lovely Image, could never relish Servitude, how finely soever it might be dressed up. The great *Turk* was well apprized of this, that Books and Literature give Men Occasion more than anything else of knowing themselves, and hating Tyranny; and, as I am informed, in his Dominions he has not many more learned Men than he would wish. But commonly the great Zeal and Affection of those who have preserved in spite of Time, a devotion for Freedom, how large soever their Number may be, remain without Effect, by their not knowing one another. The Liberty either of doing or speaking, and almost of thinking, is taken away from them by the Tyrant. They are all single in their opinions. And [40] therefore *Momus* was not out of the way, when he found Fault with the Man that *Vulcan* had made, because he had not placed a little Window in his Heart, whereby his Thoughts might be seen. It has been said, that *Brutus* and *Cassius*, when they formed the Design of delivering *Rome*, or rather the World, *were not willing that Cicero, that great Zealot for Publick Good, if ever any Man was so, should be of the Party, and judged his Heart too weak for so high and Enterprize. They were well assured of his Will, but they doubted his Courage. Nevertheless, any one who would run over the Actions of Times past, and the antient Annals, will find few or none of those, who feeling their Country ill treated, and in bad Hands, have attempted with a good Intention it's Delivery, but have gained their Point, and Liberty in shewing itself, has itself brought Aid.* *Harmodius*, *Aristogiton*, *Thrasylbulus*, *Brutus* the Elder*, *Valerius*, and *Dion*, as they thought virtuously, so they achieved happily. In such a Case, Fortune was scarce [41] ever wanting to a good Will. *Brutus* the Younger, and *Cassius* happily shook off Slavery, but in restoring Liberty they died, though not miserably. For how great a Crime would it be to say, there was anything miserable, either in the Life or Death of such Men? But their Fall was to the great Loss, the perpetual Misfortune, and entire Ruin of the Commonwealth, which in my Opinion, was buried with them. The Enterprizes against the other *Roman* Emperors were only Conspiracies of ambitious Men, who are not to be pitied for the Inconveniences they fell under: It being easy to see, their Intention was, not to take away, but to Usurp the Crown, pretending to dethrone the Tyrant, and yet designing to retain the Tyranny. To those I would not have wished Success; and am pleased that they have shewn by their Example, the sacred Name of Liberty ought not to be abused to any sinister End.

BUT to return to my Purpose from which I have digressed, the first [42] Reason why Men serve willingly, is, that they are born Slaves, and bred up such. From this proceeds another, that the People easily become cowardly and effeminate under Tyrants: For which I stand indebted to *Hippocrates*, that grand Father of Physic, who was well apprized of this, and has so said in his Treatise concerning Diseases [5] . This Man had certainly a noble Soul, and gave a Proof of it, when the (e) [6] Great King was willing to draw him into his Service by the Force of ample Rewards and Presents: He frankly [43] returned for answer (f) [7] , that he made it Matter of Conscience to undertake the Cure of *Barbarians* who would kill the *Greeks*, or to be any ways serviceably by his Art to him, who was endeavouring to enslave *Greece*. The Letter which he sent *Artaxerxes* is yet to be seen among his other Works, [44] and will for ever be a Witness of his great Soul and noble Disposition. It is then Certain, that Courage is lost with Liberty. An enslaved People have no Spirit to fight; they meet Danger like Slaves tied together by a Chain, dull and lifeless, and do not feel that Ardour for Freedom glowing in their Breasts, which inspires a Contempt of Danger, and the Ambition of purchasing by a noble Death, a glorious Name amongst their Companions. Free Men contend who shall fight most valiantly, each one for the common Good, and each for himself : They expect to have all their Share either in the Disgrace of the Defeat, or in the Glory of the Victory. But the enslaved, besides the Loss of this warlike Courage, lose also their Vivacity

in everything else, have Hearts low and effeminate, and are incapable of any thing great. This Tyrants know, and perceiving their Byas, do all they can to cherish this Disposition, and make them more weak and effeminate.

[45]

XENOPHON, a grave Historian, and of the first Rank amongst the *Greeks*, has composed a little Treatise [8] , in which he introduces *Simonides* discoursing with *Hiero*, king of *Syracuse*, of the miseries of a Tyrant. This Book is full of good Advice, delivered in an handsome a Manner as possible. Would to God that all Tyrants would peruse it, and to make use of it as a Looking-Glass. I cannot think, but they would discover their Blotches, and conceive some Shame of their Deformities. In this Treatise he recounts the Misery in which Tyrants are, who are forced, by using ALL ill, to be afraid of ALL. Amongst other things, he says that bad Kings employ Foreigners in their Wars, and hire them, not daring to use Arms in the Hands of their own People, whom they have unjustly treated. There have been, [46] indeed, good Kings, even among the *French*, who have entertained in their Pay foreign Nations, though more frequently formerly than at present, but with a very different Intention, to preserve their own People, looking upon the Loss of Money as nothing in Comparison of husbanding their Men. Much to the same Purpose was the saying of *Scipio Africanus*, I think, tha he would much rather chuse to save the Life of one Citizen, than destroy a hundred Enemies. But this is undoubted, that a Tyrant never thinks his Power sufficiently secured, until his has gained this Point, that there is not left one Man of Worth under him. Then, with great Justice may be apply'd to him, that which *Thraso* in *Terence* boasts to have reproached the Matter of the Elephants with (h).⁹ And are you thus proud because you command Wild Beasts? But this Artifice used by [47] Tyrants of IMBRUTING their Subjects, cannot appear more clearly than by what *Cyrus* did to the *Lydians*, after he was Master of *Sardis*, the Capital of *Lydia*, and that he had received *Croesus*, that rich King, into Mercy, and had carried him away Prisoner, They brought him the News that the *Sardinians* were revolted. He soon reduced them again under his Obedience; but not being willing to give up to the Mercy of the Soldier so fine a City, nor to be always at the Trouble of keeping an Army there to prevent its Defection, he fell upon a notable Expedient to make it sure to him. He established therein [10] Brothels, Taverns, and public Plays, and published this Edict, that the Inhabitants should hold them in Esteem. This Garrison was of such Service to him, that he never afterwards was put to the Necessity of drawing a Sword against the *Lydians*. This [48] poor miserable People amused themselves with the Inventing of all Sorts of Games; insomuch, that the *Romans* have from thence derived their Word, and that which we call Sports or Games, they called LUDI or *Lydians*. All Tyrants have not thus openly declared, that they would make their People effeminate; but in Truth what this one formally and expressly ordained, they have underhand for the most Part compassed. It is in Truth the natural Disposition of the meaner Sort, whose Number is always greatest in Cities. They are suspicious with Regard to him who loves them, and credulous towards him who deceives them. I do not think there is a Bird which is more easily allured by the Pipe, nor a Fish that more greedily swallows the Bait, than all the lower People are, inveigled into Servitude, for the most childish Trifle that is but shewn them. It is indeed a wonderful Thing that they should suffer themselves to be caught so soon as the Bait is offered. Publick [49] Theatres, Plays, Farces, Shews, Gladiators, Foreign Wild Beasts, Medals, Pictures, and suck like Amusements, were to the Ancients the Decoys of Servitude, the Price of their Liberty, and the Instruments of Tyranny. These Allurements brought the Subjects of former Times, under the Yoke. So that the besotted People finding their Diversions agreeable, enchanted by the vain Pleasure of what they beheld, accustomed themselves to serve as simply, but more to their Loss, as little Children, who learn to read, by seeing the shining Figures upon illuminated Books. The *Roman* Tyrants had also another Artifice, viz., That of feasting often the publick Wards of the City, cajolling the Populace (as was necessary) who are more easily

won by good Cheer, than be anything else. The Man of best Sense among them, would not have parted with his Mess of Soup to have recovered the Liberty of *Plato's* Commonwealth. The Tyrants gave Largesses of a Bushel of Corn, a Gallon of Wine, and a Sesterce a Man, and [50] then it would have grieved one to hear the cry, *Long live the King!* The Fools did not consider, that they only got back a Part of their own, and that which they did recover, the Tyrants could not have given them, if he had not taken it from themselves before. One who had hoarded the Sesterce to day, another, who had gorged himself at the publick Feast, blessing *Tiberius*, or *Nero*, for their great Liberality, perhaps, on the morrow was obliged, to give up his Goods to the Avarice, his Children to the Lust, and even his own Life to the savage Cruelty of these magnificent Emperors. The Populace have been always of this Disposition. Their Hearts are open and dissolute to the Pleasures which they ought not with Decency to receive, and insensible to the Injuries and Miseries which they ought not with Decency to suffer. There is now no body, who but hearing mention made of *Nero*. does not even tremble at the Name of that wicked Monster, that Disgrace of human Nature. And yet [51] we find, that after his Death (detestable as was his Life) [11] the noble *Roman* People were in such Concern, calling to mind his Plays and Feasts, that they were very near going into Mourning for him. S *Cornelius Tacitus* has wrote, an Author of undoubted Credit. Which will not be thought strange, if we consider, what that same People did at the Death of *Julius Caesar*, who abolished both their Laws and Liberty, whose only Merit was his Humanity; which, although so much extolled, was more pernicious to his Country, than the greatest Cruelty of the most savage Tyrant that ever lived. For, in Truth, it was this enchanting Bait that sweetened Servitude to the *Roman* People. But after his Death, that People, who had yet his Banquets in their Mouths, and in the Mind the Memory of his [52] Prodigalities, to shew him their Respect, and make his funeral Pile, heaped together, striving to outdo one another, [12] all the Seats of the *Forum*, and then raised for him a [13] Pillar of *Numidian* Marble, as to the Father of his Country, for so it was wrote on the Capital, and rendered him more Honours, dead as he was, than ought to have been given to any Man; unless, perhaps, to those who killed him. The *Roman* Emperors did not forget likewise to assume commonly the Title of Tribune of the People, as well, because that Office was held sacred and inviolable; as also, because it was established for the Defence and Protection of the People, and by the Favour and Allowance of the State. By this means they flattered themselves, that the People would have more [53] Confidence in them, as if they ought to be satisfy'd with the Name, without being sensible to the Effect.

On the contrary, they do not act much better, at present, who never do any Evil, at least of Consequence, but they gild it over with some fine Pretence of common Good, and the Ease of the Public. For you know well, *O Longa*, the Pretexes and Preambles which in some Places they can make use of, plausible enough. But, for the most Part, there cannot certainly be much Art in them, where there is so much Impudence. The Kings of *Assyria*, and after them those of the *Medes*, appeared in public as seldom as possible, that the Populace might be in doubt, whether they were not something more than Men, and to leave those in the Conceit, who easily become Visionaries in Things they cannot see with their Eyes. Thus so many Nations, which were for a long Time under the *Assyrian* Empire, by this Mystery were accustomed [54] to Servitude, and obeyed the more willingly, for not knowing what Master they had, nor scarce if they had any, and were upon Trust, afraid of a Man, whom no body had seen. The first Kings of *Egypt* never appeared in Public, but they carried sometimes the Bough of a Tree, sometimes Fire upon their Heads, thus playing the Juggler, they thought to inspire Reverence and Admiration in the Subject by their frantic Disguise, whereas to People, who had not been either very silly, or very much enslaved, they had afforded only, in my Opinion, Matter for Pastime and Derision.

IT moves Pity to hear, of how many Things the Tyrants of former Times took Advantage, to establish their Tyranny : Of how many little Means they made great Use, having found the Populace ready to be bubbled, for whom they could spread no Net but what they were taken in, and in deceiving of whom, they have always succeeded so well, that they never [55] more enslaved them than when they most made a Jest of them.

Whar shall I say of another fine Trick which passed amongst the Antients for current Coin? They firmly believed, [14] that one of the great Toes of *Pyrrhus*, King of *Epirus*, performed Miracles, and cured People of the Spleen.

To raise the Miracle higher, they pretended, that this Toe, after all the Body was burnt, was found among the Ashes, untouched by the Fire. Thus the People themselves, first invent Lies, and then believe them. Many Authors have recorded such like Fables, but in a Way, that it is easy to see, they have taken them from Reports in Cities, and the ridiculous Babble of the Populace. *Vespasian* returning from *Assyria*, and [56] passing through *Alexandria*, in his Way to *Rome*, to take Possession of the Empire, performed Miracles. [15] He restored the Lame, he made the Blind to see; and although otherwise possessed of many fine Qualities, whoever does not perceive the Fault he committed in this, in my Opinion, more blind those those he pretended to cure. The Tyrants themselves have thought it very strange, that Men should bear with one who does them an Injury. They have been very desirous to make Use of Religion as their Body-Guard; and, if it were possible, would have borrowed some Ray of the Divinity, for the Defence of their wicked Lives. Therefore, *Salmoneus*, if one may believe the Sybil of *Virgil*, and her Description of Hell, for having thus mocked Mankind, and endeavoured to personate *Jupiter*, now meets with his Reward in the lowest Hell.

[57]

Salmoneus,

suffr'ing cruel Pains, I found
For emulating Jove; the rattling Sound
Of mimic Thunder, and the glitt'ring Blaze
Of pointed Lightnings; and their forky Rays.
Through Elis, and the Grecian Towns he flew,
Th' audacious Wretch four fiery Coursers drew;
He wav'd a Torch aloft, and, madly vain,
Sought Godlike Worship from a servile Train.
Ambitious Fool, with horny Hoofs to pass
O'er hollow Arches, of resounding Brass;
To rival Thunder, in its rapid Course,
And imitate inimitable Force.
But he, the King of Heav'n, obscure on high,
Barr'd his red Arm, and launching from the Sky
His writhen Bolt, not shaking empty Smoak,
Down to the deep Abyss the flaming Felon **?rook**.

[58]

IF this Man, who was only a Fool, is so well chastised there, I believe those who have made a Religion a Cloak for their Wickedness, will be more severely punished. Our Kings have spread about in *France*, I know not what Stories of this Sort; of Toads, of Lilies, of the holy Oil, and of the Standard with Flames of Gold.[16] For my [59] own Part, I will not be a Misbeliever in these Particulars, since neither we nor our Ancestors have ever had, as yet, any Occasion to contradict them, having always had Princes so good in Peace, so valiant in War, that altho' they were born Kings, it seems as if they had not been made like others by Nature, but chosen by God Almighty before they were born, for the Government and Preservation of this [60] Kingdom. But if it should not be so, still I am not willing to enter

the Lists, to call in Question the Truth of our Histories, or to examine them so strictly, as to take away these fine Conceits, in which our *French* Poetry has such a Field to exert itself, so much better dressed than formerly, that it would seem quite new craft, by our *Ronsard*, *Baif*, and *Bellay*, who daily make so great Improvements in our Language, that I dare hope, the *Greek* and *Roman* Languages, in a little Time, will not excel ours but by their Antiquity. And certainly I should a great Injury to our Rhime, (I chuse that Word, and am not displeas'd with it,) for, although a great many have made it in a Manner mechanic: Nevertheless, I see some Genius's so much in love with it, as to render it noble once more, and give it bak it's first Honour. But I should do it, I say, a great Injury to take away from it now those fine Stories of King *Clovis*, in which, methinks, I already see, how pleasantly, how [61] gayly the Vein of our *Ronsard*, will sport itslef in his *Franciade*. I know his Force, I know his poignant Wit, I know the Beauties of the Man. He will make as good a Use of our Standard with Flames of Gold, as the *Romans* did of their *Ancilia*, [17] those Shields dropped from Heaven, as *Virgil* calls them. He will manage our holy Oil, as well as the *Athenians* did their Basket [18] of [62] of *Erisichthone*. He will display our Arms, which are still in the Tower of *Minerva*. I should certainly be much to blame to give the Lie to our Books, and to invade, as it were, the Province of our Poets. But to return from where I know not how, I have turned the Thread of my Discourse. Has it ever been otherwise, but that Tyrants, to secure themselves, have always tried to enure the People, not only to Obedience and Servitude, but even to a Kind of Devotion towards them. Therefore, what I have said hitherto, which shews, that the People serve voluntarily, is of no Use to Tyrants, [63] but with Respect to the low and mean Populace.

BUT now I come, in my Opinion, to the Point, which is the true and secret Spring of Sovereignty, the very Bulwark and Foundation of Tyranny. Whoever thinks that the Halberds of the Guards, and the Arms of the Centinels, are the Security of Tyrants, in my Judgment is much deceived : They make use of them, I believe, more for Show and Ostentation, than for any Confidence they place in them. The Guards hinder from entering into the Palace, those who are inexpert, who have not concerted well their Measures, not those who are armed and able to execute any Enterprize. It would appear upon Enquiry, that there have not been so many *Roman* emperors who have been preserved by their Guards, as have perished by them. Troops of Horse, Companies of Foot, are not the Arms by which Tyrants are defended. At first, one can scarcely believe it, [64] nevertheless it is true. There are always four or five who support the Tyrant, four or five who keep all the Country in Bondage. It has always so happened, that five or six have had the Tyrant's Ear, have made their Way to him of themselves, or been called by him to be the Accomplices of his Cruelties, the Companions of his Pleasures, Panders to his Lust, and Sharers of his Plunders. These six manage their Chief so well, that by the Bond of Society he must be wicked, not only to gratify his own Propensity, but likewise theirs. These six have six Hundred, which spoil under them; and these six Hundred are to them, what the six are to the Tyrant. These six Hundred have under them six Thousand, whom they have raised to Posts, to whom they have given either the Government of Provinces, or the Management of the public Moneys, that they may be Instruments of their Avarice and Cruelty, and execute their Orders at a proper Time. These subordinate Officers do so much Mischief [65] to their Fellow Citizens, that they cannot live but under the Shadow of their Superiors, nor escape the Punishment due to their Crimes by the Laws, but through their Connivance and Protection. The Consequence of this is fatal indeed. Whoever will amuse himself in tracing this Chain, will see, that not only the six Thousand, but the one hundred Thousand, the Millions, are fastened to the Tyrant by it, of which he makes the same Use as *Jupiter* does in *Homer*, who boasts, that if he but touch the End of it, he can draw all the Gods towards him. From hence arose the Augmentation of the Senate under *Julius Caesar*, the Establishment of new Dignities, and Election for Offices, not certainly (to take it right) for the Reformation of Justice, but for new Supports of Tyranny. In short, it comes to this, that what by Favours, Emoluments, and sharing of the Plunder with

Tyrants, there are almost as many to whom Tyranny is profitable, as there are to whom Liberty would be [66] agreeable. Just as Physicians say, that if there be a Gangreen in our Bodies, and a Fermentation arises any where else, it immediately flows towards the corrupted Part; even so from the instant a King commences Tyrant, all the wicked, all the Dregs of the Kingdom, I do not say a Gang of Thieves and Robbers, (who can neither do harm nor good to the Commonwealth) but those who are remarkable for unmeasurable Ambition, and insatiable Avarice, crowd about him to have their Share of the Booty, and be under the great Tyrant, Tyrants themselves. This is the Way of the great Robbers and of the famous Pirates. Some take a View of the Country, others pursue and rob the Travellers, some lie in Ambush, others are Scouts, some murder, others pillage; and altho' there are amongst them different Ranks, and some are only Servants, others Leaders and Chiefs of the Troop, there is not one of them who does not participate of the principal Booty, at least in the Trouble of finding it out. It is said, [67] the *Cilician* Pirates not only assemble themselves in so great Numbers, that there was a Necessity of sending *Pompey* the Great against them, but that they likewise drew into their Alliance many fine Towns and Cities, in whose Harbours they securely sheltered themselves, returning from their Cruizes; and, in Recompence, gave them a Share of the Profit.

THUS the Tyrant enslaves his Subjects by the means of one another, and is guarded by those, of whom, if they had any Spirit, he ought to be afraid; but, as we say, to cleave Wood, Wedges are made of the Wood itself. These are his true Guards and Halberdeers. Not but that they themselves sometimes suffer by him, but then these Wretches, abandoned of God and Man, are content to bear the Evil, so that they may but return it, not upon him who does them the Injury, but upon those who suffer as well as they and cannot retaliate. And yet, when I see these Men thus flattering the Tyrant, [68] to make their own Use of his Tyranny, and the Bondage of the People, I often wonder at their Wickedness, and sometimes pity their Stupidity. For, in truth, what is it to be near the Person of a Tyrant, but to be the farther from Liberty; and, as I may say, to grasp with both Hands, and embrace Servitude. Let them only for a while lay aside their Ambition, and moderate a little their Avarice : And then let them view and know themselves : They cannot but see, that the Farmers, the Husbandmen, whom they trample under Foot as much as possible, and use worse than Galley-Slaves; they must see, I say, that these Men, so ill-treated, are nevertheless in Comparison of them happy, and in some Manner free. The Labourer and Artizan, notwithstanding they are Servants to their Masters, are quit by doing what they are bid. But the Tyrant sees those that are about him, begging and suing for his Favour; and they must not only do what he commands, but they must think as he [69] would have them, and must often, to satisfy him, even prevent his Thoughts. It is not sufficient to obey him, they must also please him, they must harass, torment, nay kill themselves in his Service; and (for they must be pleased with his Pleasures) they must leave their own Taste for his, force their Inclination, and throw off their natural Dispositions. They must carefully observe his Words, his Voice, his Eyes, and even his Nod. They must have neither Eyes, Feet, nor Hands, but what must be ALL upon the Watch, to spy out his Will, and discover his Thoughts. Is this to live happily? Does it indeed deserve the Name of Life? Is there anything in the World so unsupportable? I do not say to a Man well born, but to one that has common Sense, or, without more, the Face of a Man. What Condition can be more miserable, than to live in this Manner, to have nothing that can be called their own; holding from another Ease, Liberty, Body, and Life?

[70]

BUT they serve to get Estates, as if they could get anything which properly may be said to belong to them, when they cannot say of themselves, that they are their own Masters, And as if anyone could have anything his own under a Tyrant; they flatter themselves that their Estates are their own, and do not reflect, that they give him the Power to take all from all, and

leave nothing, which can be said to belong to any body. They see that nothing renders Men Objects of his Cruelty but Riches, and there is no Crime worthy Death with him, but the having an Estate : That he loves nothing but Riches, that he destroys only the rich, who come to present themselves as it were before the Executioner, to offer themselves fat and well fed as a fit Sacrifice. These Favourites ought not so much to think of those who have gained great Estates under Tyrants, as of those, who having for some little time heap'd up Wealth, have shortly [71] after lost both their Estates and Lives. They ought not to call to mind how many others have gain'd Riches, but how little time they have kept them. Search all the ancient Histories, reflect on those within our own Times, and you will plainly see, how great the Number of those are who having gained the Ear of their Princes by bad means, and having either found Employment for their Wickedness, or abused their Credulity, have at length been reduced to nothing by those very Princes, who have been no less inconstant than profuse in their Favours, and as forward to destroy, as they were to raise their Favourites. Certainly among so great a Number who have been always about bad Kings, there are few, if any, who have not felt, some time or other, in their own Persons, that very Cruelty which they had before excited against others : And having for the most part enrich'd themselves under the shadow of his Favour, with the Spoils of others, they themselves, at last, have enrich'd [72] others with their own Spoils. Even good Men, if sometimes it happens that such are beloved by the Tyrant, the more they are in his Favour, so much the more their Virtue and Integrity shine in them [19] , and strike with Awe and Reverence the most wicked, when they behold them so near : But the Virtuous themselves cannot remain long, before they partake of the common Misfortune, and feel to their cost the Effects of Tyranny. A *Seneca*, a *Burrhus*, a *Thracia*, that Triumvirate of good Men, two of whom their ill Destiny drew near to the Tyrant, and placed in their Hands the Management of his Affairs, both of them esteem'd and cherish'd by him, besides one of them had educated him, and had, as a [73] Pledge of his Friendship, the Care of his Childhood : But these three by their cruel Deaths, are sufficient Witness, what little Security there is in Favour of bad Masters. In Truth, what Friendship can we hope for from him, whose Heart is so hardened, as to hate his People, who does nothing but to establish his Dominion (t).[20](#)] and [74] is so much his own Enemy, that he impoverishes himself, and destroys his Empire?

BUT if it shall be said, that they fell into these Misfortunes only because they were good Men, let the Objectors turn their Eyes to *Nero*, and they will see, that those who came into his Favour, and maintained themselves in it by their Wickedness, were not of a much longer Continuance. Who has ever heard of a Love so violent, of a Passion so abandoned, as his for *Poppaea*? And yet she was afterwards killed by himself. *Agrippina*, his Mother, had murdered her Husband *Claudius*, to make his way to the Empire. To oblige him, she never scrupled to do, or suffer any thing. But this same Son, her Darling, made Emperor by [75] her own Hand, [21] after having often barbarously treated her, took away her Life, and every Body then said she well deserved Death from any Hand but his. Who was ever more easily managed, more pliant, or, to say all in a Word, a greater Fool than the Emperor *Claudius*? Who was ever more hen-pecked by a Wife, then he was by *Messalina*. And yet, at length, he gave her up to the Executioner. Tyrants always retain entire their Stupidity, in not knowing how to do good. But however it happens, certain it is, that the little Wit they have, is sooner or later awakened in them, for the Purposes of Cruelty, even towards those whom they had cherished the most. [22] The Saying of *Caligula*, on seeing the Neck of his best beloved Wife uncovered, is very well known. This pretty Neck, [76] (said he, caressing her) shall be strait cut off, if I command it. And yet he seemed so fond of her, that one would have thought, he could not have lived without her. This is the Reason why most of the antient Tyrants were commonly killed by their Favourites, who knowing the Nature of Tyranny, could not be so secure of the Favour of the Tyrant, as they distrusted his Power. [23] So *Domitian* was killed by *Stephen*, [24] *Commodus** by one of his Mistresses herself, [25] *Antoninus Caracalla* by *Macrinus*, and all the rest almost in the same Manner. It is certain, the Tyrant never loves, nor

is beloved. Friendship is a sacred Word, a holy Thing; it never subsists but between [77] good Men, nor commences but by mutual Esteem : It is kept up, not so much by a Benefit received or conferred as by a virtuous Life. That which makes one Friend assured of another, is the Knowledge he has of his Integrity. The Sureties he has for him, are his good Disposition, his Truth and Constancy. No friendship can subsist where there is Cruelty, Treachery, and Injustice. When the wicked meet together, it is a Conspiracy, not a Society of Friends. They cannot mutually aid, but are afraid of one another. They are not Friends, but Confederates in Guilt.

BUT if this were not the Case, still it would be very difficult to find in a Tyrant a Love to be depended upon : For being above all, and having no Companion, he is already without the Bounds of Friendship, which are fixed in Equity, never halting, but always the same. For which Reason there is, as we say, even among Thieves some Honesty in dividing the [78] Spoil; because they are Companions and Equals, and if they do not love one another, they are afraid of each other, and are not willing by their Disunion to make their Force less. But those who are Favourites of the Tyrant, can never be secure, since he has learnt from them, that he can do any thing, and that there is neither any Tie nor Duty can bind him, looking upon his Will for Reason, and that he has no Companion, but is Master of all. Is it not then great Pity, that seeing so many evident Examples, and the Danger so near, no body will become wise at the Expense of others? That of so many, who willingly get about Tyrants, there is not one, who has the Prudence or Courage to tell them, that which the Fox, as the Fable says, told the Lyon, when he counterfeited himself sick: *I would go to visit you in your Den with all my Heart, but that I see many Traces of Beasts going into you, but none returning* These Wretches behold the shining Treasures of the Tyrant, and regard with Astonishment [79] the Rays of his Splendour, and enticed by this Brightness, they come near and do not perceive that they rush into the Flame which cannot fail to consume them. So the unwary Satyr in the Fable, seeing the Fire found by the wise *Prometheus* shine bright, [26] thought it so pretty, that he went to kiss it and burnt himself. So the Butterfly, hoping to enjoy some Pleasure, flies into the Fire, because it shines; but feels to it's Cost it's other Virtue, that of burning, as the poet *Lucan* says. But let us put the Case, that these Favourites escape out of the Hands of him they serve, they never save themselves from the King that succeeds. If he be good, they must [80] give an Account of the Actions, and at least for that time submit to Reason. If he be bad, and like their Master, he will have his own Favourites, who generally are not content in their Turn with succeeding to others, in their Employments, if they obtain not likewise, for the most Part, their Estates and Lives. Can it then be, that any on can be found, who in so great Peril, with so little Security, will take this unfortunate Place, to serve with such great Trouble, such a dangerous Master. Good God! what Suffering, what Martyrdom is this? To be Night and Day only intent to please one, and yet more afraid of him than of any Man alive. To have the Eye always in watch, the Ear listening, to discover the Snares and from what Hand the Blow may come, to observe carefully the Countenance of ones Companions, to guess who may be the Traitor; to smile upon every body, and yet be afraid of all; to have not one, either an open Enemy, or an assured Friend; to have a Countenance [81] always chearful, and the Heart half dead with fear; to be incapable of Joy, yet not dare to shew Grief?

BUT it is a Pleasure to consider, what it is they gain by this vast Torment, and what good they can expect for all this Anxiety, and this miserable Life. The People generally, for all the Evils they suffer, accuse not the Tyrant; but those who govern him. Their own Countrymen, even the Peasants and Labourers, foreign Nations; nay all the World know the Names of these Men, and in Emulation, one of another, proclaim their Vices : They heap on them a thousand Outrages, a thousand Affronts, a thousand Curses. All their Prayers, all their Vows are made against these Men. They reproach them with all their Misfortunes, all their Plagues, and all their Wants. And, if sometimes in Appearance they do them Honour, even then they

Curse them in their Hearts, and have them in greater Horror than wild Beasts. Behold the [82] Glory, behold the Honour they receive for their Services to the People, who, were every one of them to have a Piece of their mangled Body, would not I believe be satisfied, nor half content with their Punishment. But still, after they are dead, those who come after them are never so indolent but that the Names of these [27] MEN-DEVOURERS [83] are blackened by the Ink of a thousand Pens, their Reputations torn in a thousand Books, and even their Bones, as we may say, dragged by Posterity, punishing them, even after their Deaths for their wicked Lives. Let us then, at length, learn to do good. Let us lift up our Eyes, for our own Honour, or for the the Love of Virtue, to God Omnipotent, the infallible Witness of our Actions, and the just Judge of our Crimes. For my own Part ,I am persuaded, and I think I have just Grounds for it, that since nothing is so hateful to God, who is all Bounty and Goodness, as Tyranny, he must must assuredly reserve some peculiar Punishment in Hell for Tyrants and their Accomplices.

FINIS

[Note]

The Verses quoted from *Homer* are according to *Mr. Pope's* Translation, and the Comment upon them is likewise that Author's. *Vide Mr. Pope's Homer*, Book II, Ver. 244.

The Description of *Salmonus's* Punishment in Hell is according to *Mr. Dryden's* Translation . *Aeneid*, Book VI.

ERRATA

PAG. 57 Line 14, read *bar'd* for *barr'd*.

L. 13. read *all the* for *the all*. p. 77 l.?? read *Turason** for *Turacria??*

Endnotes

- [1] This is taken Word for Word from a Writing, intituled, a Narrative of what the King hath declared of his Intentions in his Council of State, held the 16th of *June*, 1726. *Vid.* Postscript of the *Amsterdam Gazette*.
- [2] Those Persons are under a Mistake who would make this Sentence of Praise of Absolute Monarchy. *Homer* speaks it only with regard to a General of an Army during the time of his Commission. Nor is *Agamemnon* styl'd *King of Kings* in any other Sense, than as the rest of the Princes had given him the Supream Authority over them in the Siege. *Aristotle* defines a King, [Greek sentence] : *Leader of the War, Judge of Controversies*, and *President of the Ceremonies of the Gods*. That he had the principal care of Religious Rites, appears from many Places in *Homer*; and that his Power was no where absolute but in War: for we find *Agamemnon* insulted in the Council, but in the Army threatening Deserters with Death. He was under an Obligation to preserve the Privileges of his Country, pursuant to which Kings are called by our Author [Greek word], and [Greek word], the Dispensers or Managers of Justice. And *Dionysus* of *Halicarnassus** acquaints us, that the old *Grecian* Kings, whether hereditary or elective, had a Council of their chief Men, as *Homer* and the most ancient Poets testify; not was it (he adds) in those times as in ours, when Kings have a full Liberty to do whatever they please. *Dion. Hal. lib. ii Hist.*
- [3] This is taken from a Treatise of *Plutarch*, intituled, *How Children ought to be educated*, Chap. II.
- [4] *Plutarch* in the Life of *Cato of Utica*, Chap. I.
- [5] It is not in that Treatise of Diseases which *Boetie* quotes here, but in another, entitled [Greek words], where *Hippocrates* says, § That the most warlike People of *Asia*, whether the *Greeks* or *Barbarians*, are those, who not being governed despotically, live under Laws which they impose upon themselves, and that where Men live under absolute Kings, they are necessarily Cowards. The same Thought is found more particularly explained in the 40th Part of the same Work.
- [6] So the *Greeks* called the *Persian* King.
- [7] A Pestilential Distemper having spread itself in the Army of *Artaxerxes*, King of *Persia*, that Prince being advised to have Recourse, upon this Occasion, to *Hippocrates*, wrote to *Hystanes*, Governor of the *Hellespont*, charging him to allure *Hippocrates* to the *Persian* Court, by offering him whatever Sums of Money he should demand, and to allure him from the King, that he should have equal Rank with the greatest Lords in *Persia*. *Hippocrates* immediately returned for answer to him, that he was sufficiently provided with all things necessary for Life, and that it was not permitted him to partake of the Riches of the *Persians*, nor to employ his Skill to cure *Barbarians*, who were Enemies of the *Greeks*. *Artaxerxes's* Letter to *Hystanes*, that of *Hystanes* to *Hippocrates*, and *Hippocrates's* Answer, from whence all the Particulars are taken which make up this Article, are at the End of *Hippocrates's* Works.
- [8] Intituled *Hieron*, or a Description of the Condition of Kings.
- [9] *Eone es ferox, quia hab es imperium in bell?as*. Ter. Eunoch. Act. III. Sc. i.v.25.
- [10] *Herodotus*, Lib. I. Pag. 63. Edit. Gronov.

- [11] *Plebs sordida, etc. circo ac Theatris sueta, simul deterrimi servorum, aut qui adesis boni, per dedecus Neronis alebantur, moesti.* *Tact. Hist. Lib. I. ab initio.*
- [12] *Suetonius, in the Life of Julius Caesar, § 84.*
- [13] *Postea solidam Columnam prope vigin? pedum lapidus Numidici in foro stauit, scripsitque.* PARENTI PATRIAE. *Suetonius, Ibid. § 85.*
- [14] All that is said here of *Pyrrhus*, is reported by *Plutarch*, in his *Life*, Chap. II.
- [15] *Suetonius, in Vespasian's Life, § 7.*
- [16] By all that *Boetie* tells us here, of the *Lilies*, of the *Holy Oil*, and of the *Standard with Flames of Gold*, it is easy to find out his true Sentiments concerning the Miracles reported of them. And *Monsieur Pasquier* thought the same about them as *Boetie* did. In his *Recherches de la France*, Lib. VIII. Chap. 21. There are in every State, says he, a great many Stories which are handed down from great Antiquity, without our being able, for the most Part, to trace their true Origin; and, nevertheless, they are held not only for true, but for greatly authorized and holy. Of such Sort we find many, as well in *Greece*, as in the City of *Rome*. And almost in the same Manner, we have forged amongst us the antient Opinion we had of the *Standard with Flames of Gold*, the Conceit of our *Lilies*, which we attribute to the Divinity, and many other such Things, which although they are not warranted by antient Authors, notwithstanding it is fitting that every good Citizen should believe them for the Honour of the Kingdom. All this reduced to it's true Senses, imports, that we must believe Things of this Kind out of Complaisance, *ch'il crederle, è Cortesia*. IN another Paragraph of this same Work (Lib. II. Ca. 17.) *Pasquier* takes Notice, that there sere some Kings of *France*, who bore three Toads for their Arms, but that *Clovis*, to make his Kingdom more miraculous, order the *Lillies* to be brought him by a Hermit, as it were by Direction from Heaven, which have continued to our Time. This last Passage has no need of a Commentary. The Author declares very clearly, and without any Evasion, to whom we ought to attribute the Forgery of our *Lillies*.
- [17] ... etc. *lapsa ancilia Coelo.* *Virgil. Aeneid. L. VIII.*
- [18] *Callimachus*, in his Hymn to *Ceres*, mentions the Basket descending, as it may be supposed, from Heaven, and being carried in the Evening to *Ceres's* Temple, at the Celebration of her Feast. *Suidas*, on the Word (Greek word), or Basket-bearers, says, the Ceremony of the Baskets was instituted in *Erisichthon's* Time, from which Authority, *Boetie*, perhaps, may have called it *Erisichthon's* Basket. But the 32d Verse of *Callimachus's* Hymn may seem to allude to it, for there it is said, (4 Greek words). The *Latin* Translation has it, there a bad Counsel seized *Erisichthon*; but it should have been rendered, where a worse Counsel seized *Erisichthon*; alluding, it would seem, to the Basket which he had before instituted in Honour of *Ceres*; whereas now he was about to insult her, and cut down a Tree sacred to the Goddess, for which he was punished with an insatiable Hunger, as related by *Ovid*, at the End of the 8th Book of his *Metamorphosis*, and by *Callimachus*, from whom *Ovid* has borrowed this Fable. The learned Editor, not having put any Note upon this Place, the Translator has endeavoured to illustrate it, being somewhat obscure.
- [19] ... *abash'd the Devil stood, And felt how awful Goodness, is, and saw Virtue in her Shape how lovely; saw, and pin'd His Loss.* *Milton, Lib. iv.*
- [20] For a King who would consult his own Interest, cannot help feeling, that by impoverishing his Subjects, he as certainly impoverishes himself, as a Gardener who after having gathered the Fruit off his Trees, would cut down the Trees themselves to sell

them. This *Alexander the Great* knew so well, that he made it a Maxim of imposing on the People which he conquered in *Asia*, only the same Tribute which they used to pay to *Darius*. upon which some one having observed to hi, that he might draw a much larger Revenue from so great an Empire, he answered, That he did not approve of the Gardener who cuts up the Cabbages by the Roots, whereas he ought only to have gathered the Sprouts. This Answer is founded upon common Sense, and yet there are many Princes to be found in History, who have rather chose to follow the Example of the Gardener, who stupidly contrives to dry up himself the Source of his Revenue, than imitate the wise Moderation of *Alexander*, by which he would secure to himself an inexhaustable Fund of Riches.

[21] *Vide Suetonius* in the Life of *Nero*, §. 34.

[22] *Vide Suetonius* in his Life, who says, § . 33 - *Quoties uxoris vel amicalae collum exosculetur, addebat, Tam bona cervix, simul ac jussero, demetur.*

[23] *Suetonius* in the Life of *Domitian*, § . I.

[24] Who was called *Marcia*. *Herodian*, Lib. I.

[25] *Antoninus Caracalla*, whom a Centurian called *Martial*, killed by the Stab of a Poinard, at the Instigation of *Macrinus*, as may be seen in *Herodian*, Lib. IV. towards the End.

[26] This is taken from a Treatise of *Plutarch*, intituled, *How we may receive Advantage even from our Enemies*, Chap. II. His Words are these, "The Satyr was desirous to embrace the Fire the first Time he saw it. But *Prometheus* called out to him, *Thou old Goat, thou wilt weep the Loss of thy Beard, for it burns when it is touched.*"

[27] This is the Name given to a King in *Homer*, (two Greek words), *Iliad*. A. ver. 231. and with which *Boetie* very justly dignifies those first Ministers, those Intendants, or Super-Intendants, of the Finances, who by excessive and unjust Impositions with which they oppress the People, by spoiling and depopulating the Countries which are abandoned to their Care, soon turn a powerful Kingdom, where Arts, Agriculture and Commerce, lately flourished into a frightful Desart, where Barbarism and Poverty reign, throw the Prince into Want, make him odious to the few Subjects which remain, and despicable to his Neighbours. These are the DEVOURERS OF THE PEOPLE, who take much less Care of Men, than a Gardener does of the Trees in his Garden. Therefore they think nothing but to make their own Profit of the Destruction they Cause, without troubling themselves with what may happen to the Garden, or to the Matter of the Garden.