

THE  
WORKS  
OF  
TACITUS.  
IN  
FOUR VOLUMES.

To which are prefixed,

Political DISCOURSES

Upon That

AUTHOR.

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M.DCC.XXXVII.

8786  
V.I.

T O

The Right Honourable

Sir ROBERT WALPOLE,

First Commissioner of the Treasury,  
Chancellor and Under-Treasurer  
of the Exchequer, one of his  
Majesty's Most Honourable Privy  
Council, and Knight of the Most  
Noble Order of the Garter.

*S I R,*

**A**S You were the first who promoted the following Work in a public manner, I take liberty to present it to the Public under your name, and to do an act of acknowledg-  
ment

## iv DEDICATION.

ment for one of generosity. Be pleased to be the Patron of a Book which under your Patronage was composed. It is natural and common for men who profess Letters, to seek the countenance and protection of Men of Power; and from such of them as to greatness of fortune were happy enough to join greatness of mind, they have not sought in vain.

POWER without Politeness and Complacency, is at best distasteful, often hated; amiable when it knows how to condescend. It is thus that men in high stations avoid envy from such as stand below them. He who cannot rise to their height, finds a sort of retaliation and amends in their coming down to him. No Man is pleased with a behaviour which represents him as contemptible. To make us think well of ourselves, by another's shewing us that we are well thought of by him, is a generous



# D E D I C A T I O N. V

rous and artful civility : a lesson which stately and rebuking men want to learn. A mean man of great quality and figure (for such incongruities we often meet) reaches others to scorn him, by his shewing that he scorns them. Affability therefore, accompanied with good sense, which will always guard it from exceeding, is the art of keeping great Splendor from growing offensive to the rest of the world.

IT must be owned, that no Affability, even the most flowing ; no Genius, even the most elevated, can escape particular distastes ; and from the dislike of Persons to that of Actions the transition is easy and too common. Men do not easily discern good qualities and intentions in one, to whom they do not wish well. All men, even those of the most unexceptionable Characters, are apt to form their judgment over-hastily,

## vi DEDICATION.

when their passions are warmed: and from this cause it has often proceeded, that the inevitable misfortunes of times and accidents have been charged upon such, whose interest and study it was to prevent them. This is one of the evils and uneasinesses inseparably attending every Administration. When a State is under heavy burdens and difficulties, the means to relieve and support it will be, almost always, proportionably heavy: and as whatever proves heavy, however necessary, is easily called Oppression; so the hand, which administers a remedy, may, merely because it is felt, be easily styled oppressive.

BESIDES the reason which I have already given for this Address, I have another; one taken from the Character of my Author. As he was a Man of Affairs, a great Minister, I chuse to present him to another; to one who having  
been

been long engaged in public Life, having had long experience of men, seen far into their bent and foibles, and been conversant with the mysteries and primary operations of Government ; can thence readily judge whether TACITUS has refined too much in his Politics, or been over-severe in his Censures upon mankind : or whether this charge has not been chiefly raised by men of speculation, who, however furnished with Learning, were yet unacquainted with the transactions of States, and ignorant of human nature ; or perhaps willing to do honour to it, or to themselves, at the expence of Truth. Men are to be known, not by Theories taken up in closets, but by Commerce with men ; and best of all in those great scenes of public Life, where You, SIR, have sustained, for so many years, a high and important part, and gained eminent ex-

## viii DEDICATION.

perience as well as the just opinion of great sufficiency.

I could here, agreeably to the usual style and purpose of Dedications, say a great many advantageous things, without risking the usual censure incurred by Dedicators. But such things I would much rather say of you, than to you. In this place, I shall only profess to be, what I intirely am, with perfect truth, and high regard,

S I R,

*Your most obliged, and most*

*obedient humble Servant,*

T. GORDON.

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# DISCOURSES

## UPON

# TACITUS.

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### DISCOURSE I.

Upon the former English Translations of TACITUS.

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Sect. I. *Of the Translation by GREENWAY and Sir H. SAVILL.*

I AM going to offer to the publick the Translation of a Work, which for wisdom and force, is in higher fame and consideration, than almost any other that has yet appeared amongst men; a Work often translated into many Languages, seldom well into any, into ours worst of all. The first was done in Queen ELIZABETH's reign, the Annals by one GREENWAY, and four Books of the History by Sir HENRY SAVILL, a man exceeding learned, and esteemed for his critical notes upon TACITUS, as well as for those upon St. CHRYSOSTOM, of whose works he has published an elaborate edition. But though he was an able Grammarian, and understood the Antiquities in TACITUS, and his words, his Translation is a

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mean performance; his stile is stiff, spiritless, and obscure; he drops many of his Author's ideas, preserves none of his turns, and starves his meaning even where he best conveys it. 'Tis a mere Translation, that rather of one word into another, than that of a dead tongue into a living, or of sense into sense. The Roman idiom is forced and wire-drawn into the English, a task altogether impossible; and not adopted and naturalized, a thing possible enough; and out of a Book profuse in eloquence, fine spirit and images, he has drawn a work harsh, halting and barren. OGILBY is not more unlike VIRGIL. GREENWAY is still worse than SAVILL; he had none of his learning, he had all his faults and more: The former has at least performed like a school-master, the latter like a school-boy.

Sect. II. *Of the English Translation by several hands.*

**A**BOUT a hundred years after them another English Translation was undertaken by several hands, Mr. DRYDEN and others. DRYDEN has translated the first Book; but done it almost literally from Mr. AMELOT DE LA HOUSSAYE, with so much haste and little exactness, that besides his many mistakes, he has introduced several Gallicisms: he follows the French author servilely, and writes French English, rather than trust him out of his eye. It is true, LA HOUSSAYE is an honest Translator, and one of the foremost: He has gone as far as the thirteenth Annal inclusive; but his phrases are often weak and trifling, and he is subject to all that faintness and circumlocution for which the French tongue is noted. DRYDEN copies his manner as well as his meaning. It was pure hurry and want of application; for he was a fine writer, had a copious imagination, a good ear, and  
a flow-

a flowing stile. Strike away all that is bad in his works, enough will remain to shew him a great Poet, a man of parts and a master of language. Even his many enemies and opposers shew the considerableness of the man; but his excellencies in many things excuse not his faults in others; his Translation of TACITUS is poor and languid, nowhere derived from the original, generally full of mistakes; at best it is only the French Translator ill translated, or ill imitated.

Sect. III. *Of the last Translation of the first Annal.*

TACITUS talking of the latter end of AUGUSTUS his reign, says, *domi res tranquillæ. Eadem magistratuum vocabula*. These are two sentences independent of each other; yet Mr. DRYDEN translates, “all things at Rome being in a settled peace, the Magistrates still retained their former names;” as if the one was all the cause of the other. This blunder is owing to LA HOUSSE ill understood: *tout étoit tranquille à Rome, les Magistrats avoient les mêmes noms*: if instead of *avoient*, he had said *ayant*, the translation would have come pretty near the French. But the English Translator does not seem to understand French, though he has no other guide, else how could he so miserably mistake, *pars multo maxima imminentis dominos variis rumoribus differebant*; as to render it, “the greater part employed their time in various discourses of future matters?” From this it is plain he never looked into the original, or understood it not. He was misled by the French which he appears here to have as little understood; *la plus part se plaisoient à faire divers jugemens de ceux qui aloient devenir leurs Maitres*.

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BUT more wretched still is what follows: TACITUS represents the Romans discoursing, during the decline of AUGUSTUS, concerning the next successors in view, AGRIPPA Posthumus and TIBERIUS, and makes them say of LIVIA the Empress; *accedere matrem muliebri impotentia: serviendum feminae, &c.* “His mother of a violent and imperious nature, according to the sex themselves, subjected to the slavery of a woman.” This is jargon and nonsense, tho’ the author seems to have followed the French; *qui (Tibere) a une mere imperieuse & violente, selon la coutume du sexe, à laquelle il faudra obéir en esclaves.* Well may he be said to follow the French Translator blindly; and less is the wonder that he adopts his Gallicisms where he happens to understand him.

When DRUSUS, the son of TIBERIUS, entered the camp of the seditious Legions in Pannonia, and the mutinous soldiery were gathered round him; TACITUS makes a charming and strong description of their behaviour, with the several vicissitudes of their passions, which shifted strangely according as they dreaded his person and authority, or recalled their grievances, and surveyed their own numbers and strength; and he concludes the whole, according to his custom, with a fine reflection: *Illi, quotiens oculos ad multitudinem retulerant, vocibus truculentis strepere; rursus, viso Cesare, trepidare. Murmur incertum, atrox clamor, & repente quies; diversis animorum motibus, pavebant, terrebantque.* This is all pretty well translated by LA HOUSSAYE. I shall only quote the last clause or reflection: *par des mouvemens tout differens, ils prenoient l’épouvante, & la donnoient*; and this I quote only to shew how impotently the English Translator hangs by the French phrase and takes it literally: “by their different motions, says he, they gave and took terror in their turns.”



Is not this pithy and sounding? There are numbers of such instances both as to language and strength; infomuch that I have been sometimes tempted to think it not to be DRYDEN'S: but I have many assurances of its being his. I take it for granted it was a jobb for the Booksellers, carelessly performed by one, who wanted no capacity, but only pains or encouragement to have done it much better, perhaps very well.

Sect. IV. *Of the last Translation of the second Annal.*

THE next Annal is translated by another hand, less negligently, but with small taste and vigour; no resemblance of the original, where in every sentence almost there occur surprizing images and turns, which no where appear in the Translation. 'Tis not the fire of TACITUS, but his embers quenched with English words cold and Gothick. Let any one read particularly the two speeches of ARMINIUS and MAROBODUUS to their different armies just before they engaged, cap. 45. and 46. and he will find that between TACITUS and his Translator, there is just as much difference as between a living soul and a cold carcase. Yet the lifeless Translation of this Annal compared with that of the third by a different hand, is an able performance.

Sect. V. *Of the last Translation of the third Annal.*

THIS translation is in truth wretched beyond belief; 'tis below drollery, and a sort of a middle between bad sense and good nonsense. TACITUS says of the arrival of the fleet, which brought AGRIPPINA from Asia with her husband's

band's funeral urn, and her children now fatherless ; *classis paulatim successit, non alacri, ut adsolet, remigio, sed cunctis ad tristitiam compositis, An. 3. c. 1.*

“ The fleet (says the Translator) came in, not  
 “ rowing briskly, as they used to do, but slowly,  
 “ and with sorrow in their countenances ;” a  
 translation worthy of one who could make T A C I -  
 T U S say elsewhere, “ D R U S U S left the City  
 “ to enquire his fortune :” Would not one think  
 that he went to some remote country to consult a  
 cunning man ? Or meant the Translator to joke  
 upon the religion and solemnities of the Romans ?  
 The words of T A C I T U S which he thus perverts,  
 or rather quite drops, are, *Drusus urbe egressus*  
*repetendis auspiciis* : “ D R U S U S went without the  
 “ gates, to repeat the formality of the auspices.”

T A C I T U S at the end of his discourse upon  
 laws, says, *Cæsar Augustus, potentia securus, quæ*  
*Triumviratu jusserat, abolevit, deditque jura, quis pace*  
*Et Principe uteremur : acriter ex eo vincla, inditi*  
*custodes, Et lege Papia Poppæa præmiis inducti, ut si*  
*Et c. sed altius penetrabant, (custodes, scil.) Urbemque*  
*Et Italiam, Et quod usquam civium, corripuerant,*  
*multorumque excisi status ; Et terror omnibus inten-*  
*tabatur, nisi Tiberius statuendo remedio, Et c.* Now  
 observe the force, and elegance, and truth, with  
 which this is rendered by the Translator ; “ A U -  
 “ G U S T U S C E S A R being settled in his authority,  
 “ he abolished those things he commanded in the  
 “ Triumvirate, and gave new laws to be observed  
 “ in time of peace, and under a Monarch. And  
 “ that they might be the better kept, he appointed  
 “ some to look after them :” [as if the laws had  
 been a flock of sheep] “ The law P A P I A P O P P E A  
 “ provided, Et c. But the informers went farther,  
 “ not only in the City, but thro’ all Italy, where  
 “ any citizens were, ruined many families and  
 “ frightened all. To remedy which T I B E R I U S,”  
 Et c.

Æc. A little farther TACITUS says, *adversis animis acceptum, quod filio Claudii focer Sejanus destineretur: polluisse nobilitatem familiæ videbantur, suspectumque jam nimix sp̄ei Sejanum ultro extulisse.*

“ There were (says the Translator) great discontents  
 “ upon CLAUDIUS’s son’s being to marry  
 SEJANUS’s daughter as a disparagement to him,  
 [to what him? SEJANUS was the last named.]  
 “ But SEJANUS, whose ambition was suspected,  
 “ was much exalted upon it.”

TACITUS discourling of the revolt of FLORUS and SACROVIR, and representing the sentiments of the people upon that and other alarms, says, *increpabant Tiberium, quod in tanto rerum motu, libellis accusatorum insumeret operam. An Julium Sacrovirum majestatis crimine reum in Senatu fore? Extitisse tandem viros, qui cruentas epistolas armis cohiberent: miseram pacem vel bello bene mutari. Tanto impenfius in securitatem compositus, neque loco, neque vultu mutato, sed ut solitum per illos dies egit: altitudine animi, an compererat modica esse & vulgatis leviora.* Hear how this is translated. Blaming “ TIBERIUS  
 “ for employing himself in reading informers accu-  
 “ sations where there was so great commotions.  
 “ What, said they, have the Senate found JULIUS  
 “ SACROVIR guilty of treason? Some have had  
 “ the courage to suppress by arms the bloody libels  
 “ of a Tyrant; war is a good change for a miser-  
 “ able peace. But he neither changed place nor  
 “ countenance; affecting to shew he was not afraid,  
 “ either through courage, or that he knew things to  
 “ be less than they were reported.” Was ever  
 good sense so vilely burlesqued? were one to study  
 to ridicule TACITUS, what more miserable stuff,  
 void of all sense and sound, could one make him  
 utter? It puts me in mind of a notable compliment  
 in an address from a learned Society to the late  
 King; “ We perceive that you are one that is not  
 B 4 afraid

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“ afraid that posterity should make mention of  
 “ you ;” or words of the like force and beauty.  
 Neither have I picked out these passages invidi-  
 ously, as the worst : I have read the whole Annal,  
 and I know no part of it better done.

### SECT. VI. *Of the last Translation of the fourth, fifth, and sixth Annal.*

THE fourth, fifth, and sixth Annals are done  
 by another hand, and poorly done. In him  
 you find little of the true meaning of TACITUS ;  
 of his spirit and manner nothing at all ; but frequent  
 deviations from his sense, and even from all sense.  
 TACITUS in the Character of SEJANUS, says ;  
*intus summa apiscendi libido, ejusque causa modo lar-  
 gitio & luxus, sæpius industria ac vigilantia, baud  
 minus noxiæ, quotiens parando regno finguntur.* Who  
 but the Translator would have discovered, that by  
 these words TACITUS meant to declare, that  
 “ virtues are as dangerous as vices, when they  
 “ meet with a turbulent spirit aspiring to Empire ?”  
 Yet the Translation of this passage is as just as  
 that of many others. Sometimes he drops whole  
 phrases and passages, such as he knows not what  
 to make of, and oftner loses out of sight the mean-  
 ing of others however plain.

TACITUS says, *ut series futuri in Agrippinam  
 exitii inciperet, Claudia Pulchra sobrina ejus postulatur,  
 accusante Domitio Afro. Is recens prætura, modicus  
 dignationis, & quoquo facinore properus clarescere,  
 crimen impuditiæ, adulterum Furnium, veneficia in  
 Principem, & devotiones objeçtabat.* “ To begin the  
 “ ruin of AGRIPPINA, [how insipid and defec-  
 “ tive !] DOMITIUS AFER lately Pretor [not a  
 “ word of *modicus dignationis*] and ready to engage  
 “ in any thing to gain himself credit [observe the  
 “ force !] accuses CLAUDIA PULCHRA of adul-  
 “ tery

“ tery with FURNIUS [the words *sobrina ejus*, which explain the rest, and the word *impuditiæ*, one of the articles of the charge, are omitted]  
 “ and to have a design on the life of that Prince  
 “ with her charms and person:” What Prince? FURNIUS was none; TIBERIUS has not been mentioned in several pages: it is nonsense; and “ a design on his life with her charms and  
 “ person,” multiplies the nonsense.

WHAT follows fares not much better: *Agrippina semper atrox, tum & periculo propinquo accensa, pergit ad Tiberium.* “ AGRIPPINA always of  
 “ a violent temper, but at present extremely enra-  
 “ ged, runs immediately to TIBERIUS, &c.” He drops *periculo propinquo*, as useless words.

TACITUS says, that amongst other reasons assigned why TIBERIUS retired from Rome, some alledged the authority assumed by his mother; who having persuaded AUGUSTUS, contrary to his inclinations, to postpone GERMANICUS and adopt TIBERIUS, did afterwards upbraid TIBERIUS with so signal a service, and even challenged the Empire as her own: *idque Augusta exprobrabat, reposcebat.* “ The Empress (says the Translator) “ seemed to reproach him with that favour, and “ requested it for her son.” What gibberish! she had but one son, and he had it. She, forsooth, reproached her son TIBERIUS for having given him the Sovereignty, and from the same TIBERIUS claimed it for the same TIBERIUS. SEJANUS, once when a cave fell in upon TIBERIUS and his company, covered the Emperor with his own body: *major ex eo*, says TACITUS. “ This “ admirable and undoubted fidelity,” says the Translator; which TACITUS never said nor meant. How miserably too does he translate, *ingentium bellorum cladem æquavit malum improvisum: ejus initium simul & finis exstitit.* “ Happened a calamity  
 “ in

# 10 DISCOURSES *upon* TACITUS.

“ in which we sustained as great a loss as in the  
 “ greatest defeats, though it was all done in an in-  
 “ stant.” I will venture to say, that this is as well  
 done as any other part of all the three Books.

## SECT. VII. *Of the last Translation of the eleventh Annal.*

THE eleventh Annal is translated by another Gentleman; but not with another spirit: it is like the rest, full of feebleness and mistakes and low phrases. I shall here give some instances. The Pleaders, in a speech to the Emperor CLAUDIUS, in defence of taking fees, and in answer to SILIUS, who alledged against them the example of certain great Orators of the former age who had never taken any; say, *facile Asinium & Messalam, inter Antonium & Augustum bellorum præmiis refertos, &c. c. 7.* “ ASINIUS and MESSALA, who  
 “ feathered their nests well in the Civil Wars ’twixt  
 “ ANTHONY,” &c. This is the Language of a chairman, but of a piece with the rest, such as, a King’s <sup>a</sup> *playing the good fellow*; <sup>b</sup> *trumping up ARMINIUS’s title*; <sup>c</sup> *being equipped with money*; <sup>d</sup> *his reputation began to exert itself far and near*; <sup>e</sup> *saw but one poor snake*; <sup>f</sup> *more bloody than he ought to be*; Senators <sup>g</sup> *squabbling in the house*; A silver mine <sup>h</sup> *which bled but a little*; <sup>i</sup> *It was not come to that yet*; <sup>k</sup> *Advice hurts not the guiltless*; <sup>l</sup> *Men had recourse*

<sup>a</sup> Vinolentiam & libidines usurpans, c. 16.

<sup>b</sup> Frustra Arminium præscribi, c. 16.

<sup>c</sup> Auctum pecunia, c. 16

<sup>d</sup> Jam longius clarescere, c. 16.

<sup>e</sup> Unam omnino anguem visam.

<sup>f</sup> Atrociorem quam novo regno conduceret, c. 9.

<sup>g</sup> Obstrepentibus his, c. 6.

<sup>h</sup> Unde tenuis fructus, c. 20.

<sup>i</sup> Non eo ventum, c. 26.

<sup>k</sup> Infontibus innoxia consilia, ib.

<sup>l</sup> Flagitiis manifestis, subsidium ab audacia petendum, ib.

<sup>m</sup> Adesse

*recourse to impudence when their ill actions came to be discovered: <sup>m</sup> others were in the same predicament with them in that matter; <sup>n</sup> Claudius as he was easily angry, so he was easily pleased; <sup>o</sup> Matrimony the last comfort of those who give themselves to lewdness; <sup>p</sup> Affidavits of her lewdness; <sup>q</sup> The vast treasures given to Silius for his drudgery. Such cant, jargon, and ill-favoured nonsense, is called the Translation of*  
TACITUS.

SECT. VIII. *Of the last Translation of the twelfth and thirteenth Annals.*

THE two succeeding Annals are Englished by another hand, and miserably Englished they are; rather worse than the former. 'Tis all wretched tittle-tattle, unmeaning and ill-bred; nor could any number of words thrown together at random, without thought or idea, be more shallow or vulgar, more destitute of ornament or sound. To pass by his *top Orators; Knack of speaking; Staving off a war any ways.—He being rectine.—The Emperor himself their worthy. Yea, Gentlemen and Senators do make no other original to themselves but from thence*; and the like gibberish which occurs in every sentence: I shall here transcribe a passage where he seems to aim at a meaning and to exceed himself: “<sup>r</sup> The power his mother had over him  
“ (NERO)

<sup>m</sup> Adeste confcios, ib.

<sup>n</sup> Claudium, ut insidiis incautum, ita iræ properum, ib.

<sup>o</sup> Nomen matrimonii cupivit, ob magnitudinem infamiæ, cujus apud prodigos novissima voluptas est, ib.

<sup>p</sup> Codicillos libidinum indices, c. 34.

<sup>q</sup> Quicquid habitum Neronibus & Drusis in precium probri cessisse, c. 35.

<sup>r</sup> Cæterum infracta paulatim potentia matris, delapso Nerone in amorem libertæ, cui vocabulum Actæ fuit: simul adsumptis in conscientiam Othone & Claudio Senecione adolescentulis decoris

“ (N E R O) dwindled away by degrees, and N E R O  
 “ fell in love with A C T E, a freed-woman, and  
 “ made O T H O and C L A U D I U S S E N E C I O  
 “ the confidents of his new Amour, one of which  
 “ (to wit) O T H O, was of a consular family, but  
 “ S E N E C I O, a son of one of C E S A R’s freed-  
 “ men; who at first without the mother’s know-  
 “ ledge, and since in spite of all she could do,  
 “ worked himself by degrees into the Prince’s af-  
 “ fections, by luxury and secret ways, that no body  
 “ knew, which the best friends he had, indulged  
 “ him in, and were pleased to see him take up and  
 “ content himself with that woman, a thing which  
 “ did no body an injury: for he had the misfor-  
 “ tune to dislike his wife O C T A V I A (whether it  
 “ be that we naturally flight what we can have,  
 “ and eagerly pursue what is forbidden) of an illu-  
 “ strious family, and of an unspotted virtue, and  
 “ ’twas feared he might fall into a vein of debauch-  
 “ ing women of quality, if he was checked in  
 “ that intrigue: but A G R I P P I N A could not bear  
 “ that a freed-woman should nose her,” &c. That  
 “ a freed-woman should beard her,” says the old  
 Translation.

How clear, how strong, and how just! This is  
 in the thirteenth Book: take one or two samples  
 more out of the twelfth. “ ’Twas enacted that  
 “ if

coris, quorum Otho familia Consulari, Senecio liberto Cæsaris  
 patre genitus, ignara matre, dein frustra obnitente, penitus in-  
 repperant per luxum & ambigua secreta. Ne severioribus quidem  
 Principis amicis adversantibus, muliercula, nulla cujusquam in-  
 juriâ, cupidines principis explete: quando uxore ab Octavia,  
 nobili quidem & probitatis spectatæ, fato quodam, an quia  
 prævalent illicita, abhorrebat: metuebaturque, ne in stupra femi-  
 narum inlustrium prorumperet, si illa libidine præhiberetur. Sed  
 Agrippina libertam æmulam, &c. *An. 13. C. 12. & 13.*

‘ Inter quæ refertur ad patres, de pœna feminarum, quæ servis  
 conjungerentur. Statuiturque, ut ignaro domino ad id prolapsa,  
 in servitutem, sin consensisset, pro liberto haberetur. Pallanti,  
 quem



“ if they (women) married (to slaves) without their  
 “ master’s consent, they should remain such” [who  
 should, the women or the slaves? the former were  
 none, and could not remain what they were not;  
 and to say it of the latter, is nonsense.] “ BAREA  
 “ SORANUS, Consul elect, moved that PALLAS  
 “ (whom CESAR said was the first that brought it  
 “ into the House) should have the Pretorial honours,  
 “ and fifteen millions of Sesterces, and, that SCI-  
 “ PIO CORNELIUS might have the Thanks of  
 “ the House, for that being descended from the  
 “ Kings of Arcadia, he forgot his birth and qua-  
 “ lity to serve the publick, and was contented to  
 “ be one of the Prince’s servants. CLAUDIUS  
 “ assured them, that PALLAS, satisfied with the  
 “ honour the Senate had done him, would live as  
 “ retiredly as he used to do. In short an act was  
 “ made,” &c.

THESE two passages are as brightly translated  
 as any in the two Books, indeed beyond most pas-  
 sages.

I shall quote one more; it is in the thirteenth  
 Annal, cap. 26. It was importunately urged in the  
 Senate that such freedmen as by abusing their Lords,  
 had shewn themselves unworthy of their liberty,  
 should remain at the mercy of the said Lords, and  
 be subject to their former chains, *nec deerant qui*  
*cenferent*, says TACITUS, *sed Consules relationem*  
*incipere non ausi ignaro principe (i. e.)* “ There were  
 “ Senators too ready to have voted for such a  
 “ Decree;

quem repertorem ejus relationis ediderat Cæsar, prætoria insignia,  
 & centies quinquagesies sestercium censuit consul designatus Barea  
 Soranus: additum à Scipione Cornelio, grates publice agendas,  
 quod regibus Arcadiæ ortus, veterrimam nobilitatem usui publico  
 postponeret, seque inter ministros Principis haberi sineret.  
 Assleveravit Claudius, contentum honore Pallantem, intra prio-  
 rem paupertatem subsistere. Et fixum est ære publico Senatus  
 Consultum, &c. *An. 12. C. 53.*

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“Decree; but the Consuls durst not propose it to the vote without acquainting the Emperor.” Of all this plain matter the Translator understood not one word. He says, “neither were there those wanting who would censure them (*nec deerant qui censerent*) but the Consuls durst not, without the Emperor’s knowledge, determine the matter.”

I cannot omit one polite phrase more out of this Book. *Suilius Senecam increpans*, says TACITUS. “He laid it in SENECA’s dish,” says the Translator, c. 42. “laying it in SENECA’s dish,” says the old Translation. He indeed has stolen all he knew of TACITUS from the old Translation, with all its blunders and stupidity, and improved both notably. Behold another specimen. “At Rome he cheated men of their legacies, and wronged the fatherless, who were deluded by him<sup>t</sup>.” The words of TACITUS are, *Romæ testamenta & orbos, velut indagine ejus capi*, c. 42.

### SECT. IX. *Of the last Translation of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth Annals.*

A Fresh hand has undertaken the three following Annals, and by good fortune such a hand as has preserved an eminent uniformity with the foregoing; only he is somewhat more gross. TACITUS says, it was reported that when AGRIPPINA studied to draw NERO her son into an incestuous commerce with herself, *Senecam contra muliebres inlecebras subsidium a femina petivisse: immissamque Acten libertam*. “SENECA (says the Translator) soon

<sup>t</sup> The old Translation has it, *At Rome he coseted men of their legacies such as died without children, as if he had laid a snare to entrap them*. This is foolish, but wiser than the other.

“ soon brought in A C T E, N E R O’s beloved woman, to expel one whore with another.”

When A G R I P P I N A had escaped the first attempt upon her life, she dissembled, and seemed not to think it designed, nor to entertain any future apprehensions: *simulata securitate*: “ Under the “ appearance of security,” (says the Translator.) But as A C E R R O N I A one of her maids had perished in that attempt, she ordered her Will to be found, and all her effects to be sealed up. This she did, says T A C I T U S, without any dissimulation; *id tantum non per simulationem*, c. 6. “ She “ takes all necessary care (says the Translator) for “ the cure of her wound; the Testament of “ A C E R R O N I A to be looked out, her coffers to “ be sealed up, and all things necessary to be done “ without the least dissimulation:” How nicely he understands the original, and how grammatical is his English! Here however there seems to be some meaning aimed at; in what follows, even that is wanting: “ The image of the villains who were “ stained with the guilt of this parricide, still haunted him.” The words of the original are *observabanturque maris illius & litorum gravis adspēctus*, c. 10.

I N truth, to expose the insipidness and nonsense of these Annals, were to transcribe them. In some places he is so gross, that his words will not bear repeating; as particularly where one of O C T A V I A’s maids tells T I G E L L I N U S, *castiora esse muliebria Octaviæ quam os ejus*. His Translation of this is abominable, as well as ridiculous and false; and many such like instances there are in him. I beg leave to quote one short passage more out of this Annal. When that Lady was by the Tyrant divorced, and banished into Campania under a guard; *inde crebri questus*, says T A C I T U S, *nec occulti per vulgum, cui minor sapientia, & ex mediocritate fortunæ, pauciora*

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*pauciora pericula sunt*, c. 60. This is a fine reflection ; observe how execrably it is rendred : “ Upon the  
“ clamour of the people (who having nothing to  
“ lose, are commonly fearless, not out of any love  
“ or relenting at his severity) this was remitted.”

THE fifteenth Annal is done just like the fourteenth, wretchedly. Here follows a specimen : CORBULO and C E S E N N I U S P E T U S commanded in the East : *sed neque Corbulo æmuli patiens* (says T A C I T U S) ; & *Pætus, cui satis ad gloriam erat, si proximus haberetur, despiciebat gesta, nihil cædis aut prædæ, usurpatas nomine tenus urbium expugnationes, dictitans : se tributa ac leges, & pro umbra Regis Romanum jus victis impositurum*, c. 6. The misfortune was, (says the Translator) “ the one was  
“ impatient of a rival, and the other could not endure a superior ; and P E T U S, who ought to  
“ have contented himself in being second to C O R -  
“ B U L O, ever took pleasure to diminish the glory  
“ of his actions, upbraiding him that his victory  
“ in taking of towns was imaginary, without conquest or plunder. That he would impose laws  
“ and demand contributions, introduce the Roman  
“ power in the place of their Knights, and render  
“ them a meer shadow.”

HE often seems to be without the least glimmering of T A C I T U S's meaning, or any meaning, and puts down a parcel of words at random. How clearly does he English, *provisis exemplis Caudinæ ac Numantinæ cladis* ; “ resolving to follow the  
“ example of Numantian, and the Caudine defeat,  
“ which practice they thought they might justify,  
“ since the Parthians were at this time more powerful than the Carthaginians or Samnites :” [were they in truth ? what a discovery is here ?] *neque eandem vim Samnitibus Italico populo, aut Pænis Romani imperii æmulis*. He goes on : *They were now beginning to talk that the Antients were always com-*  
*mended*

mended for their address in suiting all things to the times, and securing a safe retreat when fortune should frown upon them. This is another discovery which he has made from these words: *validam quoque & laudatam antiquitatem, quotiens fortuna contra daret, saluti consuluisse*, c. 13; that is, “these same venerable Antients, so very stubborn and invincible, and so much adored, always consulted self-preservation, as often as pressed by the assaults of a calamitous fortune.”

When P E T U S had submitted to such shameful conditions from the Parthians, he, amongst the rest, made a bridge over the river Arsanias, and to hide his disgrace, pretended it was to shorten his own march; when in truth, it was done in obedience to the commands of the Parthians, as a monument of their superiority and conquest: *namque iis usui fuit; nostri per diversum iere*, c. 15. “It being com-  
modious to them, (quoth the Translator) and  
not in any manner to molest us.” Were ever two meanings more remote? He often adds words of his own to those of T A C I T U S, and often drops many more of the original, sometimes whole sentences. T A C I T U S says, there prevailed then a pestilent custom of making fraudulent Adoptions, by such Candidates for Offices as had no children of their own; and as soon as the Election was over, they instantly dismissed such as they had occasionally adopted. This abuse raised a storm from such as were real parents; who, having applied to the Senate with warm representations against such fallacious dealings in others, and such injury done to themselves, add, *sibi promissa legum diu expectata, in ludibrium verti, quando quis sine solitudine parens, sine luctu orbis, longa patrum vota repente adæquaret*, c. 19. All this is dropped by the Translator, and the following jargon of his own inserted: “They took children to quit them at  
VOL I. C “ their

## 18 DISCOURSES *upon* TACITUS.

“ their fancy in contempt of those laws, while  
 “ they had a great many privileges, for care or  
 “ sorrow, the other with ease enjoyed the same.”

I am afraid I have tired my reader, as I have done my self, with such a dull deduction of stupidities. I did not at first intend to say any thing of the former Translations: I took it for granted that every man who had seen them, must have condemned them, and found them as pitiful and bad as they really are. But when upon publishing my Proposals, I found that some, who by their titles and profession should be learned, others who by their high quality, ought to have taste and elegance, had commended the former Translation, and uttered their despair of seeing a better; I found it necessary to give some account of that performance, which I think to be as low, defective, and wretched as any thing in print; neither language, nor sense, nor decency, and as much unlike TACITUS the Historian, as the meanest slave of TACITUS the Consul, was unlike his master. It is much worse than the old Translation, which is exceeding bad. It is in my own defence, as well as in defence of TACITUS, that I have censured it, and against my inclination. It looks indeed as if the Translators themselves had no opinion of it, since they have not, as is usual, said one word about it by way of Preface. This is what Mr. DRYDEN particularly never used to omit doing; why did he omit it now in the Translation of a work of such name and weight? As far as the sixth Annal there is a Translation too of LA HOUSSAYE's Notes, but done with great ignorance and errors.

## DISCOURSE II.

## Upon TACITUS and his Writings.

SECT. I. *The Character of TACITUS.*

**A**S to the Character of TACITUS and his writings ; he was the greatest Orator, Statesman, and Historian of his time ; he had long frequented the Bar ; he had passed through all the high offices of State : he was Edile, Pretor, Consul ; and after long acquaintance with business and men, he applied himself to collect observations, and to convey the fruits of his knowledge to posterity, under the agreeable dress of a History. For this task he was excellently qualified : No man had seen more, scarce any man had ever thought so much, or conveyed his thoughts with greater force and vivacity ; a mighty genius, for which no conception or design was too vast ; a powerful Orator, who abounds in great sentiments and description : yet a man of consummate integrity, who, though he frequently agitates the passions, never misleads them : a masterly Historian, who draws events from their first sources ; and explains them with a redundancy of images, and a frugality of words : a profound Politician who takes off every disguise, and penetrates every artifice : an upright Patriot, zealous for publick Liberty and the welfare of his Country, and a declared enemy to Tyrants and to the instruments of Tyranny ; a lover of human-kind ; a man of virtue, who adores Liberty and Truth, and every where adorns and recommends them ; who abhors falshood and iniquity, de-

spies little arts, exposes bad ones; and shews, upon all occasions, by the fate and fall of great wicked men, by the anxiety of their souls, by the precariousness of their power, by the uncertainty or suddenness of their fate, what a poor price greatness obtained is for goodness lost; and how infinitely, persecuted virtue is preferable to smiling and triumphant wickedness. GERMANICUS under all his hardships and disfavour, is a happier man than TIBERIUS with all his power and Empire; happier in peace of mind, happier in his fame and memory. TIGELLINUS is a great favourite with NERO, but detested by all the rest of the world and fearful of all men. SENECA is disliked by the Emperor, but universally beloved and regretted. TACITUS is a fine Gentleman, who suffers nothing pedantick or low, nothing that is trifling or indecent to fall from his pen. He is also a man of wit; not such a one as is fond of conceits and the quaintness of words, but a wit that is grave, majestick, and sublime; one that blends the solemnity of truth with the fire of imagination, and touches the heart rather than the fancy; yet for the better reception of truth, pleases and awakens the fancy.

THE telling of truth is dry and unaffecting; but to enliven it with imagery, is describing it: and every one knows the advantages that Description has over bare Narration. Hence the force of fine painting; though, in my opinion, the Orator has the advantage of the Painter, as words can multiply ideas better than the pencil, throw them thicker together, and inflame them more. What piece of APOLLO could have animated the Athenians against PHILIP of Macedon, like one of DEMOSTHENES's Orations? What picture of Love can equal the description of that passion by LUCRETIUS, the noblest wit of all the Latin Poets? It



is hardly, I believe, possible for colours to carry images higher than they are by MICHAEL ANGELO carried, in his piece of the Last Day: yet I believe it not only possible, but easy to make a description of that day more affecting than the sight of that celebrated piece.

SECT. II. *How much he excels in Description and Force.*

PAINTING in words is the strongest painting; and in that art TACITUS excels to amazement. His images are many, but close and thick; his words are few, but pointed and glowing; and even his silence is instructive and affecting.

How justly does he represent that noble fullness and disdain of the wife of ARMINIUS, when brought with other captives before GERMANICUS? *Inerant & feminae nobiles, inter quas uxor Arminii, eademque filia Segestis, mariti magis quam parentis animo, neque victa in lacrymas, neque voce supplex, compressis intra sinum manibus gravidum uterum intuens, A. 1. c. 57.* A circumstance of distress more moving than this last, could not be devised; and what words, or exclamations, or tears could raise compassion so effectually, as the representation of a spirit too great to weep or complain; of a grief too mighty to be uttered?

THE March of GERMANICUS and his Army to the Forest of Teutburg, to bury the bones of VARUS and his Legions, there massacred by the Germans; the description of that Camp, with the revival of the circumstances of that tragical event; and the sympathy and resentments of the Soldiers, are all beautifully displayed with great force and brevity, with equal tenderness and horror.

PERMOTO *ad miserationem omni qui aderat exercitu, ob propinquos, amicos, denique ob casus bellorum,*

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*Et sortem hominum. Incedunt mæstos locos, visuque ac memoria deformes. Prima Vari castra lato ambitu, Et dimensis principiis, trium legionum manus ostentabant: dein semiruto vallo, humili fossa, accisæ jam reliquæ confedissee intelligebantur: medio campi albertia ossa, ut fugerant, ut resisterant, disiecta vel aggerata: adjacebant fragmina telorum, equorumque artus, simul truncis arborum antefixa ora; lucis propinquis barbaræ aræ, apud quas tribunos ac primorum ordinum centuriones mactaverant. Cladis ejus superstites pugnam aut vincula elapsi, referebant, hic cecidisse legatos, illic raptas aquilas; primum ubi vulnus Varo adactum, ubi infelici dextra, Et suo ictu mortem invenerit; quo tribunali concionatus Arminius; quot patibula captivis, quæ scrobes; utque signis Et aquilis per superbiam inluserit. Igitur Romanus qui aderat exercitus, sextum post cladis annum, trium Legionum ossa, nullo noscente alienas reliquias an suorum humo tegeret, omnes ut conjunctos, ut consanguineos, auctâ in hostem irâ, mæsti simul Et infensi condebant, An. 1. c. 61, 62.*

HERE is eloquence and description! What can be added, what can be taken away? His stile is every where warm and pathetick, and he never informs the understanding, or entertains the imagination, but he kindles the affections. You are not only convinced by his sentiments, but governed by them, charmed with them, and grow zealous for them. This is a trial of the power and skill of a writer: this the drift and glory of persuasion and eloquence; and this the talent of TACITUS.

To display Tyrants and Tyranny he chuses the strongest words and figures: *facinora ac flagitia sua ipsi quoque in supplicium verterant. Si recludantur tyrannorum mentes, posse adspici laniatus Et ictus; quando ut corpora verberibus, ita sævitia, libidine, malis consultis, animus dilaceretur: quippe Tiberium non fortuna, non solitudines, protegebant, quin tormenta pectoris suasque ipse pœnas fateretur, An. 6. c. 6.*

IT was his business and design to lay open the iniquity and horrors of their mis-rule ; *sæva jussa, continuas accusationes, fallaces amicitias, perniciem innocentium*. You see the bloody hands of the executioners, Rome swimming in the blood of her own Citizens, and all the rage of unrelenting Tyranny ; *undantem per domos sanguinem, aut manus carnificum*. You see the bands of accusers let loose, nay hired to destroy, and breathing death and exile ; *sævitiâ oratorum accusationes minitantium : delatores per præmia eliciebantur*. You see the barbarous outrages of an insolent and merciless soldiery ; *cuncta sanguine, ferro, flammisque miscent*. You see madmen bear rule, these mad rulers governed and made worse by slaves, villains, and harlots ; yet all these monsters adored, their persons, wickedness, and even their fury sanctified ; iniquity exalted, virtue trod under foot, laws perverted, righteousness and truth depressed and banished ; every worthy man doomed to scaffolds, rocks, and dungeons ; the basest of all men pronouncing that doom, and making a prey or a sacrifice of the best ; fear and distrust and treachery prevailing ; the destroyers themselves haunted with the perpetual dread of destruction, at last overtaken by it, yet seldom leaving better in their room.

ALL these melancholy scenes you see exposed in colours strong and moving : the thoughts are great, the phrase elevated, and the words chaste and few. It is all a picture : whatever he says, you see, and all that you see affects you. It puzzles one to give instances, because there are so many in every page. How many affecting images are there in these few words near the beginning of the first Annal ; *Quotusquisque reliquus qui rempublicam vidisset ?* How mournful too and expressive, yet how plain are these which immediately follow ! *Igitur verso civitatis*  
C 4
*statu,*

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*statu, nihil usquam prisca & integri moris; as well as those a little before; rebus novis aucti tuta & præsentia, quam vetera & periculosa mallent.*

WITH what thunder and vehemence does ARMINIUS rouse the Cheruskans, his country-men, to arms, when his wife became a captive to the Romans, and his child a slave though yet unborn? *Egregium patrem! magnanimum imperatorem! fortem exercitum! quorum tot manus unam mulierculam avexerint: sibi tres Legiones, totidem legatos procubuisse: non enim se prodicione, neque adversus feminas gravidas, sed palam adversus armatos bellum tractare. Cerni adhuc Germanorum in lucis signa Romana. Coleret Segestes victam ripam, redderet filio sacerdotium, &c.* In how few words does he comprise a long and perplexed debate in the council held by GERMANICUS, how to proceed with the mutinous Legions! *Augebat metum gnarus (superior exercitus) Romanæ seditionis, & si omitteretur ripa, invasurus hostis; ac si auxilia & socii adversum abscedentes Legiones armarentur, civile bellum suscipi: periculosa severitas, flagitiosa largitio: seu nihil militi, seu omnia concederentur, in ancipiti Respublica. Igitur, &c.*  
An. I.

Sect. III. *Further instances of the justness of his Genius, and of his great Thoughts.*

HIS account of the persecutions of GERMANICUS, with his last words and amiable Character, makes a fine Tragedy; so does the Death of SENECA; so does that of the Conspirators against NERO. With what magnanimity and calmness does SULTITIUS ASPER the Centurion answer the brutal Tyrant, when asked, why he had conspired against his life? *non aliter tot flagitiis ejus subveniri potuisse.* With what silence and firmness did the Consul VESTINUS die? though he was NERO's old

old companion and friend, and unconcerned in the conspiracy, and no crime nor accuser against him: *vigens adhuc balneo infertur, calida aqua mersatur, nulla edita voce qua se miseraretur.* How beautiful, how deep, and just are his observations upon human nature! *Molles in calamitate humani animi: mobiles ad superstitionem percussæ semel mentes: cupidine ingenii humani lubentius obscura credi: neque morum spernendus, nisi quod paupertatem præcipuum malorum credebatur.* *Vivorum ut magna admiratio, ita censura difficilis: eandem virtutem admirantibus cui irascebantur: manebat admiratio viri & fama, sed oderant.* *Beneficia eo usque læta sunt dum videntur exsolvi posse; ubi multum antecessere, pro gratia odium redditur.* *Exaëto per scelera die, novissimum malorum fuit lætitia.* *Rumore populi, qui neminem sine æmulo finit: minore spe veniæ, crescit vinculum sceleris: populus novarum rerum cupiens pavidusque: vulgus eadem pravitate interfectum insecutatur, qua viventem foverat.*

How masterly and profound are those upon Government! *Primas dominandi spes in arduo: ubi sis ingressus adesse studia & ministros.* *Arduum eodem loci potentiam & concordiam esse.* *Potentia cautis consiliis tutius habetur.* *Major e longinquo reverentia.* *Principibus præcipua rerum ad famam dirigendo.* *Insociabile regnum: cupido regni fratre & filia potior.* *Scaurum cui implacabilius irascebatur (Tiberius) silentio tramisit.* *Intelligeantur artes, sed pars obsequii in eo, ne deprehenderentur.* *In summa fortuna æquius quod validius.* These I do not quote as the finest Thoughts in TACITUS, but only such as occur to me.

HE paints Thoughts and Faculties, Men and Passions, Tyranny and Slaves. His imagination is boundless, yet never out-runs his judgment; his wisdom is solid and vast, yet always enlivened by his imagination. His designing is great, his drawing just, his colouring beautiful. See the descrip-

tion of a Pestilence at Rome, *An. 16. c. 13. Domus corporibus exanimis, itinera funeribus complebantur. Non sexus, non ætas periculo vacua. Servitia perinde ac ingenua plebes raptim extinguere, inter conjugum & liberorum lamenta, qui dum assident, dum deflent, sæpe eodem rogo cremabantur. Equitum Senatorumque interitus quamvis promiscui, minus flebiles erant, tanquam communi mortalitate sævitiam Principis prævenirent.* Under a Tyrant, a Plague was a blessing.

WHO but TACITUS could have said as he does of the antient Germans: *Argentum & aurum propitii an irati Dii negaverint, dubito?* or that afterwards of the same people: *mira diversitate naturæ, cum iidem homines sic ament inertiam, quietem oderint?* or that of the Sitones, a particular Clan of Germans, who were under the Government of a Woman; *in tantum non modo a libertate, sed etiam a servitute degenerant?* These are such instances of discernment, sagacity and happy expression, as few Writings can shew. By them and a thousand more, it is manifest that TACITUS saw every thing in a true and uncommon light: and his reflections are like mirrors where human nature and government are exhibited in their proper size and colours.

I cannot help thinking That to be a bold and gallant, Saying of BOIACALUS to the Roman General, who refused him a mansion for himself and his people in the vacant lands of Frizia; and thence provoked him to implore the Sun and Stars: *quasi coram interrogabat, vellentne contueri inane solum? potius mare superfunderent adversus terrarum ereptores. Deesse nobis terram in qua vivamus; in qua moriamur non potest.* What a sublime thought is that of his concerning the Fennians? The most savage and wretched race this of all the wild Germans; their cloathing, skins; their bed, the earth; their food, the grass; destitute of horses, houses, and arms; the

the thick branches of trees their only shelter against tempests and the ravening beasts: Here they find cradles and protection for their babes; here live the old men, and hither resort the young. Yet this miserable life they prefer to that of sweating at the plough, and to the pains of rearing houses: they thirst not after the fortunes of others; they have no anxiety about preserving their own; so that they hoped for nothing that was not theirs, and having nothing of their own, could fear to lose nothing; *securi* (says TACITUS) *adversus homines, securi adversus deos, rem difficillimam adsecuti sunt, ut illis ne voto quidem opus sit.*

SECT. IV. *The Morality of TACITUS, and his spirit virtuous and humane.*

AS obvious too as his other great qualities, is his love of Mankind, of Civil Liberty, and of private and publick Virtue. His Book is a great tablature of the ugliness and horrors of Tyranny; of the scandal and infamy of servitude and debasement; of the loveliness of virtue and a free spirit; of the odiousness of vice and sycophancy. Such was his sympathy for the sufferings and severe lot of the Romans under TIBERIUS, that he is glad of a digression from home, and keeps thence as long as he can, to relieve his soul from attending to domestic evils; *duabus æstatibus gesta conjunxi, quo requiesceret animus a domesticis malis.* He grieves for the slavish spirit, for the stupid tameness of the Romans under the Tyranny of the detestable NERO. So much Roman blood wantonly shed by that monster, is a load upon his soul, and oppresses it with sorrow. *Patientia servilis, tantumque sanguinis domi perditum, fatigant animum, & mæstitia restringunt.*

HE delights in good times, in publick Liberty and virtuous Reigns, and delights to praise them; such

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such as those of NERVA and TRAJAN; *rara temporum felicitate, ubi sentire quæ velis, & quæ sentias dicere licet.* In what a different strain does he speak of the foregoing Emperors? *Nobilitas, opes, omissi gestique honores pro crimine, & ob virtutes certissimum exitium.* He glories however that the worst and most faithless times produced many instances of friendship and generous fidelity; *non tamen adeo virtutum sterile seculum, ut non & bona exempla prodiderit.*

HE is fond of a virtuous Character; as that of LABEO: *Labeo incorrupta libertate & ob id fama celebrator:* such as that of LEPIDUS; *hunc ego Lepidum temporibus illis, gravem & sapientem virum fuisse comperio: nam plæraque ab sævis adulationibus aliorum, in melius flexit:* and that of L. PISO chief Pontiff; *nullius servilis sententiæ sponte auctor.* How amiable are the Death and last words of L. ARRUNTIVS, like those of a Patriot, and a Prophet! But how vile every where, and even miserable and insecure, are Tyrants, Flatterers and the Ministers of Iniquity? What he says of the first I have quoted above: and against the other hear his honest indignation: *tempora infecta, & adulatione sordida fuere. Fædaque & nimia censerent. Adulatio perinde anceps si nulla, & ubi nimia est. Delatores genus hominum in exitium publicum repertum, perniciem aliis, ac postremo sibi invenere.* What an odious insect is VATINIUS; what a horrible villain TIGELLINUS; what infamous sycophants are CAPITO and VITELLIUS; and what a shocking paricide is SERENUS, the accuser of his father and a general accuser?



SECT. V. *The Stile of TACITUS, how pertinent and happy: his Obscurity, a charge of the moderns only.*

BESIDES the grandeur and dignity of his phrase, he is remarkable for a surprising brevity: but let his words be ever so few, his thought and matter are always abundant. His expression is like the dress of POPPÆA SABINA, described by himself; *velata parte oris ne satiaret aspectum, vel quia sic decebat*. He starts the Idea, and leaves the Imagination to pursue it. The sample he gives you is so fine, that you are presently curious to see the whole piece, and then you have your share in the merit of the discovery; a compliment which some able Writers have forgot to pay to their Readers. I cannot help thinking Mr. LOCKE a great deal too wordy, and that the plainness of his propositions, as well as their strength, suffers often by an explanation over-diffuse. Dr. TILLOTSON's stile is much better, indeed very fine, but takes up too much room; it is likely he chose it as fit for popular discourses; since it is plain from the vivacity of his Parts, and the many fine turns found in his Writings, that he could have been very sententious. These two great names are by no man revered more than I reverence them, and without malignity I mention them, as I do that of the worthy Lord CLARENDON, whose language is weighty, and grave, but encumbered and even darkened, I might say flattened, with a multiplication of words.

STILE is a part of Genius, and TACITUS had one peculiar to himself, a sort of a language of his own, one fit to express the amazing vigour of his spirit, and that redundancy of reflections which for force and frequency are to be equalled by no Writer before or since. Besides, the course and  
fluency

fluency of his Narration, is almost every where broken by persons whom he introduces speaking and debating; insomuch that a great part of his History comes out of the mouths of other people, and in expressions suitable to their several Characters. It is plain too that the older he grew, the more he pruned and curtailed his Stile; for his Histories are much more copious and flowing than his Annals: and thus what has been by others reckoned a fault, was in him the effect of his judgment. Neither were his Works intended for the populace; but for such as governed States, or such as attended to the conduct of Governors; nor, were the Stile and Latin ever so plain, would they ever be understood by such as do not. As PLUTARCH came to understand the Roman Tongue by understanding their Affairs; TACITUS is to be known by knowing human nature, and the elements and mechanism of Government.

IT is madness to wish for the manner and redundancy of LIVY in the Writings of TACITUS. They wrote at different times, and of Governments differently formed. TACITUS had transactions of another sort to describe, and other sorts of men; (for by Government men are changed); the crooked arts of policy, the false smiles of power, the jealousy, fury and wantonness of Princes uncontrolled; the flattery of the grandees; the havock made by the accusers, and universal debasement of all men: matter chiefly for reflection, complaints and rebuke! *Nobis in arto, & inglorius labor: mæstæ urbis res, &c.* LIVY had another field and more scope; the History of a Commonwealth rising, forming and conquering; perpetual victories and matter of panegyrick; and his pen flowed like the prosperity of the State. *Ingentia bello, expugnationes urbium, fusos captosque reges, discordias Consulum adversus Tribunos, agrarias frumentariasque leges, plebis*

*plebis & optimatum certamina, libero egressu memorabat, An. 4. 32.* Doubtless he could have adopted another Stile if he would, perhaps the stile of L I V Y, as I think this very quotation shews ; but T A C I T U S had another view and different topicks ; nor would another stile, the easy and numerous stile of L I V Y, have answered his purpose. I fancy too that no body who knows T A C I T U S, would wish him to have written in a strain different from what he has done. There are charms in his manner and words, as well as in his thoughts, and he wears the only dress that would become him.

IT is amazing that this obscurity of his should never be mentioned by any of the Antients who mention him. It is a fault discovered by the Moderns, though, in my opinion, common to him with other Classical Writers ; nor has he puzzled the Commentators more than H O R A C E, C I C E R O, P L I N Y, S A L L U S T, &c. His Latin is truly pure and classical ; he has few or no words which had not been used by approved writers, nor does he often give new ideas to old words. If his Works were no wise obscure to men of sense when he composed them, as we have no reason to think ; it is insolence and folly in us to reckon his obscurity a fault. It is a dead language which he writes in, and he wrote seventeen hundred years ago. When T A C I T U S the Emperor directed copies of his Books to be placed in all the Libraries, and for their better preservation, to be transcribed ten times every year, he ordered no Grammarian to explain his abstruse places ; though the Historian had been then dead near two hundred years. Great Writers are in their manner and phrase a Law and Authority to themselves ; and not confined to the Rules that fill the heads or grammars of small wits and pedants. M I L T O N has a stile of his own, and rules for writing of his own ; and who that tastes his genius would

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would wish him more fashionable and exact, or to have written otherwise. I am even pleased with the jarrings of MILTON's phrases. But here I chiefly mean his poetical style. Of his prose I shall make mention hereafter.

WHEN the subject varies, so should the stile: that of TACITUS is marvellously suited to his subject and design; had it been more familiar, it had neither been so just nor so beautiful. To me nothing is more so than the manner of TACITUS; his words and phrases are admirably adapted to his matter and conceptions, and make impressions sudden and wonderful upon the mind of man. The doleful condition of the Emperor VITELLIUS, when deserted by his fortune and all men, is strong and tragical as imagination and words can make it. *Terret solitudo & tacentes loci; tentat clausa; inborrescit vacuis; fessusque misero errore, & pudenda latebra semet occultans, à Tribuno protrahitur. Vinetæ pone tergum manus; laniata veste, sædum spectaculum ducebatur, multis increpantibus,* he adds, *nullo inlachrymante;* and the reason he gives for this, is judicious and fine; *deformitas exitus misericordiam abstulerat.* What follows is in the same affecting strain; as are the first sensible approaches of his calamity. *Vitellius, capta urbe, Aventinum in domum uxoris cellula defertur, ut si diem latebra vitavisset Terracinam—perfugeret: dein mobilitate ingenii, & quæ natura pavoris est, cum omnia metuenti, præsentia maxime displicerent, in palatium regreditur, vastum desertamque; dilapsis etiam infimis servorum, aut occursum ejus declinantibus.*

WHO would blame TACITUS for a paucity of words, when he conveys so many images in so few? *Is habitus animorum fuit, ut pessimum facinus audent pauci, plures vellent, omnes paterentur?* Where can there be a happier expression than that concerning GALBA, when the Empire was already rent from him,

him, and he knew it not? *Ignarus interim Galba & sacris intentus, fatigabat alieni jam imperii deos.* When ОТНО, proclaimed Emperor by no more than three and twenty Soldiers, was advancing to the Camp, & *paucitate salutantium trepidus*; the behaviour and acquiescence of those he met in his way are accounted for with surprising brevity and justness; *alii conscientia, plerique miraculo; pars clamore & gladiis, pars silentio, animum ex eventu sumpturi.* There is infinite pathos in what he says of the Omens and Phænomena, which were observed during the Civil Wars, and the strife of Princes; *cælo terraque prodigia, & fulminum monitus, & futurorum præfagia læta, tristia, ambigua, manifesta.* What can be more solemn, founding and sublime, even in LUCRETIVS? When NERO was disgracing himself and the Roman State, by debasing his person to that of a player upon the publick Stage; how pathetically is the behaviour and spirit of BURRUS described in a few words; *adstabat Burrus mærens & laudans!*

SECT. VI. *A general Character of his Works.*

THERE is no end of specimens and examples; it is all over a wonderful Book, full of wisdom, full of virtue; of astonishing strokes of genius and superior sense. Yet he seems not to value himself upon his great thoughts; the finest things fall from him like common things; he says them naturally, and never dwells upon one, because he has always more to utter. When he has struck your imagination, and you want to stand still and ruminate, you have no time; he draws, or rather forces you forward, and the next thought strikes you as much; so does the third, and all of them; and you go on reading and wondering, yet wishing for leisure to ponder and recollect. But he gives you

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none; for, from first to last the present reflection is always the best.

'Tis all of it eternal good sense, and will bear an eternity of time and censure. It is no wise akin to your pretty trifles of humour and fancy, that just tickle the imagination, but go no deeper, and please for a day. His beauties are solid, and upon the strictest examination discover no paint or tinsel; his wisdom and instruction are inexhaustible, and his works consequently an everlasting feast. I have seen several performances of tolerable length and notable reputation, all derived from so many short sentences of TACITUS, well wiredrawn and paraphrased. He is indeed a fund for Writers who have discretion and stile, but want depth.

There is a fine short Character of TACITUS in OWEN's Epigrams;

*Veracem fecit probitas, natura sagacem,  
Obscurum brevitæ te, gravitasque brevem.* Ep. 157.

SECT. VII. TACITUS *vindicated from the imputation of deriving events from counsels too subtle and malevolent.*

HE is accused too of over-much subtilty and refining, and of deriving the actions of his Princes, even the most innocent and plausible, from crooked designs, and a base heart; and of imputing to craft and politicks what was often no more than the effect of inclination and passion: A charge in my opinion intirely groundless. TACITUS describes things and men as they are, shews particulars acting agreeably to their characters, their situation and views; and represents counsels flowing from such sources only as were likely to produce them. Let us examine his reign of TIBERIUS for which he is chiefly censured.

THE

THE first feat of this reign, was the murder of AGRIPPA, the grandson of AUGUSTUS. TIBERIUS ordered it, and denied it, and threatened the Centurion who was the executioner, that he should answer for it to the Senate. This is the account given by TACITUS, and the same is given by SÜETONIUS; the former adds, that it was done from jealousy of State, and for the removal of a Rival; and what other reason is to be given? for he had shewn how improbable it was that the same had been ordained by AUGUSTUS, though this was pretended, as SÜETONIUS too testifies. Nor was any thing more natural than his apprehensions of GERMANICUS, a young Prince popular above all men, and at the head of a great army, who wanted him for their Emperor in the room of TIBERIUS. This is matter of fact, and well attested. Now where is the extreme refining, to represent TIBERIUS as contriving to remove such a dangerous man, one of such good pretences and powerful interest, first from his faithful Legions, and then from home, for ever; though at the same time he flattered him, extolled him, and heaped honours upon him? All this is but the common road of such Courts, when they have the same designs and fears. Is it not usual in Turkey to load a Bashaw with Imperial Presents, to bestow upon him some great Government, and to murder him before he arrive at it?

Is not power a jealous and artificial thing, full of fears and wiles; and is not TIBERIUS allowed by all men to have been a Prince of infinite distrust, craft, and cruelty? What meant he by making great men Governors of Provinces, and yet never suffering them to go thither for a course of years, nor even out of Rome, though they still held the name? What meant he by continuing others in the actual possession of Provinces for a long tract of years, nay

frequently to the end of their life? Was it not his distrust of the former; and that as to the latter, he could not make a safer choice, and therefore was afraid to choose any? Yet TACITUS, far from diving into his Politicks in this matter, or being subtle and dogmatical about it, gives you the sentiments of others; *alii lædio novæ curæ, semel placita pro æternis servavisse. Quidam, invidia, ne plures fruerentur. Sunt qui existimant, ut callidum ejus ingenium, ita anxium judicium; neque enim eminentis virtutes seſtabatur, & rursus vitia oderat: ex optimis periculum sibi; a pessimis dedecus publicum metuebat.* Never was any thing said more impartial, never any thing more just and solid. From the doubles and even contradictions that possess the heart of man, the conduct of men will be perplexed and contradictory: It is allowed that *alieni appetens, sui profusus*, was a just branch in the Character of CATILINE, and is reckoned one of the beauties and strong places in SALLUST. Without peradventure, as beautiful, and strong, and just, is this of TACITUS; *neque eminentis virtutis seſtabatur, & rursus vitia oderat*; the reason too assigned for it, is equally just and fine; *ex optimis periculum sibi; a pessimis dedecus publicum metuebat.* Is not this accounting, from the principles of nature and self-preservation, for the conduct and politicks of TIBERIUS? Many of his actions and measures, recounted by TACITUS, are supported by collateral evidence, by SUTTONIUS, PLINY, DION CASSIUS, and others; many by them omitted are by him related, with such probability, and so perfectly resemble the rest of his conduct, that we must deny TIBERIUS to have been such a Prince as all men agree he was, or believe the account of him given by TACITUS.

HIS dissimulation was constant and notorious. In the very beginning, while he confidently acted



as Emperor, with all the pomp and might of Majesty, he openly refused the Empire; *Principatum* (says SÆTONTIUS) *quamvis neque occupare confestim, neque agere dubitasset, vi & specie dominationis assumpta, diu tamen recusavit impudentissimo animo;* Such severe language as this is not given him by TACITUS.

DOES TACITUS represent him as hating and fearing the great Romans, and illustrious Senators? And do not other Historians; do not the facts themselves prove it? Was he not continually destroying them, till they were almost all destroyed? Of the twenty Grantees particularly (*principum Civitatis*) whom he desired of the Senate, for his Confidents and Counsellors, he left not above two or three alive; all the rest were by treachery and feigned crimes cut off by him: *Horum omnium vix duos aut tres incolumes præstitit; cæteros, alium alia de causa perculit,* says SÆTONTIUS. Is TACITUS therefore too refined, in discovering what facts demonstrate? Is it not SÆTONTIUS too who says, *Multa specie gravitatis, ac morum corrigendorum, sed magis naturæ obtemperans, sæve & atrociter factitavit?* “It was  
“usual with him, to do actions exceeding barbarous and merciless, yet all under shew of Justice,  
“and the reforming of Manners; but in reality  
“from the instigation of his own cruel spirit.” Is SÆTONTIUS also over subtle, the Historian in the world the most plain, and seldom aiming at a reflection? For what reason did he suffer the boundaries of the Empire to be invaded, and Provinces to be seized by the Barbarians, but from fear of trusting any great Officer with the conduct of the War?

THAT he affected to derive all power from the Senate, yet left them but the shadow of authority, and was even jealous of that shadow, is sacredly true. It was even natural; and wanted no refining, to discover it. Did not CROMWELL do the same?

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And are not all men willing to have their power, however lawless, legitimated, and the odium of their acts of violence transferred upon others? Will any one say, that the Senate liked his acts of Sovereignty, his frequent impeachments of their Members, often the best and most innocent, and his obliging them to condemn, (for he that dares not refuse is forced to consent) and his leaving every particular in continual dread of being the next; which was a farther motive in each to hatred and complaisance? He knew he had earned their hate, *reputante sibi publicum odium*. Is it likely now that he loved them, or that there was or could be sincerity or confidence on either side? What did his retirement in the Isle of Capreæ, with his perpetual absence from Rome, infer, but continual distrust of the Senate and People? Just before he expired, he was hastening from a ramble upon the Continent, back to his Den, *non temere quidquam nisi ex tuto ausurus*; to take measures of vengeance against the Senate, for that he had read in their acts, that they had discharged certain persons accused, though he had writ to the Senate, that they were only named by the informer; *pro contempto se habitum fremens, repetere Capreas quoque modo destinavit, non temere, &c.* This too is related by S U E T O N I U S. It is certain the Senate were to all these Tyrants a constant mark of jealousy and hate; and some of them, particularly C A L I G U L A and N E R O, had proposed to extirpate that venerable Assembly, by murdering the whole Body.

### SECT. VIII. *More Proofs of the Candour and Veracity of* TACITUS.

**T**ACITUS makes T I B E R I U S no worse than he was, hardly so bad. That he doomed almost his whole family to exile, famine, or the execu-

executioner; that his cruel suspicion and distrust extended even to women, even to his mother, nay to children, relations and strangers, to names, nobility, and all men, is undeniable. Nor does TACITUS relate any part of the conduct or politics of TIBERIUS, but what evidently results either from the nature of the man, or the nature of his power. He frequently speaks well of that Prince; and ill he could not avoid speaking, if he spoke of him at all. Nay the whole sixth chapter of the fourth Annal, is a fine panegyrick upon the moderation and wisdom of his Government for eight years before: *publica negotia, & privatorum maxima, apud patres tractabantur; dabaturque primoribus disserere, & in adulationem lapsos cohibebat ipse; mardabatque honores, nobilitatem majorum, claritudinem militiæ, inlustres domi artes spectando: ut satis constaret non alios potiores fuisse. Sua consulibus, sua prætoribus species; minorum quoque magistratuum exercita potestas; legesque, si majestatis quæstio eximeretur, bono in usu, &c.*

WHAT can be fairer than this? and do not other Historians agree that he grew worse and worse: that he had long smothered his vices, and was, first and last, a complete dissembler? And is it just upon TACITUS, to accuse him of displaying the subtleties and craft of a Prince, who was all craft and subtlety? Does he not give us the good and bad of his character, and frequently defend it? Does he not say of him, in opposition to popular opinion and report, *non crediderim ad ostentandam sævitiam, movendasque populi offensiones concessam filio materiam; quanquam id quoque dictum est?* *An. i. c. 76.*

DOES he not represent TIBERIUS elsewhere as mollifying a rigorous sentence of the Senate, for banishing a criminal to a barren and desolate Island, and arguing that to whomsoever they granted life, they ought to grant the conveniences of life; *dandos*

*vita usus, cui vita concederetur?* Does he not represent him in another place absolutely refusing a new accession of power, and arguing against it, like a Republican; yet charges him there with no dissimulation?

IN TACITUS you have no false colouring, no true worth blemished, no bad qualities disguised; but fair representations and equal justice. TIBERIUS is a dangerous Prince, extremely false, extremely cruel; but he has many abilities, and some good qualities. He is prudent in moderating the excesses of others, where he was not instigated by his own personal anger; *prudens moderandi, ubi propriâ irâ non impelleretur*. He loved power without bounds; yet was constant and resolute in rejecting pompous honours; *spernendis honoribus validus*: a great Tyrant, but a Prince observing the rules of primitive parcimony; *antiquæ parcimoniæ princeps*: furiously jealous of prerogative; yet the laws, where processes of treason interfered not, were in proper force; *leges, si majestatis quæstio eximeretur, bono in usu*. He is inflexible in his vengeance, and where-ever his jealousy or anger centers, there terrible tragedies are sure to follow; yet the popular imputation of his poisoning his son, is by TACITUS exposed as incredible and fabulous; with many the like instances of eminent impartiality. He gives fair quarter to the Man, but none to the Tyrant.

TO CLAUDIUS, a stupid Prince, and almost a changeling, who had no judgment, no aversion of his own, but only such as were infused and managed by others, he allows a share of sense at intervals; allows that he did some reasonable things, gave good advice to the Prince of Parthia; and wanted not elegance in his speeches, when his speeches were premeditated. He owns the spirit of Sovereignty to be jealous and unsociable; but as an exception from this rule, mentions the amiable friendship and  
union

union between GERMANICUS and DRUSUS, in the Court of TIBERIUS, though their different interests had rent the whole Court into factions. He owns the friendship of DRUSUS, for the children of GERMANICUS; though the participation of power, and the union of hearts, are seldom compatible.

The same fair temper and truth he observes in the Conduct and Character of GALBA, OTHO, and even of NERO and VITELLIUS; and it was his business and design to lay open the iniquity and horrors of their misrule.

THESE are some of the objections made to the Writings of TACITUS, and I think with extreme injustice. His Critics are more subtle than he; they are false refiners, who for the reputation of sagacity, make singular remarks, and serve him as they say he did TIBERIUS; they pervert and blacken his designs, and are too curious to be equitable. TACITUS, with a masterly discernment, unravels the mysterious conduct of TIBERIUS; it is from awe of his Mother, it is from fear of GERMANICUS, it is from jealousy of the Gracians, and with design to amuse and humour, or to deceive them all, that he rules and acts with such temper and moderation, against the bent and pride of his nature always imperious and tyrannical. But when he had well established himself; when GERMANICUS was dead; when his Mother too was gone; when he had crushed some of the Gracians, and terrified all; and especially when he was far from the eyes of Rome, is it not most true, that he then gave a loose to all the excesses of villainy and cruelty? *cuncta simul vitia, male diu dissimulata, tandem profudit.* It is not TACITUS who says this.

WAS he not continually mocking and deluding the Senate? First he would by no means accept the  
 , Empire,

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Empire, at a time when he was actually in possession ; sometimes he was weary of it, and would needs resign at every turn. Before he quitted the City, he was for visiting the Provinces, and for this purpose many preparations were made, and high expectation raised ; then, when he had retired to Capreæ, he was continually amusing them with his immediate return to Rome, nay begged one of the Consuls to guard him. He carried the deceit so far, that he often visited the Continent, and the very Walls and Gardens about Rome ; but never once returned to Rome, nor visited the Provinces, nor had a thought of resigning. The Commonwealth was always in his mouth, even when he was acting the Tyrant most ; he professed eminent moderation while he was meditating acts of cruelty ; and in instances of injustice and rigour, pleaded law and mercy.

HIS malice in leaving so wicked a Successor appears more from SUTTONIUS than from TACITUS, who allows him to have had some thoughts of appointing another ; but the former testifies expressly, that TIBERIUS was wont to foretel what a devouring Dragon he reared for the Roman people, and what a PHAETON or incendiary to the whole earth. TACITUS is vouched by SUTTONIUS in what he says was reported for the motive which determined AUGUSTUS to adopt TIBERIUS ; *ambitione tractum, ut tali successore considerabilior ipse quandoque fieret.* Suet. in Tiber. c. 21. The same too is testified by DION CASSIUS.

SECT. IX. *Mr. BAYLE's unjust censure of TACITUS; and how well the latter knew and observed the Laws of History.*

MR. BAYLE in his *Dictionary* in the Article of *Tacitus*, quotes some passages out of a Book entitled *Anonymiana*, (a very foolish book) where TACITUS is criticized as above, and approves those passages. This is the less matter of wonder to me, for that Mr. BAYLE, with all his immense learning, acuteness, and candour, had a strange and unnatural bias to absolute Monarchy, though he had fled from the fury of it, and taken refuge in a free State. A proof this that great weakness cleaves to the greatest minds; and who can boast an exemption from prejudices, when a spirit so signally disinterested and philosophical as that of BAYLE was not exempted? He himself says of TACITUS, *qu'il y a bien à reprendre dans l'affectation de son langage, & dans celle de rechercher les motifs secrets des actions, & de les tourner vers le criminel.* That this charge is groundless I have already proved. Much less to be regarded is the authority of Mr. St. EVREMOND in his censure upon TACITUS: his observations are without depth, to say no worse; nor have I found in his Works any political observations remarkable for solidity and force. What he has said of the Romans, is superficial, and often wrong.

TACITUS knew perfectly the Laws of History, and blames the passionate and partial accounts given by those who described the same reigns; since those of them which were written during the lives of the Princes, were falsified through dread of their Tyranny, and when dead, through detestation of their late cruelties. He had no motive to be partial;

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partial ; free as he was from affection, free from resentment. He knew that truth uncorrupted was the Business of an Historian, and that personal affection and hate should have no share in the work ; *nec amore quisquam, & sine odio dicendus est.* Of GALBA, OTHO, and VITELLIUS he says, that to him they were known by no mark either of favour or diskindness. The same is true of AUGUSTUS, TIBERIUS, CALIGULA, CLAUDIUS, and NERO. He shews how the truth was corrupted, first by flattery, then by resentment ; and professes to be far from either. I think he is as good as his word.

Sect. X. *An Apology for the wrong account by TACITUS given of the Jews and Christians, and for his disregard of the Religion then received.*

THERE are other accusations against TACITUS : he has misrepresented the Jews and Christians, and wanted Religion.

CONCERNING the Jews, he followed the tradition and accounts current amongst the Romans. He tells you what different relations there were, and neither adds any thing, nor misrepresents things maliciously. It was an obscure State, generally enslaved to some greater power ; to the Assyrians, Ægyptians, Grecians, and then to the Romans ; and contemned by all, as much as they themselves hated all. They had not common mercy or charity toward the Gentiles and uncircumcised ; and being persuaded that the Almighty loved only themselves, they fancied that he abhorred, and therefore they abhorred, the whole human race besides : so that it was said by TACITUS too truly, *adversus omnes alios hostile odium.* They were likewise ever solicitous to hide their mysteries from the eyes



eyes of the Heathens, and could not blame them for not knowing what was not to be known. Yet he was not ill informed in some instances, especially in their spiritual notions of the Deity, with their averſion to Images, and to the adoration of the Emperors : *nulla ſimulacra urbibus ſuis ; non regibus hæc adulatio, non Cæſaribus honor.*

OF the Goſpel it is manifeſt he knew nothing ; he could not elſe have made ſo ugly a picture of thoſe who profeſſed it ; for it is not likely that the Chriſtians were yet ſo degenerated as to diſgrace the Chriſtian Religion. TACITUS wanted an opportunity to be better informed. That Religion, as it began among the lower ſort of people, had not probably hitherto gained many proſelytes of name and quality, to countenance and recommend it to men of figure. TACITUS conſidered it like a Stateſman, as a new Sect inconfiſtent with the Laws of Rome, and threatening civil tumults and innovations. It is probable too he had heard and credited the calumnies then uſually thrown upon the manners and meetings of that people. Nor after the beſt inſtruction could he have become a Believer without the illumination of the Spirit ; which, it is plain, was withheld from him : and, without a change of heart, it was impoſſible for him to conceive the Reſurrection of the dead, and the Crucifixion of the Son of God. Yet he does them the juſtice to vindicate them from the obloquy of NERO, and expoſes the barbarity of their treatment by that Tyrant.

FOR his diſregarding the Religion then received, when I conſider what ſorts of abſurdities the Pagans held for Religion, I cannot ſo much blame him. It was a worſhip paid to Deities altogether frantick and impure, by ſacrifices and follies ridiculous and vain ; and both their Worſhip and their Gods were invented by the cunning or deluſion of men. It conſiſted

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consisted in no purification of heart, nor amendment of morals ; the things which men and societies require ; but in sounds, gesticulation, and the blood of beasts ; not in truth and sense, in benevolence and rectitude of mind ; but in lying oracles, unaccountable mysteries, and a raving imagination ; sometimes in professed acts of lewdness ; often in those of fury and madness ; always in such as were foreign from real virtue, and the restraining of the passions. Public calamities were never thought to be brought down by public depravity and vice, nor to be averted or removed by public reformation. The Gods were not offended but by the omission, or wrong performance of some ceremony or grimace ; and by grimace and ceremony they were to be appeased. And when the Deities were deemed to be endowed with the peevishness and caprices of children and apes, or the phrenzy of lunatics, what man of sense could reverence them, or believe in them ? It would not have redounded to the reputation of his sense, if he had. Where Religion is pure Superstition, and the belief of it absolutely groundless and blind ; where its Rites are fanciful, foolish, and unmanly, as the Religion, and Gods, and Worship of the Pagans were ; it would have been a revolt from common Reason to have had any such Religion. We know how freely CICERO deals with their Gods.

IT is true that these great men of Rome, who either had no notion of Religion, or one quite opposite to that publicly received and practised, regarded it as far as it was interwoven with the constitution of the State, and subservient to the ends of Government : yet they suffered their Poets, especially the dramatic Poets, to treat their Gods with severe jests and satire. They seemed to be of TIBERIUS's mind, *Deorum injurias diis curæ* ; that is, to leave to the Gods the avenging of indignities

dignities done to the Gods. Men were punished for their libelling particulars, people of condition, and especially Magistrates ; but to ridicule and lampoon the Deities, JUPITER himself, even upon the Stage, was a matter of impunity and diversion.

THEIR Religion therefore consisting in Rituals, a man might be very religious with a very debauched and libertine Spirit. *Cultor deorum parvus & infrequens*, is a complaint made by HORACE of himself, but does not seem to infer much heavenly-mindedness, nor a departure from his impure pleasures. One might, on the contrary, be exactly good and just, nay the pattern of Virtue, and a public patriot, without any tincture of their Religion. Such was CATO the Cenfor, such EPICURUS, and such was TACITUS. He thought that either there was no Providence (for his mind wavered between the doctrine of necessity and that of chance) or such a Providence as he could have well spared ; *non esse curæ Deis securitatem nostram, esse ultionem*. But this bold reproach upon the Deities, he uttered after his heart, zealous for the good of his Country, had been heated by a terrible detail of her Calamities.

NOR indeed, according to the ideas conceived of these odd Beings, so easily humoured and provoked, could one say much good of them, or expect it from them. In the reign of NERO he enumerates many presages, from which, as from signals divinely sent, great changes for the better were inferred ; but all vanished into air and disappointment ; *prodigia crebra & inrita intercessere*, &c. Hence he argues, that all these omens happened so apparently without any direction or interposition of the Gods, that, for many years after, NERO rioted in power and wickedness.

WHATEVER were the speculations of our Author about Religion, his Morality is strong and pure,

pure, full of benevolence to human society, full of every generous passion, and every noble principle; a terrible rebuke to iniquity, vice and baseness, in all stations and shapes; and one continued lesson of wisdom and virtue. These are the excellencies which in civil life recommend Books and Men; these the excellencies which recommend TACITUS; excellencies which he has carried as high as the utmost efforts of human genius could carry them. Mr. BAYLE says, *Ses Annales & son Histoire sont quelque chose d'admirable, & l'un des plus grands efforts de l'esprit humain; soit que l'on y considere la singularité du stile, soit que l'on s'attache à la beauté des pensées, & à cet heureux pinceau avec lequel il a su peindre les disguisemens & les fourberies des politiques, & le foible des passions.*

NOR does he shew more abilities than probity, as astonishing as his abilities were; and having so much, what more did he want for his design? or what more could we wish in him? Which is the better instructor, he who has store of faith, but wants virtue, and abounds not in good sense; or he who wants the first, but abounds in knowledge and the rules of righteousness? It is for this we consult TACITUS, not for his Theological Speculations. How do his metaphysical notions impede his excellencies as an Historian and Politician; or his mistakes in one thing, lessen his discernment and veracity in another?

ACCORDING to the accounts of our best Travellers concerning China, the Mandarins who are the Nobility of the country, the Learned, and such as hold the Magistracy, have no religion at all, their governing principle is publick spirit; their principal study the good of the State; and they are noted for politeness and virtue. The Bonzes or Priests, on the contrary, pretend to extraordinary devotion; but are vicious, sordid, base, and void  
of

of every virtue private or public. Here is an instance of a Monarchy the most thriving of any upon earth, or that ever was upon earth ; an Empire that contains more people than half the rest of the globe, these people full of industry and arts ; yet administered by men who are of no particular Religion, or Sect, but are guided by the natural lights of Reason and Morality ; nor knows it a greater blot and disgrace than the vile lives of its *Priests* and *Religious*.

AGAINST this instance set another, that of the Pope's Dominions, the center of the Romish Religions ; where holy men sway all things, and have engrossed all things ; where tortures and flames keep out Infidels and Heretics, and every man who thinks awry ; and where the champions for devotion, so called, protect the Church, and feed themselves. Now where but here should one look for the marks of opulence, ease, and plenty, and public happiness, if by an Administration of Priests and Devotees, public happiness were advanced ? But behold a different and melancholy scene ! Countries fertile, but desolate ; the people ignorant, idle, and starving, and all the marks and weight of Misery !

DOES not this merit reflection, that a Church blended and debauched with excessive wealth and power, is worse, a thousand times worse than none ; and that the mere light of nature and reason is many degrees more conducive to the temporal welfare of humankind, than a Religion or Church which is purely lucrative and selfish ? Were the Romish Church, or any other Church that teaches pains and penalties ; any that exalts Ecclesiastics into power, and leaves them the sword, or wields it for them, once established in China ; there would in a little time be an end of their incredible numbers ; and it would soon feel the cruel curse attending the change. In this sentiment I am vouched by that

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polite Writer, and candid Prelate, Dr. TILLOTSON: “ Better it were, says he, there were no revealed Religion, and that human nature were left to the conduct of its own principles and inclinations, which are much more mild and merciful, much more for the peace and happiness of human society ; than to be acted by a Religion that inspires men with so wild a fury, and prompts them to commit such outrages.” Serm. Vol. I. p. 206.

Make another comparison between two particulars, a Heathen guided by reason, and a Christian by passion and false zeal ; between TACITUS and St. JEROM ; behold the politeness, candour, eternal truth, and good sense in the one ; mark the rashness and enthusiasm, the fierceness and falshood of the other. So much stronger were the passions and insincerity of this great Saint, than the impressions of the Christian Religion, which is all meekness and candour ; nay, he often makes it a stale for his fury, forgeries, and implacable vengeance. I meddle not with his strange maxims, some foolish, some mad, many impracticable, and others turbulent and seditious. In TACITUS you have the good sense and breeding of a Gentleman ; in the Saint the rage and dreams of a Monk. Does the religion of the latter recommend his reveries and bitter spirit ; or the want of it in TACITUS, weaken the shining truths that are in him ?

WHEN a Writer relates facts, or reasons from principles, his good sense and veracity only are to be regarded ; and we have no more to do with his speculations or mistakes in other matters, than with his person or complexion. PLINY and ARISTOTLE are reckoned Atheists ; but what is this to their fine parts and learning ? With small spirits and bigots every thing that is noble and free, is Atheism and Blasphemy. The littleness and sourness of

of their own hearts, is the measure of all things. NERVA, TRAJAN, and MARCUS AURELIUS were Heathen Princes; but they had virtue and benevolence, and their administration was righteous: what more did their subjects want from them? JUSTINIAN, CONSTANTIUS, JOHN BASILOWITZ, JOHN GALEAS, and LEWIS the eleventh were Christian Princes, and men pretending to high Devotion; some of them great contenders for Orthodoxy, and great builders of Churches; but all barbarous and consuming Tyrants. What were the people or themselves the better for their Religion, without good nature and probity? Nay, they made Religion one of the principal machines for Tyranny; as Religion in a Tyrant or Impostor is little else but an impious bargain and composition with God for abusing men.

SUCH in truth is the situation of things below, such the frame and foible of men, that it depends in a great measure upon Civil Government, whether Religion shall in this world do good or harm. Is a country filled with oppression, the happier for being filled too with Churches and Priests, as were Greece and Italy by JUSTINIAN? Or can a country that abounds in virtue, and happiness, and good Laws, want any more to all the purposes of social life; like Lacedæmon and Rome in their best ages? Let us praise all who have true Religion, full of mercy, and void of bigotry; but let us not condemn such as, for want of the same lights and revelation which we have been blessed with, are, without any forms of Religion, virtuous and wise. Certainly worse, much worse than none, is that Religion which inspires pride, bigotry, and fierceness, and hath not charity for all men.

To conclude this head, I shall here subjoin what I have said elsewhere to the like purpose; “ That  
“ black is not white, and that two and two make four,

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“ is as true out of the mouth of an Atheist, as out of  
 “ the mouth of an Apostle. A penny given by an  
 “ Atheist to a beggar, is better alms than a half-  
 “ penny given by a Believer ; and the good sense  
 “ of an Atheist is preferable to the mistakes of a  
 “ good Christian. In short, whatever reputed  
 “ Atheists do well, or speak truly, is more to be  
 “ imitated and credited, than what the greatest  
 “ Believers do wickedly, or say falsely. Even in  
 “ the business of bearing testimony, or making a  
 “ report, in which cases the credit or reputation  
 “ of the witness gives some weight, or none, to  
 “ what he says ; more regard is to be had to the  
 “ word of an Unbeliever, who has no interest on  
 “ either side, than to the word of a Believer, who  
 “ has ; neither are the good or bad actions of an  
 “ Atheist worse, with respect to the world at least,  
 “ for his being one ; though the sin of a Saint is  
 “ more sinful than that of a Pagan. It is the  
 “ greatest folly to think that any man’s crimes are  
 “ the less for him who commits them ; or that  
 “ truth is less or more truth, for the ill or good  
 “ name of him who speaks it.”

### SECT. XI. *The foolish censure of* BOCCALINI *and others upon* TACITUS.

THE censure passed upon TACITUS by  
 BOCCALINI and some of the other Com-  
 mentators, as if he maliciously taught lessons of  
 Tyranny ; is so senseless and absurd, that it merits no  
 notice, much less confutation. As well may they  
 say that LUTHER and father PAUL display the  
 encroachments and frauds of the Church of Rome,  
 on purpose to teach that or other Churches how to  
 oppress and deceive ; or that LIVY, as great a  
 Republican as ever lived, exposed the usurpations  
 and Tyranny of TARQUIN, in order to instruct  
 Usurpers



Usurpers to support themselves and extinguish public liberty. TACITUS represents Tyrants as odious to all men, and even to themselves. But what answer could one give to a man who should advance that GROTIUS wrote his Book of the Truth of Christianity, with a view to promote and confirm Paganism?

Sect. XII. *Of the several Commentators and Translators of TACITUS.*

**I**T were almost endless to mention all who have written upon TACITUS, and their success; numbers have done it, many as Critics, some politically; and several of the former with sufficiency and applause, such as LIPSIUS, FREINSHEMIUS, old GRONOVIVS, and RYCKIUS. From the edition published by this last I have made my Translation; the text is very correct, and his notes are judicious and good. Of all those who have commented upon his Politics, I can commend but very few; I mean such as I have seen; many of them are worse than indifferent; tedious compilations of common places, or heavy paraphrases upon the original, where its vigour is lost in superfluous explications; and the lively thoughts of TACITUS converted into lifeless maxims; frequently wrong converted; frequently trifling and affected; often such discoveries as are obvious to every peasant or child; or puffy declamations, tedious, laboured and uninstruative. Of one or the other sort are the Commentaries of BOCCALINI, ANNIBAL SCOTI, FORSTNERUS, SCHILDUS, and divers others.

Mr. AMELOT DE LA HOUSSE has made a large collection of political observations upon TACITUS, as far as the thirteenth Annal inclusive; some of them pertinent and useful; but many

of them insipid, and little worth. The very first which he makes, is flat and poor; *dès que la Roïauté commence a dégénérer en tyrannie, le peuple aspire à la liberté.* Little better is this; *quand un Prince commence à devenir infirme, ou cassé, tout le monde tourne les yeux vers le soleil levant, c'est à dire, vers son successeur;* or this; *les refus du Prince doivent être assaisonnez de douceur & de courtoisie;* or this; *ceux même qui ont renoncé à leur bonheur, & qui font gloire de leur sceleratesse, s'offensent d'être appellez traitres;* or this; *un bon General ne doit jamais bazarder une bataille, qu'il n'ait mis bon ordre par tout;* this too; *il n'y a rien dont un Favori, ou un premier Ministre, doive se mettre plus en peine, que de bien connoître l'humeur de son Prince;* this too; *un Prince dépouillé de ses Etats ne reste pas volontiers entre les mains de celui qui en est emparé.* All this is trite, void of force and instruction.

THE Spanish Translation by DON ALAMOS DE BARRIENTOS, is accompanied with numerous Annotations, by him stiled *Aforismos*, which are as indifferent and impotent as the Translation it self is good and strong. His observation upon, *cuncta discordiis civilibus fessa, nomine principis sub imperium accepit*, is, *Quando alguno se viniere a hazer Senor de una grande, y poderosa ciudad libre, lo mas ordinario será despues de una larga guerra civil;* “ the opportunity for any one to become master of à great  
 “ and powerful free City, is most commonly at the  
 “ end of a great civil war.” TACITUS says that AUGUSTUS left the first Lords of the Senate his heirs in the third degree, though most of them were hated by him; *plerosque invisos sibi, sed jactantia gloriaque ad posteros.* DON ALAMOS observes upon this; *El principe muchas vezes haze honra a las personas que aborrece, para ganhar fama de modestia y sufri-*  
 “ he hates, purely for the reputation of moderation

“ and temper.” TACITUS says of GERMANICUS, *anxius occultis in se patrum aviaque odiis, quorum causse acriores, quia iniquæ* ; *El hombre inocente y bueno*, (says DON ALAMOS by way of Annotation) *de ninguna cosa recibe tanta congoxa, como de los secretos aborrecimientos que sabe le tienen sus parientes, sin merecerlo* ; “ a worthy and innocent man feels  
 “ so much anguish from nothing as from the secret  
 “ hate which he knows his parents bear him, with-  
 “ out deservng it.”

OF small value are such reflections, and small thought they cost to produce them ; the less is the wonder that DON ALAMOS has vented such a myriad. CANINI, an Italian, has however translated them into his own language, with high encomiums, and published them with the Italian Translation of POLITI, a Translation which reads well, but hampers the thoughts of TACITUS, and from an affectation to be as concise as the original, loses much of its weight and spirit. DON ALAMOS, on the contrary, opens the sentiments of TACITUS fully, often over-fully, by supplemental parentheses, that are sometimes perfectly needless, and always mar and embarrass the reading.

THESE are the only Spanish and Italian Versions which I have seen of TACITUS. There are two more of the former, by SUEYRO and COLOMA, both well esteemed ; and as many more Italian by DATI and DAVANZATI, not at all commended. Of French Translations there are five or six, all, except two, good for little, some of them good for nothing. These two are by Mr. D'HARLAY DE CHANVALLON, who has done the whole, Mr. AMELOT DE LA HOUSAYE, who has only gone as far as the thirteenth Annal. The former is vigorous and just, like that of a man of sense and observation ; nor has the latter any advantage over him, save that his French is more

modern, if that be any. ABLANCOURT is likewise one of the French Translators of TACITUS, a man of name and of a flowing stile; but if he has abused other Authors as he has abused and transformed TACITUS, it is fit they were all done over again. There is some life in him, and harmony, but no justness nor strength. All the force and fine ideas of TACITUS are lost in ABLANCOURT.

SECT. XIII. *A Conjecture concerning the modern Languages, more largely concerning the English.*

OF the French Tongue itself I may venture to say, after better judges than my self, that from a laxness and effeminacy essential to it, it cannot naturalize the strong expressions of the Ancients, without spreading and weakening them considerably. It has a number of relatives, particles and monosyllables that return incessantly, and flatten the sense, and tire the ear. The English Language has indeed many words more harsh than the French; but it has likewise many more spirituous and sounding; and though it be also loaded with relatives, particles and words of one syllable, yet I think not to the same degree, nor do those we have return so often; and we can frequently drop the particles, and leave them to be understood, as well as the relatives.

IN this respect the Latins had an advantage over the Greeks; as those two Languages have over every other that is now in the world, or perhaps ever was. We are infinitely behind them in signification and sound, and, with all our adventitious words and refinements, are still crude and gothick to them. Nearest in Language to the Ancients come the Spaniards and Italians, though still far behind; yet they stand over the heads of the English

gliff and French, and walk while we creep. The Spanish is the more fonorous and lofty ; the Italian the more fweet and gliding ; and both excel in harmony, numerosity, and the pomp of words. The Italians feem to have fpoiled their Tongue, by wild hyperboles, and phrafes of mere found and compliment ; whether it be from the turn of the nation to Love and Mufic ; whether it be from the Legends of their Saints, and their extravagant Panegyrics upon them, or from their Slavery to Churchmen, or the Severity of their Government, or from what other caufe, I do not pretend to determine.

THE French profefs to have greatly refined their Tongue ; and it is indeed brought to be exceeding glib and perfpicuous ; but whether the refiners have not pared away its ftrength to make it more fhapely and regular, has been doubted. Some refinements we alfo have made in ours, perhaps by imitating the French ; though I hope we have better preferved its force. Eafy writing has been ftudied to affectation ; a fort of writing, which, where the thoughts are not clofe, the fenfe ftrong, and the phrafe genteel, is of all others the moft contemptible. Such were the productions of Sir ROGER L'ESTRANGE, not fit to be read by any who have tafte or good breeding ; they are full of technical terms, of phrafes picked up in the ftreet from apprentices and porters, and nothing can be more low and naufeous. His fentences, befides their grofsnefs, are lively nothings, which can never be tranflated (a fure way to try language) and will hardly bear repetition. *Between hawk and buzzard : clawed him with kindnefs : alert and frifky : guzzling down tippie : would not keep touch : a queer putt : lay curfed bard upon their gizzard : cram his gut : conceited noddy : old chuff :* and the like, are fome of Sir ROGER'S choice flowers. Yet this man was reckoned a Mafter, nay a Reformer of the Englifh Language ;

Language ; a man who writ no Language ; nor does it appear that he understood any ; witness his miserable Translations of CICERO's Offices and JOSEPHUS. That of the latter is a Version full of mistakes, wretched and low, from an easy and polite one of Monsieur D'ANDILLY.

SIR ROGER is one amongst the several hands who attempted TACITUS, and the third Book of the *History* is said to be done by him. He knew not a word of it but what he has taken from Sir HENRY SAVILL, and him he has wretchedly perverted and mangled. Out of the wise and grave mouth of TACITUS he brings such quaint stuff as this ; *to cast the point upon that issue : — sneaking departure of VITELLIUS : — at the rate of a man at his wit's end : — sottish multitude never went beyond bawling : — an Emperor lugg'd out of his hole : — the sexton of the Capitol : — the Government dropt into VESPASIAN'S mouth : — not cut out for a soldier : — went not a sneaking way to work : — VALENS in the interim with his dissolute train of capons* : [into this senseless cant word Sir ROGER elegantly changes that of *Eunuchs* used by Sir H. SAVILL ; for I dare say he neither saw nor knew the original, *agmine spadonum*] : *the Emperor guzzling and gormandizing like a beast.*

SUCH jargon is hardly good enough for a Puppet-show. Sir ROGER had a genius for buffoonry and a rabble, and higher he never went ; his stile and his thoughts are too vulgar for a sensible artificer. To put his Books into the hands of youth or boys, for whom chiefly ÆSOP, by him burlesqued, was designed, is to vitiate their taste, and to give them a poor low turn of thinking ; not to mention the vile and slavish principles of the man. He has not only turned ÆSOP'S plain Beasts, from the simplicity of nature, into Jesters and Buffoons ; but out of the mouths of animals inured to the boundless

boundless freedom of air and desarts, has drawn doctrines of servitude, and a defence of Tyranny.

THE taste and stile of the Court is always the standard of the public. At the Restoration, a time of great festivity and joy, the formal and forbidding gravity of the preceding times, became a fashionable topic of ridicule; a manner different and opposite was introduced; jest and waggers were encouraged; and the King himself delighted in drollery, and low humour. Hence the Language became replete with ludicrous phrases; archness and cant grew diverting; the writings of witlings passed for wit; and if they were severe upon the Sectaries, as the fashion was, they pleased the Court. By this means L'ESTRANGE got his character. It is very true that there appeared at the same time men of just wit, and polite stile; but it cannot be denied but that the other manner was prevalent; the greatest wits sometimes fell into it.

THIS humour ended not with that Reign, nor the next, but was continued after the Revolution by L'ESTRANGE, TOM BROWN, and other delighters in low jests, their imitators; and such witlings have contributed considerably to debauch our Tongue. If we go so high as Queen ELIZABETH's time, we shall find that a good stile began then to be used, agreeably to the good sense of that Princess, and her Court; and we have the Language of that age in Sir WALTER RALEIGH, whose genius was too just and strong to go into the miserable pedantry of the next reign. Many of the productions then, and particularly the Royal productions, are wretched beyond measure; (I wish the honour and politics of those days had been better) nor could so considerable a man as Sir FRANCIS BACON escape the infection.

THE next Prince affected a high and rigid gravity, and a pomp and solemnity of stile became common;

common; yet the Language began to recover, when the cant and enthusiasm ensuing, gave it a new turn extremely insipid. and offensive. But between the reign of King JAMES and the Restoration, several Writers appeared eminently happy in their stile: such particularly was Mr. CHILLINGWORTH, whose language is flowing, and free as his own candid spirit. The same character is due to the excellent Lord FALKLAND, and Mr. HALES of Eaton. Mr. HOBBS's English is beautiful almost, if not altogether, beyond example; nothing can be finer than his way of expressing his thoughts; his stile is as singularly good, charming and clear, as many of his principles are dangerous and false. Under this character of his stile I do not comprize his Translation of THUCYDIDES; as it does not, however just it be, resemble his other Works. Hence I am inclinable to believe what I have heard, that it was done by some of his disciples, and by him revised; yet it far excels most of our Translations. MILTON's English Prose is harsh and uncouth, though vigorous and expressive. The stile of SELDEN and HAMMOND is rugged and perplexed.

SECT. XIV. *A Conjecture concerning the present state of the English Tongue, with an account of the present Work.*

OF the Character of Writing in our own time, were I to give my opinion, I should be apt to say, that in general it comes too near to talking; a method which will hardly make it delightful or lasting; no words upon paper will have the same effect as words accompanied with a voice, looks and action; hence the thoughts and language should be so far raised as to supply the want of those advantages; but indeed this is impossible, and therefore there is the greater



greater cause for heightening the stile ; now because laboured periods are offensive, and flat ones are insipid, the excellency lies between pomp and negligence. Let it be as easy as you please, but let it be strong ; two advantages that are very compatible, and often found in the same writer. **LIVY** is remarkable for both ; it is his eloquence and ornaments which have preserved him in such esteem, as much as his matter and good sense. The late Lord **SHAFTESBURY**, though he has been perhaps too anxious and affected in forming his phrase to easiness and fluency, has yet had good success ; since it is manifest that his soft alluring stile has multiplied his Readers, and helped powerfully to recommend his Works. **Dr. BURNET** of the Charter-House wrote with great eloquence and majesty, yet easy and unaffected. **Dr. TILLOTSON**'s stile is plain and pleasant, enlivened too with fine images, and strong sense ; yet many, while they strove to imitate him, have written very poorly. This has happened to some of our Divines, who, studying his manner, but wanting his genius, have uttered a flow of words, which sound not ill, but lack spirit and matter. I have looked over whole pages of **Bishop BLACKAL**'s Sermons, without finding any thing which offended the ear, or pleased the imagination, or informed the understanding. I cannot help mentioning here another Writer, who has gained great reputation for Stile, without deserving any ; I mean **Dr. SPRAT**, Bishop of Rochester. His expression is languishing and insipid, full of false pomp, full of affectation. He is always aiming at harmony and wit, but succeeds ill ; for his manner is starched and pedantic. With much greater justice has the Stile of **Dr. ATTERBURY**, his successor, been admired.

OUR Tongue is naturally cold, and the less force our words have, the more they must be multiplied ;

this multiplying of words is tedious ; thence the remedy is as bad as the disease. The Latin phrases, on the contrary, are short and lively, and a few words convey many images. These difficulties, with many others, I found in this Translation very sensibly. I wanted new words, but have rarely coined any, as the creating of words is generally thought affected and vain ; yet I have sometimes ventured upon a new phrase, and a way of my own, upon drawing the English idiom as near as possible to that of the Latin, and to the genius of my Author ; by leaving the beaten road, dropping particles, transposing words, and sometimes beginning a sentence where it is usual to end it. I have studied to imitate the spirit, eloquence and turns of TACITUS, as far as I could, assisted by a Language weak in its sounds, and loose in its contexture. This manner of writing, I own, would be strange and even ridiculous in plain and familiar subjects ; but where the subject is high and solemn, there must be a conformity of style.

IN the political Discourses following, I have likewise taken a method of my own, in reasoning largely upon topics which to me seemed of the most moment to this free Nation, and giving an idea of the politics of the Cæsars ; of the *vis, artes, & instrumenta regni*, as they are called by TACITUS. I have vindicated the principles of civil Liberty ; I have examined the defences made for CÆSAR and AUGUSTUS ; I have displayed the genius of these Usurpers ; the temper and debasement of the people ; with the conduct and tyranny of their successors, to the end of the *Annals*. In my Translation of the *History* I have done the same. I have little troubled myself with the strife and guesses of Commentators, and various Readings. I have chosen the best editions, and where the meaning was dubious, taken the most probable ; for,  
after

after all, there is a good deal of guess-work and uncertainty; difficulties not peculiar to TACITUS.

I was persuaded to this undertaking several years ago by a friend of mine, a Gentleman of Letters in the City; for then I had never seen the English Translation, and knew not but it was a good one. Mr. TRENCHARD approved the design with his usual zeal for every thing which favoured public Liberty. My Lord CARTERET, who understands TACITUS perfectly, and admires him, was pleased to think me not unfit for it, and gave me many just lights about the manner of doing it; that particularly of allowing my self scope and freedom, without which I am satisfied every Translation must be pedantic and cold. A Translation ought to read like an Original. The Duke of ARGYLL espoused it generously, with that frankness which is natural to him, agreeably to his knowledge and taste of polite Learning, and to his sincere love of Liberty. So did my Lord TOWNSHEND. Sir ROBERT WALPOLE encouraged me in the pursuit of it in a manner eminently to my credit; and to many Gentlemen of my acquaintance I am much obliged upon this occasion. I own I have been long about this Translation; that I was so, is to be ascribed not so much to idleness, as to diffidence. It was done a long while before I put it to the press; after all my care and many revises, I continued apprehensive that much fault might be found, and many objections made; a misfortune which I still doubt I shall not be able to escape, and wish I may not deserve. I therefore rely more on the candour of my Readers, than on my own sufficiency. Those of them who understand TACITUS in the original, will easily make allowances for the difficulty of making him speak any other Language. I have been chiefly careful not to mistake the sentiments of my Author about human Nature and Government;  
and

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and I will venture to say, that no man who has not accustomed himself to think upon these two subjects, can ever make tolerable sense of TACITUS, let him be as learned in other things as he will. For the same reason, no man that is merely Learned, can ever be pleased with a free Translation, however faithful and just ; for his chief attachment will ever be to Words and Criticism. Who had more Learning than Sir H. SAVILL ? 'tis plain he abounded beyond most men ; but I suppose Learning was his chief accomplishment ; and thence his Translation is a very poor one. The fault cannot be ascribed to the time ; for at that time the polite world wrote and spoke well ; and if Sir WALTER RALEIGH had then translated it, no body I believe would have ever attempted to mend it.

## DISCOURSE III.

### Upon CÆSAR the Dictator.

SECT. I. *Of CÆSAR'S Usurpation, and why his Name is less odious than that of CATILINE.*

NOTHING has been hitherto found a sufficient check and barrier to the exorbitant passions of men ; neither kindness nor severity ; nor mulcts nor pain ; nor honour ; nor infamy ; nor the terrors of death. A proof how far human malice or ambition is an over-match for human wisdom ; since Laws and Constitutions framed by the best and wisest men, have, first or last, become the sport and conquest of the worst, sometimes of the most foolish. Could wise Establishments have ensured the stability of a State, that of Rome had  
been

been immortal. Besides adopting all the best Institutions of the free States of Greece, <sup>a</sup> her principal struggle and employment for some Centuries, was the subduing of foreign enemies by Arms, and the securing of domestic Liberty by wholesome Laws; and for Laws and Arms she was the wonder and the glory of the earth. But she, whose force and policy no power could withstand, not that of Greece nor of Carthage, nor of the World, fell by the corruption, and perfidiousness, and violence of her own Citizens. The only sword that could hurt her, was her own; with that she trusted CÆSAR, and that he turned unnaturally upon his own mother; and by it enslaved her.

CATILINE's conspiracy and crime every man detects; yet CÆSAR accomplished what CATILINE only intended. Had he better qualities than CATILINE? he was so much the worse, and able to do higher mischiefs. See how infatuation prevails! the same men who abhor CATILINE, admire CÆSAR, who actually did more evil than ever the wicked heart of CATILINE had conceived. But CATILINE had no success, nor consequently flatterers. Had he succeeded, had he entailed Rome upon his race, and such as would have been concerned to have guarded his fame; there would not have been wanting flattering Poets and Historians to have echoed his Praises and Genius divine, his Eloquence, Courage, Liberality and Politics, and how much the degeneracy of Rome wanted such a Reformer, with every other topic urged in defence of CÆSAR. But CATILINE failed, and is owned to have been a Traitor. CÆSAR's iniquity was triumphant, so was his name; and after-ages have continued to reverence him by the force of habit, and of superstition which swallows every thing, exa-

<sup>a</sup> Accitis quæ usquam egregia.

mines nothing. When popular opinion has consecrated a man or a name, all that man's actions, however wicked or foolish, and every thing done under that name, are sure to be consecrated too. The force of authority is irresistible and infatuating, and reason and truth must yield to prejudice and words.

Sect. II. *Of the publick Corruption by CÆSAR promoted or introduced; with his bold and wicked Conduct.*

**W**AS the Commonwealth become disjointed and corrupt; as in truth it was deeply and dangerously? who had contributed so much as CÆSAR to that wicked work? From his first appearance in the world he confederated with every public Incendiary, with every troubler of the peace of the State, with every Traitor against his Country: infomuch that he was divested of the dignity of Prætor by a solemn Decree of Senate: and when he solicited for the Consulship, his ambition and violent designs were so much apprehended in that supreme Office<sup>b</sup>, that to check him with a proper Collegue, the Senators contributed a great sum of money; nor did even CATO deny but that such contribution, however against Law, was necessary then to save the State<sup>c</sup>.

HE began that Office with violent acts of power; by violence dispossessed his Collegue of all Share in the Administration; and, during the whole term, he raised and pulled down, gave and took away by mere will and power, whatsoever and whomsoever he would; terrified some, imprisoned others; forged

<sup>b</sup> Nihil non ausurum eum in summo magistratu.

<sup>c</sup> Ne Catone quidem abnuente eam largitionem e Rep. fieri.

plots, suborned lying accusers, and then murdered them, and trampled upon all Faith and Law.

To escape punishment for all these outrages, he corrupted and bribed the people, to chuse his own creatures into the Magistracy, or bribed the Magistrates after they were chosen. He went so far as even to engage some of them, by oath and writing, never to call him to account, nor suffer him to be called.

By the same wicked methods he obtained for his lot the province of Gaul, and kept it for ten years, committing fresh treason every day; making war of his own head, right or wrong, upon friend and foe; insomuch that it was proposed in Senate to deliver him up to the enemy; but faction and bribery saved him, and from the most extensive rapine he derived his power of bribing. He feasted the people; he gave them largesses; he gained the Senators by money, the soldiers by donatives; nay, the favourite servants and lowest slaves of considerable men, were bribed by him. Every prodigal, every expensive youth, every man indebted and desperate, every criminal, found in him a ready support and protector; and when their expences, debts, and crimes, were so excessive as to admit of no relief from him, to such he was wont to preach the absolute necessity of a Civil War.

NOR did foreign Kings and Nations escape his court and gifts; upon them he bestowed aids, and arms, and captives, all belonging to the Roman people, and without their authority; thus to purchase foreign friendship against a day of usurpation and need. To do all this he robbed the Provinces, plundered Towns, pillaged Temples, even the Capitol he plundered, whence he stole a vast quantity of gold, and placed so much gilt brass in the room of it, and put whole Kingdoms and Provinces under contribution to his privy purse.

How many thousand deaths did this man deserve; even before he had committed his capital iniquity! It was he who thus principally corrupted the State, and embroiled it, and unsettled it in all its parts.

HE offered indeed to disband his forces, if POMPEY would do so too; but even this offer was giving law to Rome. The Senate was to judge, and not CÆSAR, what armies were to be disbanded, what to be retained. Besides, even that proposal was justly suspected to have been faithless and hollow; since, had he executed the same, it had been easier for him to have re-assembled upon occasion his veteran soldiers, than for POMPEY his troops lately levied.

HAD there been no corruption in the State, such a man was enough to introduce it. From his infancy he was thought to have meditated the enslaving of his Country, and in order to enslave it, created corruption, or improved it. To commit the blackest treason and iniquity that the malice of man could devise, he stuck at no other, but by a Babel of crimes accomplished the highest.

SECT. III. CÆSAR *might have purified and reformed the State; but far different were his intentions. His Art, good Sense, and continued ill Designs.*

DID the State want reforming? why did not CÆSAR reform and restore it? This would have been true glory, the only true use of his absolute power, and the only amends for having assumed it. The work too was practicable; the wisest and greatest men in Rome thought it so, even after all the poison and depravity introduced by him. BRUTUS, CICERO, and the Senate thought so; else he would never have been put to Death by those who did it. If the State had been deemed



deemed irretrievable, and an Usurper a necessary evil, they could not have had a better than CÆSAR. But they judged otherwise, and for some time Liberty was actually restored. Why it subsisted no longer, was owing to casualties and the faithlessness of OCTAVIUS. No human wisdom can take in all incidents and possibilities at one view; to see them by succession is often to see them too late; and against what is not foreseen no remedy can be provided. CICERO who swayed the Senate, in hatred to ANTHONY, trusted OCTAVIUS too much, and raised him too high, and was by that false creature given up to the slaughter, to satiate the vengeance of ANTHONY, to cement their late union, and to begin the bloody Tragedy which they had meditated against their Country and her Liberty, by the murder of so signal a Patriot. What followed was horrible, continued massacres and the rage of the sword, the people armed against one another, two thirds of them destroyed, and AUGUSTUS established Sovereign over the rest. He too thought it possible to resettle the old free State, by proposing once or twice to resign; however insincere he were, it was a confession that he thought it to be practicable; and DRUSUS, his wife's son, declared his own purpose to effect it; nay, it was what TIBERIUS, after he was Emperor, pretended to do.

CÆSAR was said to have foretold the public Calamities and Civil Wars to ensue: Why did he not prevent them? By his Dictatorial power he might have removed what enormities, and made what regulations he would, suppressed the insolence of particulars, revived the force of the Laws, and reduced the Commonwealth to her first principles and firmness. Instead of this, he continued, more and more, to break her remaining balance, to

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weaken and debauch the people, and to destroy every Law of Liberty.

LIBERTY and the Republic were a jest to CÆSAR; he treated the very name with ridicule and contempt<sup>d</sup>; he punned upon SYLLA for resigning his usurped power. He had nothing in his head or heart but absolute rule, a Diadem, the title of King, and controuling the world according to his lust<sup>e</sup>; nay, to have his very words go for Laws<sup>f</sup>; and as a proof that he meant to entail all this pompous Dominion upon his Race, he had a Law ready to be proposed for a privilege of taking as many Wives as he thought fit, and of what quality and condition he thought fit. His acts of Tyranny were indeed so many, so high and insupportable, that even his dear friends the populace, notwithstanding all his bounties, his feasts and shews, and all his other arts to sooth and debauch them, grew fullen and discontented; they declaimed against such usurpation, in their houses and in the Forum; they called aloud for avengers, and gave him public affronts.

By the Laws of Rome the Dominion of one, and consequently the dominion of CÆSAR, was detestable and accursed, and any man was warranted to slay the Tyrant<sup>g</sup>: Nor was there any valid reason against killing CÆSAR, but that somewhat as bad or worse was to follow. Now the best and ablest Romans judged otherwise, as I have shewn; and who was better qualified to judge? As to CÆSAR's prophecy of worse times, it was deciding

<sup>d</sup> Nihil esse Rempublicam; appellationem modo sine corpore ac specie.

<sup>e</sup> Nullos non honores ad libidinem cœpit & dedit, spreto Patriæ more.

<sup>f</sup> Debere homines pro Legibus habere quæ dicat.

<sup>g</sup> Eum jus fasque esset occidi, neve ea cædes capitalis noxæ haberetur.

in his own favour, and not to be credited ; and there was policy in it as well as vanity.

THE accomplishments of CÆSAR, the mildness of his administration, and mercy to his enemies, have been much magnified. It is certain he had exquisite abilities and address ; but how did he apply them ? Was it not to be the Master of mankind ? and was not this, interest and self-love ? What could be more interested, what more selfish, than to take the world to himself ? CÆSAR had good sense and experience ; he knew that particular acts of cruelty and revenge were odious, even more odious than the slaughter of thousands, under the title of war and conquest, however unprovoked and unjust : So much more quarter from the world has ambition than cruelty, though the former is often the more mischievous passion. He knew, that, while general acts of blood would pass for Heroism, fit to be distinguished with praise and laurels, a particular life, taken away in anger, would pass for barbarity. Such fallacy is there in sounds, and in the imaginations of men ! We judge not of evil by its quantity, the true medium of judging, but by its name, and the quality of the doer or sufferer ; hence the foolish causes of popularity without merit and innocence. Acts of rage, the execution of particulars, and a vindictive Reign, would have diminished the Hero, and tarnished his fame, as much as his generosity to enemies, his noble contempt of fear and offenders, blazoned his glory, and begot admirers.

Sect. IV. *The probability of his waxing more cruel, had he reigned much longer.*

THE generous, the forgiving temper of CÆSAR, was no sure warrant, that he would not have broke out into personal cruelties ; for, of his public cruelty, Rome and the world were the theatre and

the witnesses : He must have acted agreeably to the necessities and jealousy of power, broken those necks which would not bend, and destroyed such as he could not but constantly fear. I own there came after him some Emperors who reigned without many acts of blood ; but the sovereignty was then thoroughly established, and they had no high spirits to fear, bred in the notions and possession of Liberty, as were all the Romans in his time. Nor, even after servitude had been begun, and for some time suffered under CÆSAR, could the second Triumvirate think themselves secure, till they had destroyed at once by Proscription a whole army of illustrious Romans, such as they conceived would oppose and even extirpate their domination. Nor did this tragical precaution and general barbarity, put an end to barbarity in particular instances ; AUGUSTUS, for the first years of his Reign, was making almost daily sacrifices of noble blood to his fears and safety.

POWER of it self makes men wanton, distrustful and cruel ; CÆSAR lived not long enough in purple to shew what he would prove ; five months were but a short term for trial<sup>h</sup>. It would be rash to assert, that he who had shed the blood of Nations and Armies, without provocation, without authority ; he who had violated Liberty and Law, and put chains upon his Country, and the race of men, would have spared particular lives, when from particular lives he came to apprehend danger and revolt. He that could be piqued even to folly and ridicule, because AQUILA the Tribune did not rise as he passed by ; he who could not put up this, nor forget it, nor cease mentioning it upon every occasion for a long while after, nor even forbear scolding at it, must have been capable of carrying his resentment

<sup>h</sup> Retinuit famam sine experimento.

very far, as well as of sudden anger ; nay, been full of capricious and childish humours. How far such humours, and vanity, and anger might have carried him, he lived not to shew. But he had amply shewn, that his Ambition was dearer to him than Rome and the whole earth, and to this private passion of his, every public regard had yielded ; the genuine mark this of a Tyrant, who rules the State for his own sake, and, rather than not rule it, enthralls it ! CÆSAR, who had committed all wickedness to gain power, would have committed more to have kept it, as soon as he found more to be necessary<sup>i</sup>.

WHAT avails the fair behaviour of one who may do what he pleases ? What avail his fair promises, which he may break when he pleases ? The worst of the Roman Emperors began their Reigns well, many of them excellently well ; as NERO, CLAUDIUS, CALIGULA, DOMITIAN<sup>k</sup> ; some of them reigned well for some years. CÆSAR was generous, magnificent, and humane to affectation, but<sup>l</sup> every passion, every sentiment must yield to the ardent lust of reigning. Had it not been for his great and acceptable qualities, he could not have introduced public bondage ; the Hero, the Orator, and the fine Gentleman, hid the Usurper, and palliated at least the Usurpation.

LET any man consider CÆSAR as a Subject of the State, altogether private ; one who never bore Office or Authority ; as a Physician, a Scribe or an Artist, or as one just started out of obscurity, or come from another Country ; and then ask himself, What has this man, this private unknown man, to

<sup>i</sup> Nemo enim unquam imperium flagitio quæsitum bonis artibus exercuit.

<sup>k</sup> Nihil abnuentem, dum dominationis adipisceretur.

<sup>l</sup> Cunctis affectibus flagrantiorē dominandi libidinem.

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do with governing all men against Laws established by all? His being once Consul, his commanding of Armies, and appearing in a great public light; gave him no more right to do what he did, than the quality of an Artist, a Scribe, Physician, Upstart, or Stranger, would have given him. Public trusts betrayed were aggravations of his crime, horrible aggravations! so were his excellent parts impiously applied.

Sect. V. *CÆSAR no lawful Magistrate, but a public Enemy.*

**O**F CÆSAR, his Usurpation and Death, I have reasoned largely elsewhere<sup>m</sup>, and shall here abridge part of that reasoning. “ He had no sort  
“ of Title, but success, gained by violence and all  
“ wicked means. The acquiring and exercising of  
“ Power by force is Tyranny, nor is success any  
“ proof of right. If the person of CÆSAR was  
“ sacred, so is the person of every Usurper and  
“ Tyrant; and if all the privileges and impunity  
“ belonging to a lawful Magistrate, do also apper-  
“ tain to a lawless Intruder and public Oppressor,  
“ then all these blessed consequences follow: There  
“ is an utter end of all right and wrong, public  
“ and private; every Usurper is a lawful Magi-  
“ strate; every Magistrate may be a lawless Tyrant;  
“ It is unlawful to resist the greatest human evil;  
“ the necessary means of self-preservation are  
“ unlawful: Though it be lawful and expedient to  
“ destroy little Robbers, who are so for subsistence,  
“ it is impious and unlawful to oppose great Rob-  
“ bers, who destroy nations out of lust and ambi-  
“ tion. Public mischief is defended by giving it a  
“ good name, since Tyranny may be practised with

<sup>m</sup> See CATO's Letters, Vol. II.

“ impunity, if it be but called Magistracy ; and  
 “ the execrable Authors of it are sacred, if they  
 “ but call themselves Magistrates ; Though it be  
 “ unlawful to be a public destroyer, yet it is unlaw-  
 “ ful to destroy him, and to prevent or punish  
 “ that which is most impious and unlawful. In  
 “ fine, any man who has wickedness and force  
 “ enough to destroy or enslave the whole world,  
 “ may do it, and be safe.

“ If CÆSAR was a lawful Magistrate, every  
 “ powerful villain may make himself one, and  
 “ lawful Magistrates may become such by mere  
 “ force and iniquity. But if lawful Magistracy be  
 “ not acquired by violence and butchery, CÆSAR  
 “ was none : if he was not, how came he by the  
 “ rights and impunity of such ?

“ AGAINST lawless force every man has a  
 “ right to use force. CÆSAR had no more right  
 “ than ALARICK, ATTILA, or BRENNUS,  
 “ who were foreign Invaders ; his crime was  
 “ greater, as, to that of usurpation, he added those  
 “ of ingratitude and treachery. It is owned that  
 “ when he first made war upon his Country, his  
 “ Country had a right to make war upon him ;  
 “ How came that right to cease, when he had  
 “ heightened that iniquity by success ? Is it lawful  
 “ to resist a Robber before he has robbed you, but  
 “ not after ? Is a wickedness lessened by aggrava-  
 “ tions ? CÆSAR had forfeited his life by all the  
 “ Laws of Rome ; was it not as lawful to take it  
 “ away by thirty men as by thirty thousand ; in  
 “ the Senate as in the field ?

“ A private man in society, even capitally in-  
 “ jured, must not be his own judge, but leave  
 “ revenge to the more impartial Law ; but a capital  
 “ offender against all, who sets himself above Law  
 “ and Judgment, is a public enemy ; and vio-  
 “ lence is the proper remedy for violence, when  
 “ no

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“ no other is left. In a State of Nature, every  
 “ man has a right to vindicate himself; when So-  
 “ ciety is dissolved, the same right returns. Men  
 “ can never be deprived of both public protection  
 “ and private defence.

“ CÆSAR had violated every tie that can bind  
 “ the human soul; Oaths, Trust, and Law; he  
 “ had violated every thing dear to human kind,  
 “ their Peace, Liberty, Rights and Possessions:  
 “ He did all this by means the most black and  
 “ flagitious; by Plots, Faction, Corruption, Rob-  
 “ bery, Devastation, Sacrilege, and Slaughter.

“ WHAT was left to the oppressed Romans to  
 “ do, under the bonds of the Oppressor with his  
 “ sword at their throat? Law and Appeals were  
 “ no more; a Tyrant was their Master; the Will  
 “ of a Tyrant their Law. Because he had slaugh-  
 “ tered and destroyed one half of the people, had  
 “ he thence a right to govern the rest? There  
 “ was no public force to oppose him; he had  
 “ destroyed many of the Armies of the State,  
 “ and appropriated the rest to himself against the  
 “ State; it would have been madness to have  
 “ thought of judicial process. In short, there was  
 “ no other way of abolishing his Tyranny, but by  
 “ dispatching the Tyrant.

Sect. VI. *Of the share which Casualties  
 had, in raising the Name and Memory of  
 CÆSAR. The Judgment of CICERO con-  
 cerning him.*

PEOPLE suffer their own imaginations to  
 abuse and mislead them. The sound of  
 CÆSAR's Name; the superstitious reverence paid  
 to it, his great employments, great victories, and  
 even his great usurpation, are all pompous images  
 that dazzle the eyes, and give a false lustre to the  
 blackest



blackest iniquity and imposture. Nay, it proved an advantage to the fame and defence of CÆSAR, that he was assassinated. Hence so much popular pity and lamentation for him ; hence so much rage and obloquy upon the Tyrannicides. A violent death or violent sufferings, often pass for great merit, often atone for great crimes ; and in the compassion for the doom of criminals the abhorrence of their villainies is often extinguished ; malefactors the most barbarous, who never shewed any mercy in their lives, are bewailed at their execution, only because they are executed.

THERE were circumstances also in his Death favourable to his fame ; he died with decency and a manly spirit, and he fell by the hands of his friends. These circumstances, and his bloody shirt displayed to a mob, with an artful melting speech from ANTHONY, inflamed them with sorrow and fury ; two gross passions which do not reason but feel. The same topics have ever since furnished undiscerning Declaimers with big words and vehemence, in behalf of so fine a man, slain for no fault but that of Usurpation and Tyranny ; a small crime, that of being the enemy of human kind !

As to the glory and prosperous fortune of this mighty Conqueror, CICERO says, with great truth, “ that Felicity is nothing else but good fortune  
“ assisting righteous Counsels ; nor can he whose  
“ purposes are not upright, be, from any success,  
“ esteemed in any-wise happy. Hence it is, that  
“ from the impious and abandoned pursuits of  
“ CÆSAR, no true felicity could flow : happier, in  
“ my judgment, was CAMILLUS under exile from  
“ his Country, than MANLIUS his co-temporary  
“ had been, though he had acquired over his Coun-  
“ try that Tyranny which he lusted after.” The

“ Epist. ad nepot.

same wise man says elsewhere, “ that he would  
 “ have preferred the last day of ANTONIUS the  
 “ Orator, tragical as it was, to the usurped rule of  
 “ CINNA, by whom that worthy Roman was bar-  
 “ barously murdered.” I cannot admire CÆSAR’S  
 ambition ; he would rather have been Lord of a  
 poor Village, than the second man in Rome. To  
 me it appears more glory to be the Member of a  
 free State, especially of the greatest State upon  
 earth, than a Lord of Slaves, the biggest Lord.

SECT. VII. *How vain it is to extol any  
 Designs of his for the Glory of the Ro-  
 man people.*

**I**T is said, that CÆSAR was meditating great and  
 glorious things for the Roman people, when he  
 was cut off. He might indeed have gathered empty  
 Laurels for himself by more wars at the expence of  
 the people ; but how this would have redounded to  
 their advantage, I cannot see. I can easily see, that  
 all the future strength he could have acquired, must  
 have been acquired to himself, and over them ; and  
 every accession of power must, by raising his Tyranny  
 higher, have sunk them lower, and streightened their  
 chains. He wanted to fight the Parthians, but first  
 he wanted to be King ; and for this purpose a Pro-  
 phesy was forged, that none but a King could con-  
 quer them. Was this impudent forgery too, and the  
 design of it, for the glory of the people who were  
 abused by it ? In short, he could have done nothing  
 beneficial or glorious for the Roman people, but to  
 have restored them to their ancient and substantial  
 glory, that of their Liberty and Laws. This too  
 would have been the highest glory of his own life,  
 which, to those who consider things as they are,  
 stripped of foolish fair names and disguises, is, with-  
 out this, all over black and infamous.

No man's life can be said to be detestable, if his was not ; seeing all the malefactors condemned since there were men and crimes, did not half the mischief which he did. It was even currently believed (and what worse could be believed of him than he had done?) that he meant to translate the seat of Empire, with all its strength, to Ilium, or to Alexandria ; and having exhausted all Italy by great levies, (that she might never recover herself) he would have begun, probably, a new sort of Sovereignty upon his own model, exempt from the names and appearances of the old Constitution and Laws, which still had reverence paid them at Rome, and consequently were so many grievances to him. Rome he intended to have left to the dominion of his creatures. It is probable he thought himself not safe at Rome, nor in any place which had ever known the governance of Laws, nor any where but at the head of Armies. He had reason for his fear ; the severest oppressor can never tie the hands of all the oppressed, nor put chains upon their resentments.

Sect. VIII. *Of his Death ; and the rashness of ascribing to divine Vengeance the fate of such as slew him.*

**I**N the midst of his farther designs, whatever they were, a bloody doom overtook this man of blood, and he was lawfully slain, though not by the forms of Law<sup>o</sup> ; his lawless power had made this impossible. It is true, they who slew him, were themselves slain. The righteousness of a cause does not always ensure its success ; too seldom, God knows ; but they who perish in defence of the Laws, are slain against Law. Such was the difference between his death and theirs. They were vanquished and slain

\* Abusus dominatione & jure cæsus existimaretur. (Sueton.)

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in a great Civil War, at a time when Courage, and Virtue, and Patriotism were capital and proscribed.

DID none of those who destroyed CÆSAR die a natural death? no more did CÆSAR, who destroyed the State. If this was not a judgment upon him, why should theirs be one upon them? What rule have we to know a judgment, but from the justice or iniquity of a cause? If so, CÆSAR fell by the appointment of Heaven; BRUTUS and his brethren by the malice of Men. But if there be no rule, or if judgments, like parties, take different sides; how dare we pronounce? How many of the Cæsars his successors died naturally? Not one, if we will believe the Historians and probability, from CÆSAR the Dictator to the Emperor VESPA-  
SIAN. AUGUSTUS was poisoned by LIVIA his wife; TIBERIUS smothered by MACRO his favourite, to make way for CALIGULA, who was slain with the sword by the officers of his guard. AGRIPPINA poisoned her husband CLAUDIUS; NERO stabbed himself; GALBA was murdered by the soldiers, so was VITELLIUS. OTHO fell by his own hands.

## DISCOURSE IV.

Upon OCTAVIUS CÆSAR, afterwards called AUGUSTUS.

SECT. I. *Of the base and impious Arts by which he acquired the Empire.*

**B**Y the death of the Usurper, Liberty was restored, but lasted not <sup>a</sup>; and OCTAVIUS succeeded CÆSAR, by no superior genius, by no military prowess or magnanimity; for tricking and deceit constituted his chief parts, and though he was bold in council, he was a coward in the field. But he usurped the Empire by methods so low and vile, as brought disgrace even upon Usurpation; by a thousand frauds, and turns suddenly made, without the common appearances of decency or shame; by thousands of murders deliberately committed, without process or provocation; by multiplied treacheries, assassinations, and acts of ingratitude; by employing ruffians, and being himself one; and by destructive wars conducted by the bravery of others.

HE levied forces without authority; and, under a lying pretence of defending Liberty, got to be employed by the State against ANTHONY. He then robbed the Commonwealth of her Armies; and was thought to have murdered both her chief Magistrates, the Consuls HIRTIUS and PANSA; the former by his own hand in the hurry of battle, the other after it, by causing poison to be poured

<sup>a</sup> Libertate improspere repetita.

into his wound by GLYCO his Physician. It is certain, that the Physician was suspected, seized, and even doomed to the torture, but saved by the credit of his master OCTAVIUS; whose villainy had these farther aggravations, that he was generally believed to have been a Pathic to HIRTIUS for hire; and PANSÁ had ever a tender regard for him, a regard superior to that which he owed his Country, as he manifested by the advice which he gave him before he expired under agonies caused by the hard-hearted contrivance of that his beloved and perfidious friend.

WITH this very Army of the Commonwealth he turned head upon the Commonwealth, marched in an hostile manner to Rome, and sent a deputation of Officers to his Masters the Senate, to demand the Consulship in the name of the Legions: and, upon some hesitation shewn by that venerable Body, one of these armed Embassadors laid his hand upon his sword, and told them, “If you will not make him Consul, this shall.” For his first credit with the Senate he was beholden to CICERO, at whose suit he was trusted with command in conjunction with the Consuls, and dignified with the title of Proprætor. We see how he requited the Senate, we see how he served the Consuls; and CICERO his father in Counsel, and the father of the Republic, he delivered up to be murdered and mangled by his implacable enemy.

SECT. II. *Of the vindictive spirit of OCTAVIUS, and his horrid Cruelties.*

IN the Battle of Philippi, OCTAVIUS was beaten out of the field, his Camp seized, and, but for the fortune and valour of ANTHONY, the day must have been lost. After the victory he shewed

as much insolence and cruelty, as he had wanted courage in it. He could not forbear manifesting cowardly spite to the dead body of BRUTUS, before whom he had a little before fled for his life, and sent the head of that excellent person to Rome, to be laid ignominiously at the feet of the Statue of CÆSAR. Different was the treatment shewn by ANTHONY, who had saved OCTAVIUS, and beat BRUTUS. ANTHONY beheld his Corpse with grief and tears, covered it with his own armour, and treated it with respect and tenderness. OCTAVIUS had not greatness of heart enough for such generous humanity; but treated every illustrious captive with bitter words and cowardly insults, and put them to death without mercy<sup>b</sup>; says SÆTONIUS. To one of these, imploring the privilege of burial, the base Tyrant answered, “That the fowls  
“ of the air would soon regulate that matter.” When a father begged mercy for his son, and the son for the father, the merciful OCTAVIUS commanded the father and son to fight for the survivorship. This barbarous fight he beheld, beheld the son slay his father, and then himself for having done it. Had not the remaining Prisoners reason, when they were brought before ANTHONY and him, to salute the former with the honourable title of *Imperator*, and the latter with invectives and contempt?

WITH the same cruel spirit he behaved himself after the siege of Perugia. All who applied to him, whether they pleaded innocence, or begged mercy, had one and the same merciless answer; “Death is  
“ the lot of you all;” and they had it. Three hundred of the chief, comprizing their Nobility and

<sup>b</sup> In splendidissimum quemque captivorum non sine verborum contumelio sævit,

<sup>c</sup> Moriendum esse.

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Magistrates, were carried in chains to an Altar raised to JULIUS CÆSAR, and there butchered like cattle; as victims to his ghost, upon the Ides of March, the Anniversary of his Assassination. The City itself he delivered to the lust and plunder of his soldiers, contrary to articles, and his faith given. Never was a more tragical and horrible scene. After killing, robbing and ravishing, what the sword could not destroy, the fire did; and that great and beautiful City, one of the fairest in Italy, was reduced to ashes. There were Historians, who asserted, that the quarrel between him and LUCIUS ANTONIUS, who had shut himself up in that City, was all feigned, and a contrivance between them, for two reasons; first, to try who were real friends, and who were covered enemies; and then, by the conquest and confiscation of such, to find a fund for paying the Veterans their promised largesse.

FROM the citizens of Nursia he took all that they had, their substance and even their city, and sent them forth to wander and starve; for no other crime but that, for their fellow citizens, slain at the siege of Modena, they had raised a Monument with an Inscription, “that they died for the public liberty;” though he had but just before fought and declared for the same side.

IT is impossible to paint the horrors of the Proscription; by it every considerable man in the Roman world, who was disliked, or suspected by the Triumvirate to disapprove their Tyranny, was doomed to die; it was death to conceal or to help them, and rewards were given to such as discovered and killed them. Many were betrayed and butchered by their slaves and freedmen; many by their treacherous hosts and relations; and many fled with their wives and tender children to the howling wilderness, and lived or perished amongst woods and wolves. Nothing was to be seen but blood and slaughter;



slaughter; the streets were covered with carcases; the heads of the illustrious dead were exposed upon the Rostra, and their bodies upon the pavement, denied the mercy of burial, other than such as they found in the entrails of devouring dogs and ravenous birds. This looked like dooming Rome to perish at once; and when the other two were satiated with so many butcheries, OCTAVIUS, who never had blood enough, still persisted to shed more. No sort of men escape his cruelty, nor Nobles, nor Knights, strangers nor acquaintance, nay, nor his confidants, and favourite freedmen; nor even his old companion and tutor, TORANIUS, no one knows why, unless for being an honest man, and a lover of his Country.

THESE victims continued daily for a course of years; the slightest suspicions, the vilest forgeries, were grounds for slaughters, for illustrious slaughters. Nor could the great quality and venerable station of QUINTUS GELLIUS the Prætor, nor his innocence, exempt him from the bloody hands of the executioner; nor was execution the worst part of his doom; he was by a band of soldiers seized in his seat of justice, hurried away and subjected to the torture, like the meanest slave; but confessed nothing. Nor did all this injustice and barbarity satisfy the gentle AUGUSTUS, so much renowned for moderation and clemency; he had the brutal baseness to dig out the eyes of that Magistrate with his own hands, before he allowed him the mercy of being murdered outright. One of his favourite Ministers shewed his sentiments of the clemency of AUGUSTUS plainly enough, upon the following occasion. That Prince was judging some criminals, and giving himself over to revenge, and bloody decrees, without check or compassion, when the Minister, who abhorred to see him engaged in such feats of cruelty,

elty, sent him a note, told him, “ he was a butcher,” and bad him “ come down from his Tribunal.”

*Se&ct. III. Of the treachery, ingratitude, and further cruelties of OCTAVIUS. That the same were wanton and voluntary.*

THE conduct of OCTAVIUS in regard to ANTHONY, was, like the rest of his conduct, all one train of perfidiousness. First he made court to ANTHONY, then suborned rogues to murder him ; then made war upon him with the arms of the State ; then joined with him against the State ; then by the bravery of ANTHONY he conquered the Empire, and then by plots, and the valour of AGRIPPA, he conquered ANTHONY ; then he was devising ways to destroy AGRIPPA, and, but for an expedient offered by MÆCENAS, had destroyed him.

WAS it strange that against such a Prince conspiracies were frequent ? As he was an Usurper he could not escape some ; his falshood and cruelties begot others ; and, from considerations public as well as personal, there was abundant cause for many. To punish one plot with exceeding violence, is a sure way to produce more ; and, when there is no safety found in innocence, further methods will be tried.

IT is a poor defence for AUGUSTUS, to say, that it was from necessity, and to serve himself, that he shed so much blood ; for, besides that his cruelty was natural, wanton and unnecessary, why did he seek to be in a station where acts of blood were necessary ? why did he usurp the state ? why did he make himself a mark for public and private vengeance ? was it not by ambition, was it not by treachery, that he assumed Sovereignty ? was he not

a public Traitor? and was it not his choice to be so? why did he wilfully commit crimes so flagitious, that in their defence he must commit more? Can one horrible iniquity efface another? Is a subject justified, who, because he has deserved the pains of treason, raises a rebellion against his Prince, nay, kills him, to be safe? No villainy ever was, or ever can be perpetrated, which such reasoning will not justify.

WHEN some were bold and honest enough to talk to OLIVER CROMWEL about his excesses and usurpation, he asked them, What would you have one in my station do? He was well answered: *Sir, We would have no body in your station.* To vindicate murder from the necessity of committing it, in order to conceal robbery; is to argue like a murderer and a robber; but it is honest Logic, to reply; “Do not rob, and then you need not be  
 “tempted to murder; but if you will do one, and  
 “consequently both, remember that punishment  
 “does or ought to follow crimes, and the more  
 “crimes the more punishment. If, by a repetition  
 “of crimes, you become too mighty to be punished,  
 “you must be content to be accursed and abhorred  
 “as an enemy to human race; you must expect  
 “to have all men for your enemies, as you are an  
 “enemy to all men; and since you make sport  
 “of the lives and liberties of men, you must  
 “not wonder, nor have you a right to complain,  
 “if they have all of them memories and feeling,  
 “and some of them courage and swords.”

Sect. IV. *Of the popular Arts and Accidents which raised the Character of AUGUSTUS.*

MANY things concurred to favour the fame of AUGUSTUS, and to obliterate his reproach. He reigned very long, and established a lasting peace; a special blessing and refreshment after a Civil War so long and ruinous<sup>d</sup>. For, though that war was the child of his ambition, yet, in a series of ensuing tranquillity, it was forgot. Nay, the greatness of the public calamities was a reason for forgetting them; the generation who felt them, were almost all cut off by them; and the next generation, which had not suffered, did not remember<sup>e</sup>: what the people had not seen, they did not lament. When he died there were scarce any living who had beheld the old free State<sup>f</sup>. The people too were deceived into a belief that they still enjoyed their old Government, because their Magistrates had still their old names, though with just as much power as he thought fit to leave them. This was the advice of MÆCENAS, that to the Officers of the State, the same names, pomp and ornaments should be continued, with all the appearances of authority without power<sup>g</sup>. They were to have no military command during their term, but to possess the old jurisdiction of adjudging all causes finally, except such as were capital; and though some of these last were left to the Governor of Rome, an Officer newly created by the Emperor, yet the chief were reserved.

<sup>d</sup> Cuncta discordiis civilibus fessa, sub imperium accepit.

<sup>e</sup> Juniores post Actiacam victoriam, etiam senes plerique inter bella civium nati.

<sup>f</sup> Quotusquisque reliquus qui Rempublicam vidisset?

<sup>g</sup> Eadem magistratuum vocabula: sua consulibus, sua prætoribus species.

Moreover

Moreover AUGUSTUS paid great court to the people : the very Name that covered his Usurpation, was a compliment to them : he affected to call it the Power of the Tribuneship, an Office first created purely for their protection, and as the strongest effort and barrier of popular Liberty. It was for their sake and security, he pretended to assume this power, though by it he acted as absolutely as if he had called it the Dictatorial power ; such energy there is in words ! The Office itself was erected as a bulwark against Tyranny ; and by the name of it Tyranny is now supported. In the same manner he used and perverted the Consulship ; another Magistracy peculiar to the Commonwealth, but by him abused to the ends of his Monarchy.

HE likewise won the hearts of the people by filling their bellies, by cheapness of provisions, and plentiful markets. This has infinite effect. If people have plenty at home, they will not be apt to discover many errors or much iniquity in the public, which will always be at quiet when particulars are so. But famine, or the fear of it, children crying for bread, mothers weeping for their children, and husbands and fathers unable to stop their tears, and find the necessaries of life for themselves, and such dear relations ; all these are terrible materials for tumults, sedition, and even for revolutions. But people in ease and plenty are under no temptation to be inquiring into the title of their Prince, or to resent acts of power which they do not immediately feel.

HE frequently entertained them with Shews and Spectacles ; a notable means to produce or continue good humour in the populace, to beget kind wishes and zeal for the author of so much joy, and to make them forget Usurpation, Slavery, and every public evil. These were indeed used for the ends of corruption and servitude ; they rendered the people idle,

venal, vicious, insensible of private virtue, insensible of public glory or disgrace; but the things were liked, and the ends not seen, or not minded, so that they had their thorough effect; and the Roman people, they who were wont to direct mighty wars, to raise and depose great Kings, to bestow or take away Empires, they who ruled the world, or directed its rule, were so sunk and debauched, that if they had but bread and shews, their ambition went no higher.

By the same arts Cardinal MAZARIN began to soften and debase the minds of the French; and after his death the like methods for promoting of idleness and luxury were pursued; shews, debauchery, wantonness and riot were encouraged and became common; and after the Restoration, England adopted the modes of France, her worst modes. There were some, too many, who, unworthy, of their own happiness and Liberty, came to admire her Government and misfortune; and laboured, with the spirit of Parricides, though without their punishment, to bring ours to the model of that.

I cannot omit observing here, that by the same means that CÆSAR and AUGUSTUS acquired the Empire, they destroyed its force. In the Civil Wars great part of the people perished, and the rest they debauched. They had utterly drained or corrupted that source of men which furnished soldiers who conquered the earth; henceforth the *plebs ingenua* became a mere mob, addicted to idleness and their bellies, void of courage, void of ambition, and careless of renown. Armies were with difficulty raised amongst them; when raised, not good, or apt to corrupt the rest. It was such who excited the sedition in the German Legions, after the death of AUGUSTUS<sup>b</sup>:

<sup>b</sup> Vernacula multitudo, nuper acta in urbe delectu, lascivæ fueta, laborum intolerans, implere ceterorum rudes animos; venisse tempus, &c. An. 1. C. 31.

“ the recruits lately raised in Rome, men accustomed to the softness and gaieties of the City, and impatient of military labour and discipline, inflamed the simple minds of all the rest by seditious insinuations, and harangues, &c.” Indeed the Roman Armies (so chiefly in name) were mostly composed of foreigners.

To engage new creatures and dependencies, he created many new Offices; as the multitude of Offices in France is reckoned a great support of the Authority Royal. He raised many public buildings, repaired many old, and to the City added many edifices and ornaments. He attended business, reformed enormities; shewed high regard for the Roman name; was sparing in admitting foreigners to the rights of Citizens; preserved public peace; procured public abundance, promoted public pleasure and festivity; often appeared in person at the public diversions, and in all things studied to render himself dear to the populace. In truth, when he had done all the mischief he could, or all that he wanted, and more, he ceased his cruelty and ravages. This too was imputed to him for merit. He was reckoned very good, because he began to do less mischief. It was a rational saying of that madman CALIGULA, “ that calamitous and tragical to the Roman people were the boasted Victories of his great grandfather AUGUSTUS;” and therefore he forbade them to be solemnized annually for the future.

*SECT. V. Though AUGUSTUS courted the people, and particular Senators, he continued to depress public Liberty, and the Senate.*

**B**UT, amidst all these acts of popularity and beneficence, and this plausible behaviour of AUGUSTUS, the root of the evil remained and spread; the bulwarks of Liberty were daily broken down, and having lulled the public asleep, he was sowing his tares. The best of his Government was but the sunshine of Tyranny<sup>k</sup>. AUGUSTUS was become the centre and measure of all things; he was the Senate, Magistracy and Laws; the arms of the Republic he had wrested out of her hands; those who had wielded them for her, he had slain<sup>l</sup>. The armies of the State were now the armies of AUGUSTUS, and every Province where Legions were kept or necessary, he reserved to himself; such as were unarmed he left to the Senate and people; in kindness forsooth to them; for he studied to relieve them from all anxiety and fatigue, and to leave them nothing to do; but would take all the care and trouble to himself. Italy, the original soil of Liberty and Freemen, he utterly disarmed, agreeably to the Maxims of absolute Monarchy. The Roman people and the Roman Senate he had reduced to cyphers and carcases<sup>m</sup>. Hence all the submission and duty formerly paid to the free State, were, with her power, transferred to the Emperor, and certain wealth and

<sup>k</sup> Ubi militem donis, populum annona, cunctos dulcedine pacis pellexit, insurgere paulatim, munia Senatus, Magistratum, Legum, in se trahere.

<sup>l</sup> Bruto & Cassio cæsis, nulla jam publica arma.

<sup>m</sup> Patres & plebem, invalida & inermia.



preferment were the rewards of ready servility and acquiescence<sup>n</sup>.

THIS shews that, however he depressed the power of the Senate, he paid great court to particular Senators; and it is too true, that as men generally love themselves better than their Country, they too easily postpone the public interest to their own.

SECT. VI. *What Fame he derived from the Poets and other flattering Writers of his time.*

THE Renown of AUGUSTUS was also notably blazoned by the Historians and Poets of his time; men of excellent wit, but egregious flatterers. According to them, AUGUSTUS had all the accomplishments to be acquired by men, the magnanimity of Heroes, the perfections and genius of the Deity, and the innocence peculiar to the primitive race of men. After so many instances of his cruelty, revenge, selfishness, excessive superstition, and defect in courage; after all the crying calamities and afflictions, all the oppression and vassalage, that his ambition had brought upon his Country and the globe, one would think that such praises must have passed for satire and mockery. But ambition, successful ambition, is a credulous passion; or whether he believed such praises or no, he received them graciously, and caressed the Authors. Hence so much favour to VIRGIL and HORACE, and to such other wits as knew how to be good Courtiers; and hence every admirer of those charming Poets, is an admirer of AUGUSTUS, who was so gene-

<sup>n</sup> Quanto quis servitio promptior, opibus & honoribus extollerentur.

o — Nihil est quod credere de se

Non possit cum laudatur Diis æqua potestas.

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fous to them, and is the chief burden of their Panegyrics.

SUPPOSE he had miscarried ; suppose the Commonwealth restored, and him punished as a Traitor instead of gaining the Sovereignty ; would not the Historians, would not the Poet have then spoke as the Law spoke, that Law by which he had certainly forfeited his life ? would not BRUTUS and CASSIUS have then filled their mouths with Panegyrics, as the Saviours of the State ? would they have lamented that the Usurpation failed, and extolled the Usurper ? Is CATILINE extolled, or are the Usurpations of CINNA, SYLLA, or MARIUS ? nor was the conduct and domination of either, half so barbarous and tragical as was that of AUGUSTUS for a course of years. The truth is, their Tyranny was short-lived, unsuccessful, or resigned.

INQUIRY unprosperous or punished, no man praises ; but wickedness exceeding great and triumphant, almost all men do, as well as decry virtuous attempts defeated. CÆSAR and AUGUSTUS succeeded ; and their flattery continued, because their government and race did ; <sup>P</sup> Sycophancy is ever a constant attendant upon greatness, says PATERCULUS, who was himself a scandalous flatterer, and has in his History, miserably perverted truth, or utterly suppressed it, that he might lye for the Cæsars. When Truth was treason, who would venture to speak it ? and when Flattery bore a vogue and a price, there were enough found to court it, and take it. Hence the partiality or silence of Poets and Historians <sup>q</sup>.

<sup>P</sup> Semper magnæ fortunæ comes adest adulatio.

<sup>q</sup> Gliscente adulatione deterrentur.

Sect. VII. *Of the false Glory sought and acquired by AUGUSTUS, from the badness of his Successors.*

**A**NOTHER signal advantage to the name and memory of AUGUSTUS, was the badness of his Successors ; and for his posthumous lustre he was indebted to the extreme misery of the Roman people. In proportion as TIBERIUS, CALIGULA, &c. were detested, AUGUSTUS was regretted ; yet who but AUGUSTUS was to be thanked for these monsters of cruelty ? They were legacies by him entailed upon that great State, and he was even suspected to have surrendered the Roman people to the Tyranny of TIBERIUS, purely to enhance his own praise with posterity, by the comparison and opposition of their Reigns<sup>r</sup>. He sought renown from a counsel for which he deserved abhorrence. He had made a feint or two to abdicate the Sovereignty ; had he been in earnest, he might at least have contrived, that his Usurpation should last no longer than his life, and have left for a legacy to the Roman people that Liberty of which he had robbed them ; that dominion over themselves, which none but themselves had any right to exercise. The truth is, his power and name were dearer to him than the Roman people or human race ; he made provision by a long train of successors against any possible relapse into Liberty<sup>s</sup>. When he had no longer any heir of his own blood, or none that he liked, he adopted the sons of his wife ; and even the worst of them was destined to the succession<sup>t</sup>.

<sup>r</sup> Comparatione deterrima sibi gloriam quæsisse.

<sup>s</sup> Provisis etiam hæredum in Rempublicam opibus.

<sup>t</sup> Ne successor in incerto foret.

IF it be said that by such adoption he fortified himself, and considered heirs as<sup>u</sup> the stays and security of his domination; this still shews what was uppermost in his views, that he meant to perpetuate slavery. If he had studied the good of Rome, why was not TIBERIUS, whom he knew to be tyrannical and arrogant, postponed? why was not his brother DRUSUS, the most accomplished and popular man in the Empire, preferred? or (after his death) GERMANICUS his son, one equally deserving, and equally beloved? It is even said that he loved DRUSUS, loved GERMANICUS, and was suspected to have hated and despised TIBERIUS; yet TIBERIUS was preferred, and had the world bequeathed to him. Was it done to please his wife? then he loved her better than the Roman people, nay, preferred her caprice to the felicity of human kind. DRUSUS had declared his purpose to restore the Commonwealth; the same intention is supposed to have been in GERMANICUS. This perhaps was the reason for setting them aside<sup>w</sup>; as was said of TIBERIUS.

### Sect. VIII. *The Character of* AUGUSTUS.

AS to the Character of AUGUSTUS, he was a man of Sense and Art; his courage below his capacity, his capacity below his fortune, yet his fortune below his fame; because his fame was the child of able flattery as well as of propitious fortune. He was a cunning man, not a great genius; dextrous to apply the abilities of others to his own ends, and had ability enough to be counselled by such as had more; his designs were rather incidental and pro-

<sup>u</sup> Subsidia dominationis.

<sup>w</sup> Quippe illi non perinde curæ gratia presentium, quam in posteros ambitio.

gressive, than vast and conceived at once; and he cannot be said to have mastered fortune, but to have been led by it. In the times of the Republic he would have made but a middling figure; in the station and pursuits of JULIUS CÆSAR, none at all. It is not in the least likely that he would have thought or attempted what CÆSAR accomplished. He wanted CÆSAR's masterly spirit, the eclat of that consummate Warrior, his boundless Liberality, his enchanting Eloquence. For the Eloquence of AUGUSTUS, which was easy and flowing, such as became a Prince, was quite different from that torrent of Language, and power of speaking necessary to agitate and controul the spirit of Republicans, and came far short of the talent of JULIUS, who stood in rank with the most distinguished Orators. I know not whether the vices of the Dictator had not more popular charms than the virtues of AUGUSTUS. CÆSAR made his way to the Throne, AUGUSTUS found it already made, or, where difficulties occurred, was conducted by the superior lights and force of others, whom he rewarded with all the meanness of ingratitude, and even cruelty, and did many things which the great heart of CÆSAR would have scorned. No great mind ever delighted in petty mischiefs; though to do mighty evil an elevated genius is not always necessary.

SECT. IX. *Of the Helps and Causes which acquired and preserved the Empire to AUGUSTUS. His great Power and Fortune no proof of extraordinary Ability.*

THAT AUGUSTUS acquired the Empire, is not a proof of talents grand and surprizing; a thousand things concurred to it, times and accidents, friends and enemies, the living and the dead,

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fought and contrived for him; CÆSAR, ANTHONY, the authority of the Senate, the folly and corruption of the people, the eloquence and abilities of CICERO, seasonable conjunctures, the opposition of some, the compliance or intoxication of others, nay, the charms of CLEOPATRA, and his own treachery and fears: All these coincided to push him forwards, and to hoist him into Sovereignty; nor indeed wanted he dexterity to improve opportunities; for he was a notable man, judged well, and had a turn for business.

NOR did it require much genius to hold the Empire, when he had got it. All who could oppose him were slain or subdued. He had Armies and Guards; and the people were disarmed and enslaved; the State was so thoroughly mastered, the Roman spirit so entirely broken \*, that any the most contemptible wretch among men, provided he were but vouched by the Armies, and called CÆSAR, might rule, insult, and lay waste the Roman world at his pleasure †. What was CALIGULA, what were NERO and CLAUDIUS? were they not monsters, who but for shape and speech, were utterly disjoined from humanity? and yet were not these monsters suffered, nay adored, and deified, while they were wallowing in the blood of men, and making spoil of the creation? Nor were the savages cut off by any effort of the Roman people, but by the instruments of their own cruelty, their wives, soldiers and slaves.

THUS it was possible to be Masters of mankind, not only without common sense, and common mercy and compassion, but even armed with intense and settled hate against the race of men, and daily exerting it. The rule and havock of a Lion, or any

\* *Verbo civitatis statu, nihil usquam prisce & integri moris.*

† *Omnis exuta æqualitate jussa principis aspectare.*

other beast of prey, would have been less pernicious, and less disgraceful to the Roman people, though he had required for his sustenance a vessel of human blood every day. Nay, had the imperial Lion kept about him a Court and Guard of subordinate Lions for his Instruments and Counsellors, they could not have worried and devoured faster than did the Accusers, Freedmen, Poisoners, and Assassins of the Emperors. Cruelty, inspired by hunger, ceases when hunger is asswaged ; but cruelty, created by fear and malice, is never satiated, nor knows any bounds. So much less dangerous and pernicious are the jaws and rapaciousness of a Tyger, than the jealousy and rage of a Tyrant, his flatterers and executioners.

Now where was the difficulty to AUGUSTUS, where the necessity of high wisdom, to maintain the Sovereignty, when such despicable wretches could maintain themselves in it for a course of years ? The Romans, who were masters of mankind, were become the tame property, the vassals and victims of creatures equal to no office in a State, even the meanest and most contemptible office ; creatures void of understanding, void of courage. Such, without aggravation, were the Lords of Rome for several successive reigns. Such as were a scandal to human Nature, trod upon the necks and wantoned in the blood of human kind ; nay, delegated this work, and the disposal of the Romans life and property, to the vilest of their domestics and dependants, their spies, informers, and bond-slaves,

## DISCOURSE V.

Of Governments free and arbitrary, more especially that of the CÆSARS.

Sect. I. *The Principle of God's appointing and protecting Tyrants, an Absurdity not believed by the Romans.*

**I** Do not find that a servitude so beastly and ignominious was borne by the Romans out of Principle. Their Religion, as vain and superstitious as it was, had never offered such an insult to common sense, as to teach them that their Deities, as capricious as they thought them, warranted Tyranny, and sanctified Tyrants; that the brutal and bloody CALIGULA, was the beloved and Vicegerent of Jove, almighty, all-wise and all-merciful; that the worst of men had a commission from Heaven to oppress all men, and to destroy the best; that murder, rapine and mis-rule were Government, and such lawless and bloody robbers were Governors divinely appointed; that Society had no remedy against devouring lust, and the raging sword, which were destroying all the ends of Society, and Society it self. These are Absurdities below Paganism and all its chimeras; even the Superstition of Pagans never broached such blasphemies and indignities to God and Man; never propagated Doctrines which would have turned men into idiots, destitute of reflection and feeling, nay, into beasts of burden, and beasts for sacrifice; turned the Deities into Devils; human society into a chaos of blood and carcases, and this earth into a place of torments. It never entered



entered into the heart of a Greek or a Roman, nor into any heart which felt the sentiments of virtue and humanity, that it was unlawful to defend Law; a crime to ward against murder, barbarity, and desolation; and an impiety to do the most godlike action which can be done on this side Heaven, that of disarming a Tyrant, and saving one's Country from perishing. It is true, that the Romans flattered their Tyrants, as Tyrants ever will be flattered; but as the names and appearances of the old Government still subsisted, they pretended to believe that none but the old Laws were exercised; and by the old Laws the Emperors still pretended to act. For several generations after the State was enslaved, and even during the Reigns of the worst of the CÆSARS, the Romans expressed high contempt for Nations who were avowedly slaves, and for Kings who were avowedly arbitrary; and it then continued usual to behold foreign Monarchs attending the levee and train of the Roman Magistrates and Governors of Provinces; nay, they were sometimes denied access, and treated with great scorn.

GOVERNMENT is doubtless a sacred thing, and justly claims all reverence and duty; but in the idea of Government is implied that of public Protection and Security; that it is the terror of evil doers, and the encouragement of such as do well. But when what was Government ceases; and what is called Government, is, in reality, general oppression, havock, and spoil; when a power prevails which is swayed by evil doers to the destruction of all who do well; when law and righteousness are banished, lust and iniquity triumph; property is violently invaded, and lives are wantonly destroyed; is this Government too? If it be, I should be glad to know what is not Government.

SECT. II. *The reasonableness of resisting Tyrants asserted, from the Ends of Government, and the Nature of the Deity. Opinions the most impious and extravagant, why taught, and how easily swallowed.*

IT is certainly unlawful to resist Government ; but it is certainly lawful to resist the deviation from Government, to resist what destroys Government and men. To resist the abuse of Government, is to assist Government. It is allowed to be just to help our protectors ; but it is equally just to oppose our enemies, madmen and spoilers. Now what was NERO, what CALIGULA and CLAUDIUS ? one a bloody idiot, the other an inhuman madman ; the first like the second, and all of them public robbers and butchers. If their course of cruelties and oppression was Government, so are plagues, tempests and inundations ; but if their lives and actions were altogether pernicious and detestable ; the exterminating of such monsters from amongst men, would have been a service to the whole race. Was TARQUIN half so black and odious ? yet who has ever blamed his expulsion ? was the Insolence and Tyranny of TARQUIN the Ordinance of God ? what then was the succeeding Government of the People and Senate ? if this was the Ordinance of God too ; then every Government good and bad, or rather Mis-government as well as Government, public robbery and ruin, as well as public security and protection, may be equally said to be his Ordinance ; and there are Ordinances of his that combat one another, like the two Angels contending in one of the Prophets. But if the Tyranny of TARQUIN was, and the establishing of the free State was not the Ordinance of God, then are not the Patrons of this opinion obliged to say, and to maintain

tain this gross and blasphemous absurdity, that the divine Being disapproves of good Government, Equity and Laws, and delights in injustice, cruelty and confusion ; not in the rule of equal justice, but in the ravages of lust and iniquity?

To say that all Governments, the good and the bad, are alike to him, equally inviolable, is to say that he takes no cognizance of things below ; and at this rate, there is, in his sight, no such thing as guilt and innocence. To alledge that that Government which is best for men, is disliked by him ; and the rule of lust is preferable to that of Laws ; is to make him worse than indifferent, the patron of wantonness and oppression ; a foe to order and benevolence, fonder of one man's caprice and violence, than of the happiness of millions ; nay a professed advocate for iniquity, a professed adversary to all public righteousness. If it be said, that he approves not of Tyranny himself, and yet would not have it resisted by others ; this is nonsense added to prophaneness ; since what he neither checks nor allows to be checked, he may be said to approve. If I see a man going to commit murder, and by terrible threatening and penalties restrain such as would restrain him, will it not be construed, that I chose to have the murder perpetrated ? It makes him besides a hard-hearted being, who forbids to remedy the highest human evil, nay, wilfully dooms human kind to the severest misery.

I never heard that he has forbid under any penalty the use of Medicines against the Plague, and I think I have found the reason why I never heard it ; the Plague has no treasures, nor dignities to recompence flatterers. Had it been worth while to have made such prohibition a Doctrine of Religion ; that is, had it been pleasing to Power, and the way to favour, I doubt not but it would have gained ground, and many followers, as other doctrines equally absurd have done, where the gain and craft of a few have

been followed and defended by the superstition and zeal of many ; witness Transubstantiation, Purgatory, Auricular Confession, blind Obedience under the rod of Tyranny, &c. The Turks out of bigotry to that of Predestination, forbear all precautions against the Plague, when raging on every side of them. It is impossible to invent a Doctrine so monstrous and mischievous, but it will meet with partizans and admirers, provided the inventors have convenient names and habiliments, without which the most illustrious and benevolent truths will hardly pass with a multitude bewitched with the magic of words and superstition.

It is impossible for the hearts of men to contrive a principle more absurd and wicked, than that of annexing divine and everlasting vengeance to the resisting of the most flagrant mischief which can possibly befall the sons of men ; yet it has found inventors and vouchers. It is plain from this instance, and from a thousand more, that there is no wickedness of which the hearts of men are not capable, and that the wretchedness of the whole race weighs not so much with them as their own profit and pleasure. It would seem from hence, as if we had lived in the dregs and barbarism of time, since to the late age (at least here in Christendom) was reserved the infamy of hatching a Monster so horrible, that to its birth was sacrificed all Sense and Humanity, all the considerations, and even the essence of Truth, Order and Liberty.

THE advocates for this impious tenet, which represents the great and good God as incensed with men for striving to remove their chains and sorrows, are, by defending Tyranny, so much worse than Tyrants, as a Scheme of Barbarity coolly and deliberately contrived or defended, is more heinous than particular acts of barbarity committed in the heat and hurry of passion, and as Murder is a greater crime than Manslaughter,

WHAT avail Laws and Liberty, ever so excellently framed, when they are at the mercy of lawless rage and caprice? If we are forbid by God to defend Laws, why do we make them? Is it not unlawful to make what it is unlawful to defend? What else is the end of Government, but the felicity of men; and why are some raised higher in Society than others, but that all may be happy? Has God ever interposed against the establishment of Society upon a good foot? If he has not, but wills the good of Society, and of men, how comes he to interpose against the defence of an Establishment which he nowhere forbids, and against that good which he is said to will? What more right had NERO to take away the lives of innocent men than any other Assassin; what more title to their fortune than any other Robber; what better right to spill their blood than any Tyger? And is it unlawful to resist Robbers, and Assassins, and Beasts of Prey? Did the Almighty ever say of that beastly Tyrant, "Touch not NERO my Anointed, nor do his Ruffians any harm?" Did NERO's station lessen or abrogate his crimes?

WHAT idea does it give of God, the Father of mercies and of men, to represent him screening that enemy to God and man, as a person sacred and inviolable, and holding his authority from himself; the merciful and holy Jehovah protecting an inhuman Destroyer! What more relation could there be between God and NERO, than between God and an Earthquake, God and a Conflagration or Massacre? The very phrase is shocking to the soul! Is such representation likely to make the name and nature of God amiable to men, likely to excite them to love and reverence him? SATAN is said to be delighted with the miseries and calamities of men; and, to suppose that wicked Being concerned for the security of a Tyrant, whose office it is to debase

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and afflict human race, is natural and consistent with his Character. But I wish men would not father upon the Author of all good such counsels and inclinations, as can only suit the father of cruelties and lies.

SECT. III. *The danger of slavish Principles to such as trust in them, and the notorious insecurity of lawless Might.*

NEITHER have Tyrants and Oppressors been much obliged to this enslaving Doctrine, which has generally filled them with false confidence and security ; it has always made them worse, seldom safer ; and, without doing any good, been the cause of much evil to their poor subjects. The Turks hold it as an Article of Faith, and it is one worthy of Turkish grossness and barbarity ! yet where has the deposing and murdering of Princes been so common as in Turkey ? The Monarch is told he may do what he pleases ; their Religion tells him so, the holy Mufti, who explains it, tells him so, and from God he tells him so ; but notwithstanding all these holy Authorities, this person so sacred, and guarded with securities human and divine, is often butchered with less form than a common malefactor, and even with the Mufti's consent and assistance. Thus it has happened to several in a Century ; had not their power been so great, their security would have been greater.

\* AN absolute Prince is of all others the most insecure ; as he proceeds by no rule of Law, he can have no rule of Safety. He acts by violence, and violence is the only remedy against him. Now violence which is confined to no rule, but as various and unlimited as the passions and devices of men,

\* Nunquam satis fida potentia, ubi nimia,

can never be parried by any certain provision or defence. His acts of cruelty upon particulars, whether done for revenge or prevention, do but alarm other particulars to save themselves by destroying him. Men who apprehend their lives to be in danger, will venture any thing to preserve them; or if they do more than apprehend and be already become desperate, we know to what lengths despair will push them. Thus CALIGULA, thus DOMITIAN and COMMODUS, were slaughtered by those whom they had doomed to slaughter. Nor Armies nor Guards can prevent the machinations and efforts of a secret enemy; even amongst his Armies and Guards such a one may be found, nay, in his Household, in his Bed-chamber, amongst his Kindred, nay, amongst his Children.

WHEN Princes act by Law, in case of hardship upon particulars, there is a remedy to be sought from the Law; and when the Law fairly administered will afford none, they will acquiesce; or, if they blame any thing, they will blame the Law, but a remedy they will be apt to seek; and, when they suffer not from Law, but from mere violence, they will have recourse to violence. Neither can a people be ever so sunk or deadened by Oppression, but much provocation, some management and a skilful leader, will find or raise some spirit in them, often enough to accomplish great Revolutions; witness Sicily under the French, Switzerland under the Yoke of Austria, and the Low Countries under that of Spain; nay, the most consummate and professed slaves, those of Turkey, often rouse themselves, and casting their proud rider to the earth, trample him to death.

INDEED slaves enraged are the most dangerous populace; because having no other resource against oppression, they repel violence with outrage; a little spark often raises a great flame; and a flame soon  
spreads

spreads to a Conflagration, where materials are prepared, as they almost eternally are in Governments that are absolute or aiming to be so. The Commotions at Paris, during the Minority of the late King, were followed by others all over France, though the whole Kingdom had been for a great while before, by the Tyranny of the Administration, frightened, despairing, and even lethargic; but the resentment and convulsions that followed this false calm, had like to have overset the Monarchy. Nor can any public calm be certain, or any Government secure, where the people are pillaged and oppressed. People that are used like beasts, will act like beasts; and be mad and furious, when buffeted and starved.

*Sect. IV. Princes of little and bad Minds, most greedy of Power. Princes of large and good Minds chuse to rule by Law and Limitations.*

**I**T is poor and contemptible ambition in a Prince, that of swelling his Prerogative, and catching at advantages over his People; it is separating himself from the tender relation of a Father and Protector, a Character which constitutes the Glory of a King; and assuming that of a foe, and an enslaver<sup>b</sup>. This is what a Prince of a great and benevolent spirit will consider; not himself as a lordly Tyrant, nor them as his Property and Slaves; but himself and them under the amiable and engaging ties of Magistrate and fellow Citizens. Such was the difference between a Queen ELIZABETH and a RICHARD the second; how glorious and prosperous the Reign of the one, how infamous and unhappy that of the other! what renown accompanies her memory, what scorn his! It is indeed apparent

<sup>b</sup> Non dominationem & servos, sed rectorem & cives cogitaret.  
from



from our History, that those of our Princes who thirsted most violently after arbitrary rule, were chiefly such as were remarkable for poor spirit, and small genius, Pedants, Bigots, the timorous and effeminate.

THE French Historians observe that the worst and weakest of their Kings were fondest of Dominion, and their best and wisest contented with stinted Power, and the rule of Laws. LEWIS the eleventh, says Cardinal DE RETZ, was more crafty than wise. He was in truth a genuine Tyrant; he trampled upon the Laws of the Kingdom, and the lives of his Subjects, pillaged and oppressed all manner of ways, and followed no Counsel but that of his Lust and Caprice. But what advantage or content, what security or fame did he draw from his exorbitant encroachments and power? No man ever lived under a blacker series of fears, and cares, and suspicions, or died in greater misery and terrors; and in his life, and death, and memory he is equally detestable. LEWIS the thirteenth, a man naturally harmless, but silly, was jealous of his authority, purely because he was ignorant about it; but HENRY the fourth, who was born with a Soul great and generous, never distrusted the Laws, because he trusted in the uprightness of his own Designs. *Il ne se desioit pas des loix, parce qu'il se fioit en lui même*, says DE RETZ. Another French Monarch of great name, loved and enjoyed unbridled Dominion, but had no greatness of mind or genius answerable to the measure of his ambition. He had a sort of stiffness and perseverance, by his flatterers stiled Fortitude and Firmness, but in reality arising from arrogance or obstinacy; qualities found in the weakest women, and eminently in his mother. In Religion he was a bigot; in Politics false, suspi-

<sup>c</sup> *Vid.* PHIL. DE COMINES and MEZERAY.

cious, and timid ; in Government insolent and oppressive ; the property of his Mistresses, the Pupil of his Confessors, the Dupe of his Ministers ; a fore Plague to his Neighbours ; a forer to his own People ; vainly addicted to War without the talents of a Warrior ; a dishonourable Enemy, a faithless Ally ; and, with small Abilities, a great Troubler of the World.

IT was natural to such an Imperial Wolf as CALIGULA, to delight in power as savage as his own bloody spirit, and to boast that he had an unlimited privilege to do whatever his will or fury suggested<sup>d</sup> ; but worthy of the benevolent and humane heart of TRAJAN, were the words by him used to his chief Officers, when he presented them with the sword. “ This sword, this badge of Authority, you hold from me ; but turn it, if I deserve it, against me<sup>e</sup>.” Now, did the challenging and exercise of this monstrous power secure CALIGULA ; or did the disavowing of it lessen the security of TRAJAN ? quite otherwise ; the former was abhorred and assassinated as a Tyrant ; the latter was adored living, and died lamented, as a public Father and Guardian. TRAJAN knew no other purpose of Imperial Prerogative, but that of protecting the People ; nor indeed is there any other use of Emperors and Prerogatives upon earth.

Cardinal DE RETZ says, that with all the arguments and pains he could use, he could never bring the Queen Regent to understand the meaning of these words, *the Public*. She thought that to consult the interest of the People was to be a Republican, and had no notion that the Government of a Prince was any thing else but Royal Will and Authority, rampant and without bounds. Was it any wonder, that the people of France gasped under Oppressions and Taxes, when the Government was

<sup>d</sup> Omnia sibi in homines licere.

<sup>e</sup> Pro me ; si merear, in me.

swayed by such a Woman, herself blindly governed by MAZARINE, a public Thief, if ever there was any; one convicted to have stolen from the Finances nine millions in a few years; one who had spent his younger years in low rogueries; who had no maxims of rule but such as were adapted to the severest Tyranny in Italy, that of the Pope; and one, who, in the highest post of first Minister, could never help shewing the base spirit of a little Sharper. *Le vilain cœur paroissoit toujours au travers, says DE RETZ: the Duke of Orleans called him un Scelerat, & Ministre incapable & abhorré du genre humain; un Menteur fieffé.*

SECT. V. *The Wisdom and Safety of ruling by standing Laws, to Prince and People.*

IT was a fine answer of THEOPOMPUS King of Lacedæmon to his wife, who reproached him that he would leave the Kingdom diminished to his sons, by creating the Ephori: *Yes, says he, I shall leave it smaller, but I shall leave it more permanent.* VALERIUS MAXIMUS explains this by a very just reflection; “THEOPOMPUS’s reason was  
“ full of pertinency and force; for, in reality, that  
“ Authority which bounds itself, and offers no injuries, is exposed to none. The king therefore  
“ by restraining Royalty within the just limits of  
“ Laws, did as much endear it to the Affections  
“ of his Countrymen, as he pruned it of all Licentiousness and Terror<sup>f</sup>.”

It is as rare for a Prince limited by Laws, and content with his power, to reign in sorrow, or to die tragically, as it is uncommon for those who have no bounds set them, or will suffer none, to escape a miserable

<sup>f</sup> Optime quidem; ea demum tuta est potentia, quæ viribus suis modum imponit. Theopompus i. titur legitimis regnum vinculis constringendo, quo longius a licentia retraxit, hoc propius ad benevolentiam civium admovit. Val. Max. L. 4. C. 1.

Reign, and unbloody end. The power of the Roman Kings was, from the first establishment, very short; they had no negative voice in the Senate, and could neither make War nor Peace. What TACITUS says of ROMULUS<sup>g</sup>, can only mean his administering justice, as the chief Magistrate, between man and man, or perhaps his encroachments upon the Senate towards his latter end, for which, it is thought, he paid dear.

WHERE the Government is arbitrary and severe, the oppressed people will be apt to think that no change can make their condition worse; and therefore will be ready to wish for any, nay, to risque a Civil War, risque fresh evils and calamities, to get rid of the present, and to be revenged on their Oppressor. Such was the temper of the Romans upon the revolt of SACROVIR; they even rejoiced in it, and, in hatred to TIBERIUS, wished success to the public enemy<sup>h</sup>. People will be quiet and patient under burdens, however heavy, which Law lays on; for they suppose that laws are founded upon reason and necessity; but impositions the most reasonable will be apt to appear unreasonable and tyrannical, where they proceed from the will of one. Mere will is supposed to act without reason, and to be only the effect of wantonness; hence the acquiescence of a free people however taxed, and from their acquiescence, the safety of their Governors. Hence too the industry and wealth, and consequently the peaceableness of the country; for industry and wealth are things exceeding quiet and tame, and only aim at securing themselves; whereas idleness and indigence are uneasy, tumultuous, and desperate. Besides, he who pays twenty shillings in a free Government, and pays it chearfully, would not per-

<sup>g</sup> Nobis Romulus ad libitum imperitaverat.

<sup>h</sup> Multi odio præsentium, & cupidine mutationis, suis quisque periculis lætabantur.

haps, were the Government changed, pay willingly ten, nay, perhaps be unable to pay it, though by the change no new taxes were added. While the Law requires it, he will imagine that no more than enough is required; and as the same Law leaves him all the rest to himself, he will be industrious to acquire more, and as much as he can; but when the quantity of his Tax depends upon the caprice or avarice of one; when the more he is worth, the more he will be taxed, or even fancies that he will be, he will grow idle, discontented and desponding, and rather live poor and lazy, than labour to make his Tax-master rich. Not to mention the furious Monarchies of the East destructive of all Diligence and Arts; the COMTE DE BOULAINVILLIERS in his *Etat de la France*, says, that in some Provinces in France the soil is left uncultivated, and several trades and professions are disused; because the labour of the Husbandman, and the skill and application of the Artist, are rendered abortive by rigorous impositions. They chuse rather to starve in idleness, than to work and starve.

Sect. VI. *The Condition of free States, how preferable to that of such as are not free.*

NO arbitrary Prince upon earth could have raised from the States of Holland the fifth part of what they have, as a free State, paid to their own Magistrates, nor could have found whence to have raised it. I will venture to say the same of England. Under a Monarchy of the late King JAMES's model, was it possible to have supported two wars so long and consuming as the two last, or to have raised sums so immense to carry them on? It would be madness to assert it. By this time numbers of our people would have been driven from their Country, much of our Soil been waste, many of our

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Manufactures laid aside, our Trade sunk, our Wealth fled, and the condition of England have resembled that of France, as well as our Government theirs, and for the same reason. It is in vain boasted of the House of Medicis, that in a long course of years they had laid no new tax upon a country where their power was absolute ; since the Cities and Territories, under their Sovereignty, are by it reduced from great wealth and populousness to such miserable desolation and poverty, that it is downright oppression to oblige them to pay any considerable part of the old, much more all.

To reason from experience and examples, is the best reasoning<sup>i</sup>. Compare any free State with any other that is not free. Compare the former and present condition of any State formerly free ; or once enslaved, and now free. Compare England with France ; Holland with Denmark ; or the seven Provinces under the States, with the same seven Provinces under Philip the second ; you will find in these and every other instance, that happiness and wretchedness are the exact tallies to Liberty and Bondage.

FLORENCE was a Commonwealth ill framed at first, and consequently subject to frequent convulsions, factions, parties, and subdivision of parties ; yet by the mere blessing and vigour of Liberty, she flourished in people, riches and arms, till with her Liberty she lost all spirit and prosperity ; and became languishing, little and contemptible under a small Prince with a great name. She has been long cured of all her former frolicks and tumults, by an effectual remedy, servitude ; and beggary, the child of servitude ; and by depopulation, the offspring of both<sup>k</sup>. All arguments for absolute Power, are confuted by facts ; no Country governed by mere will

<sup>i</sup> Quia pauci prudentia, honesta ab deterioribus, utilia ab noxiis discernunt ; plures aliorum eventis docentur.

<sup>k</sup> Instrumenta servitutis & reges habuere.

was ever governed well ; passion governs the will, the will becomes the measure of right and wrong and of all things, and caprice the ballance of the will ; and I know not but it may be maintained that a free State the worst constituted, as was that of Florence, is, with all its disorders, factions, and tumults, preferable to any absolute Monarchy, however calm <sup>1</sup>.

SECT. VII. *The Misery and Insecurity of the Cæsars from their overgrown Power.*

THESE Emperors of Rome, who had sacrificed their country and all things to their supreme power, found little ease and security from its being supreme. From CÆSAR the Dictator, who had sacrificed public Liberty, and was himself sacrificed to her *manes*, till CHARLEMAIN, above thirty of them were murdered, and four of them murdered themselves ; the soldiery were their masters, and upon every pique put them to death. If the Prince was chosen by the Senate, this was reason enough for shedding his blood by the Armies ; or if the Armies chose him, this choice of their own never proved an obstacle against shedding it. It was the soldiers that dispatched the Emperor PERTINAX, after he had been forced to accept the Empire. These lofty Sovereigns having trodden under foot the Senate, People and Laws, the best supports of legitimate Power, held their scepter and their lives upon the courtesy of their masters the soldiers. He who swayed the Universe, was a slave to his own mercenaries.

Though AUGUSTUS had reigned so long, and so thoroughly enfeebled or extinguished the maxims of Liberty, and introduced and settled those of Monarchy ; TIBERIUS his immediate Successor,

<sup>1</sup> Solitudinem faciunt, pacem vocant.

thought himself so little safe, that he lived in perpetual vassalage to his own fears. By making all men slaves, he could not make himself free, and was only the most overgrown and gaudy slave in the Empire; so much do Princes gain by being above Law! They who will be content with no terms of reigning, but such as make all men fear them, will find reasons to fear all men. **TIBERIUS** did so, and the many sacrifices which he made to his fear, far from lessening, did but encrease it, as such sacrifices did but multiply enemies and terrors.

**FIRST** he dreaded **AGRIPPA POSTHUMUS**, and murdered him; but the murder ensured not his repose, even from that quarter; for a slave of that Prince personated his master, and alarmed **TIBERIUS** more than **AGRIPPA** had done. He dreaded **GERMANICUS**, and when that excellent person was dead (by no fair means, it was supposed) he dreaded **AGRIPPINA** his wife, and her little children; and when by all manner of treachery and cruelty he had oppressed them, he was seized with new dread from **SEJANUS**, the greatest and justest of all; nor ceased his dread after the execution of **SEJANUS**; insomuch, that he commanded a general Massacre of all his Family, Friends, and Adherents. Next, his fears still continuing, he doomed to the most barbarous death his own grandsons by **GERMANICUS**; for their being already under miserable imprisonment and exile, did not suffice. And when the Family of **GERMANICUS** was destroyed; he had remaining fears from the Friends and Dependants of that House; these were the next objects of his Vengeance, which he executed fiercely. Nor small was the Terror which he entertained of his own Mother; and when she was gone, he let loose his rage upon the Favourites and Adherents of his Mother.

Now



NOW after all these precautions, so many and so bloody, did his suspicions abate? No; they were rather whetted and inflamed<sup>m</sup>. Of the great Lords of the Senate he was under perpetual apprehensions, and making daily victims; their wealth and race, nay, their poverty, names, and qualities frightened him; he feared friends and enemies. Those who advised him in council, those who diverted him at his leisure hours; his Confidants, Counsellors, and Bottle-companions, were all Martyrs to his Jealousy and Fury. He was so afraid of considerable men, or giving them employments which made them so, that some who were appointed Governors of Provinces, were never permitted to go thither, and great Provinces, for a course of years, left destitute of their Governors; and though he dreaded stirs and innovations above all things<sup>n</sup>; yet he suffered the loss and devastation of Provinces, the insults and invasion of enemies, rather than trust any one with the power of avenging the State, and repulsing the public foe. Thus he left Armenia to be seized by the Parthians, Mœsia by the Dacians and other barbarians, and both the Gauls to be ravaged by the Germans<sup>o</sup>, says SÆTONIUS.

Sect. VIII. *A representation of the Torments and Horrors under which TIBERIUS lived.*

WHAT joy, what tranquillity did TIBERIUS reap from his great and unaccountable Sovereignty? Did it exempt him from disquiet, or could all his efforts, all the terrors of his Power, prevent

<sup>m</sup> Irritatus suppliciis.

<sup>n</sup> Nihil æque Tiberium anxium habebat, quam ne composita turbarentur.

<sup>o</sup> Magno dedecore Imperii, nec minore discrimine.

or remove his own? Did his numerous Armies protect him from the assaults of fear and apprehension? Did he sleep the sounder for his Prætorian Bands? Did the Rocks of Capreæ, hardly accessible to men, keep off those horrors of mind which haunted him at Rome, and on the Continent? Or rather, with all the eclat of Empire, with all his Policy and all his Guards, was he not the most miserable Being in his Dominions? Doubtless he was; other particulars, the most obnoxious and threatened, had but some things and some persons to fear; TIBERIUS dreaded all men and every thing. Was his Power unlimited? so was his Misery; the more he made others suffer, the faster he multiplied his own torments. He himself confessed, that all the anger of the Deities could not doom him to more terrible anguish than that under which he felt himself perishing daily.

IMAGINE this great Prince, this Sovereign of Rome, in hourly fear of secret Assassins; daily dreading and expecting the news of Armies revolted, a new Emperor created, and himself deposed: imagine him fixed upon a high rock, and watching there from day to day, with a careful eye and an anxious and boding heart, for signals from the Continent, whether he must stay or fly: imagine him every moment ready to commit himself to the waves and tempests, and to escape whither he could for life and shelter: imagine him, even after a Conspiracy suppressed, lurking for nine months together in one lodge, under such terrors as not to dare to venture an airing, even in his beloved Capreæ, however walled with Rocks and defended with Guards. In short, he feared every thing but to do evil, which yet was the sole cause of his fears. Such was his situation and life, and such the blessing of lawless might!

“ To TIBERIUS not his Imperial fortune, not  
 “ his gloomy and inaccessible solitude could ensure  
 “ repose

“ repose, nor keep him from feeling nor even from  
 “ avowing the rack in his breast and the avenging  
 “ furies that pursued him.” His Death too, was,  
 like his life and reign, tragical and bloody.

SECT. IX. *The terrible Operation of lawless  
 Power upon the minds of Princes; and  
 how it changes them.*

**T**IBERIUS was an able man; he had talents for Affairs; he had eminent sufficiency in War; during the Commonwealth he would have well supported the Dignity of a Senator; he would have filled the first Offices of the State; he would have probably been zealous for public Liberty. He had even under AUGUSTUS, while he was yet a Subject, acquired a signal name and estimation. Nay it is likely he might have left behind him a high reputation and applause; for he had Art enough to have hid or suppressed the ill qualities which were naturally in him; so that he might have lived happy and admired, and died in renown. But being, unhappily for himself and his Country, invested with Power without controul, he let loose all his Passions, and he, who might have proved an excellent and useful Member of a free State, became a Prince altogether merciless and pernicious; a terrible Tyrant, void of natural affection for his own Blood and Family, void of all regard and tenderness for his People, and possessed with intense hate towards the Senate and Nobility. One of his discernment was not to be deceived by Flattery; he knew that, whatever submissions and even prostrations were made him, the Yoke of Sovereignty was grating and grievous to the Romans, and he sought revenge upon their persons for hating his Usurpation. This conduct made him more hated, and this hatred enraged him so, that at last, renouncing all shame, and

throwing away his beloved Arts of Diffimulation, he commenced, as it were, an open Enemy to his People, surrendered himself over to every act of Cruelty, and to every abomination, even to Rapi-  
ciousness and Plunder, a vice to which for a long time he seemed to have no bias.

BUT what is not to be apprehended from Power without controul, and who is to be trusted with it, when a man of such strong parts and long experience as TIBERIUS, was so entirely mastered and perverted by it? It is a task too mighty for the soul of man, and fit for none but God, who cannot change, cannot act passionately, cannot be mistaken, and is omnipresent. There are few instances of men who have not been corrupted and intoxicated with it, and many, of whom the highest hopes were conceived, have degenerated notoriously under it. When men are once above fear of punishment, they soon grow to be above shame. Besides, the genius and abilities of men are limited, but their passions and vanity boundless; hence so few can be perfectly good, and so many are transcendently evil. They mistake good fortune for great merit, and are apt to rise in their own conceit as high at least as fortune can raise them. GALBA was, in the opinion of all men, worthy of Empire, and that opinion would have ever continued, had he never been tried; and VESPASIAN was, till then, the only instance of an Emperor by power changed for the better <sup>P</sup>.

<sup>P</sup> Solusque omnium ante se Principum in melius mutatus est.

SECT. X. *The wretched Fears accompanying the Possession of arbitrary Power, exemplified in CALIGULA and other Roman Emperors.*

NOR was this anguish and these fears peculiar to TIBERIUS, his Successors felt them eminently ; as did every one who reigned as he reigned. CALIGULA was so haunted by inward horrors, and his imagination so terrified, that he became almost a stranger to sleep, and used to roam about the palace while others slept, afraid of the night, and invoking the return of day. Upon an alarm from Germany, he prepared to run away from Rome ; and was always provided with exquisite poison against an exigency. CLAUDIUS scarce lived a moment of his Reign free from affrights and suspicions ; nor was there any accident so trivial, or any Man, Woman, or Slave, or Child so contemptible, as not to dismay him and set him upon sanguinary precautions and punishments ; he was several times almost frightened out of his Sovereignty, and willing to creep away into safety and solitude. Even before the Senate, which upon the sight of a dagger, he had summoned in great haste and earnestness, the poor unmanly wretch burst into tears and howling, bewailed his perillous condition, that in no place or circumstance could he be out of the way of danger. His whole life was governed by fears, and his fears by his wives and freedmen ; hence his excessive cruelty, according to the measure of his own timidity, or of their ambition, vindictiveness, and rapacity. The Horrors of NERO's guilt never forsook him ; they were sometimes so violent, that every joint about him trembled ; he dreaded his Mother's Ghost as much as he had her living Spirit, and made doleful complaints, that the Furies pursued him with  
Stripes,

Stripes, and Rage, and burning Torches: and that he was alarmed with horrid shrieks and groans from his Mother's Tomb. What else did HELIOGABALUS apprehend but a violent death, when he went always provided with a silken halter and a golden poignard, as expedients to escape death by the hand of an enemy? For the like purpose CARACALLA made himself a copious provision of poisons. This barbarous Parricide was wont to complain that the Ghost of his Father, and that of his Brother by him murdered, terrified and pursued him with drawn swords. So sorely did the bloody Horrors of their Crimes and Infamy, haunt these men of Blood, and became their Executioners! What availed their Power and Armies against the alarms of their Conscience? Could all their Titles and Might, all the Guards at their gate, scare away reflection, or rescue them from the agonies and goings of their own breasts?

SECT. XI. *What it is that constitutes the Security and Glory of a Prince; and how a Prince and People become estranged from each other.*

WHAT then is it that a Prince may rely on for the security of his Person, and the quiet of his Soul? Hear the opinion of a great and a good Prince, MARCUS ANTONINUS, delivered to his Friends and Counsellors just before he expired: “ Verily it is neither the influence of Revenue and  
 “ Treasures, nor the multitude of Guards, that can  
 “ uphold a Prince, or assure him of obedience,  
 “ unless with the duty of obedience, the zeal and  
 “ affections of his People do concur. Surely, only  
 “ long and secure is the Reign of such a one as by  
 “ actions of benignity stamps upon the hearts of  
 “ his People the impressions of love; not those of  
 “ fear

“ fear by acts of cruelty.” He adds, “ that a Prince has nothing to fear from his People, as long as their obedience flows from Inclination, and is not contained by Servitude; and that Subjects will never refuse obedience, when they are not treated with contumely and violence<sup>9</sup>.”

A man who means no ill would not seek the Power to do it, and he who seeks that Power, or has it, will be eternally suspected to mean no good. Now the only way to obviate such suspicion, is, to act by known rules of Law; he who rules by consent is obnoxious to no blame. Such restraint may probably at some times keep a just Prince from doing good, but it certainly withholds a bad one from doing much greater mischief. An arbitrary Prince who can do what he will, is for ever liable to be suspected of willing all that he can; hence his people mistrust him; hence his indignation for their mistrust, and hence the root of eternal jealousy and uneasiness between him and them.

THE People likewise expect complaisance from the Prince, expect to have their sentiments and humours considered; while the Prince probably thinks that they have no right to form any judgment of public matters, or to make any demands upon him; but, on the contrary, requires of them blind reverence and obedience to his Authority; and acquiescence in his superior Conduct and Skill; that all his doings should pass for just; himself for a person altogether sacred and unaccountable; and his words for Laws. If their behaviour towards him do not happen to square exactly with these his sovereign notions and high conceit of himself, he will be apt to think, or some officious flatterer will be ready to persuade him<sup>r</sup>, “ his Royal Authority is set at nought, the

<sup>9</sup> See Herodian in Marc. Antonin.

<sup>r</sup> *Spretam voluntatem Principis, descivisse populum: quid reliquum nisi ut caperent ferrum?*

“ People are revolted ; and what remains but that  
 “ they take Arms ? ” To punish therefore their  
 Disobedience, he proceeds to violence, and exercises  
 real severity for imaginary guilt. Mischief is pro-  
 lific ; violence in him begets resentment in them ;  
 the People murmur and exclaim ; the Prince is thence  
 provoked, and studies vengeance ; when one act of  
 vengeance is resented and exposed, as it ever will  
 be, more will follow. Thus things go on. Affec-  
 tion is not only lost, but irrecoverable on either side ;  
 hatred is begun on both ; and Prince and People  
 consider themselves no longer as Magistrate and Sub-  
 jects, but one another as Enemies. Hence perhaps  
 CALIGULA’s inhuman wish, that he could mur-  
 der all his People at a blow. The sequel of all this  
 is easy to be guessed ; he is continually destroying  
 them ; they are continually wishing him destroyed.

Sect. XII. *How nearly it becometh a Prince  
 to be beloved and esteemed by his Subjects.  
 The terrible Consequences of their mutual  
 Mistrust and Hatred.*

HOW much does it import Princes to preserve  
 the good opinion of their People ! when it is  
 once lost, it is scarce ever to be recalled. When  
 once they come to believe ill of their Prince, there  
 is nothing so ill that they will not believe ; as in  
 the instance of TIBERIUS, of whom things the  
 most improbable and horrid were believed. It is  
 hardly possible for any merit, the most genuine and  
 exalted, to preserve popular favour for a long time ;  
 accidents and disasters will be falling in, to sour the  
 spirits of the populace ; or some fresh merit, more  
 new or more glaring, may appear, and lessen or in-  
 tercept their admiration of the other ; or the same  
 person may not always have the same opportunities  
 to oblige them ; so that the best care and conduct can  
 only



only serve to retain it to a certain degree; and this by good conduct is certainly and always to be done. But when the reputation of the Prince with his Subjects is entirely gone, something worse than the bare want of it will ensue. Between a Prince's forfeiting the public Affection and his incurring the public Hatred, there is scarce any medium, and even that medium is a terrible one, since to be scorned is not much better than to be hated, and often infers it.

WOULD a Prince live in security, ease and credit? let him live and rule by a standard certain and fixed, that of Laws, nor grasp at more than is given him. Many by seeking too much have lost all, and forfeited their Crown through the wantonness and folly of loading it with false and invidious ornaments. While nothing would serve them but lawless Power, even their legitimate Authority grew odious, and was rent from them. They set their People the example of assuming what was none of theirs, to do acts of violence in defense of violated Laws, to judge for themselves, and to sanctify by the title of Right whatever they could accomplish by force. Rather than live upon bad terms, people will be apt to make their own terms, and think no fealty is due where no faith is kept. Who would not rejoice more in a free gift than in plunder? for such is the difference between Power conferred and Power usurped. What new Prerogative acquired to the Crown, or what new Revenue can make amends for the Hearts of the People estranged and embittered? This is such a loss, as no acquisition, no pomp of Power whatsoever, can atone for. We have seen under what gloom, affright, and despair the Cæsars lived and swayed, though their sway was without check and bounds. MACHIAVEL says, that when a Prince has once incurred the public hate, there is no person nor thing which he ought not to dread.

HE who does no ill, fears none ; but such as are continually creating terrors and calamities to others, have abundant reason to be under continual apprehensions themselves. How much more desirable, how much more just, and easy, and safe is the condition of a Prince, who lives and rules by Laws over a free People by their own consent? both People and Laws are his guard, and what secures them, secures him. They feel that he loves them ; and he is conscious that they ought to love him. This is Government, and the effects of it ; not the triumph of boundless arrogance or folly ; not the insults of one over all, nor consequently his distrust of them, nor their slavish dread of him ; but the equal administration of eternal Righteousness, and stated Laws ; an endearing intercourse of fatherly care and protection, and of filial gratitude and duty. How amiable must it be, how refreshing to a generous Spirit, to oblige and solace a whole People, to have a whole People adore and bless him ! What master of Slaves, even the highest and most unbounded master, can boast so much of himself and his slaves ? The Grandeur of such a Prince is all false and tinsel, painted and hollow ; he is never secure, because he is not innocent ; he is not innocent, because he is an Oppressor.

To rule by mere Will, is to rule by Violence, and violence is War. He who puts himself in a state of Hostility with his Subjects, invites Hostility from them, as did the late King JAMES, who having no Confidence in the Laws, which he had violated, nor in his People, whom he had oppressed, put himself in a posture of War against his Subjects ; so that when they too had recourse to arms, they did but stand in their own defence. They had no quarrel to that King JAMES, who had taken an Oath to rule by Law ; but when that King assumed another person, and, in spite of Oaths and Laws, would oppress

prefs and spoil, they who owed this man of violence no Allegiance, opposed Might to Might, since he would abide by no Law. It was not their Prince therefore that they resisted, but their Enemy and Spoiler: he in truth, had no more Right to what the Law gave him not, than the great Turk had; they therefore opposed not an English Monarch, but an Invader and a Tyrant. Nor do I know of any People who threw off their Monarchy wantonly; and if they did it through Oppression, the Oppressor might blame himself\*. Had he conquered his Subjects, what would he have gained, but the detestable Glory of a triumphant Oppressor; of seeing a rich Country reduced by servitude to poverty, and of bearing the curses of a free People oppressed? Whoever has beheld the condition of a great neighbouring Kingdom, naturally the finest in Europe, has seen in the condition of the Inhabitants, poor, pale, nasty, and naked, what genuine Glory their Princes have reaped, by reducing all the Laws of their Country into one short one, that of Royal Will and Pleasure.

SECT. XIII. *Public Happiness only then certain, when the Laws are certain and inviolable.*

IT is allowed that amongst the Roman Emperors, there were some excellent ones. But was not all this chance? They might have proved like the rest, who were incredibly mischievous and vile. They had nothing but their own Inclinations to restrain them; and is human Society to depend for security and happiness upon uncertain Inclinations and Will? They were good by conformity to the Laws, as Laws are the only defense against such as

\* Quidam, postquam regum pertæsum, leges maluerunt.

are bad. The bad ones had almost sunk the Empire to a chaos, before there appeared one Prince of tolerable capacity and virtue to retrieve it. Inso-much that VESPASIAN declared it to be absolutely necessary to raise a fund of above three hundred millions of money (of our money) purely to save the State from absolute ruin, and dissolution<sup>†</sup>. After DOMITIAN there succeeded five good Reigns, during which Law and Righteousness prevailed, and the Emperors took nothing, neither power nor money, but what Laws long established gave them, and professed to derive every thing from the Law, and to occupy nothing in their own Name. But as the Emperor might still be a Tyrant if he would, that wild Prince COMMODUS resumed the old measures of violence, and, becoming a second CALIGULA, dissipated and overturned, in a few years, all the treasure, wise provisions and establishments, contrived and gathered by his Predecessors during the best part of a Century.

To conclude, if Princes would never encroach, Subjects would hardly ever rebel; and if the former knew that they would be resisted, they would not encroach. Every Subject knows that if he resist against Law, he will die by Law. It is certain mischief to both Prince and People, to assert slavish Doctrines, and no security to either; since nature oppressed will depart from passive principle. But to assert the reasonableness of vindicating violated Laws, is no more than asserting that Laws ought not to be violated, as they ever will be where there is no penalty annexed. The least attempt upon public Liberty is therefore alarming; if it is suffered once, it will be apt to be repeated often; a few repetitions create a habit; habit claims prescription and right. Such also is the nature of man, that

<sup>†</sup> Ut Respublica stare possit.

When public Affairs are once disconcerted, it is hard, sometimes impossible, to restore them to their first firmness; numbers become engaged in the corruption, and will be trying all their Arts and Power to support it. Where it grows extensive and general, the public Authority will probably espouse and defend it; and even where that authority is against it, the torrent may be so strong as to bear down Authority itself. How many great and good men have fallen themselves while they strove to restore the State? attempts to reform the Soldiery, to reform the Clergy, to reform the Civil Administration, have often drawn down a tragical doom upon the authors of them. It is much easier to prevent than to cure.

## DISCOURSE VI.

Of the old Law of Treason by the Emperors perverted and extended.

Sect. I. *The antient Purpose of that Law; the Politics of AUGUSTUS in stretching it.*

Proceed now to shew by what Arts and Supports the Tyranny was preserved and exerted; how the old Laws, especially that of Treason, were perverted, and to explain the *instrumenta regni*. “ This Law, says TACITUS, in the days of our “ Ancestors, had indeed the same Name, but im- “ plied different arraignments and crimes, namely “ those against the State; as when an army was “ betrayed abroad, when seditions were raised at “ home; in short, when the public was faithlessly  
K “ admini-

“ administered, and the Majesty of the Roman  
 “ People was debased. These were Actions ; and  
 “ Actions were punished, but Words were free.  
 “ AUGUSTUS was the first who brought Libels  
 “ under the penalties of this wrested Law<sup>a</sup>.”

IN that sense of this Law (and doubtless it is the true sense) the Emperors were the criminals ; they who had enslaved Senate and People, usurped and destroyed the State. But they had got the Power of interpreting Laws, or of directing those who did, and consequently were become the Law-makers. As Laws observed had defended Liberty ; Laws wrested secured the Usurpers. Hence the old Law of Treason was degraded and perverted to involve in its penalties the Authors of Lampoons and Pasquinades. This Law of Majesty was so much and so long prostituted and abused ; so much bloodshed and oppression was committed by the succeeding Emperors under its name, that at last every sentence and punishment, however just, which was pronounced by virtue of it, was thought unlawful and cruel ; so that out of detestation to this abused Law, many other good Laws perished.

DOUBTLESS Reputation is a tender thing, and ought no more to be violated than property or life ; and they who attack and blacken it, are as vile Offenders as they who rob and steal. But there was no better pretence for making it treasonable, than for construing any other offence against particulars, to be an offence against the public. In truth, AUGUSTUS could have no other view in this, than the suppressing of that Freedom of Speech which

- <sup>a</sup> Legem Majestatis reduxerat (Tiberius) ; cui nomen apud veteres idem, sed alia in judicium veniebant : si quis proditione exercitum, aut plebem seditionibus, denique male gesta Repub. Majestatem populi Romani minuisset. Facta arguebantur, dicta impune erant. Primus Augustus cognitionem de famosis libellis, specie legis ejus tractavit.

was an effect of the freedom of the antient Government, and inconsistent with his Usurpation. When words were made Treason, it was time to be wary of one's expressions; especially when the construction of them was merely arbitrary, and the Law that made them so, was utterly silent about them, there remained no sort of rule to know when they were otherwise; nor had he who was to be judge any rule but his own suspicion, anger and partiality. For every word, for every action, men were involved in process for Treason, provided there appeared but an informer to charge him, and call it so:

It is to no purpose to say that AUGUSTUS sometimes overlooked or pardoned invectives against himself. It was all grimace and false generosity; since, after this Law was so terribly inverted, there was little likelihood that men would run such capital risques. If contumelies upon private persons were high Treason, what must it be to meddle with the Prince or his Administration? He took care of himself without seeming to do so; he found his own sanctuary in providing one for others; and regulations made for his own defence and gratification, had an appearance of a spirit altogether public and disinterested. But it was a downright insult upon the sense of mankind, to convert a petulant imagination and a few wanton words, into a crime against the State. He who exposed the gallantries of a Lady of Quality, or the faults and foibles of a Patrician, was, forsooth, deemed to bear hostile purposes against the Commonwealth: for this is the construction of Treason by the Lawyers. Yet AUGUSTUS himself had made obscene Libels, particularly upon FULVIA the wife of ANTHONY. This multiplying of Treasons from Words and Writings, had a melancholy aspect; for, besides that Treasons multiplied are the bulwarks and engines of Tyranny; looks at

last became treasonable, as did natural sympathy and sorrow, nay, sighs and silence.

AUGUSTUS was cunning enough to know the advantages of Treasons multiplied to his own domination, and wrested adultery also into a crime of State. His daughter and her daughter were prostitutes, and all their gallants, according to this merciful Monarch, were Traytors, and because these sort of Traytors were very numerous, as well as considerable for quality and credit, he had here a good pretence to get rid of many considerable Romans, who gave him uneasiness and jealousy. With death or banishment therefore he punished their gallants. For to a crime common between men and women, he gave the grievous name of Treason and Sacrilege, and trod upon the moderation of Antiquity. Nor was this sort of Treason limited to the Reigning House and the blood of the Cæsars; it was universal, and every Adulterer was a Traytor; by which he made himself the greatest Traytor in Rome, as he was the most universal Adulterer; nor were his own severe Laws any check upon him, no more than the sacred ties of friendship; for he spared not the wife of his own Favourite, and faithful Counsellor MÆCENAS. This was not extreme prudence in so great a Politician, to be daily violating institutions of his own making, especially when by the rigour of the penalties, and the formidable name which he had given to the crime, he had shewn how important and unpardonable he thought it; unless, like the Princes of Italy in MACHIAVEL's time, he broke penal Laws, to encourage others to do so, on purpose to ensnare delinquents, and gain confiscations.



SECT. II. *The Deification of the Emperors, what an engine of Tyranny, and snare to the Roman People.*

THE Deification of AUGUSTUS and his usurping even in his life-time the Attributes and Prerogatives of a Deity, was another snare for Power and Crimes. Henceforth every offence offered to this new Deity was high Treason against the Gods ; for he was a God as well as the best of them, and indeed more to be dreaded than all of them. It became a high crime to swear falsely by his name, the same as if the name of Jupiter had been falsified ; nay, to sell his Statue in the sale of a house or gardens ; and the citizens of Cyzicus, notwithstanding their faithful adherence and strenuous services to the Romans in the Mithridatic War, were bereft of their freedom for neglecting the worship of the deified AUGUSTUS. The name of APIDIUS MERULA was razed from the list of Senators, because he had not sworn upon the Acts of the deified AUGUSTUS. One of the articles charged against C. SILANUS, Proconsul of Asia, was, that he violated the Deity of AUGUSTUS. VARILIA, in the opinion of TIBERIUS, deserved to be condemned, if she had uttered aught irreliously concerning the deified AUGUSTUS ; for this was Treason and Blasphemy. Such was the awe and reverence paid to this fresh Deity ; and such care had he taken to tie up the tongues of men from censuring him living or dead ; he was *instar omnium deorum* ; you might say what you would of other Gods, but beware of injuring a deified Emperor. He had done more mischief, committed higher oppressions, spilt more human blood than all the men in the world, and was made a Deity !

NOR was it out of any principle of Superstition, that TIBERIUS guarded the fame and Godhead of AUGUSTUS with such severe sanctions; for he little mattered the Gods and godly Rites, being himself a Fatalist, and only infatuated with notions of Astrology. Neither was it from any regard to AUGUSTUS (who was suspected to have been poisoned to make way for him) and whose Blood and Posterity he was daily destroying; a proceeding inconsistent with the adorations and sacrifices which he affected to offer him, as AGRIPPINA truly told him. But he did it to promote Superstition in others, and rivet the public Slavery; since in religious devotion paid to a Prince, civil submission was included and enforced. It in truth imported him nearly to have all the Laws and doings of AUGUSTUS pass for sacred, and to set an example himself that he thought them so. AUGUSTUS had left him (as he pretended) his Successor, and it behoved him that AUGUSTUS should pass for a Prince of consummate wisdom; for had he erred in other great counsels and events, he might have erred in that; besides, AUGUSTUS was a popular Prince, and it would have been unpopular to have neglected him, or rescinded his deeds.

NERO too acquired the Sovereignty by the murder of CLAUDIUS, and, to keep it, murdered his Children and Kindred; yet he at first treated his memory with high regard, vindicated the Reign, and even extolled the parts and prudence of this deified fool; for CLAUDIUS too was listed amongst the Gods; he who had been the most stupid, cowardly, and bloody Idiot that could possibly wear and disgrace a Diadem. This strange animal or human monster, just begun by nature, but never finished, as his mother used to say, was utterly unfit for any Office in the Empire or private life, yet came to be an Emperor and a God. So that to  
bear

bear sovereign rule, or to be exalted to a God, no qualification at all was necessary. His grandmother LIVIA contemned him even to loathing; she could not bear to speak to him. His nephew CALIGULA, when he had butchered many of his kindred, saved CLAUDIUS purely to keep him for a laughing-stock. He was held in the same scorn by his sister LIVILLA, by AUGUSTUS and all his family. He was the jest of the Court<sup>b</sup>. The kindest word AUGUSTUS gave him was that of *misellus*, wretchling.

SECT. III. *The Images of the Emperors, how sacred they became, and how pernicious.*

AS flattery begot servitude, so it was by servitude propagated, and whatever tended to sink and debase the spirit of the people, as sycophancy did, exalted the Tyrants; nay, their Images and Statues became sacred and revered; and any villain or profligate might offer what outrage he pleased to every worthy man, every slave insult his Lord, every criminal escape justice, by sheltering himself under the Emperor's Statue, or by carrying his Effigies about him. Nor could so considerable a man as a Senator of Rome, even in the face of the Tribunal, and in the very portal of the Senate, escape the insults and menaces of a profligate woman, who thus defended herself with the Image of TIBERIUS, though he had legally convicted her of forgery; so far was he from daring to bring her to judgment. So that in this impious reverence to a silent Stone, all Law, and punishment, and protection was swallowed up. This gives probability to what PHILOSTRATUS tells us in the life of APOLLONIUS TYANEUS, that a master was

<sup>b</sup> Tum Claudius inter ludibria aulæ erat.

condemned, as one sacrilegious and accursed, for having chastized a slave, who happened to have about him a small coin impressed with the Effigies of TIBERIUS. So vastly had servitude grown upon the Romans so early as the Reign of TIBERIUS, and in the best part of his Reign, even while he yet kept tolerable measures with Law and Liberty, and warily avoided all excesses of power and cruelty. Yet in his second year, GRANIVS MARCELLUS being arraigned of high Treason, it was one of the Articles, that the Statue of MARCELLUS stood higher than that of the Cæsars, and from that of AUGUSTUS the head had been taken off, and the head of TIBERIUS put on. At the recital of this TIBERIUS waxed into such a flame and fury, that, departing from his wonted caution and silence, he cried aloud, he would vote in this cause himself under the tie of an oath. He was excellently answered by CNEIVS PISO, who asked him; “ In what place, CÆSAR, will you chuse  
 “ to vote? if first, I shall have your example to  
 “ follow; if last, I fear, through ignorance, I may  
 “ happen to differ from you.” Hence the reflection of TACITUS, that there even then remained some faint traces of expiring Liberty.

It is not strange, however hideous, to find afterwards these Statues, these dead representatives of the dead, invested with such extravagant and inviolable sanctity, that it was death without redemption for a master to chastize his slave near the picture or image of AUGUSTUS; death, to change one’s garments there; death, to carry a coin or a ring with his Image into the Privy or into the Stews; death, to drop a word that seemed to censure any action or any saying of his; and death was the portion of that unhappy man, who suffered some pub-

lie honour to be decreed him by his Colony, on the Anniversary of the same day, when AUGUSTUS had once public honours decreed to him.

THE execrable CALIGULA, who was a professed foe to the human race, a monster gorged with blood, and dyed in it, assumed Godhead as well as the rest, and claimed all the apparatus of Divinity, a Temple and Altars, Worship and choice Sacrifices. It is incredible what dreadful punishments he inflicted upon many even of principal fashion, for no other crime, than that they had never invoked his celestial Genius by an Oath. This was capital, it was Majesty violated; and for it the offenders, after they had been first torn and mangled with stripes, were doomed to the mines, or to the drudgery of mending the public roads, or to be thrown to wild beasts; and some were sawed asunder. A bloody Deity! Had he been omnipotent, the race of men must have been extinct. All his own murders, all the efforts of his malice and rage, were not able to accomplish it, and he wished to derive the Glory of his Reign from some signal Calamities happening in it; as if the monster himself had not been curse and calamity enough! He envied AUGUSTUS the happiness of an Army massacred, and TIBERIUS the sad disaster at Fidenæ, where fifty thousand souls were maimed, or perished outright by the fall of the Amphitheatre there. Hence he longed passionately for the blessing of some public Calamities great and dreadful, the Slaughter of great Armies, Famine, Pestilence, Conflagrations and Earthquakes. The acclamations of the crowd in the Theatre differing from his, he uttered a Godlike wish, “That the whole Roman People had but one common neck; for then one execution would have dispatched them all.” To complete the Character of this benevolent Deity, he boasted,

boasted, that of all his great Qualities, none delighted him so much as his defiance of all shame<sup>d</sup>.

THESE celestial Titles and Worship divine, were sometimes bestowed upon the wives of the Emperors, their sisters, harlots, and infants. CALIGULA was wont to swear by the Divinity of DRUSILLA his sister and concubine. CLAUDIUS had divine Honours decreed to LIVIA his grandmother. NERO's daughter by POPPÆA was deified; Worship, Priest, and Chapel were assigned her; and it was one of the crimes imputed to THRASEA PÆTUS, that he did not believe POPPÆA herself to be a Divinity. Nay, it would seem as if NERO's Voice had been created a Divinity, since I think, it was Treason never to have sacrificed to it; a crime imputed to the same THRASEA. DOMITIAN likewise adjudged himself a God, and proved much such another as CALIGULA.

*SECT. IV. What a destructive Calamity the Law of Majesty grew, and how fast Treasons multiplied under its Name.*

I Have said so much of this humour of deifying Princes living or dead, not so much to expose it, as to shew the wicked effects it had upon Liberty and the State. It opened a new Source of flattery, and accusations, and punishments, and strengthened the hand of Tyranny; of this I have given sufficient instances, and many more might be given, all manifestly proving with what impudence and cruelty the Law of Majesty was stretched and embittered. In this Law all Laws were swallowed up, and therefore all crimes brought under the article of Treason,

<sup>d</sup> Nihil majus in natura sua laudare se ac probare quam a<sup>d</sup> *dis*-  
ticipular.

as Treason was the highest crime<sup>c</sup>, as in the case of C. SILIUS, whose chief offence was overmuch service done to TIBERIUS; thence that refined observation of TACITUS; "That benefits are  
 " only so far acceptable, as it seems possible to dis-  
 " charge them; but when once they have exceeded  
 " all retaliation, hatred is returned for gratitude." Under TIBERIUS, says SUTTONIUS, every fault passed for Capital, even that of Words, however few and undesigning. When C. SILANUS was arraigned for male-administration in Asia, TACITUS says, that besides all the other methods of artifice and violence, manifold and barbarous, used to destroy him; that none of his relations might dare to aid him and plead for him in his trial, articles of Treason were subjoined, a sure bar to all assistance, and a seal upon their lips. One of the great charges against LIBO DRUSUS was, that he asked the fortune-tellers, whether he should not one day be immensely rich. This too was the sin of Majesty violated, and for it he was pursued to death and his estate seized. Note, that these were two men of high quality, akin to the Cæsars, and obnoxious to TIBERIUS. This seems to have been their real crime. CESIUS CORDUS was accused of Rapine in his Government of Crete; but to make sure of the criminal, he was likewise charged with the crime of violated Majesty; a charge, says TACITUS, which in those days proved the sum and bulwark of all accusations whatsoever.

It was Treason in CREMUTIUS CORDUS to have inserted in his History the praises of BRUTUS; Treason, to have stiled CASSIUS the last of the Romans, though in doing it he only quoted the words of BRUTUS; Treason in TITIUS SABI-

<sup>c</sup> Cuncta quæstione majestatis exercita.

**NUS** to have been a follower of **GERMANICUS**, and after his death, a faithful friend to his wife and children; Treason in **POMPEIA MACRINA**, Treason in her Father and Brother, the former an illustrious Roman Knight, the latter once Prætor, to have been descended from **THEOPHANES** of Mitylene, a noble Greek, in great confidence with **POMPEY** the Great; Treason in **L. ENNIUS** a Roman Knight, to have turned the Effigies of the Emperor into money; Treason in **LUTORIUS PRISCUS**, another Roman Knight, to have composed during the illness of **DRUSUS**, a Poem for an Elegy, in case he died; Treason in **MAMERCUS SCAURUS**, an illustrious Orator nobly born, that in a Tragedy by him composed, there were certain Verses capable of two meanings; Treason in **TORQUATUS SILANUS**, a Nobleman of the first rank in Rome, to live splendidly, and entertain several principal servants; another **SILANUS** his Nephew died soon after for the very same sort of Treason. In another Nobleman it was Treason, to have preserved the Image of **CASSIUS** amongst those of his Ancestors; Treason in the two brothers surnamed **PETRÆ**, both illustrious Roman Knights, to have dreamed something about **CLAUDIUS**; Treason in **APPIUS SILANUS**, that **MESSALINA** the Empress, and **NARCISSUS** the freedman, had forged a dream concerning him; and, to add no more, it was Treason, it was Majesty violated, for a poor distressed Lady to have bewailed the blood of her son, spilt to satiate an implacable Tyrant incensed by his gay raillery. This was **FUSIUS GEMINUS** lately Consul; and his ancient mother was murdered for bewailing the murder of her child <sup>f</sup>.

<sup>f</sup> *Fœminæ ob lacrymas inculpabantur; necataque est Vitia Fusii Gemini mater, quod filii necem flevisset.*



## DISCOURSE VII.

Of the Accufations, and Accufers  
under the Emperors.

SECT. IV. *The pestilent Employment of these Men, their Treachery and Encouragement.*

FROM Law thus perverted there arose encouragement more than enough for Informers and Accusers, and a plentiful harvest : a sort of men, says TACITUS, born for the destruction of mankind, and by no terrors or penalties ever sufficiently restrained ; yet by the Emperor such sons of perdition were sought out and invited by great rewards. TIBERIUS had the front to tell the Senate, that these insects, enemies to Law and Liberty, were the Guardians and Defenders of the Laws. They were his Defenders, if he pleased ; the Champions of Imperial Violence and Lust ; but the Pests of the Public ; dogs of Prey thirsting after the blood and fortunes of every worthy and every wealthy man. That Prince who does not punish Informers, encourages them, said DOMITIAN ; but this he said in the beginning of his Reign while he yet retained the appearances of benevolence and humanity ; afterwards when the disguise was taken off, and he followed the bent of his brutal nature, it was enough to ruin any man, if he were but charged to have done some deed, or spoke some word, no matter what, against the Majesty of the Prince. Men were then capitally arraigned, and the estates were seized of both the living and the dead, for any fault whatsoever,

soever, upon the credit of any Accuser whatsoever; and inheritances, to which he could have no possible title or pretence upon earth, were usurped by him, if there was but one Person, one Informer, who could say, that he heard the deceased declare CÆSAR to be his heir. The same pretence served CALIGULA; nay, when people had out of fear named him amongst their heirs, he wondered at their impudence to keep him out of his share by living afterwards, and for that offence poisoned many such. In short the chief and most frequent incidents in the Reigns of almost all the Cæsars, were but the bloody efforts and successs of the Accusers; and the groundwork and support of all accusations, was the perverted Law of violated Majesty, which came to signify every thing which the Accusers averred and the Emperors disliked.

In the beginning of TIBERIUS's Reign, L. PISO, one of the boldest men then surviving, owned himself so much intimidated by the merciless pursuits of the Impleaders, who breathed nothing but terror and accusations, that he threatened in open Senate to relinquish Rome and retire into some distant corner of the earth. He had reason for his complaint and fears, he was afterwards marked out as a victim and prey by one of the tribe, and arraigned for certain words secretly dropped against the Majesty of the Prince. These accusations were no other or better than the cruel Proscription continued; by the latter, Senators and Knights, Patriots obnoxious to the Usurpers, were butchered in the lump; afterwards, under the process of the Accusers, they perished piece-meal, but were incessantly perishing<sup>a</sup>, often a great many at a time. Every Law

<sup>a</sup> Quem diem vacuum poena ubi inter sacra & vota, vincla & laqueus inducantur.

of the old free State, and every man who loved his Country and her Laws, were repugnant to the reigning Tyranny ; hence as the Republic was swallowed up in the Sovereignty of the Cæſars, all her laws were made to center in that of Majesty, and all men who adhered or were suspected to adhere to the ancient Constitution, were either destroyed by this new Law (rather an old Law turned into a new snare) or at the mercy of its Guardians and Accusers. And all this new violence was committed under old names and constitutions <sup>b</sup> ; so that the Commonwealth was made to cut her own throat ; just as cruel and ambitious men justify Persecution and Oppression by the authority of the Gospel, which abhors it. The Church of Rome calls every thing that displeases her, Hereſy and Blaſphemy ; this is the *Lex Majeſtatis* of ſome Churchmen, and by cruelties committed under that name they have more than vied with the NERO's and DOMITIAN's. Thus, after a ſolemn murder committed by the Senate, to gratify TIBERIUS, he ſent them a Letter of thanks, for puniſhing a perſon who was an enemy to the Commonwealth ; as if the Republic had been then ſubſiſting and vindicating her own wrongs.

THE Accuſers were the agents and tools of Tyranny, and by the Tyrants upheld and animated with open countenance and high rewards ; their buſineſs was to hunt down and deſtroy every man ſignal for blood, or wealth, or dignity, or virtue ; becauſe all ſuch men were obnoxious to imperial Jealouſy and Diſpleaſure. Had a noble Roman ſuſtained public Offices ? he was a dangerous man ; had another reſuſed to bear them ? he was equally dangerous ; and for public Offices either exerciſed or declined, he was ſure to be attacked as a criminal of State ;

<sup>b</sup> Proprium id Tiberio fuit, ſcelera nuper reperta priſcis verbis obtegere.

and if he were conspicuous for any notable ability or virtue, his doom was inevitable<sup>c</sup>. VALERIUS ASIATICUS perished because he had delightful Gardens, which tempted the avidity of MESSALINA; as did STATILIUS TAURUS, for the same reason, by the avarice and subornation of AGRIPPINA; so did SEXTUS MARIUS for his immense Wealth and gold Mines, under TIBERIUS. This gives one an idea of the terrible spirit of the Emperors as well as of the Accusers; how much the former feared and hated, and how fast they destroyed every thing that was noble, good, or amiable amongst men; and what a pestilent employment was that of an Accuser! Was it any wonder that to carry on so detestable a trade, they were to be tempted with lucrative earnings? In truth, their recompences were so public and ample, that they were detested not more for their Iniquities than for the Wages of their Iniquities.

THESE Pests of Rome were, for being so, frequently raised to the highest Offices in the Roman State; and that Imperial City, the Mistress of the Earth, saw her public Dignities, those of the Pontificate, and of the Consulship, bestowed as spoils upon Parricides for spilling her best blood, and tearing her vitals. With the Prince their credit was high, as their merit was infamous; some were preferred to be Governors of the Provinces, others taken to be his chief Confidants and Counsellors in the Palace. And thus, vested with credit and sway, exerting all their terrors, and pursuing their hate, they controuled and confounded all things<sup>d</sup>. After the tragical Death of LIBO DRUSUS, procured by execrable Artifices, Falshoods, Horrors and wrested Laws,

<sup>c</sup> Nobilitas, opes, omissi gestique honores, pro crimine; & ob virtutes certissimum exitium.

<sup>d</sup> Agerent, verterent cuncta, odio & terrore.

all the substance of that noble Patrician was divided amongst his Accusers; and such of them as were Senators were created Prætors, even without the regular method of election. The four Senators who ensnared TITIVS SABINVS, by trappanning, lurking, feigned friendship, and by a series of treachery the most infamous and cruel that could be practised amongst men, and afterwards accused him, engaged in all this meritorious villainy purely to gain the Consulship, to which there was no possible access but through SEJANVS, nor without villainy was the favour of SEJANVS to be sought or purchased.

BUT besides rewarding of the Accusers out of the fortune of the Accused, (for where they had not all, they still went shares with his children) they had frequently excessive sums out of the public Treasury; CAPITO COSSUTIANVS had near a hundred and thirty thousand Crowns, for accusing THRASEA PETVS; EPRIVS MARCELLVS had as much, for the same good service; for NERO, after he had long wallowed in the blood of eminent men, and butchered them without number, was in hopes by the murder of THRASEA and SORANVS, to extirpate Virtue, name and essence, from the face of the earth. OSTORIUS SABINVS, the Accuser of SORANVS, had indeed a less reward in money, that of thirty thousand Crowns; but the reward was enhanced by the ornaments of the Quæstorship presented with it. “ These Incendiaries  
 “ were animated, and such crying calamities to the  
 “ public were excited by the Minions of the Court,  
 “ who, as it were, sounded the Trumpet to Arraign-  
 “ ments and Confiscations; on purpose, that out of  
 “ the fortunes of the condemned they might raise or  
 “ increase their own;” says AM. MARCELLINVS. AQUILIUS REGVLVS, an upstart and a mischievous Accuser under NERO, was distinguished with two Consulships, and the dignity of Pontiff;  
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and had premiums in money to the value of more than two hundred thousand Crowns ; as if he had been burying the Commonwealth, and for this merit had afterwards gathered her spoils, says TACITUS.

SECT. II. *The traiterous Methods taken to circumvent and convict Innocence. The spirit of accusing how common, the dread of it how universal ; and the misery of the Times.*

AS upon these bloody occasions, it was necessary to find or feign some crime ; so any crime served the turn, as I have largely shewn ; witnesses also must be had ; but any witnesses were good witnesses ; and where they did not offer themselves, they were bought with money, or frightened with the torture. Slaves were suborned against the life of their Lords ; clients and freedmen against their Patrons ; and he who had no enemy, was betrayed and undone by his friends<sup>c</sup>. Now, because, by the old Roman laws, slaves could not be witnesses against their masters, the crafty TIBERIUS found a trick to evade that law without seeming to violate it ; he contrived to have the slaves upon such occasion sold ; and then they might be evidence against their late Lord. This perfidious subtilty was begun by AUGUSTUS, as is largely shewn by DION CASSIUS. Nay, when a man had no other to accuse him, he was accused by his own son. Dreadful times ! even, all rewards and incitements apart, fear for themselves made men treacherous to others ; falshood and cruelty reigned uncontrouled. If you would please the Prince, you must gratify his bloody spirit ; to do that, you must offer victims and exercise the trade

<sup>c</sup> Corrupti in dominos servi, in patronos liberti, & quibus deerat inimicus, per amicos oppressi.

of accusing; if you were ill with him, no man, no innocence could protect you; and to be well with him, you must make all other men detest you. To make your own fortune you must ruin that of others, and shed blood to get money.

To this vile employment men of the highest Quality descended, and those of the first note for Eloquence and Civil Accomplishments; such was COTTA MESSALINUS, a man nobly born, but the foremost in every sanguinary motion; such was PUBLIUS DOLABELLA, who sprung from Ancestors the most illustrious, yet debased his Nobility, and engaged in the occupation of an Accuser, even against those of his own blood. When men of such Quality set such example, what wonder if numbers followed it? Many pursued it for money; others because they would not become obnoxious by appearing slack. The question was not about right or wrong, Law or Magistracy; but how to please and humour, to satiate the Emperor, and to escape his suspicion and fury. It was the plea of the Accusers afterward, when they were brought to answer for their crimes, that they were obliged by the Emperors, or their wives, to undertake and prosecute accusations: this SULLIUS pleaded, and urged the imperious orders of MESSALINA. Nay, men of figure were sometimes called upon by the Emperor in person to undertake Accusations. This, says TACITUS, was one of the most baneful and deadly evils of those times, that the first Lords of the Senate degraded themselves to the office of the vilest Informers; some impudently in the face of the sun; others in the dark ways of treachery; no distinction of kindred from strangers, of friends from such as were unknown; none between things lately transacted, and such as were covered by a course of years in oblivion; for words spoken in the Forum, spoken at an entertainment, and about what subject soever

spoken, the speaker was accused ; every one hastening to be foremost in the accusation, and to prevent his fellows ; some for their own safety, many, as it were, struck with the contagion, and smitten with the disease of accusing.

THIS universal treachery begot apprehension in all men equally universal. When villainy was thus rewarded, or thus necessary, and thus every-where practised by high and low, every man was fearful of finding every man a villain. Hence the mournful anguish and terror which seized the City ; people were afraid to converse, nay, afraid to meet ; they distrusted all alike, their acquaintance as well as the unknown ; even things mute and inanimate were dreaded ; and roofs and walls created terror and circumspection ; nay, they were apprehensive that guilt might be found in these their apprehensions, and thence came to dread this very thing, that they had shewn dread<sup>f</sup>.

SECT. III. *Plots feigned or true, an ample field for Accusations and Cruelty ; and upon what miserable Evidence Executions were decreed.*

**B**UT the best market for Accusations, and the best opportunity for the Emperor to exert Tyranny, and consume men, was the detection of any Conspiracy forged or real. How prodigious and merciless was the slaughter committed by CONSTANTIUS after the death of MAGNENTIUS, and by his bloody instrument PAULUS, firnamed *Catena* from his dexterity in calumny and accusations ! Thus too, upon the detection of the designs of SEJANUS against TIBERIUS, who at one time, for a course of years, had destroyed every man that

<sup>f</sup> Id ipsum paventes, quod timuissent.



was obnoxious to this execrable Favourite of his, and afterwards destroyed every man who had been well with his Favourite; thus when those of PISO against NERO came to be discovered, the whole business of the State was that of accusing, imprisoning and executing. Rome was dyed, deformed, and filled with blood, and death, and funerals; and as many as were hated, or disliked, or worth destroying upon any account, were sure to have been Conspirators, and to be doomed to the pains annexed to Conspiracy. TIBERIUS caused a general slaughter to be made of all that were in prison, under accusation of intelligence with SEJANUS. Any thing upon earth, the lightest, the most fortuitous and foolish thing, served for proof of such intelligence. POMPONIUS SECUNDUS was arraigned of Treason, for that there were some signs (but not shewn by him neither) of friendship between him and AETIUS GALLUS, who was a friend to SEJANUS, who was a Traytor. GALLUS, upon the execution of SEJANUS, had retired into the Gardens of POMPONIUS: this was all; yet this was the doughty argument used by his Accuser, for proving this worthy and accomplished man a Traytor, one who had violated Majesty. Yet his Accuser CONSIDIUS was a man considerable enough to have been Prætor: it was thus, I suppose, he shewed how well he deserved Imperial Favour, and one of the highest Dignities in the State.

THE Emperor CONSTANTIUS was as cruel and as credulous: with him it was death to be accused, and every Accusation, however doubtful, or false, or even whispered, was convincing proof of guilt; nay, the least rumour, however groundless, the smallest hint, however spiteful, created Treason and death without redemption; and by no better proof men of the first quality and merit were doomed to confiscation, or banishment, or execution. The

bare saying that such a one was in the Conspiracy, or a friend to the Conspirators, was conviction in abundance for taking away Estates and Lives. NERO, whose chief and only purpose was to afflict and destroy, created guilt wheresoever he found distaste. His own hatred or fear was crime enough, and reason sufficient to destroy the object. Some were sacrificed without being once accused, or named; some punished ere they knew they were accused; and the least defamation was full conviction. Nothing was more common than to charge any great man, doomed beforehand to destruction, with designs against the State. This was the charge upon LIBO DRUSUS. All the guilt that could be proved upon him, though to prove it, and indeed to create it, the most villainous arts were used, was, that he had consulted the Fortune-tellers, and dealt in Charms. This was conspiring against the State, it was Treason; and because the Romans were much addicted to such sort of Superstition, this became a very convenient Treason, and very fertile; yet TRIBERIUS himself was, as much as any, addicted to Astrology. In the accusations particularly against great Ladies, who for blood, or wealth, or beauty, merited Imperial Wrath, it was a constant article, that they had dealt with the Chaldeans, or practised the rites of Magic: and for this many great Ladies were doomed to death<sup>s</sup>.

§ Ob hæc mors indicta.

Scct. IV. *What ridiculous Causes produced capital Guilt. The spirit of the Emperor CONSTANTIUS; with somewhat of his Father CONSTANTINE.*

**T**HIS humour of consulting the Astrologers, still encreasing with Superstition and Tyranny, administered an inexhaustible fund of crimes and accusations: the noise of a Mouse in a wall, or the sight of a Weasel, became matters of omen and consultation, and consequently matters of Treason and Blood: so did the use of an old Woman's Charm for aches: so did the counting the Vowels upon one's Fingers, as a remedy against the Colic: so did the wearing of an Amulet for an Ague: so did the casual dropping of any Word or Joke, that bore any analogy to the Empire, or the Emperor's name, or to any matter of State and Power: so did the frequenting of Sepulchres, and carrying away the bones or habiliments of the dead: so did any Dream dreamt about any such subject, or construed to be so dreamed.

Under CONSTANTIUS there was one MERCURIUS, a Persian, who was a favourite of the Emperor, and a spy for Dreams; insomuch that he had the title of *Somniorum comes*. This blessed instrument, a fellow of a malicious spirit, and fawning behaviour, used to creep into all companies and banquets, to fish out Dreams from particulars; and whatever he there learned of this kind, after he had, with all his invention, dressed it up in ugly and formidable colours, he carried instantly to the Emperor, whose ears were ever open wide to such mischievous insuflions; and this Dreaming, thus represented, was a crime to be expiated only by the blood of the Criminal, I should say, Dreamer, and so a terrible process was formed. This terror spread so much,

that people, far from telling their Dreams, durst scarce own that they slept: nay, it was lamented by some, that they had not been born upon Mount Atlas, where, according to tradition, people never dream.

To complain too of the badness of the times, was high Treason; for this was arraigning the Government, and punished capitally. But Death itself, however unjust, was not always the most formidable woe. The accused were often not allowed the benefit of Death, till they were first barbarously racked and mangled by torture; and to gratify the inhuman Vengeance of the Prince, their Agonies were continued as long as life could continue under them<sup>b</sup>. This is testified by AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS of CONSTANTIUS the second Christian Emperor, more cruel than NERO and CALIGULA; a consideration which confirms what I have said before, that where the Government is bad, even the best Religion can do little good. CONSTANTIUS was a Christian, and even zealous in Church Matters, and Religious Disputes, and by fostering them did miserably afflict Christianity and the Empire. But he was so far from being improved or bettered by this zeal, that the most cruel Tyrants that went before him, such monsters as CALIGULA, DOMITIAN, and COMMODUS, were but babes to him in cruelty<sup>i</sup>.

I wish much better things could be boasted of his Father, the first Emperor who embraced Christianity, and stiled CONSTANTINE THE GREAT. All the Princes, even the persecuting Princes who went before him, hurt not Religion so much as he did;

<sup>b</sup> Mortemque longius in puniendis quibusdam, si natura permitteret, conabatur extendi.

<sup>i</sup> Caligulæ, & Domitiani, & Commodi immanitatem facile superabta, *says the same Ammianus.*

by blending it unnaturally with Politics and Power, by laying the foundations of a spiritual Tyranny, and enabling the Bishop of Rome, and other great Prelates, to exert the domineering spirit, which before they had but ill concealed; a spirit which has almost extinguished that of the Gospel. In his Civil Administration, he was rapacious, profuse, and oppressive; and in his Family barbarous and sanguinary; however his partial and flattering Historian, EUSEBIUS, has extolled him, and concealed the iniquities of his Reign. But, in barbarity, and the excesses of Power, his son and Successor CONSTANTIUS exceeded him. What just reason had AMMIANUS to say, that under the lying pretence of guarding Imperial Majesty, numerous and horrible were the butcheries then committed<sup>k</sup>!

Sect. V. *The black and general carnage made under CONSTANTIUS, by his bloody Minister PAULUS CATENA, for certain Acts of Superstition and Curiosity.*

CONSTANTIUS surrendered at one time a great part of the Roman World to the merciless hands of Accusers, Torturers and Executioners; and certain causes, in themselves frivolous and contemptible, but magnified with the swelling imputation of Majesty violated, produced all the uproar and calamity attending a great Civil War. The trumpets sounded to try and slay<sup>l</sup>.

AN Egyptian Deity, named *Besa*, was noted for uttering Oracles, and telling fortunes, and thence

<sup>k</sup> Per simulationem tuendæ Majestatis imperatoris multa & nefanda perpetrabantur.

<sup>l</sup> Ad vicem bellorum civilium inflabant litui quædam colorata lævæ Majestatis criminis—materiam autem in infinitum questionibus extendendis dedit occasio vilis & parva.

much frequented, adored and consulted by all the Countries round about. As many consulted him in person, others did it in writing : this occasioned, that several of the billets thus sent, continued in the Temple after the answer was returned. Some of these were maliciously transmitted to the Emperor, a Prince of a poor spirit, suspicious, and bitter. He now waxed fierce and wrathful, and instantly dispatched his execrable instrument, PAULUS CATENA, into the East, armed with Powers equal to those given to some famous Captain for carrying on a mighty war. PAULUS was authorized to hear and determine discretionally, and proceeded to his charge, breathing nothing but rage, and bloody zeal. Universal accusation and calumny being thus licensed and encouraged, numbers of all degrees were dragged from far and near, as it were, out of the several quarters of the world, to this barbarous Tribunal, and exposed to the mercy of a butcher, who only pursued blood and prey. Some came with their joints excoriated with fetters, others crushed and spent in carts made for carrying criminals ; no distinction made between the noble and vulgar. The process was long and tragical ; in short, confiscations, exiles, tortures worse than death, death under tedious torments, and every evil painful or destructive to human nature, was there exerted and suffered. As for PAULUS, the lives, and fortunes, and fate of multitudes depended upon his nod, a man skilled in the Arts of cruelty, and openly professing them ; a savage who made a market of the rack and the wheel ; one, fed, as it were, with human carcasses mangled, and enriched by butchery and rapine ; a fellow who avowed the trade of accusing and killing, and studied to ensnare and devour innocence, lives, and property. This was the man in high favour and trust under the pious CONSTANTIUS. It will be a relief to the Reader to know that this monster,

ster, bloated with blood and crimes, was burnt alive under JULIAN, a Prince of very different parts and spirit.

Sect. VI. *The Ravages of the Accusers continued; their Credit with the Emperors; yet generally meet their Fate. The Falseness of these Princes. The melancholy State of those Times.*

THE Reigns of these following Princes, CONSTANTIUS, CONSTANS, GALLUS, VALENTINIAN, VALENS, were spent in a continual war upon their people, under colour of their Majesties being violated.

CRYING and tragical were the ravages committed at Rome by that bloody man MAXIMINUS, where, under pretence of Majesty violated, poisonings, and acts of lewdness, some few real, more imputed, were used as a stale for killing, torturing, and destroying. Every man, or woman, that was obnoxious to him or the Accusers, was put to death; and to private malice or rapaciousness a sea of Roman blood was spilt. I think it was this MAXIMINUS, who persuaded certain persons accused to confess and discover others, and in that case promised they should undergo no punishment either by sword or fire. They did so, trusting to his faith, and confessed crimes never committed; he then, for a salvo, doomed them to die under leaden hammers. He was executed himself under GRATIAN.

AGAINST the defence of innocence accused, against the most evident truth and justice, and all honest information, the ears of the Emperor were eternally shut; but calumny whispered by any malignant, had equal weight with real crimes proved by authentic witnesses; says AMMIANUS, Falsehood

hood and flattery, envy and rapaciousness passed for evidence; justice was converted into cruelty, and judgment into rage; the Tribunals erected for justice, and preservation of life and property, were become shambles, and what had the names of pains and penalties, was in truth robbery and assassination.

As there was never any lack of Accusers, there was none of Criminals; and the accused, the more they were destroyed, the faster they multiplied; like witches in former days, daily executed, and daily increasing. They were the food and revenue of the Accusers, who while they could speak and lie, could never want occupation or wages, as long as there were Tyrants and men. MARCELLUS was charged with having uttered disaffected words concerning TIBERIUS, and the Accuser collecting every thing which was detestable in the manners of that Prince, alledged the same as the imputations of the accused. A large field for accusations, and well cultivated by the Accusers! you could say nothing of these Emperors that was true, but what was Treason; such bloody monsters were they all! and the worst you could have said being actually true, you were easily believed to have actually said it. What a blessed lot it must have been to have lived in those Reigns, under monsters unchained, and rogues let loose; when virtue and property were proscribed, villains carested and guarded!

THE persons of Accusers came to be considered as sacred and inviolable; the more they were detested by the public, the more they were protected by the Emperor; and in proportion as they merited death and ignominy, had countenance and preferment. Their vilest forgeries, convicted and owned, against the lives and fortunes of the greatest men, drew down no doom or penalty upon them. The crimes charged upon FONTIUS, late Proconsul of Asia, by SERENUS, were proved to have been  
by



by him forged ; yet he escaped punishment. Nay, the more the man was abhorred by all men, the more TIBERIUS considered and protected him. This SERENUS was a villain of exalted merit ; he had falsely accused his own father of Treason, an old man, and already in exile : but TIBERIUS owed him a spite, and the son studied to oblige TIBERIUS, who had been offended with the elder SERENUS for once upbraiding him with some wicked service unrewarded ; nor had an interval of eight years pacified the Prince. Yet it generally so happened, that their reign was but temporary ; first or last most of them found the genuine wages of their fraud and iniquity, and suffered the same doom which they had made others suffer ; a doom much more bitter, as it was just, accompanied also with universal hatred of their persons, and with a guilty and upbraiding conscience. This was the fate of SULLIUS, CASSIUS SEVERUS, and others.

Now as it was the custom, to find high Treason in harmless words, impertinent vanities, and even in ridiculous follies, deserving rather pity than punishment, such as were those charged upon LIBO ; so it was the purpose and policy of the Emperor never to prevent any guilt of this kind : on the contrary, he was glad of guilt, and when he knew it was begun, let it run on, till it was ripe, and evidence and Accusers were ready. TIBERIUS knew that LIBO dealt with the Astrologers, with every thing done or said by him ; yet at no time had he caressed LIBO more, than at the time when he was meditating his destruction. He preferred him to the Prætorship ; he entertained him at his table ; shewed no strangeness in his countenance, no resentment in his words ; so deeply had he smothered his vengeance ! and when he might have restrained all the dangerous Speeches and Practices of LIBO, he chose rather to permit them, in order to punish him for them.

The

## 158 DISCOURSES *upon* TACITUS.

The crafty Tyrant did not only lull asleep his destined victim by these excessive civilities ; but meant by them to deceive the world, as if **LIBO's** crimes were a surprize upon him, at a juncture when he would seem to have meant all kindness to **LIBO**. But he was mistaken, and his dissimulation only served to heighten the opinion of his malice ; for craft discovered is worse than folly, as folly never creates hatred. Cunning is only then complete, when it cannot be detected, which seldom happens. **NERO** carested and flattered **SENECA**, while he was devising all methods to destroy him. When he meant to murder his mother, never was there such a scene of false fondness as that which he played. He was formed by nature, says **TACITUS**, and by habit nurtured, to hide his hate under insidious blandishments. **DOMITIAN** used to treat with the utmost good humour and tenderness such as he intended to murder ; nor was there any warning or interval between his caressing you and delivering you to the Executioner ; nor a more certain sign that a tragical doom awaited you, than the Prince's gentle behaviour towards you. Well might **SUETONIUS** say, that his cruelty was not only excessive, but sly, and instantaneous.

Now under such a torrent of Accusations, under Laws perverted, Informers busy, employed, protected and rewarded, when all things were crimes, and all men were feared, nay, when fear itself was a crime, (for when **CALIGULA** murdered his brother, he gave it for a reason, that the youth was afraid of being murdered) when servants and neighbours, nay, acquaintance and kindred, were all justly to be suspected ; we need not admire that all offices of friendship and compassion were suspended amongst men, and compassion itself, as it were, extinguished. When **LIBO DRUSUS**, so often already mentioned, upon his arraignment for Treason, went in mourning  
from

from house to house to solicit the interposition of his relations (as all the great families in Rome were so) and to pray their aid, when his life and all was at stake; they all declined it to a man, each alledging a reason of his own, but every one in reality from the same cause, namely, their fear of the Emperor<sup>m</sup>.

PEOPLE must not only shew no sorrow or sympathy for their murdered relations, but they must testify joy, unless they had a mind to be murdered themselves; as under NERO, many, whose nearest relations had been murdered by him, repaired to the Temples with thanksgiving and offerings, and when the City was filled with corps, so was the Capitol with victims. In that mighty carnage made by TIBERIUS of the friends and followers of SEJANUS at once; when the pavements were covered with single carcases, or filled with carcases in piles, those of every sex and age, many that were noble, many that were mean, all cast abroad promiscuously; neither their acquaintance nor kindred were allowed to approach them, or to bewail them, or even at last to behold them. About the coarces spies were placed, to watch countenances, and the signs of sorrow: and when, after they became putrified and noisome, and were thrown into the Tiber, whether they floated in the stream, or were cast upon the banks, none would touch them, none durst bury or burn them. The force of Fear had cut off all the commerce and offices of Humanity; and the more Tyranny raged, the more human compassion was extinguished<sup>n</sup>. Even the outrageous CALIGULA had so well learned to hide his heart, that when by

<sup>m</sup> Abnuentibus cunctis, cum diversa prætenderent, eadem, formidine.

<sup>n</sup> Interciderat fortis humanæ commercium vi metus; quantumque sævitia glisceret, miseratio arcebatur.

the cruelty of TIBERIUS, his mother and both his brothers were condemned and banished, not a word escaped him; nor a groan; though all arts were used to draw words and resentment from him. OCTAVIA too, the wife of NERO, when her little innocent brother was murdered before her face, by the direction of the Tyrant her husband, had even then learned, young as she was, to smother all symptoms of tenderness and sorrow, and every affection of the soul; nay, AGRIPPINA, with all her courage and high spirit, laboured to hide her surprize and dread, and every other emotion, upon that occasion.

SECT. VII. *The increase of Tyranny. Innocence and Guilt not measured by the Law, but by the Emperor's Pleasure and Malice.*

ONE would think that Tyranny had by this time gone as far as it could go, and that after this, human cruelty and terrors could be strained no higher. But this is a mistake, Flatterers and Accusers were ingenious villains, and Tyranny is a monster never glutted; it is still craving for new butchery and victims; its purveyors therefore are ever studying to humour and pamper it°. Who could have imagined any thing upon earth more intensely cruel than TIBERIUS? yet his Successors exceeded him and one another in cruelties, for number and quality; and DOMITIAN committed such as had escaped even the preceding monsters. Hence TACITUS says; “As our fore-fathers had seen  
“ the ultimate point and last efforts of public  
“ Liberty; it was reserved to us of this generation  
“ to behold the utmost weight and severity of pub-  
“ lic Bondage; since by the terrors of State Inqui-

• *Metus principis rimantur, & sævitæ adrepunt.*

fitors,

“ fitors, we were even bereft of the common inter-  
 “ course of Civil Life, that of discourfing ourfelves,  
 “ and of liftening to the difcourfe of others:” he  
 adds, “ we fhould have alfo loft the ufe of memory,  
 “ as well as the habit of fpeaking, had it been  
 “ equally in our power to forget as to be filent.”

THE trial of perfons for Treafon went on generally in the old form, but in effect, was all refolvable into the breaft and good pleafure of the Prince. According to hints from him, perfons were condemned or acquitted; fometimes by his interpoſing the Tribunitial Power, they were not admitted to be accuſed; fometimes Treafon was found in one man’s words and actions, which in another were not allowed to be criminal. Thus men were ſentenced, or abſolved, or not accuſed, not according to their guilt or innocence, but to their degree of grace or diſlike with the Emperor, who had the Prerogative to coin guilt and innocence, and invert one into the other, as he pleaſed. Thus TIBERIUS purſued VESTILIUS to death, his brother’s antient friend and his own, for ſuſpicion of having lampooned his Nephew CALIGULA; but would not allow COTTA MESSALINUS to be a criminal for the ſame offence and for many more. But COTTA had merit, he was always foremoſt in every bloody Council; all his wickedneſs and crimes were ſo many ſervices, and ſo much merit. In thoſe days there was no ſure guilt but that of worth and of virtue, and innocence; hence the ſecurity of all men egregiouſly miſchievous. The known cruelty of the Prince, was no terror to thoſe who took care to eſcape it, by the vileneſs of their lives; eſpecially if they were active to feed his cruelty by noble ſacrifices; like HATERIUS AGRIPPA, who meditated in the miſt of his cups and harlots the deſtruction of illuſtrious men. The worſt and

vilest men in the Empire, became the securest, and often the highest, by destroying the best.

SECT. VIII. *What TACITUS means by Instrumenta regni.*

**B**ESIDES the Accusers, who were the Imperial Bloodhounds, to hunt men down for words, conjectures, signs, and appearances, by ridiculous pleas, forced constructions, and wrested Laws; the Emperors had other pestilent tools called by TACITUS *Instrumenta regni*, the Instruments of Imperial Rule. These were the Poisoners and Assassins. When there was no room or pretence to accuse a person signal for worth or opulence, or on any account obnoxious, and thence fit to be destroyed; or when it was unsafe to accuse him; recourse was had to a dose or dagger. Such were P. CELER, and ÆLIUS the Freedman, they who poisoned JULIUS SILANUS, by the appointment of AGRIPPINA: such was ANICETUS, who murdered NERO'S Mother, by the direction of her son: such was LOCUSTA, who administered the poison to CLAUDIUS, a woman famous for many feats in poisoning, and long retained for this talent, amongst the implements of Court; it was she who prepared this poison as well as that which destroyed young BRITANNICUS: such was XENOPHON, Physician to CLAUDIUS; one who helped to dispatch his master: such were they who by the procurement of LIVIA, made away the descendants of AUGUSTUS. After the assassination of CALIGULA, in his apartment was found a chest filled with all sorts of poisons, so rapid, that when they were thrown into the sea, they proved baneful to the fish; and numbers were by the tide cast dead upon the shore. Such also were the Tribunes and Centurions, and even the Captain of the Prætorian Guards; who

whenever they were ordered to seize and kill, never failed to obey, without any reason but the word of command. Thus POSTHUMUS AGRIPPA was dispatched by a Centurion under TIBERIUS: thus GERELANUS the Tribune, was, at the head of a band of soldiers, by NERO employed to see the execution of VESTINUS the Consul, a man charged with no guilt; but NERO, who hated and feared him, having neither crime nor accuser against him, and being therefore unable to assume even the false guise of a Judge, betook himself to the violence of a Tyrant.

IN truth, the whole body of Prætorian Guards were kept by these Tyrants as their Assassins, to murder for them, or to secure others who did. The Turk too has his Mutes and Poisoners in the Seraglio, as well as soldiers, to execute his fury secretly, or openly. LEWIS the eleventh entertained other secret Ruffians to stab and drown, besides his trusty murderer the Provost TRISTAN. Queen KATHERINE and her son CHARLES the Ninth, kept an Assassin, to dispatch privately such men of rank as they could find no other means to destroy; and as dark as the proceedings in the Bastile are kept, it is known what helps have been administered to the miserable prisoners there, to get rid of life, besides that of nature. Under the Reign of LEWIS the fourteenth the trade of poisoning was brought to great perfection; and was suspected, with too much appearance, to have been part of the Politics of some French Ministers, as well as the bane of others.

Sect. IX. *How much these Emperors hated, and how fast they destroyed all great and worthy Men. Their dread of every Man for any Reason.*

THE destruction of every man who was great or good, was so common and almost certain in those tragical Reigns, that TACITUS reckons as a wonder the natural death of L. PISO, chief Pontiff<sup>p</sup>. Eminent men, and eminent merit, are the dread of Tyrants. That merit and those talents which, during the old Republic, would have certainly recommended a man to public Favour and public Honours, did afterwards expose him as certainly, to Imperial jealousy and persecution, generally to ruin and death; and those pestilent Accusers, Instruments of public Servitude, the sons of rapine and blood, who were now the men of fashion and favour, and cloathed with the spoils of their Country, for afflicting and mangling her, and devouring her vitals, would have been then treated as public Enemies and Beasts of prey, and doomed to the pains of Murder and Treason, with universal consent and abhorrence.

SUCH a barbarous and unnatural inversion of all Order, Law, and Righteousness, accompanied the Sovereignty of the Cæsars. AUGUSTUS, reckoned the best and wisest of them, though he affected to love and countenance men of parts and accomplishments, yet limited his favours to such of them as were devoted to Flattery and the Usurpation. Hence the public Honours conferred by him upon ATEIUS CAPITO, a new man, one of signal Abilities, but a notorious Flatterer; nay, the Em-

<sup>p</sup> Per idem tempus L. Piso Pontifex, rarum in tanta claritudine, fato obiit.



peror raised him in opposition to ANTISTIVS LABEO, one who excelled in the same acquirements; one who never departed from a laudable freedom of speech and spirit, and thence more applauded than the other, by the public voice: whereas, the suppleness and submission of CAPITO rendered him more acceptable to those who bore rule. The latter by this merit gained the dignity of Consul; the other, for having too much, was never suffered to rise higher than that of Prætor. How much must the spirit of Imperial Jealousy encrease afterwards?

EVERY thing gave these Tyrants fear and offence. Was a man nobly born and popular? He withdrew the affections of the People, rivalled the Prince, and threatened a Civil War<sup>q</sup>. Was he akin to AUGUSTUS? He had his eye upon the Sovereignty<sup>r</sup>. Had he a reputation for Arms? He was a living terror to the Prince<sup>s</sup>. Was a great man afraid of popularity, and lived retired? He gained fame by shunning it, and still was an eye-sore<sup>t</sup>; and his best fate was to leave his Country<sup>u</sup>; but where the exile was a considerable man, the executioner generally followed. Was he virtuous, and his life and morals exact? He was another BRUTUS, and by the purity of his manners, upbraided the vitious behaviour of the Emperor<sup>w</sup>. Was a man sad? It was because the administration pro-

<sup>q</sup> *Studia civium in se verteret; secessionem jam & partes, & si multi idem audeant, bellum esse.*

<sup>r</sup> *Nobilem, & quod tunc spectaretur, è Cæsarum posteris.*

<sup>s</sup> *Ostorius multa militari fama—metum Neroni fecerat, ne invaderet pavidum semper — missus Centurio qui cædem ejus maturaret.*

<sup>t</sup> *Quanto metu occultior, tanto plus famæ adeptus.*

<sup>u</sup> *Consuleret quieti urbis; esse illi per Asiam avitos agros.*

<sup>w</sup> *Glifcere ac vigere Brutorum æmulos — rigidi & tristis, quo tibi lascivium exprobrent.*

spered\*. Did he indulge himself in gayety and feasting? It was because the Emperor was ill, and his end thought to be near†. Was he rich? He was too wealthy for a subject, and great wealth in private hands boded ill to Princes‡. Was he poor? He was thence the more enterprizing and desperate§. Was he a dull man, and unactive; He only put on the guise of stupidity and sloth, till he found room for some bloody purpose¶. Or had he a different character, and was a lively and active man? Then it was plain he did not so much as feign a desire of private life and recess, but avowed a bustling Republican Spirit, and to be meddling with the State‡. Did he live in pomp and magnificence? He studied to overshadow the Emperor in seats and grandeur§. Was he accomplished in science, a Philosopher, or master of Eloquence, and thence esteemed? The lustre of his Fame gave umbrage to the Prince¶.

IN short, no man could possess any advantage or quality that rendered him acceptable to God or man, a blessing to his Country, to his friends, or to himself, but such quality and advantage was sure to

\* *Hominem bonis publicis mœstum.*

† *Reddendam pro intempestiva lætitia mœstam & funebrem noctem, quæ sentiat vivere Vitellium & imperare.*

‡ *Plautum magnis opibus — auri vim atque opes principibus infensas.*

§ *Syllam inopem, unde præcipuam audaciam.*

¶ *Simulatorem segnitæ, dum temeritati locum reperiret.*

‡ *Plautum ne fingere quidem cupidinem otii, sed veterum Romanorum incitamenta præferre; assumptâ etiam Stoicorum arrogantia sectaque, quæ turbidos & negotiorum appetentes faciat.*

§ *Hortorum amœnitate & villarum magnificentia quasi principem supergrederetur.*

¶ *Verginium & Rufum claritudo nominis expulit; nam Verginius studia juvenum eloquentiâ, Musonius præceptis sapientiæ fovebat.*

awaken the jealousy and vengeance of these Tyrants, and procure his doom<sup>f</sup>.

SECT. X. *Reflections upon the Spirit of a Tyrant. With what Wantonness the Roman Emperors shed the blood of the Roman People. The blindness of such as assisted the Usurpation of CÆSAR and AUGUSTUS.*

HOW miserable must be the reflections of a Tyrant, if he has any reflections, that numbers must be wretched (for what wretchedness is not produced by Tyranny?) that he may make a hideous figure, unsafe and detested? Every step he takes for his grandeur and security, renders him more contemptible or abhorred, and therefore more insecure; and the bloody end of most, abundantly shews, that numerous Guards and Armies are so far from securing him, that from them his greatest dread accrues. What a curse it is upon a thinking Being, to consider himself as an obstacle to every thing lovely and desirable amongst men: to the Virtue, Liberty and Happiness of all men, to his own peace and stability, to his own innocence and true glory: that for every chain he puts upon his People, he multiplies terrors and contempt upon his own head; and having forfeited their affections, and living in distrust of those whom he ought chiefly to confide in, relies for his life upon hirelings, the sons of vice and idleness, or forced from their honest labour to be made so, and often picked out of streets and gaols? He dreads every man who is great and brave; and one who fights for him, conquers for him, and saves him, does but expose himself to jealousy, indignity and martyrdom. His own slaves, spiritless and coward-

<sup>f</sup> *Omni bonâ arte in exilium actâ, ne quid usquam honestum occurreret.*

ly, cannot serve him, and a man truly valiant is undone by serving him. The people are apt to admire and magnify military virtue, and thence the Tyrant hates and dreads such as have it. CHARLES the fifth held it a greater honour, to be Count of CATALONIA, than King of the Romans: he had reason; the CATALANS were free men and valiant; the Romans poor monk-ridden slaves.

BUT I shall find another place in the course of these Observations to discourse more fully of Armies and Conquests: I shall here only observe with what wantonness these Tyrants shed the blood of Roman Citizens; Citizens whose lives were once so valuable, fenced and secured by Laws so numerous, so sacred, and strong; lives so precious that nothing against the life and fortune of the meanest Roman could be determined, but by the Romans in general, assembled in Centuries. These Romans who, while free, became the masters of mankind, were, by losing their Liberty, become daily victims to their own domestic Traitors, and miserable Traitors they were; to a CLAUDIUS, a CALIGULA, a NERO. By the ancient Constitution and Laws of Rome, these Usurpers were the only persons liable to be put to death, without process, or form, or penalty. See the *Lex Valeria* in LIVY, and CICERO *Pro domo sua*.

HAD such as were Champions for the exaltation of CÆSAR and AUGUSTUS, foreseen what their race and descendants were to suffer under the Successors of these Usurpers, would it not have quenched their zeal, would it not have struck them with horror? Had they foreseen their offspring stooping and groaning under a beastly bondage, not to the Emperor only, but to his slaves and strumpets; living a precarious life at the mercy of sycophants; under continual terrors of the Accusers, or themselves exercising the execrable occupation of such; some endangered

gered by the lustre of their name ; some by that of their virtue and capacity, others from that of their wealth ; many become Pimps, Pathics, and Parasites to the Prince ; several, upon his authority, prostituting their persons and quality upon the public Stage ; numbers doomed to exile upon desolate rocks and islands ; numbers slain outright, their carcases exposed and denied the privilege of burial, their fortunes seized from their families ; and all of them liable to the like tragical fate ; their wives withal daily exposed to the lust of the Tyrant, and afterwards made the subject of his Imperial Sport and Drollery, even before their injured and blushing husbands, nay, prostituted in the Palace as in the public Stews, and such as passed by invited in to lie with these illustrious Ladies, as with common harlots, for money.

HAD the Partizans of Usurpation foreseen these woful consequences to their families from it, would it not have changed their hearts and their conduct ? Yet what was easier to be foreseen than the fury and ravages of a madman or fool unlimited, where chance, and not law, directed the blind Succession ; as did blind will, and not reason, the Administration ? But with the heat of party and present impulse, cool reflection and foresight are incompatible : it scarce ever happens, that, for future considerations, however wise, the instant passion, however foolish, is smothered. The Adherents of CÆSAR and AUGUSTUS had an immediate view of greatness, and would not disturb so pleasing an imagination by anxious care or fear for things future. All the world goes well with those that are well ; and before men can be brought to believe prophecies of misery, they must begin to feel it. What a child is Man ! what a name is Reason ! The most frequent use we make of it, is to reason ourselves out of it, and from it to borrow arms against itself : just as we have seen

Laws quoted to vindicate the subversion of Law, and the Holy Gospel of Peace and Love urged in defence of Persecution and Enmity.

SECT. XI. *Why under such Tyrants, the Senate continued to subsist.*

IT may be inquired why Tyrants so jealous and precipitate, did not abolish the Senate; and it was once the purpose of CALIGULA, as it was afterwards that of NERO, to have murdered all the Senators: but in truth it would have been an enterprize of infinite difficulty and danger, to have attempted the suppression of that body. It is incredible what stubbornness and force there is in established Names, Customs and Forms, which often are harder to destroy than realities and substances; and signs and titles frequently remain, when the things signified and denominated by them are gone. Thus Popery has extirpated Christianity, and is called Christianity; and Evangelical Humility and Forbearance are preached and extolled in the midst of Pride and Flames.

As the Popes pretend to derive all power from the Gospel, which they pervert and suppress, so did the other Roman Tyrants theirs from the Senate; as if the ancient free State had still subsisted, and to have destroyed the Senate, would have been to have abrogated their own title to Sovereignty. They must likewise have destroyed the Consulship, which was still reckoned *summum Imperium*, the supreme Magistracy: with the Office of Prætor, and every Office, great and small, in the State, with the title and stile of every Law of Rome, and every Tribunal of Justice there: for, every Law and every Office depended upon the Senate, or upon the Senate and People. They must have abolished Learning, History, Records, all Process and Memory;

nay,

may, the very Military Titles, and Laws of War and Negotiation ; those about the Colonies and Provinces, Customs and Trade ; and have introduced absolute Oblivion, a new Language, and a new Creation.

Now what Power, what Genius upon earth, was equal to such a prodigious design, that of vacating at once regulations and usages so infinitely numerous, so long established, become a great part of the public Language, grown, as it were, to the minds and memories of men, and essential to Speech and Conversation, as well as to business and protection ; and then to supply such an immense void, with Ordinances, Offices, Terms and manner of Process, so as to answer all the ends of Society in so vast an Empire ? This was not to be done, nor was it needful : they found their account sufficiently in breaking the Power and Spirit of the Senate, in reducing it to a skeleton and a name, and in exercising under that name all their own violences and exorbitances. The Senate and the People had a venerable sound, and served as a cloak for power when they themselves had none, and the Emperor had all<sup>s</sup>. The registering of Edicts by the Parliament of Paris is become a matter of form ; but without that form, the Court, as uncontrouled as it is, does not care to execute an Edict. The Romans still preserved a veneration for their Senate and Magistrates, and the same was often found in the Armies ; insomuch that as late as the Reign of COMMODUS, the soldiers were so enraged at the insolence of PERENNIS, his Favourite and Minister, for discharging from their military commands such as were Patricians and Senators, and for placing in their room others of Equestrian Rank, that they cut him in pieces. .

<sup>s</sup> Cuncta Legum & Magistratuum in se trahens Princeps.

**T**IME, however, with the continuance of Tyranny, and Barbarity its inseparable companion, cancelled by degrees the old names and forms, after the essence had been long cancelled ; and introduced a cloud of offices and words, of rumbling sounds, and swelling titles, suitable to the genius of absolute Rule, and as different from the purity of the old Republican Language, as are Liberty and Politeness from grossness and bondage.

Sect. XII. *How the unrelenting Cruelty of the Emperors hastened the Dissolution of the Empire. The bad Reigns of CONSTANTINE and CONSTANTIUS. The good Reign of JULIAN. The indiscreet behaviour of the Christians. Continued Tyranny ; and end of the Empire.*

**T**O resume once more the subject of Accusations and the abused Law of Majesty ; They were cankers in the heart of the Empire, which at last hastened its Dissolution. The Emperors, to gratify their own cruelty, were continually wasting the public Strength by sacrifices noble and many ; and, to satiate their avarice or that of their creatures, encouraged endless seizures and confiscations. This crying Oppression was by the Emperor CONSTANTINE, before mentioned, carried higher than any of the Pagan Emperors had ever carried it. Besides his own rapine, which was merciless and excessive, he glutted his Favourites and Grandees with the spoil and fortunes of others ; as MARCELLINUS witnesses<sup>b</sup>. His son CONSTANTIUS followed his example, and was a more consuming Tyrant than the Father. I have already said something of his Character and Reign, which was chiefly conducted

<sup>b</sup> Proximorum fauces aperuit primus Constantinus.



by inhuman villains, whose heads and hands were eternally engaged in the plunder and blood of his People. Such were his Counsellors, such his Governors of Provinces, which were sucked and devoured to the bone, and might say with truth, what a noble Dalmatian once told TIBERIUS; “ Instead of sending us Shepherds to protect our flocks, “ you send us Wolves to devour them.” How many Governors in all Countries have deserved to be hanged, before they reached their Governments, because they went with design to rob and oppress?

THESE depredations were restrained during the Reign of JULIAN, who had as much capacity, as many virtues and accomplishments, as could well adorn private life, or a crown: he was brave, generous, wise, and humane; a Hero, a Philosopher, a Politician, a Friend and Father to mankind. It is pity such an amiable Character should have any blots; his had two; he was superstitious even to weakness, and had conceived an aversion to the Christians altogether unsuitable to his remarkable candor and equity; an aversion which they themselves improved too much, by a behaviour unworthy of so great a Prince, much more unworthy of so meek a Religion. They indeed treated him with eminent spite and outrage, traduced him, libelled him, and even mobbed him. Nothing could be a sharper Satire upon them, for such brutish conduct, than the singular meekness with which he bore it. The truth is, the Christians were then strangely degenerated from the primitive peaceableness and purity, become licentious and turbulent to the last degree, and perpetually instigated by the arrogance and ambition of the Bishops, who were come to contend with arms as well as curses, for the possession of opulent Churches. It was not uncommon with these ambitious men, to affront and revile the Emperors to their faces, to publish Invectives against them,

them, to break the public Peace and to raise frequent Tumults and Seditions. As they were the most complaisant Courtiers when pleased; so they were the most implacable Incendiaries when disgusted. All this was enough to alarm any Prince, and to awaken resentment in the most flegmatic. Moreover a great part of the wealth and revenue, which used to go towards the public Charge, particularly to defend the Frontiers against the Barbarians, was diverted and appropriated to maintain the grandeur and pomp of the great Prelates; *sacerdotes specie religionis fortunas omnes effundebant*, as TACITUS says, upon another occasion.

As some parts of the behaviour of that great Prince, one wise and good in most things, but mistaken and even unjust in others, chiefly towards the Christians, ought to be censured and condemned; the behaviour of the Christians towards him can never be justified. They insulted him intolerably, with all the excesses of bitterness and ill-breeding, while he lived, and slandered and blackened him shamefully when dead; as much as some of them basely flattered and extolled other Emperors, who, though complaisant and liberal to the Ecclesiastics, were consuming Tyrants.

It is the business of Truth and of true Religion, to give even enemies their due, and friends no more than their due. To give JULIAN his; if we lay aside his Religion, I doubt whether we can find upon record one Prince that excelled him, or three that equalled him. He is indeed a pattern to princes, in spite of the anger and obloquy of Writers who were apparently animated by a spirit then too common, a spirit altogether narrow, monkish, and vindictive; such a one as the charitable Religion of JESUS disclaims, and wants not. To his benevolent Gospel and Precepts I sincerely wish all men to conform;

form ; but fewer signs of such conformity, or rather greater signs of the want of it, have I no where seen, than in the Conduct, Discourses, and Writings of such as have railed at others for their religious sentiments, real or imputed. I wish too that a temper so barbarous and Antichristian had been entirely confined to the Days of that Emperor, whose Administration will for ever recommend him to all calm and impartial men, as an astonishing example of virtue and parts.

THE Reign of JOVIAN, whose intention seems to have been honest and good, was but short, and followed by those of VALENTINIAN and VALENS ; Princes exceeding furious, suspicious and sanguinary. Under them the old Accusations, Confiscations and Carnage were revived without mercy, and continued thenceforward, with few intervals, till the Roman Empire was quite overthrown. The people in every part of it being quite harrassed and consumed, finding no relaxation from Oppressors and Accusations, no protection from Law, no refuge in the Clemency of the Emperors, grew desperate, and revolted to the Goths, Huns, Vandals, and other Invaders.

SECT. XIII. *The Excellency of a limited Monarchy, especially of our own.*

I Think it is MACHIAVEL who observes, that two or three weak and bad Princes succeeding each other, are sufficient to ruin a State, where they govern by mere Will ; but it may survive a long succession of foolish Princes limited by good Laws. VESPASIAN found three hundred millions (of our money) wanting to restore the Empire to a condition of subsisting. Monarchy, according to PLATO, is the best Government, or the worst : to which opinion I subscribe ; as I do to that of PHILIP DE COMINES,

COMINES, that England is the place in the world, where the Public is most equally administered, and where the people suffer the least violence. We are blessed with that form of Government which TACITUS mentions as the most perfect, and thinks the hardest to be framed; that happy ballance and mixture of interests which comprehends every interest<sup>i</sup>.

AN English Monarch has one advantage which sets him above any arbitrary Monarch upon earth; he obliges his subjects by being obliged to them. As he protects them by defending their Property and Laws; so they, by supporting him, enable him to do it: while they give by choice, and not by force, they give chearfully. Princes who take all themselves, and leave nothing to their people to give, can never be beloved by their people. If it be true that we hate those whom we have hurt, it is equally true, that we are apt to love those whom we have obliged. Hence God is said, not only to love doing good, but to love the good that he does.

ARBITRARY Princes would doubtless chuse to have the love and affections of their people, were the same to be acquired by furious and unaccountable Rule; but this is impossible. Hence dread of their power is all the share they can expect in the hearts of their subjects; and this is a compliment which their subjects pay to things the most hideous and vile; to Serpents; to mad and wild Beasts; to Plagues and Satan; to Pain and Poverty. But even this miserable compliment is not always paid to such princes: they are not always dreaded. When their terrors are become habitual, they cease, in a good measure, to be terrors; the people grow har-

<sup>i</sup> *Cunctas nationes & urbes populus, aut primores, aut singuli regunt. Delecta ex his & constituta Reipub. forma laudari facilius quam evenire, vel, si evenit, haud diuturna esse potest.*

dened and desperate; they themselves become scorned; and contempt, the most abject lot in life, becomes the portion of those who possess the highest. When NERO asked SUBRIUS FLAVIUS, one of the Conspirators against his life, from what motives he had renounced his Allegiance; "It was because I abhorred thee," said he. The Consul VESTINIUS too was known to NERO, to despise his vile and unmanly spirit; and in the whole detection of that Conspiracy, and the punishment of the conspirators, nothing was so signal as the series of contempt poured upon that brutal Tyrant, in the height of his Power, and amidst the terrors of his Tyranny. Nothing, says TACITUS, mortified him so much. But when the Monster was deposed, he incurred such sovereign scorn, that he was doomed to be stripped naked, and scourged to death like a slave, with his head fastened in a pillory; his carcass to be cast afterwards from the Tarpeian Rock, and with a hook in his nose to be dragged to the Tiber.

NOR could the great reputation of JULIUS CÆSAR, or that of AUGUSTUS, and all their Power, secure them from popular insults and despight. The *mæchum calvum*, and *videſne ut cinædus orbem digito temperet*; were contumelies which even their greatness could not escape. MITHRIDATES King of Armenia, when despoiled of his Kingdom, experienced by the behaviour of his People, how much they revered him; they even assaulted him with reproaches and blows<sup>k</sup>. When the Emperor VITELLIUS was led along to the slaughter, with his hands bound behind him, his habit all torn, and himself a filthy spectacle; he found much the like usage. Numbers wounded him with reproaches; but none was found to bewail him; and the populace railed at him when dead, with the

<sup>k</sup> Vulgus duro imperio habitum, probra ac verbera intentabat.

same baseness of heart, with which they had flattered him living <sup>1</sup>.

## DISCOURSE VIII.

Of the general Debasement of Spirit and Adulation which accompany Power unlimited.

Sect. I. *The motives of Flattery considered. Its vileness, and whence it begins.*

**I** SHALL now say something of the extreme Debasement of the Romans under the Emperors. Flattery ever rises in proportion to Power and Fear. Where Law and Liberty reign, and men hold not their Property and Lives at the mercy of one or a few; this security begets in them a pride and stubbornness inconsistent with Servility and Adulation. Men do not flatter such as they dare own to be no better than themselves, or such as have no power to hurt them; nor will they pay over-much reverence to great Titles which are not accompanied with great Power, nor supported by Superstition. For Superstition enslaves as effectually as real Power, and therefore confers it; nor is Tyranny ever so complete as when the chief Magistrate is chief Pontiff, as were the Soldans of Egypt and Bagdat; or, which is the next thing, can create and depose him, as do the Turkish Emperors. But where men hold their fortunes and lives at the mere mercy of another, they will fear him as much as they love themselves,

<sup>1</sup> Vulgus eadem pravitate infectabatur interfectum, qua foverat viventem.

and flatter him, as much as they fear him \*. If his Power be limited, their Flattery will be limited; but boundless, if his Authority be so. Thus court and sycophancy prevail less under a mixed Monarchy, than under one that is despotic; in an Aristocracy less than there; and less still in a popular State. Perfect equality quite destroys it; complete Sovereignty raises it to the highest.

THE more foolish and wicked a Prince is, the more Incense he will have; it is the surest way of pleasing a Tyrant, as it sanctifies his Iniquities, and represents him to himself as worthy of all his Grandeur and equal to all the highest Offices of Empire. TIBERIUS, who was a Prince of great penetration, hated Flattery, because he knew it to be so; as he knew that they who paid him most, the Senate and Grandees, dreaded, and therefore hated his Power; as he, who understood perfectly the nature and blessing of Liberty, would have dreaded and hated any man in his place, had he been in theirs. He knew that Flattery and Hate often go together; so that they who possess the greatest Hate, profess the greatest Affection. It is as much as their lives are worth, to manifest any tokens of Aversion; and the stronger it is, it will require the more Art and Assiduity to hide it. JULIUS CÆSAR was loaded with all sorts and every excess of Honours, some that were divine, with design to make him odious, while they who conferred them abhorred him, and were concerting schemes to destroy him. With the same view the like artifices were practised by the Senate towards his Successor OCTAVIUS, afterwards AUGUSTUS, concerning whom the equivocal saying of CICERO, could not but be remembered by TIBERIUS <sup>b</sup>, “ they should extol the

\* Omnis exuta æqualitate, jussu Principis aspectare.

<sup>b</sup> Ut juvenem laudarent, & tollerent.

“ Youth, and take him off.” Hence though **TIBERIUS** was irreconcilable to public Liberty, he abominated Flattery<sup>c</sup>. He saw that Flattery was the mere effect of Bondage, and suiting only with the spirit of Slaves; and though he would not part with the Sovereignty (notwithstanding he often talked of it, as well as pretended great backwardness to accept it) yet he was ashamed of the vile and slavish abjectness of the Romans<sup>d</sup>.

BUT neither under **TIBERIUS**, was there any security in abstaining from Flattery; he was a Prince infinitely jealous, and could brook no sort of opposition, nor even independence; and it was both necessary and dangerous to flatter him; but, in my opinion, not so dangerous as necessary: I mean, to such as purely consulted their own safety, and to escape the rage of the Tyrant. It is true, he despised Flatterers; but he hurt them not; and it was natural for him to think (suspicious as he was) that such as would not flatter him, scorned him. It is certain he never forgave free speakers, never could endure men of bold spirit, but, first or last, pursued them to destruction. It was perillous, says **TACITUS**, to practise no Flattery, and perillous to practise too much<sup>e</sup>. **L. PISO** had inveighed against the corruptions of the State, particularly against the pestilent pursuits of the Impleaders, who were daily arraiging, and circumventing, and menacing all men; he even threatened to quit Rome. **TIBERIUS** bore this calmly, nay, he descended to mollify him with kind words. But in a soul like his, brooding over Vengeance, though he had suppressed the sallies of Wrath, the deep impressions remained; **PISO** was a

<sup>c</sup> Libertatem metuebat, adulationem oderat.

<sup>d</sup> Etiam illum, qui libertatem publicam nolle, tam projectæ servientium patientiæ tædebat.

<sup>e</sup> Adulatione, quæ moribus corruptis, perinde anceps si nulla, & ubi nimia est.



good while afterwards charged with Treason, and, but for a natural death, which opportunely intervened, must have suffered the pains of Treason. *ASINIUS GALLUS* incurred his rage for a motion in Senate which had really a compliment in it. *TIBERIUS* had in a Letter to the Fathers complained, that from the plots and snares of his enemies, he led a life full of dread and apprehensions. *GALLUS* proposed to address the Prince, that he would explain his fears to the Senate, and permit them to remove the causes; this incensed him. *GALLUS* too had piqued him before, and was suspected by him of aspiring views; and though he had notoriously flattered him, he could not by it redeem his life.

As all Corruptions in a State begin commonly from the *Grandees* (or rather they are beginners of all Corruption) so the *Grandees* are the most signal Flatterers; they are most in the eye of a Prince, they are the most obnoxious to his jealousy, and thence the most prone to flatter him<sup>f</sup>. A Prince who governs or would govern by mere Will, must countenance and employ such as ask no reasons for what he does; but commend all he does; and the more they have to get or lose, the lower they must stoop, the more they must praise<sup>g</sup>. For this vile servitude of theirs they make reprisals upon the people, and are as terrible to those below them, as fawning to those above them; for the most prostitute Slaves, are the most insolent Tyrants, and it is from the same baseness of spirit that men oppress and flatter; it was truly said of *CALIGULA*, “that there never lived a more complaisant Slave, nor a more cruel and detestable Master.” Thus

<sup>f</sup> Ruere in servitium consules, patres, eques; quanto quis inlustrior, tanto magis falsi ac festinantes.

<sup>g</sup> Primores civitatis quorum claritudo sua obsequiis protegendam erat.

Flattery is propagated, and infects all degrees of men. The Prince awes the Grandees, and by the Grandees is flattered; the Grandees oppress and terrify the people; and thence the people dread and adore the Grandees. The Bashaws are slaves to the great Turk; the people slaves to the Bashaws.

THE insolence of slavish spirits is by TACITUS exemplified in VITELLIUS, among many other instances. He was always the foremost in Flattery; ever assaulting every worthy Patriot with reproaches, and ever struck silent when repulsed; agreeably to the genius of Sycophants, to be both insulting and cowardly. This man, however, prospered by Prostitution. He had great employments under TIBERIUS, he was a great Favourite in the two succeeding Reigns, he was thrice Consul and once Censor. Nor did the man want good talents and qualifications; in the Government of Provinces, says TACITUS, he exercised the integrity of a primitive Roman. But his dread of CALIGULA, and complaisance to CLAUDIUS, changed him into a filthy Slave, and he is handed down to posterity as a pattern of the most infamous Flattery: The just reward of his servile submission. His first and best actions were forgot; his last and worst remembered; and the excellencies of his younger years obliterated by an old age drenched in servitude and iniquity. Besides his adoring CLAUDIUS as a God, he carried one of MESSALINA's sandals in his bosom continually, frequently kissed it; and amongst his household Gods placed golden Statues of PALLAS and NARCISUS, the Emperor's freed slaves. This man was, I think, farther to VITELLIUS afterwards Emperor. Such men such Princes delight in; *regibus boni quam mali suspectiores sunt, semperque his aliena virtus formidolosa est*: says SALLUST.

SECT. II. *Men of elevated Minds irreconcilable to Arbitrary Power, and thence suspected by it. The Court paid to it always insincere, sometimes expedient, but seldom observes any bounds.*

AGRIPPA told AUGUSTUS, according to ADION CASSIUS, that it was impossible for a man of great spirit and resolution, to be other than a lover of Liberty, and an enemy in his heart to an absolute master. AGRIPPA himself was that sort of man; he had courage enough to advise that Prince to resign the Sovereignty, and restore public Liberty; such in truth was his credit and bravery, that AUGUSTUS thought himself no otherwise safe, than either by killing him, or taking him for his son-in-law. The Emperor did more than give him his daughter; he assumed him partner in the Tribunitial Power, which, as that Usurper and his Successors managed it, was, in effect, the Dictatorial Power. The other great men of Rome he suspected and hated; though in vanity and for the praise of Posterity, he left them his heirs in the third degree<sup>h</sup>; AUGUSTUS and TIBERIUS judged too well, to imagine that the illustrious Senators and Chiefs of Rome, men who had scorned the alliance and affinity of Kings, nay, treated Kings as their creatures and dependents, could like a blind dependence upon one of their own Citizens, who by usurpation and violence had made himself an enemy to all. Even in the Reign of TIBERIUS there were Romans who thought themselves as good as him; CNEIUS PISO, for example, scarce gave place to him, and despised his sons, as men far beneath himself. But

<sup>h</sup> Tertio gradu primores civitatis scripserat; plerique invisos sibi, sed jactantia gloriaque apud posteros.

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his haughty spirit cost him his life ; for though **TIBERIUS** used him as a proper instrument to thwart and overthrow **GERMANICUS**, he afterwards turned that very service to the destruction of **PISO**.

**AFFECTION** can never accompany a submission which is forced, nor men submit willingly to a Power which they think they have themselves a right to exercise. Hence the compliments and praises of these eminent Romans towards the Emperors, are generally by **TACITUS** derived from Flattery ; though sometimes necessary, and sometimes well intended ; necessary, when used for their own preservation ; and well intended, when employed to instil into the Prince virtuous lessons of Government. **MARCUS TERENTIUS** was perhaps justifiable, when in defence of his life, which was at stake, he made that high-flown compliment to **TIBERIUS** ; “ To thee the Gods have granted  
“ the supreme disposal of things, and to us have  
“ left the glory of obedience.” The Senators also did well in magnifying some popular Acts of **NERO**, that his youthful mind being thus incited by the Glory arising from light things, might court it in things which were greater. And **THRASEA PETUS** was justifiable, when in his speech about **ANTISTIVS** the Prætor, arraigned for Treason for lampooning the Emperor, he extolled that Prince’s mercy, in order to make him merciful.

BUT as that which is only good in some certain degrees and exigences, seldom stops there ; so this same Flattery, no wise blameable under some circumstances, grew scandalous and excessive ; it kept pace with all the phrenzy and cruelties of these outrageous and inhuman Tyrants ; and by it their cruelties and phrenzy were encouraged. The more mischievous and vile they were, the more they were adored. Dread of their fury had seized the souls of men ; nor was any remedy sought against their fury  
but

but that of Flattery. Men of slavish minds always began the detestable rout ; their example drew others after them ; the lovers of liberty found it impossible to resist the many, and unsafe to distinguish themselves by opposition. Interest swayed some, example others, fear all, and at last it became a common strife who should be foremost in the race to Servitude. All public spirit, all regard to the glory and good of Rome, the inseparable characteristic of the old free Romans, was now lost and forgot ; it was converted into fear and anxiety of every man for himself. This will ever be the case when a Prince, armed with sufficient Powers, sets up his own interest against that of the State ; particulars having no longer any thing to do with the public, will study only to secure themselves.

Sect. III. *The excessive Power of the Imperial freed Slaves ; with the scandalous Submission and Honours paid them by the Romans.*

AS Tyranny produces abject fear and anxiety in particulars for themselves, so from this selfish fear and anxiety come the beginning and progress of universal Servitude, the extinction of all Patriotism and honest zeal, the power of corruption, and the symptoms of a State hastening to ruin and desolation. All the good or evil which could befall any Roman, lay wholly in the breast and option of the Prince ; and hence the study of every man to humour the Prince, or the Slaves who governed him ; for governed he generally was by slaves the vilest and most pestilent ; yes, the whole Empire, that Empire that contained a great share of the Globe, and terrified almost the whole, was swayed, sold, oppressed, and exhausted by slaves bought from the chain and the oar. CLAUDIUS not only declared that affairs

fairs adjudged by his Receivers should be held equally valid with those adjudged by himself, but got the same established by a solemn Decree of Senate. Now these Receivers of the Emperors were his manumized Slaves, who under that title often governed Provinces; he raised the authority of these vermin to a pitch equal with that of the Sovereign and the Laws. **FELIX** Governor of Judea was a freed slave, the husband of three Queens, and the brother of **PALLAS** another freed slave, who controlled the Emperor, lay with the Empress, and was master of the Empire; so that **NERO** said pertinently of him, when he turned him out of office, "that **PALLAS** went to abdicate the Sovereignty."

**BEHOLD** the debasement of the great and venerable Roman Senate! It is not enough that they flatter the Emperor, and heap upon him Powers and Honours so great and manifold, that at last they have none for themselves, hardly any for him; they must likewise adore, and enrich, and exalt the fugitives and off-scourings of the earth, insects naturally doomed to the vilest offices of the kitchen, stable, and privies. The Romans, Lords of the World, must put their necks under the feet of the dregs of human race. For a contemptible project of that same **PALLAS**, about punishing Ladies who married slaves, **BAREAS SORANUS** Consul elect, the first Magistrate in the Roman world, moved the Senate to reward him with the ornaments of Prætor, the next Civil Office in the State, and a present of near an hundred thousand pounds. To this motion it was added by **CORNELIUS SCIPIO**, that **PALLAS** should have public thanks, that he who was descended from the old Kings of Arcadia, should to the service of the public thus postpone that his ancient Nobility, and deign to be reckoned amongst the Emperor's Ministers. But **CLAUDIUS** averred,  
that

that PALLAS would rest content with the honours of the Prætorship, and, rejecting the present, chuse to live in his usual poverty. The Decree passed, was engraved in brass, and publicly hung up; a pompous Decree, in which a fellow, lately a bare-footed slave, now worth near eight millions, was magnified for observing the laudable self-denial and parcimony of the primitive ages. Observe the strange inversion of all order and sense! dignity debased; infamy exalted; how low the awful authority of the Senate descended! how vilely the function of a Consul prostituted! how ignominiously the glorious name of SCIPIO employed! how abominably the ornaments of Magistracy defiled! an ordinance of State, big with servitude and lies! what stupidity in the Emperor, what insolence in the slave, and what a melancholy failure of all Virtue, Truth, and Liberty amongst all degrees of men! It was, in truth, a compliment made to a slave by a body of slaves, as PLINY well observes. We may guess at the villainy and evil deeds of the man by the enormous Honours that were paid him, though we had no other rule or proof, as we have proofs enough. No such violent court was ever paid to SENECA; and TIGELLINUS had much more weight and authority than BURRUS.

REAL goodness and merit beget in all good men real friendship and affection; and real affection is never so loud nor shewy as affection assumed. Where we sincerely like and esteem, we are not afraid of suspicion in the person esteemed, nor spend much breath and ceremony to convince him. But where we are conscious of our own insincerity, our professions are pompous and wordy. It was absolutely impossible that these vile Upstarts should love the Senate, or any great men, great in blood, or fortune, or virtue; or the Senate or any great Roman could love such vile Upstarts; but we see what disguises

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guises fear and falshood can put on! Impartial posterity, which neither fears the Senate nor PALLAS, can perceive nothing in the Honours by them conferred upon him, but the infamy of both perpetuated. Nor was CLAUDIUS the only Emperor who was thus led in bondage by his franchised bondmen; others submitted to the same vassalage, to the same infamous Counsellors; *Plerique principes* (says PLINY) *libertorum erant servi; eorum consiliis, eorum nutu regebantur*. Was not the world finely governed, and humankind completely happy; when the universal Lord was swayed by the lust and nod of creatures just redeemed from the infamy of whips and fetters? The mighty CÆSAR, to whom the Romans owed all their ensuing misery and bondage, began the exaltation of such sons of earth; and, in contempt of censure, declared, that, “if he had employed Highwaymen  
“and Assassins to support his grandeur, he would  
“in return have honoured them with the same favour.” A true confession, but methinks not very politic; we have seen already whether his worthy Successors did not actually do so, and what were the *Instrumenta regni*, the bloody tools and machinery of absolute Rule. POLYCLETUS, a manumized slave of NERO’s, when sent by his master to inspect the State of Britain, travelled with such an immense train, that he was a burden to great nations, even those of Italy and Gaul.

### SECT. IV. *The excessive Flattery of the Senate, how ill judged.*

THERE was no mean in the Flattery of the Senate. They might have been good Courtiers, without being so abandoned Courtiers. There are instances of their carrying questions against the spirit of the Court and the efforts of Favourites, in



the worst Reigns. Thus, in spite of all the power and caballing of AGRIPPINA, they expelled TARQUITIUS PRISCUS, a creature of hers, from the Senate, in detestation of his base attack upon the life of STATILIUS TAURUS, in subserviency to the Empress, who yearned after the Wealth and fine Gardens of that illustrious Senator. Thus too in the case of ANTISTIUS the Prætor, who had composed some virulent Verses against NERO, and exposed them at a great entertainment; though he was impleaded of Treason by COSSUTIANUS CAPITO son-in-law to that powerful minion TIGELLINUS, and though JUNIUS MARULLUS, the Consul elect, moved that he might be doomed to die after the rigorous manner of antiquity; the Senate followed the milder motion of THRASEA PETUS for confiscation and exile. Nor would they depart from the sentence even after they had received NERO's Letter about it, though in it he manifested high indignation.

THEY might have made some other efforts of this kind, where they made none; on the contrary, they gave away their Liberties and Voices faster than they could have been taken. But the honest boldness of THRASEA broke the bondage which hung upon the minds of others; so much can the example of one worthy man do even in an assembly devoted to corruption and servitude! It is true, THRASEA paid a severe after-reckoning, and it was the apprehension of that which stopped the mouths of others, or opened them only to fawn. But who would not chuse the reputation, and integrity of a Patriot, that of a THRASEA, even at the expence of his fate; rather than the fortune and favour of the sycophant VITELLIUS, with the abjectness of his life, and infamy of his name?

Sect. V. *The free Judgment of Posterity a powerful warning to Princes, to reign with moderation and to detest Flatterers. The Name and Memory of the Roman Tyrants how treated.*

ALL men have some vanity, and thence some fondness for fame; if they would acquire it; and avoid infamy, they must square their actions to the judgment of Posterity. With Posterity, little evasions, false colourings, and chicane will not pass for reasons, though they may with our contemporaries, who are often influenced by friendships, often engaged in parties, often warmed and misled by passion and partiality. Death and Time destroy all artifices, dissipate all mists; and unveil mysteries; the intentions of men with all their motives and pursuits are then scanned and laid open: The flights of Flattery, will not then be termed fondness for the Prince, nor the efforts of Ambition mis-called public zeal. CLAUDIUS and PALLAS, TIBERIUS and SEJANUS, NERO and TIGELLINUS; men so carested, applauded and worshipped during their life and power, men who then employed all tongues in their praises, do now fill, and have long filled the mouths of all men with detestation, and their hearts with abhorrence. What avail now their craft and subornations, their power and high posts? Does the awe of purple, or the violence of the sword, do Prætorian Guards and perverted Laws, secure their memory, as they did their persons? Do I, for example, fear their charges of Treason, or the vile breath of their Informers, while I treat them as sanguinary Monsters, as the Tyrants, Pests and Oppressors of the earth, as public Curses, and Murderers in cold blood?

THESE Tyrants and their Flatterers, though they pushed both Tyranny and Flattery as far as they would go, have not been able, with all their Arts and Terrors, to stifle the memory of men, nor restrain the speech. They are handed down to us under their proper titles. The *Emperor* NERO we seldom say; but the *Tyrant* NERO is in every one's mouth; and the idea of a sycophant ever accompanies the name of VITELLIUS. His great credit and offices are forgot, or remembered only to his infamy. What a check must History and the Censure of Posterity be to a Prince that has any reflection! Had TIBERIUS, CLAUDIUS, CALIGULA, and other Imperial Monsters considered what frightful lights they were like to be drawn in to future times, it would have spoiled their pleasure in tyrannizing, and made them hate their Flatterers, who persuaded them that all men, at least the best men, spoke of them as they themselves spoke. With regard to Fame and Posterity it had been better for these wretches that they had never been born, as well as happy for human-kind; yet no man was ever a greater drudge for Fame than NERO; *Erat illi æternitatis perpetuæque famæ cupido, sed inconsulta*, says SUTTONIUS. Witness his laborious fatigues in the Theatre and Circus, continued day after day, and often nights and days, for the reputation of a good Singer, Harper, and Coachman. CALIGULA aspired to the like glory, and was a notable Fencer and assiduous Dancer, as well as a Charioteer<sup>i</sup>. Laudable Ambition for a Prince, and as just and high as that of many others!

TIBERIUS also wished and prayed for the praises and affectionate remembrance of posterity<sup>k</sup>. How

<sup>i</sup> Scenicæ saltandi canendique artes studiosissime appeteret  
— Thrax & auriga.

<sup>k</sup> Ut quodcumque concessero, cum laude & bonis recordationibus facta atque famam nominis mei prosequantur.

well he succeeded, we all know. He is detested as one of the most dangerous, false, and deliberate Tyrants that ever afflicted men; nay, he was no sooner known to be dead, than the people broke forth into joy and execrations; some cried, “Into the Tiber with TIBERIUS: others besought mother earth and the infernal Gods to allot him no mansion but amongst the damned and accursed:” others threatened to drag his body with hooks to the charnel of malefactors. And when his corps was going to be removed from Misenum to Rome, every one cried aloud, that it should rather be carried to the town of Atella, to be in the Amphitheatre there thrown into a fire, till it were half burned. Such were the marks of remembrance he had, and deserved, from the people! The other two are treated as frantic butchers, or rather as two mad dogs delighted with carnage and worrying, bent and active to kill and destroy. What is it to us that they were Princes and Emperors? Men of sense find no magic in names, but regard Monsters as Monsters, whatever titles Fortune or Flatterers gave them, or they themselves took.

It is thus Tyrants suffer the vengeance of after-ages; and terrible vengeance it is to such as are tender of their Renown, and seek Immortality, as most Princes do; and indeed have it forced upon them, since they stand too high, and do too much not to be remembered. Hence they ought to be more afraid of future censure, which is generally well grounded and will certainly last, than of temporary praise, which is often false, consequently fleeting, at best to be suspected.

SECT. VI. *How lamentably Princes are debauched and misled by Flatterers.*

NOW if Tyrants are abhorred, how much abhorrence is due to Flatterers, who often change Princes into Tyrants, and make Tyrants worse than they would be? TIBERIUS assumed the Sovereignty with great diffidence; and his natural wariness would have probably made him mild against his nature, had not the Romans so readily offered him their necks and their persons to bondage. But when he found them devoted to Slavery, he used them like Slaves, and having nothing to fear from them, he only followed the vile bent of his own spirit<sup>1</sup>.

DOMITIAN rejoiced when he found that AGRICOLA had left him coheir with his wife and daughter; he vainly thought it done but of judgment and choice, and in pure regard to his person. So much was he corrupted and blinded by continual Flattery, as to be utterly ignorant, that no Prince, but a bad one, was ever by a father tender of his issue and family, assumed into heirship with them, as PLINY the younger well observes.

NERO was in terrible agonies after he had murdered his Mother; he dreaded the soldiery, the Senate, and the people; but when, instead of danger and resentment, he met with flattering speeches from the Officers, flattering Decrees from the Senate, popular Processions, Applauses, public Devotions paid to all the Deities, and universal acquiescence; his native insolence became more swelled; and, from this general Servitude, assuming the pride of victory, he ascended the Capitol, offered sacrifices, and thenceforth surrendered himself to the full sway of all his exorbitant lusts. When he had caused these

<sup>1</sup> Rupto pudore & metu, suo tantum ingenio utebatur.

two noble Romans, *PLAUTUS* and *SYLLA*, to be assassinated, he wrote to the Senate without mentioning the execution, only that they were two men of turbulent spirits, and what mighty care it cost him to secure the State. Instantly the obsequious fathers degraded from the Senate these dead Senators, and ordained public Prayers and Sacrifices. *NERO*, upon the receiving of this Decree, and finding that all his brutal iniquities and acts of blood passed for so many feats of renown, grew emboldened to do a thing which even *NERO* till then durst not do, and turned away the virtuous *OCTAVIA* his wife, her by whom he held the Empire<sup>m</sup>. Nay, when soon after the Imperial butcher had ordered the blood of that illustrious Innocent to be shed, thanks and oblations were again presented to the Deities, by an ordinance of Senate. A particular, says *TACITUS*, which with this view I recount, that whoever reads the events of those times in this or any other History, may take it for granted, that as often as the Emperors commanded acts of cruelty, banishments and assassinations, so often thanks and sacrifices were decreed to the Gods; and those Solemnities which were of old the marks and consequences of public victories and public felicity, were now so many sad marks of public slaughter and desolation<sup>n</sup>.

THIS was remarkably verified afterwards as well as now; when *NERO*, upon the discovery of *PISO*'s conspiracy, had spilt rivers of blood, and slain men by heaps; the fuller the city was of executions and funerals, the fuller too were the Temples of sacrifices. One had lost a son, one a brother,

<sup>m</sup> *Igitur accepto patrum consulto, postquam cuncta scelerum suorum pro egregiis accipi videt, exturbat Octaviam.*

<sup>n</sup> *Quod ad eum finem memoravimus, ut quicumque casus temporum illorum nobis vel aliis auctoribus noscent, præsumptum habeant, quotiens fugas & cædes jussit princeps, totiens grates deis actas; quæque rerum secundarum olim, tum publicæ cladis insignia fuisset.*

br kinsman, or friend in this general butchery ; and the greater their loss, the more gayety they shewed, adorned their houses with Laurel, frequented Temples with Thanksgiving, embraced the knees of the Tyrant, and worried his hand with kisses. NERO took all this for so many sincere tokens of affection and joy ; when, in truth, their Congratulations and Flattery were just in proportion to their severe sorrow.

Sect. VII. *The pestilent tendency of flattering Counsels, and the Glory of such as are sincere.*

WHAT a poisonous thing is Flattery ? By it Princes are misled into a persuasion that all their measures of Oppression, all their acts of Frenzy and Rage, are just measures of Government, that forced praise is real affection, that they themselves are popular when they are abhorred ; and thus they are kept from repenting or amending, because, relying upon the assurances of Flatterers, they cannot find that they have done amiss, or see any thing to be mended. The Flatterers of NERO ridiculed SENECA, and railed at him, and persuaded that Prince he wanted no Tutors. The same did the Flatterers of COMMODUS in relation to the old Counsellors ; which had been his father's. NERO and COMMODUS followed the advice of their Flatterers, and reigned mischievously, and died tragically, and their memories are abhorred. Thus they are kept hoodwinked and secure, till the first thing they open their eyes upon, is their Throne tottering or overturned, and perhaps an executioner's knife at their breast ; and even when things are come to that extremity, there will be those to misrepresent and flatter, as in the case of GALBA ; a few moments before he was massacred, he was soothed with false assurances of security °.

° Quidam minora vero. ne tum quidem obliti adulationis.

How pernicious too is such falsification even to those that practise it; since though they mean it out of selfishness and for security, yet by sanctifying upon all occasions the Oppression and Destruction of others, they do but invite their own! Whereas were matters laid honestly before Princes, that this measure is a Grievance, that an Oppression, and that whatever is unjust to others is dangerous to themselves, they would prefer caution with safety, to humour and wilfulness accompanied with peril; they would grow into a habit of doubting, deliberating and enquiring; of submitting their own judgment to that of others; of remembering that they are what they are for the sake of their People, and that they ought to have no Will, nor Interest, but the public Will and the public Interest.

Had NERO pursued the good Rules of Government dictated by SENECA and BURRUS, and proposed by himself in his ~~first~~ Speech to the Senate; had he avoided the counsels of that bloody and detestable sycophant TIGELLINUS, and of others like him, he might have ended his reign with as much renown as he began it, and left a memory revered as much as it is now detested. And would the Confidants of Princes, instead of debasing themselves into the characters of Parasites, instead of abusing their trust, and bringing infamy upon their masters and themselves; would they, instead of this, give upright counsel, such as conduced to the good of all men, they would, besides the praise of well-doing, take the best method to secure themselves, their fortunes and families in the general security: or, should they be rewarded with disgrace, or even with death, they would have the approbation of their own Consciences, the applauses of the Living, and the praises of Posterity. But while they sooth the Prince in his jealousies and violence, and encourage him in destroying such as he, or such as they fear or dislike, they set him a lesson and example  
for



for turning the edge of his fury upon themselves, whenever he becomes prompted by his humour or caprice ; a case often happening, and always to be apprehended. The Courtiers and Flatterers of the Emperor CARACALLA, to humour him, concurred with him in the murder of his brother GETA ; and, after that murder, though committed by his own hand, were themselves murdered for their wicked complaisance, and amongst them LETUS his Favourite and Confident. Yet he was so far from remorse for shedding his brother's blood, that he massacred every friend and adherent to his brother, to the number of twenty thousand, in a short time. TIBERIUS, of all his Friends, Confidents and Counsellors, scarce let one escape a violent end, unless where by a natural death they prevented it : and they who had been the Ministers of his Tyranny, hardly ever failed to fall by it. He indeed protected them from the resentment and prosecution of others ; but he generally poured vengeance upon them himself<sup>p</sup>. VESULARIUS ATTICUS and JULIUS MARINUS, were two of his most ancient intimates ; they had accompanied him during his retirement at Rhodes, and never forsook him in his retreat at Capreæ ; they had abetted his Tyranny, and assisted him in his cruel Counsels, nor does it appear that they had ever offended him by any good Counsel. VESULARIUS was his manager and inter-agent in the perfidious plot to destroy that noble Roman LIBODRUSUS ; and by the co-operation of MARINUS, SEJANUS had worked the overthrow of CURTIUS ATTICUS. Was not all this merit enough, at least, to have redeemed their own lives ? It was not ; they fell themselves victims to his cruelty, as to satiate his cruelty they had made others fall : *ad*

<sup>p</sup> Scelerum ministros, ut perverti ab aliis nolebat ; ita plerumque satiatus, & oblati in eandem operam recentibus, veteres & prægraves adflixit.

*mortem aguntur : quo lætius acceptum*, says TACITUS, *sua exempla in consultores recidisse* ; their tragical end was followed with the more joy, for that upon their own heads had thus recoiled the precedents of their own traiterous devising. In truth, these instruments of cruelty are generally abhorred by the Princes that use them. ANICETUS Admiral of the Gallies to NERO, conducted and perpetrated the murder of his mother AGRIPPINA, and for a short space continued in some small favour with the Prince ; but was afterwards held in greater averſion ; for, says TACITUS, the Ministers of evil Counſels are by Princes beheld as men whoſe looks continually upbraid them<sup>9</sup>. Such too was the fate of CLEANDER under COMMODUS, who loved him, was governed by him, and cut off his head. How differently related is the fate of BURRUS, ſuſpected to have been poiſoned by NERO<sup>1</sup>: Mighty and laſting was the ſorrow of Rome for his death, for the Romans remembered his virtues ; and a little before<sup>2</sup>, While the calamities of the Public were growing daily more heavy and bitter, the reſources of the Public were diminiſhed, and BURRUS died. How nobly too is the tragedy of SENECA recounted ! it is too long to find room here.

I ſhall end this Diſcourſe with obſerving, that as Flattery is the effect of dread and falſhood ; as the moſt tyrannical Princes are moſt flattered, and men of the falſeſt minds are the greateſt Flatterers ; this conſideration ſhould be a leſſon to Princes and great men, to weigh the actions they do againſt the praiſes they receive ; and if they find themſelves righteous, they may conclude their panegyrics to be ſincere. Let them reflect upon their acts of benevolence or oppreſſion, and how they have uſed their people.

<sup>9</sup> Ut exprobrantes aſpiciuntur.

<sup>1</sup> Civitati grande deſiderium ejus manſit per memoriam virtutis.

<sup>2</sup> Graveſcentibus in dies publicis malis, ſubſidia minuebantur, conſeſſitque vita Burrus.

They would also do well to examine what sort of men they are who praise them ; whether men of virtue and honour, lovers of truth, lovers of their Country, and of human-kind ; or whether they are those unlimited Sycophants, whose custom and rule it is to extol at random all the sayings and doings of Princes, worthy and unworthy <sup>1</sup>.

## DISCOURSE IX.

## Upon COURTS.

Sect. I. *Of Freedom of Speech ; and how reasonable it is.*

**T**O the foregoing Discourse upon Flattery, I thought it might not be unsuitable to subjoin another upon Courts, the place where that pestilent and unmanly practice is wont chiefly to prevail.

DURING those Reigns which I have been describing, when Power was established in Terrors, and Subjection converted into Abasement, small was the wonder that restraint upon speech was no inconsiderable link in the public chain, and care taken that such as presumed to breathe aught but vassalage, should not breathe at all. This was wretched policy, barbarous, and impossible to be practised. The passions are not to be extinguished but with life ; and to forbid people, especially a suffering people, to speak, is to forbid them to feel.

It is not indeed to be expected that men should be suffered to meet together tumultuously, in order to publish their mutual Discontents and Wrongs, and to inflame one another ; but complaints uttered in their families, or dropped occasionally, or com-

<sup>1</sup> Quibus omnia principis, honesta atque inhonesta laudare mos est.

municated to a friend, can never affect Authority. The more men express of their hate and resentment, perhaps the less they retain; and sometimes they vent the whole that way; but these passions, where they are smothered, will be apt to fester, to grow venomous, and to discharge themselves by a more dangerous organ than the mouth, even by an armed and vindictive hand. Less dangerous is a railing mouth, than a heart filled and enflamed with bitterness and curses; and more terrible to a Prince ought to be the secret execrations of his people than their open revilings, or than even the assaults of his enemies. Of all the blood spilt under TIBERIUS and the following Tyrants for Words (and for no greater cause a deluge was spilt) how small a part conduced to their security? none that I remember; but every drop was an indelible stain upon their persons and upon their Government; every drop derived hatred, and consequently weakness and danger, upon it. Rigorous punishment for small faults, or for such as in the common opinion pass for none, is a mark of ill politics; it makes the spirit of the Administration look hideous and dreadful, and it renders every man who finds himself liable to the like faults, a capital enemy. Surely it ought to be a maxim in Government, that errors which can have no consequences, ought to have no punishment.

OLIVER CROMWELL, who seems to have seen far into the heart of man, was little affected with the hard words and invectives of particulars, and as high as he carried Authority, left people to talk and rail. The same is true of the late Regent of France, one who well knew human nature, and the nature of power; it was then common to see Frenchmen swagger and storm as freely as an old Roman would have done against an unpopular Magistrate. In truth, where no liberty is allowed to speak of Governors, besides that of praising them, their praises will be little believed. Their tender-  
ness

ness and aversion to have their conduct examined, will be apt to prompt people to think their conduct guilty or weak, to suspect their management and designs to be worse than perhaps they are, and to become turbulent and seditious, rather than be forced to be silent. When nothing but incense and applause will be accepted or borne ; all plain dealing, all honest counsel and true information, will be at an end, and banished, to make room for deceitful adorations, for pleasing and pernicious falsehoods. If Princes whose memory is disliked, had allowed their subjects and co-temporaries to have spoken truth to them, or of them, probably Posterity would not have spoke so much ill, as it is probable they would not then have deserved it ; and I am apt to believe, that it had been better for all of them to have permitted all that could have been said, than to have missed hearing what it imported them to have heard ; better to have heard the disgusts and railings of their people, than that their people were armed against them, or revolted from them ; a fate which has befallen some of them, who, having had Courtiers over-complaisant, or ears over-tender, learnt that they were dethroned before they had learnt that they were not beloved ; and found scarce any interval between the acclamations of Flatterers and the strokes of an Executioner. Such is the genius of Courts, where ill tidings are generally concealed or disguised ; such too often the silence and soothings of Courtiers, who tell only or chiefly what is pleasing ; and such sometimes the pride and impatience of Princes, that they will suffer nothing which ruffles their passions, to approach their understanding.

Sect. II. *The Spirit of Courtiers what ; some good ones.*

IT is something else than zeal for telling truth, that carries men to Court, and keeps them in it ; to raise an interest, or to preserve it, is the more prevailing

prevailing passion. And because whoever sets his foot there with any view to place and favour, is always sure of competitors, be his person or pretences what they will, ever so considerable or inconsiderable ; his chief care will be to conquer opposers, and secure himself ; and as there ever will be some opposition, real or apprehended, that care will be constant. Hence the spirit of a Court, selfish, suspicious and unfriendly ; and hence the supple spirit of Courtiers, to love and hate, court and avoid, praise and persecute the same person with notable suddenness, just as he is promoted or disgraced, and can help or hurt, or is to be deprived of all capacity to do either. To be well with the subsisting Power, with him who holds the reins of Authority, and distributes, or causes to be distributed the blessings and terrors of Power, is the main pursuit ; his motions are chiefly watched, his affections and aversions are studied and adopted ; and thus a smile or a frown from the Throne, or from one who is next the Throne, is eagerly caught up, seizes the faces of a whole drawing-room in an instant, and is handed down, with signal uniformity, through all classes of men, from a Grandee to the lowest Clerk in an Office.

A Court is a great Exchange, where one or a few have favours to dispose of, where many resort to procure them, and where all therefore strive to outgo in the ways of pleasing every one who has the same aim, and study every method to render themselves acceptable. Hence their obsequious Countenances, Flattery, Insinuations, and Zeal, some passions concealed, some disguised, and others personated ; hence too their attachment to such as can help to promote them, and their neglect of such as cannot ; hence with them good fortune, however unworthily placed, always passes for merit, and abilities ever sink with power ; and hence their falsehood, ingratitude and courteous behaviour.

THAT this is true of the herd of Courtiers, I believe will be allowed. Without doubt there are exceptions, and men of great honour, disinterestedness and friendship are often to be found there; men who scorn treachery and baseness, and would risk all, rather than do a mean thing. Such were MANIUS LEPIDUS, SENECA, and BURRUS; such COCCERIUS NERVA and JULIUS AGRICOLA, and such were the Chancellor DE L'HOSPITAL, Chancellor HYDE, and the Earl of SOUTHAMPTON; all these great men were Courtiers, and lived in Courts full of corruption and dangerous designs; all practised some degrees of suppleteness, submitted their opinions to the necessity of the times, and, by defeating many evil measures, were the Authors of much good, though not of all that they would.

CARDINAL RICHELIEU makes heavy complaints of the opposition which he found to his best designs from the credit and intrigues of Women, and the whispers and ill offices of malevolent Courtiers. These great men abovementioned were likewise often wronged; bad counsels which they had heartily opposed, were imputed to them; and, when they concurred with some excesses to obviate much greater, just allowances were not made, and their motives were spitefully construed. Thus the Chancellor DE L'HOSPITAL was severely censured by the Hugonots for passing the Edict of Romorantin, which bore hard upon them; though by that Edict he prevented their utter extirpation, and the misery of all France, by hindering the introduction and establishment of that monstrous and bloody Tribunal the Inquisition; in which design the Court and Parliament were already agreed, and I think the Edict for that detestable purpose was ready. For such signal and glorious service the Protestants first railed at him, and the Papists afterwards cursed him. Lord CLARENDON too was reproached

proached with the sale of Dunkirk, and for many other exorbitancies which the sincere heart of that upright Minister abhorred. Nor could the good counsels of **SENECA** secure him from much envy and defamation; and many great Ministers, thought to be the Authors of evil counsels, have fallen into disgrace, or perished, for daring to offer such as were benevolent and upright <sup>a</sup>.

Sect. III. *The Arts of Courtiers; their Cautiousness, and its Causes.*

**P**LAUSIBLENESS and guises are inseparable from Courts; men must not seem to understand all that they apprehend or know, no more than they must speak all that they think or feel <sup>b</sup>. Princes often dissemble with their Subjects, their Ministers with them, and all with one another; and every one talks, as he appears, to the best advantage. Some dissimulation there, is absolutely necessary, and therefore lawful. Men are not obliged upon all occasions to speak the truth, though whatever they speak upon any occasion ought to be true. Nor ought any one to be blamed for hiding his passions and sentiments, when the discovery would only serve to hurt himself. But few people in private life can be trusted with secrets, which published would lessen one's peace or fame; and in Courts there are much fewer, perhaps none. Particular interests and passions are often shifting there; men who were once close united, become widely divided; friendships old and long, are turned into bitter and vindictive enmity; and he who would once have risked his life for the preferment of his friend, would venture as much, upon a disgust, to bring him to a scaffold. This might be exemplified by a thousand instances in all Times

<sup>a</sup> Est vulgus ad deteriora promptum.

<sup>b</sup> Intelligebantur artes, sed pars obsequii in eo ne deprehenderentur.



and Histories. Nothing keeps the passions more awake than the pursuit of power ; nothing touches the pride of man more sensibly, than neglect or disappointment in that pursuit, and nothing is more tender and suspicious than pride. Few have got so much as not to aim at more, or have had ever so much assistance but they expect further, even where the same is unreasonable or perhaps impossible ; and from disappointment ensues disgust. Too rarely seen is that Gratitude which looks backward, and generously subsists upon favours past, without fresh claims and aliment ; how much more common is that which must be kept up by daily benefits, and, when bereft of such food, expires ? Nor is the ceasing of gratitude the worst that is to be apprehended from selfish and ungenerous men ; the room of it is too often supplied by spite and revenge ; and if it be natural to hate such as we have injured, this hate must be great in proportion to the injury done ; and what injury can be greater than that of being barbarous to benefactors ?

THESE considerations are sufficient to make such as frequent Courts and know men, slow and wary in confiding, and to put them under considerable reserves even where they confide most. No one cares to be at the mercy of a friend, that may be an enemy ; hence, in the making of friendship any where, it ought to be one of the first considerations, whether there be any probable causes which threaten a rupture ; whether the business of love, or power, or fame, or anger, or interest, be never likely to interfere, and produce the most bitter of all enmities, that of friends.

THIS wariness at Court extends even to words and looks. The conversing with great men and great affairs, naturally produces secrecy and silence ; for, since such is the folly of the world, that whatever a great man says, however light or accidental, shall be deemed deep and mysterious, if it has  
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the least allusion to the transactions of the times; and since they who hear it will be apt, through vanity, to quote it; great men seldom say any thing upon such subjects; and even when they hear the talk and sentiments of others, they take care that neither their answers, nor their countenance, shall betray their own. Sometimes a word thoughtlessly dropped, or an unseasonable smile, or some mark of surprize, has given light into an important design, and marred it intirely. The like circumspection they observe in their discourse upon particulars, because their discourse may be easily altered and poisoned by the malice or folly of such as hear it; a practice as usual at Court, as in any country village; and many a man has been disgraced by his own words, whispered and altered by a virulent breath; nay, the very same thing reported with a different tone and action, has had the same effect; and where the alteration of the words was considerable, those of them which were forged and criminal have been believed, because the rest that were true and innocent, were well attested.

I shall illustrate this by the story of young NERO (the son of GERMANICUS) in the Court of TIBERIUS. It excellently shews the jealousies of Princes, and the spirit of Courts. That young Prince was intirely beloved of the Roman People, who had adored his father; hence the distaste and dark suspicions of the Emperor, his great uncle and grandfather by adoption. SEJANUS, who had already poisoned the Emperor's son DRUSUS, and was plotting the overthrow of the whole reigning House, fed the hate and apprehensions of the old Prince, by malignant reports and insuasions concerning the young, now the next in Succession. This he did by the inter-agency of hollow whispers and tale-bearers, who related and blackened every thing that escaped NERO, who was also hard used and brow-beaten, on purpose to extort from him severe and unwary complaints, such as might fill up the charge against him.

him. Moreover his domestics and retainers, impatient to see him in power that they might shine in its trappings, were continually exciting him to rouse his courage and exert himself, to meet the zeal of the people, to gratify the passionate wishes of the army; as the only expedients to daunt and repulse the insolence of SEJANUS, who now despised him as a boy, and his grandfather as superannuated.

THE young Prince, however naturally modest, was yet by so many instigations transported beyond the circumspection which the station that he was in, and the many eyes that were upon him, required; and thence gave vent to words, which, though they betrayed no sign of any treasonable purpose, yet, being ill-guarded and favouring of contumacy, were, by the spies purposely placed about him, carried instantly, well heightened and imbibtered, to TIBERIUS. Nor, under all these imputations and aspersions, was he warned or admitted to vindicate himself, but beset, on the contrary, with several melancholy and boding appearances. Some of the Court carefully shunned to meet him; others just greeted him, and then instantly left him; many with whom he had begun a conversation, broke it off abruptly; while the creatures and adherents of SEJANUS looked on with a malicious laugh. TIBERIUS too always received him sternly, or with a hollow and upbraiding smile; and, whether the youth spoke, or said nothing, there were crimes in his words, crimes in his silence. Neither did his bed-chamber and the shades of night secure him from his Enemies and Accusers, for even his restlessness and watchings, nay, his sighs and dreams, were by his wife divulged to her mother LIVIA, and by her to her adulterer SEJANUS. DRUSUS also, his younger brother, was, by this wicked politician, drawn to combine against him as one who stood between himself and the Empire, and was better beloved by their common mother AGRIPPINA; a fresh cause of emulation and prejudice. Yet at that  
very

very time was SEJANUS laying a design against the life of this same DRUSUS, whom he knew to be of a spirit tempestuous and fiery, and thence the more obnoxious to snares. Thus he began the Tragedy of these two youths, and that of their mother; but before he had finished theirs, suffered his own, which was abundantly bloody, but abundantly just. Their brother CALIGULA was a better Courtier; he studied the temper and manner of TIBERIUS, and in all things conformed to it; but was particularly a complete scholar of his in dissimulation<sup>c</sup>. Upon the condemnation of his mother, upon the exile of his brothers, not a word, not a groan escaped him, nor any symptom of resentment or pity. The passions are no where more agitated than at Court; yet no where are the signs of perturbation more suppressed.

Sect. IV. *Of Slanderers and Tale-bearers in Courts. The Folly of Craft.*

THE occupation of slander and whispering, will, like other occupations, always thrive according to the encouragement given to it, and being easily exercised, will be ever engaging fresh adventurers. What requires less labour and conscience than to find out, or frame, or invenom a story to the prejudice of another, especially when he is not to be heard in his own defence, nor suffered to confront his Accuser, nor perhaps even knows that he has one? There is an endless appetite in mankind for Intelligence and secret History; and in proportion to that appetite, they who feed it are well received and encouraged. But of all places they fare best in Courts. Great men are in the power of such people much more than they themselves imagine or mean; these assiduous shadows of theirs, who have their ear, and know their tempers, watch their unwary moments, and observe when they are gay and

<sup>c</sup> *Simulationum falsa in sinu avi perdidiscerat.*

open, when disobliged and angry, when full of thought and business; and will be sure to improve the present temper and opportunity. They know the Characters of men; know whom their Patron loves, whom he dislikes, to whom he is altogether indifferent, with what is likely to be believed of each. They extoll some, decry others, flatter him, misrepresent all; and sooth, or alarm, or divert him, just as his humour and their drift requires. If with this they can play the droll, and make dry and malicious jests, they are accomplished in their way; but most villainous is that talent which is good for nothing but to do hurt; it is like death and poison, fit only to take away life. V A T I N I U S was a buffoon of this pestilent cast, and, from working in a stall, taken to Court, at first for jest and diversion; but having a malicious spirit and a sarcastical turn, soon became a terror to every worthy and illustrious man; insomuch that in wealth and favour, and in power to do mischief, he grew to exceed all the other Ministers of iniquity in N E R O's Court.

I N all Courts there are many who rise into notice and preferment for no greater merit than that of officiousness, buffoonery and tale-bearing; and Courts are the places in the world where bad and worthless people can do the most harm; a Barber, a Porter, a Valet de Chambre, and even a Child, are all capable of doing notable mischief there. Those instruments, let them be ever so mean, will find some or other to hear them; these will find others; and a story that has run through a hundred hands, and can be traced to no original, or to a very low one, perhaps the idle Prattle of a Chambermaid, may, for all that, have no mean influence.

B U T whatever reason men have, upon all these accounts, to keep a guard upon their lips and behaviour at Court; there is still room for great frankness and candour, and no necessity of illusion and

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deceiving, though it be often necessary to let people deceive themselves, and would be often imprudent and dangerous to undeceive them. It is certain, that in the transacting of great Affairs, the rules of morality admit of some relaxation; this is to be lamented; but not to be helped. Such frequently are the exigencies of a State, and such always the crookedness and depravity of the heart of man; that were you to deal openly, to tell all that you mean, all that you know, and all that you aim at, you would expose your Country to ruin, and yourself to scorn, perhaps to the block. The most that can be done is to save appearances, and be wary of what expressions are used; for, upon these occasions, and many others, men are not to be upbraided for their silence. I know some who have gone through nice Embassies, some who have concluded intricate Negotiations, others who have administered the highest Offices, and still preserved the character of high Honour, and untainted Veracity. This shews the thing to be possible; and a promise or assurance, just given to serve a turn, and therefore not observed afterwards, does often more injury to him who made it, than the serving that turn did good. Cardinal RICHELIEU was not liberal of money nor promises; but he always performed more than he undertook; hence the zeal and firm adherence of all who depended upon him. Cardinal MAZARIN denied nothing, performed nothing, was believed in nothing, and his ill faith was become proverbial; hence no man was ever more hated, no man in his station more despised; he could never rely upon any party, for he deceived all parties and all particulars; and nothing could support him but the blind obstinacy of the Queen Regent, and the mere weight of Royal Power armed in his defence; but in spite of the Queen and the Authority Royal, he was forced to run and sculk for his life. The Parliament set a price  
upon

upon his head, and issued ordinances to the people to fall upon him as a public Enemy. Yet he had never carried Sovereign Power so high as his Predecessor, nor ever exerted it so terribly; but he had no faith nor honour, and therefore no personal friends. To this hour, *RICHELIEU* is considered as a Minister, who, though arbitrary and severe, was yet an elevated genius, and a man of veracity to particulars; *MAZARIN*, as a man not rigorous indeed, nor vindictive, but sordid, addicted to low cunning and lyes, and with all the eclat of a great Minister unable to hide the little tricking Italian.

*CRAFTINESS* is a despicable quality, and undoes itself; he who has it, and acts by it, can never disguise it long; and when it becomes apparent, it becomes impotent, arms every body against it, brings hatred or ridicule, at best is perfectly usefess; and the man, even when he deals uprightly, is suspected to mean knavishly. What gained *TIBERIUS* by all his profound subtlety and wiles, but to have his best actions ill construed, and his sincerest professions to be disbelieved<sup>d</sup>? What gained *PHILIP* the second of Spain by that strange and intricate scene of false Politics, concerted to transfer his own guilt upon the head of his Minister *ANTONIO PEREZ*; but to bring home the just imputation of that guilt to his own door, and to produce full proof, where before there was only suspicion? Sincerity is very consistent with human prudence, and often a part of it, considering the reputation that always attends it; and men even in Courts may be very upright, without being unguarded; nor can Courtiers ever do business with one another without some openness and candour. I have seen it asserted somewhere, that people are oftner deceived by distrust than by

<sup>d</sup> *Ad vana & totiens irrita revolutus, de reddendâ Repub. &c. vero quoque & honesto fidem dempsit.*

acts of confidence. I have observed as plain dealing in Courtiers as in any other sort of men in the world. It is ridiculous to carry reserve and deepness into every thing. I know not a more contemptible sort of men than such as mimic business and mystery ; I have seen some subaltern Courtiers look as important, demure and wary, as if they had carried great matters, and even the weight of the State upon their shoulders. This affectation serves to raise their credit amongst their servants and artificers in town, and in the country amongst their tenants and neighbours, and diverts better judges. There are others who really believe themselves to be in secrets ; who take shrugs and nods, mere words and shadows for real confidence and communication ; and live in happy ignorance, under the conceit of high trust and intelligence. Some few too there are, who, besides despising the foppery of being thought trusted where they are not, are careful to hide it from the world when they are. 'Tis men of this turn who chiefly do credit to a Court ; and whoever does it credit, does it service.

SECT. V. *How much worthless People abound in Courts, and why.*

AS in a great family, where there are numerous domestics, in spite of all the care that can be taken to examine the Characters of servants when they are admitted, or to regulate and watch their behaviour afterwards, there will be some still unworthy of their places, and a discredit to their master ; how much more so must it be in a Court, where not only the officers, but even the offices are so numerous ; where so many have a right to prefer or recommend, and where so many do both from strange, wretched, and selfish motives, nay, often for considerations altogether dishonourable and scandalous ? It is therefore



fore no wonder, that though the politest men are always found at Court, so likewise are always a strange rabble of creatures, ignorant, mercenary, ridiculous and disagreeable, who owe their preferment to chance, whim, money, dirty services, to names, affinities, nay, to impudence and folly; and one who has no pretences to any thing else, neither to education, nor capacity, nor honour, nor spirit, nor even to good looks and common sense, shall find pretences to a place, and probably get one. Nor is this to be remedied; since he who gives it does not chuse, but take, and has often stronger reasons to oblige the recommender, than to reject the recommended. I have known a friend, nay, a relation of a great Minister, disappointed twice of an Office which was even intended for him, but by potent intercession was bestowed elsewhere; the first time, upon one whom the Minister knew not, whom the Recommender knew not, nor whom even the Lady who spoke for him knew; but one who for a sum of money engaged a Gentleman's Valet de Chambre to engage the Lady's Woman whom the Valet courted, to engage her Lady whom she governed, to engage the last Recommender, who undertook it, and succeeded. He who had the first pretences was again put by upon a vacancy, and a creature put in, whom the Minister was known to despise, and almost to loath; but sacrificed his opinion, his aversion, and his friend to mediation not more honourably obtained. At so critical a juncture as that of a Rebellion, I have heard of one who by a Letter written with the same pen which he had used in corresponding with the Rebels, procured a handsome provision for his brother, who wished the Rebels as well as he, and had distinguished himself in a very public place by acts of disaffection, and disloyal heats. Nor in this instance was there any money or intrigue at all; the Recommender had only once told a hearty lye for a

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great man in a nice case, and sworn to it; hence his merit and influence. For an act of honour or spirit, done to serve the Public, he might perhaps have found less regard, perhaps not so much as access; as befel some who did.

IT is certain, great men often prefer such as they dislike, and such as do them no credit, sometimes with their eyes open, frequently through misinformation, and in both cases through solicitation and importunity. Men of merit often want interest, often application and boldness; whereas one who has no one worthy qualification, is the more likely to have importunity and shamelessness. It has indeed been often a notable advantage to a man, that he had not sense enough to be ashamed nor baulked; nay, I have known such a negative accomplishment to be the making of his fortune. A rational man will take a rational answer, or even a trifling one, when he sees it meant for a rebuke or a refusal; or perhaps he has too much pride to press and beseech, or to ask above once; but he who has no understanding to mislead him from his interest; or to apprehend what is said to him; he who is incapable of a repulse, or to be ashamed of begging and teasing; but has an unchangeable front and unwearied nonsense, stands in a fair light to have his pretences considered. Though he cannot persuade, he can tire; and he finds the fruit and advantage of talents in the absolute want of them; he is despised and promoted; a little share of good sense and modesty, would have ruined him, and he might then have been neither disliked nor minded.

SUCH is the force of recommendation without reason, or against it; and such too the power of assiduity unincumbered with parts! There are strange inconsistencies in the make, and turn, and education of men. There are those who can calmly encounter death and terrors in any shape, yet shall tremble in speaking

speaking two or three words to a Secretary of State ; a task which would not baulk a common Footman. Others can harangue readily and boldly before a great Assembly, yet are struck dumb in the company of Women, a place where a Page, or an ignorant Beau, can be entertaining and eloquent. Some have talents, but not the use of them. Many have capacity, but want application ; many are hurt by too much application not directed by capacity ; several have good sense and activity, and can apply both to serve a friend, but neither to do good to themselves. In some you find excellent parts frustrated by predominant passions ; in others eminent courage and spirit drowned and depreciated by a modesty almost childish ; and numbers there are who, under a notorious defect of ability, acquirements, and every amiable quality, are pushed up as high as any of these could have pushed them, perhaps much higher than all of them would. So that, in the odd assortment of human things, Fortune would seem to correspond with the caprice and wantonness of Nature.

I have already owned that it is impossible to keep many worthless people out of a Court, considering how many ways there are to get in ; but owing to such is a good measure of the obloquy usually thrown upon Courts and ministers ; as the falsehood, the low tricks and spirit of these Underlings, are all ascribed to the genius of the place and of power ; and under the character of insincerity and ingratitude, it is usual in popular discourse and opinion, though it is really very unjust, to throw all Courtiers together. I even believe that there are some of them foolish and base enough to like the reputation of slipperiness and deceiving, for the sake of being thought good Courtiers. From the numbers too and little minds of such, we may account for the general outcry and reproach which from that quarter usually follow any worthy Minister fallen into disgrace. They are for

the Powers that be ; and though they be the work of his hands, were thrust into place by his late might, and are still basking in the Sun-shine which he let in upon them ; yet they are ready not only to leave a falling house, but to help pull it down. It is the temper of Renegadoes. The celebrated SANCHO was first warmly in the interest of the injured BASIL, one who had lost his Mistress for no want of merit, but through the superior wealth of his rival GAMACHO ; yet the savory skimmings and loaded ladles out of GAMACHO's kettles, so effectually turned the supple spirit of that courtly Squire, that, without more ceremony, he began to justify and extol the happy supplanter, and to rail plentifully at poor BASIL under misfortune and disgrace.

WHAT can Ministers expect, when they have raised such dust, but that with the first contrary wind, it will be blown into their eyes ? Mean spirits, selfish and impudent, can never take the impressions of gratitude and honour ; no more than such as are modest and generous can ever be ungrateful or base. Yet hard is the task to weed a Court of such ; not only because the same interest that recommends, does likewise protect ; but because there are so many Candidates ready to fill their places, and supported by so many Patrons and Intercessors, that more will be disobliged than can be gratified by the change ; and after all perhaps the fresh comer may not prove the more deserving man. Neither can the great Officers easily cure the exorbitances and exactions of the inferior ; especially when the same are become common and inveterate. All men, even the greatest men desire to live easy with those they have daily to do with, and will not care to incur the clamour and curses of Subalterns ; who, though they are but small men, yet being numerous, and supported by all who are interested in corruption, are able by continual complaints

\*plaints and noise, to weaken the credit of the most puissant Minister, and to make him very uneasy.

Sect. VI. *The remarkable Fickleness and Insincerity of Courtiers.*

I Had once an opportunity of seeing the steadiness and gratitude of Courtiers put to trial, upon an apprehension of a change in the ministry. I was strictly curious in my observations and inquiries ; and my discoveries were such, as have fully confirmed me in all my former and present sentiments of these people. There were some who gave proofs of signal friendship and constancy to the standing Ministry ; several were wary and silent, but many made preposterous haste to shew their levity and selfishness ; and, from the behaviour of most, there arose warning enough, even to greatness itself, to rely for its best security upon wisdom and innocence.

A little before the death of TIBERIUS, then past hopes, he was reported to be dead. Instantly the Courtiers crowded about CALIGULA the next heir, with a torrent of congratulations and zeal ; and he was going forth, thus attended, to assume the pomp and exercise of Sovereignty, when sudden tidings came, that the Emperor, who had lain some time in a swoon, was revived, and calling for some refreshment to strengthen his spirits. Instant terror seized all ; most of them dispersed and fled ; some assumed an air of mourning ; many feigned utter ignorance. CALIGULA was struck speechless, and, from the highest hopes, expecting his last doom. MACRO only remained undaunted ; he commanded the ancient Emperor to be smothered with a great weight of coverings, having first ordered every body to quit the chamber.

AMONGST the many good things, and excellent sense in the Memoirs of Cardinal DE RETZ, there occur frequent pictures of the Court, particularly upon the beginning of the Commotions in Paris. At the Palace Royal, and especially in the Cabinet, upon that occasion, every individual assumed a person, and acted a part. The Coadjutor acted the innocent and the dupe, but was not so. MAZARIN affected to appear resolute, but appeared more so than he was. By starts and intervals the Queen counterfeited great temper and gentleness; yet had been at no time more bitter and enraged. The Duke DE LONGUEVILLE feigned extreme affliction, yet felt a sensible joy, as he was the man in the world the most delighted with the beginnings of all affairs. The Duke of ORLEANS, in speaking to the Queen, shewed great warmth and vehemence, but presently after fell a whistling (a usual habit of his) with all the indolence in the world. The Marshal DE VILLEROY displayed gayety and unconcern, to make his Court to MAZARIN; but to the Coadjutor he owned, with tears in his eyes, that the State was upon the brink of a precipice. Mr. DE BEAUTRU and Mr. DE NOGENT, played the buffoons, to humour the Queen, and drolled upon the commotion; though both these men knew well, that, in all probability, this farce of theirs would too soon be followed by a Tragedy. The Abbé DE LA RIVIERE only, though the most notorious poltron of the age, was persuaded that this popular insurrection was but smoke; this he maintained stiffly to the Queen, and this pleased her. To fill up the complement of Actors, the Marshal DE LA MEILLERAIE, who had hitherto joined with the Coadjutor in representing the terrors and consequences of the tumult, all on a sudden changed his past part, and took that of the Champion, with a different tone and other sentiments; in an instant

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he was all rage, and contempt, and defiance. *Mem. DE RETZ*, vol. 1. p. 122.

IN short, the Queen and the Cardinal took every one who told them truth, for a certain enemy to themselves, and for a promoter, at least a secret well-wisher, of the revolt. When this was the reward of plain-dealing, who would venture his place and favour by dealing plainly? Thus, for want of honest information, and sincere advisers, and by suspecting or disbelieving such as were so, the State had nigh perished. The whole detail in *DE RETZ* is full of curious incidents, full of strong and just reflections; as is almost the whole Book.

## DISCOURSE X.

### Of Armies and Conquest.

Sect. I. *The Burden and Danger of maintaining great Armies.*

TOO many Princes are infatuated with false notions of Glory, and thence delight in War. Without doubt it is true Glory to excel in war, where war is necessary; but in the whole course of History, where one has been so, twenty have been otherwise; and to engage in it from the wantonness of ambition, or for the sake of Laurel, or through peevishness and humour, is to risque the blood, and treasure, and people, and being of a State, for the foppery of false Heroism: or to sacrifice the same to the selfish and inglorious view of making a Country (either that which conquers, or that which is conquered, or both) the prey of the Hero. For such has been generally the logic of the Sword, that because it has saved, it may

therefore oppress and enthrall, and for defending a part, take the whole. Wars beget great Armies ; Armies beget great Taxes ; heavy Taxes waste and impoverish the Country, even where Armies commit no violences ; a case seldom to be supposed, because it has seldom happened. But where great Armies are, they must be employed, and do mischief abroad, to keep them from doing it at home ; so that the people must be exhausted and oppressed to keep the men of the sword in exercise.

THE great Turk, to keep the swords of the Janizaries from his own throat, is forced to plague his neighbours, even where he earns nothing but blows and disgrace ; and thence increases the danger which he would avert ; for, as by his Armies he makes all men slaves, he himself is a slave to his Armies, and often their victim ; or, to escape himself, is frequently forced to satiate their fury by the blood of his bravest Officers, and best Counsellors. If it be the Glory of his Monarchy, that he can put the greatest men and all men to death, without reason, or form, or process ; he is subject in his own person to the same lawless and expeditious butchery, from his own outrageous slaves, who being not accustomed to receive any Law from him, give him none, whenever he is in their power, which is as often as they think fit ; and he who is a Prince of slaves, is adjudged by slaves, and dies like the meanest slave. What is there to save him ? His people who are oppressed, want the inclination, and being unarmed, the power. So that he lives in personal servitude to those who are the instruments of public Servitude ; and as others must die to please him, so must he to please them. It is the Law of retaliation, and operates as often as its causes operate, namely, caprice, or rage, or fear. This is the blessing of being absolute, and unfettered by human constitutions ; the same sword which is lifted up for you,



at the command of whim or passion, is with the like wantonness lifted up against you; and if you reign in blood, you must not think it strange to die in it.

SECT. II. *Great Armies the best disciplined, whether thence the less formidable to a Country. Their Temper and Views.*

**I**N regard to public Liberty, Armies the best disciplined are not less to be dreaded than the worst, but I think, more; since their relaxation of discipline takes away from their union and sufficiency; it renders them weaker and less equal to mighty mischief; but where they are strict and united, the highest iniquities are not too big for them. Disorderly Troops may rob particulars, ravage towns, and harass a Country; but if you would subdue Nations, commit universal spoil, and enslave Empires, your forces must be under the best regulations. It was with an Army victorious and brave, and consequently well disciplined, that AGATHOCLES slaughtered all the Nobles of Syracuse, and brought that illustrious State (the noblest of all the Greek Cities) under bondage. CROMWELL'S conquest of his Country was made by Troops the most sober and best disciplined that this, or perhaps any other nation, had ever seen. And it was with the best of all the Roman Armies, that CÆSAR established himself Tyrant of Rome.

SOLDIERS know little else but booty, and blind obedience; whatever their interest, or rapacity dictates, they generally will do; and whatever their officers command, they must do. It is their profession to dispute by force, and the sword; they too soon learn their own power, and where it is an overbalance for the Civil Power, it will always controul the

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the Civil Power, and all things<sup>a</sup>. They find readily somewhat to say; the strongest is ever the best disputant, when he carries his reasons upon the point of his sword<sup>b</sup>. They have done great services, they have suffered great wrongs, and will therefore reward and redress themselves. It is the reasoning of CÆSAR<sup>c</sup>. It is nothing to the purpose to say, that an Army lifted amongst the natives, especially the officers being natives, and many of them men of fortune, will never hurt or oppress their Country; for such were CROMWELL'S Army, such were CÆSAR'S, and many other enslaving Armies; besides Armies are soon modelled, and Officers who are obnoxious, are soon changed.

No Government can subsist but by force, and where-ever that force lies, there it is that Government is or soon will be. Free States therefore have preserved themselves, and their Liberties, by arming all their people, because all the people are interested in preserving those Liberties; by drawing out numbers of them thus armed, to serve their Country occasionally, and by dissolving them (when that occasion was over) into the mass of the people again; by often changing the chief Officers, or, if they continued the same, by letting their commissions be temporary, and always subject to the controul of the supreme Power, often to that of other co-ordinate Power, as the Dutch Generals are to the Deputies. It is indeed but rare, that States who have not taken such precaution, have not lost their Liberties; their Generals have set up for themselves, and turned

<sup>a</sup> *Suâ in manu sitam rem Romanam; suis victoriis augeri Rempublicam.*

<sup>b</sup> *Preces erant, sed quibus contradici non posset.*

<sup>c</sup> *Hæc voluerunt: tantis rebus gestis, C. Cæsar condemnatus esse, nisi ab exercitu auxilium petissem.*

the Arms put into their hands against their Masters. This did MARIUS, SYLLA, CÆSAR, DIONYSIUS, AGATHOCLES, CHARLES MARTEL, OLIVER CROMWELL, and many others; and this they all did by the same means: it is still frequently done in the Eastern Monarchies; and by the same means all the Christian Princes of Europe, who were arbitrary, became so. For as the experience of all ages shews us, that all men's views are to attain dominion and riches, it is ridiculous to hope, that they will not use the means in their power to attain them, and madness to trust them with those means. They will never want pretences, either from their own safety, or the public Good, to justify the measures which have succeeded; and they know well, that the success will always justify itself; that great numbers will be found to sanctify their power; most of the rest will submit to it, and in time will think it just and necessary; perhaps at last believe it to be obtained miraculously, and to have been the immediate act of Heaven.

SECT. III. *Princes ruling by military Power, ever at the Mercy of military Men.*

AS by these means private men often come at Sovereign Power; so limited Princes often become arbitrary; but one mischief is inseparable from this sort of Government; they generally lose their Authority by the same method they get it. For, having attained it by violence, they are obliged to keep it by violence; and that cannot be done but by engaging in the interest of their Oppression a body of men, strong enough to maintain it; and it will for the most part happen, that as these men have no interest but their own in serving a Tyrant, so when that interest ceases, and they can serve themselves better in destroying him, they seldom fail of doing

doing it. In fact we find, that in all the great despotic Governments in the world the Monarchs are slaves to their soldiery, and they murder and depose their Princes just according to their caprices. The General sets up any of the Princes of the blood, whom he thinks most for his interest, and oftentimes upon the death of the Possessor they are all set up, by one part of the Army or other, (if one cannot get all the rest into his power, and murder them) and the Civil War continues, till one has slaughtered all his rivals :

If this is not done in the modern absolute Governments of Europe, it is because despotic Power is not so thoroughly established there, and the people have yet some share of Property, and consequently of Power ; but still they do it as much as they dare ; in some instances they have set up themselves, and in almost all have been the principal engines and instruments in working about Revolutions, according to their own inclinations and disgusts. Of this we had many instances in our own Country, within the compass of not many years.

How much easier is it to corrupt a few leading Officers, often necessitous, generally ambitious, than to persuade a whole Kingdom, if they are well governed, to destroy themselves ? Some will be disobliged, because not preferred to their wishes, or because others are preferred before them ; they will differ according to their countries or their interests about the person to be their General, and to have the power of preferring or recommending Officers ; and that part which is disappointed shall be a faction against that which succeeds. Where-ever Commissions are venal, there will be no difficulty of buying those, who are disaffected, into them, if they can disguise their disaffection till a proper opportunity. In a Country where factions abound, and those at the helm can find any account in keeping measures with

with a contrary faction, Officers will be put in to oblige that faction, sometimes to gratify friends or favourites ; at different times, others will be discarded, to oblige one party, or to mortify the other. New men, by private recommendation or money, shall supercede old Officers ; this will create new dissatisfactions and disgusts, as soon as they dare shew them. When the Administration is changed, and another party gets uppermost, all those things shall be done over again ; so that at last an Army shall be a medley of all the factions of a Kingdom ; and all their preferments and expectations depending upon the success of those factions ; each individual will take every safe opportunity to advance his own ; and for the most part one or other of these factions, sometimes all, are ready to join in shuffling the cards anew ; the sure prelude of a Civil War.

THIS is and ever must be the case of all Countries which subsist by standing Armies. For there are few instances in History, to be given of Armies who did not play their own game, in times of distress ; few instances of disobliged or unpreferred Officers, who did not change sides ; too many have made their peace by some remarkable act of treachery ; very often they have done it only from the motives of ambition and avarice. I wish that we never had had instances amongst ourselves of any who have done the same ; or even of Generals who played a double game. What OLIVER CROMWELL, MONK, and very many both of the King's and of the Parliament Officers did in the Civil War, we all know, as well as what King JAMES's Army did more lately : I wish we equally knew what intrigues of this kind have been carrying on since. In Civil Wars amongst men of the same Country, the communication is so easy between friends, relations and former acquaintance, that there is a very ready transition from one side to another ;

and a little success, small intrigues, and a few advantages generally make that transition.

Sect. IV. *Instances of the Boldness and Fury of the Roman Soldiery.*

IT is astonishing from what light and wanton motives, by what vile and contemptible instruments, Armies are often instigated to violence and ravages. The sedition of that in Pannonia, after the death of AUGUSTUS, was raised by one common soldier, inflamed by another; rapine and massacres were committed or defended by almost all; they murdered their Officers; even their General had like to have been murdered, upon the credit of an impudent lie told by one of these vile incendiaries, who yet could scarce alledge any other grievance than that they had not too much pay, and too little discipline. Nor was the insurrection, excited by these two fellows, restrained to the Pannonian Legions only, but extended to those in Germany, who waxed into fury rather greater, and outraged all things human and divine.

IT was one common soldier who gave the Empire to CLAUDIUS, by saluting him Emperor, while the poor dastardly wretch was lurking in a corner, and expecting death instead of Sovereignty. Under GALBA two private Centinels undertook to transfer the Empire to another, and actually transferred it. It is shocking to reflect with what eagerness these blood-thirsty assassins hastened to murder that good old Prince, for no charge of misgovernment, nor for defrauding them of their pay; but because he would not exhaust the Public to glut them with bounties. They were such abandoned Ruffians, that they sought to kill MARIUS CELSUS, purely because as he was an able and virtuous man,  
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they judged him an enemy to themselves who delighted only in blood, and wickedness, and spoil. It would require a volume to recount the behaviour, the treacherous and inhuman exploits of these sons of violence thenceforward ; their murdering and promoting of Emperors, sometimes two or three, sometimes more, once thirty at a time ; their selling the Empire for money ; their besieging and threatening to massacre the Senate ; their burning the Capitol, setting fire to the Imperial City, pillaging and butchering its inhabitants, and using them like slaves and captives ; with other instances of their insolence, barbarity, and misrule. In the third and fourth Volumes of this Work much of this will be seen, recounted by TACITUS.

THE Gothic Governments were military in their first settlement ; the General was King, the Officers were the Nobles, and the Soldiers their Tenants ; but by the nature of the settlement, out of an Army a Country Militia was produced. The Prince had many occasional troops, but no standing troops ; hence he grew not absolute, like the Great Turk ; who having cantoned out the conquered Countries amongst his horsemen, must by doing it have lost his arbitrary Power, but that he kept a large body of men in arms, called the Janizaries.

GREAT BRITAIN has preserved its Liberties so long, because it has preserved itself from great standing Armies ; which, where-ever they are strong enough to master their Country, will certainly first or last master it. Some troops we must have for guards and garisons, enough to prevent sudden Insurrections, and sudden Revolutions. What numbers are sufficient for this, the experience of past times, and the sense of our Parliaments, have shewn.

SECT. V. *The Humour of conquering, how injudicious, vain, and destructive.*

THE Athenians began the ruin of their State, by a mad and expensive War upon Sicily; and from an ambition of conquering a people who had never offended them, exposed themselves to the attacks of the Lacedemonians, to the revolt of their own subjects, to domestic disorders, and the change of their Government. And though upon the recalling of ALCIBIADES, they won some victories, and for a while made some figure; they were at last conquered intirely by LYSANDER, their walls thrown down, the States subject to them set at liberty, and they themselves subjected to the domination of thirty Tyrants. They never after recovered their former Glory. The Lacedemonians fell afterwards into the same warlike folly, and their folly had the same fate. By lording over Greece they drew upon themselves a combination of Greek Cities, which together (especially the Thebans under the famous EPAMINONDAS) despoiled them of their Authority, soon after their triumph over Athens. The Thebans too abused their good fortune; they were equally fond of fighting and conquest, and by it drew another confederacy against them. In truth, everyone of these States had been so long weakening themselves, and one another, by their propensity to War, that at last they fell under servitude to the Kings of Macedon, a Country formerly depending upon, or rather under vassalage to Athens and Sparta.

THESE States acted like some of the Princes of our time; by trusting to their own superior Prowess, they invaded their neighbours, and taught them Art enough to beat themselves. Thus the Muscovite,  
by



by falling upon the late King of Sweden, yet in his minority, roused a tempest that had well nigh overturned his Throne ; and thus that King, by refusing the most honourable conditions of peace, and by urging his fate and revenge too far, taught the Russians that bravery and discipline which nothing could ever teach them before ; saw his own brave Army utterly routed by forces that he despised ; himself driven from his dominions, and a fugitive in a Country of Infidels ; and his Provinces cantoned out amongst enemies, who, before he had tempted his good fortune to leave him, would have been glad to have compounded with him for a moiety of their own dominions.

CHARLES Duke of Burgundy had his head so turned with gaining the battel of Montl'hery, that he never listened afterwards to any counsel, but that of his own headstrong humour ; nor ceased plunging himself into Wars, till in that against the Switzers, who had given him no just provocation, he lost his Army, his dominions, and his life. If PHILIP the second had kept his oath with the Low Countries, he might have preserved his Authority over them all. But nothing less would humour his pride than the subduing of their Liberties and Conscience ; and in defence of their Conscience and Property, he drove them to the use of Arms, which a people employed in trade and manufacture, as they were, had no list to, nor skill in. Every body knows the issue ; he lost the seven Provinces and their Revenue for ever, with many millions of money, and almost half a million of lives thrown away to recover them. By his mighty and boasted Armada designed to conquer England, what else did he conquer but his own Power at sea ? He had prepared, he had been for some years preparing, a naval force mighty as his own arrogance ; but it all proved to be only measures taken for baffling his arrogance, and for destroying

stroying the maritime force of Spain ; and all the while that he was vainly meditating the destruction of England, he was in reality taking the part of England against himself, and, with all his might, weakening its greatest enemy. Had he husbanded that mighty strength ; had he employed it at times, and in parcels, against these dominions, he might have had some success ; but he combined against his own hopes.

How foolish is the reasoning of passion ! It leads men to throw away strength to gain weakness. Even where these sons of violence succeed, they may be justly said to acquire nothing, beyond the praise of mischief. What is the occupation and end of Princes and Governors, but to rule men for their good, and to keep them from hurting one another ? Now what Conqueror is there who mends the condition of the conquered ? ALEXANDER the Great, though he well knew the difference between a limited and a lawless Monarchy, did not pretend, that his invasion of Persia was to mend the condition of the Persians. It was a pure struggle for dominion ; when he had gained it, he assumed the Throne upon the same arbitrary terms upon which their own Monarchs had held it, nor knew any Law but his will. The subject only felt the violence of the change, without any benefit or relaxation from slavery. His Glory therefore is all false and deceitful, as is all Glory which is gained by the blood of men, without mending the state of mankind. This spirit of fighting and conquering continued in his Successors, who plagued the earth as he had done, and weltered in the blood of one another, till they were almost all destroyed by the sword or poison, with the whole family of ALEXANDER. It was no part of the dispute amongst them, which of them could bestow most happiness upon the afflicted world, about which  
they

they strove, but who should best exalt himself, and enslave all.

THE State of Carthage after many Countries conquered, but not bettered by her Arms, was almost dissolved by her own barbarous Mercenaries, and at last conquered and destroyed by the Romans; who were in truth the most generous conquerors that the world has known: and most Countries found the Roman Government better than their own. This continued for some time, till their Provincial Magistrates grew rapacious, and turned the Provinces into spoil. Rome itself perished by her conquests, which being made by great Armies, occasioned such power and insolence in their Commanders, and set some Citizens so high above the rest, an inequality pernicious to free States, that she was enslaved by ingrates whom she had employed to defend her. Rome vanquished foreign nations; foreign luxury debauched Rome, and traitorous Citizens seized upon their mother with all her acquisitions. All her great blaze and grandeur, served only to make her wretchedness more conspicuous, and her chains more intensely felt. Upon her thralldom there ensued such a series of Tyranny and misery, treachery, oppression, cruelty, death and affliction, in all shapes; that her agonies were scarce ever suspended till she finally expired. When her own Tyrants, become through Tyranny impotent, could no longer afflict her, for protection was none of their business; a host of Barbarians, only known for ravages, and acts of inhumanity, finished the work of desolation, and closed her civil doom. She has been since racked under a Tyranny more painful, as it is more slow; and more base, as it is scarce a domination of men; I mean her vassalage to a sort of beings of all others the most merciless and contemptible, Monks and Spectres.

SECT. VI. *The Folly of conquering further urged and exemplified.*

THE Turks, like other Conquerors, know not when to leave off. They sacrifice the people to gain more territories ; and the more they conquer, the greater is their loss. They lavish men and treasure, to gain waste ground. What is the use of earth and water, where there are no Inhabitants for these elements to support ? The strength of a Government consists in numerous subjects industrious and happy ; not in extent of territory desolate or ill peopled, or peopled with inhabitants poor and idle. It is incredible what a profusion of wealth and lives their attempts upon Persia have cost them, always with fatal success, even under their wisest and most warlike Princes ; and at a time when their Empire flourished most. Yet these attempts are continued, at a season when their Affairs are at the lowest ; their Provinces exhausted, their people and revenue decayed, their soldiery disorderly, and all things conspiring to the final dissolution of their Empire.

THOSE who will be continually exerting their whole strength, whether they be societies or particular men, will at last have none to exert. The Turks have been for ages wasting their vitals to widen their extremities, and to extend their limbs ; which, by being unnaturally stretched, are quite disjointed and benumbed for want of nourishment from the seat of life ; and must therefore, like mortified members, soon drop off ; they have been long spinning out their own vitals. Now if they had conquered Persia, what benefit would the conquest have derived to the Persians ? None at all ; but on the contrary, fresh oppression, and probably persecution ; since the Turks deem them Heretics for the colour of their caps, and for their obstinate refusal

refusal to change one name for another in the list of Mahomet's Successors.

Thus these Barbarians destroy themselves to destroy others; and Christian Princes imitate these Barbarians. The Spaniard, to secure to himself the possession of America, destroyed more lives than he had subjects in Europe; and his mighty Empire there, with his mountains of treasure, bears indeed an awful sound; yet it is allowed that he has lost much more than he got, besides the crying guilt of murdering a large part of the globe. His conquests there, together with his expulsion of the Moors at home, have dispeopled Spain; and the inhabitants who remain trusting to their American wealth, are too proud and lazy to be industrious; so that most of their gold goes to other nations for the manufactures wanted in the Spanish West-Indies. Hence multitudes and diligence (and diligence often creates multitudes, as by multitudes diligence is created) are better than mountains of gold, and will certainly attract such mountains; though others have the name and first property. Had he kept the industrious Moors, and expelled the barbarous Inquisitors; encouraged Liberty and Trade, and consequently Liberty of Conscience, Spain would have been a more powerful nation, and he consequently a greater King, than all his wide and guilty conquests have made him. Sir WALTER RALEIGH says, that the Low Countries alone did, for revenue, equal his West-Indies. Notwithstanding his many Kingdoms, his Empire in both Hemispheres, and that the sun never sets upon all his dominions at once, the small Republic of Holland, small in compass of territory, has been an overmatch for him.

A late neighbouring Prince was a busy Conqueror. But did his People and Country gain by his conquests? He drained them of men and money by

millions, only to add to their poverty servitude and wretchedness, and from their chains and misery derived his own Glory. Nor do I know any reason why a Prince, who reduces his People, his Nobles, and all degrees of men in his Dominions, to poverty and littleness, should have the title of Great, unless for the greatness of the evils which he brought upon his own Kingdom and all Europe. Let the late and present condition of that Monarchy declare, what advantages that noble Country owes to his Glory and Victories. Had it not been for his wanton Wars and oppressive Taxes, there is no pitch of felicity which the goodness of their soil and climate, the number and industry of the natives, their many manufactures, and the advantage of their situation, might not have raised them to. But all was sacrificed to the Ambition and Bigotry of one. How many resources that Kingdom has within itself; and to what happiness it is capable of rising under a just and gentle Administration, is manifest from the suddenness with which it recovered itself under the good Government of HENRY the fourth; how many millions it paid, how many put into the Exchequer; and what a flourishing condition it was arrived to, after so fierce, so long, and so consuming a Civil War, and after two such profuse and profligate Reigns, as that of CHARLES the Ninth, and that of HENRY the Third. But what avails all this, when one short Edict, and the maggot of a minute, can dissipate all its wealth and all its happiness?

I might here display what ridiculous causes do often pique and awaken the vanity and ambition of Princes, and prompt them to lavish lives and treasure, and utterly undo those whom they should tenderly protect. For a beast of burden, or even for the tooth of a beast; for a mistress, for a river, for a senseless word hastily spoken, for words that had

a foolish meaning, or no meaning at all; for an empty sepulchre or an empty title; to dry the tears of a coquette, to comply with the whims of a pedant, or to execute the curses of a bigot; important Wars have sometimes been waged, and nations animated to destroy one another; nor is there any security against such destructive follies, where the sense of every man must acquiesce in the wild passion of one; and where the interest and peace, and preservation of a State, are found too light to ballance his rage or caprice. Hence the policy of the Romans to tame a people not easy to be subdued; they committed such to the domination of Tyrants. Thus they did in Armenia, and thus in Britain<sup>c</sup>. And these instruments did not only enslave their subjects, but by continual fighting with one another, consume them.

NECESSARY Wars are accompanied with evils more than enough; and who can bear or forgive calamities courted and sought? The Roman State owed her greatness in a good measure to a misfortune; it was founded in War, and nourished by it. The same may be said of the Turkish Monarchy. But States formed for peace, though they do not arrive to such immensity and grandeur, are more lasting and secure; witness Sparta and Venice. The former lasted eight hundred years, and the other has lasted twelve hundred, without any Revolution; what errors they both committed, were owing to their attempts to conquer, for which they were not formed; though the Spartans were exceeding brave and victorious; but they wanted the *Plebs ingenua*, which formed the strength of the

<sup>c</sup> Quædam civitates regi Cogiduno donatæ; vetere ac jampridem recepta populi Romani consuetudine, ut haberet instrumenta servitutis & reges.

Roman Armies; as the Janizaries, a militia formerly excellently trained and disciplined, formed those of the Turk. With the latter, fighting and extending their dominions, is an article of their Religion, as false and barbarous in this as in many of its other principles, and as little calculated for the good of men.

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