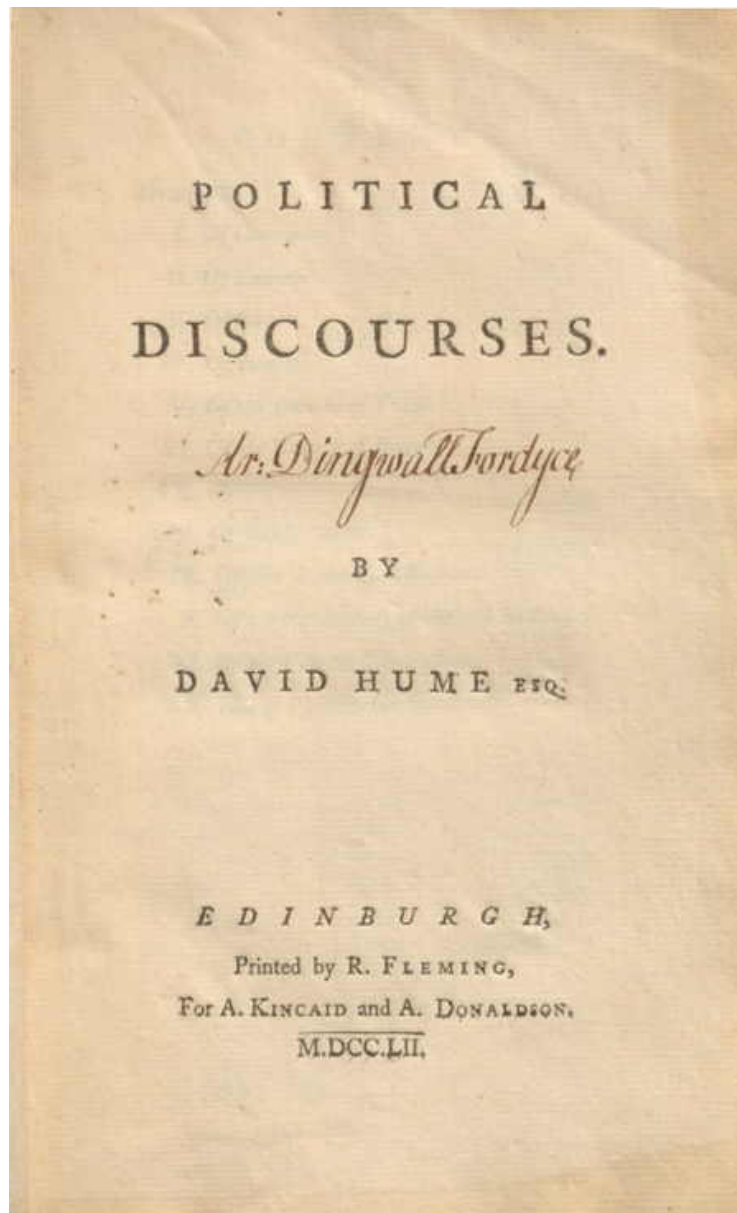


DAVID HUME,
Political Discourses (1752)



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Editor's Introduction

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

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

Table of Contents

- [ERRATA.](#)
 - [DISCOURSE I. Of Commerce.](#) [p. 1]
 - [DISCOURSE II. Of Luxury.](#) [p. 23]
 - [DISCOURSE III. Of Money.](#) [p. 41]
 - [DISCOURSE IV. Of Interest.](#) [p. 61]
 - [DISCOURSE V. Of the Balance of Trade.](#) [p. 79]
 - [DISCOURSE VI. Of the Balance of Power.](#) [p. 101]
 - [DISCOURSE VII. Of Taxes.](#) [p. 115]
 - [DISCOURSE VIII. Of Public Credit.](#) [p. 123]
 - [DISCOURSE IX. Of some remarkable customs.](#) [p. 143]
 - [DISCOURSE X. Of the Populousness of antient Nations.](#) [p. 155]
 - [DISCOURSE XI. Of the Protestant Succession.](#) [p. 263]
 - [DISCOURSE XII. Idea of a perfect Commonwealth.](#) [p. 281]
 - [Endnotes](#)
-

ERRATA.[↩](#)

PAGE 9. line 18. read, *He takes the field in his turn; and during his service, is chiefly maintain'd by himself.* P. 49. add to the note, *And as a recoinage of our silver begins to be requisite by the continual wearing of our shillings and sixpences, 'tis doubtful, whether we ought to imitate the example in king William's reign, when the clipt money was rais'd to the old standard.* P. 72. l. 11. r. *the price.* P. 76. l. 14. for *occasion* r. *accession.* P. 89. l. 7. r. *the entry of those wines of Languedoc, Guienne and other Southern provinces.* P. 183. l. 11. r. *of the government.* P. 267. l. 3. for *their* r. *the.* P. 274. l. 6. r. *exclude all high claims like those of their father and grandfather.*

[1]

DISCOURSE I.

Of Commerce.

THE greatest part of mankind may be divided into two classes; that of *shallow* thinkers, who fall short of the truth, and that of *abstruse* thinkers, who go beyond it. The latter class are by far the most uncommon, and I may add, by far the most useful and valuable. They suggest hints, at least, and start difficulties, which they want, perhaps, skill to pursue, but which may produce very fine discoveries, when handled by men who have a more just way of thinking. At worst, what they say is uncommon; and if it should cost some pains to comprehend it, one has, however, the pleasure of hearing something that is new. An author is little to be valu'd, who tells us nothing but what we can learn from every coffee-house conversation.

ALL people of *shallow* thought are apt to decry even those of *solid* understanding as *abstruse* thinkers [2] and metaphysicians and refiners; and never will allow any thing to be just, which is beyond their own weak conceptions. There are some cases, I own, where an extraordinary refinement affords a strong presumption of falshood, and where no reasoning is to be trusted but what is natural and easy. When a man deliberates concerning his conduct in any *particular* affair, and forms schemes in politics, trade, oeconomy, or any business in life, he never ought to draw his arguments too fine, or connect too long a chain of consequences together. Something is sure to happen, that will disconcert his reasoning, and produce an event different from what he expected. But when we reason upon *general* subjects, one may justly affirm, that our speculations can scarce ever be too fine, provided they be just; and that the difference betwixt a common man and a man of genius, is chiefly seen in the shallowness or depth of the principles, upon which they proceed. General reasonings seem intricate, merely because they are general; nor is it easy for the bulk of mankind to distinguish, in a great number of particulars, that common circumstance, in which they all agree, or to extract it, pure and unmixt, from the other superfluous circumstances. Every judgment or conclusion, with them, is particular. They cannot enlarge their view to those universal propositions, which comprehend under them an infinite number of individuals, and include a whole [3] science in a single theorem. Their eye is confounded with such an extensive prospect, and the conclusions deriv'd from it, even tho' clearly exprest, seem intricate and obscure. But however intricate they may seem, 'tis certain, that general principles, if just and sound, must always prevail in the general course of things, tho' they may fail in particular cases; and 'tis the chief business of philosophers to regard the general course of things. I may add, that 'tis also the chief business of politicians; especially in the domestic government of the state, where the public good, which is, or ought to be their object, depends on the concurrence of a multitude of cases; not, as in foreign politics, upon accidents, and chances, and the caprices of a few persons. This therefore makes the difference betwixt *particular* deliberations and *general* reasonings, and renders subtilty and refinement much more suitable to the latter than to the former.

I THOUGHT this introduction necessary before the following discourses on *commerce*, *luxury*, *money*, *interest*, &c. where, perhaps, there will occur some principles, which are uncommon, and which may seem too refin'd and subtile for such vulgar subjects. If false, let them be rejected: but no one ought to entertain a prejudice against them, merely because they are out of the common road.

[4]

THE greatness of a state and the happiness of its subjects, however independent they may be suppos'd in some respects, are commonly allow'd to be inseparable with regard to commerce; and as private men receive greater security, in the possession of their trade and riches, from the power of the public, so the public becomes powerful in proportion to the riches and extensive commerce of private men. This maxim is true in general; tho' I cannot forbear thinking, that it may possibly admit of some exceptions, and that we often establish it with too little reserve and limitation. There may be some circumstances, where the commerce and riches and luxury of individuals, instead of adding strength to the public, may serve only to thin its armies, and diminish its authority among the neighbouring nations. Man is a very variable being and susceptible of many different opinions, principles, and rules of conduct. What may be true while he adheres to one way of thinking, will be found false, when he has embrac'd an opposite set of manners and opinions.

THE bulk of every state may be divided into *husbandmen* and *manufacturers*. The former are employ'd in the culture of the land. The latter work up the materials furnish'd by the former, into all the commodities, which are necessary or ornamental to human life. As soon as men quit their savage state, where they live chiefly by hunting[5] and fishing, they must fall into these two classes; tho' the arts of agriculture employ *at first* the most numerous part of the society[*]. Time and experience improve so much these arts, that the land may easily maintain a much greater number of men, than those who are immediately employ'd in its cultivation, or who furnish the more necessary manufactures to such as are so employ'd.

IF these superfluous hands be turn'd towards the finer arts, which are commonly denominated the arts of *luxury*, they add to the happiness of the state; since they afford to many the opportunity of receiving enjoyments, with which they would otherways have been unacquainted. But may not another scheme be propos'd for the employment of these superfluous hands? May not the sovereign lay claim to them, and employ them in fleets and armies, to increase the dominions of the state abroad, and spread its fame over distant nations? 'Tis certain, that the fewer desires and wants are found in the proprietors and labourers of land, the fewer hands do they employ; and consequently [6] the superfluities of the land, instead of maintaining tradesmen and manufacturers, may support fleets and armies to a much greater extent, than where a great many arts are requir'd to minister to the luxury of particular persons. Here therefore seems to be a kind of opposition betwixt the greatness of the state and the happiness of the subjects. A state is never greater than when all its superfluous hands are employ'd in the service of the public. The ease and convenience of private persons require, that these hands should be employ'd in their service. The one can never be satisfied, but at the expence of the other. As the ambition of the sovereign must entrench on the luxury of individuals; so the luxury of individuals must diminish the force, and check the ambition of the sovereign.

NOR is this reasoning merely chimerical; but is founded on history and experience. The republic of *Sparta* was certainly more powerful than any state now in the world, consisting of an equal number of people; and this was owing entirely to the want of commerce and luxury. The *Helotes* were the labourers: The *Spartans* were the soldiers or gentlemen. 'Tis evident, that the labour of the *Helotes* could not have maintain'd so great a number of *Spartans*, had these latter liv'd in ease and delicacy, and given employment to a great variety of trades and manufactures. The like policy may be remark'd in *Rome*; and indeed, thro' [7] all antient history, 'tis observable, that the smallest republics rais'd and maintain'd greater armies than states, consisting of triple the number of inhabitants, are able to support at present. 'Tis computed that, in all *European* nations, the proportion betwixt soldiers and people does not exceed one to a hundred. But we read, that the city of *Rome* alone, with its small territory, rais'd and maintain'd, in early times, ten legions against the *Latins*. *Athens*, whose whole dominions were not larger than *Yorkshire*, sent to the expedition against *Sicily* near forty

thousand men [*] . *Dionysius* the elder, 'tis said, maintain'd a standing army of a hundred thousand foot and ten thousand horse, beside a large fleet of four hundred sail; [†] tho' his territories extended no farther than the city of *Syracuse*, about a third part of the island of *Sicily*, and some sea-port towns or garrisons on the coast of *Italy* and *Illyricum*. 'Tis true, the antient armies, in time of war, subsisted much upon plunder: But did not the enemy plunder in their turn? which was a more ruinous way of levying a tax, than any other that could be devis'd. In short, no probable reason can be given for the great power of the more antient states above the modern, but their [8] want of commerce and luxury. Few artizans were maintain'd by the labour of the farmers, and therefore more soldiers might live upon it. *Titus Livius* says, that *Rome*, in his time, would find it difficult to raise as large an army as that which, in her early days, she sent out against the *Gauls* and *Latins* [*] . Instead of those soldiers who fought for liberty and empire in *Camillus's* time, there were, in *Augustus's* days, musicians, painters, cooks, players and taylors. And if the land was equally cultivated at both periods, 'tis evident it could maintain equal numbers in the one profession as in the other. They added nothing to the mere necessities of life, in the latter period more than in the former.

'TIS natural on this occasion to ask, whether sovereigns may not return to the maxims of antient policy, and consult their own interest, in this respect, more than the happiness of their subjects? I answer, that it appears to me almost impossible; and that because antient policy was violent, and contrary to the more natural and usual course of things. 'Tis well known with what peculiar laws *Sparta* was govern'd, and what a prodigy that republic is justly esteem'd by every one, who has consider'd human nature, as it has display'd itself in other nations and other ages. Were the testimony [9] of history less positive and circumstantial, such a government wou'd appear a mere philosophical whim or fiction, and impossible ever to be reduc'd to practice. And tho' the *Roman* and other antient republics were supported on principles somewhat more natural, yet was there a very extraordinary concurrence of circumstances to make them submit to such grievous burthens. They were free states; they were small ones; and the age being martial, all the neighbouring states were continually in arms. Freedom naturally begets public spirit, especially in small states; and this public spirit, this *amor patriae*, must increase, when the public is almost in continual alarm, and men are oblig'd, every moment, to expose themselves to the greatest dangers for its defence. A continual succession of wars makes every citizen a soldier: They take the field in their turn; and during their service are chiefly maintain'd by themselves. And, notwithstanding that this service is equivalent to a very severe tax, 'tis less felt by a people addicted to arms, who fight for honour and revenge more than pay, and are unacquainted with gain and industry as well as pleasure. [*] Not to mention the [10] great equality of fortunes amongst the inhabitants of the antient republics, where every field, belonging to a different proprietor, was able to maintain a family, and render'd the numbers of citizens very considerable, even without trade and manufactures.

BUT tho' the want of trade and manufactures, amongst a free and very martial people, may *sometimes* have no other effect than to render the public more powerful; 'tis certain, that, in the common course of human affairs, it will have a quite contrary tendency. Sovereigns must take mankind as they find them, and cannot pretend to introduce any violent change in their principles and ways of thinking. A long course of time, with a variety of accidents and circumstances, are requisite to produce those great revolutions, which so much diversify the face of human affairs. And the less natural any set of principles are, which support a particular society, the more difficulty will a legislator [11] meet with in raising and cultivating them. 'Tis his best policy to comply with the common bent of mankind, and give it all the improvements, of which it is susceptible. Now, according to the most natural course of things, industry and arts and trade increase the power of the sovereign as well as the happiness of the subjects; and that policy is violent, which aggrandizes the public by the

poverty of individuals. This will easily appear from a few considerations, which will present to us the consequences of sloth and barbarity.

WHERE manufactures and mechanic arts are not cultivated, the bulk of the people must apply themselves to agriculture; and if their skill and industry increase, there must arise a great superfluity from their labour beyond what suffices to maintain them. They have no temptation, therefore, to increase their skill and industry; since they cannot exchange that superfluity for any commodities, which may serve either to their pleasure or vanity. A habit of indolence naturally prevails. The greater part of the land lyes uncultivated. What is cultivated, yields not its utmost, for want of skill or assiduity in the farmers. If at any time, the public exigencies require, that great numbers shou'd be employed in the public service, the labour of the people furnishes now no superfluities, by which these numbers can be maintain'd. The labourers cannot increase their skill and industry on a sudden. [12] Lands uncultivated cannot be brought into tillage for some years. The armies, mean while, must either make sudden and violent conquests, or disband for want of subsistence. A regular attack or defence, therefore, is not to be expected from such a people, and their soldiers must be as ignorant and unskilful as their farmers and manufacturers.

EVERY thing in the world is purchas'd by labour; and our passions are the only causes of labour. When a nation abounds in manufactures and mechanic arts, the proprietors of land, as well as the farmers, study agriculture as a science, and redouble their industry and attention. The superfluity, which arises from their labour, is not lost; but is exchang'd with the manufacturers for those commodities, which mens luxury now makes them covet. By this means, land furnishes a great deal more of the necessaries of life, than what suffices for those who cultivate it. In times of peace and tranquillity, this superfluity goes to the maintenance of manufacturers and the improvers of liberal arts. But 'tis easy for the public to convert many of these manufacturers into soldiers, and maintain them by that superfluity, which arises from the labour of the farmers. Accordingly we find, that this is the case in all civiliz'd governments. When the sovereign raises an army, what is the consequence? He imposes a tax. This tax obliges all the people to retrench what is least necessary to their subsistence. [13] Those, who labour in such commodities, must either enlist in the troops, or turn themselves to agriculture, and thereby oblige some labourers to enlist for want of business. And to consider the matter abstractly, manufactures increase the power of the state only as they store up so much labour, and that of a kind, which the public may lay claim to, without depriving any one of the necessaries of life. The more labour, therefore, is employ'd beyond mere necessaries, the more powerful is any state; since the persons engag'd in that labour may easily be converted to the public service. In a state without manufactures, there may be the same number of hands; but there is not the same quantity of labour, nor of the same kind. All the labour is there bestow'd upon necessaries, which can admit of little or no abatement.

THUS the greatness of the sovereign and the happiness of the state are, in a great measure, united with regard to trade and manufactures. 'Tis a violent method, and in most cases impracticable, to oblige the labourer to toil, in order to raise from the land more than what subsists himself and family. Furnish him with manufactures and commodities, and he will do it of himself. Afterwards, you will find it easy to seize some part of his superfluous labour, and employ it in the public service, without giving him his wonted return. Being accustom'd to labour, he will think this less [14] grievous, than if, at once, you oblig'd him to an augmentation of labour without any reward. The case is the same with regard to the other members of the state. The greater is the stock of labour of all kinds, the greater quantity may be taken from the heap, without making any sensible alteration upon it.

A PUBLIC granary of corn, a store-house of cloth, a magazine of arms; all these must be allow'd to be real riches and strength in any state. Trade and industry are really nothing; but a stock of labour, which, in time of peace and tranquillity, is employ'd for the ease and

satisfaction of individuals, but in the exigencies of state, may, in part, be turn'd to public advantage. Could we convert a city into a kind of fortified camp; and infuse into each breast so martial a genius, and such a passion for public good as to make every one willing to undergo the greatest hardships for the sake of the public; these affections might now, as in antient times, prove alone a sufficient spur to industry, and support the community. It would then be advantageous, as in camps, to banish all arts and luxury; and, by restrictions on equipage and tables, make the provisions and forage last longer than if the army were loaded with a number of superfluous retainers. But as these principles are too disinterested and too difficult to support, 'tis requisite to govern men by other passions, and animate them with [15] a spirit of avarice and industry, art and luxury. The camp is, in this case, loaded with a superfluous retinue; but the provisions flow in proportionably larger. The harmony of the whole is still supported; and the natural bent of mens minds being more complied with, individuals, as well as the public, find their account in the observance of those maxims.

THE same method of reasoning will let us see the advantage of *foreign* commerce, in augmenting the power of the state, as well as the riches and happiness of the subjects. It increases the stock of labour in the nation; and the sovereign may convert what share of it he finds necessary to the service of the public. Foreign trade, by its imports, furnishes materials for new manufactures. And by its exports, it produces labour in particular commodities, which could not be consum'd at home. In short, a kingdom, that has a large import and export, must abound more with labour, and that upon delicacies and luxuries, than a kingdom, which rests contented with its native commodities. It is, therefore, more powerful, as well as richer and happier. The individuals reap the benefit of these commodities, so far as they gratify the senses and appetites. And the public is also a gainer, while a greater stock of labour is, by this means, stor'd up against any public exigency; that is, a greater number of laborious men are [16] maintain'd, who may be diverted to the public service, without robbing any one of the necessities, or even the chief conveniencies of life.

IF we consult history, we shall find, that in most nations foreign trade has preceded any refinement in home manufactures, and given birth to domestic luxury. The temptation is stronger to make use of foreign commodities, which are ready for use, and which are entirely new to us, than to make improvements on any domestic commodity, which always advance by slow degrees, and never affect us by their novelty. The profit is also very great, in exporting what is superfluous at home, and what bears no price, to foreign nations, whose soil or climate is not favourable to that commodity. Thus men become acquainted with the *pleasures* of luxury and the *profits* of commerce; and their *delicacy* and *industry*, being once awaken'd, carry them to farther improvements, in every branch of domestic as well as foreign trade. And this perhaps is the chief advantage, which arises from a commerce with strangers. It rouses men from their lethargic indolence; and presenting the gayer and more opulent part of the nation with objects of luxury, which they never before dream'd of, raises in them a desire of a more splendid way of life than what their ancestors enjoy'd. And, at the same time, the few merchants, who possess the secret of this importation and exportation, make exorbitant [17] profits; and becoming rivals in wealth to the antient nobility, tempt other adventurers to become their rivals in commerce. Imitation soon diffuses all those arts; while domestic manufacturers emulate the foreign in their improvements, and work up every home-commodity to the utmost perfection, of which it is susceptible. Their own steel and iron, in such laborious hands, become equal to the gold and rubies of the *Indies*.

WHEN the affairs of the society are once brought to this situation, a nation may lose most of its foreign trade, and yet continue a great and powerful people. If strangers will not take any particular commodity of ours, we must cease to labour in it. The same hands will turn themselves towards some refinement in other commodities, which may be wanted at home. And there must always be materials for them to work upon; till every person in the

state, who possesses riches, possesses as great plenty of home-commodities, and those in as great perfection, as he desires; which can never possibly happen. *China* is represented as one of the most flourishing empires in the world; tho' it has very little commerce beyond its own territories.

IT will not, I hope, be considered as a superfluous digression, if I here observe, that, as the multitude of mechanical arts is advantageous, so is the great number of persons, to whose share the productions [18] of these arts fall. A too great disproportion among the citizens weakens any state. Every person, if possible, ought to enjoy the fruits of his labour, in a full possession of all the necessaries, and many of the conveniencies of life. No-one can doubt, but such an equality is most suitable to human nature, and diminishes much less from the *happiness* of the rich than it adds to that of the poor. It also augments the *power of the state*, and makes any extraordinary taxes or impositions be paid with much more chearfulness. Where the riches are engross'd by a few, these must contribute very largely to the supplying the public necessities. But when the riches are disperst among multitudes, the burthen feels light on every shoulder, and the taxes make not a very sensible difference on any one's way of living.

ADD to this, that where the riches are in few hands, these must enjoy all the power, and will readily conspire to lay the whole burthen on the poor, and oppress them still farther, to the discouragement of all industry.

IN this circumstance consists the great advantage of *England* above any nation at present in the world, or that appears in the records of any story. 'Tis true, the *English* feel some disadvantages in foreign trade by the high price of labour, which is in part the effect of the riches of their artizans, as well as of [19] the plenty of money: But as foreign trade is not the most material circumstance, 'tis not to be put in competition with the happiness of so many millions. And if there were no more to endear to them that free government, under which they live, this alone were sufficient. The poverty of the common people is a natural, if not an infallible consequence of absolute monarchy; tho' I doubt, whether it be always true, on the other hand, that their riches are an infallible consequence of liberty. That seems to depend on particular accidents and a certain turn of thinking, in conjunction with liberty. My lord *Bacon*, accounting for the great advantages obtain'd by the *English* in their wars with *France*, ascribes them chiefly to the superior ease and plenty of the common people, amongst the former; yet the governments of the two kingdoms were, at that time, pretty much alike. Where the labourers and artizans are accustom'd to work for low wages, and to retain but a small part of the fruits of their labour, 'tis difficult for them, even in a free government, to better their condition, or conspire among themselves to heighten their wages. But even where they are accustom'd to a more plentiful way of life, 'tis easy for the rich, in a despotic government, to conspire against *them*, and throw the whole burthen of the taxes on their shoulders.

[20]

IT may seem an odd position, that the poverty of the common people in *France*, *Italy*, and *Spain* is, in some measure, owing to the superior riches of the soil and happiness of the climate; and yet there want not many reasons to justify this paradox. In such a fine mold or soil as that of those more southern regions, agriculture is an easy art; and one man, with a couple of sorry horses, will be able, in a season, to cultivate as much land as will pay a pretty considerable rent to the proprietor. All the art, which the farmer knows, is to leave his ground fallow for a year, as soon as it is exhausted; and the warmth of the sun alone and temperature of the climate enrich it, and restore its fertility. Such poor peasants, therefore, require only a simple maintenance for their labour. They have no stock nor riches, which claim more; and at the same time, they are for ever dependent on their landlord, who gives no leases, nor fears

that his land will be spoil'd by the ill methods of cultivation. In *England*, the land is rich, but coarse; must be cultivated at a great expence; and produces slender crops, when not carefully manag'd, and by a method, which gives not the full profit but in a course of several years. A farmer, therefore, in *England* must have a considerable stock and a long lease; which beget proportional profits. The fine vineyards of *Champagne* and *Burgundy*, that oft yield to the landlord above five pounds *per* [21] acre, are cultivated by peasants, who have scarce bread: And the reason is, that such peasants need no stock but their own limbs, along with instruments of husbandry, which they can buy for 20 shillings. The farmers are commonly in some better circumstances in those countries. But the graziers are most at their ease of all those, who cultivate the land. The reason is still the same. Men must have profits proportionable to their expence and hazard. Where so considerable a number of the labouring poor as the peasants and farmers, are in very low circumstances, all the rest must partake of their poverty, whether the government of that nation be monarchical or republican.

WE may form a similar remark with regard to the general history of mankind. What is the reason, why no people living betwixt the tropics cou'd ever yet attain to any art or civility, or reach even any police in their government and any military discipline; while few nations in the temperate climates have been altogether depriv'd of these advantages? 'Tis probable, that one cause of this phaenomenon is the warmth and equality of weather in the torrid zone, that render cloaths and houses less requisite for the inhabitants, and thereby remove, in part, that necessity, which is the great spur to industry and invention. *Curis acuens mortalia corda*. Not to mention, that the fewer goods or possessions of this kind any people enjoy, [22] the fewer quarrels are likely to arise amongst them; and the less necessity will there be for a settled police or regular authority to protect and defend them from foreign enemies or from each other.

DISCOURSE II.

Of Luxury. ↩

LUXURY is a word of a very uncertain signification, and may be taken in a good as well as a bad sense. In general, it means great refinement in the gratification of the senses; and any degree of it may be innocent or blameable, according to the age or country or condition of the person. The bounds betwixt the virtue and the vice cannot here be fixt exactly, more than in other moral subjects. To imagine, that the gratifying any of the senses, or the indulging any delicacy in meats, drinks, or apparel is, of itself, a vice, can never enter into any head, that is not disorder'd by the frenzies of a fanatical enthusiasm. I have, indeed, heard of a monk abroad, who, because the windows of his cell open'd upon a very noble prospect, made a *covenant with his eyes* never to turn that way, or receive so sensual a gratification. And such is the crime of drinking *Champagne* or *Burgundy*, preferably to small beer or porter. These indulgences are only vices, when they are pursu'd at the expence of some virtue, as liberality or charity: In like manner, as they are follies, when for them a man ruins his fortune, and reduces himself to want and beggary. Where they entrench upon [24] no virtue, but leave ample subject, whence to provide for friends, family, and every proper object of generosity or compassion, they are entirely innocent, and have in every age been acknowledg'd such by almost all moralists. To be entirely occupy'd with the luxury of the table, for instance, without any relish for the pleasures of ambition, study or conversation, is a mark of gross stupidity, and is incompatible with any vigour of temper or genius. To confine one's expence entirely to such a gratification, without regard to friends or family, is an indication of a heart entirely devoid of humanity or benevolence. But if a man reserve time sufficient for all laudable pursuits, and money sufficient for all generous purposes, he is free from every shadow of blame or reproach.

SINCE luxury may be consider'd, either as innocent or blameable, one may be surpris'd at those preposterous opinions, which have been entertain'd concerning it; while men of libertine principles bestow praises even on vitious luxury, and represent it as highly advantageous to society; and on the other hand, men of severe morals blame even the most innocent luxury, and represent it as the source of all the corruptions, disorders, and factions, incident to civil government. We shall here endeavour to correct both these extremes, by proving, *first*, that the ages of refinement and luxury are both the happiest and most virtuous; *secondly*, [25] that wherever luxury ceases to be innocent, it also ceases to be beneficial, and when carry'd a degree too far, is a quality pernicious, tho' perhaps not the most pernicious, to political society.

To prove the first point, we need but consider the effects of luxury both on *private* and on *public* life. Human happiness, according to the most receiv'd notions, seems to consist in three ingredients, action, pleasure, and indolence; and tho' these ingredients ought to be mixt in different proportions, according to the particular dispositions of the person, yet no one ingredient can be entirely wanting, without destroying, in some measure, the relish of the whole composition. Indolence or repose, indeed, seems not, of itself, to contribute much to our enjoyment; but like sleep, is requisite as an indulgence to the weakness of human nature, which cannot support an uninterrupted course of business or pleasure. That quick march of the spirits, which takes a man from himself, and chiefly gives satisfaction, does in the end exhaust the mind, and requires some intervals of repose, which, tho' agreeable for a moment, yet, if prolong'd, beget a languor and lethargy, that destroy all enjoyment. Education, custom, and example have a mighty influence in turning the mind to any of these pursuits; and it must

be own'd, that, where they promote a relish for action and pleasure, they are so far favourable to human happiness. In times, [26] when industry and arts flourish, men are kept in perpetual occupation, and enjoy, as their reward, the occupation itself, as well as those pleasures, which are the fruits of their labour. The mind acquires new vigour; enlarges its powers and faculties; and by an assiduity in honest industry, both satisfies its natural appetites, and prevents the growth of unnatural ones, which commonly spring up, when nourish'd with ease and idleness. Banish those arts from society, you deprive men both of action and of pleasure; and leaving nothing but indolence in their place, you even destroy the relish of indolence, which never is agreeable, but when it succeeds to labour, and recruits the spirits, exhausted by too much application and fatigue.

ANOTHER advantage of industry and of refinements in the mechanical arts is, that they commonly produce some refinements in the liberal arts; nor can the one be carried to perfection, without being accompany'd, in some degree, with the other. The same age, which produces great philosophers and politicians, renown'd generals and poets, usually abounds with skilful weavers and ship-carpenters. We cannot reasonably expect, that a piece of woolen cloth will be wrought to perfection in a nation, that is ignorant of astronomy, or where ethics are neglected. The spirit of the age affects all the arts; and the minds of men, being once rous'd from their lethargy, and put into a fermentation, [27] turn themselves on all sides, and carry improvements into every art and science. Profound ignorance is totally banish'd, and men enjoy the privilege of rational creatures, to think as well as to act, to cultivate the pleasures of the mind as well as those of the body.

THE more these refin'd arts advance, the more sociable do men become; nor is it possible, that, when enrich'd with science, and possess'd of a fund of conversation, they should be contented to remain in solitude, or live with their fellow citizens in that distant manner, which is peculiar to ignorant and barbarous nations. They flock into cities; love to receive and communicate knowledge; to show their wit or their breeding; their taste in conversation or living, in cloaths or furniture. Curiosity allures the wise: Vanity the foolish: And pleasure both. Particular clubs and societies are every where form'd: Both sexes meet in an easy and sociable manner, and men temper, as well as behaviour, refine apace. So that beside the improvements they receive from knowledge and the liberal arts, 'tis impossible but they must feel an increase of humanity, from the very habit of conversing together, and contributing to each other's pleasure and entertainment. Thus *industry*, *knowledge*, and *humanity* are link'd together by an indissoluble chain, and are found, from experience as [28] well as reason, to be peculiar to the more polish'd and luxurious ages.

NOR are these advantages attended with disadvantages, that bear any proportion to them. The more men refine upon pleasure, the less will they indulge in excesses of any kind; because nothing is more destructive to true pleasure than such excesses. One may safely affirm, that the *Tartars* are oftner guilty of beastly gluttony, when they feast on their dead horses, than *European* courtiers with all their refinements of cookery. And if libertine love, or even infidelity to the marriage-bed, be more frequent in polite ages, when it is often regarded only as a piece of gallantry, drunkenness, on the other hand, is much less common: A vice more odious and more pernicious both to mind and body. And in this matter I would appeal not only to an *Ovid* or a *Petronius*, but to a *Seneca* or a *Cato*. We know, that *Caesar*, during *Cataline's* conspiracy, being necessitated to put into *Cato's* hands a *billetdoux*, which discover'd an intrigue with *Servilia*, *Cato's* own sister, that stern philosopher threw it back to him with indignation, and in the bitterness of his wrath gave him the appellation of drunkard, as a term more opprobrious than that with which he cou'd more justly have reproach'd him.

BUT industry, knowledge, and humanity are not advantageous in private life alone: They diffuse their beneficial influence on the *Public*, and render [29] the government as great and flourishing as they make individuals happy and prosperous. The encrease and consumption of

all the commodities, which serve to the ornament and pleasure of life, are advantageous to society; because at the same time that they multiply those innocent gratifications to individuals, they are a kind of *store-house* of labour, which, in the exigencies of state, may be turn'd to the public service. In a nation, where there is no demand for such superfluities, men sink into indolence, lose all the enjoyment of life, and are useless to the public, which cannot maintain nor support its fleets and armies, from the industry of such slothful members.

THE bounds of all the *European* kingdoms are, at present, pretty near the same they were two hundred years ago: But what a difference is there in the power and grandeur of those kingdoms? Which can be ascrib'd to nothing but the encrease of art and industry. When *Charles* the VIII. of *France* invaded *Italy*, he carry'd with him about 20,000 men: And yet this armament so exhausted the nation, as we learn from *Guicciardin*, that for some years it was not able to make so great an effort. The late king of *France*, in time of war, kept in pay above 400,000 men; [*] tho' from *Mazarine's* death to his own he was engag'd in a course of wars, that lasted near thirty years.

[30]

THIS industry is much promoted by the knowledge, inseparable from the ages of arts and luxury; as on the other hand, this knowledge enables the public to make the best advantage of the industry of its subjects. Laws, order, police, discipline; these can never be carry'd to any degree of perfection, before human reason has refin'd itself by exercise, and by an application to the more vulgar arts, at least, of commerce and manufactures. Can we expect, that a government will be well model'd by a people, who know not how to make a spinning wheel, or to employ a loom to advantage? Not to mention, that all ignorant ages are infested with superstition, which throws the government off its bias, and disturbs men in the pursuit of their interest and happiness.

KNOWLEDGE in the arts of government naturally begets mildness and moderation, by instructing men in the advantages of humane maxims above rigour and severity, which drive subjects into rebellion, and render the return to submission impracticable, by cutting off all hopes of pardon. When mens temper is soften'd as well as their knowledge improv'd, this humanity appears still more conspicuous, and is the chief characteristic, that distinguishes a civiliz'd age from times of barbarity and ignorance. Factions are then less inveterate; revolutions less tragical; authority less severe; [31] and seditions less frequent. Even foreign wars abate of their cruelty; and after the field of battle, where honour and interest steel men against compassion as well as fear, the combatants divest themselves of the brute, and resume the man.

NOR need we fear, that men, by losing their ferocity, will lose their martial spirit, or become less undaunted and vigorous in defence of their country or their liberty. The arts have no such effect in enervating either the mind or body. On the contrary, industry, their inseparable attendant, adds new force to both. And if anger, which is said to be the whetstone of courage, loses somewhat of its asperity, by politeness and refinement; a sense of honour, which is a stronger, more constant, and more governable principle, acquires fresh vigour by that elevation of genius, which arises from knowledge and a good education. Add to this, that courage can neither have any duration, nor be of any use, when not accompany'd with discipline and martial skill, which are seldom found among a barbarous people. The antients remark'd that *Datames* was the only barbarian that ever knew the art of war. And *Pyrrhus* seeing the *Romans* marshal their army with some art and skill, said with surprize *These barbarians have nothing barbarous in their discipline!* 'Tis observable, that as the old *Romans*, by applying themselves solely to war, were the only unciviliz'd people that [32] ever possess military discipline; so the modern *Italians* are the only civiliz'd people, among *Europeans*, that ever wanted courage and a martial spirit. Those who wou'd ascribe this

effeminacy of the *Italians* to their luxury or politeness, or application to the arts, need but consider the *French* and *English*, whose bravery is as uncontestable as their love of luxury, and their assiduity in commerce. The *Italian* historians give us a more satisfactory reason for this degeneracy of their countrymen. They shew us how the sword was dropt at once by all the *Italian* sovereigns; while the *Venetian* aristocracy was jealous of its subjects, the *Florentine* democracy apply'd itself entirely to commerce; *Rome* was govern'd by priests, and *Naples* by women. War then became the business of soldiers of fortune, who spar'd one another, and to the astonishment of the world, cou'd engage a whole day in what they call'd a battle, and return at night to their camps without the least bloodshed.

WHAT has chiefly induc'd severe moralists to declaim against luxury and refinement in pleasure is the example of antient *Rome*, which, joining, to its poverty and rusticity, virtue and public spirit, rose to such a surprising height of grandeur and liberty; but having learn'd from its conquer'd provinces the *Grecian* and *Asiatic* luxury, fell into every kind of corruption; whence arose sedition and civil wars, attended at last with the total loss of liberty. [33] All the *Latin* classics, whom we peruse in our infancy, are full of these sentiments, and universally ascribe the ruin of their state to the arts and riches imported from the East: insomuch that *Sallust* represents a taste for painting as a vice no less than lewdness and drinking. And so popular were these sentiments during the latter ages of the republic, that this author abounds in praises of the old rigid *Roman* virtue, tho' himself the most egregious instance of modern luxury and corruption; speaks contemptuously of *Grecian* eloquence, tho' the most elegant writer in the world; nay, employs preposterous digressions and declamations to this purpose, tho' a model of taste and correctness.

BUT it would be easy to prove, that these writers mistook the cause of the disorders in the *Roman* state, and ascrib'd to luxury and the arts what really proceeded from an ill model'd government, and the unlimited extent of conquests. Luxury or refinement on pleasure has no natural tendency to beget venality and corruption. The value, which all men put upon any particular pleasure, depends on comparison and experience; nor is a porter less greedy of money, which he spends on bacon and brandy, than a courtier, who purchases champagne and ortolans. Riches are valuable at all times and to all men, because they always purchase pleasures, such as men are accustom'd to and desire; nor can any thing restrain or regulate the love of money but [34] a sense of honour and virtue; which, if it be not nearly equal at all times, will naturally abound most in ages of luxury and knowledge.

OF all *European* kingdoms, *Poland* seems the most defective in the arts of war as well as peace, mechanical as well as liberal; and yet 'tis there that venality and corruption do most prevail. The nobles seem to have preserv'd their crown elective for no other purpose, but regularly to sell it to the highest bidder. This is almost the only species of commerce, with which that people are acquainted.

THE liberties of *England*, so far from decaying since the origin of luxury and the arts, have never flourish'd so much as during that period. And tho' corruption may seem to encrease of late years; this is chiefly to be ascrib'd to our establish'd liberty, when our princes have found the impossibility of governing without parliaments, or of terrifying parliaments by the fantom of prerogative. Not to mention, that this corruption or venality prevails infinitely more among the electors than the elected; and therefore cannot justly be ascrib'd to any refinements in luxury.

IF we consider the matter in a proper light, we shall find, that luxury and the arts are rather favourable to liberty, and have a natural tendency to preserve, if not produce a free government. In [35] rude unpolish'd nations, where the arts are neglected, all the labour is bestow'd on the cultivation of the ground; and the whole society divides into two classes, proprietors of land, and their vassals or tenants. The latter are necessarily dependent and

fitted for slavery and subjection; especially where they possess no riches, and are not valu'd for their knowledge in agriculture; as must always be the case where the arts are neglected. The former naturally erect themselves into petty tyrants; and must either submit to an absolute master for the sake of peace and order; or if they will preserve their independency, like the *Gothic* barons, they must fall into feuds and contests amongst themselves, and throw the whole society into such confusion as is perhaps worse than the most despotic government. But where luxury nourishes commerce and industry, the peasants, by a proper cultivation of the land, become rich and independent; while the tradesmen and merchants acquire a share of the property, and draw authority and consideration to that middling rank of men; who are the best and firmest basis of public liberty. These submit not to slavery, like the poor peasants, from poverty and meanness of spirit; and having no hopes of tyrannizing over others, like the barons, they are not tempted, for the sake of that gratification, to submit to the tyranny of their sovereign. They covet equal laws, which may secure their property, [36] and preserve them from monarchical, as well as aristocratical tyranny.

THE house of commons is the support of our popular government; and all the world acknowledge, that it ow'd its chief influence and consideration to the encrease of commerce, which threw such a balance of property into the hands of the commons. How inconsistent, then, is it to blame so violently luxury, or a refinement in the arts, and to represent it as the bane of liberty and public spirit!

TO declaim against present times, and magnify the virtue of remote ancestors, is a propensity almost inherent in human nature; and as the sentiments and opinions of civiliz'd ages alone are transmitted to posterity, hence it is that we meet with so many severe judgments pronounc'd against luxury and even science, and hence it is that at present we give so ready an assent to them. But the fallacy is easily perceiv'd from comparing different nations that are contemporaries; where we both judge more impartially, and can better set in opposition those manners with which we are sufficiently acquainted. Treachery and cruelty, the most pernicious and most odious of all vices, seem peculiar to unciviliz'd ages; and by the refin'd *Greeks* and *Romans* were ascrib'd to all the barbarous nations, which surrounded them. They [37] might justly, therefore, have presum'd, that their own ancestors, so highly celebrated, possess no greater virtue, and were as much inferior to their posterity in honour and humanity as in taste and science. An antient *Frank* or *Saxon* may be highly extoll'd: But I believe every man would think his life or fortune much less secure in the hands of a *Moor* or *Tartar*, than in those of a *French* or *English* gentleman, the rank of men the most civiliz'd, in the most civiliz'd nations.

WE come now to the *second* position, which we propos'd to illustrate, *viz.* that as innocent luxury or a refinement in pleasure is advantageous to the public; so wherever luxury ceases to be innocent, it also ceases to be beneficial, and when carry'd a degree farther, begins to be a quality pernicious, tho', perhaps, not the most pernicious, to political society.

LET us consider what we call vicious luxury. No gratification, however sensual, can, of itself, be esteem'd vicious. A gratification is only vicious, when it engrosses all a man's expence, and leaves no ability for such acts of duty and generosity as are requir'd by his situation and fortune. Suppose, that he correct the vice, and employ part of his expence in the education of his children, in the support of his friends, and in relieving the poor; would any prejudice result to society? On the contrary, [38] the same consumption would arise; and that labour, which, at present, is employ'd only in producing a slender gratification to one man, would relieve the necessitous, and bestow satisfaction on hundreds. The same care and toil, which raise a dish of peas at *Christmas*, would give bread to a whole family during six months. To say, that, without a vicious luxury, the labour would not have been employ'd at all, is only to say, that there is some other defect in human nature, such as indolence, selfishness, inattention to others, for which luxury, in some measure, provides a remedy; as

one poison may be an antidote to another. But virtue, like wholesome food, is better than poisons, however corrected.

SUPPOSE the same number of men, that are, at present, in *Britain*, with the same soil and climate; I ask, is it not possible for them to be happier, by the most perfect way of life, that can be imagin'd, and by the greatest reformation, which omnipotence itself could work in their temper and disposition? To assert, that they cannot, appears evidently ridiculous. As the land is able to maintain more than all its inhabitants, they cou'd never, in such an *Utopian* state, feel any other ills, than those which arise from bodily sickness; and these are not the half of human miseries. All other ills spring from some vice, either in ourselves or others; and even many of our diseases proceed from the same [39] origin. Remove the vices, and the ills follow. You must only take care to remove all the vices. If you remove part, you may render the matter worse. By banishing *vicious* luxury, without curing sloth and an indifference to others, you only diminish industry in the state, and add nothing to mens charity or their generosity. Let us, therefore, rest contented with asserting, that two opposite vices in a state may be more advantageous than either of them alone; but let us never pronounce vice, in it self, advantageous. Is it not very inconsistent for an author to assert in one page, that moral distinctions are inventions of politicians for public interest; and in the next page maintain, that vice is advantageous to the public? [*] And indeed, it seems, upon any system of morality, little less than a contradiction in terms, to talk of a vice, that is in general beneficial to society.

I THOUGHT this reasoning necessary, in order to give some light to a philosophical question, which has been much disputed in *Britain*. I call it a *philosophical* question, not a *political* one. For whatever may be the consequence of such a miraculous transformation of mankind, as would endow them with every species of virtue, and free them from every vice, this concerns not the magistrate, who aims only at possibilities. He cannot cure every vice, by substituting a virtue in its place. Very [40] often he can only cure one vice by another; and in that case, he ought to prefer what is least pernicious to society. Luxury, when excessive, is the source of many ills; but is in general preferable to sloth and idleness, which wou'd commonly succeed in its place, and are more pernicious both to private persons and to the public. When sloth reigns, a mean uncultivated way of life prevails amongst individuals, without society, without enjoyment. And if the sovereign, in such a situation, demands the service of his subjects, the labour of the state suffices only to furnish the necessaries of life to the labourers, and can afford nothing to those, who are employ'd in the public service.

DISCOURSE III.

Of Money. ↩

MONEY is not, properly speaking, one of the subjects of commerce; but only the instrument, which men have agreed upon to facilitate the exchange of one commodity for another. 'Tis none of the wheels of trade: 'Tis the oil, which renders the motion of the wheels more smooth and easy. If we consider any one kingdom by itself, 'tis evident, that the greater or less plenty of money is of no consequence; since the prices of commodities are always proportion'd to the plenty of money, and a crown in *Harry* the VII's. time serv'd the same purpose as a pound does at present. 'Tis only the *public*, that draws any advantage from the greater plenty of money; and that only in its wars and negotiations with foreign states. And this is the reason, why all rich and trading countries, from *Carthage* to *Britain* and *Holland*, have employ'd mercenary troops, which they hir'd from their poorer neighbours. Were they to make use of their native subjects, they would find less advantage from their superior riches, and from their great plenty of gold and silver; since the pay of all their servants must rise in proportion to the public opulence. Our small army in *Britain* [42] of 20,000 men are maintain'd at as great expence as a *French* army thrice as numerous. The *English* fleet, during the late war, requir'd as much money to support it as all the *Roman* legions, which kept the whole world in subjection, during the time of the emperors[*]

THE greater number of people and their greater industry are serviceable in all cases; at home and abroad, in private and in public. But the greater plenty of money is very limited in its use, and may even sometimes be a loss to a nation in its commerce with foreigners.

THERE seems to be a happy concurrence of causes in human affairs, which check the growth of trade and riches, and hinder them from being confin'd entirely to one people; as might naturally at first be dreaded from the advantages of an establish'd commerce. Where one nation has got the start of another in trade, 'tis very difficult for the latter to regain the ground it has lost; because of the superior industry and skill of the former, and the greater stocks, which its merchants are possess' of, and which enable them to trade for so much smaller profits. But these advantages are compensated, in some measure, by the low prices of labour in every nation, that has not an extensive commerce, and does not very much abound in gold and silver. Manufactures, therefore, gradually shift their places, leaving those countries and provinces, which they have already enrich'd, and flying to others, whither they are allur'd by the cheapness of provisions and labour; till they have enrich'd these also, and are again banish'd by the same causes. And in general, we may observe, that the dearness of every thing, from plenty of money, is a disadvantage, that attends an establish'd commerce, and sets bounds to it in every country, by enabling the poorer states to undersell the richer in all foreign markets.

THIS has made me entertain a great doubt concerning the benefit of *banks* and *paper credit*, which [44] are so generally esteem'd advantageous to every nation. That provisions and labour shou'd become dear by the encrease of trade and money, is, in many respects, an inconvenience; but an inconvenience that is unavoidable, and the effect of that public wealth and prosperity, which are the end of all our wishes. 'Tis compensated by the advantages we reap from the possession of these precious metals, and the weight which they give the nation in all foreign wars and negotiations. But there appears no reason for encreasing that inconvenience by a counterfeit money, which foreigners will never accept of, and which any

great disorder in the state will reduce to nothing. There are, 'tis true, many people in every rich state, who, having large sums of money, wou'd prefer paper with good security; as being of more easy transport and more safe custody. If the public provide not a bank, private bankers will take advantage of this circumstance; as the goldsmiths formerly did in *London*, or as the bankers do at present in *Dublin*: And therefore 'tis better, it may be thought, that a public company should enjoy the benefit of that paper credit, which always will have place in every opulent kingdom. But to endeavour artificially to encrease such a credit, can never be the interest of any trading nation; but must lay them under disadvantages, by encreasing money beyond its natural proportion to labour and commodities, and thereby heightening their price to the merchant [45] and manufacturer. And in this view, it must be allow'd, that no bank cou'd be more advantageous than such a one as lockt up all the money it receiv'd, and never augmented the circulating coin, as is usual, by returning part of its treasure into commerce. A public bank, by this expedient, might cut off much of the dealings of private bankers and money jobbers; and tho' the state bore the charge of salaries to the directors and tellers of this bank, (for according to the preceeding supposition, it would have no profit from its dealings) the national advantage, resulting from the low price of labour and the destruction of paper credit, would be a sufficient compensation. Not to mention, that so large a sum, lying ready at command, would be a great convenience in times of public danger and distress; and might be replac'd at leisure, when peace and tranquillity were restor'd to the nation.

BUT of this subject of paper credit, we shall treat more largely hereafter. And I shall finish this essay of money, by proposing and explaining two observations, which may, perhaps, serve to employ the thought of our speculative politicians. For to these only I all along address myself. 'Tis enough that I submit to the ridicule sometimes, in this age, attach'd to the character of a philosopher, without adding to it that which belongs to a projector.

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I. 'T WAS a shrewd observation of *Anacharsis* [*] the *Scythian*, who had never seen money in his own country, that gold and silver seem'd to him of no use to the *Greeks*, but to assist them in numeration and arithmetic. 'Tis indeed evident, that money is nothing but the representation of labour and commodities, and serves only as a method of rating or estimating them. Where coin is in greater plenty; as a greater quantity of it is then requir'd to represent the same quantity of goods; it can have no effect, either good or bad, taking a nation within itself: no more than it wou'd make any alteration on a merchant's books, if instead of the *Arabian* method of notation, which requires few characters, he shou'd make use of the *Roman*, which requires a great many. Nay the greater plenty of money, like the *Roman* characters, is rather inconvenient and troublesome; and requires greater care to keep and transport it. But notwithstanding this conclusion, which must be allowed just, 'tis certain, that since the discover of the mines in *America*, industry has encreas'd in all the nations of *Europe*, except in the possessors of those mines; and this may justly be ascrib'd, amongst other reasons, to the encrease of gold and silver. Accordingly we find, that in every kingdom, into which money begins to flow in greater abundance than formerly, every thing takes a new face; labour and [47] industry gain life; the merchant becomes more enterprizing; the manufacturer more diligent and skillful; and even the farmer follows his plough with greater alacrity and attention. This is not easily to be accounted for, if we consider only the influence, which a greater abundance of coin has in the kingdom itself, by heightening the price of commodities, and obliging every one to pay a greater number of these little yellow or white pieces for every thing he purchases. And as to foreign trade, it appears, that great plenty of money is rather disadvantageous, by raising the price of every kind of labour.

To account, then, for this phaenomenon, we must consider, that tho' the high price of commodities be a necessary consequence of the encrease of gold and silver, yet it follows not immediately upon that encrease; but some time is requir'd before the money circulate thro' the whole state, and make its effects be felt on all ranks of people. At first, no alteration is perceiv'd; by degrees, it raises the price first of one commodity, then of another; till the whole at last rises to a just proportion, with the new quantity of specie, which is in the kingdom. In my opinion, 'tis only in this interval or intermediate situation, betwixt the acquisition of money and rise of prices, that the encreasing quantity of gold and silver is favourable to industry. When any quantity of money is imported into a nation, it is [48] not at first disperst into many hands; but is confin'd to the coffers of a few persons, who immediately seek to employ it to the best advantage. Here are a set of manufacturers or merchants, we shall suppose, who have receiv'd returns of gold and silver for goods, which they sent to *Cadiz*. They are thereby enabled to employ more workmen than formerly, who never dream of demanding higher wages, but are glad of employment from such good paymasters. If workmen become scarce, the manufacturer gives higher wages; but at first requires an encrease of labour, and this is willingly submitted to by the artizan, who can now eat and drink better to compensate his additional toil and fatigue. He carries his money to market, where he finds every thing at the same price as formerly, but returns with greater quantity and of better kinds, for the use of his family. The farmer and gardener, finding that all their commodities are taken off, apply themselves with alacrity to the raising of more; and at the same time, can afford to take better and more cloaths from their tradesmen, whose price is the same as formerly, and their industry only whetted by so much new gain. 'Tis easy to trace the money in its progress thro' the whole commonwealth; where we shall find, that it must first quicken the diligence of every individual, before it encrease the price of labour.

[49]

AND that the specie may encrease to a considerable pitch, before it have this latter effect, appears, amongst other reasons, from the frequent operations of the *French* king on the money; where it was always found, that the augmenting the numerary value did not produce a proportional rise of the prices, at least for some time. In the last year of *Louis* the XIV. money was rais'd three sevenths, but prices augmented only one. Corn in *France* is now sold at the same price, or for the same number of livres, it was in 1683, tho' silver was then at 30 livres the mark, and is now at 50. [*] Not to mention, the [50] great addition of gold and silver, which may have come into that kingdom, since the former period.

FROM the whole of this reasoning we may conclude, that 'tis of no manner of consequence, with regard to the domestic happiness of a state, whether money be in a greater or less quantity. The good policy of the magistrate consists only in keeping it, if possible, still encreasing; because, by that means, he keeps a spirit of industry alive in the nation, and encreases the stock of labour, wherein consists all real power and riches. A nation, whose money decreases, is actually, at that time, much weaker and more miserable, than another nation, who possesses no more money, but is on the encreasing hand. This will be easily accounted for, if we consider, that the alterations in the quantity of money, either on the one side or the other, are not immediately attended with proportionable alterations in the prices of commodities. There is always an interval before matters be adjusted to their new situation; and this interval is as pernicious to industry, when gold and silver are diminishing, as it is advantageous, when these metals are encreasing. The workman has not the same employment from the manufacturer and merchant; tho' he pays the same price for every thing in the market. The farmer cannot dispose of his corn and cattle; tho' he must pay the same rent to his landlord. The [51] poverty and beggary and sloth, which must ensue, are easily foreseen.

II. The *second* observation I propos'd to make with regard to money, may be explain'd after the following manner. There are some kingdoms, and many provinces in *Europe*, (and all of them were once in the same condition) where money is so scarce, that the landlord can get none at all from his tenants; but is oblig'd to take his rent in kind, and either to consume it himself, or transport it to places, where he may find a market. In those countries, the prince can levy few or no taxes, but in the same manner: And as he will receive very small benefit from impositions so pay'd, 'tis evident, that such a kingdom has very little force even at home; and cannot maintain fleets and armies to the same extent, as if every part of it abounded in gold and silver. There is surely a greater disproportion betwixt the force of *Germany* at present and what it was three centuries ago, [*] than there is in its industry, people and manufactures. The *Austrian* dominions in the empire are in general well peopled and well cultivated, and are of great extent, but have not a proportionable weight in the balance of *Europe*; proceeding, as is commonly suppos'd, from their scarcity of money. How do all these facts agree with that principle of [52] reason, that the quantity of gold and silver is in itself altogether indifferent? According to that principle, wherever a sovereign has numbers of subjects, and these have plenty of commodities, he shou'd, of course, be great and powerful, and they rich and happy, independent of the greater or lesser abundance of the precious metals. These admit of divisions and sub-divisions to a great extent; and where they wou'd become so small as to be in danger of being lost, 'tis easy to mix them with a baser metal, as is practis'd in some countries of *Europe*; and by that means raise them to a bulk more sensible and convenient. They still serve the same purposes of exchange, whatever their number may be, or whatever colour they may be suppos'd to have.

To these difficulties I answer, that the effect, here suppos'd to flow from scarcity of money, really arises from the manners and customs of the inhabitants, and that we mistake, as is usual, a collateral effect for a cause. The contradiction is only apparent; but it requires some thought and reflection to discover the principles, by which we can reconcile *reason* to *experience*.

It seems a maxim almost self-evident, that the prices of every thing depend on the proportion betwixt commodities and money, and that any considerable alteration on either of these has the same [53] effect either of heightening or diminishing the price. Encrease the commodities, they become cheaper: Encrease the money, they rise in their value. As on the other hand, a diminution of the former, and that of the latter have contrary tendencies.

'TIS also evident, that the prices do not so much depend on the absolute quantity of commodities and of money, which are in a nation; as on that of the commodities, which come or may come to market, and of the money, which circulates. If the coin be lockt up in chests, 'tis the same thing with regard to prices, as if it were annihilated: If the commodities be hoarded in granaries, a like effect follows. As the money and commodities, in these cases, never meet, they cannot affect each other. Were we, at any time, to form conjectures concerning the prices of provisions, the corn, which the farmer must reserve for the maintenance of himself and family, ought never to enter into the estimation. 'Tis only the overplus, compar'd to the demand, that determines the value.

To apply these principles, we must consider, that in the first and more uncultivated ages of any state, e're fancy has confounded her wants with those of nature, men, contented with the productions of their own fields, or with those rude preparations, which they themselves can work upon [54] them, have little occasion for exchange, or at least for money, which, by agreement, is the common measure of exchange. The wool of the farmer's own flock, spun in his own family, and wrought by a neighbouring weaver, who receives his payment in corn or wool, suffices for furniture and cloathing. The carpenter, the smith, the mason, the taylor are retain'd by wages of a like nature; and the landlord himself, dwelling in the neighbourhood, is contented to receive his rent in the commodities rais'd by the farmer. The greatest part of

these he consumes at home, in rustic hospitality: The rest, perhaps, he disposes of for money to the neighbouring town, whence he draws the materials of his expence and luxury.

BUT after men begin to refine on all these enjoyments, and live not always at home, nor are contented with what can be rais'd in their neighbourhood, there is more exchange and commerce of all kinds, and more money enters into that exchange. The tradesmen will not be paid in corn; because they want something more than barely to eat. The farmer goes beyond his own parish for the commodities he purchases, and cannot always carry his commodities to the merchant, who supplies him. The landlord lives in the capital or in a foreign country; and demands his rent in gold and silver, which can easily be transported to him. Great undertakers and manufacturers and merchants [55] arise in every commodity; and these can conveniently deal in nothing but in specie. And consequently, in this situation of society, the coin enters into many more contracts, and by that means is much more employ'd than in the former.

THE necessary effect is, that provided the money does not encrease in the nation, every thing must become much cheaper in times of industry and refinement, than in rude, uncultivated ages. 'Tis the proportion betwixt the money, that circulates, and the commodities in the market, that determines the prices. Goods, that are consum'd at home, or exchang'd with other goods in the neighbourhood, never come to market; they affect not, in the least, the current specie; with regard to it they are as if totally annihilated; and consequently this method of using them sinks the proportion on the side of the commodities, and encreases the prices. But after money enters into all contracts and sales, and is every where the measure of exchange, the same national cash has a much greater task to perform; all commodities are then in the market; the sphere of circulation is enlarg'd; 'tis the same case as if that individual sum were to serve a larger kingdom; and therefore, the proportion being here diminish'd on the side of the money, every thing must become cheaper, and the prices gradually fall.

[56]

BY the most exact computations, that have been form'd all over *Europe*, after making allowance for the change in the numerary value or the denomination, 'tis found, that the prices of all things have only risen three, or at most four times since the discovery of the *West Indies*. But will any one assert, that there is no more than four times the coin in *Europe*, that was in the fifteenth century and the centuries preceding it? The *Spaniards* and *Portuguese* from their mines, the *English*, *French* and *Dutch*, by their *African* trade, and by their interlopers in the *West Indies*, bring home about seven millions a year, of which not above a tenth part goes to the *East Indies*. This sum alone in five years would probably double the antient stock of money in *Europe*. And no other satisfactory reason can be given, why all prices have not risen to a much more exorbitant height, except that deriv'd from a change of customs and manners. Besides, that more commodities are produc'd by additional industry, the same commodities come more to market, after men depart from their antient simplicity of manners. And tho' this encrease has not been equal to that of money, it has, however, been considerable, and has preserv'd the proportion betwixt coin and commodities nearer the antient standard.

WERE the question propos'd, which of these methods of living in the people, the simple or the [57] refin'd, is the most advantageous to the state or public, I shou'd, without much scruple, prefer the latter, in a view to politics at least; and should produce this as an additional reason for the encouragement of trade and manufactures.

WHEN men live in the antient simple manner, and supply all their necessities from their domestic industry or from the neighbourhood, the sovereign can levy no taxes in money from a considerable part of his subjects; and if he will impose on them any burthens, he must take

his payment in commodities, with which alone they abound; a method attended with such great and obvious inconveniencies, that they need not here be insisted on. All the money he can pretend to raise must be from his principal cities, where alone it circulates; and these, 'tis evident, cannot afford him so much as the whole state cou'd, did gold and silver circulate thro' the whole. But besides this obvious diminution of the revenue, there is also another cause of the poverty of the public in such a situation. Not only the sovereign receives less money, but the same money goes not so far as in times of industry and general commerce. Every thing is dearer, where the gold and silver are suppos'd equal; and that because fewer commodities come to market, and the whole coin bears a higher proportion to what is to be purchas'd by it; [58] whence alone the prices of every thing are fix'd and determin'd.

HERE then we may learn the fallacy of the remark, often to be met with in historians, and even in common conversation, that any particular state is weak, tho' fertile, populous, and well cultivated, merely because it wants money. It appears, that the want of money can never injure any state within itself: For men and commodities are the real strength of any community. 'Tis the simple manner of living which here hurts the public, by confining the gold and silver to few hands, and preventing its universal diffusion and circulation. On the contrary, industry and refinements of all kinds incorporate it with the whole state, however small its quantity may be: They digest it into every vein, so to speak; and make it enter into every transaction and contract. No hand is entirely empty of it; and as the prices of every thing fall by that means, the sovereign has a double advantage: He may draw money by his taxes from every part of the state, and what he receives goes farther in every purchase and payment.

WE may infer, from a comparison of prices, that money is not more plentiful in *China*, than it was in *Europe* three centuries ago: But what immense power is that empire possest of, if we may judge by the civil and military list, maintain'd by [59] it? *Polybius* [*] tells us, that provisions were so cheap in *Italy* during his time, that in some places the stated club in the inns was a *semis* a head, little more than a farthing: Yet the *Roman* power had even then subdu'd the whole known world. About a century before that period, the *Carthaginian* ambassadors said, by way of raillery, that no people liv'd more sociably amongst themselves than the *Romans*; for that in every entertainment, which, as foreign ministers, they receiv'd, they still observ'd the same plate at every table. [†] The absolute quantity of the precious metals is a matter of great indifference. There are only two circumstances of any importance, viz. their gradual encrease, and their thorough concoction and circulation thro' the state; and the influence of both these circumstances has been here explained.

IN the following discourse we shall see an instance of a like fallacy, as that above mention'd; where a collateral effect is taken for a cause, and where a consequence is ascrib'd to the plenty of money; tho' it be really owing to a change in the manners and customs of the people.

DISCOURSE IV.

Of Interest. ↩

NOTHING is esteem'd a more certain sign of the flourishing condition of any nation than the lowness of interest: And with reason; tho' I believe the cause is somewhat different from what is commonly apprehended. The lowness of interest is generally ascrib'd to the plenty of money. But money, however plentiful, has no other effect, *if fixt*, than to raise the price of labour. Silver is more common than gold; and therefore you receive a greater quantity of it for the same commodities: But do you pay less interest for it? Interest in *Batavia* and *Jamaica* is at 10 *per cent.* in *Portugal* at 6; tho' these places, as we may learn from the prices of every thing, abound much more in gold and silver than either *London* or *Amsterdam*.

WERE all the gold in *England* annihilated at once, and one and twenty shillings substituted in the place of every guinea, wou'd money be more plentiful or interest lower? No surely: We shou'd only use silver instead of gold. Were gold render'd as common as silver, and silver as common as copper; would money be more plentiful or interest [62] lower? We may assuredly give the same answer. Our shillings would then be yellow, and our half-pence white; and we shou'd have no guineas. No other difference wou'd ever be observ'd. No alteration on commerce, manufactures, navigation, or interest; unless we imagine, that the colour of the metal is of any consequence.

NOW what is so visible in these greater variations of scarcity or abundance of the precious metals, must hold in all inferior changes. If the multiplying gold and silver fifteen times makes no difference, much less can the doubling or tripling them. All augmentation has no other effect than to heighten the price of labour and commodities; and even this variation is little more than that of a name. In the progress towards these changes, the augmentation may have some influence, by exciting industry; but after the prices are settled, suitable to the new abundance of gold and silver, it has no manner of influence.

AN effect always holds proportion with its cause. Prices have risen about four times, since the discovery of the *Indies*; and 'tis probable gold and silver have multiply'd much more: But interest has not fallen much above half. The rate of interest, therefore, is not deriv'd from the quantity of the precious metals.

MONEY having merely a fictitious value, arising from the agreement and convention of men, the greater or less plenty of it is of no consequence, if we consider a nation within itself; and when once fixt, tho' in never so great abundance, it has no other effect, than to oblige every one to tell out a greater number of those shining bits of metal, for cloaths, furniture, or equipage, without encreasing any one convenience of life. If a man borrows money to build a house, he then carries home a greater load; because the stone, timber, lead, glass, &c. with the labour of the masons and carpenters, are represented by a greater quantity of gold and silver. But as these metals are consider'd merely as representations, there can no alteration arise, from their bulk or quantity, their weight or colour, either upon their real value or their interest. The same interest, in all cases, bears the same proportion to the sum. And if you lent me so much labour and so many commodities; by receiving five *per cent.* you receive always proportional labour and commodities, however represented, whether by yellow or white coin, whether by a pound or an ounce. 'Tis in vain, therefore, to look for the cause of the fall or rise of interest in the greater or less quantity of gold and silver, which is fixt in any nation.

HIGH interest arises from *three* circumstances: A great demand for borrowing; little riches to supply that demand; and great profits arising from commerce: And these circumstances are a clear proof of the small advance of commerce and industry, not of the scarcity of gold and silver. Low interest, on the other hand, proceeds from the three opposite circumstances: A small demand for borrowing; great riches to supply that demand; and small profits arising from commerce: And these circumstances are all connected together, and proceed from the encrease of industry and commerce, not of gold and silver. We shall endeavour to prove these points as fully and distinctly as possible, and shall begin with the causes and the effects of a great or small demand for borrowing.

WHEN a people have emerg'd ever so little from a state of barbarity, and their numbers have encreas'd beyond the original multitude, there must immediately arise an inequality of property; and while some possess large tracts of land, others are confin'd within narrow limits, and some are entirely without any landed property. Those, who possess more land than they can labour, employ those who possess none, and agree to receive a determinate part of the product. Thus the *landed* interest is immediately establish'd; nor is there any settled government, however rude, wherein [65] affairs are not on this footing. Of these proprietors of land, some must presently discover themselves to be of different tempers from others; and while one wou'd willingly store up the product of his land for futurity, another desires to consume at present what shou'd suffice for many years. But as the spending a settled revenue is a way of life entirely without occupation; men have so much need of somewhat to fix and engage them, that pleasures, such as they are, will be the pursuit of the greatest part of the landholders, and the prodigals amongst them will always be more numerous than the misers. In a state, therefore, where there is nothing but a landed interest, as there is little frugality, the borrowers must be very numerous, and the rate of interest must hold proportion to it. The difference depends not on the quantity of money, but on the habits and manners which prevail. By this alone the demand for borrowing is encreas'd or diminish'd. Were money so plentiful as to make an egg be sold for six-pence; as long as there are only landed gentry and peasants in the state, the borrowers must be numerous, and interest high. The rent for the same farm wou'd be heavier and more bulky: But the same idleness of the landlord, with the higher prices of commodities, wou'd dissipate it in the same time, and produce the same necessity and demand for borrowing. [*]

NOR is the case different with regard to the *second* circumstance we propos'd to consider, *viz.* the great or little riches to supply this demand. This effect also depends on the habits and ways of living of the people, not on the quantity of gold and silver. In order to have, in any state, a great number of lenders, 'tis not sufficient nor requisite, that there be great abundance of the precious metals. 'Tis only requisite, that the property or command of that quantity, which is in the state, whether great or small, should be collected in particular hands, so as to form considerable sums, or compose a great money'd interest. This begets a number of lenders, and sinks the rate of usury; and this, I shall venture to affirm, depends not on the quantity of specie, but on particular manners and customs, which make the specie gather into separate sums or masses of considerable value.

FOR suppose, that, by miracle, every man in *Britain* shou'd have five pounds slipt into his pocket in one night; this wou'd much more than [67] double the whole money that is at present in the kingdom, and yet there would not next day, nor for some time, be any more lenders, nor any variation on the interest. And were there nothing but landlords and peasants in the state, this money, however abundant, cou'd never gather into sums, and wou'd only serve to encrease the prices of every thing, without any farther consequence. The prodigal

landlord dissipates it, as fast as he receives it; and the beggarly peasant has no means nor view nor ambition of obtaining above a bare livelihood. The overplus of borrowers above that of lenders continuing still the same, there will follow no reduction of interest. That depends upon another principle, and must proceed from an encrease of industry and frugality, of arts and commerce.

EVERY thing, useful to the life of man, arises from the ground; but few things arise in that condition, which is requisite to render them useful. There must, therefore, beside the peasants and the proprietors of land, be another rank of men, who, receiving from the former the rude materials, work them into their proper form, and retain part for their own use and subsistence. In the infancy of society, these contracts betwixt the artizans and the peasants, and betwixt one species of artizan and another, are commonly enter'd into immediately, by the persons themselves, who, being neighbours, are readily acquainted with each other's necessities, [68] and can lend their mutual assistance to supply them. But when mens industry encreases, and their views enlarge; 'tis found, that the most remote parts of the state can assist each other as well as the more contiguous, and that this intercourse of good offices may be carry'd on to the greatest extent and intricacy. Hence the origin of *merchants*, the most useful race of men in the whole society, who serve as agents betwixt those parts of the state, that are wholly unacquainted, and are ignorant of each other's necessities. Here are in a city fifty workmen in silk and linen and a thousand customers; and these two ranks of men, so necessary to each other, can never rightly meet, 'till one man erects a shop, to which all the workmen, and all the customers repair. In this province, grass rises in abundance: The inhabitants abound in cheese and butter and cattle; but want bread and corn, which, in a neighbouring province, are in too great abundance for the uses of the inhabitants. One man discovers this. He brings corn from the one province, and returns with cattle; and supplying the wants of both, he is, so far, a common benefactor. As the people encrease in numbers and industry, the difficulty of their mutual intercourse encreases: The business of the agency or merchandize becomes more intricate; and divides, sub-divides, compounds, and mixes to a greater variety. In all these transactions, 'tis necessary and reasonable, that a considerable part of the commodities and labour shou'd belong [69] to the merchant, to whom, in a great measure, they are owing. And these commodities he will sometimes preserve in kind, or more commonly convert into money, which is their common representation. If gold and silver have encreas'd in the state along with industry, it will require a great quantity of these metals to represent a great quantity of commodities and labour. If industry alone has encreas'd, the prices of every thing must sink, and a very small quantity of specie will serve as a representation.

THERE is no craving or demand of the human mind more constant and insatiable than that for exercise and employment; and this desire seems the foundation of most of our passions and pursuits. Deprive a man of all business and serious occupation, he runs restless from one amusement to another; and the weight and oppression, which he feels from idleness, is so great, that he forgets the ruin, which must follow from his immoderate expences. Give him a more harmless way of employing his mind or body, he is satisfied, and feels no longer that insatiable thirst after pleasure. But if the employment you give him be profitable, especially if the profit be attach'd to every particular exertion of industry, he has gain so often in his eye, that he acquires, by degrees, a passion for it, and knows no such pleasure as that of seeing the daily encrease of his fortune. And this is the reason why [70] trade encreases frugality, and why, among merchants, there is the same overplus of misers above prodigals, as, among the possessors of land, there is the contrary.

COMMERCE encreases industry, by conveying it readily from one member of the state to another, and allowing none of it to perish or become useless. It encreases frugality, by giving occupation to men, and employing them in the arts of gain, which soon engage their

affection, and remove them from all relish of pleasure and expence. 'Tis an infallible consequence of all industrious professions to beget frugality, and make the love of gain prevail over the love of pleasure. Among lawyers and physicians, who have any practice, there are many more, who live within their income, than who exceed it, or even live up to it. But lawyers and physicians beget no industry; and 'tis even at the expence of others they acquire their riches; so that they are sure to diminish the possessions of some of their fellow citizens as fast as they encrease their own. Merchants, on the contrary, beget industry, by serving as canals to convey it thro' every corner of the state; and, at the same time, by their frugality, they acquire great power over that industry, and collect a large property in the labour and commodities, which they are the chief instruments in producing. There is no other profession, therefore, except merchandize, which can make [71] the money'd interest considerable, or in other words, can encrease industry, and by also encreasing frugality, give a great command of that industry to particular members of the society. Without commerce, the state must consist chiefly of landed gentry, whose prodigality and expence make a continual demand for borrowing; and of peasants, who have no sums to supply that demand. The money never gathers into large stocks or sums, that can be lent at interest. It is disperst into numberless hands, who either squander it in idle show and magnificence, or employ it in the purchase of the common necessities of life. Commerce alone assembles it into considerable sums; and this effect it has merely from the industry, which it begets, and the frugality, which it inspires, independent of the quantity of precious metal, which may circulate in the state.

THUS an encrease of commerce, by a necessary and infallible consequence, raises a great number of lenders, and by that means produces a lowness of interest. We must now consider how far this encrease of commerce diminishes the profits arising from that profession, and gives rise to the *third* circumstance requisite to produce a lowness of interest.

IT may be proper to observe on this head, that low interest and low profits of merchandize are [72] two events, that mutually forward each other, and are both originally deriv'd from that extensive commerce, which produces opulent merchants, and renders the money'd interest considerable. Where merchants possess great stocks, whether represented by few or many pieces of metal, it must frequently happen, that, when they either become tir'd of business, or have heirs unwilling or unfit to engage in commerce, a great deal of these riches naturally seeks an annual and secure revenue. The plenty diminishes their price, and makes the lenders accept of a low interest. This consideration obliges many to keep their stocks in trade, and rather be content with low profit than dispose of their money at an under-value. On the other hand, when commerce has become very extensive, and employs very large stocks, there must arise rivalships among the merchants, which diminish the profits of trade; at the same time, that they encrease the trade itself. The low profits of merchandize induce the merchants to accept more willingly of a low interest, when they leave off business, and begin to indulge themselves in ease and indolence. It is needless, therefore, to enquire, which of these circumstances, *viz. low interest* or *low profits*, is the cause, and which the effect. They both arise from an extensive commerce, and mutually forward each other. No man will accept of low profits, where he can have high interest; and no man will accept of low interest, where he can [73] have high profits. An extensive commerce, by producing large stocks, diminishes both interest and profit, and is always assisted, in its diminution of the one, by the proportional sinking of the other. I may add, that as low profits arise from the encrease of commerce and industry; they serve in their turn to the farther encrease of commerce, by rendering the commodities cheaper, encreasing the consumption, and heightening the industry. And thus, if we consider the whole connexion of causes and effects, interest is the true barometer of the state, and its lowness is a sign almost infallible of the flourishing of a people. It proves the encrease of industry, and its prompt circulation thro' the whole state, little inferior to a demonstration. And tho', perhaps, it may not be impossible but

a sudden and a great check to commerce may have a momentary effect of the same kind, by throwing so many stocks out of trade; it must be attended with such misery and want of employment in the poor, that, besides its short duration, it will not be possible to mistake the one case for the other.

THOSE, who have asserted, that the plenty of money was the cause of low interest, seem to have taken a collateral effect for a cause; since the same industry, which sinks the interest, does commonly acquire great abundance of the precious metals. A variety of fine manufactures, along with vigilant, enterprising merchants, will soon draw money to [74] a state, if it be any where to be found in the world. The same cause, by multiplying the conveniences of life, and encreasing industry, collects great riches into the hands of persons, who are not proprietors of land, and produces by that means a lowness of interest. But tho' these effects, plenty of money and low interest, do both naturally arise from commerce and industry, they are altogether independent of each other. For, suppose a nation remov'd into the *Pacific* ocean, without any foreign commerce or any knowledge of navigation: Suppose, that this nation possesses always the same stock of coin, but is continually encreasing in its numbers and industry: 'Tis evident, that the price of every commodity must gradually diminish in that kingdom; since 'tis the proportion betwixt money and any species of goods, which fixes their mutual value; and upon the present supposition, the conveniences of life become every day more abundant, without any alteration on the current specie. A less quantity of money, therefore, amongst this people, will make a rich man, during the times of industry, than wou'd serve to that purpose, in ignorant and slothful ages. Less money will build a house, portion a daughter, buy an estate, support a manufactory, or maintain a family and equipage. These are the uses, for which men borrow money; and therefore, the greater or less quantity of it in a state has no influence on the interest. But 'tis evident, that the greater or less stock of labour [75] and commodities must have a great influence; since we really and in effect borrow these, when we take money upon interest. 'Tis true, when commerce is extended all over the globe, the most industrious nations always abound most with the precious metals: So that low interest and plenty of money are in fact almost inseparable. But still 'tis of consequence to know the principle, whence any phenomenon arises, and to distinguish betwixt a cause and a concomitant effect. Besides, that the speculation is curious, it may frequently be of use in the conduct of public affairs. At least, it must be own'd, that nothing can be of more use than to improve, by practice, the method of reasoning on these subjects, which, of all others, are the most important; tho' they are commonly treated in the loosest and most careless manner.

ANOTHER reason of this popular mistake with regard to the cause of low interest seems to be the instance of some nations; where, after a sudden acquisition of riches or of the precious metals, by means of foreign conquest, the interest has fallen, not only amongst them, but in all the neighbouring states, as soon as that money was disperst, and had insinuated itself into every corner. Thus, interest in *Spain* fell near a half immediately after the discovery of the *West Indies*, as we are inform'd by *Garcilasso de la Vega*: And it has been ever since gradually sinking in every kingdom of *Europe*. [76] Interest in *Rome*, after the conquest of *Egypt*, fell from 6 to 4 *per cent.* as we learn from *Dion*. [*]

THE causes of the sinking of interest upon such an event seem different in the conquering country and in the neighbouring states; but in neither of them can we justly ascribe that effect merely to the encrease of gold and silver.

IN the conquering country, 'tis natural to imagine, that this new acquisition of money will fall into a few hands, and be gather'd into large sums, which seek a secure revenue, either by the purchase of land or by interest; and consequently the same effect follows, for a little time, as if there had been a great occasion of industry and commerce. The encrease of lenders above the borrowers sinks the interest; and so much the faster, if those, who have acquir'd

those large sums, find no industry or commerce in the state, and no method of employing their money but by lending it at interest. But after this new mass of gold and silver has been digested and has circulated, thro' the whole state, affairs will soon return to their former situation: While the landlords and new money-holders, living idly, squander above their income; and the former daily contract debt, and the latter encroach on their stock 'till its final extinction. The whole money may still be in the state, [77] and make itself felt by the encrease of prices: But not being now collected into any large masses or stocks, the disproportion betwixt the borrowers and lenders is the same as formerly, and consequently the high interest returns.

ACCORDINGLY we find, in *Rome*, that so early as *Tiberius's* time, interest had again mounted to 6 *per cent*. [*] tho' no accident had happen'd to drain the empire of money. In *Trajan's* time, money, lent on mortgages in *Italy*, bore 6 *per cent*. [†] on common securities in *Bithynia*, 12. [‡] And if interest in *Spain* has not risen to its old pitch; this can be ascrib'd to nothing but the continuance of the same cause, that sunk it, viz. the large fortunes continually made in the *Indies*, which come over to *Spain*, from time to time, and supply the demand of the borrowers. But this accidental and extraneous cause, more money is to be lent in *Spain*; that is, more money is collected into large sums, than would otherways be found in a state, where there are so little commerce and industry.

As to the reduction of interest, which has follow'd in *England*, *France*, and other kingdoms of *Europe*, that have no mines, it has been gradual, and has not proceeded from the encrease of money, consider'd merely in itself, but from the [78] encrease of industry, which is the natural effect of the former encrease, in that interval, before it raises the price of labour and provisions. For to return to the foregoing supposition; if the industry of *England* had risen as much from other causes (and that rise might easily have happen'd, tho' the stock of money had remain'd the same) must not all the same consequences have follow'd, which we observe at present? The same people wou'd, in that case, be found in the kingdom, the same commodities, the same industry, manufactures and commerce, and consequently the same merchants, with the same stocks, that is, with the same command over labour and commodities, only represented by a smaller number of white or yellow pieces: Which being a circumstance of no moment, would only affect the waggoner, porter, and trunk-maker. Luxury, therefore, manufactures, arts, industry, frugality, flourishing equally as at present, 'tis evident that interest must also have been as low; since that is the necessary result of all these circumstances; so far as they determine the profits of commerce, and the proportion betwixt the borrowers and lenders in any state.

DISCOURSE V.

Of the Balance of Trade. [↩](#)

'TIS very usual, amongst nations ignorant of the nature of commerce, to prohibit the exportation of commodities, and to preserve amongst themselves, whatever they think valuable and useful. They consider not, that, in this prohibition, they act directly contrary to their intentions, and that the more is exported of any commodity, the more will be rais'd at home, of which they themselves will always have the first offer.

'TIS well known to the learned, that the antient laws of *Athens* render'd the exportation of figs criminal; that being suppos'd a species of fruit so excellent in *Attica*, that the *Athenians* esteem'd it too delicious for the palate of any foreigner. And in this ridiculous prohibition they were so much in earnest, that informers were thence called sycophants among them, from two *Greek* words, which signify *figs* and *discoverer*. [[*](#)] I have been told, that many old acts of parliament show the same ignorance in the nature of commerce. And to this day, in a neighbouring kingdom, the exportation of corn is almost always prohibited; in order, [[80](#)] as they say, to prevent famines; tho' 'tis evident, that nothing contributes more to the frequent famines, which so much distress that fertile country.

THE same jealous fear with regard to money has also prevail'd amongst several nations; and it requir'd both reason and experience to convince any people, that these prohibitions serve to no other purpose than to raise the exchange against them, and produce a still greater exportation.

THESE errors, one may say, are gross and palpable: But there still prevails, even amongst nations well acquainted with commerce, a strong jealousy with regard to the balance of trade, and a fear, that all their gold and silver may be leaving them. This seems to me, almost in every case, a very groundless apprehension; and I shou'd as soon dread, that all our springs and rivers wou'd be exhausted, as that money shou'd abandon a kingdom, where there are people and industry. Let us carefully preserve these latter advantages; and we need never be apprehensive of losing the former.

'TIS easy to observe, that all calculations concerning the balance of trade are founded on very uncertain facts and suppositions. The customhouse books are own'd to be an insufficient ground of reasoning; nor is the rate of exchange much better, unless we consider it with all nations, and [[81](#)] know also the proportions of the several sums remitted; which one may safely pronounce impossible. Every man, who has ever reason'd on this subject, has always prov'd his theory, whatever it was, by facts and calculations, and by an enumeration of all the commodities sent to all foreign kingdoms.

THE writings of Mr. *Gee* struck the nation with an universal pannic, when they saw it plainly demonstrated, by a detail of particulars, that the balance was against them for so considerable a sum as must leave them without a single shilling in five or six years. But, luckily, twenty years have since elaps'd, along with an expensive foreign war; and yet 'tis commonly suppos'd, that money is still more plentiful amongst us than in any former period.

NOTHING can be more entertaining on this head than Dr. *Swift*; an author, who has more humour than knowledge, more taste than judgment, and more spleen, prejudice, and passion than any of these qualities. He says, in his *short view of the state of Ireland*, that the whole cash of that kingdom amounted but to 500,000 *l.* that out of this they remitted every year a neat million to *England*, and had scarce any other source to compensate themselves from,

and little other foreign trade but the importation of *French* wines, for which they pay'd ready money. The consequence of [82] this situation, which must be own'd disadvantageous, was, that in a course of three years, the current money of *Ireland*, from 500,000 *l.* was reduc'd to less than two. And at present, I suppose, in a course of near 30 years, it is absolutely nothing. Yet I know not how, that opinion of the advance of riches in *Ireland*, which gave the doctor so much indignation, seems still to continue, and gain ground amongst every body.

IN short, this apprehension of the wrong balance of trade, appears of such a nature, that it discovers itself, wherever one is out of humour with the ministry, or is in low spirits; and as it can never be refuted by a particular detail of all the exports, which counterbalance the imports, it may here be proper to form a general argument, which may prove the impossibility of that event, as long as we preserve our people and our industry.

SUPPOSE four parts of all the money in *Britain* to be annihilated in one night, and the nation reduc'd to the same condition, in this particular, as in the reigns of the *Harrys* and *Edwards*; what would be the consequence? Must not the price of all labour and commodities sink in proportion, and every thing be sold as cheap as they were in those ages? What nation could then dispute with us in any foreign market, or pretend to navigate or to sell manufactures at the same price, which to us [83] wou'd afford sufficient profit? In how little time, therefore, must this bring back the money, which we had lost, and raise us to the level of all the neighbouring nations? Where, after we have arriv'd, we immediately lose the advantage of the cheapness of labour and commodities; and the farther flowing in of money is stopt by our fulness and repletion.

AGAIN; suppose, that all the money in *Britain* were multiply'd four-fold in a night, must not the contrary effect follow? Must not all labour and commodities rise to such an exorbitant height, that no neighbouring nations could afford to buy from us; while their commodities, on the other hand, became so cheap in comparison, that, in spite of all the laws, which cou'd be form'd, they wou'd be run in upon us, and our money wou'd flow out; 'till we fall to a level with foreigners, and lose that great superiority of riches, which had laid us under such disadvantages?

Now 'tis evident, that the same causes, which wou'd correct these exorbitant inequalities, were they to happen miraculously, must prevent their happening in the common course of nature, and must for ever, in all neighbouring nations, preserve money nearly proportion'd to the art and industry of each nation. All water, wherever it communicates, remains always at a level: Ask naturalists [84] the reason; they tell you, that were it to be rais'd in any one place, the superior gravity of that part, not being balanc'd, must depress it, 'till it meets a counterpoize; and that the same cause, which redresses the inequality, when it happens, must for ever prevent it, without some violent, external operation. [*]

CAN one imagine, that it had ever been possible, by any laws, or even by any art, or industry, to have preserv'd all the money in *Spain*, which the galleons have brought from the *Indies*? Or that all commodities cou'd be sold in *France* for a tenth of the price they wou'd yield on the other side of the *Pyrenees*, without finding their way thither, and draining from that immense treasure? What other reason, indeed, is there, why all nations, at present, gain in their trade with *Spain* and *Portugal*; but because it is impossible to heap up money, more than any fluid, beyond its proper level? The sovereigns of these countries have shown, that they wanted not inclination to keep their gold and silver to themselves, had it been in any degree practicable.

[85]

BUT as any body of water may be rais'd above the level of the surrounding element, if the former has no communication with the latter; so in money, if the communication be cut off, by any material or physical impediment (for all laws alone are ineffectual) there may, in such a case, be a very great inequality of money. Thus the immense distance of *China*, along with the monopolies of our *India* companies, obstructing the communication, preserve in *Europe* the gold and silver, especially the latter, in much greater plenty than they are found in that kingdom. But notwithstanding this great obstruction, the force of the causes above mention'd is still evident. The skill and ingenuity of *Europe* in general much surpasses that of *China*, with regard to manual arts and manufactures; yet are we never able to trade thither without great disadvantage: And were it not for the continual recruits we receive from *America*, money wou'd very soon sink in *Europe*, and rise in *China*, 'till it came nearly to a level in both places. Nor can any reasonable man doubt, but that industrious nation, were they as near us as *Poland* or *Barbary*, would drain us of the overplus of our specie, and draw to themselves a larger share of the *West Indian* treasures. We need have no recourse to a physical attraction, to explain the necessity of this operation. There is a moral attraction, arising from the interests and passions of men, which is full as potent and infallible.

[86]

HOW is the balance kept in the provinces of every kingdom among themselves, but by the force of this principle, which makes it impossible for money to lose its level, and either to rise or sink, beyond the proportion of the labour and commodities, that is in each province? Did not long experience make people easy on this head, what a fund of gloomy reflections might calculations afford a melancholy *Yorkshire* man; while he computed and magnify'd the sums drawn to *London* by taxes, absentees, commodities; and found on comparison the opposite articles so much inferior? And no doubt, had the *Heptarchy* subsisted in *England*, the legislature of each state had been continually alarm'd by the fear of a wrong balance; and as 'tis probable, that the mutual hatred of these states wou'd have been extremely violent, on account of their close neighbourhood, they wou'd have loaded and oppress'd all commerce, by a jealous and superfluous caution. Since the union has remov'd the barriers betwixt *Scotland* and *England*; which of these nations gains from the other by this free commerce? Or if the former kingdom has receiv'd any encrease of riches, can it be reasonable accounted for by any thing, but the encrease of its art and industry? 'Twas a common apprehension in *England*, before the union, as we learn from *L'Abbe du Bos*, [*] that *Scotland* wou'd soon drain them of their treasure, [87] were an open trade allow'd; and on t'other side the *Tweed* a contrary apprehension prevail'd: With what justice in both, time has shown.

WHAT happens in small portions of mankind must take place in greater. The provinces of the *Roman* empire, no doubt, kept their balance with each other, and with *Italy*, independent of the legislature; as much as the several counties of *Britain*, or the several parishes of each county. And any man, who travels over *Europe*, at this day, may see, by the prices of commodities, that money, in spite of the absurd jealousy of princes and states, has brought itself nearly to a level, and that the difference betwixt one kingdom and another is not greater in this respect, than it is often betwixt different provinces of the same kingdom. Men naturally flock to capital cities, sea-ports, and navigable rivers. There we find more men, more industry, more labour, and consequently more money; but still the latter difference holds proportion with the former, and the level is preserv'd. [*]

[88]

OUR jealousy and our hatred of *France* are without bounds; and the former sentiment, at least, must be acknowledg'd very reasonable and well grounded. These passions have occasion'd innumerable barriers and obstructions upon commerce, where we are accus'd of being commonly the aggressors. But what have we gain'd by the bargain? We lost the *French*

market for our woolen manufactures, and transferr'd the commerce of wine to *Spain* and *Portugal*, where we buy much worse liquor at a higher price. There are few *Englishmen*, that wou'd not think their country absolutely ruin'd, were *French* wines sold in *England* so cheap and in such abundance as to supplant, in some measure, all ale and home-brewn liquors: But wou'd we lay aside prejudice, it wou'd not be difficult to prove, that nothing cou'd be more innocent, perhaps advantageous. Each new acre of vineyard planted in *France*, in order to supply *England* with wine, wou'd make it requisite for the *French* to take the product of an *English* acre, sown in wheat or barley, in order to subsist themselves; and 'tis evident, we have thereby got command of the better commodity.

[89]

THERE are many edicts of the *French* king, prohibiting the planting of new vineyards, and ordering all those lately planted to be grubb'd up: So sensible are they, in that country, of the superior value of corn, above every other product.

MARESCHAL *Vauban* complains often, and with reason, of the absurd duties, which load the entry of wines of *Languedoc*, *Guienne* and those other southern provinces, that are imported into *Britany* and *Normandy*. He entertain'd no doubt, but these latter provinces cou'd preserve their balance, notwithstanding the open commerce, which he recommends. And 'tis evident, that a few leagues more navigation to *England* wou'd make no difference: Or if it did, that it must operate alike on the commodities of both kingdoms.

THERE is indeed one expedient, by which it is possible to sink, and another by which we may raise, money beyond its natural level in any kingdom; but these cases, when examin'd, will be found to resolve into our general theory, and to bring additional authority to it.

I SCARCE know any method of sinking money below its level; but those institutions of banks, funds, and paper credit, with which we are in this kingdom so much infatuated. These render [90] paper equivalent to money, circulate it thro' the whole state, make it supply the place of gold and silver, raise proportionably the price of labour and commodities, and by that means either banish a great part of those precious metals, or prevent their farther encrease. What can be more short-sighted than our reasonings on this head? We fancy, because an individual wou'd be much richer, were his stock of money doubled, that the same good effect wou'd follow were the money of every one encreas'd; not considering, that this wou'd raise as much the price of every commodity, and reduce every man, in time, to the same condition as before. 'Tis only in our public negotiations and transactions with foreigners, that a greater stock of money is advantageous; and as our paper is there absolutely insignificant, we feel, by its means, all the ill effects, arising from a great abundance of money, without reaping any of the advantages.

SUPPOSE there are 12 millions of paper, that circulate in the kingdom as money (for we are not to imagine, that all our enormous funds are employ'd in that shape) and suppose, that the real cash of the kingdom is 18 millions: Here is a state, which is found by experience able to hold a stock of 30 millions. I say, if it be able to hold it, it must of necessity have acquir'd it in gold and silver, had we not obstructed the entrance of these metals by this new invention of paper. *Whence would it [91] have acquir'd that sum?* From all the kingdoms of the world. *But why?* Because, if you remove these 12 millions, money in this state is below its level, compar'd with our neighbours; and we must immediately draw from all of them, till we be full and saturate, so to speak, and can hold no more. By our wise politics, we are as careful to stuff the nation with this fine commodity of bankbills and chequer-notes, as if we were afraid of being overburthen'd with the precious metals.

'TIS not to be doubted, but the great plenty of bullion in *France*, is, in a great measure, owing to the want of paper credit. The *French* have no banks: Merchants bills do not there circulate as with us: Usury or lending on interest is not directly permitted; so that many have large sums in their coffers: Great quantities of plate are us'd in private houses; and all the churches are full of it. By this means, provisions and labour still remain much cheaper amongst them than in nations that are not half so rich in gold and silver. The advantage of this situation in point of trade, as well as in great public emergencies, is too evident to be disputed.

THE same fashion, a few years ago, prevail'd in *Genoa*, which still has place in *England* and *Holland*, of using services of *China* ware instead of plate; but the senate, wisely foreseeing the consequences, [92] prohibited the use of that brittle commodity beyond a certain extent; while the use of silver plate was left unlimited. And I suppose, in their late distresses, they felt the good effect of this ordonnance. [*]

BEFORE the introduction of paper money into our colonies, they had gold and silver sufficient for their circulation. Since the introduction of that commodity, the least of the inconveniencies that has follow'd, is the total banishment of the precious metals. And after the abolition of paper, can it be doubted but money will return, while these colonies possess manufactures and commodities, the only things valuable in commerce, and for whose sake alone all men desire money.

WHAT pity *Lycurgus* did not think of paper credit, when he wanted to banish gold and silver from *Sparta*! It wou'd have serv'd his purpose better than the lumps of iron he made use of as money; and wou'd also have prevented more effectually all commerce with strangers, as being of so much less real and intrinsic value.

BUT as our darling projects of paper credit are pernicious, being almost the only expedient, by which we can sink money below its level; so in my opinion the only expedient, by which we can raise money above its level, is a practice we wou'd all [93] exclaim against as destructive, viz. the gathering large sums into a public treasure, locking them up, and absolutely preventing their circulation. The fluid, not communicating with the neighbouring element, may, by such an artifice, be rais'd to what height we please. To prove this, we need only return to our first supposition, of the annihilating the half or any part of our cash; where we found, that the immediate consequence of such an event wou'd be, the attraction of an equal sum from all the neighbouring kingdoms. Nor does there seem to be any necessary bounds set, by the nature of things, to this practice of hoarding. A small city, like *Geneva*, continuing this policy for ages, might engross nine tenths of the money of *Europe*. There seems, indeed, in the nature of man, an invincible obstacle to that immense growth of riches. A weak state, with an enormous treasure, wou'd soon become a prey to some of its poorer but more powerful neighbours. A great state wou'd dissipate its wealth on dangerous and illconcerted projects; and probably destroy, along with it, what is much more valuable, the industry, morals, and numbers of its people. The fluid, in this case, rais'd to too great a height, bursts and destroys the vessel, that contains it; and mixing itself with the surrounding element, soon falls to its proper level.

[94]

So little are we commonly acquainted with this principle, that, tho' all historians agree in relating uniformly so recent an event, as the immense treasure amass'd by *Harry* the VII. (which they make amount to 1,700,000 pounds) we rather reject their concurring testimony, than admit of a fact, which agrees so ill with our inveterate prejudices. 'Tis indeed probable, that that sum might be three fourths of all the money in *England*. But where is the difficulty that such a sum might be amass'd in twenty years, by a cunning, rapacious, frugal, and almost

arbitrary monarch? Nor is it probable, that the diminution of circulating money was ever sensibly felt by the people, or ever did them any prejudice. The sinking of the prices of all commodities wou'd immediately replace it, by giving *England* the advantage in its commerce with all the neighbouring kingdoms.

HAVE we not an instance in the small republic of *Athens* with its allies, who in about fifty years, betwixt the *Median* and *Peloponnesian* wars, amass'd a sum greater than that of *Harry* the VII? [*] For all the *Greek* historians[†] and orators[‡] agree, that the *Athenians* collected in the citadel more than 10,000 [95] talents, which they afterwards dissipated to their own ruin, in rash and imprudent enterprises. But when this money was set a running, and began to communicate with the surrounding fluid; what was the consequence? Did it remain in the state? No. For we find by the memorable *census*, mention'd by *Demosthenes* [*] and *Polybius*, [†] that in about fifty years afterwards, the whole value of the republic, comprehending lands, houses, commodities, slaves, and money, was less than 6000 talents.

WHAT an ambitious high spirited people was this, to collect and keep in their treasury, with a view to conquests, a sum, which it was every day in the power of the citizens, by a single vote, to distribute among themselves, and which wou'd go near to triple the riches of every individual! For we must observe, that the numbers and private riches of the *Athenians* are said by antient writers to have been no greater at the beginning of the *Peloponnesian* war, than at the beginning of the *Macedonian*.

MONEY was little more plentiful in *Greece* during the age of *Philip* and *Perseus* than in *England* during that of *Harry* the VII: Yet these two monarchs in 30 years, [‡] collected, from the small kingdom of *Macedon*, a much larger treasure than that of the *English* monarch. *Paulus Aemilius* [96] brought to *Rome* about 1,700,000 pounds *Sterling*. [*] *Pliny* says 2,400,000. [†] And that was but a part of the *Macedonian* treasure. The rest was dissipated by the resistance and flight of *Perseus*. [‡]

WE may learn from *Stanyan*, that the canton of *Berne* had 300,000 pounds lent at interest, and had above six times as much in their treasury. Here then is a sum hoarded of 1,800,000 pounds *Sterling*, which is at least quadruple of what shou'd naturally circulate in such a petty state; and yet no one, who travels into the *Païs de Vaux* or any part of that canton, observes any want of money more than cou'd be suppos'd in a country of that extent, soil, and situation. On the contrary, there are scarce any inland provinces in the continent of *France* or *Germany*, where the inhabitants are at this time so opulent; tho' that canton has vastly encreas'd its treasure since 1714, the time when *Stanyan* wrote his judicious account of *Switzerland*. [*]

THE account given by *Appian* [†] of the treasure of the *Ptolemies*, is so prodigious, that one cannot admit [97] of it; and so much the more, that the historian says the other successors of *Alexander* were also frugal, and had many of them treasures not much inferior. For this saving humour of the neighbouring princes must necessarily have check'd the frugality of the *Aegyptian* monarchs, according to the foregoing theory. The sum he mentions is 740,000 talents or 191,166,666 pounds 13 shillings and 4 pence, according to Dr. *Arbuthnot's* computation. And yet *Appian* says, that he extracted his account from the public records; and he was himself a native of *Alexandria*.

FROM these principles we may learn what judgment we ought to form of those numberless bars, obstructions, and imposts, which all nations of *Europe*, and none more than *England*, have put upon trade; from an exorbitant desire of amassing money, which never will heap up beyond its level, while it circulates; or from an ill grounded apprehension of losing their specie, which never will sink below it. Cou'd any thing scatter our riches, 'twou'd be such impolitic contrivances. But this general ill effect, however, results from them, that

they deprive neighbouring nations of that free communication and exchange, which the author of the world has intended, by giving them soils, climates, and geniuses, so different from each other.

[98]

OUR modern politics embrace the only method of banishing money, the using paper credit; they reject the only method of amassing it, the practice of hoarding; and they adopt a hundred contrivances, which serve to no purpose but to check industry, and rob ourselves and our neighbours of the common benefits of art and nature.

ALL taxes, however, upon foreign commodities, are not to be regarded as prejudicial or useless, but those only which are founded on the jealousy above mention'd. A tax on *German* linen encourages home manufactures, and thereby multiplies our people and industry. A tax on brandy encreases the sale of rum, and supports our southern colonies. And as 'tis necessary imposts shou'd be levy'd for the support of government, it may be thought more convenient to lay them on foreign commodities, which can easily be intercepted at the port, and subjected to the impost. We ought, however, always to remember the maxim of Dr. *Swift*, that, in the arithmetic of the customs, two and two make not four, but often make only one. It can scarcely be doubted, but if the duties on wine were lower'd to a third, they wou'd yield much more to the government than at present: Our people might thereby afford to drink commonly a better and more wholesome liquor: And no prejudice wou'd ensue to the balance of trade, of which [99] we are so jealous. The manufacture of ale, beyond the agriculture, is but inconsiderable, and gives employment to few hands. The transport of wine and corn wou'd not be much inferior.

BUT are there not frequent instances, you will say, of states and kingdoms, that were formerly rich and opulent, and are now poor and beggarly? Has not the money left them, with which they formerly abounded? I answer, If they lose their trade, industry, and people, they cannot expect to keep their gold and silver: For these precious metals hold proportion to the former advantages. When *Lisbon* and *Amsterdam* got the *East India* trade from *Venice* and *Genoa*, they also got the profits and money, that arose from it. Where the seat of government is transferr'd, where expensive armies are maintain'd at a distance, where great funds are possess'd by foreigners; there naturally follows from these causes a diminution of the specie. But these, we may observe, are violent and forcible methods of carrying away money, and are in time commonly attended with the transport of people and industry. But where these remain, and the drain is not continu'd, the money always finds its way back again, by a hundred canals, of which we have no notion nor suspicion. What immense treasures have been spent, by so many nations, in *Flanders*, since the revolution, in the course of three long wars? More money perhaps, than the half of what [100] is at present in all *Europe*. But what has now become of it? Is it in the narrow compass of the *Austrian* provinces? No surely: It has most of it return'd to the several countries, whence it came, and has follow'd that art and industry, by which, at first, it was acquir'd.

IN short, a government has great reason to preserve with care its people and its manufactures. Its money, it may safely trust to the course of human affairs, without fear or jealousy. Or if it ever give attention to that latter circumstance, it ought only to be so far as it affects the former.

DISCOURSE VI.

Of the Balance of Power. ↩

IT is a question, whether the *idea* of the balance of power be owing entirely to modern policy, or whether the *phrase* only has been invented in these latter ages. 'Tis certain, that [*] *Xenophon*, in his institution of *Cyrus*, represents the combination of the *Asiatic* powers to have arisen from a jealousy of the encreasing force of the *Medes* and *Persians*; and tho' that elegant composition shou'd be suppos'd altogether a romance, this sentiment, ascrib'd by the author to the Eastern princes, is at least a proof of the prevailing notions of antient times.

IN the whole politics of *Greece*, the anxiety, with regard to the balance, is most apparent, and is expressly pointed out to us, even by the antient historians. *Thucydides* [‡] represents the league, which was form'd against *Athens*, and which produc'd the *Peloponnesian* war, as entirely owing to this principle. And after the decline of *Athens*, when the *Thebans* and *Lacedemonians* disputed for sovereignty, we find, that the *Athenians* (as well as many other republics) threw themselves always into the [102] lighter scale, and endeavour'd to preserve the balance. They supported *Thebes* against *Sparta*, till the great victory, gain'd by *Epaminondas* at *Leuctra*; after which they immediately went over to the conquer'd, from generosity, as they pretended, but, in reality, from their jealousy of the conquerors. [*]

WHOEVER will read *Demosthenes's* oration for the *Megalopolitans*, may see the utmost refinements on this principle, that ever enter'd into the head of a *Venetian* or *English* speculatist. And upon the first rise of the *Macedonian* power, this orator immediately discover'd the danger, sounded the alarm thro' all *Greece*, and at last assembled that confederacy under the banners of *Athens*, which fought the great and decisive battle of *Chaeronea*.

'TIS true, the *Grecian* wars are regarded by historians as wars of emulation rather than of politics; and each state seems to have had more in view the honour of leading the rest than any wellgrounded hopes of authority and dominion. If we consider, indeed, the small number of inhabitants in any one republic, compar'd to the whole, the great difficulty of forming sieges in those times, and the extraordinary bravery and discipline of every freeman amongst that noble people; we shall conclude, [103] that the balance of power was of itself sufficiently secur'd in *Greece*, and needed not to be guarded with that caution, which may be requisite in other ages. But whether we ascribe the shifting sides in all the *Grecian* republics to *jealous emulation* or *cautious politics*, the effects were alike, and every prevailing power was sure to meet with a confederacy against it, and that often compos'd of its former friends and allies.

THE same principle, call it envy or prudence, which produc'd the *Ostracism* of *Athens* and *Petalism* of *Syracuse*, and expell'd every citizen, whose fame or power overtop'd the rest; the same principle, I say, naturally discover'd itself in foreign politics, and soon rais'd enemies to the leading state, however moderate in the exercise of its authority.

THE *Persian* monarch was really, in his force, a petty prince, compar'd to the *Grecian* republics; and therefore it behov'd him, from views of safety more than from emulation, to interest himself in their quarrels, and to support the weaker side in every contest. This was the advice given by *Alcibiades* to *Tissaphernes*, [*] and it prolong'd near a century the date of the *Persian* empire; till the neglect of it for a moment, after the first appearance of the aspiring genius of *Philip*, brought that lofty and frail edifice to the ground, [104] with a rapidity, of which there are few instances in the history of mankind.

THE successors of *Alexander* show'd an infinite jealousy of the balance of power; a jealousy, founded on true politics and prudence, and which preserv'd distinct for several ages the partitions made after the death of that famous conqueror. The fortune and ambition of *Antigonus* [*] threaten'd them anew with an universal monarchy; but their combination and their victory at *Ipsus* sav'd them. And in after times, we find, that, as the Eastern princes consider'd the *Greeks* and *Macedonians* as the only real military force, with whom they had any intercourse, they kept always a watchful eye over that part of the world. The *Ptolemies*, in particular, supported first *Aratus* and the *Achaeans*, and then *Cleomenes* King of *Sparta*, from no other view than as a counterbalance to the *Macedonian* monarchs. For this is the account, which *Polybius* gives of the *Egyptian* politics. [†]

THE reason, why 'tis suppos'd, that the antients were intirely ignorant of the *balance of power*, seems to be drawn from the *Roman* history more than the *Greek*; and as the transactions of the former are generally the most familiar to us, we have thence form'd all our conclusions. It must be [105] own'd, that the *Romans* never met with any such general combination or confederacy against them, as might naturally be expected from their rapid conquests and declar'd ambition; but were allow'd peaceably to subdue their neighbours, one after another, till they extended their dominion over the whole known world. Not to mention the fabulous history of their *Italic* wars [*] ; there was, [106] upon *Hannibal's* invasion of the *Roman* state, a very remarkable crisis, which ought to have call'd up the attention of all civiliz'd nations. It appear'd afterwards (nor was it difficult to be observ'd at the time[*]) that this was a contest for universal empire; and yet no prince or state seems to have been in the least alarm'd about the event or issue of the quarrel. *Philip* of *Macedon* remain'd neuter, 'till he saw the victories of *Hannibal*; and then most imprudently form'd an alliance with the conqueror, upon terms still more imprudent. He stipulated, that he was to assist the *Carthaginian* state in their conquest of *Italy*; after which they engag'd to send over forces into *Greece*, to assist him in subduing the *Grecian* commonwealths[†] .

THE *Rhodian* and *Achaean* republics are much celebrated by antient historians for their wisdom and sound policy; yet both of them assisted the *Romans* in their wars against *Philip* and *Antiochus*. And what may be esteem'd still a stronger proof, that this maxim was not familiarly known in those ages; no antient author has ever remark'd the imprudence [107] of those measures, nor has even blam'd that absurd treaty above mention'd, made by *Philip* with the *Carthaginians*. Princes and statesmen may, in all ages, be blinded in their reasonings with regard to events, before hand: But 'tis somewhat extraordinary, that historians, afterwards, shou'd not form a sounder judgment of them.

Massinissa, *Attalus*, *Prusias*, in satisfying their private passions, were, all of them, the instruments of the *Roman* greatness, and never seem to have suspected, that they were forging their own chains, while they advanc'd the conquests of their ally. A simple treaty and agreement betwixt *Massinissa* and the *Carthaginians*, so much requir'd by mutual interest, barr'd the *Romans* from all entrance into *Africa*, and preserv'd liberty to mankind.

THE only prince we meet with in the *Roman* history, who seems to have understood the balance of power, is *Hiero* king of *Syracuse*. Tho' ally of *Rome*, he sent assistance to the *Carthaginians*, during the war of the auxiliaries.

'Esteeming it requisite, (says *Polybius* [*]) both in order to retain his dominions in *Sicily*, and to preserve the *Roman* friendship, that *Carthage* shou'd be safe: Lest by its fall the remaining power shou'd be able, without contraste or opposition, to execute [108] every purpose and undertaking. And here he acted with great wisdom and prudence. For that is never, on any account, to be overlookt; nor ought such a force ever to be thrown into one hand, as to incapacitate the neighbouring states from defending their rights against it.'

Here is the aim of modern politics pointed out in express terms.

IN short, the maxim of preserving the balance of power is founded so much on common sense and obvious reasoning, that 'tis impossible it cou'd altogether have escap'd antiquity, where we find, in other particulars, so many marks of deep penetration and discernment. If it was not so generally known, and acknowledg'd as at present, it had, at least, an influence on all the wiser and more experienc'd princes and politicians. And indeed, even at present, however generally known and acknowledged, amongst speculative reasoners, it has not, in practice, an authority much more extensive, amongst those who govern the world.

AFTER the fall of the *Roman* empire, the form of government establish'd by the northern conquerors, incapacitated them, in a great measure, from farther conquests, and long maintain'd each state in its proper boundaries. But when vassalage and the feudal militia were abolish'd, mankind were anew alarm'd by the danger of universal monarchy, [109] from the union of so many kingdoms and principalities in the person of the emperor, *Charles*. But the power of the house of *Austria*, founded on extensive but divided dominions, and their riches, deriv'd chiefly from mines of gold and silver, were more likely to decay, of themselves, from internal defects, than to overthrow all the bulwarks rais'd against them. In less than a century, the force of that violent and haughty race was shatter'd, their opulence dissipated, their splendor eclips'd. A new power succeeded, more formidable to the liberties of *Europe*, possessing all the advantages of the former, and labouring under none of its defects; except a share of that spirit of bigotry and persecution, with which the house of *Austria* were so long and still are so much infatuated.

Europe has now, for above a century, remain'd on the defensive against the greatest force, that ever, perhaps, was form'd by the civil or political combination of mankind. And such is the influence of the maxim here treated of, that tho' that ambitious nation, in the five last general wars, have been victorious in four[*] , and unsuccessful only in one[†] , they have not much enlarg'd their dominions, nor acquir'd a total ascendant over *Europe*. [110] On the contrary, there remain still some hopes of maintaining the resistance so long, that the natural revolutions of human affairs, together with unforeseen events and accidents, may guard us against universal monarchy, and preserve the world from so great an evil.

IN the three last of these general wars, *Britain* has stood foremost in the glorious struggle; and she still maintains her station, as guardian of the general liberties of *Europe*, and patron of mankind. Beside her advantages of riches and situation; her people are animated with such a national spirit, and are so fully sensible of the inestimable blessings of their government, that we may hope their vigor never will languish in so necessary and so just a cause. On the contrary, if we may judge by the past, their passionate ardour seems rather to require some moderation; and they have oftener err'd from a laudable excess than from a blamable deficiency.

IN the *first* place, we seem to have been more possess'd with the antient *Greek* spirit of jealous emulation, than actuated with the prudent views of modern politics. Our wars with *France* have been begun with justice, and even, perhaps, from necessity; but have always been too far push'd, from obstinacy and passion. The same peace, which was afterwards made at *Ryswick* in 1697, was offer'd so early as the ninety two; that concluded at [111] *Utrecht* in 1712 might have been finish'd on as good conditions at *Gertruytenberg* in the eight; and we might have given at *Frankfort*, in 1743, the same terms, which we were glad to accept of at *Aix-la-Chapelle* in the forty eight. Here then we see, that above half of our wars with *France*, and all our public debts are owing more to our own imprudent vehemence, than to the ambition of our neighbours.

IN the *second* place, we are so declar'd in our opposition to *French* power, and so alert in defence of our allies, that they always reckon upon our force as upon their own; and expecting to carry on war at our expence, refuse all reasonable terms of accommodation. *Habent subjectos, tanquam suos; viles, ut alienos*. All the world knows, that the factious vote of the house of commons, in the beginning of the last parliament, along with the profest humour of the nation, made the queen of *Hungary* inflexible in her terms, and prevented that agreement with *Prussia*, which wou'd immediately have restor'd the general tranquillity of *Europe*.

IN the *third* place, we are such true combatants, that, when once engag'd, we lose all concern for ourselves and our posterity, and consider only how we may best annoy the enemy. To mortgage our revenues at so deep a rate, in wars, where we were only accessaries, was surely the most fatal delusion, [112] that a nation, who had any pretension to politics and prudence, has ever yet been guilty of. That remedy of funding, if it be a remedy, and not rather a poison, ought, in all reason, to be reserv'd to the last extremity; and no evil, but the greatest and most urgent, shou'd ever induce us to embrace so dangerous an expedient.

THESE excesses, to which we have been carry'd, are prejudicial; and may, perhaps, in time, become still more prejudicial another way, by begeting, as is usual, the opposite extreme, and rendering us totally careless and supine with regard to the fate of *Europe*. The *Athenians*, from the most bustling, intriguing, warlike people of *Greece*, finding their error in thrusting themselves into every quarrel, abandon'd all attention to foreign affairs; and in no contest ever took party on either side, except by their flatteries and complaisance to the victor.

ENORMOUS monarchies, such as *Europe*, at present, is in danger of falling into, are, probably, destructive to human nature; in their progress, in their continuance, [*] and even in their downfall, which never can be very distant from their establishment. The military genius, which aggrandiz'd [113] the monarchy, soon leaves the court, the capital, and the center of such a government; while the wars are carry'd on at a great distance, and interest so small a part of the state. The antient nobility, whose affections attach them to their sovereign, live all at court, and never will accept of military employments, which wou'd carry them to remote and barbarous frontiers, where they are distant both from their pleasure and their fortune. The arms of the state must, therefore, be trusted to mercenary strangers, without zeal, without attachment, without honour; ready on every occasion to turn them against the prince, and join each desperate malecontent, who offers pay and plunder. This is the necessary progress of human affairs: Thus human nature checks itself in its airy elevations: Thus ambition blindly labours for the destruction of the conqueror, of his family, and of every thing near and dear to him. The *Bourbons*, trusting to the support of their brave, faithful, and affectionate nobility, would push their advantage, without reserve or limitation. These, while fir'd with glory and emulation, can bear the fatigues and dangers of war: But never would submit to languish in the garrisons of *Hungary* or *Lithuania*, forgot at court, and sacrific'd to the intrigues of every minion or mistress, that approaches the prince. The troops are filled with *Cravates* and *Tartars*, *Hussars* and *Cossacs*; intermingled, perhaps, with [114] a few soldiers of fortune from the better provinces: And the melancholy fate of the *Roman* emperors, from the same causes, is renew'd, over and over again, 'till the final dissolution of the monarchy.

DISCOURSE VII.

Of Taxes. [↩](#)

THERE is a maxim, that prevails amongst those, whom, in this country, we call *ways and means men*, and who are denominated *Financiers* and *Maltotiers* in *France*; that every new tax creates a new ability in the subjects to bear it, and that each encrease of publick burthens encreases proportionably the industry of the people. This maxim is of such a nature as is most likely to be extremely abus'd, and is so much the more dangerous, that its truth cannot be altogether deny'd; but it must be own'd; when kept within certain bounds, to have some foundation in reason and experience.

WHEN a tax is laid upon commodities, that are consum'd by the common people, the necessary consequence may seem to be, that either the poor must retrench something from their way of living, or raise their wages, so as to make the burthen of the tax fall entirely upon the rich. But there is a third consequence, which very often follows upon taxes, viz. that the poor encrease their industry, perform more work, and live as well as before, without demanding more for their labour. Where taxes are moderate, are laid on gradually, and affect not the [116] necessities of life, this consequence naturally follows; and 'tis certain, that such difficulties often serve to excite the industry of a people, and render them more opulent and laborious than others, who enjoy the greatest advantages. For we may observe, as a parallel instance, that the most trading nations have not always possess the greatest extent of fertile land; but on the contrary, that they have labour'd under many natural disadvantages. *Tyre, Athens, Carthage, Rhodes, Genoa, Venice, Holland* are strong examples to this purpose. And in all history, we find only three instances of large and fertile countries, that have possess much trade, the *Netherlands, England, and France*. The two former seem to have been allur'd by the advantages of their maritime situation, and the necessity they lay under of frequenting foreign ports, in order to procure what their own climate refus'd them. And as to *France*, trade has come very late into that kingdom, and seems to have been the effect of reflection and observation in an ingenious and enterprising people, who remark'd the immense riches acquir'd by such of the neighbouring nations as cultivated navigation and commerce.

THE places mention'd by *Cicero*, [*] as possess of the greatest commerce in his time are *Alexandria, Colchos, Tyre, Sidon, Andros, Cyprus, Pamphilia, Lycia, Rhodes, Chios, Byzantium, Lesbos, Smyrna*, [117] *Miletum, Coos*. All these, except *Alexandria*, were either small islands or narrow territories. And that city ow'd its trade entirely to the happiness of its situation.

SINCE therefore some natural necessities or disadvantages may be thought favourable to industry, why may not artificial burthens have the same effect? Sir *William Temple*, [†] I am sure, ascribes the industry of the *Dutch* entirely to necessity, proceeding from their natural disadvantages; and illustrates his doctrine by a very striking comparison with *Ireland*;

‘where, (says he,) by the largeness and plenty of the soil, and scarcity of people, all things necessary to life are so cheap, that an industrious man, by two days labour, may gain enough to feed him the rest of the week: Which I take to be a very plain ground of the laziness, attributed to the people. For men naturally prefer ease before labour, and will not take pains, if they can live idle; though when, by necessity, they have been enur'd to it, they cannot leave it, being grown a custom necessary to their health and to their very entertainment: Nor perhaps is the change harder, from constant ease to labour, than from constant labour to ease.’

After which the author proceeds to confirm his doctrine, by enumerating, as above, the places, where trade has most flourish'd, in [118] antient and modern times; and which are commonly observ'd to be such narrow confin'd territories, as beget a necessity for industry.

'TIS always observ'd, in years of scarcity, if it be not extreme, that the poor labour more, and really live better, than in years of great plenty, when they indulge themselves in idleness and riot. I have been told, by a considerable manufacturer, that in the year 1740, when bread and provisions of all kinds were very dear, his workmen not only made a shift to live, but paid debts, which they had contracted in former years, that were much more favourable and abundant. [*]

THIS doctrine, therefore, with regard to taxes, may be admitted in some degree: But beware of the abuse. Taxes, like necessity, when carry'd too far, destroy industry, by engendring despair; and even before they reach this pitch, they raise the wages of the labourer and manufacturer, and heighten the price of all commodities. An attentive, disinterested legislature will observe the point, when the emolument ceases, and the prejudice begins: But as the contrary character is much more common, 'tis to be fear'd, that taxes, all over *Europe*, are multiplying to such a degree, as will entirely crush all art and industry; tho', perhaps, their first increase, along with other circumstances, [119] might contribute to the growth of these advantages.

THE best taxes are those which are levy'd upon consumptions, especially those of luxury; because such taxes are less felt by the people. They seem to be, in some measure, voluntary, since a man may chuse how far he will use the commodity, which is taxed: They are paid gradually and insensibly: And being confounded with the natural price of the commodity, they are scarcely perceiv'd by the consumers. Their only disadvantage is, that they are expensive in the levying.

TAXES upon possessions are levy'd without expence; but have every other disadvantage. Most states, however, are oblig'd to have recourse to them, in order to supply the deficiencies of the other.

BUT the most pernicious of all taxes are those which are arbitrary. They are commonly converted, by their management, into punishments on industry; and also, by their unavoidable inequality, are more grievous than by the real burthen, which they impose. 'Tis surprising, therefore, to see them have place amongst any civiliz'd people.

IN general, all poll-taxes, even when not arbitrary, which they commonly are, may be esteem'd [120] dangerous: Because it is so easy for the sovereign to add a little more, and a little more, to the sum demanded, that these taxes are apt to become altogether oppressive and intolerable. On the other hand, a duty upon commodities checks itself; and a prince will soon find, that an encrease of the impost is no encrease of his revenue. It is not easy, therefore, for a people to be altogether ruin'd by such taxes.

HISTORIANS inform us, that one of the chief causes of the destruction of the *Roman* state was the alteration, which *Constantine* introduc'd into the finances, by substituting an universal poll-tax, in lieu of almost all the tythes, customs, and excises, which formerly compos'd the revenue of the *empire*. The people, in all the provinces, were so grinded and oppress'd by the *publicans*, that they were glad to take refuge under the conquering arms of the barbarians; whose dominion, as they had fewer necessities and less art, was found preferable to the refin'd tyranny of the *Romans*.

THERE is a prevailing opinion, that all taxes, however levy'd, fall upon the land at last. Such an opinion may be useful in *Britain*, by checking the landed gentlemen, in whose hands our legislature is lodg'd, and making them preserve great regard for trade and industry. But I

must confess, that this principle, tho' first advanc'd by a celebrated writer, [121] has so little appearance of reason, that, were it not for his authority, it had never been receiv'd by any body. Every man, to be sure, is desirous of pushing off from himself the burthen of any tax, that is impos'd, and laying it upon others: But as every man has the same inclination, and is upon the defensive; no set of men can be suppos'd to prevail altogether in this contest. And why the landed gentleman shou'd be the victim of the whole, and shou'd not be able to defend himself, as well as others are, I cannot readily imagine. All tradesmen, indeed, wou'd willingly prey upon him, and divide him among them, if they cou'd: But this inclination they always have, tho' no taxes were levy'd; and the same methods, by which he guards against the imposition of tradesmen before taxes, will serve him afterwards, and make them share the burthen with him.

I SHALL conclude this subject with observing, that we have, with regard to taxes, an instance of what frequently happens in political institutions, that the consequences of things are diametrically opposite to what we shou'd expect on the first appearance. 'Tis regarded as a fundamental maxim of the *Turkish* government, that the *Grand signior*, tho' absolute master of the lives and fortunes of each individual, has no authority to impose a new tax; and every *Ottoman* prince, who has made such an attempt, either has been oblig'd to retract, [122] or has found the fatal effects of his perseverance. One wou'd imagine, that this prejudice or establish'd opinion were the firmest barrier in the world against oppression; yet'tis certain, that its effect is quite contrary. The emperor, having no regular method of encreasing his revenue, must allow all the bashas and governors to oppress and abuse the subjects: And these he squeezes after their return from their government. Whereas, if he cou'd impose a new tax, like our *European* princes, his interest wou'd so far be united with that of his people, that he wou'd immediately feel the bad effects of these disorderly levies of money, and wou'd find, that a pound, rais'd by a general imposition, wou'd have less pernicious effects, than a shilling taken in so unequal and arbitrary a manner.

DISCOURSE VIII.

Of Public Credit. ↩

IT appears to have been the common practice of antiquity, to make provision, in time of peace, for the necessities of war, and to hoard up treasures, before hand, as the instruments either of conquest or defence; without trusting to extraordinary imposts, much less to borrowing, in times of disorder and confusion. Besides the immense sums abovemention'd, [*] which were amass'd by *Athens*, and by the *Ptolemies*, and other successors of *Alexander*; we learn from *Plato*, [†] that the frugal *Lacedemonians* had also collected a great treasure; and *Arrian* [‡] and *Plutarch* [*] specify the riches, which *Alexander* got possession of on the conquest of *Susa* and *Ecbatana*, and which were reserv'd, some of them, from the time of *Cyrus*. If I remember right, the scripture also mentions the treasure of *Hezekiah* and the *Jewish* princes; as profane history does that of *Philip* and *Perseus* kings of *Macedon*. The antient republics in *Gaul* had commonly [124] large sums in reserve. [*] Every one knows the treasure seiz'd in *Rome* by *Julius Caesar*, during the civil wars; and we find afterwards, that the wiser emperors, *Augustus*, *Tiberius*, *Vespasian*, *Severus*, &c. always discover'd the prudent foresight, of saving great sums against any public exigency.

ON the contrary, our modern expedient, which has become very general, is to mortgage the public revenues, and to trust, that posterity, during peace, will pay off the incumbrances, contracted during the preceding war: And they, having before their eyes, so good an example of their wise fathers, have the same prudent reliance on their posterity; who, at last, from necessity, more than choice, are oblig'd to place the same confidence in a new posterity. But not to waste time in declaiming against a practice, which appears ruinous, beyond the evidence of a hundred demonstrations; it seems pretty apparent, that the antient maxims are, in this respect, much more prudent than the modern; even tho' the latter had been confin'd within some reasonable bounds, and had ever, in any instance, been attended with such frugality, in time of peace, as to discharge the debts incurr'd by an expensive war. For why shou'd the case be so very different betwixt the public and an individual, as to make us establish such different maxims of conduct for each? If the funds of the former be [125] greater, its necessary expences are proportionably larger; if its resources be more numerous, they are not infinite; and as its frame should be calculated for a much longer duration, than the date of a single life, or even of a family, it shou'd embrace maxims, large, durable, and generous, suitable to the suppos'd extent of its existence. To trust to chances and temporary expedients is, indeed, what the necessity of human affairs frequently reduces us to; but whoever voluntarily depend on such resources have not necessity, but their own folly, to accuse for their misfortunes, when any such befall them.

IF the abuses of treasures be dangerous, either by engaging the state in rash enterprises, or making them neglect military discipline, in confidence of their riches; the abuses of mortgaging are more certain and inevitable; poverty, impotence, and subjection to foreign powers.

ACCORDING to modern policy, war is attended with every destructive circumstance; loss of men, encrease of taxes, decay of commerce, dissipation of money, plunder by sea and land. According to antient maxims, the opening of the public treasure, as it produc'd an uncommon affluence of gold and silver, serv'd as a temporary encouragement to industry, and aton'd, in some degree, for the inevitable calamities of war.

WHAT then shall we say to the new paradox, that public encumbrances are, of themselves, advantageous, independent of the necessity of contracting them; and that any state, even tho' it were not prest by a foreign enemy, cou'd not possibly have embrac'd a wiser expedient for promoting commerce and riches, than to create funds and debts and taxes, without limitation? Discourses, such as these, might naturally have past for trials of wit among rhetoricians, like the panegyrics on folly and a fever, on *Busiris* and *Nero*; had we not seen such absurd maxims patroniz'd, by great ministers, and by a whole party among us. And these puzzling arguments, (for they deserve not the name of specious) tho' they cou'd not be the foundation of lord *Oxford's* conduct; for he had more sense; serv'd at least to keep his partizans in countenance, and perplex the understanding of the nation.

LET us examine the consequences of public debts, both in our domestic management, by their influence on commerce and industry, and in our foreign transactions, by their effects on wars and negotiations.

THERE is a word, which is here in the mouth of every body, and which, I find, has also got abroad, and is much employ'd by foreign writers, [*] [127] in imitation of the *English*; and that is CIRCULATION. This word serves as an account of every thing; and tho' I confess, that I have sought for its meaning in the present subject, ever since I was a school-boy, I have never yet been able to discover it. What possible advantage is there which the nation can reap by the easy transference of stock from hand to hand? Or is there any paralel to be drawn from the circulation of other commodities, to that of chequer notes and *India* bonds? Where a manufacturer has a quick sale of his goods to the merchant, the merchant to the shop-keeper, the shop-keeper to his customers; this enlivens industry, and gives new encouragement to the first dealer or the manufacturer and all his tradesmen, and makes them produce more and better commodities of the same species. A stagnation is here pernicious, wherever it happens; because it operates backwards, and stops or benumbs the industrious hand in its production of what is useful to human life. But what production we owe to *Change-alley*, or even what consumption, except that of coffee, and pen, ink and paper, I have not yet learn'd; nor can one foresee the loss or decay of any one beneficial commerce or commodity, tho' that place and all its inhabitants were for ever bury'd in the ocean.

BUT tho' this term, circulation, has never been explain'd by those, who insist so much on the advantages [128] that result from it, there seems, however, to be some benefit of a similar kind, arising from our incumbrances: As indeed, what human evil is there, which is not attended with some advantage? This we shall endeavour to explain, that we may estimate the weight we ought to allow it.

PUBLIC securities are with us become a kind of money, and pass as readily at the current price as gold or silver. Wherever any profitable undertaking offers itself, however expensive, there are never wanting hands enow to embrace it; nor need a trader, who has sums in the public stocks, fear to launch out into the most extensive trade; since he is possess of funds, which will answer the most sudden demand that can be made upon him. No merchant thinks it necessary to keep by him any considerable cash. Bank stock, or *India* bonds, especially the latter, serve to all the same purposes; because he can dispose of them, or pledge them to a banker, in a quarter of an hour; and at the same time, they are not idle, even when in his scritoire, but bring him in a constant revenue. In short, our national debts furnish merchants with a species of money, that is continually multiplying in their hands, and produces sure gain, beside the profits of their commerce. This must enable them to trade upon less profit. The small profit of the merchant renders the commodity cheaper; causes a greater consumption; quickens the labour of the [129] common people; and helps to spread arts and industry thro' the whole society.

THERE are also, we may observe, in *England*, and in all states, that have both commerce and public debts, a set of men, who are half merchants, half stock-holders, and may be suppos'd willing to trade for small profits; because commerce is not their principal or sole support, and their revenues in the funds are a sure resource for themselves and their families. Were there no funds, great merchants wou'd have no expedient for realizing or securing any part of their profit, but by making purchases of land; and land has many disadvantages in comparison of funds. Requiring more care and inspection, it divides the time and attention of the merchant; upon any tempting offer or extraordinary accident in trade, it is not so easily converted into money; and as it attracts too much, both by the many natural pleasures it affords, and the authority it gives, it soon converts the citizen into the country gentleman. More men, therefore, with large stocks and incomes may naturally be suppos'd to continue in trade, where there are public debts: And this, it must be own'd, is of some advantage to commerce, by diminishing its profits, promoting circulation, and encouraging industry. [*]

[130]

BUT in opposition to these two favourable circumstances, perhaps of no very great importance, weigh the many disadvantages, that attend our public debts, in the whole *interior* oeconomy of the state: You will find no comparison betwixt the ill and the good, that result from them.

First, 'TIS certain, that national debts cause a mighty confluence of people and riches to the capital, by the great sums, which are levy'd in the provinces to pay the interest of those debts; and perhaps too, by the advantages in trade above mention'd, which they give the merchants in the capital above the rest of the kingdom. The question is, whether, in our case, it be for the public interest, that so many privileges shou'd be conferr'd on *London*, which has already arriv'd at such an enormous size, and seems still encreasing. Some men are apprehensive of the consequences. For my part, I cannot forbear thinking, that tho' the head is undoubtedly too big for the body, yet that great city is so happily situated, that its excessive bulk causes less inconvenience, than even a smaller capital to a greater kingdom. There is more difference betwixt [121] the prices of all provisions in *Paris* and *Languedoc* than betwixt those in *London* and *Yorkshire*.

Secondly, PUBLIC stocks, being a kind of papercredit, have all the disadvantages attending that species of money. They banish gold and silver from the most considerable commerce of the state, reduce them to common circulation, and by that means render all provisions and labour dearer than otherwise they wou'd be.

Thirdly, THE taxes, which are levy'd to pay the interest of these debts, are a check upon industry, heighten the price of labour, and are an oppression on the poorer sort.

Fourthly, As foreigners possess a share of our national funds, they render the public, in a manner, tributary to them, and may in time occasion the transport of our people and our industry.

Fifthly, THE greatest part of public stock being always in the hands of idle people, who live on their revenue, our funds give great encouragement to an useless and inactive life.

BUT tho' the injury, that arises to commerce and industry from our public funds, will appear, upon balancing the whole, very considerable, it is trivial in comparison of the prejudice, that results [132] to the state, consider'd as a body politic, which must support itself in the society of nations, and have various transactions with other states, in wars and negotiations. The ill, there, is pure and unmixt, without any favourable circumstance to atone for it: And 'tis an ill too, of a nature the highest and most important.

WE have indeed been told, that the public is no weaker upon account of its debts; since they are mostly due amongst ourselves, and bring as much property to one as they take from another. 'Tis like transferring money from the right hand to the left; which leaves the person neither richer nor poorer than before. Such loose reasonings and specious comparisons will always pass, where we judge not upon principles. I ask, Is it possible, in the nature of things, to overburthen a nation with taxes, even where the sovereign resides amongst them? The very doubt seems extravagant; since 'tis requisite, in every commonwealth, that there be a certain proportion observ'd betwixt the laborious and the idle part of it. But if all our present taxes be mortgag'd, must we not invent new ones? And may not this matter be carry'd to a length, that is ruinous and destructive?

IN every nation, there are always some methods of levying money more easy than others, suitable to the way of living of the people, and the commodities [133] they make use of. In *Britain*, the excises upon malt and beer afford a very large revenue; because the operations of malting and brewing are very tedious and are impossible to be conceal'd; and at the same time, these commodities are not so absolutely necessary to life, as that the raising their price wou'd very much affect the poorer sort. These taxes being all mortgag'd, what difficulty to find new ones! What vexation and ruin of the poor!

DUTIES upon consumptions are more equal and easy than those upon possessions. What a loss to the public, that the former are all exhausted, and that we must have recourse to the more grievous method of levying taxes!

WERE all the proprietors of land only stewards to the public; must not necessity force them to practise all the arts of oppression, us'd by stewards, where the absence and negligence of the proprietor render them secure against enquiry?

'TWILL scarce be asserted, that no bounds ought ever to be set to national debts, and that the public wou'd be no weaker, were 12 or 15 shillings in the pound, land tax, mortgag'd, along with all the present customs and excises. There is something, therefore, in the case, beside the mere transferring of property from one hand to another. In 500 years, [134] the posterity of those, now in the coaches, and of those upon the boxes, will probably have chang'd places, without affecting the public by these revolutions.

I MUST confess, that there is a strange supineness, from long custom, crept into all ranks of men, with regard to public debts; not unlike what divines so vehemently complain of with regard to their religious doctrines. We all own, that the most sanguine imagination cannot hope, either that this or any future ministry will be possess'd of such rigid and steady frugality, as to make any considerable progress in the payment of our debts, or that the situation of foreign affairs will, for any long time, allow them leisure and tranquillity, sufficient for such an undertaking. [*] *What then is to become of us?* Were we ever so good Christians, and ever so resign'd to providence; this, methinks, were a curious question, even consider'd as a speculative one, and what it might not be altogether impossible [135] to form some conjectural solution of. The events here will depend little upon the contingencies of battles, negotiations, intrigues, and factions. There seems to be a natural progress of things, which may guide our reasoning. As it wou'd have requir'd but a moderate share of prudence, when we first began this practice of mortgaging, to have foretold, from the nature of men and of ministers, that things wou'd necessarily be carry'd to the length we see; so now that they have at last happily reach'd it, it may not be difficult to guess at the consequence. It must, indeed, be one of these two events; either the nation must destroy public credit, or public credit will destroy the nation. 'Tis impossible they can both subsist, after the manner they have been hitherto manag'd, in this, as well as in some other nations.

THERE was, indeed, a scheme for the payment of our debts, which was propos'd by an excellent citizen, Mr. *Hutchinson*, above 30 years ago, and which was much approv'd of by some men of sense, but never was likely to take effect. He asserted, that there was a fallacy in imagining, that the public ow'd this debt; for that really every individual ow'd a proportional share of it, and paid, in his taxes, a proportional share of the interest, beside the expences of levying these taxes. Had we not better, then, says he, make a proportional distribution of the debt amongst us, and each of us contribute a [136] sum suitable to his property, and by that means, discharge at once all our funds and public mortgages? He seems not to have consider'd, that the laborious poor pay a considerable part of the taxes by their annual consumptions, tho' they cou'd not advance, at once, a proportional part of the sum requir'd. Not to mention, that property in money and stock in trade might easily be conceal'd or disguis'd; and that visible property in lands and houses wou'd really at last answer for the whole: An inequality and oppression, which never wou'd be submitted to. But tho' this project is never likely to take place; 'tis not altogether improbable, that, when the nation become heartily sick of their debts, and are cruelly oppress'd by them, some daring projector may arise, with visionary schemes for their discharge. And as public credit will begin, by that time, to be a little frail, the least touch will destroy it, as happen'd in *France*; and in this manner, it will *dye of the doctor*. [*]

[137]

BUT 'tis more probable, that the breach of national faith will be the necessary effect of wars, defeats, misfortunes, and public calamities, or even perhaps of victories and conquests. I must confess, when I see princes and states fighting and quarreling, amidst their debts, funds, and public mortgages, it always brings to my mind a match of cudgelplaying fought in a *China* shop. How can it be expected, that sovereigns will spare a species of property, which is pernicious to themselves and to the public, when they have so little compassion on lives and properties, which are useful to both? Let the time come (and surely it will come) when the new funds, created for the exigencies of the year, are not subscrib'd to, and raise not the money projected. Suppose, either that the cash of the nation is exhausted; or that our faith, which has been hitherto so ample, begins to fail us. Suppose, that, in this distress, the nation is threaten'd with an invasion, a rebellion is suspected or broke out at home, a squadron cannot be equipt for want of pay, victuals, or repairs; or even a foreign subsidy cannot be advanc'd. What must a prince or minister do in such an emergence? The right of [138] self-preservation is unalienable in every individual, much more in every community. And the folly of our statesmen must then be greater than the folly of those who first contracted debt, or what is more, than that of those who trusted, or continue to trust this security, if these statesmen have the means of safety in their hands, and do not employ it. The funds, created and mortgag'd, will, by that time, bring in a large yearly revenue, sufficient for the defence and security of the nation: Money is perhaps lying in the exchequer, ready for the discharge of the quarterly interest: Necessity calls, fear urges, reason exhorts, compassion alone exclaims: The money will immediately be seiz'd for the current service, under the most solemn protestations, perhaps, of being immediately replac'd. But no more is requisite. The whole fabric, already tottering, falls to the ground, and buries thousands in its ruins. And this, I think, may be called the *natural death* of public credit: For to this period it tends as naturally as an animal body to its dissolution and destruction. [*]

[139]

THESE two events, suppos'd above, are calamitous, but not the most calamitous. Thousands are thereby sacrific'd to the safety of millions. But we are not without danger, that the contrary event may take place, and that millions may be sacrific'd, for ever, to the temporary safety of thousands.[*] Our [140] popular government, perhaps, will render it difficult or dangerous for a minister to venture on so desperate an expedient, as that of a

voluntary bankruptcy. And tho' the house of lords be altogether compos'd of the proprietors of lands, and the house of commons chiefly; and consequently neither of them can be suppos'd to have great property in the funds; yet the connexions of the members may be so great with the proprietors, as to render them more tenacious of public faith, than prudence, policy, or even justice, strictly speaking, requires. And perhaps too, our foreign enemies, or rather enemy (for we have but one to dread) may be so politic as to discover, that our safety lyes in despair, and may not, therefore, show the danger, open and barefac'd, 'till it be inevitable. The balance of power in *Europe*, our grandfathers, our fathers, and we, have all justly esteem'd too unequal to be preserv'd without our attention and assistance. But our [141] children, weary with the struggle, and fetter'd with incumbrances, may sit down secure, and see their neighbours oppress and conquer'd; till at last, they themselves and their creditors lye both at the mercy of the conqueror. And this may properly enough be denominated the *violent death* of our public credit.

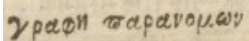
THESE seem to be the events, which are not very remote, and which reason foresees as clearly almost as she can do any thing, that lyes in the womb of time. And tho' the antients maintain'd, that, in order to reach the gift of prophesy, a certain divine fury or madness was requisite; one may safely affirm, that, in order to deliver such prophesies as these, no more is necessary, than merely to be in one's senses, free from the influence of popular madness and delusion.

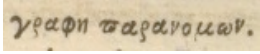
DISCOURSE IX.

Of some remarkable customs. ↪

I SHALL observe three remarkable customs in three celebrated governments; and shall conclude from the whole, that all general maxims in politics ought to be establish'd with great reserve, and that irregular and extraordinary appearances are frequently discover'd, in the moral, as well as in the physical world. The former, perhaps, we can better account for, after they happen, from springs and principles, of which every one has, within himself, or from obvious observation, the strongest assurance and conviction: But 'tis often fully as impossible for human prudence, before hand, to foresee and foretell them.

I. ONE wou'd think it essential to every supreme council or assembly, which debates, that entire liberty of speech shou'd be granted to every member, and that all motions or reasonings shou'd be receiv'd, which can any way tend to illustrate the point under deliberation. One wou'd conclude, with still greater assurance, that, after a motion was made, which was voted and approv'd by that assembly, in which the legislature is lodg'd, the member, who made the motion, must, for ever, be [144] exempted from farther trial and enquiry. But no political maxim can, at first sight, appear more undisputable, than that he must, at least, be secur'd from all inferior jurisdiction; and that nothing less, than the same supreme legislative assembly, in their subsequent meetings, cou'd render him accountable for those motions and harangues, which they had before approv'd of. But these axioms, however irrefragable they may appear, have all fail'd in the *Athenian* government, from causes and principles too, which appear almost inevitable.

BY the  or *indictment of illegality*, (tho' it has not been remark'd by antiquaries or commentators) any man was try'd and punish'd, in a common court of judicature, for any law, which had pass'd upon his motion, in the assembly of the people, if that law appeared to the court unjust or prejudicial to the public. Thus *Demosthenes*, finding that ship money was levy'd irregularly, and that the poor bore the same burthen as the rich, in equipping the gallies, corrected this inequality by a very useful law, which proportion'd the expence to the revenue and income of each individual. He mov'd for this law in the assembly; he prov'd its advantages;[*] he convinc'd the people, the only legislature in *Athens*; the law pass'd; and was carried into execution: And yet he was try'd in a criminal court for that law, upon the complaint [145] of the rich, who resented the alteration he had introduc'd into the finances.[*] He was, indeed, acquitted, upon proving anew the usefulness of his law.

Ctesiphon mov'd in the assembly of the people, that particular honours shou'd be conferr'd on *Demosthenes*, as on a citizen affectionate and useful to the commonwealth: The people, convinc'd of this truth, voted those honours: Yet was *Ctesiphon* try'd by the . It was asserted, amongst other topics, that *Demosthenes* was not a good citizen, nor affectionate to the commonwealth: And the orator was called upon to defend his friend, and consequently himself; which he executed by that sublime piece of eloquence, that has ever since been the admiration of mankind.

AFTER the fatal battle of *Chaeronea*, a law was past, upon the motion of *Hyperides*, giving liberty to slaves, and enrolling them in the troops.[†] On account of this law, the orator was afterwards try'd by the indictment above mention'd; and defended himself, amongst other topics, by that stroke celebrated by *Plutarch* and *Longinus*. *It was not I*, [146] said he, *that mov'd for this law: It was the necessities of war; it was the battle of Chaeronea*. The orations

of *Demosthenes* abound with many instances of trials of this nature, and prove clearly, that nothing was more commonly practis'd.

THE *Athenian* democracy was such a mobbish government, as we can scarce form a notion of in the present age of the world. The whole collective body of the people voted in every law, without any limitation of property, without any distinction of rank, without controul from any magistracy or senate;[*] and consequently with little regard to order, justice, or prudence. The *Athenians* soon became sensible of the mischiefs attending this constitution: But being averse to the checking themselves by any rule or restriction, they resolv'd, at least, to check their demagogues or counsellors, by the fear of future punishment and enquiry. They accordingly instituted this remarkable law; a law esteem'd so essential to their government, that *Aeschines* insists on it, as a known truth, that were it abolish'd or neglected, it were impossible for the democracy to subsist.[†]

[147]

THE people fear'd not any ill consequences to liberty from the authority of the criminal courts; because these were nothing but very numerous juries, chosen by lot from amongst the people. And they consider'd themselves justly as in a state of pupillage, where they had an authority, after they came to the use of reason, not only to retract and controul whatever had been determin'd, but to punish any guardian for measures, which they had embrac'd by his persuasion. The same law had place in *Thebes*; [*] and for the same reason.

IT appears to have been an usual practice in *Athens*, on the establishment of any law, esteem'd very useful or popular, to prohibit for ever its abrogation and repeal. Thus the demagogue, who diverted all the public revenues to the support of shows and spectacles, made it criminal so much as to move for a reversal of this law.[†] Thus *Leptines* mov'd for a law, not only to recal all the immunities formerly granted, but to deprive the people for the future of the power of granting any more.[‡] Thus all bills of attainder[*] were forbid, or laws that affect one *Athenian*, without extending to the whole [148] commonwealth. These absurd clauses, by which the legislature vainly attempted to bind itself for ever, proceeded from an universal sense of the levity and inconstancy of the people.

II. A WHEEL within a wheel, such as we observe in the *German* empire, is consider'd by lord *Shaftsbury*, [†] as an absurdity in politics: But what must we say to two equal wheels, which govern the same political machine, without any mutual check, controul, or subordination; and yet preserve the greatest harmony and concord? To establish two distinct legislatures, each of which possesses full and absolute authority within itself, and stands in no need of the other's assistance, in order to give validity to its acts; this may appear, before hand, altogether impracticable, as long as men are actuated by the passions of ambition, emulation, and avarice, which have been hitherto their chief governing principles. And shou'd I assert, that the state I have in my eye was divided by two distinct factions, each of which predominated in a distinct legislature, and yet produc'd no clashing of these independent powers; the supposition may appear almost incredible. And if, to augment the paradox, I shou'd affirm, that this disjointed, irregular government was the most active, triumphant, and illustrious commonwealth, that ever yet appear'd on [149] the stage of the world; I shou'd certainly be told, that such a political chimera was as absurd as any vision of the poets. But there is no need for searching long, in order to prove the reality of the foregoing suppositions: For this was actually the case with the *Roman* republic.

THE legislative power was there lodged both in the *comitia centuriata* and *comitia tributa*. In the former, 'tis well known, the people voted accordingly to their *census*; so that when the first class was unanimous, (as commonly happen'd) tho' it contain'd not, perhaps, the hundredth part of the commonwealth, it determin'd the whole; and with the authority of

the senate, establish'd a law. In the latter, every vote was alike; and as the authority of the senate was not there requisite, the lower people entirely prevail'd, and gave law to the whole state. In all party divisions, at first betwixt the *Patricians* and *Plebeians*, afterwards betwixt the nobles and the people, the interest of the Aristocracy was predominant in the first legislature; that of the Democracy in the second: The one cou'd always destroy what the other had establish'd: Nay, the one, by a sudden and unforeseen motion, might take the start of the other; and totally annihilate its rival, by a vote, which, from the nature of the constitution, had the full authority of a law. But no such contest or struggle is observ'd in the history of *Rome*: No instance of a quarrel betwixt these two legislatures; [150] tho' many betwixt the parties, that govern'd in each. Whence arose this concord, which may seem so extraordinary?

THE legislature establish'd at *Rome*, by the authority of *Servius Tullius*, was the *comitia centuriata*, which, after the expulsion of the kings, render'd the government, for some time, altogether aristocratical. But the people, having numbers and force on their side, and being elated with frequent conquests and victories in their foreign wars, always prevail'd when push'd to extremities, and first extorted from the senate the magistracy of the tribunes, and then the legislative power of the *comitia tributa*. It then behov'd the nobles to be more careful than ever not to provoke the people. For beside the force, which the latter were always possess'd of, they had now got possession of legal authority, and cou'd instantly break in pieces any order or institution, which directly oppos'd them. By intrigue, by influence, by money, by combination, and by the respect paid their character; the nobles might often prevail, and direct the whole machine of government: But had they openly set their *comitia centuriata* in opposition to the *tributa*, they had soon lost the advantage of that institution, along with their consuls, praetors, ediles, and all the magistrates elected by it. But the *comitia tributa*, not having the same reason for respecting the *centuriata*, frequently repeal'd laws favourable to [151] the aristocracy: They limited the authority of the nobles; protected the people from oppression; and controul'd the actions of the senate and magistracy. The *centuriata* found it convenient always to submit; and tho' equal in authority, yet being inferior in power, durst never directly give any shock to the other legislature, either by repealing its laws, or establishing laws, which, it foresaw, wou'd soon be repeal'd by it.

NO instance is found of any opposition or struggle betwixt these *comitia*; except one slight attempt of this kind, mention'd by *Appian* in the 3d book of his civil wars. *Mark Anthony* resolving to deprive *Decimus Brutus* of the government of *Cisalpine Gaul*, rail'd in the *Forum*, and call'd one of the *comitia*, in order to prevent the meeting of the other, which had been order'd by the senate. But affairs were then fallen into such confusion, and the *Roman* constitution was so near its last extremity, that no inference can be drawn from such an expedient. This contest, besides, was founded more on form than party. 'Twas the senate, who order'd the *comitia tributa*, that they might obstruct the meeting of the *centuriata*, which, by the constitution, or at least forms of the government, cou'd alone dispose of provinces.

Cicero was recall'd by the *comitia centuriata*; tho' banish'd by the *tributa*, that is, by a *plebiscitum*: [152] But his banishment, we may observe, never was consider'd as a legal deed, arising from the free choice and inclination of the people. It was always ascrib'd to the violence alone of *Clodius*, and the disorders introduc'd by him into the government.

III. THE *third* custom we propos'd to observe regards *England*; and tho' it be not so important as those, which we have pointed out in *Athens* and *Rome*, it is no less singular and remarkable. 'Tis a maxim in politics, which we readily admit as undisputed and universal, that a power, however great, when granted by law to an eminent magistrate, is not so dangerous to liberty, as an authority, however inconsiderable, which he acquires from violence and usurpation. For besides that the law always limits every power, which it bestows; the very receiving it as a concession establishes the authority whence it is deriv'd,

and preserves the harmony of the constitution. By the same right that one prerogative is assum'd without law, another may also be claim'd, and another, with still greater facility: While the first usurpations both serve as precedents to the following, and give force to maintain them. Hence the heroism of *Hampden*, who sustain'd the whole violence of royal prosecution rather than pay a tax of 20 shillings, not impos'd by parliament: Hence the care of all *English* patriots to guard against the first encroachments [153] of the crown: And hence alone the existence, at this day, of *English* liberty.

THERE is, however, one occasion, wherein the parliament has departed from this maxim; and that is, in the *pressing of seamen*. The exercise of an illegal power is here tacitly permitted in the crown; and tho' it has frequently been deliberated on, how that power might be render'd legal, and under what restrictions it might be granted to the sovereign, no safe expedient cou'd ever be propos'd for that purpose, and the danger to liberty always appear'd greater from law than from usurpation. While this power is exercis'd to no other end than to man the navy, men willingly submit to it, from a sense of its use and necessity; and the sailors, who are alone affected by it, find no body to support them, in claiming the rights and privileges, which the law grants, without distinction, to all *English* subjects. But were this power, on any occasion, made an instrument of faction or ministerial tyranny, the opposite faction, and indeed all lovers of their country, wou'd immediately take the alarm, and support the injur'd party: The liberty of *Englishmen* wou'd be asserted: Juries wou'd be implacable; and the tools of tyranny, acting both against law and equity, wou'd meet with the severest vengeance. On the other hand, were the parliament to grant such an authority, they wou'd probably fall into one of these two inconveniencies: They wou'd either bestow it under so [154] many restrictions as wou'd make it lose its effects, by cramping the authority of the crown; or they wou'd render it so large and comprehensive, as might give occasion to great abuses, for which we cou'd, in that case, have no remedy. The very illegality of the power, at present, prevents its abuses, by affording so easy a remedy against them.

I PRETEND not, by this reasoning, to exclude all possibility of contriving a register for seamen, which might mann the navy, without being dangerous to liberty. I only observe, that no satisfactory scheme of that nature has yet been propos'd. Rather than adopt any project hitherto invented, we continue a practice seemingly the most absurd and unaccountable. Authority, in times of full internal peace and concord, is arm'd against law: A continu'd and open usurpation in the crown is permitted, amidst the greatest jealousy and watchfulness in the people; nay proceeding from those very principles: Liberty, in a country of the highest liberty, is left entirely to its own defence, without any countenance or protection: The wild state of nature is renew'd, in one of the most civiliz'd societies of mankind: And great violences and disorders, amongst the people, the most humane and the best natur'd, are committed with impunity; while the one party pleads obedience to the supreme magistrate, the other the permission of fundamental laws.

DISCOURSE X.

Of the Populousness of antient Nations. [*] ↩

THERE is very little ground, either from reason or experience, to conclude the universe eternal or incorruptible. The continual and rapid motion of matter, the violent revolutions with which every part is agitated, the changes remark'd in the heavens, the plain traces, as well as tradition, of an universal deluge or general convulsion of the elements; all these prove strongly the mortality of this fabric of the world, and its passage, by corruption or dissolution, from one state or order to another. It must, therefore, have its infancy, youth, manhood, and old age, as well as each individual form, which it contains, and 'tis probable, that, in all these variations, man, equally with every animal [156] and vegetable, will partake. In the flourishing age of the world, it may be expected, that the human species shou'd possess greater vigour both of mind and body, more prosperous health, higher spirits, longer life, and a stronger inclination and power of generation. But if the general system of things, and human society of course, have any such gradual revolutions, they are too slow to be discernible in that short period, which is comprehended by history and tradition. Stature and force of body, length of life, even courage and extent of genius, seem hitherto to have been naturally, in all ages, pretty much the same. The arts and sciences, indeed, have flourish'd in one period, and have decay'd in another: But we may observe, that at the time when they rose to greatest perfection amongst one people, they were perhaps totally unknown to all the neighbouring nations; and tho' they universally decay'd in one age, yet in a succeeding generation they again reviv'd, and diffus'd themselves over the world. As far, therefore, as observation reaches, there is no universal difference discernible in the human species; and tho' it were allow'd, that the universe, like an animal body, had a natural progress from infancy to old age, yet as it must still be uncertain, whether, at present, it be advancing to its point of perfection, or declining from it, we cannot thence presuppose any decay in human nature.[*] To [157] prove, therefore, or account for the greater populousness of antiquity, by the imaginary youth or vigour of the world, will scarce be admitted by any just reasoner. These *general physical* causes ought entirely to be excluded from that question.

THERE are indeed some more *particular physical* causes of great importance. Diseases are mention'd in antiquity, which are almost unknown to modern medicine; and new diseases have arisen and propagated themselves, of which there are no traces in ancient history. And in this particular, we may observe, upon comparison, that the disadvantage is very much on the side of the moderns. Not to mention some others of less importance, the small pox commits such ravages, as would almost alone account for the great superiority suppos'd in antient times. The tenth or the twelfth part of mankind, destroy'd every generation, shou'd make a vast difference, it may be thought, in the numbers of the people; and when join'd to venereal distempers, a new plague diffus'd every where, this disease is perhaps equivalent, by its constant operation, to the three great scourges of mankind, war, [158] pestilence, and famine. Were it certain, therefore, that antient times were more populous than the present, and cou'd no moral causes be assign'd for so great a change; these physical causes alone, in the opinion of many, wou'd be sufficient to give us satisfaction on that head.

BUT is it certain, that antiquity was so much more populous, as is pretended? The extravagancies of *Vossius*, with regard to this subject, are well known: But an author of much greater genius and discernment has ventur'd to affirm, that, according to the best computations, which these subjects will admit of, there are not now the fiftieth part of mankind on the face of the earth, which existed in the time of *Julius Caesar*. [*] It may easily

be observ'd, that the comparisons, in this case, must be very imperfect; even tho' we confine ourselves to the scene of antient history, *Europe* and the nations about the *Mediterranean*. We know not exactly the numbers of any *European* kingdom, or even city, at present: How can we pretend to calculate those of antient cities and states, where historians have left us such imperfect traces? For my part, the matter appears to me so uncertain, that, as I intend to throw together some reflexions on that head, I shall intermingle the enquiry concerning *causes* with that concerning *facts*; [159] which ought never to be admitted, where the facts can be ascertain'd with any tolerable assurance. We shall *first* consider, whether it be probable, from what we know of the situation of society in both periods, that antiquity must have been more populous. *Secondly*, Whether in reality it was so. If I can make appear, that the conclusion is not so certain, as is pretended, in favour of antiquity, 'tis all I aspire to.

IN general, we may observe, that the question with regard to the comparative populousness of ages or kingdoms implies very important consequences, and commonly determines concerning the preference of their whole police, manners, and constitution of government. For as there is in all men, both male and female, a desire and power of generation more active than is ever universally exerted, the restraints, which it lyes under, must proceed from some difficulties in mens situation, which it belongs to a wise legislature carefully to observe and remove. Almost every man, who thinks he can maintain a family, will have one; and the human species, at this rate of propagation, wou'd more than double every generation, were every one coupled as soon as he comes to the age of puberty. How fast do mankind multiply in every colony or new settlement; where it is an easy matter to provide for a family; and where men are no way straitned or confin'd, as in long establish'd governments? History [160] tells us frequently of plagues, that have swept away the third or fourth part of a people: Yet in a generation or two, the destruction was not perceiv'd; and the society had again acquir'd their former number. The lands, that were cultivated, the houses built, the commodities rais'd, the riches acquir'd, enabled the people, who escap'd, immediately to marry, and to rear families, which supply'd the place of those who had perish'd. [*] And for a like reason, every wise, just, and mild government, by rendering the condition of its subjects easy and secure, will always abound most in people, as well as in commodities and riches. A country, indeed, whose climate and soil are fitted for vines, will naturally be more populous than one, which produces only corn, and that more populous than one, which is only fitted for pasturage. But if every thing else be equal, it seems natural to expect, that whereever there are most happiness and virtue and the wisest institutions, there will also be most people.

THE question, therefore, concerning the populousness of antient and modern times being allow'd of great importance, 'twill be requisite, if we wou'd [161] bring it to some determination, to compare both the *domestic* and *political* situation of these two periods, in order to judge of the facts by their moral causes; which is the first view, in which we propos'd to consider them.

THE chief difference betwixt the *domestic* oeconomy of the antients and that of the moderns consists in the practice of slavery, which prevail'd amongst the former, and which has been abolish'd for some centuries throughout the greatest part of *Europe*. Some passionate admirers of the antients and zealous partizans of civil liberty (for these sentiments, as they are both of them, in the main, extremely just, are also found to be almost inseparable) cannot forbear regretting the loss of this institution; and whilst they brand all submission to the government of a single person, with the harsh denomination of slavery, they wou'd gladly subject the greatest part of mankind to real slavery and subjection. But to one, who considers coolly of the subject, it will appear, that human nature, in general, really enjoys more liberty at present, in the most arbitrary government of *Europe*, than it ever did during the most flourishing period of antient times. As much as submission to a petty prince, whose

dominions extend not beyond a single city, is more grievous than obedience to a great monarch; so much is domestic slavery more cruel and oppressive than any civil subjection whatsoever. [162] The more the master is remov'd from us in place and rank, the greater liberty do we enjoy; the less are our actions inspected and controul'd; and the fainter that cruel comparison becomes betwixt our own subjection, and the freedom and even dominion of another. The remains, that are left of domestic slavery, in our colonies, and amongst some *European* nations, wou'd never surely create a desire of rendering it more universal. The little humanity commonly observ'd in persons, accusom'd, from their infancy, to exercise so great authority over their fellow creatures, and to trample upon human nature, were sufficient alone to disgust us with that authority. Nor can a more probable reason be given for the severe, I might say, barbarous, manners of antient times, than the practice of domestic slavery; by which every man of rank was render'd a petty tyrant, and educated amidst the flattery, submission, and low debasement of his slaves.

ACCORDING to the antient practice, all checks were on the inferior, to restrain him to the duty of submission; none on the superior, to engage him to the reciprocal duties of gentleness and humanity. In modern times, a bad servant finds not easily a good master, nor a bad master a good servant; and the checks are mutual, suitable to the inviolate and eternal laws of reason and equity.

[163]

THE custom of exposing old, useless, or sick slaves in an island of the *Tyber*, there to starve, seems to have been pretty common in *Rome*; and whoever recover'd, after having been so expos'd, had his liberty given him, by an edict of the emperor *Claudius*; where it was likewise forbid to kill any slave, merely for old age or sickness.[*] But supposing, that this edict was strictly obey'd, wou'd it better the domestic treatment of slaves, or render their lives much more comfortable? We may imagine what others wou'd practise, when it was the profest maxim of the elder *Cato* to sell his superannuated slaves for any price, rather than maintain what he esteem'd an useless burthen.[†]

THE *ergastula* or dungeons, where slaves in chains were beat to work, were very common all over *Italy*. *Columella* [‡] advises, that they be always built under ground; and recommends[‡] it as the duty of a careful overseer to call over every day the names of these slaves, like the mustering of a regiment or ship's company, in order to know presently when any of them had deserted. A proof of the frequency of these *ergastula*, and of the great number of slaves confin'd in them. *Partem Italiae ergastula a solitudine vindicant*, says *Livy*.

[164]

ACHAIN'D slave for a porter was usual in *Rome*, as appears from *Ovid*, [*] and other authors.[‡] Had not these people shaken off all sense of compassion towards that unhappy part of their species, wou'd they have presented all their friends, at the first entrance, with such an image of the severity of the master, and misery of the slave?

NOTHING so common in all trials, even of civil causes, as to call for the evidence of slaves; which was always extorted by the most exquisite torments. *Demosthenes* says,[‡] that where it was possible to produce, for the same fact, either freemen or slaves as witnesses, the judges always prefer'd the torturing of slaves, as a more certain and infallible evidence.[‡]

Seneca draws a picture of that disorderly luxury, which changes day into night and night into day, and inverts every stated hour of every office in life. Amongst other circumstances, such as displacing the meals and time of bathing, he mentions, that, regularly, about the third hour of the night, the [165] neighbours of one, who indulges this false refinement, hear the noise of whips and lashes; and upon enquiry, find he is then taking an account of the conduct

of his servants, and giving them due correction and discipline. This is not remark'd as an instance of cruelty, but only of disorder, which, even in actions the most usual and methodical, changes the fixt hours, that an establish'd custom had assign'd them. [*]

BUT our present business is only to consider the influence of slavery on the populousness of a state. 'Tis pretended, that, in this particular, the antient practice has infinitely the advantage, and was the the chief cause of that extreme populousness, which [166] is suppos'd in those times. At present, all masters discourage the marrying of their male servants, and admit not by any means the marriage of the female, who are then suppos'd altogether incapacitated for their service. But where the property of the servants is lodg'd in the master, their marriage and sertility form his riches, and bring him a succession of slaves that supply the place of those, whom age and infirmity have disabled. He encourages, therefore, their propagation, as much as that of his cattle; rears the young with the same care; and educates them to some art or calling, which may render them more useful or valuable to him. The opulent are, by this policy, interested in the being at least, tho' not the well-being of the poor; and enrich themselves by encreasing the number and industry of those, who are subjected to them. Each man, being a sovereign in his own family, has the same interest with regard to it, as the prince with regard to the state; and has not, like the prince, any opposite motives of ambition or vain-glory, which may lead him to depopulate his little sovereignty. All of it is, at all times, under his eye; and he has leisure to inspect the most minute detail of the marriage and education of his subjects. [*]

[167]

SUCH are the consequences of domestic slavery, according to the first aspect and appearance of things: But if we enter deeper into the subject, we shall perhaps find reason to retract our hasty determinations. The comparison is shocking betwixt the management of human creatures and that of cattle; but being extremely just, when apply'd to the present subject, it may be proper to trace the consequences of it. At the capital, near all great cities, in all populous, rich, industrious provinces, few cattle are bred. Provisions, lodging, attendance, labour are there dear; and men find better their account in buying the cattle, after they come to a certain age, from the remoter and cheaper countries. These are consequently the only breeding countries for cattle; and by a parity of reason, for men too, when the latter are put on the same footing with the former. To rear a child in *London*, till he cou'd be serviceable, wou'd cost much dearer, than to buy one of the same age from *Scotland* or *Ireland*; where he had been rais'd in a cottage, cover'd with rags, and fed on oatmeal or potatoes. Those who had slaves, therefore, in all the richer and more populous countries, wou'd discourage the pregnancy of the females, and either [167] prevent or destroy the birth. The human species wou'd perish in those places, where it ought to encrease the fastest; and a perpetual recruit be needed from all the poorer and more desart provinces. Such a continu'd drain wou'd tend mightily to depopulate the state, and render great cities ten times more destructive than with us; where every man is master of himself, and provides for his children from the powerful instinct of nature, not the calculations of sordid interest. If *London*, at present, without much encreasing, needs a yearly recruit from the country of 5000 people, as is commonly computed: What must it require, if the greatest part of the tradesmen and common people were slaves, and were hinder'd from breeding, by their avaricious masters?

ALL antient authors tell us, that there was a perpetual flux of slaves to *Italy* from the remoter provinces, particularly *Syria*, *Cilicia*, [*] *Cappadocia*, the lesser *Asia*, *Thrace* and *Egypt*: Yet the number of people encreas'd not in *Italy*; and writers complain of the continual decay of industry and agriculture. [†] Where then is that extreme fertility of the *Roman* slaves, which is commonly suppos'd? [169] So far from multiplying, they cou'd not, it seems, so much as keep up the stock, without immense recruits. And tho' great numbers were continually manumitted, and converted into *Roman* citizens, the numbers even of these did

not encrease;[*] till the freedom of the city was communicated to foreign provinces.

THE term for a slave, born and bred in the family, was *verna*; [†] and these slaves seem to have [170] been intitled by custom to privileges and indulgences beyond others; a sufficient reason, why the masters wou'd not be fond of rearing many of that kind.[*] Whoever is acquainted with the maxims of our planters will acknowledge the justness of this observation.[†]

Atticus is much prais'd by his historian for the care which he took in recruiting his family from the slaves born in it:[‡] May we not thence infer, that that practice was not then very common?

THE names of slaves in the *Greek* comedies, *Syrus*, *Mysus*, *Geta*, *Thrax*, *Davus*, *Lydus*, *Phryx*, &c. afford a presumption, that at *Athens*, at least, most of the slaves were imported from foreign nations. [171] The *Athenians*, says *Strabo*, [*] gave to their slaves, either the names of the nations, whence they were bought, as *Lydus*, *Syrus*, or the names that were most common amongst those nations, as *Manes* or *Midas* to a *Phrygian*, *Tibias* to a *Paphlagonian*.

Demosthenes, after having mention'd a law, which forbid any man to strike the slave of another, praises the humanity of this law; and adds, that if the barbarians, from whom slaves were bought, had information that their countrymen met with such gentle treatment, they wou'd entertain a great esteem for the *Athenians*. [†] *Isocrates* [‡] also says, that all the *Greek* slaves were barbarians.

'TIS well known, that *Demosthenes*, in his nonage, had been defrauded of a large fortune by his tutors, and that afterwards he recover'd, by a prosecution at law, the value of his patrimony. His orations, on that occasion, still remain, and contain a very exact detail of the whole substance left by his father, [∴] in money, merchandise, houses, and slaves, along with the value of each particular. Amongst the rest were 52 slaves, handicraftsmen, viz. 32 sword-cutlers, and 20 cabinet-makers; [O] all males, not a word of any wives, children, or [172] family, which they certainly wou'd have had, had it been a common custom at *Athens* to breed from the slaves: And the value of the whole must have depended very much on that circumstance. No female slaves are even so much as mention'd, except some chamber-maids, that belong'd to his mother. This argument has great force, if it be not altogether decisive.

CONSIDER this passage of *Plutarch*, [*] speaking of the elder *Cato*.

'He had a great number of slaves, which he took care to buy at the sales of prisoners of war; and he chose them young, that they might easily be accustom'd to any diet or manner of life, and be instructed in any business or labour, as men teach any thing to young dogs or horses.—And esteeming love the chief source of all disorders, he allow'd the male slaves to have a commerce with the female in his family, upon paying a certain sum for this privilege: But he strictly forbid all intrigues out of his family.'

Are there any symptoms in this narration of that care, which is suppos'd in the antients, of the marriage and propagation of their slaves? If that was a common practice, founded on general interest, it wou'd surely have been embrac'd by *Cato*, who was a great oconomist, and [173] liv'd in times, when the antient frugality and simplicity of manners were still in credit and reputation.

IT is expressly remark'd by the writers of the *Roman* law, that scarce any ever purchase slaves with a view of breeding from them. [*]

OUR lackeys and chamber-maids, I own, do not serve much to multiply the species: But the antients, beside those who attended on their person, had all their labour perform'd by slaves, who liv'd, many of them, in their family; and some great men possest to the number of 10,000. If there be any [174] suspicion, therefore, that this institution was unfavourable to propagation, (and the same reason, at least in part, holds with regard to antient slaves as well as modern servants) how destructive must slavery have prov'd?

HISTORY mentions a *Roman* nobleman, who had 400 slaves under the same roof with him; and having been assassinated at home by the furious revenge of one of them, the law was executed with rigour, and all without exception were put to death. [*] Many other *Roman* noblemen had families equally, or more numerous; and I believe every one will allow, that this wou'd scarce be practicable were we to suppose all the slaves marry'd, and the females to be breeders. [†]

So early as the poet *Hesiod*, [‡] marry'd slaves, whether male or female, were esteem'd very inconvenient. How much more, where families had encreas'd to such an enormous size, as in *Rome*, and the antient simplicity of manners was banish'd from all ranks of people?

[175]

Xenophon in his oeconomics, where he gives directions for the management of a farm, recommends a strict care and attention of laying the male and female slaves at a distance from each other. He seems not to suppose they are ever marry'd. The only slaves amongst the *Greeks*, that appear to have continu'd their own breed, were the *Helotes*, who had houses apart, and were more the slaves of the public than of individuals. [*]

THE antients talk so frequently of a fixt, stated portion of provisions assign'd to each slave, [†] that we are naturally led to conclude, that slaves liv'd almost all single, and receiv'd that portion as a kind of board wages.

THE practice, indeed, of marrying the slaves seems not to have been very common, even amongst the country labourers, where it is more naturally to be expected. *Cato*, [‡] enumerating the slaves, requisite to labour a vineyard of a hundred acres, makes them amount to 15; the overseer and his wife, *villicus* and *villica*, and 13 male slaves. For an olive plantation of 240 acres, the overseer and his wife and 11 male slaves: And so in proportion to a greater or less plantation or vineyard.

[176]

Varro, [*] citing this passage of *Cato*, allows his computation to be just in every other respect, except the last. For as it is requisite, says he, to have an overseer and his wife, whether the vineyard or plantation be great or small, this must alter the exactness of the proportion. Had *Cato's* computation been erroneous in any other respect, it had certainly been corrected by *Varro*, who seems fond of discovering so trivial an error.

THE same author, [†] as well as *Columella*, [‡] recommends it as requisite to give a wife to the overseer, in order to attach him the more strongly to his master's service. This was, therefore, a peculiar indulgence granted to a slave, in whom so great a confidence was repos'd.

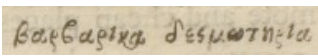
IN the same place, *Varro* mentions it as an useful precaution not to buy too many slaves from the same nation; lest they beget factions and seditions in the family: A presumption, that in *Italy* the greatest part, even of the country labouring slaves (for he speaks of no other) were bought from the remoter provinces. All the world knows, that the family slaves in *Rome*, who were instruments of show and luxury, were commonly imported from the East. *Hoc profecere*, says *Pliny*, speaking of the jealous care of masters, *mancipiorum legiones*, et

in [177] *domo turba externa, ac servorum quoque causa nomenclator adhibendus.* [*]

IT is indeed recommended by *Varro*, [‡] to propagate young shepherds in the family from the old ones. For as grasing farms were commonly in remote and cheap places, and each shepherd liv'd in a cottage apart, his marriage and encrease were not liable to the same inconveniencies as in dearer places, and where many servants liv'd in a family; which was universally the case in such of the *Roman* farms as produc'd wine or corn. If we consider this exception with regard to shepherds, and weigh the reason of it, it will serve for a strong confirmation of all our foregoing suspicions. [‡]

Columella, [‡] I own, advises the master to give a reward, and even liberty to a female slave, that had rear'd him above three children: A proof, that sometimes the antients propagated from their slaves, which, indeed, cannot be deny'd. Were it otherwise, the practice of slavery, being so common in antiquity, must have been destructive to a degree, which no expedient cou'd repair. All I pretend by these reasonings is, that slavery is in general disadvantageous both to the happiness and populousness of mankind, and that its place is much better supply'd by the practice of hir'd servants.

[178]

THE laws, or, as some writers call them, the seditions of the *Gracchi*, were occasion'd by their observing the encrease of slaves all over *Italy*, and the diminution of free-citizens. *Appian* [*] ascribes this encrease to the propagation of the slaves: *Plutarch* [‡] to the purchase of barbarians, who were chain'd and imprison'd,  [‡]. 'Tis to be presum'd, that both causes concurr'd.

Sicily, says *Florus*, [‡] was full of *ergastula*, and was cultivated by labourers in chains. *Eunus* and *Athenio* excited the servile war, by breaking up these monstrous prisons, and giving liberty to 60,000 slaves. The younger *Pompey* augmented his army in *Spain* by the same expedient[()]. If the country labourers throughout the *Roman* empire were so generally in this situation, and if it was difficult or impossible to find separate lodgings for the families of the city servants; how unfavourable to propagation, [179] as well as humanity, must the institution of domestic slavery be esteem'd?

Constantinople, at present, requires the same recruits of slaves from all the provinces, which *Rome* did of old; and these provinces are of consequence far from being populous.

Aegypt, according to Mons. *Maillet*, sends continual colonies of black slaves to the other parts of the *Turkish* empire, and receives annually an equal return of white: The one brought from the inland parts of *Africa*, the other from *Mingrelia*, *Circassia*, and *Tartary*.

OUR modern convents are, no doubt, very bad institutions: But there is reason to suspect, that antiently every great family in *Italy*, and probably in other parts of the world, was a species of convent. And tho' we have reason to detest all these popish institutions, as nurseries of the most abject superstition, burthensome to the public, and oppressive to the poor prisoners, male, as well as female; yet may it be question'd, whether they be so destructive to the populousness of a state as is commonly imagin'd. Were the land, which belongs to a convent, bestow'd on a nobleman, he wou'd spend its revenue on dogs, horses, grooms, footmen, cooks, and chamber-maids; and his family wou'd not furnish many more citizens than the convent.

[180]

THE common reason why parents thrust their daughters into nunneries, is, that they may not be overburthen'd with too numerous a family; but the antients had a method almost as innocent and more effectual to that purpose, *viz.* the exposing their children in the earliest infancy. This practice was very common; and is not mention'd by any author of those times with the horror it deserves, or scarce[*] even with disapprobation. *Plutarch*, the humane, good natur'd *Plutarch*, [‡] recommends it as a virtue in *Attalus*, king of *Pergamus*, that he murder'd, or, if you will, expos'd all his own children, in order to leave his crown to the son of his brother, *Eumenes*: Signalizing in this manner his gratitude and affection to *Eumenes*, who had left him his heir preferably to that son. 'Twas *Solon*, the most celebrated of the sages of *Greece*, who gave parents permission by law to kill their children. [‡]

SHALL we then allow these two circumstances to compensate each other, *viz.* monastic vows and the exposing of children, and to be unfavourable, in equal degrees, to the propagation of mankind? I doubt the advantage is here on the side of antiquity. [181] Perhaps, by an odd connexion of causes, the barbarous practice of the antients might rather render those times more populous. By removing the terrors of too numerous a family, it wou'd engage many people in marriage; and such is the force of natural affection, that very few, in comparison, wou'd have resolution enough, when it came to the push, to carry into execution their former intentions.

China the only country, where this barbarous practice of exposing children prevails at present, is the most populous country we know; and every man is married before he is twenty. Such early marriages cou'd scarce be general, had not men the prospect of so easy a method of getting rid of their children. I own, that *Plutarch* [*] speaks of it as a very universal maxim of the poor to expose their children; and as the rich were then averse to marriage, on account of the courtship they met with from those who expected legacies from them, the public must have been in a bad situation betwixt them. [‡]

[182]

OF all sciences there is none, where first appearances are more deceitful than politics. Hospitals for foundlings seem favourable to the encrease of numbers; and perhaps, may be so, when kept under proper restrictions. But when they open the door to every one, without distinction, they have probably a contrary effect, and are pernicious to the state. 'Tis computed, that every ninth child, born at *Paris*, is sent to the hospital; tho' it seems certain, according to the common course of human affairs, that 'tis not a hundredth part, whose parents are altogether incapacitated to rear and educate them. The infinite difference, for health, industry, and morals, betwixt an education in an hospital and that in a private family, shou'd induce us not to make the entrance into an hospital too easy and engaging. To kill one's own child is shocking to nature, and must therefore be pretty unusual; but to turn over the care of him upon others is very tempting to the natural indolence of mankind.

HAVING consider'd the domestic life and manners of the antients, compar'd to those of the moderns; [123] [183] where, in the main, we seem rather superior, so far as the present question is concern'd; we shall now examine the *political* customs and institutions of both ages, and weigh their influence in retarding or forwarding the propagation of mankind.

BEFORE the encrease of the *Roman* power, or rather, till its full establishment, almost all the nations, which are the scene of antient history, were divided into small territories or petty commonwealths, where of course a great equality of fortune prevail'd, and the center of government was always very near its frontiers. This was the situation of affairs, not only in *Greece* and *Italy*, but also in *Spain*, *Gaul*, *Germany*, *Afric*, and a great part of the lesser *Asia*: And it must be own'd, that no institution cou'd be more favourable to the propagation of mankind. For tho' a man of an overgrown fortune, not being able to consume more than

another, must share it with those who serve and attend him: Yet their possession being precarious, they have not the same encouragement to marriage, as if each had a small fortune, secure and independent. Enormous cities are besides destructive to society, beget vice and disorder of all kinds, starve the remoter provinces, and even starve themselves, by the high prices, to which they raise all provisions. Where each man had his little house and field to himself, and each county had its capital, free and independent: What a happy situation [184] of mankind! How favourable to industry and agriculture; to marriage and propagation! The prolific virtue of men, were it to act in its full extent, without that restraint, which poverty and necessity imposes on it, wou'd double the numbers every generation: And nothing surely can give it more liberty, than such small commonwealths, and such an equality of fortune amongst the citizens. All small states naturally produce equality of fortune, because they afford no opportunities of great encrease; but small commonwealths much more, by that division of power and authority, which is essential to them.

WHEN *Xenophon* [*] return'd after the famous expedition with *Cyrus*, he hir'd himself and 6000 of the *Greeks* into the service of *Seuthes*, a prince of *Thrace*; and the articles of his agreement were, that each soldier shou'd receive a *daric* a month, each captain two *darics*, and he himself as general four: A regulation of pay, which wou'd not a little surprize our modern officers.

WHEN *Demosthenes* and *Aeschines*, with eight more, were sent ambassadors to *Philip* of *Macedon*, their appointments for above four months were a thousand *drachmas*, which is less than a *drachma* a day for each ambassador. [†] But a *drachma* a day, [185] nay sometimes two, [*] was the pay of a common foot soldier.

A CENTURION amongst the *Romans* had only double pay to a common soldier, in *Polybius*'s[†] time; and we accordingly find their gratuities after a triumph regulated by that proportion. [‡] But *Mark Anthony* and the triumvirate gave the centurions five times the reward of the other. [||] So much had the encrease of the commonwealth encreas'd the inequality amongst the citizens. [§]

IT must be own'd, that the situation of affairs in modern times, with regard to civil liberty, as well as equality of fortune, is not near so favourable, either to the propagation or happiness of mankind. *Europe* is shar'd out mostly into great monarchies; and such parts of it as are divided into small territories, are commonly govern'd by absolute princes, who ruin their people by a ridiculous mimicry of the greater monarchs, in the splendor of their court and number of their forces. *Switzerland* alone and *Holland* resemble the antient republics; and tho' the former is far from possessing any advantage either [186] of soil, climate, or commerce, yet the numbers of people, with which it abounds, notwithstanding their enlisting themselves into every service in *Europe*, prove sufficiently the advantages of their political institutions.

THE antient republics deriv'd their chief or only security from the numbers of their citizens. The *Trachinians* having lost great numbers of their people, the remainder, instead of enriching themselves by the inheritance of their fellow citizens, apply'd to *Sparta*, their metropolis, for a new stock of inhabitants. The *Spartans* immediately collected ten thousand men, amongst whom the old citizens divided the lands, of which the former proprietors had perish'd. [*]

AFTER *Timoleon* had banish'd *Dionysius* from *Syracuse*, and had settled the affairs of *Sicily*, finding the cities of *Syracuse* and *Sellinuntium* extremely depopulated by tyranny, war, and faction, he invited over from *Greece* some new inhabitants to repeople them. [†] Immediately forty thousand men (*Plutarch* [‡] says sixty thousand) offer'd themselves; and he distributed so many lots of land amongst them, to the great satisfaction of the antient

inhabitants: A proof at once of the maxims of antient policy, which affected populousness more than riches; [187] and of the good effects of these maxims, in the extreme populousness of that small country, *Greece*, which cou'd at once supply so large a colony. The case was not much different with the *Romans* in early times. He is a pernicious citizen, said *M. Curius*, who cannot be contented with seven acres. [*] Such ideas of equality cou'd not fail to produce populousness.

WE must now consider what disadvantages the antients lay under with regard to populousness, and what checks they receiv'd from their political maxims and institutions. There are commonly compensations in every human condition; and tho' these compensations be not always perfectly equivalent, yet they serve, at least, to restrain the prevailing principle. To compare them and estimate their influence is indeed very difficult, even where they take place in the same age and in neighbouring countries: But where several ages have interven'd, and only scatter'd lights are afforded us by antient authors; what can we do but amuse ourselves [188] by talking, *pro* and *con*, on an interesting subject, and thereby correcting all hasty and violent determinations?

First, WE may observe, that the antient republics were almost in perpetual war; a natural effect of their martial spirit, their love of liberty, their mutual emulation, and that hatred, which generally prevails amongst nations, that live in a close neighbourhood. Now war in a small state is much more destructive than in a great one; both because all the inhabitants, in the former case, must fill the armies, and because the state is all frontier, and all expos'd to the inroads of the enemy.

THE maxims of antient war were much more destructive than those of modern; chiefly by the distribution of plunder, in which the soldiers were indulg'd. Our common soldiers are such a low rascally set of people, that we find any abundance, beyond their simple pay, breeds confusion and disorder, and a total dissolution of discipline. The very wretchedness and meanness of those, who fill the modern armies, render them less destructive to the countries, which they invade: One instance, amongst many, of the deceitfulness of first appearances in all political reasonings. [*]

[189]

ANTIEN battles were much more bloody by the very nature of the weapons employ'd in them. The antients drew up their men 16 or 20, sometimes 50 men deep, which made a narrow front; and 'twas not difficult to find a field, in which both armies might be marshall'd, and might engage with each other. Even where any body of the troops was kept off by hedges, hillocks, woods, or hollow ways, the battle was not so soon decided betwixt the contending parties, but that the others had time to overcome the difficulties, that oppos'd them, and take part in the engagement. And as the whole armies were thus engag'd, and each man closely buckl'd to his antagonist, the battles were commonly very bloody, and great slaughter made on both sides, but especially on the vanquish'd. The long, thin lines, requir'd by fire arms, and the quick decision of the fray, render our modern engagements but partial rencounters, and enable the general, who is foil'd in the beginning of the day, to draw off the greatest part of his army, sound and entire. Cou'd *Folard's* project of the column take place (which seems impracticable [*]) it wou'd render modern battles as destructive as the antient.

[190]

THE battles of antiquity, both by their duration and their resemblance of single combats, were wrought up to a degree of fury, quite unknown to latter ages. Nothing cou'd then engage the combatants to give quarter but the hopes of profit, by making slaves of their prisoners. In civil wars, as we learn from *Tacitus*, [†] the battles were the most bloody, because the prisoners were not slaves.

WHAT a stout resistance must be made, where the vanquish'd expected so hard a fate! How inveterate the rage, where the maxims of war were, in every respect, so bloody and severe!

INSTANCES are very frequent, in antient history, of cities besieg'd, whose inhabitants, rather than open their gates, murder'd their wives and children, and rush'd themselves on a voluntary death, sweeten'd perhaps with a little prospect of revenge upon the enemy. *Greeks*, [*] as well as *Barbarians*, have been often wrought up to this degree of fury. And the same determinate spirit and cruelty must, in many other instances, less remarkable, have been [191] extremely destructive to human society, in those petty commonwealths, that liv'd in a close neighbourhood, and were engag'd in perpetual wars and contentions.

SOMETIMES the wars in *Greece*, says *Plutarch*, [*] were carried on entirely by inroads, and robberies, and pyracies. Such a method of war must be more destructive, in small states, than the bloodiest battles and sieges.

BY the laws of the 12 tables, possession for two years form'd a prescription for land; one year for movables: [†] An indication, that there was not in *Italy*, during that period, much more order, tranquillity, and settled police than there is at present amongst the *Tartars*.

THE only cartel, I remember in antient history, is that betwixt *Demetrius Poliorcetes* and the *Rhodians*; when it was agreed, that a free citizen shou'd be restor'd for 1000 *drachamas*, a slave bearing arms for 500. [‡]

BUT *secondly*, it appears, that antient manners were more unfavourable than the modern, not only in time of war but also in time of peace, and that too, in every respect, except the love of civil liberty [192] and equality, which is, I own, of considerable importance. To exclude faction from a free government is very difficult, if not altogether impracticable; but such inveterate rage betwixt the factions, and such bloody maxims, are found, in modern times, amongst religious parties alone, where bigotted priests are the accusers, judges, and executioners. In antient history, we may always observe, where one party prevail'd, whether the nobles or people, (for I can observe no difference in this respect[†]) that they immediately butcher'd all of the opposite party they laid their hands on, and banish'd such as had been so fortunate as to escape their fury. No form of process, no law, no trial, no pardon. A fourth, a third, perhaps near a half of the city were slaughter'd, or expell'd, every revolution; and the exiles always join'd foreign enemies, and did all the mischief possible to their fellow citizens; till fortune put it in their power to take full revenge by a new revolution. And as these were very frequent in such violent governments, the disorder, diffidence, jealousy, enmity, which must prevail, are not easy for us to imagine in this age of the world.

THERE are only two revolutions I can recollect in all antient history, which past without great severity and great effusion of blood in massacres and [193] assassinations, viz. the restoration of the *Athenian* democracy by *Thrasybulus*, and the subduing the *Roman* republic by *Caesar*. We learn from antient history, that *Thrasybulus* past a general amnesty for all past offences; and first introduc'd that word, as well as practice into *Greece*. [*] It appears, however, from many orations of *Lysias*, [†] that the chief, and even some of the subaltern offenders, in the preceeding tyranny, were try'd, and capitally punish'd. This is a difficulty not clear'd up, and even not observ'd, by antiquarians and historians. And as to *Caesar's* clemency, tho' much celebrated, it wou'd not gain great applause in the present age. He butcher'd, for instance, all *Cato's* senate, when he became master of *Utica*; [‡] and these, we may readily believe, were not the most worthless of the party. All those, who had born arms against that usurper, were forfeited; and, by *Hirtius's* law, declar'd incapable of all public offices.

THESE people were extremely fond of liberty; but seem not to have understood it very well. When the thirty tyrants first establish'd their dominion at *Athens*, they began with seizing all the sycophants and informers, that had been so troublesome during the democracy, and putting them to death, by an arbitrary sentence and execution. Every [194] man, says *Sallust* [*] and *Lysias*, [‡] was rejoiced at these punishments; not considering, that liberty was from that moment annihilated.

THE utmost energy of *Thucydides*'s nervous stile, and the great copiousness and expression of the *Greek* language seem to sink under that historian, when he attempts to describe the disorders, that arose from faction, throughout all the *Greek* commonwealths. You wou'd imagine, that he still labours with a thought greater than he can find words to communicate. And he concludes his pathetic description with an observation, which is at once very refin'd and very solid.

'In these contests, (says he,) those who were dullest and most stupid and had the least foresight, commonly prevail'd. For being conscious of this weakness, and dreading to be over-reach'd by those of greater penetration, they went to work hastily, without premeditation, by the sword and poniard, and thereby prevented their antagonists, who were forming fine schemes and projects for their destruction.' [‡]

[195]

NOT to mention *Dionysius* [*] the elder, who is computed to have butcher'd in cold blood above 10,000 of his fellow citizens; nor *Agathocles*, [‡] *Nabis*, [‡] and others, still more bloody than he; the transactions, even in free governments, were extremely violent and destructive. At *Athens*, the thirty tyrants and the nobles, in a twelvemonth, murder'd, without trial, about 1200 of the people, and banish'd above the half of the citizens that remain'd. [§] In *Argos*, near the same time, the people kill'd 1200 of the nobles; and afterwards their own demagogues, because they had refus'd to carry their prosecutions farther. [||] The people also in *Corcyra* kill'd 1500 of the nobles and banish'd a thousand. [¶] These numbers will appear the more surprizing, if we consider the extreme smallness of [196] these states: But all antient history is full of such instances. [*]

WHEN *Alexander* order'd all the exiles to be restor'd, thro' all the cities; it was found that the [197] whole amounted to 20,000 men; [*] the remains probably of still greater slaughters and massacres. What an astonishing multitude in so narrow a country as antient *Greece*! And what domestic confusion, jealousy, partiality, revenge, heart-burnings, must tear those cities, where factions were wrought up to such a degree of fury and despair?

'TWOUD be easier, says *Isocrates* to *Philip*, to raise an army in *Greece* at present from the vagabonds than from the cities.

EVEN where affairs came not to such extremities (which they fail'd not to do almost in every city twice or thrice every century) property was render'd very precarious by the maxims of antient government. *Xenophon*, in the banquet of *Socrates*, gives us a very natural, unaffected description of the tyranny of the *Athenian* people.

'In my poverty, (says *Charmides*,) I am much more happy than ever I was during my riches; as much as it is happier to be in security than in terrors, free than a slave, to receive than to pay court, to be trusted than suspected. Formerly I was oblig'd to caress every informer: Some imposition was continually laid upon me; and it was never allow'd me to travel or be absent [198] from the city. At present, when I am poor, I look big and threaten others. The rich are afraid of me, and show me every kind of civility and respect; and I am become a kind of tyrant in the city.' [*]

IN one of the pleadings of *Lysias*, [†] the orator very coolly speaks of it, by the bye, as a maxim of the *Athenian* people, that, whenever they wanted money, they put to death some of the rich citizens as well as strangers, for the sake of the forfeiture. In mentioning this, he seems to have no intention of blaming them; still less, of provoking them, who were his audience and judges.

WHETHER a man was a citizen or a stranger amongst that people, it seems indeed requisite, either that he shou'd impoverish himself, or the people wou'd impoverish him, and perhaps kill him into the bargain. The orator last mention'd gives a pleasant account of an estate laid out in the public service; [‡] that is, above the third of it, in rareeshows and figur'd dances.

[199]

INEED not insist on the *Greek* tyrannies, which were altogether horrible. Even the mixt monarchies, by which most of the antient states of *Greece* were govern'd, before the introduction of republics, were very unsettled. Scarce any city, but *Athens*, says *Isocrates*, could show a succession of kings, for four or five generations[*] .

BESIDES many other obvious reasons for the instability of antient monarchies, the equal division of property amongst the brothers in private families, [200] by a necessary consequence, must contribute to unsettle and disturb the state. The universal preference given to the elder in modern governments, tho' it increases the inequality of fortunes, has, however, this good effect, that it accustoms men to the same idea of public succession, and cuts off all claim and pretension of the younger.

THE new settled colony of *Heraclea*, falling immediately into factions, apply'd to *Sparta*, who sent *Heripidas* with full authority to quiet their dissensions. This man, not provok'd by any opposition, not inflam'd by party rage, knew no better expedient than immediately putting to death about 500 of the citizens[‡] . A strong proof how deeply rooted these violent maxims of government were throughout all *Greece*.

IF such was the disposition of mens minds amongst that refin'd people, what may be expected in the commonwealths of *Italy*, *Afric*, *Spain*, and *Gaul*, which were denominated barbarous? Why otherways did the *Greeks* so much value themselves on their humanity, gentleness and moderation above all other nations? This reasoning seems very natural: But unluckily the history of the *Roman* commonwealth, in its earlier times, if we give credit to the receiv'd accounts, stands against us. No blood was ever shed in any sedition at [201] *Rome*, 'till the murder of the *Gracchi*. *Dionysius Halicarnassoeus* [‡] , observing the singular humanity of the *Roman* people in this respect, makes use of it as an argument that they were originally of *Grecian* extraction: Whence we may conclude, that the factions and revolutions in the barbarous republics were more violent than even those of *Greece* above mention'd.

IF the *Romans* were so late in coming to blows, they made ample compensation after they had once enter'd upon the bloody scene; and *Appian's* history of their civil wars contains the most frightful picture of massacres, proscriptions and forfeitures, that ever was presented to the world. What pleases most in that historian is, that he seems to feel a proper resentment of these barbarous proceedings; and talks not with that provoking coolness and indifference, which custom had produc'd in many of the *Greek* historians. [§]

[202]

THE maxims of antient politics contain, in general, so little humanity and moderation, that it seems superfluous to give any particular reason for the violences committed at any particular period. Yet I cannot forbear observing, that the laws, in the latter ages of the

Roman commonwealth, were so absurdly contriv'd, that they oblig'd the heads of parties to have recourse to these extremities. All capital punishments were abolish'd: However criminal, or what is more, however dangerous any citizen might be, he cou'd not regularly be punish'd otherways than by banishment: And it became necessary, in the revolutions of party, to draw the sword of private vengeance; nor was it easy, when laws were once violated, to set bounds to these sanguinary proceedings. Had *Brutus* himself prevail'd over the *triumvirate*, cou'd he, in common prudence, have allow'd *Octavius* [203] and *Anthony* to live, and have contented himself with banishing them to *Rhodes* or *Marseilles*, where they might still have plotted new commotions and rebellions? His executing *C. Antonius*, brother to the *triumvir*, shows evidently his sense of the matter. Did not *Cicero*, with the approbation of all the wise and virtuous of *Rome*, arbitrarily put to death *Catiline's* associates, contrary to law, and without any trial or form of process? And if he moderated his executions, did it not proceed, either from the clemency of his temper or the conjunctures of the times? A wretched security in a government, which pretends to laws and liberty.

THUS, one extreme produces another. In the same manner as excessive severity in the laws is apt to beget great relaxation in their execution; so their excessive lenity naturally engenders cruelty and barbarity. 'Tis dangerous to force us, in any case, to use freedom with their sacred regulations and prescriptions.

ONE general cause of the disorders, so frequent in all antient governments, seems to have consisted in the great difficulty of establishing any aristocracy in those ages, and the perpetual discontents and seditions of the people, whenever even the meanest and most beggarly were excluded from the legislature and from public offices. The very quality [204] of *freeman* gave such a rank, being oppos'd to that of *slave*, that it seem'd to intitle the possessor to every power and privilege of the commonwealth. *Salon's* [†] laws excluded no freeman from votes or elections, but confin'd some magistracies to a particular *census*; yet were the people never satisfy'd 'till those laws were repeal'd. By the treaty with *Antipater* [‡] , no *Athenian* had a vote, whose *census* was less than 2000 *drachmas* (about 60 *l. Sterl.*) And tho' such a government wou'd to us appear sufficiently democratical, it was so disagreeable to that people, that above two thirds immediately deserted their country[¶] *Cassander* reduc'd that *census* to the half[⋄] ; yet still the government was consider'd as an oligarchical tyranny, and the effect of foreign violence.

Servius Tullius's [○] laws seem very equal and reasonable, by fixing the power in proportion to the property: Yet the *Roman* people cou'd never be brought quietly to submit to them.

IN those days, there was no medium betwixt a severe, jealous aristocracy, over discontented subjects; and a turbulent, factious, tyrannical democracy.

[205]

BUT *thirdly*, there are many other circumstances, in which antient nations seem inferior to the modern, both for the happiness and encrease of mankind. Trade, manufactures, industry were no where, in former ages, so flourishing as they are at present, in *Europe*. The only garb of the antients, both for males and females, seems to have been a kind of flannel, which they wore commonly white or grey, and which they scour'd, as often as it grew dirty. *Tyre*, which carry'd on, after *Carthage*, the greatest commerce of any city in the *Mediterranean*, before it was destroyed by *Alexander*, was no mighty city, if we credit *Arrian's* account of its inhabitants[†] . *Athens* is commonly suppos'd to have been a trading city; but it was as populous before the *Median* war, as at any time after it, according to *Herodotus* [‡] ; and yet its commerce, at that time, was so inconsiderable, that, as the same historian observes[¶] , even the neighbouring coasts of *Asia* were as little frequented by the

Greeks as the pillars of *Hercules*: For beyond these, he conceiv'd nothing.

GREAT interest of money and great profits of trade are an infallible indication, that industry and [206] commerce are but in their infancy. We read in *Lysias* [.] of 100 *per cent.* profit made on a cargo of two talents, sent to no greater distance than from *Athens* to the *Adriatic*: Nor is this mention'd as an instance of exorbitant profit. *Antidorus*, says *Demosthenes* [O] , pay'd three talents and a half for a house, which he let at a talent a year: And the orator blames his own tutors for not employing his money to like advantage. My fortune, says he, in eleven years minority, ought to have been tripled. The value of 20 of the slaves, left by his father, he computes at 40 minas; and the yearly profit of their labour at twelve[.] . The most moderate interest at *Athens* (for there was higher [.] often pay'd) was 12 *per cent.* [*] ; and that pay'd monthly. Not to insist upon the exorbitant interest of 34 *per cent.* to which the vast sums distributed in elections had rais'd money[.] at *Rome*, we find, that *Verres*, before that factious period, stated 24 *per cent.* for money, which he left in the publicans hands. And tho' *Cicero* exclaims against this article, it is not on account of the extravagant usury; but because it had never been customary to state any interest on such occasions[.] . Interest, indeed, sunk at *Rome*, after the settlement of the [207] empire: But it never remain'd any considerable time, so low as in the commercial states of modern ages[*] .

AMONGST the other inconveniencies, which the *Athenians* felt from the fortifying *Decelia* by the *Lacedemonians*, it is represented by *Thucydides* [.] as one of the most considerable, that they cou'd not bring over their corn from *Euboea* by land, passing by *Oropus*, but were oblig'd to embark it, and to sail about the promontory of *Sunium*. A surprising instance of the imperfection of antient navigation: For the water carriage is not here above double the land.

I DO not remember any passage in any antient author, wherein the growth of any city is ascrib'd to the establishment of a manufacture. The commerce, which is said to flourish, is chiefly the exchange of those commodities, for which different soils and climates were suited. The sale of wine and oil into *Africa*, according to *Diodorus Siculus* [.] , was the foundation of the riches of *Agrigentum*. The situation of the city of *Sybaris*, according to the same author [O] , was the cause of its immense populousness; being built near the two rivers, *Crathys* and *Sybaris*. But these two rivers, we may observe, are not navigable; and cou'd only produce some fertile vallies for agriculture and husbandry; [208] an advantage so inconsiderable, that a modern writer wou'd scarcely have taken notice of it.

THE barbarity of the antient tyrants, along with the extreme love of liberty, which animated those ages, must have banish'd every merchant and manufacturer, and have quite depopulated the state, had it subsisted upon industry and commerce. While the cruel and suspicious *Dionysius* was carrying on his butcheries, who, that was not detain'd by his landed property, and cou'd have carry'd along with him any art or skill to procure a subsistence in other countries, wou'd have remain'd expos'd to such implacable barbarity? The persecutions of *Philip* the II. and *Lewis* the XIV. fill'd all *Europe* with the manufacturers of *Flanders* and of *France*.

I GRANT, that agriculture is the species of industry, which is chiefly requisite to the subsistence of multitudes of people; and it is possible, that this industry may flourish, even where manufactures and other arts are unknown or neglected. *Swisserland* is at present a very remarkable instance; where we find, at once, the most skilful husbandmen and the most bungling tradesmen, that are to be met with in all *Europe*. That agriculture flourish'd mightily in *Greece* and *Italy*, at least in some parts of them, and at some periods, we have reason [209] to presume: And whether the mechanical arts had reach'd the same degree of perfection may not be esteem'd so material; especially, if we consider the great equality in the antient republics, where each family was oblig'd to cultivate, with the greatest care and industry, its

own little field, in order to its subsistence.

BUT is it just reasoning, because agriculture may, in some instances, flourish without trade or manufactures, to conclude that, in any great extent of country, and for any great tract of time, it wou'd subsist alone? The most natural way, surely, of encouraging husbandry, is first to excite other kinds of industry, and thereby afford the labourer a ready market for his commodities, and a return of such goods as may contribute to his pleasure and enjoyment. This method is infallible and universal; and as it prevails more in modern governments than in the antient, it affords a presumption of the superior populousness of the former.

EVERY man, says *Xenophon*, [*] may be a farmer: No art or skill is requisite: All consists in the industry and attention to the execution. A strong proof, as *Columella* hints, that agriculture was but little known in the age of *Xenophon*.

ALL our latter improvements and refinements; have they operated nothing towards the easy subsistence [210] of men, and consequently towards their propagation and encrease? Our superior skill in mechanics, the discovery of new worlds, by which commerce has been so much enlarg'd, the establishment of posts, and the use of bills of exchange; these seem all extremely useful to the encouragement of art, industry, and populousness. Were we to strike off these, what a check wou'd we give to every kind of business and labour, and what multitudes of families wou'd immediately perish from want and hunger? And it seems not probable, that we cou'd supply the place of these new inventions by any other regulation or institution.

HAVE we reason to think, that the police of antient states was any way comparable to that of modern, or that men had then equal security, either at home, or in their journeys by land or water? I question not, but every impartial examiner wou'd give us the preference in this particular. [*]

THUS upon comparing the whole, it seems impossible to assign any just reason, why the world shou'd have been more populous in antient than in modern times. The equality of property, amongst the antients, liberty, and the small divisions of their states, were indeed favourable to the propagation of mankind: But their wars were more bloody and destructive; their governments [211] more factious and unsettl'd; commerce and manufactures more feeble and languishing; and the general police more loose and irregular. These latter disadvantages seem to form a sufficient counter-balance to the former advantages; and rather favour the opposite opinion to that which commonly prevails with regard to this subject.

BUT there is no reasoning, it may be said, against matter of fact. If it appear, that the world was then more populous than at present, we may be assur'd, that our conjectures are false, and that we have overlook'd some material circumstance in the comparison. This I readily own: All our preceding reasonings, I acknowledge to be mere trifling, or, at least, small skirmishes and frivolous rencounters, that decide nothing. But unluckily the main combat, where we compare facts, cannot be render'd much more decisive. The facts deliver'd by antient authors are either so uncertain or so imperfect as to afford us nothing decisive in this matter. How indeed cou'd it be otherwise? The very facts, which we must oppose to them, in computing the greatness of modern states, are far from being either certain or compleat. Many grounds of calculation, proceeded on by celebrated writers, are little better than those of the emperor *Heliogabalus*, who form'd an estimate of the immense greatness of *Rome*, from ten thousand [212] pound weight of cobwebs, which had been found in that city. [*]

'TIS to be remark'd, that all kinds of numbers are uncertain in antient manuscripts, and have been subject to much greater corruptions than any other part of the text; and that for a very obvious reason. Any alteration in other places, commonly affects the sense or grammar,

and is more readily perceiv'd by the reader and transcriber.

FEW enumerations of inhabitants have been made of any tract of country by any antient author of good authority; so as to afford us a large enough view for comparison.

'TIS probable, that there was formerly a good foundation for the numbers of citizens assigned to any free city; because they enter'd for a share of the government, and there were exact registers kept of them. But as the number of slaves is seldom mention'd, this leaves us in as great uncertainty as ever, with regard to the populousness even of single cities.

The first page of *Thucydides* is, in my opinion, the commencement of real history. All preceding narrations are so intermixt with fable, that philosophers [213] ought to abandon them, in a great measure, to the embellishment of poets and orators. [*]

WITH regard to remote times, the numbers of people assign'd are often ridiculous, and lose all credit and authority. The free citizens of *Sybaris*, able to bear arms, and actually drawn out in battle, were 300,000. They encountred at *Siagra* with 100,000 citizens of *Crotona*, another *Greek* city contiguous to them; and were defeated. This is *Diodorus Siculus's*[.] account; and is very seriously insisted on by that historian. *Strabo* [.] also mentions the same number of *Sybarites*.

Diodorus Siculus [.] , enumerating the inhabitants of *Agrigentum*, when it was destroy'd by the *Carthaginians*, says, that they amounted to 20,000 citizens, 200,000 strangers, besides slaves, who, in so opulent [214] a city, as he represents it, wou'd probably be, at least, as numerous. We must remark, that the women and the children are not included; and that therefore, upon the whole, the city must contain near two millions of inhabitants [§.] And what was the reason of so immense an encrease? They were very industrious in cultivating the neighbouring fields, not exceeding a small *English* county; and they traded with their wine and oil to *Africa*, which, at that time, had none of these commodities.

Ptolemy, says *Theocritus* [.] , commands 33,339 cities. I suppose the singularity of the number was the reason of assigning it. *Diodorus Siculus* [*] gives three millions of inhabitants to *Aegypt*, a very small number: But then he makes the number of their cities amount to 18,000: An evident contradiction.

He says[.] , the people were formerly seven millions. Thus remote times are always most envy'd and admir'd.

THAT *Xerxes's* army was extremely numerous, I can readily believe; both from the great extent of his [215] empire, and from the foolish practice of the Eastern nations, of encumbering their camp with a superfluous multitude: But will any reasonable man cite *Herodotus's* wonderful narrations as an authority? There is something very rational, I own, in *Lysias's*[.] argument upon this subject. Had not *Xerxes's* army been incredibly numerous, says he, he had never made a bridge over the *Hellespont*: It had been much easier to have transported his men over so short a passage, with the numerous shipping he was master of.

Polybius [§] says, that the *Romans*, betwixt the first and second *Punic* wars, being threaten'd with an invasion from the *Gauls*, muster'd all their own forces, and those of their allies, and found them amount to seven hundred thousand men able to bear arms. A great number surely, and which, when join'd to the slaves, is probably more than that extent of country affords at present[.] The enumeration too seems to have been made with some exactness; and *Polybius* gives us the detail of the particulars. But might not the number be magnify'd, in order to encourage the people?

[216]

Diodorus Siculus [†] makes the same enumeration amount to near a million: These variations are suspicious. He plainly too supposes, that *Italy* in his time was not so populous: Another very suspicious circumstance. For who can believe, that the inhabitants of that country diminish'd from the time of the first *Punic* war to that of the *triumvirates*?

Julius Caesar, according to *Appian* [§] , encounter'd four millions of *Gauls*, kill'd one million, and took another prisoner[*] . Supposing the numbers of the enemy's army and of the kill'd cou'd be exactly assign'd, which never is possible; how cou'd it be known how often the same man return'd into the armies, or how distinguish the new from the old levy'd soldiers? No attention ought ever to be given to such loose, exaggerated calculations; especially where the author tells us not the mediums, upon which the calculations were form'd.

Paterculus [†] makes the number kill'd by *Caesar* amount only to 400,000: A much more probable account, and more easily reconcil'd to the history [217] of these wars, given by that conqueror himself in his commentaries.

ONE wou'd imagine, that every circumstance of the life and actions of *Dionysius* the elder might be regarded as authentic, and free from all fabulous exaggerations; both because he liv'd at a time when letters flourish'd most in *Greece*, and because his chief historian was *Philistus*, a man allow'd to be of great genius, and who was a courtier and minister of that prince. But can we admit, that he had a standing army of 100,000 foot, 10,000 horse, and a fleet of 400 gallies? [†] These, we may observe, were mercenary forces, and subsisted upon their pay, like our armies in *Europe*. For the citizens were all disarm'd; and when *Dion* afterwards invaded *Sicily*, and call'd on his countrymen to vindicate their liberty, he was oblig'd to bring arms along with him, which he distributed among those who join'd him. [*] In a state, where agriculture alone flourishes, there may be many inhabitants; and if these be all arm'd and disciplin'd, a great force may be call'd out upon occasion: But great numbers of mercenary troops can never be maintain'd, without either trade and manufactures, or very extensive dominions. The United Provinces never were masters of such a force by sea and land, as that which is said to belong to *Dionysius*; yet they possess as large a territory, perfectly [218] well cultivated, and have infinitely more resources from their commerce and industry. *Diodorus Siculus* allows, that, even in his time, the army of *Dionysius* appear'd incredible; that is, as I interpret it, it was entirely a fiction, and the opinion arose from the exaggerated flattery of the courtiers, and perhaps from the vanity and policy of the tyrant himself.

THE critical art may very justly be suspected of temerity, when it pretends to correct or dispute the plain testimony of antient historians by any probable or analogical reasonings: Yet the licence of authors upon all subjects, particularly with regard to numbers, is so great, that we ought still to retain a kind of doubt or reserve, whenever the facts advanc'd depart, in the least, from the common bounds of nature and experience. I shall give an instance with regard to modern history. Sir *William Temple* tells us, in his memoirs, that, having a free conversation with *Charles* the II, he took the opportunity of representing to that monarch the impossibility of introducing into this island the religion and government of *France*, chiefly on account of the great force, requisite to subdue the spirit and liberty of so brave a people. 'The *Romans*, says he, were forc'd to keep up 12 legions for that purpose" (a great absurdity [*]) and [219] *Cromwell* left an army of near eighty thousand men.' Must not this last fact be regarded as unquestion'd by future critics, when they find it asserted by a wise and learned minister of state, contemporary to the fact, and who address his discourse, upon an ungrateful subject, to a great monarch, who was also contemporary, and who himself broke those very forces about fourteen years before. Yet by the most undoubted authority, we may insist, that *Cromwell's* army, when he died, did not amount to half the number here mention'd.

'TIS a very usual fallacy to consider all the ages of antiquity as one period, and to compute the numbers contain'd in the great cities mention'd by antient authors, as if these cities had been all contemporary. The *Greek* colonies flourish'd extremely in *Sicily*, during the age of *Alexander*: But in *Augustus*'s time they were so decay'd, that almost all the product of that fertile island was consum'd in *Italy*. [*]

LET us now examine the numbers of inhabitants assign'd to particular cities in antiquity; and omitting the numbers of *Nineveh*, *Babylon*, and the *Egyptian Thebes*, let us confine ourselves to the [220] sphere of real history, to the *Grecian* and *Roman* empires. I must own, the more I consider this subject, the more am I inclin'd to scepticism, with regard to the great populousness ascrib'd to antient times.

Athens is said by[.] *Plato* to be a very great city; and it was surely the greatest of all the *Greek* [*] cities, excepting *Syracuse*, which was nearly about the same size in *Thucydides*'s[.] time, and afterwards encreas'd beyond it. For *Cicero* [.] mentions it as the greatest of all the *Greek* cities in his time; not comprehending, I suppose, either *Antioch* or *Alexandria* under that denomination. *Athenaeus* [§] says, that by the enumeration of *Demetrius Phalereus* there were in *Athens* 21,000 citizens, 10,000 strangers, and 400,000 slaves. This number is very much insisted on, by those whose opinion I call in question, and is esteem'd a fundamental fact to their purpose: But in my opinion there is no point of criticism more certain, than that *Athenaeus*, and *Ctesicles*, whom he cites, are here mistaken, [221] and that the number of slaves is augmented by a whole cypher, and ought not to be regarded as more than 40,000.

First. WHEN the number of citizens is said to be 21,000 by *Athenaeus*, [.] men of full age are only understood. For (1) *Herodotus* [*] says, that *Aristagoras*, ambassador from the *Ionians*, found it harder to deceive one *Spartan* than 30,000 *Athenians*; meaning, in a loose way, the whole state, suppos'd in one popular assembly, excluding the women and children. (2) *Thucydides* [.] says, that making allowances for all the absentees in the fleet, army, garrisons, and for people employ'd in their private affairs, the *Athenian* assembly never rose to five thousand. (3) The forces enumerated by the same historian[.] , being all citizens, and amounting to 13,000 heavy arm'd infantry, prove the same method of calculation; as also the whole tenor of the *Greek* historians, who always understand men of full age, when they assign the number of citizens in any republic. Now these being but the fourth of the inhabitants, the free *Athenians* were by this account 84,000; the strangers 40,000; and the slaves, calculating by the smaller number, and allowing that they marry'd and [222] propagated at the same rate with freemen, were 160,000: And the whole inhabitants 284,000: A large enough number surely. The other number 1,720,000 makes *Athens* larger than *London* and *Paris* united.

Secondly. THERE were but 10,000 houses in *Athens*. [*]

Thirdly. THO' the extent of the walls, as given us by *Thucydides* be great, [.] (viz. 18 miles, beside the sea-coast) yet *Xenophon* [.] says, there was much waste ground within the walls. They seem indeed to have join'd four distinct and separate cities [§] .

Fourthly. NO insurrection of the slaves, or suspicion of insurrection ever mention'd by historians; except one commotion of the miners. [.]

[223]

Fifthly. THE *Athenians* treatment of their slaves is said by *Xenophon* [*] and *Demosthenes* [.] and *Plautus* [.] to have been extremely gentle and indulgent: Which cou'd never have been the case, had the disproportion been twenty to one. The disproportion is not so great in any of our colonies; and yet we are oblig'd to exercise a very rigorous, military

government over the Negroes.

Sixthly. NO man is ever esteem'd rich for possessing what may be reckon'd an equal distribution of property in any country, or even triple or quadruple that wealth. Thus every person in *England* is computed by some to spend six pence a day: Yet is he esteem'd but poor that has five times that sum. Now *Timarchus* is said by *Aeschines* [II] to have been left in easy circumstances; but he was master only of 10 slaves employ'd in manufactures. *Lysias* and his brother, two strangers, were proscrib'd by the thirty for their great riches; tho' they had but 60 a piece. [§] *Demosthenes* was left very rich by his father; yet he had no more than 52 slaves. [III] His work-house, of 20 cabinet makers, is said to be a very considerable manufactory. [‡]

Seventhly. DURING the *Decelian* war, as the *Greek* historians call it, 20,000 slaves deserted, and brought [224] brought the *Athenians* to great distress, as we learn from *Thucydides*. [*] This could not have happen'd, had they been only the twentieth part. The best slaves wou'd not desert.

Eighthly. *Xenophon* [‡] proposes a scheme for entertaining by the public 10,000 slaves: And that so great a number may possibly be supported, any one will be convinc'd, says he, who considers the numbers we had before the *Decelian* war. A way of speaking altogether incompatible with the larger number of *Athenaeus*.

Ninthly. THE whole *census* of the state of *Athens* was less than 6000 talents. And tho' numbers in antient manuscripts be often suspected by critics, yet this is unexceptionable; both because *Demosthenes*, [‡] who gives it, gives also the detail, which checks him, and because *Polybius* [§] assigns the same number, and reasons upon it. Now the most vulgar slave cou'd yield by his labour an *obolus* a day, over and above his maintenance; as we learn from *Xenophon*, [III] who says that *Nicias's* overfeer paid his master so much for slaves, whom he employ'd in digging of mines; and also kept up the number of slaves. If you will take the pains to estimate an *obolus* a day, and the slaves at 400,000, computing only at 4 years purchase, you will find the sum above 12,000 talents; even tho' allowance [225] be made for the great number of holy-days in *Athens*. Besides, many of the slaves wou'd have a much greater value from their art. The lowest that *Demosthenes* [*] estimates any of his father's slaves is two minas a-head. And upon this supposition, it is a little difficult, I confess, to reconcile even the number of 40,000 slaves with the *census* of 6000 talents.

Tenthly. *Chios* is said by *Thucydides* [‡] to contain more slaves, than any *Greek* city except *Sparta*. *Sparta*, then, had more than *Athens*, in proportion to the number of citizens. The *Spartans* were 9000 in the town; 30,000 in the country. [‡] The male slaves, then, of full age, must have been more than 780,000: The whole more than 3,120,000. A number impossible to be maintain'd in a narrow, barren country, such as *Laconia*, which had no trade. Had the *Helotes* been so very numerous, the murder of 2000 mention'd by *Thucydides*, [§] wou'd have irritated them, without weakening them.

BESIDES, we are to consider, that the number, assign'd by *Athenaeus*, [III] whatever it is, comprehends all the inhabitants of *Attica*, as well as those of *Athens*. The *Athenians* affected much a country [226] life, as we learn from *Thucydides*; [*] and when they were all chas'd into town, by the invasion of their territory during the *Peloponnesian* war, the city was not able to contain them, and they were oblig'd to lye in the porticos, temples, and even streets, for want of lodging. [‡]

THE same remark is to be extended to all the other *Greek* cities; and when the number of the citizens is assign'd, we must always understand it of the inhabitants of the neighbouring country, as well as of the city. Yet even with this allowance, it must be confest, that *Greece* was a populous country, and much exceeded what we cou'd imagine of so narrow a territory,

naturally not very fertile, and which drew no supplies of corn from other places. For excepting *Athens*, which traded to *Pontus* for that commodity, the other cities seem to have subsisted chiefly from their neighbouring territory. [‡]

[227]

Rhodes is well known to have been a city of extensive commerce, and of great fame and splendor; yet it contain'd only 6000 citizens able to bear arms, when it was besieg'd by *Demetrius*. [*]

Thebes was always one of the capital cities of *Greece*: [‡] But the number of its citizens exceeded not those of *Rhodes*. [‡] *Phliasia* is said to be a small city by *Xenophon*; [§] yet we find, that it contain'd 6000 citizens. [¶] I pretend not to reconcile these two facts.

Mantinaea was equal to any city in *Arcadia*: [||] Consequently it was equal to *Megalopolis*, which was 50 stadia, or 6 miles and a quarter in circumference. [*] But *Mantinaea* had only 3000 citizens. [‡] The *Greek* cities, therefore, contain'd often fields and gardens, along with the houses; and we cannot judge of them by the extent of their walls. *Athens* contain'd no more than 10,000 houses; yet [228] its walls, with the sea coast, were above 20 miles in extent. *Syracuse* was 22 miles in circumference; yet was scarce ever spoke of by the antients as more populous than *Athens*. *Babylon* was a square of 15 miles or 60 miles in circuit; but it contain'd large cultivated fields and inclosures, as we learn from *Pliny*. Tho' *Aurelian's* wall was 50 miles in circumference; [*] the circuit of all the 13 divisions of *Rome*, taken a-part, according to *Publius Victor*, was only about 43 miles. When an enemy invaded the country, the whole inhabitants retir'd within the walls of the antient cities, along with their cattle, and furniture, and instruments of husbandry. And the great height, to which the walls were rais'd, enabled a small number to defend them with facility.

Sparta, says *Xenophon*, [‡] is one of the cities of *Greece*, that has the fewest inhabitants. Yet *Polybius* [‡] says it was 48 stadia in circumference, and was round.

ALL the *Aetolians* able to bear arms in *Antipater's* time were but ten thousand men. [§]

Polybius [||] tells us, that the *Achaean* league might, without any inconvenience, march 30 or 40,000 [229] men; and this account seems very probable. For that league comprehended the greatest part of *Peloponnesus*. Yet *Pausanias*, [*] speaking of the same period, says, that all the *Achaean*s able to bear arms, even when several manumitted slaves were join'd to them, did not amount to fifteen thousand.

THE *Thessalians*, till their final conquest by the *Romans*, were, in all ages, turbulent, factious, seditious, disorderly. [‡] 'Tis not therefore natural to suppose, that that part of *Greece* abounded much in people.

THE whole inhabitants of *Epirus*, of all ages, sexes and conditions, who were sold by *Paulus Aemilius*, amounted only to 150,000. [‡] Yet *Epirus* might be double the extent of *Yorkshire*. [||]

[230]

WE may now consider the numbers of people in *Rome*, and *Italy*, and collect all the lights afforded us by scatter'd passages in antient authors. We shall find, upon the whole, a great difficulty in fixing any opinion on that head; and no reason to support those exaggerated calculations, so much insisted on by modern writers.

Dionysius Halycarnasseus [*] says, that the antient walls of *Rome* were nearly of the same compass with those of *Athens*, but that the suburbs ran out to a great extent; and it was difficult to tell, where the town ended or the country begun. In some places of *Rome*, it appears from the same author, [†] from *Juvenal*, [‡] and from other antient writers, [||] that the houses were high, and families liv'd in separate [231] stories, one above another: But 'tis probable, these were only the poorer citizens, and only in some few streets. If we may judge from the younger *Pliny's* [*] account of his house, and from *Bartoli's* plans of antient buildings, the men of quality had very spacious palaces; and their buildings were like the *Chinese* houses at this day, where each apartment is separate from the rest, and rises no higher than a single story. To which, if we add, that the *Roman* nobility much affected very extensive porticos and even woods [†] in town; we may perhaps allow *Vossius* (tho' there is no manner of reason for it) to read the famous passage of the elder *Pliny* [‡] his own way, without admitting [234] own way, without admitting the extravagant consequences he draws from it.

THE number of citizens, who receiv'd corn by the public distribution in *Augustus's* time, [*] were 200,000. This one wou'd esteem a pretty certain ground of calculation: Yet is it attended with such circumstances as throw us back into doubt and uncertainty.

Did the poorer citizens only receive the distribution? It was calculated, to be sure, chiefly for their benefit. But it appears from a passage of *Cicero*, [†] that the rich might also take their portion, and that it was esteem'd no reproach in them to apply for it.

TO whom was the corn given; whether only to heads of families, or to every man, woman and child? The portion every month was five *modii* to each [‡] (about 5% of a bushel.) This was too little for a family, and too much for an individual. [235] A very accurate antiquarian, [†] therefore, infers, that it was given to every man of full years: But he allows the matter to be uncertain.

WAS it strictly enquir'd, whether the claimant liv'd within the precincts of *Rome*, or was it sufficient, that he presented himself at the monthly distribution? This last seems more probable. [‡]

WERE there no false claimants? We are told, [*] that *Caesar* struck off at once 170,000, who had crept in without a just title; and it is very little probable, that he remedy'd all abuses.

BUT lastly, what proportion of slaves must we assign to these citizens? This is the most material question; and the most uncertain. 'Tis very doubtful, whether *Athens* can be establish'd as a rule for *Rome*. Perhaps the *Athenians* had more slaves, because they employ'd them in manufactures, for which a capital city, like *Rome*, seems not so proper. Perhaps, on the other hand, the *Romans* had more slaves, on account of their superior luxury and riches.

THERE were exact bills of mortality kept in *Rome*; but no antient author has given us the [236] number of burials, except *Suetonius*, [*] who tells us, that in one season, there were 30,000 names carry'd to the temple of *Libitina*: But this was during a plague; which can afford no certain foundation for any inference.

THE public corn, tho' distributed only to 200,000 citizens, affected very considerably the whole agriculture of *Italy*: [‡] A fact no way reconcileable to some modern exaggerations with regard to the inhabitants of that country.

THE best ground of conjecture I can find, concerning the greatness of antient *Rome* is this: We are told by *Herodian*, [†] that *Antioch* and *Alexandria* were very little inferior to *Rome*. It appears from *Diodorus Siculus*, [§] that one straight street of *Alexandria*, reaching from port to port, was five miles long; and as *Alexandria* was much more extended in length

than breadth, it seems to have been a city nearly of the bulk of *Paris*; [III] and *Rome* might be about the size of *London*.

[237]

THERE liv'd in *Alexandria* in *Diodorus Siculus*'s time, [*] 300,000 free people, comprehending, I suppose, women and children. [‡] But what number of slaves? Had we any just ground to fix these at an equal number with the free inhabitants, it wou'd favour the foregoing calculation.

THERE is a passage in *Herodian*, which is a little surprising. He says, positively and plainly, that the palace of the emperor was as large as all [238] the rest of the city. [‡] This was *Nero*'s golden house, which is indeed represented by *Suetonius* [III] and *Pliny* [*] as of an enormous extent; but no power of imagination can make us conceive it to bear any proportion to such a city as *London*.

WE may observe, had the historian been relating *Nero*'s extravagance, and had he made use of such an expression, it would have had much less weight; these rhetorical exaggerations being so apt to creep into an author's stile, even when the most chaste and correct. But 'tis mention'd by *Herodian* only by the bye, in relating the quarrels betwixt *Geta* and *Caracalla*.

IT appears from the same historian, [‡] that there was, then, much land uncultivated, and put to no [239] manner of use; and he ascribes it as a great praise to *Pertinax*, that he allow'd every one to take such land, either in *Italy* or elsewhere, and cultivate it as he pleas'd, without paying any taxes. *Lands uncultivated and put to no manner of use!* This is not heard of in any part of Christendom; except perhaps, in some remote parts of *Hungary*, as I have been inform'd. And it surely corresponds very ill with that idea of the extreme populousness of antiquity, so much insisted on.

We learn from *Vopiscus*, [*] that there was in *Etruria* much fertile land uncultivated; which the emperor, *Aurelian*, intended to convert into vineyards, in order to furnish the *Roman* people with a gratuitous distribution of wine: A very proper expedient to dispeople still farther that capital and all the neighbouring territories.

IT may not be amiss to take notice of the account, which *Polybius* [‡] gives of the great herds of swine to be met with in *Tuscany* and *Lombardy*, as well as in *Greece*, and of the method of feeding them which was then practis'd.

'There are great herds of swine, (says he) throughout all *Italy*, particularly, in former times, thro' *Etruria* and *Cisalpine Gaul*. And a herd frequently contains a thousand or more swine. When one of [240] these herds in feeding meets with another, they mix together; and the swine-herds have no other expedients to separate them than to go to different quarters, where they sound their horn; and these animals, being accustom'd to that signal, run immediately each to the horn of his own keeper. Whereas in *Greece*, if the herds of swine happen to mix in the forests, he, who has the greatest flock, takes cunningly the opportunity of driving all away. And thieves are very apt to purloin the straggling hogs, which have wander'd to a great distance from their keeper, in search of food.'

MAY we not infer from this account, that the North of *Italy* was then much less peopled, and worse cultivated than at present? How cou'd these vast herds be fed in a country, so thick of enclosures, so improv'd by agriculture, so divided by farms, so planted with vines and corn intermingled together? I must confess, that *Polybius*'s relation has more the air of that oeconomy, which is to be met with in our *American* colonies, than the management of an *European* country.

WE meet with a reflection in *Aristotle's* [†] ethics, which seems to me unaccountable on any supposition, and by proving too much in favour of [241] our present reasoning may be thought really to prove nothing. That philosopher, treating of friendship, and observing, that that relation ought neither to be contracted to a very few, nor extended over a great multitude, illustrates his opinion by the following argument. 'In like manner, (says he,) as a city cannot subsist, if it either have so few inhabitants as ten, or so many as a hundred thousand; so is there a mediocrity requir'd in the number of friends; and you destroy the essence of friendship by running into either extreme.' What! Impossible, that a city can contain a hundred thousand inhabitants! Had *Aristotle* never seen, nor heard of a city that was near so populous? This, I must own, passes my comprehension.

Pliny [*] tells us, that *Seleucia*, the seat of the *Greek* empire in the East, was reported to contain 600,000 people. *Carthage* is said by *Strabo* [†] to have contain'd 700,000. The inhabitants of *Pekin* are not much more numerous. *London*, *Paris*, and *Constantinople* may admit of nearly the same computation; at least, the two latter cities do not exceed it. *Rome*, *Alexandria*, *Antioch* we have already spoke of. From the experience of past and present ages, one might conjecture, that there is a kind of impossibility in the nature of [242] things, that any city cou'd ever rise much beyond this proportion. Whether the grandeur of a city be founded on commerce or on empire, there seem to be invincible obstacles, which prevent its farther progress. The seats of vast monarchies, by introducing extravagant luxury, irregular expence, idleness, dependence, and false ideas of rank and superiority, are improper for commerce. Extensive commerce checks itself, by raising the price of all labour and commodities. When a great court engages the attendance of a numerous nobility, possess of over-grown fortunes, the middling gentry remain in their provincial towns, where they can make a figure on a moderate income. And if the dominions of a state arrive at an enormous size, there necessarily arise many capitals, in the remoter provinces; whither all the inhabitants, except a few courtiers, repair, for education, fortune, and amusement. [*] *London*, by uniting extensive commerce and middling empire, has, perhaps, arriv'd at a greatness, which no city will ever be able to exceed.

CHUSE *Dover* or *Calais* for a center: Draw a circle of two hundred miles radius: You comprehend *London*, *Paris*, the *Netherlands*, the *United* [243] *Provinces*, and some of the best cultivated counties of *France* and *England*. It may safely, I think, be affirm'd, that no spot of ground can be found, in antiquity, of equal extent, which contain'd near so many great and populous cities, and was so stockt with riches and inhabitants. To balance, in both periods, the states, which possess most art, knowledge, civility and the best police, seems the truest method of comparison.

'TIS an observation of *L'Abbe du Bos*, [†] that *Italy* is warmer at present than it was in antient times.

'The annals of *Rome* tell us, (says he) that in the year 480. *ab U. C.* the winter was so severe that it destroy'd the trees. The *Tyber* froze in *Rome*, and the ground was cover'd with snow for forty days. When *Juvenal* [*] describes a superstitious woman, he represents her as breaking the ice of the *Tyber*, that she may perform her ablutions.'

Hybernum fracta glacie descendet in amnem,
Ter matutino Tyberi mergetur.

'He speaks of that river's freezing as a common event. Many passages of *Horace* suppose the streets of *Rome* full of snow and ice. We shou'd have more certainty with regard to this point, had the antients known the use of thermometers: But their writers, without intending it, [244] give us information, sufficient to convince us, that the winters are now much more temperate at *Rome* than formerly. At present, the *Tyber* no more freezes at *Rome* than the *Nile* at

Cairo. The *Romans* esteem the winter very rigorous, if the snow lyes two days, and if one sees for eight and forty hours a few small icicles hang from a fountain that has a North exposition.'

THE observation of this ingenious critic may be extended to other *European* climates. Who cou'd discover the mild climate of *France* in *Diodorus Siculus*'s[*] description of *Gaul*?

'As it is a Northern climate, (says he) it is infested with cold to an extreme degree. In cloudy weather, instead of rain, there fall great snows; and in clear weather it there freezes so excessive hard, that the rivers acquire bridges of their own substance, over which, not only single travellers may pass, but large armies, accompany'd with all their baggage and loaded waggons. And there being many rivers in *Gaul*, the *Rhone*, the *Rhine*, &c. almost all of them are froze over; and 'tis usual, in order to prevent falling, to cover the ice with chaff and straw, at the places where the road passes.'

NORTH of the *Cevennes*, says *Strabo*, [†] *Gaul* produces not figs and olives: And the vines, that have been planted, bear not grapes, that will ripen.

[245]

Ovid positively maintains, with all the serious affirmation of prose, that the *Euxine* sea froze every winter in his time; and he appeals to *Roman* governors, whom he names, for the truth of his assertion. [‡] This never happens at present in the latitude of *Tomi*, whither *Ovid* was banish'd. All the complaints of the same poet seem to mark a rigour of the seasons, which is scarce experienc'd at present in *Petersburg* or *Stockholm*.

Tournefort, a *Provençal*, who had travel'd into the same countries, observes that there is not a finer climate in the world: And he asserts that nothing but *Ovid*'s melancholy cou'd have given him such dismal ideas of it. But the facts, mention'd by that poet, are too circumstantiate to bear any such interpretation.

Polybius [*] says, that the climate in *Arcadia* was very cold, and the air moist.

'*Italy*, [†] (says *Varro*,) is the most temperate climate in *Europe*. The inland parts' (*Gaul*, *Germany*, and *Pannonio*, no doubt) 'have almost perpetual winter.'

THE Northern parts of *Spain*, according to *Strabo*, [§] are but ill inhabited, because of the great cold.

[246]

ALLOWING, therefore, this remark to be just, that *Europe* is become warmer than formerly; how can we account for it? Plainly, by no other method, but by supposing, that the land is at present much better cultivated, and that the woods are clear'd, which formerly threw a shade upon the earth, and kept the rays of the sun from penetrating to it. Our Northern colonies in *America* become more temperate, in proportion as the woods are fell'd; [*] but in general, every one may remark, that cold still makes itself much more severely felt, both in North and South *America*, than in places under the same latitude in *Europe*.

Saserna, cited by *Columella*, [†] affirm'd, that the disposition of the heavens was alter'd before his time, 2nd that the air had become much milder and warmer; as appears hence, says he, that many places now abound with vineyards and olive plantations, which formerly, by reason of the rigour of the climate, cou'd raise none of these productions. Such a change, if real, will be allow'd an evident sign of the better cultivation and peopling of countries [247] before the age of *Saserna*; [‖] and if it be continu'd to the present times, is a proof, that these advantages have been continually encreasing throughout this part of the world.

LET us now cast our eye over all the countries, that were the scene of antient and modern history, and compare their past and present situation. We shall not, perhaps, find such foundation for the complaint of the present emptiness and desolation of the world. *Aegypt* is represented by *Maillet*, to whom we owe the best account of it, as extremely populous; tho' he esteems the number of its inhabitants to be diminish'd. *Syria* and the lesser *Asia*, as well as the coast of *Barbary*, I can readily own, to be very desart in comparison of their antient condition. The depopulation of *Greece* is also very obvious; but whether the country now call'd *Turky* in *Europe* may not, in general, contain as many inhabitants as during the flourishing period of *Greece* may be a little doubtful. The *Thracians* seem, then, to have liv'd like the *Tartars* at present, by pasturage and plunder: [*] The *Getes* were still more unciviliz'd: [†] And the *Illyrians* were no better. [‡] These occupy nine tenths of that country: And tho' the police and government [248] of the *Turks* be not very favourable to industry and propagation; yet it preserves, at least, peace and order amongst the inhabitants; and is preferable to that barbarous, unsettled condition, in which they antiently liv'd.

Poland and *Muscovy* in *Europe* are not very populous; but are certainly much more so than the antient *Sarmatia* and *Scythia*; where no husbandry or agriculture was ever heard of, and pasturage was the sole art, by which the people were maintain'd. The like observation may be extended to *Denmark* and *Sweden*. No one ought to esteem the immense swarms of people, that formerly came from the North, and over-ran all *Europe*, to be any objection to this opinion. Where a whole nation, or even half of it, remove their seat; 'tis easy to imagine what a prodigious multitude they must form; with what desperate courage they must make their attacks; and how the terror they strike into the invaded nations, will make these magnify, in their imagination, both the courage and multitude of the invaders. *Scotland* is neither extensive nor populous; but were the half of its inhabitants to seek a new habitation, they wou'd form a colony as large as the *Teutons* and *Cimbri*, and wou'd shake all *Europe*; supposing it in no better a condition for defence than formerly.

Germany has surely at present twenty times more inhabitants than in antient times, when they cultivated [249] no ground, and each tribe valu'd itself on the extensive desolation which it spread around, as we learn from *Caesar* [*] and *Tacitus* [†] and *Strabo*. [‡] A proof that the division into small republics will not alone render a nation populous, unless attended with the spirit of peace, order, and industry.

THE barbarous condition of *Britain* in former times is well known, and the thinness of its inhabitants may easily be conjectur'd, both from their barbarity, and from a circumstance mention'd by *Herodian*, [||] that all *Britain* was marshy, even in *Severus's* time, after the *Romans* had been fully settled in it above a whole century.

'TIS not easily imagin'd, that the *Gauls* were antiently much more advanc'd in the arts of life than their Northern neighbours; since they travel'd to this island for their education in the mysteries of the religion and philosophy of the *Druids*. [§] I cannot, therefore, think, that *Gaul* was then near so populous as *France* is at present.

WERE we to believe, indeed, and join together the testimony of *Appian* and that of *Diodorus Siculus*, we must admit an incredible populousness in *Gaul*. The former historian[¶] says, that there [250] were 400 nations in that country; the latter affirms[*] that the largest of the *Gallic* nations consisted of 200,000 men, besides women and children, and the least of 50,000. Calculating, therefore, at a medium, we must admit of near 200 millions of people, in a country, which we esteem populous at present, tho' suppos'd to contain little more than 20. [†] Such calculations, therefore, by their extravagance lose all manner of authority. We may observe, that that equality of property, to which the populousness of antiquity may be ascrib'd, had no place amongst the *Gauls*. [‡] Their intestine wars also, before *Caesar's* time, were almost perpetual. [||] And *Strabo* [§] observes, that tho' all *Gaul*

was cultivated, yet it was not cultivated with any skill or care; the genius of the inhabitants leading them less to arts than arms, till their slavery to *Rome* produc'd peace among themselves.

Caesar [III] enumerates very particularly the great forces, which were levy'd in *Belgium*, to oppose his conquests; and makes them amount to 208,000. These were not the whole people able to bear arms in *Belgium*: For the same historian tells us, that the *Bellovaci* cou'd have brought a hundred thousand men into the field, tho' they engag'd only for sixty. Taking the whole, therefore, in this proportion [251] of ten to six, the sum of fighting men in all the states of *Belgium* was above half a million; the whole inhabitants two millions. And *Belgium* being about the fourth of *Gaul*, that country might contain eight millions, which is not above the third of its present inhabitants. [*]

THE antient *Helvetia* was 240 miles in length, and 180 in breadth, according to *Caesar*; [†] yet contain'd only 360,000 inhabitants. The canton of *Berne* alone, has, at present, as many people.

AFTER this computation of *Appian* and *Diodorus Siculus*, I know not if I dare say, that the modern *Dutch* are more numerous than the antient *Batavi*.

Spain is decay'd from what it was three centuries ago; but if we step backward two thousand [252] years, and consider the restless, turbulent, unsettl'd condition of its inhabitants, we may probably be inclin'd to think, that it is now much more populous. Many *Spaniards* kill'd themselves when depriv'd of their arms by the *Romans*. [*] It appears from *Plutarch* [†] that robbery and plunder were esteem'd honourable amongst the *Spaniards*. *Hirtius* [‡] represents in the same light the situation of that country in *Caesar's* time; and he says, that every man was oblig'd to live in castles and wall'd towns for his security. 'Twas not till their final conquest under *Augustus*, that these disorders were repress. [III] The account, which *Strabo* [§] and *Justin* [¶] give of *Spain*, corresponds exactly with those above mention'd. How much, therefore, must it diminish from our idea of the populousness of antiquity, when we find, that *Cicero*, comparing *Italy*, *Afric*, *Gaul*, *Greece*, and *Spain*, mentions the great number of inhabitants, as the peculiar circumstance which render'd that latter country formidable. [{inverted †}]

[253]

Italy, 'tis probable, however, has decay'd: But how many great cities does it still contain; *Venice*, *Genoa*, *Pavia*, *Turin*, *Milan*, *Naples*, *Florence*, *Leghorn*, which either subsisted not in antient times, or were then very inconsiderable? If we reflect on this, we shall not be apt to carry matters to so great an extreme as usual, with regard to this subject.

WHEN the *Roman* authors complain, that *Italy*, which formerly exported corn, became dependent on all the provinces for its daily bread, they never ascribe this alteration to the encrease of its inhabitants, but to the neglect of tillage and agriculture. [*] A natural effect of that pernicious practice of importing corn, in order to distribute it *gratis* among the *Roman* citizens, and a very bad means of multiplying the inhabitants of any country. [†] The *sportula*, so much talk'd of by *Martial* and *Juvenal*, being presents regularly made by the great lords to their smaller clients, must have had a like tendency to produce idleness, debauchery, and a continual decay amongst the people.

[254]

WERE I to assign a period, when I imagine this part of the world might possibly contain more inhabitants than at present, I shou'd pitch upon the age of *Trajan* and the *Antonines*; the great extent of the *Roman* empire being then civiliz'd and cultivated, settled almost in a

profound peace both foreign and domestic, and living under the same regular police and government. [*] But we are not told, [255] that all extensive governments, especially absolute monarchies, are destructive to population, and contain [256] a secret vice and poison, which destroy the effect of all these promising appearances. [*] To confirm this, there is a passage, cited from *Plutarch*, [‡] which being somewhat singular, we shall here examine it.

THAT author, endeavouring to account for the silence of many of the oracles, says, that it may be ascribed to the present desolation of the world, proceeding from former wars and factions; which common calamity, he adds, has fallen heavier upon *Greece* than on any other country; insomuch, that the whole cou'd scarce at present furnish out three thousand warriors, which, in the time of the *Median* war, were supply'd by the single city of *Megara*. The gods, therefore, who affect works of dignity and importance, have suppress many of their oracles, and deign not to use so many interpreters of their will to so diminutive a people.

I MUST confess, that this passage contains so many difficulties, that I know not what to make of it. You may observe, that *Plutarch* assigns for a cause [257] of the decay of mankind, not the extensive dominion of the *Romans*, but the former wars and factions of the several nations; all which were quieted by the *Roman* arms. *Plutarch's* reasoning, therefore, is directly contrary to the inference, which is drawn from the fact he advances.

Polybius supposes, that *Greece* had become more prosperous and flourishing after the establishment of the *Roman* yoke; [*] and tho' that historian wrote before these conquerors had degenerated, from being the patrons, to be the plunderers of mankind; yet as we find from *Tacitus* [‡] that the severity of the emperors afterwards corrected the licence of the governors, we have no reason to think that extensive monarchy so destructive, as it is often represented.

WE learn from *Strabo*, [‡] that the *Romans*, from their regard to the *Greeks*, maintain'd, to his time, most of the privileges and liberties of that celebrated [258] nation; and *Nero* afterwards rather encreas'd them. [*] How therefore can we imagine, that the *Roman* yoke was so burthensome over that part of the world? The oppression of the proconsuls was check'd; and the magistracies in *Greece* being all bestow'd in the several cities, by the free votes of the people, there was no great necessity for the competitors to attend the emperor's court. If great numbers went to seek their fortunes in *Rome*, and advance themselves by learning or eloquence, the commodities of their native country, many of them wou'd return with the fortunes they had made, and thereby enrich the *Grecian* commonwealths.

BUT *Plutarch* says, that the general depopulation had been more sensibly felt in *Greece* than in any other country. How is this reconcileable to its superior privileges and advantages?

BESIDES, this passage, by proving too much, really proves nothing. *Only three thousand men able to bear arms in all Greece!* Who can admit so strange a proposition; especially, if we consider the great numbers of *Greek* cities, whose names still remain in history, and which are mention'd by writers long after the age of *Plutarch*? There are there surely ten times more people at present, when there scarce remains a city in all the bounds [259] of antient *Greece*. That country is still tolerably cultivated, and furnishes a sure supply of corn, in case of any scarcity in *Spain*, *Italy* or the South of *France*.

WE must observe, that the antient frugality of the *Greeks*, and their equality of property, still subsisted during the age of *Plutarch*; as appears from *Lucian*. [*] Nor is there any ground to imagine, that that country was possess'd by a few masters, and a great number of slaves.

'TIS probable, indeed, that military discipline, being entirely useless, was extremely neglected in *Greece* after the establishment of the *Roman* empire; and if these commonwealths, formerly so warlike and ambitious, maintain'd each of them a small city guard, to prevent mobbish disorders, 'tis all they had occasion for: And these, perhaps, did not amount to three thousand men, throughout all *Greece*. I own, that if *Plutarch* had this fact in his eye, he is here guilty of a very gross paralogism, and assigns causes no way proportion'd to the effects. But is it so great a prodigy, that an author shou'd fall into a mistake of this nature? [†]

[260]

BUT whatever force may remain in this passage of *Plutarch*, we shall endeavour to counter-balance it by as remarkable a passage in *Diodorus Siculus*, where the historian, after mentioning *Ninus's* army of 1,700,000 foot and 200,000 horse, endeavours to support the credibility of this account, by some posterior facts; and adds, that we must not form a notion of the antient populousness [261] of mankind from the present emptiness and depopulation, which is spread over the world. [†] Thus an author, who liv'd at that very period of antiquity, which is represented as most populous, [†] complains of the desolation, which then prevail'd, gives the preference to former times, and has recourse to antient fables as a foundation for his opinion. The humour of blaming the present, and admiring the past, is strongly rooted in human nature, and has an influence, even on persons, endu'd with the profoundest judgment and most extensive learning.

DISCOURSE XI.

Of the Protestant Succession. ↩

I SUPPOSE, that a member of parliament, in the reign of king *William* or queen *Anne*, while the establishment of the *protestant succession* was yet uncertain, were deliberating concerning the party he wou'd chuse in that important question, and weighing, with impartiality, the advantages and disadvantages on each side. I believe the following particulars wou'd have enter'd into his consideration.

HE wou'd easily perceive the great advantages, resulting from the restoration of the *Stuart* family; by which we shou'd preserve the succession clear and undisputed, free from a pretender, with such a specious title as that of blood, which, with the multitude, is always the claim, the strongest, and most easily comprehended. 'Tis in vain to say, as many have done, that the question with regard to *governors*, independent of *government*, is frivolous, and little worth disputing, much less fighting about. The generality of mankind never will enter into these sentiments; and 'tis much happier, I believe, for society, that they do not, but continue in their natural prejudices and prepossessions. How cou'd [264] stability be preserv'd in any monarchical government (which, tho', perhaps, not the best, is, and always has been the most common of any) unless men had so passionate a regard for the true heir of their royal family; and even tho' weak in understanding, or infirm in years, gave him so great a preference above persons, the most accomplish'd in shining talents, or celebrated for great achievements? Wou'd not every popular leader put in his claim at every vacancy, or even without any vacancy; and the kingdom become the theatre of perpetual wars and convulsions? The condition of the *Roman* empire, surely, was not, in this respect, much to be envy'd; nor is that of the *Eastern* nations, who pay little regard to the title of their sovereigns, but sacrifice them, every day, to the caprice or momentary humour of the populace or soldiery. 'Tis but a foolish wisdom, which is so carefully display'd, in undervaluing princes, and placing them on a level with the meanest of mankind. To be sure, an anatomist finds no more in the greatest monarch than in the lowest peasant or day-labourer; and a moralist may, perhaps, frequently find less. But what do all these reflections tend to? We, all of us, still retain these prejudices in favour of birth and family; and neither in our serious occupations, nor most careless amusements, can we ever get entirely rid of them. A tragedy, that wou'd represent the adventures of common sailors, or porters, or even of private [265] gentlemen, wou'd presently disgust us; but one, that introduces kings and princes, acquires in our eyes an air of importance and dignity. Or shou'd a man be able, by his superior wisdom, to get entirely above such prepossessions, he wou'd soon, by means of the same wisdom, again bring himself down to them; for the sake of society, whose welfare he wou'd perceive to be intimately connected with them. Far from endeavouring to undeceive the people in this particular, he wou'd cherish and foster such sentiments of reverence to their princes; as requisite to preserve a due subordination in society. And tho' the lives of twenty thousand men be often sacrific'd to maintain a king in possession of his throne, or preserve the right of succession undisturbed, he entertains no indignation at the loss; on pretence that every individual of these was, perhaps, in himself, as valuable as the prince he serv'd. He considers the consequences of violating the hereditary right of kings: Consequences, which may be felt for many centuries; while the loss of several thousand men brings so little prejudice to a large kingdom, that it may not be perceiv'd a few years afterwards.

THE advantages of the *Hanover* succession are of an opposite nature, and arise from this very circumstance, that it violates hereditary right, and places on the throne a prince, to whom birth gave no title to that dignity. 'Tis evident to any one, [266] who considers the history of this island, that the privileges of the people have, during the two last centuries, been continually upon the encrease, by the division of the church lands, by the alienations of the barons estates, by the progress of trade, and above all, by the happiness of our situation, which, for a long time, gave us sufficient security, without any standing army or military establishment. On the contrary, public liberty has, almost in every other nation of *Europe*, been, during the same period, extremely upon the decline; while the people were disgusted at the hardships of the old *Gothic* militia, and chose rather to entrust their prince with mercenary armies, which he easily turn'd against themselves. 'Twas nothing extraordinary, therefore, that some of our *British* sovereigns mistook the nature of the constitution, and genius of the people; and as they embrac'd all the favourable precedents left them by their ancestors, they over-look'd all those, which were contrary, and which suppos'd a limitation in our government. They were encourag'd in this mistake, by the example of all the neighbouring princes, who, bearing the same title or appellation, and being adorn'd with the same ensigns of authority, naturally led them to claim the same powers and prerogatives. [*] [267] The flattery of courtiers farther blinded them; and above all, that of the clergy, who from several passages of their *scripture*, and these wrested too, had erected a regular and avow'd system of [268] tyranny and despotic power. The only method of destroying, at once, all these exorbitant claims and pretensions was to depart from the true hereditary line, and chuse a prince, who, being plainly a creature of the public, and receiving the crown on conditions, exprest and avow'd, found his authority establish'd on the same bottom with the privileges of the people. By electing him in the royal line, we cut off all hopes of ambitious subjects, who might, in future emergencies, disturb the government by their cabals and pretensions: By rendering the crown hereditary in his family, we avoided all the inconveniencies of elective monarchy: And by excluding the lineal heir, we secur'd all our constitutional limitations, and render'd our government uniform and of a piece. The people cherish monarchy, because protected by it: The monarch favours liberty, because created by it. And thus every advantage is obtain'd by the new establishment, as far as human skill and wisdom can extend itself.

[269]

THESE are the separate advantages of fixing the succession, either in the house of *Stuart*, or in that of *Hanover*. There are also disadvantages in each establishment, which an impartial patriot wou'd ponder and examine, in order to form a just judgment upon the whole.

THE disadvantages of the protestant succession consist in the foreign dominions, which are possess'd by the princes of the *Hanover* line, and which, it might be suppos'd, wou'd engage us in the intrigues and wars of the continent, and lose us, in some measure, the inestimable advantage we possess, of being surrounded and guarded by the sea, which we command. The disadvantages of recalling the abdicated family consist chiefly in their religion, which is more prejudicial to society than that establish'd amongst us, is contrary to it, and affords no toleration or peace or security to any other religion.

IT appears to me, that all these advantages and disadvantages are allow'd on both sides; at least, by every one, who is at all susceptible of argument or reasoning. No subject, however loyal, pretends to deny, that the disputed title and foreign dominions of the present royal family are a loss; nor is there any partizan of the *Stuart* family, but will confess, that the claim of hereditary, indefeasible right, and the *Roman* catholick religion are also disadvantages [270] in that family. It belongs, therefore, to a philosopher alone, who is of neither party, to put all these circumstances in the scale, and assign to each of them its proper poize and influence. Such an one will readily, at first, acknowledge, that all political

questions are infinitely complicated; and that there scarce ever occurs, in any deliberation, a choice, which is either purely good, or purely ill. Consequences, mix'd and vary'd, may be foreseen to flow from every measure: And many consequences, unforeseen, do always, in fact, result from it. Hesitation, and reserve, and suspense are, therefore, the only sentiments he brings to this essay or trial. Or if he indulges any passion, 'tis that of derision and ridicule against the ignorant multitude, who are always clamorous and dogmatical, even in the nicest questions, of which, from want of temper, perhaps still more than of understanding, they are altogether unfit judges.

BUT to say something more determinate on this head; the following reflections will, I hope, show the temper, if not the understanding of a philosopher.

WERE we to judge merely by first appearance, and by past experience, we must allow, that the advantages of a parliamentary title in the house of *Hanover* are much greater than those of an undisputed hereditary title in the house of *Stuart*; and [271] that our fathers acted wisely in preferring the former to the latter. So long as the house of *Stuart* reign'd in *Britain*, which, with some interruptions, was above 80 years, the government was kept in a continual fever, by the contentions betwixt the privileges of the people and the prerogatives of the crown. If arms were dropt, the noise of disputes continu'd: Or if these were silenc'd, jealousy still corroded the heart, and threw the nation into an unnatural ferment and disorder. And while we were thus occupy'd in domestic contentions, a foreign power, dangerous, if not fatal, to public liberty, erected itself in *Europe*, without any opposition from us, and even sometimes with our assistance.

BUT within these last sixty years, when a parliamentary establishment has taken place; whatever factions may have prevail'd either amongst the people or in public assemblies; the whole force of our constitution has always fallen to one side, and an uninterrupted harmony has been preserv'd betwixt our princes and our parliaments. Public liberty, with internal peace and order, has flourish'd, almost without interruption: Trade and manufactures and agriculture have encreas'd: The arts and sciences and philosophy have been cultivated: Even religious parties have been necessitated to lay aside their mutual rancour: And the glory of the nation has spread itself all over *Europe*; while we [272] stand the bulwark against oppression, and the great antagonist of that power, which threatens every people with conquest and subjection. So long and so glorious a period no nation almost can boast of; nor is there another instance, in the whole history of mankind, that so many millions of people have, during such a space of time, been held together, in a manner so free, so rational, and so suitable to the dignity of human nature.

BUT tho' this recent instance seems clearly to decide in favour of the present establishment, there are some circumstances to be thrown into the other scale; and 'tis dangerous to regulate our judgment by one event or example.

WE have had two rebellions during the flourishing period above mention'd; besides plots and conspiracies without number. And if none of these have produc'd any very fatal event, we may ascribe our escape chiefly to the narrow genius of those princes, who disputed our establishment; and may esteem ourselves so far fortunate. But the claims of the banish'd family, I fear, are not yet antiquated; and who can foretel, that their future attempts will produce no greater disorder?

THE disputes betwixt privilege and prerogative may easily be compos'd by laws, and votes, and conferences, and concessions; where there is tolerable [273] temper or prudence on both sides, or on either side. Amongst contending titles, the question can only be determin'd by the sword, and by devastation, and by civil war.

A PRINCE, who fills the throne with a disputed title dares not arm his subjects; the only method of securing a people fully, both against domestic oppression and foreign conquest.

NOTWITHSTANDING all our riches and renown, what a critical escape did we lately make, from dangers, which were owing not so much to bad conduct and ill success in war, as to the pernicious practice of mortgaging our finances, and the still more pernicious maxim of never paying off our incumbrances. Such fatal measures cou'd never have been embrac'd, had it not been to secure a precarious establishment. [*]

BUT to convince us, that an hereditary title is to be embrac'd rather than a parliamentary one, which is not supported by any other views or motives; a man needs only transport himself back to the aera of the restoration, and suppose, that he had had a seat in that parliament, which recall'd the royal family, and put a period to the greatest disorders [274] that ever arose from the opposite pretensions of prince and people. What wou'd have been thought of one, that had propos'd, at that time, to set aside *Charles* the second, and settle the crown on the duke of *York* or *Gloucester*; merely, in order to exclude the high claims of their father and grandfather? Wou'd not such an one have been regarded as a very extravagant projector, who lov'd dangerous remedies, and cou'd tamper and play with a government and national constitution, like a quack with a sickly patient?

THE advantages, which result from a parliamentary title, preferably to an hereditary one, tho' they are great, are too refin'd ever to enter into the conception of the vulgar. The bulk of mankind wou'd never allow them to be sufficient for committing what wou'd be regarded as an injustice to the prince. They must be supported by some gross, popular, and familiar topics; and wise men, tho' convinc'd of their force, wou'd reject them, in compliance with the weakness and prejudices of the people. An encroaching tyrant or deluded bigot alone, by his misconduct, is able to enrage the nation, and render practicable what was always, perhaps, desirable.

IN reality, the reason assign'd by the nation for excluding the race of *Stuart*, and so many other branches of the royal family, is not on account of [275] their hereditary title (which however just in itself, wou'd, to vulgar apprehensions, have appear'd altogether absurd) but on account of their religion: Which leads us to compare the disadvantages above mention'd of each establishment.

I CONFESS, that, considering the matter in general, it were rather to be wish'd, that our prince had no foreign dominions, and cou'd confine all his attention to the government of this island. For not to mention some real inconveniencies, that may result from territories on the continent; they afford such a handle for calumny and defamation, as is greedily seiz'd by the people, who are always dispos'd to think ill of their superiors. It must, however, be acknowledg'd, that *Hanover* is, perhaps, the spot of ground in *Europe* the least inconvenient for a king of *Britain*. It lyes in the heart of *Germany*, at a distance from the great powers, which are our natural rivals: It is protected by the laws of the empire, as well as by the arms of its own sovereign: And it serves only to connect us more closely with the house of *Austria*, which is our natural ally.

IN the last war, it has been of service to us, by furnishing us with a considerable body of auxiliary troops, the bravest and most faithful in the world. The elector of *Hanover* is the only considerable prince in the empire, who has drove no separate [276] end, and has rais'd up no stale pretensions, during the late commotions of *Europe*; but has acted, all along, with the dignity of a king of *Britain*. And ever since the accession of that family, 'twou'd be difficult to show any harm we have ever receiv'd from the electoral dominions, except that short disgust in 1718, with *Charles* the twelfth, who, regulating himself by maxims very different from those of other princes, made a personal quarrel of every public injury.

THE religious persuasion of the house of *Stuart* is an inconvenience of a much deeper dye, and wou'd threaten us with much more dismal consequences. The *Roman* catholic religion, with its huge train of priests and friers, is vastly more expensive than ours: Even tho' unaccompany'd with its natural attendants of inquisitors and stakes and gibbets, it is less tolerating: And not contented with dividing the sacerdotal from the regal office, (which must be prejudicial to any state) it bestows the former on a foreigner, who has always a separate, and may often have an opposite interest to that of the public.

BUT were this religion ever so advantageous to society, it is contrary to that which is establish'd among us, and which is likely to keep possession, for a long time, of the minds of the people. And tho' it is much to be hop'd, that the progress of reason [277] and philosophy will, by degrees, abate the virulent acrimony of opposite religious all over *Europe*; yet the spirit of moderation has, as yet, made too slow advances to be entirely trusted. The conduct of the *Saxon* family, where the same person can be a catholic king and a protestant elector, is, perhaps, the first instance, in modern times, of so reasonable and prudent a behaviour. And the gradual progress of the catholic superstition does, even there, prognosticate a speedy alteration: After which, 'tis justly to be apprehended, that persecutions will put a speedy period to the protestant religion in the place of its nativity.

THUS, upon the whole, the advantages of the settlement in the family of *Stuart*, which frees us from a disputed title, seem to bear some proportion with those of the settlement in the family of *Hanover*, which frees us from the claims of prerogative: But at the same time, its disadvantages, by placing on the throne a *Roman* catholic, are much greater than those of the other establishment, in settling the crown on a foreign prince. What party an impartial patriot, in the reign of king *William* or queen *Anne*, wou'd have chosen amidst these opposite views, may, perhaps, to some appear hard to determine. For my part, I esteem liberty so invaluable a blessing in society, that whatever favours its progress and security, can scarce [278] be too fondly cherish'd by every one, who is a lover of human kind.

BUT, the settlement in the house of *Hanover* has actually taken place. The princes of that family, without intrigue, without cabal, without sollicitation on their part, have been call'd to mount our throne, by the united voice of the whole legislative body. They have, since their accession, display'd, in all their actions, the utmost mildness, equity, and regard to the laws and constitution. Our own ministers, our own parliaments, ourselves have govern'd us; and if aught ill has befallen us, we can only blame fortune or ourselves. What a reproach must we become amongst nations, if, disgusted with a settlement so deliberately made, and whose conditions have been so religiously observ'd, we shou'd throw every thing again into confusion; and by our levity and rebellious disposition, prove ourselves totally unfit for any state but that of absolute slavery and subjection?

THE greatest inconvenience attending a disputed title is, that it brings us in danger of civil wars and rebellions. What wise man, to avoid this inconvenience, wou'd run directly upon a civil war and rebellion? Not to mention, that so long possession, secur'd by so many laws, must, e're this time, in the apprehension of a great part of the nation, have begot a title in the house of *Hanover*, [279] independent of their present possession: So that now we shou'd not even, by a revolution, obtain the end, of avoiding a disputed title.

No revolution, made by national forces, will ever be able, without some other great necessity, to abolish our debts and incumbrances, in which the interest of so many persons is concern'd. And a revolution, made by foreign forces, is a conquest: A calamity, with which the precarious balance of power very nearly threatens us, and which our civil dissensions are likely, above all other circumces, to bring suddenly upon us.

DISCOURSE XII.

Idea of a perfect Commonwealth. ↩

OF all mankind, there are none so pernicious as political projectors, if they have power; nor so ridiculous, if they want it: As on the other hand, a wise politician is the most beneficial character in nature, if accompany'd with authority, and the most innocent, and not altogether useless, even if depriv'd of it. 'Tis not with forms of government, as with other artificial contrivances; where an old engine may be rejected, if we can discover another more accurate and commodious, or where trials may safely be made, even tho' the success be doubtful. An establish'd government has an infinite advantage, by that very circumstance of its being establish'd; the bulk of mankind being govern'd by authority, not reason, and never attributing authority to any thing, that has not the recommendation of antiquity. To tamper, therefore, in this affair, or try projects, merely upon the credit of suppos'd argument and philosophy, can never be the part of a wise magistrate, who will bear a reverence to what carries the marks of age; and tho' he may attempt some improvement for the public good, yet will he adjust his innovations, as much as possible, to the antient fabric, and preserve [282] entire the chief pillars and supports of the constitution.

THE mathematicians in *Europe* have been much divided concerning that figure of a ship, which is the most commodious for sailing; and *Huygens*, who at last fixt this controversy, is justly thought to have oblig'd the learned, as well as commercial world; tho' *Columbus* had sail'd to *America*, and Sir *Francis Drake* made the tour of the world, without any such discovery. As one form of government must be allow'd more perfect than another, independent of the manners and humours of particular men; Why may we not enquire what is the most perfect of all, tho' the common botcht and inaccurate governments seem to serve the purposes of society, and tho' it be not so easy to establish a new government as to build a vessel upon a new plan? The subject is surely the most worthy curiosity, of any the wit of man can possibly devise. And who knows, if this controversy were fixt by the universal consent of the learned, but in some future age an opportunity might be afforded of reducing the theory to practice, either by a dissolution of the old governments, or the combination of men to form a new one, in some distant part of the world? In all cases, it must be advantageous to know what is most perfect in the kind, that we may be able to bring any real constitution or form of government as near it as possible, by [283] such gentle alterations and innovations, as may not give too great disturbance to society.

ALL I pretend to in the present essay is to revive this subject of speculation; and therefore I shall deliver my sentiments in as few words as possible. A long dissertation on that head wou'd not, I apprehend, be very acceptable to the public, who will be apt to regard such disquisitions, both as useless and chimerical.

ALL plans of government, which suppose great reformation in the manners of mankind, are plainly imaginary. Of this nature, are the republic of *Plato*, and the *Utopia* of Sir *Thomas More*. The *Oceana* is the only valuable model of a commonwealth, that has yet been offer'd to the public.

THE chief defects of the *Oceana* seem to be these. *First*, Its rotation is inconvenient, by throwing men, of whatever ability, by intervals, out of public employments. *Secondly*, Its *Agrarian* is impracticable. Men will soon learn the art, which was practis'd in antient *Rome*, of concealing their possessions under other peoples names; till at last, the abuse will become so common, that they will throw off, even the appearance of restraint. *Thirdly*, The *Oceana*

provides not a sufficient security for liberty or the redress of grievances. The senate must propose, and the people consent; by which [284] means, the senate have not only a negative upon the people, but what is of infinitely greater consequence, their negative goes before the votes of the people. Were the king's negative of the same nature in the *English* constitution, and cou'd he prevent any bill from coming into parliament, he wou'd be an absolute monarch. As his negative follows the votes of the houses, it is of little consequence: Such a difference is there in the manner of placing the same thing. When a popular bill has been debated in the two houses, is brought to maturity, all its conveniencies and inconveniencies weigh'd and balanc'd; if afterwards it be presented for the royal assent, few princes will venture to reject the unanimous desire of the people. But cou'd the king crush a disagreeable bill in embryo (as was the case, for some time in the *Scotch* parliament, by means of the lords of the articles) the *British* government wou'd have no balance, nor wou'd grievances ever be redrest: And 'tis certain, that exorbitant power proceeds not, in any government, from new laws, so much as from neglecting to remedy the abuses, which frequently rise upon the old ones. A government, says *Machiavel*, must often be brought back to its original principles. It appears, then, that in the *Oceana* the whole legislature may be said to rest in the senate; which *Harrington* wou'd own to be an inconvenient form of government; especially after the *Agrarian* is abolish'd.

[285]

HERE is a form of government, to which I cannot, in theory, discover any considerable objection. Let *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, or any territory of equal extent, be divided into 100 counties, and each county into 100 parishes, making in all 10,000. If the country, purpos'd to be erected into a commonwealth, be of more narrow extent, we may diminish the number of counties, but never bring them below thirty. If it be of greater extent, 'twere better to enlarge the parishes, or throw more parishes into a county, than encrease the number of counties.

LET all the freeholders in the country parishes, and those who pay scot and lot in the town parishes, meet annually in the parish church, and chuse by ballot some freeholder of the county for their member, whom we shall call the county *representative*.

LET the 100 county representatives, two days after their election, meet in the county town, and chuse by ballot, from their own body, ten county *magistrates*, and one *senator*. There are, therefore, in the whole commonwealth, 100 senators, 1100 county magistrates, and 10,000 county representatives. For we shall bestow on all senators the authority of county magistrates, and on all county magistrates the authority of county representatives.

[286]

LET the senators meet in the capital, and be endow'd with the whole executive power of the commonwealth, the power of peace and war, of giving orders to generals, admirals, and ambassadors; and in short, all the prerogatives of a *British* king, except his negative.

LET the county representatives meet in their particular counties, and possess the whole legislative power of the commonwealth; the greatest number of counties deciding the question, and where these are equal, let the senate have the casting vote.

EVERY new law must first be debated in the senate; and tho' rejected by it, if ten senators insist and protest, it must be sent down to the counties. The senate may join to the copy of the law, their reasons for receiving or rejecting it.

BECAUSE it would be troublesome to assemble the whole county representatives for every trivial law, that may be requisite, the senate have their choice of sending down the law either to the county magistrates or county representatives.

THE magistrates, tho' the law be referr'd to them, may, if they please, call the representatives, and submit the affair to their determination.

WHETHER the law be referr'd by the senate to the county magistrates or representatives, a copy of it, and of the senate's reasons must be sent to [287] every representative eight days before the day appointed for the assembling in order to deliberate concerning it. And tho' the determination be, by the senate, referr'd to the magistrates, if five representatives of the county order the magistrates to assemble the whole court of representatives, and submit the affair to their determination, they must obey.

EITHER the county magistrates or representatives may give, to the senator of the county, the copy of a law to be propos'd to the senate; and if five counties concur in the same order, the law, tho' refus'd by the senate, must come either to the county magistrates or representatives, as is contain'd in the order of the five counties.

ANY twenty counties, by a vote either of their magistrates or representatives, may throw any man out of all public offices for a year. Thirty counties for three years.

THE senate has a power of throwing out any member or number of members of its own body, not to be re-elected for that year. The senate cannot throw out twice in a year the senator of the same county.

THE power of the old senate continues for three weeks after the annual election of the county representatives. Then all the new senators are shut up in a conclave, like the cardinals; and by an intricate [288] ballot, such as that of *Venice* or *Malta*, they chuse the following magistrates; a protector, who represents the dignity of the commonwealth, and presides in the senate; two secretaries of state; these six councils, a council of state, a council of religion and learning, a council of trade, a council of laws, a council of war, a council of the admiralty; each council consisting of five persons: Along with six commissioners of the treasury and a chief commissioner. All these must be senators. The senate also names all the ambassadors to foreign courts, who may either be senators or not.

THE senate may continue any or all of these, but must re-elect them every year.

THE protector and two secretaries have session and suffrage in the council of state. The business of that council is all foreign politics. The council of state has session and suffrage in all the other councils.

THE council of religion and learning inspects the universities and clergy. That of trade inspects every thing that may affect commerce. That of laws inspects all the abuses of laws by the inferior magistrates, and examines what improvements may be made of the municipal law. That of war inspects the militia and its discipline, magazines, stores, &c. and when the republic is in war, examines into the proper orders for generals. The council of admiralty has the same power with regard [289] to the navy, along with the nomination of the captains and all inferior officers.

NONE of these councils can give orders themselves, except where they receive such powers from the senate. In other cases, they must communicate every thing to the senate.

WHEN the senate is under adjournment, any of the councils may assemble it before the day appointed for its meeting.

BESIDES these councils or courts, there is another call'd the court of *competitors*, which is thus constituted. If any candidates for the office of senator have more votes than a third of the representatives, that candidate, which has most votes, next to the senator elected, becomes incapable for one year of all public offices, even of being a magistrate or

representative: But he takes his seat in the court of competitors. Here then is a court, which may sometimes consist of a hundred members; sometimes have no members at all; and by that means, be for a year abolish'd.

THE court of competitors has no power in the commonwealth. It has only the inspection of public accounts, and the accusing any man before the senate. If the senate acquit him, the court of competitors may, if they please, appeal to the people, either magistrates or representatives. Upon that appeal, the magistrates or representatives meet on the day appointed by the court of competitors, [290] and chuse in each county three persons; from which number every senator is excluded. These to the number of 300 meet in the capital, and bring the person accus'd to a new trial.

The court of competitors may propose any law to the senate; and if refus'd may appeal to the people, that is to the magistrates or representatives, who examine it in their counties. Every senator, who is thrown out of the senate by a vote of the court, takes his seat in the court of competitors.

THE senate possesses all the judicative authority of the house of lords, that is, all the appeals from the inferior courts. It likewise nominates the lord chancellor, and all the officers of the law.

EVERY county is a kind of republic within itself, and the representatives may make county laws; which have no authority 'till three months after they are voted. A copy of the law is sent to the senate, and to every other county. The senate or any single county may, at any time, annul any law of another county.

THE representatives have all the authority of the *British* justices of the peace in trials, commitments, &c.

THE magistrates have the nomination of all the officers of the revenue in each county. All causes with regard to the revenue are appeal'd ultimately [291] to the magistrates. They pass the accompts of all the officers; but must have all their own accompts examin'd and past at the end of the year by the representatives.

THE magistrates name rectors or ministers to all the parishes.

THE presbyterian government is establish'd; and the highest ecclesiastical court is an assembly or synod of all the presbyters of the county. The magistrates may take any cause from this court, and determine it themselves.

THE magistrates may try, and depose or suspend any presbyter.

THE militia is establish'd in imitation of that in *Switzerland*, which being well known, we shall not insist upon it. 'Twill only be proper to make this addition, that an army of 20,000 be annually drawn out by rotation, paid and encamp'd during six weeks in summer; that the duty of a camp may not be altogether unknown.

THE magistrates nominate all the colonels and downwards. The senate all upwards. During war, the general nominates the colonel and downwards, and his commission is good for a twelvemonth. But after that it must be confirm'd by the magistrates of the county, to which the regiment belongs. The magistrates may break any officer in the county regiment. And the senate may do the same to any officer in the service. If the magistrates [292] do not think proper to confirm the general's choice, they may nominate another officer in the place of him they reject.

ALL crimes are try'd within the county by the magistrates and a jury. But the senate can stop any trial, and bring it before themselves.

ANY county may indict any man before the senate, for any crime.

THE protector, the two secretaries, the council of state, with any five more that the senate appoints, on extraordinary emergencies, are possess of *dictatorial* power for six months.

THE protector may pardon any person condemn'd by the inferior courts.

IN time of war, no officer of the army, that is in the field, can have any civil office in the commonwealth.

THE capital, which we shall call *London*, may be allow'd four members in the senate. It may therefore be divided into four counties. The representatives of each of these chuse one senator, and ten magistrates. There are therefore in the city four senators, forty four magistrates, and four hundred representatives. The magistrates have the same authority as in the counties. The representatives also have the same authority; but they never meet in one general court: They give their [293] votes in their particular county or division of hundreds.

WHEN they enact any city law, the greatest number of counties or divisions determines the matter. And where these are equal, the magistrates have the casting vote.

THE magistrates chuse the mayor, sheriff, recorder and other officers of the city.

IN the commonwealth, no representative, magistrate, or senator, as such, has any salary. The protector, secretaries, councils, and ambassadors have salaries.

THE first year in every century is set apart to correct all inequalities, which time may have produc'd in the representation. This must be done by the legislature.

THE following political aphorisms may explain the reason of these orders.

THE lower sort of people and small proprietors are good enough judges of one not very distant from them in rank or habitation; and therefore, in their parochial meetings, will probably chuse the best or nearly the best representative: But they are wholly unfit for county meetings, and for electing into the higher offices of the republic. Their ignorance gives the grandees an opportunity of deceiving them.

[294]

TEN thousand, even tho' they were not annually elected, are a large enough basis for any free government. 'Tis true, the nobles in *Poland* are more than 10,000, and yet these oppress the people. But as power continues there always in the same persons and families, this makes them, in a manner, a different nation from the people. Besides, the nobles are there united under a few heads of families.

ALL free governments must consist of two councils, a less and a greater, or in other words, of a senate and people. The people, as *Harrington* observes, wou'd want wisdom, without the senate: The senate, without the people, wou'd want honesty.

A LARGE assembly of 1000, for instance, to represent the people, if allow'd to debate, wou'd fall into disorder. If not allow'd to debate, the senate has a negative upon them, and the worst kind of negative, that before resolution.

HERE therefore is an inconvenience which no government has yet fully remedy'd, but which is the easiest to be remedy'd in the world. If the people debate, all is confusion: If they do not debate, they can only resolve; and then the senate carves for them. Divide the people

into many separate bodies; and then they may debate with [295] safety, and every inconvenience seems to be prevented.

CARDINAL *de Retz* says, that all numerous assemblies, however compos'd, are mere mob, and sway'd in their debates by the least motive. This we find confirm'd by daily experience. When an absurdity strikes a member, he conveys it to his neighbour, and so on, till the whole be infected. Separate this great body; and tho every member be only of middling sense, 'tis not probable, that any thing but reason can prevail over the whole. Influence and example being remov'd, good sense will always get the better of bad among a number of people, Good sense is one thing: But follies are numberless; and every man has a different one. The only way of making a people wise is to keep them from uniting into large assemblies.

THERE are two things to be guarded against in every *senate*: Its combination and its division. Its combination is most dangerous; and against this inconvenience we have provided the following remedies. 1, The great dependence of the senators on the people by annual elections; and that not by an undistinguishing rabble, like the *English* electors, but by men of fortune and education. 2, The small power they are allow'd. They have few offices to dispose of. Almost all are given by the magistrates in the counties. 3, The court of [296] competitors, which being compos'd of men that are their rivals, next to them in interest, and uneasy in their present situation, will be sure to take all advantages against them.

THE division of the senate is prevented, 1, By the smallness of their number. 2, As faction supposes a combination to a separate interest, it is prevented by their dependence on the people. 3, They have a power of expelling any factious member. 'Tis true, when another member of the same spirit comes from the county, they have no power of expelling him: Nor is it fit they shou'd; for that shows the humour to be in the people, and probably arises from some ill conduct in public affairs. 4, Almost any man, in a senate so regularly chosen by the people, may be suppos'd fit for any civil office. 'Twou'd be proper, therefore, for the senate to form some *general* resolutions with regard to the disposing of offices among the members: Which resolutions wou'd not confine them in critical times, when extraordinary parts on the one hand, or extraordinary stupidity on the other, appears in any senator; but yet they wou'd be sufficient to prevent brigue and faction, by making the disposal of the offices a thing of course. For instance; let it be a resolution, that no man shall enjoy any office, till he has sat four years in the senate: That, except ambassadors, no man shall be in office two years following: That [297] no man shall attain the higher offices but thro' the lower; That no man shall be protector twice, &c. The senate of *Venice* govern themselves by such resolutions.

IN foreign politics the interest of the senate can scarce eever be divided from that of the people; and therefore 'tis fit to make the senate absolute with regard to them; otherwise there cou'd be no se crecy nor refin'd policy. Besides, without money, no alliance can be executed; and the senate is still sufficiently dependent. Not to mention, that the legislative power being always superior to the executive, the magistrates or representatives may interpose, whenever they think proper.

THE chief support of the *British* government is the opposition of interests; but that, tho' in the main serviceable, breeds endless factions. In the foregoing plan, it does all the good without any of the harm. The *competitors* have no power of controlling the senate: They have only the power of accusing, and appealing to the people.

'TIS necessary, likewise, to prevent both combination and division in the thousand magistrates. This is done sufficiently by the separation of places and interests.

BUT lest that shou'd not be enough, their dependence on the 10,000 for their elections, serves to the same purpose.

NOR is that all: For the 10,000 may resume the power, whenever they please; and not only when they all please, but when any five of a hundred please, which will happen upon the very first suspicion of a separate interest.

THE 10,000 are too large a body either to unite or divide, except when they meet in one place, and fall under the guidance of ambitious leaders. Not to mention their annual election, by almost the whole body of the people.

A SMALL commonwealth is the happiest government in the world, within itself; because every thing lyes under the eye of the rulers: But it may be subdu'd by great force from without. This scheme seems to have all the advantages both of a great and a little commonwealth.

EVERY county law may be annull'd either by the senate or another county; because that shows an opposition of interests: In which case, no part ought to decide for itself. The matter must be referr'd to the whole, which will best determine what agrees with general interest.

AS to the clergy and militia, the reasons of these orders are obvious. Without the dependence of the clergy on the civil magistrate, and without a militia, 'tis folly to think any free government will ever have security or stability.

IN many governments, the inferior magistrates have no rewards but what arise from their ambition, vanity, or public spirit. The salaries of the *French* judges amount not to the interest of the sums they pay for their offices. The *Dutch* burgo-masters have little more immediate profit than the *English* justices of peace, or the members of the house of commons formerly. But lest any shou'd suspect that this wou'd beget negligence in the administration, (which is little to be fear'd considering the natural ambition of mankind) let the magistrates have competent salaries. The senators have access to so many honourable and lucrative offices, that their attendance needs not be bought. There is little attendance requir'd of the representatives.

THAT the foregoing plan of government is practicable, no one can doubt, who considers the resemblance it bears to the commonwealth of the United provinces, formerly one of the wisest and most renown'd governments, that ever was in the world. The alterations in the present scheme are all evidently to the better. 1, The representation is more equal. 2, The unlimited power of the burgo-masters in the towns, which forms a perfect aristocracy in the *Dutch* commonwealth, is corrected by a well temper'd democracy, in giving to the people the annual election of the county [300] representatives. 3, The negative, which every province and town has upon the whole body of the *Dutch* republic, with regard to alliances, peace and war, and the imposition of taxes, is here remov'd. 4, The counties, in the present plan, are not so independent of each other, nor do they form separate bodies so much as the seven provinces; where the jealousy and envy of the smaller provinces and towns against the greater, particularly *Holland* and *Amsterdam*, have frequently disturb'd the government. 5, Larger powers, tho' of the safest kind, are entrusted to the senate than the States General possess; by which means, the former may become more expeditious, and secret in their resolutions, than 'tis possible for the latter.

THE chief alterations, that cou'd be made on the *British* government, in order to bring it to the most perfect model of limited monarchy, seem to be the following. *First*, The plan of the republican parliament ought to be restor'd, by making the representation equal, and by allowing none to vote in the county elections who possess not a hundred a year. *Secondly*, As

such a house of commons wou'd be too weighty for a frail house of lords, like the present, the bishops and *Scotch* peers ought to be remov'd, whose behaviour, in *former parliaments*, destroy'd entirely the authority of that house: The number of the upper house ought to be rais'd to three or four hundred: Their seats not [301] hereditary, but during life: They ought to have the election of their own members; and no commoner shou'd be allow'd to refuse a seat, that was offer'd him. By this means, the house of lords wou'd consist entirely of the men of chief credit, ability, and interest of the nation; and every turbulent leader in the house of commons might be taken off, and connected in interest with the house of peers. Such an aristocracy wou'd be an excellent barrier both to the monarchy and against it. At present, the balance of our government depends, in some measure, on the ability and behaviour of the sovereign; which are variable and uncertain circumstances.

I ALLOW, that this plan of limited monarchy, however corrected, is still liable to three great inconveniencies. *First*, It removes not entirely, tho it may soften, the parties of *court* and *country*. *Secondly*, The king's personal character must still have a great influence on the government. *Thirdly*, The sword is in the hands of a single person, who will always neglect to discipline the militia, in order to have a pretext for keeping up a standing army. 'Tis evident, that this is a mortal distemper in the *British* government, of which it must at last inevitably perish. I must, however, confess, that *Sweden* seems, in some measure, to have remedy'd this inconvenience, and to have a militia, along with its limited monarchy, as well as a [302] standing army, which is less dangerous than the *British*.

WE shall conclude this subject with observing the falshood of the common opinion, that no large state, such as *France* or *Britain*, cou'd ever be modell'd into a commonwealth, but that such a form of government can only take place in a city or small territory. The contrary seems evident. Tho' 'tis more difficult to form a republican government in an extensive country than in a city; there is more facility, when once it is form'd, of preserving it steady and uniform, without tumult and faction, in the former than in the latter. 'Tis not easy, for the distant parts of a large state to combine in any plan of free government; but they easily conspire in the esteem and reverence for a single person, who, by means of this popular favour, may seize the power, and forcing the more obstinate to submit, may establish a monarchical government. On the other hand, a city readily concurs in the same notions of government, the natural equality of property favours liberty, and the nearness of habitation enables the citizens mutually to assist each other. Even under absolute princes, the subordinate government of cities is commonly republican; while that of counties and provinces is monarchical. But these same circumstances, which facilitate the erection of commonwealths in cities, render their constitution more frail and uncertain. Democracies [303] are turbulent. For however the people may be separated or divided into small parties, either in their votes or elections; their near habitation in a city will always make the force of popular tides and currents very sensible. Aristocracies are better adapted for peace and order, and accordingly were most admired by antient writers; but they are jealous and oppressive. In a large government, which is modell'd with masterly skill, there is compass and room enough to refine the democracy, from the lower people, who may be admitted into the first elections or first concoction of the commonwealth, to the higher magistrates, who direct all the motions. At the same time, the parts are so distant and remote, that 'tis very difficult, either by intrigue, prejudice, or passion, to hurry them into any measures against the public interest.

'TIS needless to enquire whether such a government wou'd be immortal. I allow the justness of the poet's exclamation on the endless projects of human race, *Man and for ever!* The world itself probably is not immortal. Such consuming plagues may arise as wou'd leave even a perfect government a weak prey to its neighbours. We know not, how far enthusiasm, or other extraordinary motions of the human mind, may transport men, to the neglect of all order and public good. Where difference of interest is remov'd, whimsical and unaccountable

factions often arise, from personal [304] favour or enmity. Perhaps, rust may grow to the springs of the most accurate political machine, and disorder its motions. Lastly, extensive conquests when pursu'd, must be the ruin of every free government, and of the more perfect governments sooner than of the imperfect; because of the very advantages, which the former possess above the latter. And tho' such a state ought to establish a fundamental law against conquests: Yet republics have ambition as well as individuals, and present interest makes men forgetful of their posterity. 'Tis a sufficient incitement to human endeavours, that such a government wou'd flourish for many ages; without pretending to bestow on any work of man, that immortality, which the Almighty seems to have refus'd to his own productions.

FINIS.

Endnotes↩

Notes for Discourse 1

[*] Mons. *Melon* in his political essay on commerce asserts, that even at present, if you divide *France* into 20 parts, 16 are labourers or peasants, 2 only artizans, one belonging to the law, church and military, and one merchants, financiers and bourgeois. This calculation is certainly very erroneous. In *France, England*, and indeed most parts of *Europe*, half of the inhabitants live in cities, and even of those who live in the country, a very great number are artizans, perhaps above a third, ↩

[*] *Thucydides*, lib. 7. ↩

[†] *Diod. Sic.* lib. 2. This account, I own, is somewhat suspicious, not to say worse; chiefly because this army was not composed of citizens, but of mercenary forces. See discourse X. ↩

[*] *Titi Livii* l.b. 7. cap. 25. *Adeo in quae laboramus*, says he, *sola crevimus, divitias luxuriantque*. ↩

[*] The more antient *Romans* liv'd in perpetual war with all their neighbours, and in old *Latin*, the term, *hostis*, exprest both a stranger and an enemy. This is remark'd by *Cicero*; but by him is ascribed to the humanity of his ancestors, who softened, as much as possible, the denomination of an enemy, by calling him by the same appellation which signified a stranger: *De off.* lib. 2. 'Tis however much more probable, from the manners of the times, that the ferocity of those people was so great as to make them regard all strangers as enemies, and call them by the same name. It is not, besides, consistent with the most common maxims of policy or of nature, that any state shou'd regard its public enemies with a friendly eye, or preserve any such sentiments for them as the *Roman* orator would ascribe to his ancestors. Not to mention, that the early *Romans* really exercised piracy, as we learn from their first treaties with *Carthage*, preserved by *Polybius*, lib. 3. and consequently, like the *Sallee* and *Algerine* rovers, were actually at war with most nations, and a stranger and an enemy were with them almost synonymous. ↩

Notes for Discourse 2

[*] The inscription on the *Place-de-Vendome* says 440,000. ↩

[*] Fable of the bees. ↩

Notes for Discourse 3

[*] A PRIVATE soldier in the *Roman* infantry had a denarius a day, somewhat less than 8 pence. The *Roman* emperors had commonly 25 legions in pay, which, allowing 5000 men to a legion, makes 125,000. *Tacit. ann. lib.* 4. 'Tis true, there were also auxiliaries to the legions; but their numbers are uncertain as well as their pay. To consider only the legionaries, the pay of the private men could not exceed 1600,000 pound. Now the parliament in the last war commonly allow'd for the fleet 2500,000. We have therefore 900,000 over for the officers and other expences of the *Roman* legions. There seem to have been but few officers in the *Roman* armies, in comparison of what are employ'd in all our modern troops, except some *Swiss* corps: And these officers had very small pay: A centurion, for instance, only double a common soldier. And as the soldiers from their pay (*Tacit. ann. lib.* 1.) bought their own cloaths, arms, tents and baggage; this must also

diminish considerably the other charges of the army. So little expensive was that mighty government, and so easy was its yoke over the world. And indeed, this is the more natural conclusion from the foregoing calculations. For money, after the conquest of *Egypt*, seems to have been nearly in as great plenty at *Rome*, as it is at present in the richest of the *European* kingdoms. ↵

[*] Plut. *Quomodo quis suos profectus in virtute sentire possit*. ↵

[*] THESE facts I give upon the authority of *Mons. de Tot* in his *Reflexions politiques*, an author of reputation. Tho' I must confess, that the facts, which he advances on other occasions, are often so suspicious as to make his authority less in this matter. However, the general observation, that the augmenting the money in *France* does not at first proportionably augment the prices, is certainly just.

By the bye, this seems to be one of the best reasons for a gradual and universal augmentation of the money, which can be given, tho' it has been entirely overlook'd in all those volumes, which have been wrote on that question by *Melon*, *Du Tot*, and *Paris de Verney*. Were all our money, for instance, recoin'd, and a penny's worth of silver taken from every shilling, the new shilling wou'd probably purchase every thing that cou'd have been bought by the old; the prices of every thing wou'd thereby be insensibly diminish'd; foreign trade enliven'd; and domestic industry, by the circulation of a greater number of pounds and shillings, wou'd receive some encrease and encouragement. In executing such a project, 'twou'd be better to make the new shilling pass for 24 half-pence, in order to preserve the illusion, and make it be taken for the same. ↵

[*] THE *Italians* gave to the emperor *Maximilian*, the nickname of *Pocchi-danari*. None of the enterprises of that prince ever succeeded, for want of money. ↵

[*] Lib. 2. cap. 15. ↵

[†] *Plin.* lib. 33. cap. 11. ↵

Notes for Discourse 4

[*] I HAVE been inform'd by a very eminent lawyer and a man of great knowledge and observation, that it appears from antient papers and records, that, about four centuries ago, money, in *Scotland*, and probably in other parts of *Europe*, was only at five *per cent*. and afterwards rose to ten before the discovery of the *West Indies*. This fact is curious; but might easily be reconcil'd to the foregoing reasoning. Men, in that age, liv'd so much at home, and in so very simple and frugal a manner, that they had no occasion for money; and tho' the lenders were then few, the borrowers were still fewer. The high rate of interest among the early *Romans* is accounted for by historians from the frequent losses sustain'd by the inroads of the enemy. ↵

[*] Lib. 51. ↵

[*] *Columella*, lib. 3. cap. 3. ↵

[†] *Plinii epist.* lib. 7. ep. 18. ↵

[‡] *Ibid.* lib. 10. ep. 62. ↵

Notes for Discourse 5

[*] Plut. *de curiositate*. ↵

[*] THERE is another cause, tho' more limited in its operation, which checks the wrong balance of trade, to every particular nation, to which the kingdom trades. When we import more goods than we export, the exchange turns against us, and this becomes a new encouragement to export; as much as the charge of carriage and insurance of the money due would amount to. For the exchange can never rise higher than that sum. ↵

[*] Les interets d'Angleterre mal-entendus. ↵

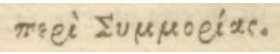
[*] IT must carefully be remark'd, that, throughout this discourse, wherever I speak of the level of money, I mean always its proportional level to the commodities, labour, industry, and skill, which is in the several states. And I assert, that, where these advantages are double, triple, quadruple, to what they are in the neighbouring states, the money infallibly will also be double, triple, quadruple. The only circumstance, that can obstruct the exactness of these proportions, is the expence of transporting the commodities from one place to another; and this expence is sometimes unequal. Thus the corn, cattle, cheese, butter of *Derbyshire* cannot draw the money of *London*, so much as the manufactures of *London* draw the money of *Derbyshire*. But this objection is only a seeming one: For so far as the transport of commodities is expensive, so far is the communication betwixt the places obstructed and imperfect. ↵

[*] OUR tax on plate is, perhaps, in this view, impolitic. ↵

[*] There were about eight ounces of silver in a pound *Sterling* in *Harry* the VII,'s time. ↵

[†] *Thucydidis* lib. 2. and *Diod. Sic.* lib. 12. ↵

[‡] Vid. *Aeschinis* & *Demosthenis* epist. ↵

[*]  . ↵

[†] Lib. 2. cap. 62. ↵

[‡] *Titi Livii* lib. 45. cap. 40. ↵

[*] *Vel. Patrcr.* lib. 1. cap. 9. ↵

[†] Lib. 33 cap. 3. ↵

[‡] *Titi Livii*, *ibid.* ↵

[*] The poverty, which *Stanyan* speaks of, is only to be seen in the most mountainous cantons, where there is no commodity to bring money: And even there the people are not poorer than in the diocese of *Saltzburg* on the one hand, or *Savoy* on the other; if they be so poor. ↵

[†] Proem. ↵

Notes for Discourse 6

[*] Lib. I. ↵

[†] Lib. I. ↵

[*] *Xenoph.* hist, *Graec*, lib. 6. & 7. ↵

[*] *Thuc.* lib. 8. ↵

[*] *Diod, Sic.* lib. 20. ↵

[†] Lib. 2. cap. 51. ↵

[*] THERE have strong suspicions, of late, arisen amongst critics, and, in my opinion, not without reason, concerning the first ages of the *Roman* history; as if they were almost entirely fabulous, 'till after the sacking of the city by the *Gauls*; and were even doubtful for some time afterwards, 'till the *Greeks* began to give attention to *Roman* affairs, and commit them to writing. This scepticism, however, seems to me scarcely defensible in its full extent, with regard to the domestic history of *Rome*, which has some air of truth and probability, and cou'd scarce be the invention of an historian, who had so little morals or judgment as to indulge himself in fiction and romance. The revolutions seem so well proportion'd to their causes: The progress of the factions is so conformable to political experience: The manners and maxims of the age are so uniform and natural, that scarce any real history affords more just reflection and improvement. Is not *Machiavel's* comment on *Livy* (a work surely of great judgment and genius) founded entirely on this period, which is represented as fabulous. I wou'd willingly, therefore, in my private sentiments, divide the matter with these critics; and allow, that the battles and victories and triumphs of those ages had been extremely falsify'd by family memoirs, as *Cicero* says they were: But as in the accounts of domestic factions, there were two opposite relations transmitted to posterity, this both serv'd as a check upon fiction, and enabled latter historians to gather some truth from comparison and reasoning. Half of the slaughter, which *Livy* commits on the *Aequi* and the *Volsci*, wou'd depopulate *France* and *Germany*; and that historian, tho' perhaps he may justly be charg'd as superficial, is at last shock'd himself with the incredibility of his narration. The same love of exaggeration seems to have magnify'd the numbers of the *Romans* in their armies, and *census*. ↵

[*] IT was observ'd by some, as appears by the speech of *Agelaus* of *Naupactum* in a general congress of *Greece*. See *Polyb.* lib. 5. cap. 104. ↵

[†] *Titi Livii* lib. 23. cap. 33. ↵

[*] Lib. 1. cap. 83. ↵

[*] THOSE concluded by the peace of the *Pyrences*, *Nimeguen*, *Ryswick* and *Aix-la-Chapelle*. ↵

[†] THAT concluded by the peace of *Utrecht*. ↵

[*] IF the *Roman* empire was of advantage, it cou'd only proceed from this, that mankind were generally in a very disorderly, unciviliz'd condition, before its establishment. ↵

Notes for Discourse 7

[*] *Epist. ad Att.* lib. 9. ep. 11. ↵

[†] ACCOUNT of the *Netherlands*, chap. 6. ↵

[*] To this purpose, see also discourse I. at the end. ↵

Notes for Discourse 8

[*] DISCOURSE V. ↵

[†] *Alcib.* 1. ↵

[‡] LIB. 3. ↵

[*] *Plut. in vita Alex.* He makes these treasures amount to 20,000 talents, or about 15 millions Sterling. *Quintus Curtius (lib. 5. cap. 2.)* says that *Alexander* found in *Susa* above 50,000 talents. ↵

[*] *Strabo*, lib 4. ↵

[*] *Melon, Du Tot, Law*, in the pamphlets, publish'd in *France*. ↵

[*] ON this head, I shall observe, without interrupting the thread of the argument, that the multiplicity of our public debts serves rather to sink the interest, and that the more the government borrows, the cheaper may they expect to borrow; contrary to first appearance, and contrary to common opinion. The profits of trade have an influence on interest. See discourse IV. ↵

[*] IN times of peace and security, when alone it is possible to pay debt, the money'd interest are averse to receive partial payments, which they know not how to dispose of to advantage; and the landed interest are averse to continue the taxes requisite for that purpose. Why therefore shou'd a minister persevere in a measure so disagreeable to all parties? For the sake, I suppose, of a posterity, which he will never see, or of a few reasonable, reflecting people, whose united interest, perhaps, will not be able to secure him the smallest borough in *England*. 'Tis not likely we shall ever find any minister so bad a politician. With regard to these narrow, destructive maxims of politics, all ministers are expert enough. ↵

[*] SOME neighbouring states practise an easy expedient, by which they lighten their public debts. The *French* have a custom (as the *Romans* formerly had) of augmenting their money; and this the nation has been so much familiariz'd to, that it hurts not public credit, tho' it be really cutting off at once, by an edict, so much of their debts. The *Dutch* diminish the interest without the consent of their creditors; or which is the same thing, they arbitrarily tax the funds as well as other property. Cou'd we practise either of these methods, we need never be oppress'd by the national debt; and 'tis not impossible but one of these, or some other method may, at all adventures, be try'd, on the augmentation of our encumbrances and difficulties. But people in this country are so good reasoners upon whatever regards their interest, that such a practice will deceive no body; and public credit will probably tumble at once by so dangerous a trial. ↵

[*] So great dupes are the generality of mankind, that, notwithstanding such a violent shock to public credit, as a voluntary bankruptcy in *England* wou'd occasion, it wou'd not probably be long, e're credit wou'd again revive in as flourishing a condition as before. The present king of *France*, during the late war, borrow'd money at lower interest than ever his grandfather did; and as low as the *British* parliament, comparing the natural rate of interest in both kingdoms. And tho' men are commonly more govern'd by what they have seen, than by what they foresee, with whatever certainty; yet promises, protestations, fair appearances, with the allurements of present interest, have such powerful influence as few are able to resist. Mankind are, in all ages, caught by the same baits: The same tricks, play'd over and over again, still trepan them. The heights of popularity and patriotism are still the beaten road to power and tyranny; flattery to treachery; standing armies to arbitrary government; and the glory of God to the temporal interest of the clergy. The fear of an everlasting destruction of credit, allowing it to be an evil, is a needless bugbear. A prudent man, in reality, wou'd rather lend to the public immediately after they had taken a sponge to their debts than at present; as much as an opulent knave, even tho' one cou'd not force him to pay, is a preferable debtor to an honest bankrupt: For the former, in order to carry on business, may find it his interest to discharge his debts, where they are not exorbitant: The latter has it not in his power. The

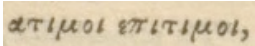
reasoning of *Tacitus, hist. lib 3.* as it is eternally true, is very applicable to our present case. *Sed vulgus ad magnitudinem beneficiorum aderat: Stultissimus quisque pecuniis mercabatur: Apud sapientes cassa habebantur, quae neque dari neque accipi, salva republica, poterant.* The public is a debtor, whom no man can oblige to pay. The only check, which the creditors have on it, is the interest of preserving credit; an interest, which may easily be overbalanc'd by a very great debt; and by a difficult and extraordinary emergence, even supposing that credit irrecoverable. Not to mention, that a present necessity often forces states into measures, which are, strictly speaking, against their interest. ↵

[*] I HAVE heard it has been computed, that the whole creditors of the public, natives and foreigners, amount only to 17000. These make a figure at present on their income; but in case of a public bankruptcy, wou'd, in an instant, become the lowest, as well as the most wretched of the people. The dignity and authority of the landed gentry and nobility is much better rooted; and wou'd render the contention very unequal, if ever we come to that extremity. One wou'd incline to assign to this event a very near period, such as half a century, had not our fathers prophesies of this kind been already found fallacious, by the duration of our public credit, so much beyond all reasonable expectation. When the astrologers in *France* were every year foretelling the death of *Harry the IV.* *These fellows*, says he, *must be right at last.* We shall, therefore, be more cautious than to assign any precise date; and shall content ourselves with pointing out the event in general. ↵

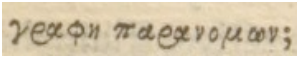
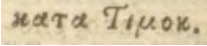
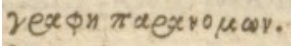
Notes for Discourse 9

[*] His harangue for it is still extant; . ↵

[*] Pro Ctesiphonte. ↵

[†] *Plutarch in vita decem oratorum. Demosthenes* gives a different account of this law *contra Aristogiton, orat. II.* He says, that its purport was, to render the , or to restore the privilege of bearing offices to those who had been declar'd incapable. Perhaps, these were both clauses of the same law. ↵

[*] THE senate of the Bean was only a less numerous mob, chosen by lot from among the people; and their authority was not great. ↵

[†] *In Ctesiphontem.* 'Tis remarkable, that the first step, after the dissolution of the democracy by *Critias* and the Thirty, was to annul the ; as we learn from *Demosthenes* . The orator in this oration gives us the words of the law, establishing the . Page 297 *ex edit. Aldi.* And he accounts for it, from the same principles, that we here reason upon. ↵

[*] Plut. in vita Pelop. ↵

[†] *Demost. Olynth. 1. 2.* ↵

[†] *Demost. contra Lept.* ↵

[*] *Demost. contra Aristocratem.* ↵

[†] ESSAY on the freedom of wit and humour. Part 3. sect. 2. ↵

Notes for Discourse 10

[*] AN eminent clergyman in *Edinburgh*, having wrote, some years ago, a discourse on the same question with this, of the populousness of antient nations, was pleas'd lately to communicate it to the author. It maintain'd the opposite side of the argument, to what is here insisted on, and contained much erudition and good reasoning. The author acknowledges to have borrow'd, with some variations, from that discourse, two computations, that with regard to the number of inhabitants in *Belgium*, and that with regard to those in *Epirus*. If this learned gentleman be prevail'd on to publish his differtation, it will serve to give great light into the present question, the most curious and important of all questions of erudition. ↵

[*] *Collumela* says, lib. 3. cap. 8. that in *Aegypt* and *Africa* the bearing of twins was frequent and even customary, *gemini parties familiares, ac paene solennes sunt*. If this was true, there is a physical difference both in countries and ages. For travellers make no such remark of those countries at present. On the contrary, we are apt to suppose the northern nations more fertile. As those two countries were provinces of the *Roman* empire, it is difficult, tho' not altogether absurd, to suppose, that such a man as *Columella* might be mistaken with regard to them. ↵

[*] *Lettres Persanes*. See also *L'Esprit des Loix* liv. 23. chap. 17, 18, 19. ↵

[*] THIS too is a good reason, why the small pox does not depopulate countries so much as may at first sight be imagin'd. Where there is room for more people, they will always arise, even without the assistance of naturalization bills. 'Tis remarkt by *Don Geronimo de Ustariz*, that the provinces of *Spain*, which send most people to the *Indies*, are most populous; which proceeds from their superior riches. ↵

[*] *Suetonius in vita Claudii*. ↵

[†] *Plut. in vita Catonis*. ↵

[‡] *Lib. 1. cap. 6*. ↵

[†] *Id. lib. 11. cap. 1*. ↵

[*] *Amor. lib. 1. eleg. 6*. ↵

[†] *Sueton. de claris rhetor*. So also the antient poet *Janitoris tintinnire impedimenta audio*. ↵

[‡] *In Oneterem. orat. 1*. ↵

[†] THE same practice was common in *Rome*; but *Cicero* seems not to think this evidence so certain as the testimony of free citizens. *Pro Caelio*. ↵

[*] *Epist. 122*. THE inhuman sports, exhibited at *Rome*, may justly be consider'd too as an effect of the people's contempt for slaves, and was also a great cause of the general inhumanity of their princes and rulers. Who can read the accounts of the amphitheatrical entertainments without horror? Or who is surpris'd, that the emperors shou'd treat that people in the same way the people treated their inferiors? One's humanity, on that occasion, is apt to renew the barbarous wish of *Caligula*, that the people had but one neck. A man cou'd almost be pleas'd, by a single blow, to put an end to such a race of monsters. You may thank God, says the author above cited (*epist. 7.*) addressing himself to the *Romans* people, that you have a master, (*viz.* the mild and merciful *Nero*) who is incapable of learning cruelty from your example. This was spoke in the beginning of his reign: But he fitted them very well afterwards; and no doubt, was considerably improv'd by the sight of the barbarous objects, to which he had, from his infancy, been accustom'd.

↵

[*] WE may here observe, that if domestic slavery really encreas'd populousness, it wou'd be an exception to the general rule, that the happiness of any society and its populousness are necessary attendants. A master, from humour or interest, may make his slaves very unhappy, and yet be careful, from interest, to encrease their number. Their marriage is not a matter of choice with them, no more than any other action of their life. ↵

[*] TEN thousand slaves in a day have been often sold for the use of the *Romans*, at *Delus* in *Cilicia*. *Strabo*, lib. 14. ↵

[†] *Columella*, lib. 1. *Proem.* et cap. 2. et 7. *Varro*, lib. 3. cap. 1. *Horace*, lib. 2. od. 15. *Tacit. Annal.* lib. 3. cap. 54. *Sueton. in vita Aug.* cap. 42. *Plin.* lib. 18. cap. 13. ↵

[*] *Minore indies plebe ingenua*, says *Tacitus*, *ann.* lib. 4. cap 27. ↵

[†] As *servus* was the name of the genus, and *verna* of the species, without any correlative, this forms a strong presumption, that the latter were, by far, the least numerous. 'Tis an universal observation, which we may form upon language, that where two related parts of a whole bear any proportion to each other, in numbers, rank, or consideration, there are always correlative terms invented, which answer to both the parts, and express their mutual relation. If they bear no proportion to each other, the term is only invented for the less, and marks its distinction from the whole. Thus, man and woman, master and servant, father and son, prince and subject, stranger and citizen are correlative terms. But the words, seaman, carpenter, smith, taylor, &c. have no correspondent terms, which express those who are no seaman, no carpenter, &c. Languages differ very much with regard to the particular words, where this distinction obtains; and may thence afford very strong inferences, concerning the manners and customs of different nations. The military government of the *Roman* emperors had exalted the soldiery so high, that they balanc'd all the other orders of the state: Hence *miles* and *paganus* became relative terms, a thing, till then, unknown to antient and still so to modern languages. Modern superstition exalted the clergy so high, that they overbalanced the whole state: Hence *clergy* and *laity* are terms oppos'd in all modern languages; and in these alone. And from the same principles I infer, that, if the number of slaves, bought by the *Romans* from foreign countries, had not extremely exceeded those bred at home, *verna* wou'd have had a correlative, which wou'd have exprest the former species of slaves. But these, it wou'd seem, compos'd the main body of the antient slaves, and the latter were but a few exceptions. ↵

[*] *Verna* is us'd by *Roman* writers as a word equivalent to *scurra*, on account of the petulance and impudence of those slaves. *Mart.* lib. 1. cp. 42. *Horace* also mentions the *vernae procaces*, and *Petronius*, cap. 24. *vernula urbanitas*. *Seneca de provid.* cap. 1. *vernularum licentia*. ↵

[†] 'TIS computed in the *West Indies*, that a stock of slaves grow worse five *per cent.* every year, unless new slaves be bought to recruit them. They are not able to keep up their own number, even in those warm countries, where cloaths and provisions are so easily got. How much more must this happen in *European* countries, and in or near great cities? ↵

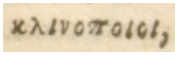
[‡] *Corn. Nepes in vita Attici*, ↵

[*] *LIB.* 7. ↵

[†] *In Midiam*, p. 221. *ex edit. Aldi.* ↵

[‡] *Panegy.* ↵

[∴] *In Aphobum orat.* 1. ↵

[O] , makers of those beds, which the antients lay upon at meals. ↓

[*] In vita Catenit. ↓

[*] *Non temere ancillae ejus rei causa comparantur ut pariant. Digest. lib. 5. tit. 3. de haered. petit. lex 27.* The following texts are to the same purpose. *Spadonem morbosum non esse, neque vitiosum, verius mihi videtur; sed sanum esse, sicuti illum qui unum testiculum habet, qui etiam generare potest. Digest. lib. 2. tit. 1. de aedilicio edicto lex 6. sect. 2. Sin autem quis ita spado sit, ut tam necessariae pars corporis penitus absit, morbosus est. Id. lex. 7.* His impotence, it seems, was only regarded so far as his health or life might be affected by it. In other respects, he was full as valuable. The same reasoning is employ'd with regard to female slaves. *Quaeritur de ea muliere, quae semper mortuos parit, an morbosa sit; et ait Sabinus, si vulvae vitio hoc contingit, morbosam esse. Id. lex 14.* It has even been doubted, whether a woman pregnant was morbid or vitiated; and it is determined, that she is sound, not on account of the value of her offspring, but because it is the natural part or office of women to bear children. *Si mulier praegnans venerit, inter omnes convenit sanam eam esse. Maximum enim ac praecipuum munus faeminarum accipere ac tueri conceptum. Puerperam quoque sanam esse: Si modo nihil extrinsecus accedit, quod corpus ejus in aliquam valitudinem immitteret. De sterili Celius distinguere Trebatium dicit, ut si natura sterilis sit, sana sit. Si vitio corporis, centra. Id. ↓*

[*] *Tacit. ann. lib. 14. cap. 43.* ↓

[†] THE slaves, in the great houses, had little rooms assigned them, called *cellae*. Whence the name of cell was transfer'd to the monks room in a convent. See farther on this head, *Just. Lipsius, Saturn. 1. cap. 14.* These form strong presumptions against the marriage and propagation of the family slaves. ↓

[‡] *Opera & Dies, lib. 2. 1. 24. also 1. 220.* ↓

[*] *Strabo, lib. 8.* ↓

[†] SEE *Cato de re rustica, cap. 56. Donatus in Phormion. 1. 1. 9. Seneca epist. 80.* ↓

[‡] *De re rust, cap. 10, 11.* ↓

[*] LIB. 1. cap. 18. ↓

[†] LIB. 1. cap. 17. ↓

[‡] LIB. 1. cap. 18. ↓

[*] LIB. 33. cap. 1. ↓

[†] LIB. 2. cap. 10. ↓

[‡] *Pastoris duri est hic filius, illis bubulet. Juven. Sat. XI. 151.* ↓

[∴] LIB. 1. cap. 8. ↓

[*] *De bell. civ. lib. 1.* ↓

[†] In vita Tib. & C. Grach. ↓

[‡] To the same purpose is that passage of the elder *Seneca, ex controversia 5. lib. 5. Arata quondam populis rura, singulorum ergastulorum sunt; latiusque nunc villici, quam olim reges, imperant. At nunc eadem, says Pliny, vincti pedes, damnatae manus, inscripti vultus exercent. lib. 18. cap. 3.* So also *Martial:*

And *Lucan*:

*Tum longos jungere fines
Agrorum, et quondam duro sulcata Camilli,
Vomere et antiquas Curiorum passa ligones, Longa sub ignotis extendere rura
colonis.* lib. 1.

*Vincto fossore coluntur
Hesperiae segetes.* lib 7.



[∴] *LIB. 3. cap. 19.*

[()] *Id. lib. 4 cap. 8.*

[*] *Tacitus* blames it. *De morib. Germ.*

[†] *De fraterno amore. Seneca* also approves of the exposing of sickly, infirm children. *De ira*, lib. 1. cap. 15.

[‡] *Sext. Emp. lib 3. cap. 24.*

[*] *De amore prolis.*

[†] THE practice of leaving great sums of money to friends, tho' one had near relations, was common to *Greece* as well as *Rome*; as we may gather from *Lucian*. This practice prevails very little in modern times; and *Ben Johnson's volpone* is therefore almost entirely extracted from antient authors, and suits better the manners of those times.

[123] It may justly be thought, that the liberty of divorces in *Rome* was another discouragement to marriage. Such a practice prevents not quarrels from *humour*, or rather encreases them, and occasions also those from *interest*, which are much more dangerous and destructive. See farther on this head, *Essays moral and political*, essay XXI. Perhaps too the unnatural lusts of the antients ought to be taken into consideration, as of some moment.

[*] *De exp. Cyr. lib. 7.*

[†] *Demost. de falsa leg.* He calls it a considerable sum.

[*] *Thucyd. lib. 3.*

[†] *LIB. 6. cap. 37.*

[‡] *Tit. Liv. lib 41. cap 7, 13. & alibi, passim.*

[||] *Appian de bell. civ. lib. 4.*

[§] *Caesar* gave the centurions ten times the gratuity of the common soldiers. *De bell. Gallico*, lib. 8. In the *Rhodian* cartel, mention'd afterwards, no distinction in the price of ransom was made on account of ranks in the army.

[*] *Diod. Sic. lib. 12. Thucyd. lib. 3.*

[†] *Diod. Sic. lib. 16.*

[‡] In vita Timol. ↵

[*] *Plin.* lib. 18. cap. 3. The same author in cap. 6. says, *Verumque fatentibus latifundia perdidere Italiam: Jam vero et provincias. Sex domi femissem Africae possidebant, cum interfecit cos Nero princeps.* In this view, the barbarous butchery committed by the first *Roman* emperors was not perhaps so destructive to the public as we may imagine. These never ceas'd till they had extinguish'd all the illustrious families, which had enjoy'd the plunder of the world, during the latter ages of the republic. The new nobles, who rose in their place, were less splendid, as we learn from *Tacit. Ann.* lib. 3. cap. 55. ↵

[*] THE antient soldiers, being free citizens, above the lowest rank, were all marry'd. Our modern soldiers are either forc'd to live unmarried, or their marriages turn to small account towards the encrease of mankind. A circumstance which ought, perhaps, to be taken into consideration, as of some consequence in favour of the antients. ↵

[*] WHAT is the advantage of the column after it has broke the enemy's line? Only, that it then takes them in the flank, and dissipates whatever stands near it by a fire from all sides. But till it has broke them, does it not present a flank to the enemy, and that expos'd to their musquetry, and what is much worse, to their cannon? ↵

[‡] *HIST.* lib. 2. cap. 44. ↵

[*] As *Abydus* mention'd by *Livy*, lib. 31. cap. 17, 18. and *Polyb.* lib. 16. As also the *Xanthians*, *Appian de bell. civil.* lib. 4. ↵

[*] In vita Arati. ↵

[‡] *INST.* lib. 2. cap. 6. 'Tis true, the same law seems to have been continu'd, till the time of *Justinian*. But abuses, introduc'd by barbarism, are not always corrected by civility. ↵

[‡] *Diod. Sicul.* lib. 20. ↵

[‡] *Lysias*, who was himself of the popular faction, and very narrowly escap'd from the 30 *Tyrants*, says that the Democracy was as violent a government as the Oligarchy. *Orat.* 24. de statu popul. ↵

[*] *Cicero Philip.* 1. ↵

[‡] As *orat.* 11. *contra Eratost.* *orat.* 12. *contra Agorat.* *orat.* 15. *pro Mantith.* ↵

[‡] *Appian de bell. civ.* lib. 2. ↵

[*] SEE *Caesar's* speech *de bell. Catil.* ↵

[‡] *ORAT.* 24. And in *orat.* 29. he mentions the faction only as the cause why these illegal punishments shou'd displease. ↵

[‡] *LIB.* 3. The country in *Europe*, wherein I have observ'd the factions to be most violent and party hatred the strongest, is *Ireland*. This goes so far as to cut off even the most common intercourse of civilities betwixt the protestants and catholics. Their cruel insurrections, and the severe revenges which they have taken of each other, are the causes of this mutual ill-will, which is the chief source of disorder, poverty, and depopulation in that country. The *Greek* factions, I imagine, to have been inflam'd still to a higher degree of rage: The revolutions being commonly more frequent, and the maxims of assassination much more avow'd and acknowledg'd. ↵

[*] *Plut. de virt. et fort. Alex.* ↵

[†] *Diod. Sic.* lib. 18, 19. ↩

[‡] *Tit. Liv.* lib. 31, 33, 34. ↩

[§] *Diod. Sic.* lib. 14. *Isocrates* says there were only 5000 banish'd. He makes the number of those kill'd amount to 1500. *Arcop. Aeschines, contra Ctesi.* assigns precisely the same number. *Seneca (de tranq. anim. cap. 5.)* says 1300. ↩

[||] *Diod. Sic.* lib. 15. ↩

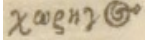
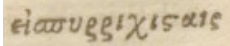
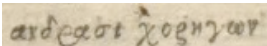
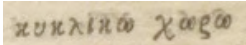
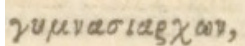
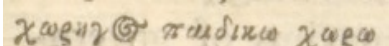
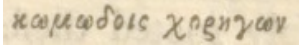
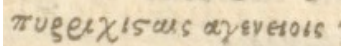
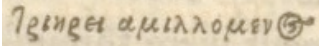
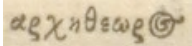
[¶] *Diod Sic.* lib. 13. ↩

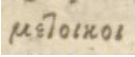
[*] WE shall mention from *Diod. Siculus* alone a few, which past in the course of sixty years during the most shining age of *Greece*. There were banish'd from *Sybaris* 500 of the nobles and their partizans, lib. 12. p. 77. *ex edit. Rhodomanni*. Of *Chians* 600 citizens banish'd, lib. 13. p. 189. At *Ephesus*, 340 kill'd, 1000 banish'd, lib. 13. p. 223. Of *Cyrenians*, 500 nobles kill'd; all the rest banish'd, lib. 14. p. 263. The *Corinthians* kill'd 120, banish'd 500, lib. 14. p. 304. *Phaebidas* the *Spartan* banish'd 300 *Baeotians*, lib. 15. p. 342. Upon the fall of the *Lacedemonians*, Democracies were restor'd in many cities, and severe vengeance taken of the nobles, after the *Greek* manner. But matters did not end there. For the banish'd nobles, returning in many places, butcher'd their adversaries at *Phialae*, in *Corinth*, in *Megara*, in *Phliasia*. In this last place, they kill'd 300 of the people; but these again revolting, kill'd above 600 of the nobles and banish'd the rest, lib. 15. p. 357. In *Arcadia* 1400 banish'd, besides many kill'd. The banish'd retir'd to *Sparta* and to *Pallantium*: The latter deliver'd up to their countrymen, and all kill'd, lib. 15. p. 373. Of the banish'd from *Argos* and *Thebes*, there were 500 in the *Spartan* army, *id.* p. 374. Here is a detail of the most remarkable of *Agathocles'* cruelties from the same author. The people before his usurpation had banish'd 600 nobles, lib. 19. p. 655. Afterwards, that tyrant, in concurrence with the people, kill'd 4000 nobles and banish'd 6000, *id.* p. 657. He kill'd 4000 people at *Gela*, *id.* p. 741. By *Agathocles'* brother 8000 banish'd from *Syracuse*, lib. 20. p. 757. The inhabitants of *Aegesta*, to the number of 40,000 were kill'd, man, woman, and child, and with tortures, for the sake of their money, *id.* p. 802. All the relations, *viz.* father, brother, children, grandfather of his *Libyan* army kill'd, *id.* p. 803. He kill'd 7000 exiles after capitulation, *id.* p. 816. 'Tis to be remarkt that *Agathocles* was a man of great sense and courage. ↩

[*] *Diod. Sic.* lib. 18. ↩

[*] PAGE 885. *exedit. Leuncl.* ↩

[†] ORAT. 29. in *Nicom.* ↩

[‡] IN order to recommend his client to the favour of the people, he enumerates all the sums he had expended. When  30 minas: Upon a chorus of men 20 minas;  8 minas;  50 minas;  3 minas: Seven times trierarch, where he spent 6 talents: Taxes, once 30 minas; another time 40;  , 12 minas;  15 minas;  18 minas;  7 minas;  15 minas;  30 minas. In the whole 10 talents 38 minas: An immense sum for an *Athenian* fortune, and what alone wou'd be esteem'd great riches. Orat. 20. 'Tis true, he

says, the law did not oblige absolutely to be at so much expence, not above a fourth. But without the favour of the people, no body was so much as safe; and this was the only way to gain it. See, farther orat. 24. *de pop. statu*. In another place, he introduces a speaker, who says that he had spent his whole fortune, and an immense one, eighty talents, for the people. Orat. 25. *de prob. Evandri*. The  or strangers find, says he, if they do not contribute largely enough to the people's fancy, that they have reason to repent. Orat. 30. *contra Phil*. You may see with what care *Demosthenes* displays his expences of this nature, when he pleads for himself *de corona*. And how he exaggerates *Midias* stinginess in this particular, in his accusation of that criminal. All this, by the bye, is a mark of a very iniquitous judicature: And yet the *Athenians* valu'd themselves on having the most legal and regular administration of any people in *Greece*. ↵

[*] Panath. ↵

[†] *Diod. Sic.* lib. 14. ↵

[‡] LIB. 1. ↵

[§] THE authorities cited above are all historians, orators, and philosophers, whose testimony is unquestioned. 'Tis dangerous to rely upon writers, who deal in ridicule and satire. What will posterity, for instance, infer from this passage of *Dr. Swift*?

‘I told him, that in the kingdom of *Tribnia (Britain)* by the Natives call'd *Langdon, (London)* where I had sojourn'd some time in my travels, the bulk of the people consist, in a manner, wholly of discoverers, witnesses, informers, accusers, prosecutors, evidences, swearers, together with their several subservient and subaltern instruments, all under the colours, the conduct, and pay of ministers of state and their deputies. The plots in that kingdom are usually the workmanship of those persons, &c.’ *Gulliver's travels*.

Such a representation might suit the government of *Athens*; but not that of *England*, which is a prodigy, even in modern times, for humanity, justice and liberty. Yet the doctor's satire, tho' carry'd to extremes, as is usual with him, even beyond other satirical writers, did not altogether want an object. The bishop of *Rochester*, who was his friend and of the same party, had been banish'd a little before by a bill of attainder, with great justice, but without such a proof as was legal, or according to the strict forms of common law. ↵

[†] Plutarch. in vita Salon. ↵

[‡] *Diod. Sic.* lib. 18 ↵

[§] Id. *ibid.* ↵

[∴] Id, *ibid.* ↵

[()] *Tit. Liv.* lib. 1. cap. 43. ↵

[†] LIB. 2. There were 8000 kill'd during the siege; and the whole captives amounted to 30,000: *Diodorus Siculus* lib. 17. says only 13,000: But he accounts for this small number by saying that the *Tyrians* had sent away beforehand part of their wives and children to *Carthage*. ↵

[‡] LIB. 5. he makes the number of the citizens amount to 30,000. ↵

[§] *ib.* 5. ↵

[∴] *Orat.* 33. *advers. Diagit.* ↩

[O] *Contra Aphob.* p. 25. *ex edit Aldi.* ↩

[[]] *Id. ibid.* p. 19. ↩

[∴:] *Id. ibid.* ↩

[*] *Id. ibid.* and *Aeschines contra Ciesiph.* ↩

[†] *Epist. ad Attic.* lib. 5. epist. 21. ↩

[‡] *Contra Verr. orat.* 3. ↩

[*] SEE discourse IV. ↩

[†] LIB. 7. ↩

[‡] LIB 13. ↩

[O] LIB. 12. ↩

[*] *Oecon.* ↩

[*] SEE essays moral and political, essay XV. ↩

[*] *Aelii Lamprid, in vita Heliog.* cap. 26. ↩

[*] IN general, there is more candour and sincerity in antient historians, but less exactness and care, than in the moderns. Our speculative factions, especially those of religion, throw such an illusion over our minds, that men seem to regard impartiality to their adversaries and to heretics, as a vice or weakness: But the commonness of books, by means of printing, has oblig'd modern historians to be more careful in avoiding contradictions and incongruities. *Diodorus Siculus* is a good writer; but 'tis with pain I see his narration contradict, in so many particulars, the two most authentic pieces of all *Greek* history, viz. *Xenophon's* expedition, and *Demosthenes'* orations. *Plutarch* and *Appian* seem scarce ever to have read *Cicero's* epistles. ↩

[[]] LIB. 12. ↩

[†] LIB. 6. ↩

[‡] LIB. 13. ↩

[§] *Diagenes Laertius (in vita Empedoclis)* says, that *Agrigentum* contain'd only 800,000 inhabitants. ↩

[‡] IDYLL. 17. ↩

[*] LIB. 1. ↩

[†] *Id. ibid.* ↩

[‡] *Orat. funebris.* ↩

[§] LIB. 2. ↩

[†] The country, that supply'd this number, was not above a third of *Italy*, viz. the pope's dominions, *Tuscany*, and a part of the kingdom of *Naples*. ↩

[†] LIB. 2. ↩

[§] Celtica. ↩

[*] *Plutarch (in vita Caes.)* makes the number that *Caesar* fought with amount only to 3 millions. *Julian (in Caesaribus)* to 2. ↩

[‡] LIB. 2. cap. 47. ↩

[†] *Diod, Sic.* lib, 2. ↩

[*] *Plutarch, in vita Dionis.* ↩

[*] *Strabo*, lib. 4. says that one legion would be sufficient, with a few cavalry; but the *Romans* commonly kept up somewhat a greater force in this island; which they never took pains entirely to subdue. ↩

[*] *Strabo.* lib. 6. ↩

[||] *Apolog. Socr.* ↩

[*] *Argos* seems also to have been a great city: For *Lysias* contents himself with saying that it did not exceed *Athens*. *Orat.* 34. ↩

[†] LIB. 6. see also *Plutarch. in vita Niciae.* ↩

[‡] *Orat. contra Verrem*, lib. 4. cap. 52. *Strabo*, lib. 6. says it was 22 miles in compass. But then we are to consider, that it contain'd two harbours within it; one of which was a very large one; and might be regarded as a kind of bay. ↩

[§] LIB. 6. cap. 20. ↩

[||] *Demosthenes* assigns 20,000. *contra Aristog.* ↩

[*] LIB. 5. ↩

[†] LIB. 8. ↩

[‡] LIB. 2. *Diodorus Siculus's* account perfectly agrees, lib. 12. ↩

[*] *Xenophon. mem.* lib. 2. ↩

[†] LIB. 2. ↩

[‡] *De ratione red.* ↩

[§] We are to observe, that when *Dionysius Halycarnassaeus* says, that if we regard the antient walls of *Rome*, the extent of the city will not appear greater than that of *Athens*; he must mean the *Acropolis* or high town only. No antient author ever speaks of the *Piraeum*, *Phalerus*, and *Micnychia* as the same with *Athens*. Much less can it be supposed, that *Dionysius* wou'd consider the matter in that light, after the walls of *Cimon* and *Pericles* were destroy'd, and *Athens* was entirely separated from these other towns. This observation destroys all *Vossius's* reasonings, and introduces common sense into these calculations. ↩

[||] *Athen.* lib. 6. ↩

[*] *De rep. Athen.* ↩

[†] *Philip.* 3. ↩

[‡] *Sticho.* ↩

[||] Contra Timarch. ↩

[§] *Orat.* 11. ↩

[||] Contra Aphob. ↩

[†] Ibid. ↩

[*] LIB. 7. ↩

[†] *De rat. red.* ↩

[‡] De classibus. ↩

[§] LIB. 2. cap. 62. ↩

[||] *De rat. red.* ↩

[*] Contra Aphobum. ↩

[†] LIB. 8. ↩

[‡] Plutarch. in vita Lycurg. ↩

[§] LIB. 4. ↩

[||] THE same author affirms that *Corinth* had once 460,000 slaves, *Aegina* 470,000. But the foregoing arguments hold strong against these facts. 'Tis however remarkable, that *Athenaeus* cites so great an authority as *Aristotle* for this last fact: And the scholiast on *Pindar* mentions the same number of slaves in *Aegina*. ↩

[*] LIB. 2. ↩

[†] Id. ibid. ↩

[‡] *Demost. contra Lept.* The *Athenians* brought yearly from *Pontus* 400,000 medimni or bushels of corn, as appear'd from the custom-house books. And at that time they imported little corn from any other place. This by the bye is a strong proof, that there is some great mistake in the foregoing passage of *Athenaeus*. For *Attica* itself was so barren in corn, that it produc'd not enough even to maintain the peasants. *Tit. Livii* lib. 43. cap. 6. *Lucian*, in his *navigium sive vota*, says, that a ship, which, by the dimensions he gives, seems to have been about the size of our third rates, carry'd as much corn as wou'd maintain all *Attica* for a twelvemonth. But perhaps *Athens* was decay'd at that time; and besides, it is not safe to trust such loose rhetorical calculations. ↩

[*] *Diod. Sic.* lib. 20. ↩

[†] Isoc. paneg. ↩

[‡] *Diod Sic.* lib. 15 and 17. ↩

[§] *Hist. Graec.* lib. 7. ↩

[¶] *Id.* lib. 7. ↩

[||] *Polyb.* lib. 2. ↩

[*] *Polyb.* lib. 9. cap. 20. ↩

[†] *Lysias*, orat. 34. ↩

[*] Vopiscus in vita Aurel. ↩

[†] *De rep. Laced.* This passage is not easily reconcil'd with that of *Plutarch* above, who says, that *Sparta* had 9000 citizens. ↩

[‡] *Polyb.* lib. 9. cap. 20. ↩

[§] *Diod. Sic.* lib. 18. ↩

[||] Legat. ↩

[*] In Achaicis. ↩

[†] *Tit. Liv.* lib. 34. cap. 51. *Plato in Critone.* ↩

[‡] *Tit. Liv.* lib. 45. cap. 34. ↩

[||] A LATE *Trench* writer, in his *observations on the Greeks*, has remark'd, that *Philip* of *Macedon*, being declar'd captain general of the *Greeks*, wou'd have been back'd by the force of 230,000 of that nation in his intended expedition against *Persia*. This number comprehends, I suppose, all the free citizens, throughout all the cities; but the authority, on which that computation is founded, has, I own, escap'd either my memory or reading; and that writer, tho' otherwise very ingenious, has given into a bad practice, of delivering a great deal of erudition, without one citation. But supposing, that that enumeration cou'd be justify'd by good authority from antiquity, we may establish the following computation. The free *Greeks* of all ages and sexes were 920,000: The slaves, computing them by the number of *Athenian* slaves as above, who seldom marry'd or had families, were double the male citizens of full age, viz. 460,000. And the whole inhabitants of antient *Greece* about one million, three hundred and eighty thousand. No mighty number, nor much exceeding what may be found at present in *Scotland*, a country of nearly the same extent, and which is very indifferently peopled. ↩

[*] LIB. 4. ↩

[†] LIB. 10. ↩

[‡] SATYR. 3. l. 269, 270. ↩

[||] *Strabo* lib. 5. says, that the emperor *Augustus* prohibited the raising houses higher than 70 foot. In another passage, lib. 16. he speaks of the houses of *Rome* as remarkably high. See also to the same purpose *Vitruvius* lib. 2. cap. 8. *Aristides* the sophist, in his oration

, says that *Rome* consisted of cities on the the top of cities, and that if one were to spread it out and unfold it, it wou'd cover the whole surface of *Italy*. Where an author indulges himself in such extravagant declamations, and gives so much into the hyperbolical stile, one knows not how far he must be reduc'd. But this reasoning seems natural: If *Rome* was built in so scatter'd a manner as *Dionysius* says, and ran so much into the country, there must have been very few streets, where the houses were rais'd so high. 'Tis onlyf or want of ground, that any body builds in that inconvenient manner. ↩

[*] LIB. 2. epist. 16. lib. 5. epist. 6. 'Tis true, *Pliny* there describes a country-house: But since that was the idea the antients form'd of a magnificent and convenient building, the great men wou'd certainly build the same way in town. In *laxitatem ruris excurrunt*, says *Seneca* of the rich and voluptuous. Epist. 114. *Valerius Maximus*, lib. 4. cap. 4. speaking of *Cincinnatus*'s field of 4 acres, says, *Anguste se habitare nunc putat, cujus domus tantum patet quantum Cincinnati rura patuerant*. To the same purpose, see lib. 36. cap. 15. also lib. 18. cap. 2. ↩

[‡] *Moenia ejus (Romae) collegere ambitu imperatoribus, censoribusque Vespasianis, A. U. C. 828. pass. xiii. MCC. complexa montes septem, ipsa dividitur in regiones quatuordecim, compita earum 265. Ejusdem spatii mensura, currente a milliario in capite Rom. Fori statuto, ad singulas portas, quae sunt bodie numero 37, ita ut duodecim portae semel numerentur, praetereanturque ex veteribus septem, quae esse desierunt, efficit passuum per directum 30775. Ad extrema vero tectorum cum castris praetoriis ab eodem milliario, per vicos omnium viarum, mensura collegit paulo amplius septuaginta millia passuum. Quo si quis altitudinem tectorum addat, dignam profecto aestimationem concipiat, fateaturque nullius urbis magnitudinem in toto orbe potuisse ei comparari. Plin. lib. 3. cap. 5.*

ALL the best manuscripts of *Pliny* read the passage as here cited, and fix the compass of the walls of *Rome* to be 13 miles. The only question is, what *Pliny* means by 30775 paces, and how that number was form'd. The manner, in which I conceive it, is this. *Rome* was a semicircular area of 13 miles circumference. The *Forum* and consequently the *Milliarium*, we know, was situated on the Banks of the *Tyber*, and near the center of the circle or upon the diameter of the semicircular area. Tho' there were 37 gates to *Rome*, yet only twelve of them had streight streets, leading from them to the *Milliarium*. *Pliny*, therefore, having assign'd the circumference of *Rome*, and knowing that that alone was not sufficient to give in a just notion of its surface, uses this farther method. He supposes all the streets, leading from the *Milliarium* to the 12 gates, to be laid together into one streight line, and supposes we run along that line, so as to count each gate once: In which case, he says, that the whole line is 30775 paces: Or in other words, that each street or radius of the semicircular area is upon an average two miles and a half; and the whole length of *Rome* is 5 miles, and its breadth about half as much, beside the scatter'd suburbs.

Pere Hardouin understands this passage in the same manner; with regard to the laying together the several streets of *Rome* into one line, in order to compose 30775 paces: But then he supposes that streets led from the *Milliarium* to every gate, and that no street exceeded 800 paces in length. But (1) a semicircular area, whose radius was only 800 paces, cou'd never have a circumference near 13 miles, the compass of *Rome* as assign'd by *Pliny*. A radius of two miles and a half forms very nearly that circumference. (2) There is an absurdity in supposing a city so built as to have streets running to its center from every gate in its circumference. These streets must interfere as they approach. (3) This diminishes too much from the greatness of antient *Rome*, and reduces that city below even *Bristol* or *Rotterdam*.

The sense which *Vossius* in his *observationes variae* puts on this passage of *Pliny*, errs widely in the other extreme. One manuscript, of no authority, instead of 13 miles, has assign'd 30 miles for the compass of the walls of *Rome*. And *Vossius* understands this only of the curvilinear part of the circumference; supposing, that, as the *Tyber* form'd the diameter, there were no walls built on that side. But (1) this reading is allow'd contrary to almost all the manuscripts. (2) Why shou'd *Pliny*, a concise writer, repeat the compass of the walls of *Rome* in two successive sentences? (3) Why repeat it with so sensible a variation? (4) What is the meaning of *Pliny's* mentioning twice the *Milliarium*, if a line was measur'd, that had no dependence on the *Milliarium*? (5) *Aurelian's* wall is said by *Vopiscus* to have been drawn *laxiore ambitu*, and to have comprehended all the buildings and suburbs on the north-side of the *Tyber*; yet its compass was only 50 miles, and even here critics suspect some mistake or corruption in the text. It is not probable that *Rome* wou'd diminish from *Augustus* to *Aurelian*. It remain'd still the capital of the same empire; and none of the civil wars, in that long period, except the tumults on the death of

Maximus and *Balbinus*, ever affected the city. *Caracalla* is said by *Aurelius Victor* to have encreas'd *Rome*. (6) There are no remains of antient buildings, which mark any such greatness of *Rome*. *Vossius's* reply to this objection seems absurd, that the rubbish wou'd sink 60 or 70 foot below ground. It appears from *Spartian (in vita Severi)* that the five mile stone *in via Lavicana* was out of the city. (7) *Olympiodorus* and *Publius Victor* fix the number of houses in *Rome* to be betwixt forty and fifty thousand. (8) The very extravagance of the consequences, drawn by this critic, as well as *Lipsius*, if they be necessary, destroys the foundation on which they are grounded: That *Rome* contain'd 14 millions of inhabitants; while the whole kingdom of *France* contains only five, according to his computation, &c.

THE only objection to the sense, which we have affix'd above to the passage of *Pliny*, seems to lye in this, that *Pliny*, after mentioning the 37 gates of *Rome*, assigns only a reason for suppressing the seven old ones, and says nothing of the 18 gates, the streets leading from which, terminated, according to my opinion, before they reach'd the Forum. But as *Pliny* was writing to the *Romans*, who perfectly knew the disposition of the streets, it is not strange he shou'd take a circumstance for granted, which was so familiar to every body. Perhaps too, many of these gates led to wharfs upon the river. ↵

[*] Ex monument. Ancyrr. ↵

[†] *Tusc. quaest.* lib. 3. cap. 48. ↵

[‡] *Licinius apud Sallust. hist. frag.* lib. 3. ↵

[†] Nicolaus Hortensius de re frumentaria Roman. ↵

[‡] Not to take the people too much from their business, *Augustus* ordain'd the distribution of corn to be made only thrice a year: But the people finding the monthly distributions more convenient (as preserving, I suppose, a more regular oeconomy in their family) desir'd to have them restor'd. *Sucton. August.* cap. 40. Had not some of the people come from some distance for their corn, *Augustus's* precaution seems superfluous. ↵

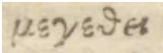
[*] *Sueton. in Jul.* cap. 41. ↵

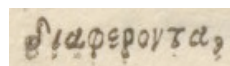
[*] In vita Neronis. ↵

[‡] LIB. 4. cap. 5. ↵

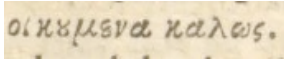
[†] *Sueton. Aug.* cap. 42. ↵

[§] LIB. 17. ↵

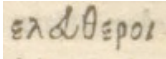
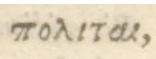
[||] *Quintus Curtius* says its walls were only ten miles in circumference, when founded by *Alexander*, lib. 4. cap. 8. *Strabo*, who had travel'd to *Alexandria* as well as *Diodorus Siculus*, says it was scarce four miles long, and in most places about a mile broad, lib. 17. *Pliny* says it resembled a *Macedonian* cassock stretching out in the corners, lib. 5. cap. 10. Notwithstanding this bulk of *Alexandria*, which seems but moderate, *Diodorus Siculus* speaking of its circuit as drawn by *Alexander* (which it never exceeded, as we learn from *Ammianus Marcellinus*, lib. 22. cap. 16.) says it was 

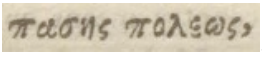


, extremely great, *ibid.* The reason, which he assigns for its surpassing all cities of the world (for he excepts not *Rome*) is, that it contain'd 300,000 free inhabitants. He also mentions the revenues of the kings, viz. 6000, as another circumstance to the same purpose: No such mighty sum in our eyes, even tho' we make allowances for the different value of money. What *Strabo* says of the neighbouring

country means only that it was well peopled . Might not one affirm, without any great hyperbole, that the whole banks of the river from *Gravesend* to *Windsor* are one city? This is more than *Strabo* says of the banks of the lake *Mareotis* and of the canal to *Canopus*. 'Tis a vulgar saying in *Italy*, that the king of *Sardinia* has but one town in *Piedmont*: For it is all a town. *Agrippa* in *Josephus, de bello Judaic.* lib. 2. cap. 16. to make his audience comprehend the excessive greatness of *Alexandria*, which he endeavours to magnify, describes only the compass of the city as drawn by *Alexander*: A clear proof that the bulk of the inhabitants were lodged there, and that the neighbouring country was no more than what might be expected about all great towns, very well cultivated and well peopled. ↵

[*] LIB. 17. ↵

[†] He says  not , which must have been understood of citizens alone, and grown men. ↵

[‡] LIE. 4. cap. I. , *Politian* interprets it *aedibus majoribus etiam reliqua urbe*. ↵

[||] He says (in *Nerone*, cap. 30.) that a portico or piazza of it was 3000 feet long; *tanta laxitas ut porticus triplices milliarias haberet*. He cannot mean three miles. For the whole extent of the house from the *Palatine* to the *Esquiline* was not near so great. So when *Vopisc.* in *Aureliano* mentions a portico in *Sallust's* gardens, which he calls *porticus milliariensis*, it must be understood of a thousand feet. So also *Horace*;

*Nulla decempedis
Metata privatis opacam
Porticus excipiebat Arcton.*

Lib. 2. ode 15.

So also in lib. 1. satyre 8.

Mille pedes in fronte, trecentos cippus in agrum Hic dabat.

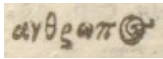
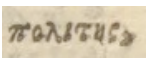
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[*] LIE. 36. cap. 15. *Bis vidimus urbem totam cingi domibus principum, Caii ac Neronis*. ↵

[†] LIB. 2. cap. 15. ↵

[*] In *Aurelian.* cap. 48. ↵

[†] LIB. 12. cap. 2. ↵

[†] LIE. 9. cap. 10. His expression is  not  inhabitant not citizen. ↵

[*] LIE. 6. cap. 28. ↵

[†] LIE. 17. ↵

[*] Such were *Alexandria*, *Anticob*, *Carthage*, *Ephesus*, *Lyons*, &c. in the *Roman* empire. Such are even *Bourdeaux*, *Tholouse*, *Dijon*, *Rennes*, *Rouen*, *Aix*, &c. in *France*, *Dublin*, *Edinburgh*, *York* in the *British* dominions. ↵

[†] VOL. 2. sect. 16. ↩

[*] SAT. 6. ↩

[*] LIB. 4. ↩

[†] LIB. 4. ↩

[‡] *Trist.* lib. 3. eleg. 9. *De ponto*, lib. 4. eleg. 7, 9, 10. ↩

[*] LIB. 4. cap. 21. ↩

[†] LIB. 1. cap. 2. ↩

[¶] LIB. 3. ↩

[*] THE warm Southern also become more healthful: And 'tis remarkable, that in the *Spanish* histories of the first discovery and conquest of these countries they appear to have been very healthful; being then well peopled and cultivated. No account of the sickness or decay of *Cortes's* or *Pizzarro's* small armies. ↩

[†] LIB. 1. cap. 1. ↩

[||] HE seems to have liv'd about the time of the younger *Africanus*, *id. ib.* ↩

[*] *Xenoph. exp.* lib. 7. *Polyb.* lib. 4. cap. 45. ↩

[†] *Ovid. passim*, &c. *Strabo*, lib. 7. ↩

[‡] *Polyb.* lib. 2. cap. 12. ↩

[*] *De bello Gallico*, lib. 6. ↩

[†] *De moribus Germ.* ↩

[‡] LIB. 7. ↩

[||] LIB 3. cap. 47. ↩

[§] *Caesar de bello Gallico*, lib. 6. *Strabo*, lib. 7. says the *Gauls* were not much more improv'd than the *Germans*. ↩

[¶] *Celt.* pars 1. ↩

[*] LIB. 5. ↩

[†] ANTIENT *Gaul* was more extensive than modern *France*. ↩

[‡] *Caesar de bello Gallico*, lib. 6. ↩

[||] *Id. ibid.* ↩

[§] LIB. 4. ↩

[||] *De bello Gallico*, lib. 2. ↩

[*] IT appears from *Caesar's* account, that the *Gauls* had no domestic slaves. The whole common people were indeed a kind of slaves to the nobility, as the people of *Poland* are at this day: And a nobleman of *Gaul* had sometimes ten thousand clients or dependants of this kind; nor can we doubt, that the armies were compos'd of the people as well as of the nobility: An army of 100,000 noblemen from a very small state is incredible. The fighting

men amongst the *Helvetii* were the fourth part of the whole inhabitants; a clear proof, that all the males of military age bore arms. See *Caesar de bello Gall.* lib. 1.

We may remark, that the numbers in *Caesar's* commentaries can be more depended on than those of any other antient author; because of the *Greek* translation, which still remains, and which checks the original. ↵

[†] *De bello Gallico*, lib. 1. ↵

[*] *Titi Livii* lib. 34. cap. 17. ↵

[†] *In vita Marii*. ↵

[‡] *De bello Hisp.* ↵

[||] *Vell. Pater.* lib. 2. sect. 90. ↵

[§] *LIB.* 3. ↵

[¶] *LIB.* 44. ↵

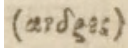
[{inverted †}] *Nec numero Hispanos, nec robore Galles, nec calliditate Paenos, nec artibus Graeces, nec denique hoc ipso hujus gentis, ac terrae domestico nativoque sensu, Italos ipsos ac Latines—superavimus. De harusp. resp. cap. 9.* The disorders of *Spain* seem to have been almost proverbial. *Nec impacatos a tergo horrebis Iberos. Virg. Georg. lib. 3.* The *Iberi* are here plainly taken, by a poetical figure, for robbers in general. ↵

[*] *Varro de re rustica.* lib. 2. praef. *Columella praef. Suston. August. cap. 42.* ↵

[†] THO' the observation of *L'Abbé du Bos* shou'd be admitted, that *Italy* is now warmer than in former times, the consequence may not be necessary, that it is more populous or better cultivated. If the other countries of *Europe* were more savage and woody, the cold winds, that blow'd from them, might affect the climate of *Italy*. ↵

[*] THE inhabitants of *Marseilles* lost not their great superiority ever the *Gauls* in commerce and the mechanic arts, till the *Roman* dominion turn'd the latter from arms to agriculture and civil life. See *Strabo*, lib. 4. That author, in several places, repeats the observation concerning the improvement, arising from the *Roman* arts and civility: And he liv'd at the time, when the change was new, and wou'd be more sensible. So also *Pliny*, *Quis exim non, communicato orbe terrarum, majestate Romani imperii, profecisse vitam putet, commercio rerum ac societate festae pacis, omniaque exam, quae acculta antea fuerant, in promiscuousu facta.* lib. 14. proem, *Numine deum electa* (speaking of *Italy*) *quae caelum ipsum clarius faceret, sparsa congregaret imperia, ritusque moliret, et tot populorum discordes, ferasque linguas sermonis commercio contraberet ad colloquia, et humanitatem homini daret; breviterque, una cunctarum gentium in toto orbe patria fieret,* lib. 2. cap. 5. Nothing can be stronger to this purpose than the following passage from *Tertullian*, who liv'd about the age of *Severus*. *Certe quidem ipse orbis in promptu est, culticr de die et instructor pristino. Omnia jam pervia, omnia nota, omnia negotiosa. Solitudines famosas retro fandi amoenissimi oblitteraverunt, silvas arva domuerunt, feras pecora fugaverant, arenae seruntur, saxa panguntur, paludes cliquantur, tantae urbes, quantae non casae quendam. Jam nec insulae horrent, nec scopuli terrent; ubique domus, ubique populus, ubique respublica, ubique vita. Summum testimonium frequentiae humanae, onerosi sumus mundo, vix nobis elementa sufficiunt; et necessitates arctiores, et querelae apud omnes, dum jane nos natura non sustinet. De anima, cap. 30.* The air of rhetoric and declamation, which appears in this passage, diminishes somewhat from its authority, but does not entirely destory it. A man of violent imagination, such as

Tertullian, augments every thing equally; and for that reason his comparative judgments are the most to be depended on. The same remark may be extended to the following passage of *Aristides* the sophist, who liv'd in the age of *Adrian*. *The whole world*, says he, addressing himself to the *Romans*, seems to keep one holiday; and mankind, laying aside the swords they formerly wore, now betake themselves to feasting and to joy. The cities, forgetting their antient contentions, preserve only one emulation, which shall embellish itself most by every art and ornament. Theatres every where arise, amphitheatres, porticos, aqueducts, temples, schools, academies; and one may safely pronounce, that the sinking world has been again rais'd by your auspicious empire. Nor have cities alone receiv'd an encrease of ornament and beauty; but the whole earth, like a garden or paradise, is cultivated and adorn'd. Insomuch that such of mankind as are plac'd out of the limits of your empire (who are but few) seem to merit our simpathy and compassion.

'Tis remarkable, that tho' *Diodorus Siculus* makes the whole inhabitants of *Aegypt*, when conquer'd by the *Romans*, amount only to three millions; yet *Josephus*, *de bello Jud.* lib. 2. cap. 16. says, that its inhabitants, excluding those of *Alexandria*, were seven millions and a half, in the reign of *Nero*: And he expressly says, that he drew this account from the books of the *Roman* publicans, who levy'd the poll tax. *Strabo*, lib. 17. praises the superior police of the *Romans* with regard to the finances of *Aegypt*, above that of its former monarchs: And no part of administration is more essential to the happiness of a people. Yet we read in *Athenaeus*, (lib. 1. cap. 25.) who flourish'd during the reign of the *Antonines*, that the town *Mareia*, near *Alexandria*, which was formerly a large city, had dwindled into a village. This is not, properly speaking, a contradiction. *Suidas* (*August.*) says that the emperor *Augustus*, having number'd the whole *Roman* empire, found it contain'd only 4,101,017 men . There is here surely some great mistake, either in the author or transcriber. But this authority, feeble as it is, may be sufficient to counterbalance the exaggerated accounts of *Herodotus* and *Diodorus Siculus* with regard to more early times. ↵

[*] *L'Esprit des loix*, livre 23. chap. 19. ↵

[†] *De orac. defectu*. ↵

[*] *LIB.* 2. cap. 62. It may perhaps be imagin'd, that *Polybius*, being dependent on *Rome*, wou'd naturally extol the *Roman* dominion. But in the first place, *Polybius*, tho' one sees sometimes instances of his caution, discovers no symptoms of flattery. Secondly, This opinion is only deliver'd in a single stroke, by the bye, while he is intent upon another subject; and 'tis allow'd, if there be any suspicion of an author's insincerity, that these oblique propositions discover his real opinion better than his more formal and direct assertions. ↵

[†] *Annal.* lib. 1. cap. 2. ↵

[‡] *LIB.* 8, & 9. ↵

[*] *Plutarch.* *De his qui sero a Numine puniuntur*. ↵

[*] *De mercede conductis*. ↵

[†] I must confess, that that discourse of *Plutarch* concerning the silence of the oracles is in general of so odd a texture, and so unlike his other productions, that one is at a loss what judgment to form of it. 'Tis wrote in dialogue, which is a method of composition, that *Plutarch* commonly little affects. The personages he introduces advance very wild, absurd, and contradictory opinions, more like the visionary systems of *Plato* than the solid sense of *Plutarch*. There runs also thro' the whole an air of superstition and

credulity, which resembles very little the spirit, that appears in the other philosophical compositions of that author. For 'tis remarkable, that tho' *Plutarch* be an historian as superstitious as *Herodotus* or *Livy*, yet there is scarcely, in all antiquity, a philosopher less superstitious, excepting *Cicero* and *Lucian*. I must, therefore, confess, that a passage of *Plutarch*, cited from this discourse, has much less authority with me, than if it had been found in most of his other compositions.

THERE is only one other discourse of *Plutarch* liable to like objections, viz. that concerning those whose punishment is delay'd by the Deity. It is also wrote in dialogue, contains like superstitious, wild visions, and seems to have been chiefly compos'd in rivalryship to *Plato*, particularly his last book, *de republica*.

AND here I cannot but observe, that Mons. *Fontenelle*, a writer eminent for candour, seems to have departed a little from his usual character, when he endeavours to throw a ridicule upon *Plutarch* on account of passages to be met with in this dialogue concerning oracles. The absurdities here put into the mouths of the several personages are not to be ascrib'd to *Plutarch*. He makes them resute each other; and in general, he seems to intend the ridiculing of those very opinions, which *Fontenelle* wou'd ridicule him for maintaining. See *Histoire des Oracles*. ↵

[†] LIB. 2. ↵

[‡] HE was contemporary with *Caesar* and *Augustus*. ↵

Notes for Discourse 11

[*] IT appears from the speeches, and proclamations, and whole train of king *James* the I. 's actions, as well as his son's, that they consider'd the *English* government as a simple monarchy, and never imagin'd that any considerable part of their subjects entertain'd a contrary idea. This made them discover their pretensions, without preparing any force to support them; and even without reserve or disguise, which are always employ'd by those, who enter upon any new project, or endeavour to innovate in any government. King *James* told his parliament plainly, when they meddled in state affairs, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*. He us'd also, at his table, in promiscuous companies, to advance his notions, in a manner still more undisguis'd: As we may learn from a story told in the life of Mr. *Waller*, and which that poet us'd frequently to repeat. When Mr. *Waller* was young, he had the curiosity to go to court; and he stood in the circle, and saw king *James* dine, where, amongst other company, there sat at table two bishops. The king, openly and aloud, propos'd this question, *Whether he might not take his subjects money, when he had occasion for it, without all this formality of parliament*. The one bishop readily replied, *God forbid you shou'd not: For you are the breath of our nostrils*. The other bishop declin'd answering, and said he was not skill'd in parliamentary cases: But upon the king's urging him, and saying he wou'd admit of no evasion, his lordship replied very pleasantly, *Why then, I think your majesty may lawfully take my brother's money: For he offers it*. In Sir *Walter Raleigh's* preface to the history of the world, there is this remarkable passage. *Philip the II. by strong hand and main force, attempted to make himself, not only an absolute monarch over the Netherlands, like unto the kings and sovereigns of England and France; but Turk-like to tread under his feet all their natural and fundamental laws, privileges and antient rights*. *Spenser*, speaking of some grants of the *English* kings to the *Irish* corporations, says, 'All which, tho', at the time of their first grant, they were tolerable, and perhaps reasonable, yet now are most unreasonable and inconvenient. But all these will easily be cut off with the superior power of her majesty's prerogative, against which her own grants are not to be pleaded or enforc'd.' *State of Ireland*, page 1537, Edit. 1706.

As these were very common, tho' not, perhaps, the universal notions of the times, the two first princes of the house of *Stuart* were the more excusable for their mistake. And *Rapin*, the most judicious of historians, seems sometimes to treat them with too much severity upon account of it. ↵



[*] THOSE who consider how universal this pernicious practice of funding has become all over *Europe* may perhaps dispute this last opinion. But we lay under less necessity than other states. ↵