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An Essay On The History Of Civil Society

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Part Fifth. Of the Decline of Nations.

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PART FIFTH.

Of the Decline of Nations.



S E C T. I.

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

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



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

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

* Strahlenberg.

† Gemelli Careri.

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with another, only served to distinguish the stranger, whose language and pedigree differed from theirs.

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

THERE have certainly been very few examples of states, who have, by arts or policy, improved the original dispositions of human nature, or endeavoured, by wise and effectual precautions, to prevent its corruption. Affection, and force of mind, which are the band and the strength of communities, were the inspiration of God, and original attributes in the nature of man. The wisest policy of nations, except in a very few instances, has tended, we may suspect, rather to maintain the peace of society, and to repress the external effects of bad passions,

passions, than to strengthen the disposition of the heart itself to justice and goodness. It has tended, by introducing a variety of arts, to exercise the ingenuity of men, and by engaging them in a variety of pursuits, inquiries, and studies, to inform, but frequently to corrupt the mind. It has tended to furnish matter of distinction and vanity; and by incumbering the individual with new subjects of personal care, to substitute the anxiety he entertains for himself, instead of the confidence and the affection he should entertain for his fellow-creatures.

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

THE wealth, the aggrandizement and power of nations, are commonly the effects of virtue; the loss of these advantages, is often a consequence of vice.

WERE we to suppose men to have succeeded in the discovery and application of every art by which states are preserved, and governed; to have attained, by efforts of wisdom and magnanimity, the admired establishments and advantages of a civilized and flourishing people; the subsequent part of their history, contain-



ing, according to vulgar apprehension, a full display of those fruits in maturity, of which they had till then carried only the blossom, and the first formation, should, still more than the former, merit our attention, and excite our admiration.

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

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

STATES have been thus conquered from abroad, before they gave any signs of internal decay, even in the midst of prosperity, and in the period of their greatest ardour for national objects. Athens, in the height of her ambition, and of her glory, received a fatal wound, in striving to extend her maritime power beyond the Grecian seas. And nations of every description, formidable by their rude ferocity, respected for their discipline and military experience, when advancing, as well as when declining, in their strength, fell a prey, by turns, to the ambition and arrogant spirit of the Romans. Such examples may excite and alarm the jealousy and caution of states; the presence of similar dangers may exercise the talents of politicians and statesmen; but mere reverses of fortune are the common materials of history, and must long since have ceased to create our surprise.

DID we find, that nations advancing from small beginnings, and arrived at the possession of arts which lead to dominion, became secure of their advantages, in proportion



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

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

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

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

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

S E C T.



S E C T. II.

Of the Temporary Efforts and Relaxations of the National Spirit.

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

EVEN the weak and the remiss are roused to enterprise, by the contagion of such remarkable ages; and states which have not in their form the principles of a continued exertion, either favourable or adverse to the welfare of mankind, may have paroxysms of ardour, and a temporary appearance of national vigour. In the case of such nations, indeed, the returns of moderation are but a relapse to obscurity, and the presumption of one age is turned to dejection in that which succeeds.

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

MEN engage in pursuits with degrees of ardour not proportioned to the importance of their object. When they are stated in opposition, or joined in confederacy, they only wish for pretences to act. They forget, in the heat of their animosities, the subject of their controversy; or they seek, in their formal reasonings concerning it, only a disguise for their passions. When the heart is inflamed, no consideration can repress its ardour; when its fervour subsides, no reasoning can excite, and no eloquence awaken, its former emotions.

THE continuance of emulation among states, must depend on the degree of equality by which their forces are balanced; or on the incentives by which either party,

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

STATES even distinguished for military prowess, sometimes lay down their arms from lassitude, and are weary of fruitless contentions: but if they maintain the station of independent communities, they will have frequent occasions to recall, and exert their vigour. Even under popular governments, men sometimes drop the consideration of their political rights, and appear at times remiss or supine; but if they have reserved the power to defend themselves, the intermission of its exercise cannot be of long duration. Political rights, when neglected, are always invaded; and alarms from this quarter must frequently come to renew the attention of parties. The love of learning, and of arts, may change its pursuits, or droop for a season; but while men are possessed of freedom, and while the exercises of ingenuity are not superseded, the public may proceed, at different times,

times, with unequal fervour; but its progress is seldom altogether discontinued, or the advantages gained in one age are seldom entirely lost to the following.

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

SECT.



S E C T. III.

Of Relaxations in the National Spirit incident to Polished Nations.

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

WE may fancy to ourselves, that in ages of progress, the human race, like scouts gone abroad on the discovery of fertile lands, having the world open before them, are presented at every step with the appearance of novelty. They enter on every new ground with expectation and joy: They engage in every enterprise with the ardour of men, who believe they are going to arrive at
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national felicity, and permanent glory; and forget past disappointments amidst the hopes of future success. From mere ignorance, rude minds are intoxicated with every passion; and partial to their own condition, and to their own pursuits, they think that every scene is inferior to that in which they are placed. Roused alike by success, and by misfortune, they are sanguine, ardent, and precipitant; and leave to the more knowing ages which succeed them, monuments of imperfect skill, and of rude execution in every art; but they leave likewise the marks of a vigorous and ardent spirit, which their successors are not always qualified to sustain, or to imitate.

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

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

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

THE ignorant and the artless, to whom objects of science are new, and who are worst furnished with the conveniencies of life, instead of being more active, and more curious, are commonly more quiescent, and less inquisitive,

quisitive, than the knowing and the polished. When we compare the particulars which occupy mankind in their rude and in their polished condition, they will be found greatly multiplied and enlarged in the last. The questions we have put, however, deserve to be answered; and if, in the advanced ages of society, we do not find the objects of human pursuit removed, or greatly diminished, we may find them at least changed; and in estimating the national spirit, we may find a negligence in one part, but ill compensated by the growing attention which is paid to another.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

UNDER the *distinction* of callings, by which the members of polished society are separated from each other, every individual is supposed to possess his species of talent, or his peculiar skill, in which the others are confessedly ignorant; and society is made to consist of parts, of which none is animated with the spirit of society itself. "We see in the same persons," said Pericles, "an equal attention to private and to public affairs; and in men who have turned to separate professions, a competent knowledge of what relates to the community; for we alone consider those who are inattentive to the state, as perfectly insignificant." This encomium on the Athenians, was probably offered under an apprehension, that the contrary was likely to be charged by their enemies, or might soon take place. It happened accordingly, that the business of state, as well as of war, came

came to be worse administered at Athens, when these, as well as other applications, became the objects of separate professions; and the history of this people abundantly shewed, that men ceased to be citizens, even to be good poets and orators, in proportion as they came to be distinguished by the profession of these, and other separate crafts.

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

WHEN we are involved in any of the divisions into which mankind are separated, under the denominations of a country, a tribe, or an order of men any way affected by common interests, and guided by communicating passions, the mind recognises its natural station; the sentiments of the heart, and the talents of the understanding, find their natural exercise. Wisdom, vigilance, fidelity, and fortitude, are the characters requisite in such a scene, and the qualities which it tends to improve.

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

THE manners of rude nations require to be reformed. Their foreign quarrels, and domestic dissensions, are the operations of extreme and sanguinary passions. A state of greater tranquillity hath many happy effects. But if nations pursue the plan of enlargement and pacification, till their members can no longer apprehend the common ties of society, nor be engaged by affection in the cause of their country, they must err on the opposite side, and by leaving

leaving too little to agitate the spirits of men, bring on ages of languor, if not of decay.

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

WHAT we observe, however, on the tendency of enlargement to loosen the bands of political union, cannot be applied to nations who, being originally narrow, never greatly extended their limits, nor to those who, in a rude state, had already the extension of a great kingdom.

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



ful, of which the force, on many occasions, redounds to the power of the state.

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

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

* *Memoirs of Brandenburg.*

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

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



lay the political spirit at rest, and will chain up the active virtues more than the restless disorders of men.

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

If this be the end of political struggles, the design, when executed, in securing to the individual his estate, and the means of subsistence, may put an end to the exercise of those very virtues that were required in conducting its execution. A man who, in concert with his fellow-subjects, contends with usurpation in defence of his estate or his person, may find an exertion of great generosity, and of a vigorous spirit; but he who, under political establishments, supposed to be fully confirmed, betakes him, because he is safe, to the mere enjoyment of fortune, has in fact turned to a source of corruption the very advantages which the virtues of the other procured. Individuals, in certain ages, derive their protection chiefly from the strength of the party to which they adhere; but in times of corruption, they flatter themselves,

themselves, that they may continue to derive from the public that safety which, in former ages, they must have owed to their own vigilance and spirit, to the warm attachment of their friends, and to the exercise of every talent which could render them respected, feared, or beloved. In one period, therefore, mere circumstances serve to excite the spirit, and to preserve the manners of men; in another, great wisdom and zeal for the good of mankind on the part of their leaders, are required for the same purposes.

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

REPUBLICAN governments, in general, are in hazard of ruin from the ascendant of particular factions, and from the mutinous spirit of a populace, who being corrupted, are no longer fit to share in the administration of state. But under other establishments, where liberty may be more successfully attained if men are corrupted, the national vigour declines from the abuse of that very security which is procured by the supposed perfection of public order.

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

necessaries of life; or, in the language of Cato, teach them to value their houses, their villas, their statues, and their pictures, at a higher rate than they do the republic. They may be found to grow tired in secret of a free constitution, of which they never cease to boast in their conversation, and which they always neglect in their conduct.

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

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

ORDINARY



ORDINARY establishments terminate in a relaxation of vigour, and are ineffectual to the preservation of states; because they lead mankind to rely on their arts, instead of their virtues, and to mistake for an improvement of human nature, a mere accession of accommodation, or of riches. Institutions that fortify the mind, inspire courage, and promote national felicity, can never tend to national ruin.

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

S E C T.



S E C T. IV.

The same subject continued.

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

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

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are more easily accomplished. The first, however, were circumstances under which nations advanced and prospered ; the second were those in which the spirit relaxed, and the nation went to decay.

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

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

THE policy of China is the most perfect model of an arrangement, at which the ordinary refinements of government



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

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



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

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

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



pened. It has happened in every instance where the polished have fallen a prey to the rude, and where the pacific inhabitant has been reduced to subjection by military force.

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

STATESMEN and leaders of armies, accustomed to the mere observance of forms, are disconcerted by a suspension of customary rules; and on slight grounds despair of their country. They were qualified only to go the rounds of a particular track; and when forced from their stations, are in reality unable to act with men. They only took part in formalities, of which they understood not the tendency; and together with the modes of procedure, even the very state itself, in their apprehension, has ceased to exist. The numbers, possessions, and resources of a great people, only serve, in their
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view, to constitute a scene of hopeless confusion and terror.

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

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

EVEN delicate living, and good accommodation, are not found to enervate the body. The armies of Europe have been obliged to make the experiment; and the children of opulent families, bred in effeminacy, or nursed with tender care, have been made to contend with the
savage.

savage. By imitating his arts, they have learned, like him, to traverse the forest; and, in every season, to subsist in the desert. They have, perhaps, recovered a lesson, which it has cost civilized nations many ages to unlearn, That the fortune of a man is entire while he remains possessed of himself.

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



victor of Asia did not think himself prepared for that conquest, till he had formed an army from the subdued republics of Greece.

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

WE find in the orations of Demosthenes, a perpetual reference to this state of manners. We find him exhorting the Athenians, not only to declare war, but to arm themselves for the execution of their own military plans. We find that there was an order of military men, who easily passed from the service of one state to that of another; and who, when they were neglected from home, turned away to enterprises on their own account. There were not, perhaps, better warriors in any former age; but those warriors were not attached to any state; and the settled inhabitants of every city thought themselves disqualified for military service.

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The discipline of armies was perhaps improved; but the vigour of nations was gone to decay. When Philip, or Alexander, defeated the Grecian armies, which were chiefly composed of soldiers of fortune, they found an easy conquest with the other inhabitants: and when the latter, afterwards supported by those soldiers, invaded the Persian empire, he seems to have left little martial spirit behind him; and by removing the military men, to have taken precaution enough, in his absence, to secure his dominion over this mutinous and refractory people.

THE subdivision of arts and professions, in certain examples, tends to improve the practice of them, and to promote their ends. By having separated the arts of the clothier and the tanner, we are the better supplied with shoes and with cloth. But to separate the arts which form the citizen and the statesman, the arts of policy and war, is an attempt to dismember the human character, and to destroy those very arts we mean to improve. By this separation, we in effect deprive a free people of what is necessary to their safety; or we prepare a defence against invasions from abroad, which gives a prospect of usurpation, and threatens the establishment of military government at home.

WE may be surpris'd to find the beginning of certain military instructions at Rome, referred to a time no earlier than that of the Cimbric war. It was then, we are told by Valerius Maximus, that Roman soldiers were made to learn from gladiators the use of a sword:

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and the antagonists of Phyrrius and of Hannibal were, by the account of this writer, still in need of instruction in the first rudiments of their trade. They had already, by the order and choice of their incampments, impressed the Grecian invader with awe and respect; they had already, not by their victories, but by their national vigour and firmness, under repeated defeats, induced him to sue for peace. But the haughty Roman, perhaps, knew the advantage of order and of union, without having been broke to the inferior arts of the mercenary foldier; and had the courage to face the enemies of his country, without having practised the use of his weapon under the fear of being whipped. He could ill be persuaded, that a time might come, when refined and intelligent nations would make the art of war to consist in a few technical forms; that citizens and foldiers might come to be distinguished as much as women and men; that the citizen would become possessed of a property which he would not be able, or required, to defend; that the foldier would be appointed to keep for another what he would be taught to desire, and what he would be enabled to seize for himself; that, in short, one set of men were to have an interest in the preservation of civil establishments, without the power to defend them; that the other were to have this power, without either the inclination or the interest.

THIS people, however, by degrees came to put their military force on the very footing to which this description

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

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

THE boasted refinements, then, of the polished age, are not divested of danger. They open a door, perhaps, to disaster, as wide and accessible as any of those they have shut. If they build walls and ramparts, they enervate the minds of those who are placed to defend them; if they form disciplined armies, they reduce the military spirit of entire nations; and by placing the sword where they have given a distaste to civil establishments, they prepare for mankind the government of force.



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

S E C T.



S E C T. V.

Of National Waste.

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

IF we suppose, that together with these advantages, the military character of a people remains, or is improved, it must follow, that what is gained in civilization, is a real increase of strength; and that the ruin of nations could never take its rise from themselves. Where states have stopped short in their progress, or
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have actually gone to decay, we may suspect, that however disposed to advance, they have found a limit, beyond which they could not proceed; or from a remission of the national spirit, and a weakness of character, were unable to make the most of their resources, and natural advantages. On this supposition, from being stationary, they may begin to relapse, and by a retrograde motion, in a succession of ages, arrive at a state of greater weakness, than that which they quitted in the beginning of their progress; and with the appearance of better arts, and superior conduct, expose themselves to become a prey to barbarians, whom, in the attainment, or the height of their glory, they had easily baffled or despised.

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

THE wealth of the state consists in the fortune of its members. The actual revenue of the state is that share of every private fortune, which the public has been accustomed to demand for national purposes. This revenue cannot be always proportioned to what may be supposed
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redundant in the private estate, but to what is, in some measure, thought so by the owner; and to what he may be made to spare, without intrenching on his manner of living, and without suspending his projects of expence, or of commerce. It should appear, therefore, that any immoderate increase of private expence is a prelude to national weakness: government, even while each of its subjects consumes a princely estate, may be straitened in point of revenue, and the paradox be explained by example, That the public is poor, while its members are rich.

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

GREAT armies, maintained either at home or abroad, without any national object, are so many mouths unnecessarily opened to waste the stores of the public, and so
many



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

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

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

GREAT national expence, however, does not imply the necessity of any national suffering. While revenue is applied with success, to obtain some valuable end; the profits of every adventure, being more than sufficient to repay its costs, the public should gain, and its resources should continue to multiply. But an expence, whether sustained at home or abroad, whether a waste of the present, or an anticipation of future, revenue, if it bring no proper return, is to be reckoned among the causes of national ruin.

