

Landesbibliothek Oldenburg

Digitalisierung von Drucken

Political Considerations Upon Refin'd Politicks

Naudé, Gabriel

London, 1711

Chap. I. Objections that may be made against this Discourse, with their
necessary Answers.

urn:nbn:de:gbv:45:1-1842



CONSIDERATIONS

UPON

Refin'd Politicks, &c.

CHAP. I.

*Objections that may be made against
this Discourse, with their necessary
Answers.*



Had no sooner, *with much Ap-
plication*, drawn the first Lines
of this Discourse, but that I
found my self encompass'd with
two powerful Difficulties suffi-
cient, in my Opinion, to have hindred any
other Person, that had less Courage and Af-
fection to the work than my self, from going

any farther, and to have chill'd the warmest Blood and vigorous Spirit in the pursuit of these Resolutions which may appear no less dangerous than extraordinary. For if the Judicious Poet *Horace* (*Ode 2. Book 2.*) could ingeniously tell his Friend *Pollio*, who was going to write the History of the Civil Wars that happen'd in his time.

*Periculosa plenum opus aleæ
Tractas, & incedis per ignes
Suppositos cineri doloso:*

The Work to which you now aspire,
Is full of doubtful chance,
Through a vast Plain you must advance,
Where treacherous Cinders hide the
Lurking Fire.

What good Success can be expected from any Enterprize that is much more rash and difficult; for not to speak of the Danger there is in trying to penetrate into the Actions of Princes, and to lay that open and naked to View, which they always endeavour to conceal by a thousand Artifices, there are still two others of no less consequence, one of which, as I conceive, may regard and touch your Person, as I find the other will concern my own.

As to the first, I shall freely say, with that Poet who has treated of Philosophy in such beautiful Verse: that he is now the single Maintainer of his Sect;

Illud

*Illud in his rebus vereor, ne forte rearis
Impia te rationis inire elementa, viamq;
Indugredi sceleris.* (Lucretius Book 1.)

If you shall start at these bold Truths
and fly

These Lines as Maxims of Impiety.
Mr. Creech.

At least, I in reason ought to fear, that I
should wound the Ears or offend the Eyes
of your Eminency, and disturb the Sweet-
ness and Goodness of your Nature as well
as the Quiet and Integrity of your Mind, by
the Recital of so many Deceits, Tricks, Vio-
lences, and other the like unjust and tyran-
nical Actions, (as they appear at first)
which I must hereafter relate, explain, and
defend.

If *Aneas*, one of the most resolute Com-
manders amongst the Ancients, was so mov'd
with Pity at the Recital only of the sacking
and Ruines of *Troy*, which he made to the
Queen of *Carthage*, that he began it with
these Words,

*Quamquam animus meminisse horret Luctuq;
refugit.* Virgil *Æn.* 2.

Great Queen, what you command me to
relate,

Renews the sad Remembrance of our Fate.

Mr. Dryden.

And

And if an Emperor who nevertheless could not escape the Name of *Cruel*, said one day to a Magistrate, who brought a Sentence to sign, by which two poor Wretches were to be condemned: *Utinam nescirem Literas*; I wish I knew not how to write. (*Seneca* Book 2. of Clemency.) May not you have much more reason to wish you had never seen this Discourse, since it entertains you with nothing but what is disagreeable to your Candour and good Nature; should not I do much better to follow the Advice of *Solomon*, *Coram Rege tuo noli videri sapiens*, Don't seem to be wise in the Presence of your Prince; and pursue those Studies in which I have been conversant from my Youth, rather than appear before you with these extravagant Notions, as *Diognotus* did with his before *Alexander*; that he might look on him as a great Engineer and Architect. May I not apprehend that I shall have the same Success that *Phormio* the Grammarian had with his Oration, concerning the Art of War, spoke before *Hannibal*, who was esteemed the greatest General of his Age.

And, in truth, when I consider how ill I am provided with means to accomplish so great an Undertaking, which is another difficulty: I have almost a mind to proceed no farther but to quit it entirely.

Shall I that am but a Novice in these Exercises seem so bold as to intrude into Mysteries which are more conceal'd than those of
the

the *Eleusinian* Goddeſs, without being firſt initiated; with what aſſurance can I preſume to enter into the depth of ſuch Affairs, to penetrate into the Cabinets of the Great, and advance even to that Sanctuary where they form their bold Deſigns, without having had the Addreſs and Converſation of thoſe who manage them? I could not ſure be angry with any Perſon who ſeeing me perſiſt in this reſolution ſhould judge that this was to put a Violence upon Nature which never paſſes ſo ſuddenly from one extreme to the other; or to ſpeak more moderately of it, that there was more Boldneſs than Reaſon in endeavouring to ſail upon the wide Seas without a Compaſs, or in engaging my ſelf in a Labyrinth of Subtilties and refin'd Politicks, without having in my Hand that Thread of Knowledge, which might extricate me thence with the Succeſs of a favourable Iſſue. For it is not here as with thoſe Perſons who look upon the Sun with the leſs difficulty, the farther they are from him; or with Painters amongſt whom the ſhorteſt ſighted make the beſt Pictures: But rather this Political Prudence is like to *Proteus*, of whom 'tis impoſſible to have any certain Knowledge, 'till after having deſcended in *ſecreta ſenis*, into the old Man's Secrets, and having with a fix'd and piercing Eye contemplated all his Diverſity of Figures, Motions, and Metamorphoſes, by which,

—Fit

—*Fit subito sus horridus, Atraque Tigris
Squamosusq; Draco & fulva cervice Leena.*
(Virg. Georgicks Book 4.)

He not unmindful of his usual Art
First in dissembled Fire attempts to part,
Then roaring Beasts and running Streams
he tries,

And wearies all his Miracles of Lies.

Mr. Dryden.

However as the young *Aristeus* was not
deter'd by the many difficulties that *Arethusa*
set before him from undertaking his
Voyage, and thence obtaining afterwards an
entire Satisfaction; so these which I have
recounted and a thousand others could not
hinder me, but that, after I had taken the
Councel given by *Pliny* the younger, *Tutius
per plana, sed humilius & depressius iter; fre-
quentior Currentibus quam reptantibus lapsus;
sed & his non labentibus nulla laus, illis non-
nulla laus etiamsi labantur.* The way indeed
is safest through the plain, but then it is more
humble and depress'd; they who run, fall oft-
ner than they who creep; but then those la-
ter have no Praise though they do not fall,
whereas the others though they chance to
trip have still some Commendation. I was re-
solved to set forward in the full Carier of
the Design which I propos'd.

In answer therefore to the two Dif-
ficulties that I rais'd to my self, and, in the
first

first place to that which regards your Eminency, it is not to be mistrusted that these Doctrines do in the least blemish your Piety, or any ways disturb the Quiet and Integrity of your Mind, as at the first blush they might seem to do, and as the three Verses of *Lucretius* would intimate: The Sun displays his Beams upon the most vile and abject Things, and yet is neither blacken'd or defil'd.

*Nec quia forte lutum radiis ferit, est ideo
ipse*

*Fædus, non sordet lumen quum sordida Tan-
git.* (Palingenius in Scorpi.)

Though the Sun's Rays strike on the Mud,
yet he
Is pure, with Light from all such Mixture
free.

The Divines are not less devout for knowing what is Heresy; nor Physicians less skilful for understanding the Force and Compositions of all Poysons. The Habits of the Understanding are distinguish'd from those of the Will: The first appertain to the Sciences, and are always commendable: The second regard moral Actions, and may be either Good or Evil. *Trithemius* and *Pererius* have shewn that it was expedient that there should be Magicians, and that the way should be known how to raise Spirits, that by such Apparitions they might convince the Incredulity



dulity of Atheists: Soldiers go often to their Exercise to learn how to trail the Pike, or handle the Musquet, that so they may with more Art and Industry kill Men and destroy their own Likeness: But however they make no other use of them but against the Enemies of their Prince and Country. The best Surgeons study nothing more than how to cut off an Arm or a Leg with dexterity; but it is for the preservation of those who are diseas'd.

——— *Truncantur & Artus*

Ut liceat reliquis securum degere Membris.

(Claud. 2. in Eutrop.)

——— We thus cut off one Limb

That so the rest may live in Ease secure.

Why then should a great Politician be prohibited to know when to Exalt or Debase, Release or Imprison, Condemn or Acquit, Reprieve or Execute those Persons he shall think proper to be so us'd for the repose of the State.

Several are of Opinion that a Prince who is prudent and well advis'd, ought not only to command according to Law, but may command even the Laws themselves if Necessity requires it. To preserve Justice in greater Matters, says *Charon*, it is expedient sometimes to relinquish it in less, and it is permitted to do Wrong in the Particular, provided that Right be done in the Main.

If

If it be objected that it is not proper how-
 ever to discover such things, and that to
 Teach them is, truly speaking, to place *Gla-*
dium ancipitem in Manu Stulti, To put a
 Sword in the Hand of a Fool. I shall an-
 swer, that ill People may abuse every thing
 that is good in the World. Hereticks would
 ground their Impieties upon the Holy Scri-
 ptures. The *Paracelsians* pervert the Text of
Hippocrates, to establish their visionary Ima-
 ginations. Advocates cite the Code and the
 Pandects in defence of the greatest Criminals,
 and yet it never entered into Peoples Heads
 to suppress all these Books. The Sword may
 as well offend as defend; Wine as well
 make drunk as refresh; Medicines as well
 kill as cure; and yet no body hitherto has
 said that the use of all these is not very ne-
 cessary. By the common Law of Nature all
 things are instituted to a good End, but there
 are Persons who very often abuse them. Na-
 ture does not produce Things venomous,
 that they might serve for Poisons and destroy
 Mankind, because in so doing she would be
 destructive to her self: But it is our Wicked-
 ness that converts them to that purpose;
Terra quidem nobis malorum Remedium genuit,
nos illud Vitæ fecimus Venenum, Plin. lib. 18.
 c. 1. The Earth has brought us forth Remedies
 for all Diseases, and we have turn'd them into
 Poisons. But we must go on and say, that
 the Depravity of Mankind is so great, and
 the Means they make use of to obtain their
 1 designs

designs so daring and hazardous, that to speak of the following *Politicks* as practised now adays, without mentioning these *Refinements*, is indeed to be ignorant of the proper Methods of Instruction which *Aristotle* says are so essential, *Est enim pædiæ inscitia, nescire quorum oporteat querere Demonstrationem, quorum vero non oporteat*, It is the Ignorance of Erudition, not to know for what we ought and for what we ought not to seek a Demonstration. Wherefore *Lipsius* and *Charon*, though they were far from being *Timons* and *Manhaters*, yet treated of this part of *Politicks*, lest their Works should have been imperfect. And the same *Aristotle* who never did any thing uncorrect, when he wrote of *Politicks* and those Governments which were opposite to Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Democracy, which are Tyranny, Oligarchy and Ochlocracy, gives Precepts for the Faulty as well as the Legitimate. And in this he has been follow'd by *St. Thomas Aquinas* in his Commentaries; where having discommended Tyrannick Government, and dissuaded Persons from it by all the Reasons he could think of, yet nevertheless lays down Rules for the establishing of it, in case any one would be so wicked as to attempt it. And lest this should be doubted, here are his own Words to this purpose, in the Commentary upon the Fifth of the *Politicks*, Text the XIth, *To preserve a Tyranny it is necessary to kill such Persons as excel in Power or Riches,*

Riches, because they by means of their Authority may be able to rise against the Tyrant. " It is expedient likewise, that the most prudent Persons should be dispatch'd lest they by their Wisdom should find a way to expel the Tyranny. Nor should Schools or other Societies where Prudence may be gain'd, be in any manner permitted; for wise Men have Inclinations to great Actions, and are therefore Magnanimous, and easily inclin'd to Insurrections. To maintain a Tyranny, the Tyrant should take Care that his Subjects should accuse one another of Crimes and Treasons, so as to be in a perpetual Disturbance amongst themselves, that Friend may be against Friend; the Commonalty may dissent from the Rich, and the Rich from the Commonalty; for so they will be less able to do any thing against the Tyrant. Great Tributes and heavy Exactions are to be laid upon the People, that so they may be impoverish'd. The Tyrant should encourage Civil Wars amongst his own Subjects, if he has none with Foreigners, for that will keep them from practising against him. A Kingdom indeed is supported by Friends, but a Tyranny should have no regard to them. And in the following Text, which is the Twelfth, see how he teaches Hypocrisy and Simulation. " A Tyrant to secure his Tyranny, should not appear Severe or Cruel to his Subjects; for if he seems

C Cruel

" Cruel he will render himself odious, and
 " so excite them against him; but he ought
 " to make himself rever'd by them, for the
 " Excellence of some eminent Goodness; for
 " Reverence is due to that, and if he be not
 " endow'd with it, he ought to dissemble so
 " as to seem to have it. A Tyrant ought so
 " to behave himself that he may seem to his
 " Subjects to excel in some eminent Good-
 " ness, wherein they are deficient, for that
 " will create him Reverence. If he is not
 " possess'd of the Virtues in reality, yet at
 " least let him make them think that he has
 " them.

These are surely very strange Doctrines
 from the Mouth of a Saint, and are no-
 thing different from those of *Machiavel* and
Cardan, and yet may be solv'd by these two
 Reasons which are probable and right e-
 nough. The first is, That these Maxims
 being so declar'd and publish'd, the Subjects
 may easily know when the Carriage of their
 Prince tends to a Tyrannick Power, and so
 provide for themselves accordingly, as Mari-
 ners when they foresee a Storm make the best
 of their way to avoid it. The second, That
 when a Tyrant acting without Counsel and
 Advice would establish his Dominion,

Cuncta ferit dum cuncta timet grassatur in
omnes

Ut se posse putent. Claudian.

He

He strikes at all, whilst all he Fears, and
Raves

To make them think that all must be his
Slaves.

And resembles a Wolf, who being got into a Fold, tho' he might appease his Hunger and glut himself with one Sheep, yet worries all the rest. But on the contrary, if he proceeds with Judgment and follows the Precepts of them who are better advis'd and less passionate than himself, he will perhaps like *Tarquin* rest content with striking off the Heads of the highest Poppies, or crushing those Spirits which appear above others, after the Example of *Thrasylbulus* and *Periander*; and so the Evil that could not be avoided will become much more easy and supportable.

Besides there is no occasion to fear that the Narration of all these tragical Accidents should offend the Ears of your Eminence, or disturb the Sweetness and Goodness of your Nature: That complete Knowledge you have acquired in Politicks, that long Practice and Experience that you have had in the Courts of the greatest Monarchs where these *Machiavilianisms* are so common, will not permit any one to imagine that you have any thing to learn concerning them. And farther, altho' Justice and Clemency are two Virtues very becoming a great Man, yet it is not always requisite that he should have the same incli-



nation to Pity, for which *Seneca* gives this Reason in his Treatise of Clemency, (*Book 2. ch. 5.*) *Quemadmodum Religio Deos colit, superstitio violat, Clementiam Mansuetudinemque omnes boni præstabunt, misericordiam autem vitabunt, est enim vitium pusilli animi ad speciem alienorum malorum subsidentis*; As Religion worships the Gods, Superstition profanes them; so all good Men will shew Clemency and Mercy, but will avoid Pity, which is the Failure of a weak Mind, sinking under the appearance of other Mens Misfortunes: Now it would be a Crime to think, that there could be any thing in your Eminence that is low or abject, since if it be true which the same Author says, that *Nihil æque Homines ac magnus Animus decet*, Nothing is so becoming a Man as a great Spirit: With how much greater Reason ought that Spirit to appear in your Eminence, to accompany and heighten that Dignity you sustain, not only as a Prince of the Church, but as a chief Counsellor to his Holiness, and so in some measure of one of the most potent Princes of *Europe*: *Magnam enim fortunam Magnus animus decet qui nisi se ad illam extulit & altior stetit illam quoque infra terram deducit*; For a great Soul is proper for a great Fortune; for unless a Man carries himself beyond it and exalts himself higher, he draws it down with him and depresses it. At least it occasions the Management of it to have less Authority and Reputation.

tation. So we find in History, that *Epiphanes*, for having acted below his Dignity, and not governing like a King, was surnam'd the *Insensible*, and that *Ramirus* of *Arragon*, retaining several of his Monkish Manners, after having quitted the Convent, to take the Crown, was derided and contemn'd by his Courtiers; our own Times furnish us with the Examples of a King of *Great Britain*, who *E stato schernito, & besseggiato per haver voluto comporre libri & fare del letterato* (*Tassoni*, Book 7. c. 4.) was thought to act below his Dignity, by writing Books, and being learned: And of *Henry III.* so much spoke of, and so remarkable in our Modern Histories, who having liv'd amongst Monks, and through the excess of an ill-guided Devotion, abandon'd his Crown and Government, gave occasion to Pope *Sixtus* the Fifth to say, *This good King does all that he can to be a Monk, and I have done all that I could not to be one.* And for this reason, some of the best Advice that ever *Monsieur de Villeroy* gave to *Henry* the Great, who had liv'd like a Soldier and Musqueteer, during the Wars he made before his coming to the Crown, was, when he told him, *That a Prince, who was not jealous of the Respects due to his Majesty, would permit himself to be affronted and despised. That the Kings his Predecessors, in the utmost Confusions, had always acted like Kings: that it was time he should speak, write, and act like a King.*



But why should we search for Examples amongst strange Princes, when the History of those who have govern'd this City, in which your Eminence resides at present, shews us two Sovereign Popes, who not having accompany'd the Grandeur of their Supreme Dignity with an equal Spirit, serve still for the Subject of Tales and Raillery, and of Laughter to Posterity. The great Piety and Religion which they carried in their Countenance, not being able to hinder, but that *Masson* should say of the first, who was *Celestin* the Fifth, *Vir fuit simplex nec eruditus, qui humana negotia ne capere quidem posset.* He was a simple Man, no Scholar, and one that had no Apprehension of common Business. And *Paulus Jovius* speaking of the second, concerning a certain sort of Fish, which rose to a great Price during his Pontificate, *Merluceo plebeio admodum pisci, Hadrianus sextus sicuti in republica administranda bebetis ingenii vel depravati judicii, ita in esculentis insulsissimi gustus, supra mediocre pretium ridente toto foro Piscatorio jam fecerat.* (Lib. de Pisc. Rom.) That he shew'd himself to be as dull, and of as depraved a Judgment in his Administration of Affairs, as he was insipid in his Taste. In which Character he shew'd himself much more moderate than *Peter Martyr*, not the Heretick of *Florence*, but the Apostolick Protonotary, Native of a little Village in the Dutchy of *Milan*, whosays of the Election of the same Pope,

Pope, *Cardinalibus hoc loco accidit, quod in fabulis de Pardo ac Leone super Agno raptando scribitur, fortibus illis strenue se dilacerantibus quodcumque quadrupes iners aliud prædæ se dominum fecit*; Whilst the Leopard and Lyon were fighting for the Lamb, a stupid Beast ran away with the Prey: So that Persons shoud either avoid great Employments, or else administer them with a Generosity and Force of Spirit, so far exalted above what is common, that it may be able to make Fortune desire to second and favour it in all Undertakings. This being a most certain Maxim, that whoever has this Principle and Foundation, which comes by Nature, *Bona enim mens, nec emitur, nec comparatur*, says *Seneca*, for a good Understanding is not to be bought or traffick'd for, cannot miss of being the Worker and Creator of his own Fortune, according to *Plautus*, *Sapiens pot ipse fingit fortunam sibi*. *Alexander*, although he was young, and ill provided with Soldiers, propos'd to himself to conquer the *Persians*, and pass even to the *Indies*, and accomplish'd it: *Cæsar* undertook in his single Person, to govern that Republick which commanded all others, he found the means of doing it: The two Shepherds, *Romulus* and *Tamerlane*, had their Designs to lay the Foundation of two powerful Empires, and they executed them. *Mahomet*, from a Merchant, would make himself a Prophet, and from a Prophet, a Sovereign of the third part of the World;



he had Success. And what think you, my Lord, was the principal Spring which caus'd all these marvellous Effects? No other in truth but a valiant Mind, which *Juvenal* teaches us always to place among the foremost of our Desires, *Fortem posce animum*. Now in this place to specify the Parts that compose this Noble Spirit, would be to fall from one Discourse to another, and do as *Montagne*, who follows rather the Starts of his own Fancy, than the Titles of his Essays. It may be sufficient to say at present, that one of the first and most necessary things, is, often to recollect this Saying of *Seneca*, *O quam contempta res est homo nisi supra humana surrexerit*; Oh what a despicable Thing is Man, unless he raises himself above human Things; that is, unless he have a strong and fix'd Eye, and, as if he were plac'd upon some high Tower, looks down upon the whole World, which appears to him as a Theatre, ill regulated, and full of Confusion, where some act Comedies, and others Tragedies, and where he may intervene; *Tanquam Deus aliquis ex machina*; Like some Divinity from a Machine, as often as he pleases, or the variety of Occasions shall persuade him to do it. Now if it may seem extraordinary to your Eminence, and not proper for my Age, or perhaps my Condition, that I should be so resolute in Matters that are so ticklish and delicate, and much more in the Mouth of a young Man, who

is

is call'd by *Horace*, *Utilium tardus provisor*, as being too negligent in providing such things as may be useful hereafter, and not accusom'd to apply himself to so serious and important Studies, which belong to the fullness of old Age. I shall first answer your Eminence, that the Age in which I am, is not disproportion'd to the Matter and Subject which I treat of; for Youth, that is, *Optima quaque dies*, &c. as *Virgil* and *Seneca* call it, has that Epithet of *Best*, because the Mind is tractable, and the Time fitted for Labour, and proper to be exercis'd in fitting Studies. Why then, since several Persons have perform'd many brave Exploits before the Flower of their Age, should not I be permitted to follow them, and if not to produce generous and lofty Actions, at least to frame noble and bold Conceptions, seeing I have always endeavour'd to acquire certain good Dispositions of Mind, which ought not now to be unuseful to me: For I have address'd my self to the Muses, without being too much enamour'd of them; I was pleas'd with my Studies, but not too much addicted to them; I pass'd through a Course of Scholastick Philosophy, without meddling with the contentious part of it, and thorough that of the Ancient and Moderns, without being partial to any Sect; I made more use of *Seneca* than *Aristotle*, of *Plutarch* than *Plato*, of *Juvenal* and *Horace*, than *Homer* and *Virgil*, and of *Montaigne* and *Charon*, more than

than all the before-mention'd. I have not had so much practice of the World, as effectually to discover the Cheats and Villanies that are committed in it, but I have nevertheless seen a great part of them, in Histories, Satyrs and Tragedies. Pedantry might have gained something upon my Behaviour and Carriage, during seven or eight Years that I staid in the Colleges, but I can assure my self, that it obtained no Advantage over my Spirit; Nature, God be prais'd, has been no Stepmother to me, and the reading of divers Authors has given me great Assistance, but that of the *Book of St. Antoine*, has furnish'd me with the best. After all, I hope it may not displease your Eminence, that being full of Zeal and good Affection for your Service, I employ my Thoughts to give you any agreeable Diversion; but my last Design is, for a contemplative State of Life, to which I have vow'd, and design'd all the rest of my Days, without encumbering my self with the active, only so far as your Eminence, to whom I have made the first Vow of Obedience may please to engage me.

It remains now to see, if I do not pass beyond the Bounds of my Capacity, by endeavouring to treat of things that seem to be beyond my Knowledge; to which I may answer, with that of *Seneca*, *Paucis ad bonum mentem opus est literis*, There is not much Learning requir'd to a good Understanding, I have not the Presumption to think I shall
obtain

obtain the Prize in this Course, I shall only make a small Effort, and when I am out of the right way, I shall expect some new Assistance or Instruction to pass farther. *Aratus*, that excellent Man, who did not understand much of Astronomy, yet made a good Book of the *Phænomena's*: *Celsus*, who was a mere Grammarian, compos'd a most useful Book in Physick: *Dioscorides* was a Soldier, *Macer* a Senator, and yet both have writ very exquisitely concerning Plants: *Hippodamus*, from a simple Architect and Mason, became a great Politician, and Founder of a Commonwealth, that is mention'd by *Aristotle*. I have always been of this Opinion, that whoever has natural Parts, and some Improvement from Study, may infer and deduce all sorts of Conclusions, from five or six good Principles, as *Pliny* says, That the ancient Painters made their best Pieces from the mixture only of four or five sorts of Colours; one may likewise add, that the Sciences seem to be link'd to one another, and to have such a Correspondence, that he who is possess'd of one, is likewise Master of all that stand in a Subaltern degree to it: Besides, the Age in which we live, seems much to favour this Design, since one may know and discover the greatest Secrets of Monarchies, the Intrigues of Courts, the Cabals of the Faction, the Pretences and Motives of particular Persons,

Quid

*Quid Rex in aurem Reginae dixerit,
Quid Juno fabulata sit cum Jove.* (Plaut.)

what the King whisper'd to the Queen, what *Juno* discours'd of with *Jupiter*; by the means of so many Relations, Memoirs, Discourses, Instructions, Libels, Manifesto's, Pasquinades, and such like secret Pieces that come abroad daily, which may more easily form and enliven our Minds and set us free from foolish Prejudice, than all the Actions that are usually practis'd in Courts of Princes, whose importance it is difficult to know, for want of being able to penetrate into their Causes and different Movements.

As for my own Method of treating this Subject, I shall do it with all the Precaution and Modesty imaginable; not minding the vulgar Notions, but such as the venerable *Cato* or *Curius* wou'd have fram'd: And if I knew in the least, that what I should say on this Subject, wou'd create any Abuse or Disorder, greater than what is this day practis'd among Princes, I wou'd throw these Papers into the Fire, and make an eternal Vow of Silence; for I wou'd not gain the Reputation of a subtle Politick Speculator, to lose that of an honest Man; which shall be the chief and only end I shall aim at in pursuing this Discourse.

C H A P.