

and therefore, in all common Situations, effectually supplies their Place.

But in free Countries, it is naturally weak, unless supported by the generous Principles of Religion, Honour, or public Spirit; for, as in most Cases, a full national Union will require, that the separate and partial Views of private Interest be in some Degree sacrificed to the general Welfare, so where Principle prevails not, the national Union must ever be thwarted or destroyed by selfish Views and separate Interests.

Another Circumstance must be remarked, by which, in free Countries, the national Union will often be accidentally checked, but not destroyed; I mean, by the Freedom of Opinion itself, urged into Act by the very Strength of generous and prevailing Principle.

This Distinction leads us to observe what may be deemed an Oversight, or Inaccuracy, of the celebrated Montesquieu: He hath often given it as his Opinion, that Factions are not only natural, but necessary, to free Governments; and this general Rule he gives without Restriction. Thus he speaks of Rome: *On n'entend parler dans les auteurs, que des divisions, qui perdirent Rome; mais on ne voit pas que ces divisions y étoient nécessaires, qu'elles y avoient toujours été, et qu'elles y devoient toujours être.*

How far this Proposition is true or false, the Distinction made above will lead us to discover. When the Spirit of Union is checked, and Divisions arise from the Variety and Freedom of Opinion only, or from the contested Rights and Privileges of the different Ranks or Orders of a State (not from the detached and selfish Views of Individuals) a Republic is then in its Strength, and gathers Warmth and Fire from these Collisions. Such was the State of ancient Rome, in the simpler and more disinterested Periods of that Republic.

But when Principle is weakened, and Manners lost, and Factions run high from selfish Ambition, Revenge, or Avarice, a Republic is then on the very Eve of its Destruction; and such was the State of Rome, in the Times of Marius and Sylla, Pompey and Caesar, Anthony and Augustus.

Therefore, before we can determine whether the Factions that divide a free Country be salutary or dangerous, it is necessary to know what is their Foundation, and their Object. If they arise from Freedom of Opinion, and aim at the public Welfare, they are salutary; if their Source be selfish Interest, of what Kind soever, they are then dangerous and destructive.

It was necessary to make these Distinctions before we could say with Precision how far, in our own Country, a national Spirit of Union is in Reality a national Good.

The Point therefore to be examined, is, "How far our national Spirit of Union is weakened or destroyed by selfish Views of Good, by separate Interests, and Defect of Principle?"

Now, if the Delineation already given of our ruling Manners and Principles be true, the Consequence must needs follow, that our national Spirit of Union must be shaken by them.

Neither shall we need to cast about for evident Facts that will confirm this Theory: Glaring Proofs will meet us at every Turn, and not only make good this Conclusion, but throw new Light on the Delineation already made.

The Restraints laid on the royal Prerogative at the Revolution, and the Accession of Liberty thus gained by the People, produced two Effects with Respect to Parliaments: One was, that instead of being occasionally, they were thenceforward annually, assembled; the other was, that whereas on any trifling Offence given they had been usually intimidated or dissolved, they now found themselves possessed of new Dignity and Power, their Consent being necessary for raising the annual Supplies.

No Body of Men, except in the simplest and most virtuous Times, ever found themselves possessed of Power, but many of them would attempt to turn it to their own private Advantage. Thus the Parliaments finding themselves of Weight, and finding at the same Time, that the Disposal of all lucrative Employments was vested in the Crown, soon bethought themselves, that in Exchange for their Concurrence in granting Supplies, and forwarding the Measures of Government, it was but equitable that the Crown should concur in vesting them, or their Dependants, with the lucrative Employments of State.

If this was done, the Wheels of Government ran smooth and quiet; but if any large Body of Claimants was dissatisfied, the political Upstart

• Grandeur de Rom. Lib. ix.

began, and public Measures were obstructed or overturned.

William III. found this to be the national Turn, and set himself, like a Politician, to oppose it: He therefore silenced all he could, by Places or Pensions; and hence the Origin of making of Parliaments.

But the Art, as yet, was but in its Infant State. The ruling Principles, which had brought about the Revolution, had not as yet lost their Force; and the first Essays of Art are always rude: Time only, and Variety of Trial and Experiment, can form them into perfect Systems.

In the mean Time, this new Principle of Self-Interest began to work deeper every Day in its Effects. As a Seat in Parliament was now found to be of considerable selfish Importance, the Contentions for Gain, which had begun in Town, spread itself by Degrees into the Country: Shirés and Boroughs, which in former Times had paid their Representatives for their Attendance in Parliament, were now the great Objects of Request, and political Struggle.

And as the Representatives had already found their Influence, and made their Demands on the Crown, so now the Constituents found their Influence, and made their Demands on the Representatives.

Thus the great Chain of political Self-Interest was at length formed; and extended from the lowest Cobler in a Borough to the King's first Minister.

But a Chain of Self-Interest is indeed no better than a Rope of Sand; there is no Cement nor Cohesion between the Parts: There is rather a mutual Antipathy and Repulsion; the Character of Self-Interest being in a peculiar Sense that of *terres atque rotundus*, wrapt up wholly in itself, and unconnected with others, unless for its own Sake. Here then we see even this Chain itself ready to fall in Pieces, and on any sudden Thwart or Concussion, break into an Infinity of Factions.

Besides this, the lucrative Employments of our Country not being near so numerous as the Claimants are, in every Degree of political Power and Expectation, the Spirit of selfish Faction arose of Course in its Strength, from unsatisfied Demands, and disappointed Avarice.

It hath been much debated, whether the Ministers or the People have contributed more to the Establishment of this System of Self-Interest and Faction. On Enquiry it would probably appear, that at different Periods the Pendulum hath swung at large on both Sides: It came down, in former Times, from the Minister to the Representative, from the Representative to the managing Alderman, from the Alderman to the Cowler; in later Times, the Impulse seems to have been chiefly in the contrary Direction: From the Cowler to the managing Alderman, from him to the Member, from the Member to the great Man who ruled the Borough, and thence to the Minister. Thus what was formerly in the Minister an Act of supposed Prudence, has of late grown into an Act of supposed Necessity. The Cowler by this Time had found his Strength; so the Pressure went upwards, till it came upon the Ministry.

To suppose that the Servants of the Crown never attempted Measures that were known to be bad; nor never made Parliaments, in order to carry their Attempts into Action, would be ridiculous; but on the other Hand it is equally true, what Machiavel somewhere delivers as a Maxim, "That an ill-disposed Citizen can do no great Harm, but in an ill-disposed City." Bribery in the Minister supposes a corrupt People.

And to venture a plain, though perhaps an unpopular, Truth on this Occasion, it must be owned, that a Minister is not therefore certainly corrupt in his Intention, because he makes a Parliament by indirect and corrupt Means. This Conduct, however indefensible, may arise from two opposite Causes: He may be afraid of the Virtue of a Nation, in it's opposing bad Measures; or he may not dare to rely on the Virtue of a Nation, in supporting him in good ones.

There was a noted Minister in this Kingdom, who, during his long Reign, seems to have put these two Maxims in Practice, as Occasion offered; for if it was his Maxim, "that every Man had his Price." It was his Maxim too, "that he was obliged to bribe the Members, not to vote against, but according to their Conscience."

However this is not meant as a Vindication of his Measures; on the contrary, they seem generally to have aimed no higher than to secure present Expedients, to oblige his Friends and Dependants, and provide for his own Safety. His Capacity, even when he meant well, seems to have been too

narrow to comprehend any great Plan of Legislation; and perhaps his Character might be drawn in these few Words, "That while he seemed to strengthen the Superstitions, he weakened the Foundation of our Constitution."

But however defective Ministers may have been in making the Public Welfare the main Object of their Views, we may be satisfied, by this Estimate of Things, from the Revolution to the present Times, that the Nation have at least marched *passibus æquis*; and though this Work is not intended either as a Defence or an Accusation of Ministers, yet for the Sake of Truth, it must be said, that the eternal Clamours of a selfish and a factious People against every Ministry that rises, puts one in Mind of those Carthaginian Armies, which being at once cowardly and insolent, ran away at Sight of an Enemy, and then crucified their General, because he did not gain the Victory.

To return therefore to our Subject (if indeed we have departed from it) evident it is, that the Want of Principle hath at length firmly established a System of political Self-Interest among us, which must at all Times break out into Factions, and prevent the great Effects which a national Spirit of Union would produce. Former Times, we pleasantly see, have been fatally infected with this selfish Spirit; present Times in this Respect are sated, and therefore we speak not of them: But if the ruling Manners, and present Want of Principle, in this Kingdom, be not checked in their Career, we must expect that future Times will be more selfish, and therefore more factious, than those former ones we have already described.

For Vanity, Luxury and Effeminacy (increased beyond all Belief within these 20 Years) as they are of a selfish, so are they of a craving and unsatisfied Nature: The present Rage of Pleasure and unmanly Dissipation hath created a Train of new Necessities, which in their Demands outstrip every possible Supply.

And if the great Principles of Religion, Honour and public Spirit, are weak or lost among us, what effectual Check can there be upon the Great to controul their unbounded and unwarranted Pursuit of lucrative Employments, for the Gratification of these unmanly Passions?

And whenever this happens, what can we expect as the Consequence, but a general Anarchy? What, but that disappointed Avarice will kindle Faction? That national Union must be thwarted by selfish Regards? That no public Measure, however salutary, can be carried into Act, if it clash with any foreseen private Interest?

Nay, is it not the Duty of every Well-wisher to his Country to consider, not only how soon this may be, but how far it is, our present Situation?

What other Effect can naturally arise from the Vanity, Dissipation, and Rapacity of a dissolute People? For in a Nation so circumstanced, it is natural to imagine, that next to Gaming and Riot, the chief Attention of the great World must be turned on the Business of Election-Jobbing; of securing Counties, controuling, bribing, or buying of Boroughs; in a Word, on the Possession of a great parliamentary Interest.

But what an Aggravation of this Evil would arise, should ever those of the highest Rank, though prohibited by Act of Parliament, insult the Laws; by interfering in Elections, by soliciting Votes, or procuring others to solicit them, by influencing Elections in an avowed Defiance of their Country, and even selling vacant Seats in Parliament to the best Bidder?

Would not this be a faithful Copy of degenerating and declining Rome? *Ea demum Romæ libertas est, non senatum, non magistratus, non leges, non mores majorum, non instituta patrum vereri.*

And what can we suppose would be the real Drift of this illegitimate Waste of Time, Honour, Wealth, and Labour? Might not the very Reason publicly assigned for it be this, "That they may strengthen themselves and Families, and thus gain a lasting Interest (as they call it) for their Dependants, Sons, and Posterity?" Now what would this imply but a supposed Right or Privilege of demanding lucrative Employments, as the chief Object of their View? And whence can this supposed Privilege of Demand derive its Force, but from a foreseen Power, and determined Purpose, of kindling Faction, and obstructing all public Measures, in Case of Disappointment and Disgrace?

We see then how the political System of Self-Interest is at length completed, and a Foundation laid in our Principles and Manners for endless Diffentions in the State. Thus Faction is established,

blished, not on Ambition, but on Avarice; on Covarice and Rapacity, for the End of Dissipation.

Need we point out particular Facts, in Confirmation of these Truths? Is not the Nation now labouring under this fatal Malady? Is not the deadly Bow-string already stretched, and the People gasping and expiring under the Tugs of opposed and contending Parties?

Distraham, laceratamque rempublicam—morum in manu sit, quam ut incolumis sit quarrimus.

The Author afterwards answers an Object that may be drawn from the present Circumstances of the French Nation, which he concludes as follows:

"Thus, in Contradiction to all known Example, France hath become powerful, while she seemed to lead the Way in Effeminacy; and while she hath allured her Neighbour Nations, by her Example, to drink largely of her Cerean and soned Cup of Manners, hath secured her Health by the secret Antidote of Principle.

Forced by this, the Character of the French Nation, tho' inconsistent, is respectable: They are found, or rather invented, the Art of uniting Extremes: They have Virtues and Vices, Strength and Weaknesses, seemingly incompatible.

They are effeminate, yet brave; insincere, yet honest; hospitable, not benevolent; vain, yet sensible; splendid, not generous; warlike, yet polite; plausible, not virtuous; mercantile, yet not mean; trifles serious, gay in Enterprize; Women a Toilet, Heroes in the Field; profligate in Habit, in Conduct decent; divided in Opinion, in Affection united; in Manners weak, but strong in Principle; contemptible in private Life, in Public formidable."

L O N D O N, October 15.

LETTERS from Lisbon by Monday's Mail give a further Confirmation of the Earthquake that was so violently felt at the Island of Fyall, St. George, Pico, Tercera and St. Michaels; it was felt at these five Western Islands at the same Time, and great Numbers of Inhabitants were buried in the Ruins.

The Manna Dogger, Captain Garrig Van Burthen about 100 Tons, and 9 Men, from Terdam to Bilbao, ran on the Goodwin Sands 7th Instant, and is bulged and lost, but the Captain and Crew got safe on Shore at Deal the Goods undermentioned are saved and stored under the King's Locks at that Port, viz. Bolts of Canvas, 10 Casks of Sugar, 4 Bundles of Whalebone, 11 Casks of Salmon, and 36 of Beans.

A new SCREEN is going to be Built at the Court of Common Pleas in Westminster to keep the Court WARM.

The Lyme Privateer of Weymouth, Captain Baillicul, of 10 Guns and 60 Men, overtook a Bay of Biscay, and only the Captain and 10 Men were saved by the Cumberland Privateer Guernsey.

We hear that the Winds have lately blown so Catholic, that a Protestant Fleet cannot enter a French Harbour.

By Letters from Gibraltar, we are informed that a Man of War of Admiral Osborn's Squadron had taken a French Privateer of 16 Guns, was on a Cruize in the Streights, and carried in there.

In the Disturbances about the Militia Northampton three Persons lost their Lives, others were terribly bruised by the Troop full Gallop among them; after which the King took to the Church-Yard for Security, the alighted, and Sword in Hand drove them wounding many of them.

Extract of a Letter from Nottingham
"The Militia Affairs occasions great Disturbances. Upon their last Meeting for Business they seized the worthy Sir George S. Hostage for the Return of the Lists; which he was obliged to make use of the most ingenious Arguments, and grant them their Liberty to regain his Liberty.

The Parishioners of Enfield, Edmontonham, Hadley, and South Mims, have to pay all such poor Persons as shall be employed in the Militia 18d. for each Day, be employed; and to hire Persons to serve in the Room of such Persons who do not choose themselves. If this Method was followed in the Kingdom, it might be a Means of raising a real useful Militia, as there would be