

"The examples of former ages do, beyond all comparison, more sensibly affect us, than those of our own times."

ONE of my former speculations touched upon the propensity of mankind to feel too strong an admiration for the objects of antiquity. I promised at that time, that the subject should be again introduced.

It is not improbable that the Roman and some other ancient characters were more deeply marked both with virtues and vices, than what the present age exhibits. Civilization wears off the sharp points of passions and prejudices that stimulate men in a more uncultivated state of society. A commercial spirit has obtained an ascendancy over the warlike disposition of ancient times. These reasons may perhaps solve the question, though they may not be the most philosophic the subject admits of.

The difference between the character of ancient and modern times, is greater in imagination than reality. Custom renders the objects, we every day behold, so familiar that we view them without astonishment. Our cotemporaries exhibit virtues without being noticed or praised; and commit vices, that excite little indignation or reproach.

The apothegms of ancient philosophers are celebrated for their wisdom. They are quoted on many occasions by persons, who are themselves capable of conceiving ideas of greater depth and propriety. We hear remarks in conversation that shew great sagacity, and soon forget them. But when an aphorism has the sanction of some splendid name of antiquity, it is supposed far enough to exceed any thing modern.

Many persons are captivated with ancient eloquence and poetry. It was more the custom in former times than at present to address the passions. This circumstance gives an ardor to some of their orations, which is not usual in modern speeches. Great orators can only be formed by great occasions. The convulsed state of ancient governments kept the turbulent feelings of the human mind always on the stretch. Their public speakers were invigorated with the subject, and interested in the event. After all, I think we have no occasion to look to antiquity for specimens of the most sublime and animated oratory.

It may seem paradoxical, but I believe it is very true, that a general prevalence of knowledge among a people smother the flame of eloquence. Where large numbers have an academical education, there will be a great proportion, who do not give any strong indications of genius.—The learned lumber which these men accumulate has no other way to find a market, but by assuming the names of taste and criticism. Inconsiderable talents are capable of spying out blemishes and finding fault. When certain rules of criticism are established, from which it is called unclassical to depart, they chill the natural warmth and boldness of the imagination. The fancy disdains controul, and when its wings are clipped by critical reviewers, it daunt not soar to those elevations it would aspire after, if unrestrained. As the imagination gives oratory its most lively powers of fascination, it is evident that the more the mind is fettered by established rules, the less scope it has to display those bold strokes of eloquence, which only warm and invigorate the heart, in proportion as they are sudden and unexpected.

But perhaps a much more probable reason than any I have offered, why we are so lavish of our admiration on ancient heroes and orators, results from the practice of studying the Latin and Greek languages. The students at an academy have not arrived at a maturity of age to form a comparison between the ancients and moderns, even if both had equal justice done them. But the greatest pains are taken to produce a veneration for the ancients; and such splendid examples are selected as will make strong and permanent impressions on a young, unguarded mind. The instructor will tell one, that he is obliged to hold out such allurements to encourage the scholars to overcome the difficulty of learning those languages. In addition to these causes of extravagant preference, the ambitious lad supposes he cannot shew his attainments so effectually as in celebrating the actions and names of those illustrious characters, which poets and historians have before celebrated.

It would have a good effect if the best speeches and writings of our countrymen were selected and used at schools and colleges as lessons both for reading and speaking. They would not suffer by a comparison with ancient specimens, either for propriety of sentiment or vigor of imagination. The best characters and most noble exploits which our own times and country can furnish, would, by these means, make forcible impressions on the rising generation. It would contribute to excite a national prejudice, without which, no government can exist in the highest degree of perfection.

FROM THE NEWPORT HERALD.

Translated from the PARIS GAZETTE, printed the year of our Lord, 2440.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

WASHINGTON, the capital of the Union, May, 2440.

THE soldier and the statesman, whose name dignifies this federal city, forms the corner stone to this confederated republic. At his country's call he sacrificed the innocent pleasures of Vermonian Mount for the toils and dangers of a perilous war.—Though avarice was a ruling passion, he modestly declined all rewards for his services—though religion was unfashionable amongst the great, he was exemplary in his morals; and in victory, he acknowledged God to be the giver—though power was fascinating, he with pathetic joy resigned his sword.—Summoned again from his peaceful retreat to complete the glorious revolution, he accepted, from duty only, the first post of government, which he discharged with integrity, unbiassed by adulations or power. At his demise he left a second legacy to his country—THE EXAMPLE OF A VIRTUOUS STATESMAN—a model for succeeding Presidents.

These States where liberty, good faith, and equality fled for refuge 800 years ago, are now covered with numerous well regulated cities, and highly cultivated towns. The Constitution then formed, was so perfect, that it hath undergone few other changes that what regards the settlement of the new territory, and the extension of manufactures and commerce.—Public virtue and justice hath done more here than what courage and power ever effected in the world: Without the expence of a fleet rotting in docks or idly parading, our commerce is secured and our flag honored: Without a standing army in time of peace, turning useful laborers from the source of industry, the vigilance of our small guards, and the good order of our militia forms a permanent security for our borders and our sea coast.

LONDON, July, 2440.

The obstinacy and ambition of George the III. which severed America from our nation, was but a prelude to a separation from the rest of our colonial establishments which hath since taken place; and England, like ancient Rome, finds herself reduced to the boundaries that nature hath prescribed.

The consequence has however produced beneficial effects; it hath curtailed the power and dissipated the glare of the crown.—It hath placed the character of Charles the I, in a just light;—no longer is the temple profaned by deprecatory prayers and lying eulogiums; instead of which the statue of Protector Cromwell is erected upon the executed convict, facing the Parliamentary house, because the great man it represents is the true author of our present excellent constitution. The swarm of pensioners who feasted on honey that they did not collect, are annihilated: A magnanimous and free policy pervades our commercial system, and the capital and our islands are increasing in wealth, enjoying all a share in the common bounties of God.

PARIS, July, 2440.

Twelve ships of six hundred tons arrived up to the capital and brought an abundant supply of every necessary article; by which means the inhabitants no longer eat fish at ten times its value; no longer reigns on the borders of the Seine, a devouring capricious and insolent luxury, but instead of it there is a luxury of industry, a luxury which creates and improves every thing that contributes to supply the necessary wants and conveniences to all.

Absolute sovereignty has been long abolished, the Chief retains the title of King, without the will and power of a despot—he executes the laws—proposes useful establishments—and as a father of his people his ear is open to hear, and his justice to redress their wrongs. The States-General are vested with all legislative powers, their arrests are founded on the public good, they decide by plurality of voices. Lettres de Cachet are abolished, the bastille razed to its ground, and on its ruin is erected the Temple of Clemency.

The citizen is no longer a cypher in the State, for the general happiness of the country is founded on the safety of each individual—he fears not men, but the laws, and the Monarch himself is subject to them; the King is responsible to the States-General for the execution of his duty, and they to the people—hence we see our Princes fearing God, and the censure of posterity; regarding a good conscience and a spotless administration as the highest degree of earthly felicity.

The citizens of the present day have clear and just ideas of natural, political, and civil rights; they no longer degrade themselves in holding their lives and their properties at the will and pleasure of their rulers; amusements no longer divert their attention from general concerns, nor power crush them into silence—but all Frenchmen are free.

ENGLISH PARAGRAPH.

THERE is a late account from Paris, which mentions Col. Glover's going to take possession of Saint Afize, the late princely residence of the

Duchess of Kingston, and which formerly belonged to the Duke of Orleans. A great many respectable gentlemen attended him to that very magnificent palace, which is about 25 miles from Paris, situated upon a terrace equal to Windsor, at the bottom of which runs the river Seine. The views from the house and terrace are embellished with the finest villages, gentlemen's seats, woods and vineyards, and an extent of prospect impossible to describe. Every room in the house is richly and completely furnished. It contains 140 beds fit for any nobleman to sleep in; and to every bed room a dressing room, and chamber for a servant. The whole number of beds is 250. A large billiard room, a large hall, richly ornamented with statues, and fountains of water, which play and form cascades during dinner. The glass throughout the house is of great value. There is a fine play-house, and an elegant chapel. This magnificent building would be fit for a Prince of 2 or 300,000l. a year, although the whole of the revenues of the estate are not above 2500l. per annum. It is finely wooded, with various cuts through the woods and the end of each terminating in a rich beautiful prospect. The people paid Col. Glover great honors upon his arrival, as did all the neighboring gentlemen, together with the Stewards, Masters of the chase, &c. About 40 young men attended him the next day in a shooting party, where there was the greatest plenty of pheasants, partridges, stags, deer, and fawns. They presented the Col. with the gun which the old Duke of Orleans used; and all allowed it had never had been used to better purpose in so short a time, as the Colonel missed only one shot out of twenty times.

MR FENNO,

The insertion of the following in your paper will be agreeable to the service of your readers—and it is presumed, will not offend others, as all have a pretence to goodness, since "seriousness is the native soil of every virtue."

On a late SACRAMENTAL OCCASION in the NORTH CHURCH.

The Measure in imitation of WATTS' "few happy matches"

FROM meaner themes my Muse ascend!  
An angel ask some notes to lend,  
To sing of Love Divine:  
The Heav'n's a brighter lustre shed,  
And glory beams around my head,  
Since God himself is mine.

The thunders of Mount Sinai, now  
No longer fright, its glowing brow,  
Nor witness to our guilt;  
The louder cries of Jesus' blood  
Have quell'd their rage—appeas'd our God—  
For this his blood was spilt.

To celebrate this dying love,  
And raise their hearts to joys above  
This low revolving sphere,  
Behold a noble band arrive,  
Who boldly dare in Christ believe—  
Who dare be Christians here.

Around their Father's board they croud,  
While joyful songs resound aloud;  
While ev'ry rapture's high;  
Blest prelude to that happy state,  
Where feasts and songs, and crowns await,  
In realms above the sky.

O! knew the worldling half this joy—  
Half these delights, which never cloy,  
How would his soul repine,  
And mourn the foolish choice he made,  
Of earthly pleasures—phantom shade,  
In preference to divine.

Awake each sweetly sounding string,  
In notes sublime salute your King,  
Let love inspire the strain,  
And when ye take your glorious flight,  
Up to your God, to dwell in light,  
O! may I join your train. CHRISTIAN.

THE NATIONAL MONITOR.—No. XIX.

"Curs'd be the verse how smooth soe'er it flow,"  
Where lies and scandal mark the patriot's foe.

SCANDAL is the most powerful agent in the cause of anarchy and confusion.—It is to be regretted that too many characters who are abandoned in principle and conduct, possess at the same time so competent an acquaintance with human nature, that they know where to assault it with the greatest advantage. It must be acknowledged that we are so constituted, that the most improbable conjectures arrest our attention, and make an impression upon our minds. Our passive natures are vulnerable to the slightest external influence; but when, under the guise of a compliment, the bold front of calumny comes forward with a confident tale of defamation against a competitor, it is almost universally the case, that a fatal credence is the result.—When the sons of disorder and mischief have so far effected their object—the public confidence in their benefactors may be shaken—those, whom the sober dictates of reason and reflection have led the people to honor and respect as their best patriots, become the objects of envy and jealousy. Their opinions are disregarded and their usefulness is destroyed.

The consequences may be more easily conceived, than described. The object of the worst of men, in their innuendoes and slanders against public characters, is never the public good: It is first to supplant them in the affections of the people, that the way may be open to supplant them in the places they hold. Sometimes it is true, that slanders are uttered by inferior motives: Disappointment, chagrin, malice, and envy are often contented with an humbler grade of mischief: And if they can effect the ruin of characters which throw their own into the shade, they rest satisfied. In either of these cases, the public interest is sacrificed. Men of probity, abilities and independent principles are discouraged in their laudable exertions to serve their country. "The post of honor becomes a private station." The people bewildered by blind and wicked confessions, are plunged into confusion and anarchy; till torn by faction and tyrannized over by demagogues, they find their detestable resort is in the arms of a despot.

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