

Major John Rogers

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[WHOLE No. 116.]

## DISCOURSES ON DAVILA.

No. VI.

Such bribes the rapid Greek o'er Asia hurl'd;  
For such, the steady Romans took the world.

IN a city or a village, little employments and trifling distinctions are contended for with equal eagerness, as honors and offices in commonwealths and kingdoms.

What is it that bewitches mankind to marks and signs? A ribbon? A garter? A star? A golden key? A Marshal's staff? Or a white hickory stick? Though there is in such frivolities as these neither profit nor pleasure, nor any thing amiable, estimable or respectable; yet experience teaches us, in every country of the world, they attract the attention of mankind more than parts or learning, virtue or religion. They are therefore sought with ardor, very often, by men possessed in the most eminent degree, of all the more solid advantages of birth and fortune, merit and services, with the best faculties of the head, and the most engaging recommendations of the heart.

Fame has been divided into three species: glory, which attends the great actions of lawgivers and heroes, and the management of the great commands and first offices of State: reputation, which is cherished by every gentleman and tradesmen. But even the division is incomplete, because the desire and the object of it, though it may be considered in various lights and under different modifications, is not confined to gentlemen nor merchants but is common to every human being. There are no men, who are not ambitious of distinguishing themselves, and growing considerable among those, with whom they converse. This ambition is natural to the human soul: and as when it receives a happy turn, it is the source of private felicity and public prosperity; and when it errs, produces private uneasiness, and public calamities, it is the business and duty of private prudence, of private and public education, and of natural policy, to direct it to right objects. For this purpose it should be considered, that to every man who is capable of a worthy conduct, the pleasure from the approbation of worthy men is exquisite and inexpressible.

It is curious to consider the final causes of things, when the physical are wholly unknown. The intellectual and moral qualities, are most within our power, and undoubtedly the most essential to our happiness. The personal qualities of health, strength, and agility, are next in importance. Yet, the qualities of fortune, such as birth, riches, and honors, though a man has less reason to esteem himself for these, than for those of his mind or body, are, every where acknowledged to glitter with the brightest lustre, in the eyes of the world.

As virtue is the only rational source, and eternal foundation of honor, the wisdom of nations, in the titles they have established as the marks of order and subordination, has generally given an intimation, not of personal qualities, nor of the qualities of fortune; but of some particular virtues, more especially becoming men, in the high stations they possess. Reverence is attributed to the Clergy—veneration to Magistrates—honor to Senators—serenity, clemency, or mildness of disposition to Princes. The sovereign authority and supreme executive, have commonly titles that designate power as well as virtue—as Majesty to Kings—magnificent, most honored, and sovereign Lords, to the government of Geneva—noble mightiness to the States of Friesland—noble and mighty Lords to the States of Guelderland—noble great and venerable Lords to the regency of Leyden—noble and grand Mightinesses to the States of Holland—noble great and venerable Lords, the regency of Amsterdam—noble mightinesses, the States of Utrecht—and high mightinesses the States-General.

A death bed, it is said, shews the emptiness of titles. That may be.—But does it not equally shew the utility of riches, power, liberty and all earthly things? The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces, the solemn temples, the great globe itself, appear the baseless fabric of a vision, and life itself a tale, told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. Shall it be inferred from this, that fame, liberty, property and life, shall be always despised and neglected? Shall laws and government, which regulate sub-lunary things be neglected, because they appear baubles at the hour of death?

The wisdom and virtue of all nations have endeavored to regulate the passion for respect and distinction, and to reduce it to some order in society, by titles marking the gradations of magis-

tracy, to prevent as far as human power and policy can prevent, collisions among the passions of many pursuing the same objects, and the rivalries, animosities, envy, jealousy and vengeance, which always result from them.

Has there ever been a nation, who understood the human heart, better than the Romans? Or made a better use of the passion for consideration, congratulation and distinction? They considered, that as reason is the guide of life, the senses, the imagination and the affections are the springs of activity. Reason holds the helm, but passions are the gales: and as the directest road to these is through the senses, the language of signs was employed by Roman wisdom to excite the emulation and active virtue of the citizens. Distinctions of conditions as well as of ages, were made by difference of cloathing. The Laticlave, or large flowing Robe, studded with broad spots of purple, the ancient distinction of their Kings, was, after the establishment of the consulate, worn by the Senators, through the whole period of the republic and the Empire. The Tribunes of the people, were, after their institution, admitted to wear the same venerable signal of sanctity and authority. The angusticlave, or the smaller robe, with narrower studs of purple, was the distinguishing habit of Roman Knights. The golden ring was also peculiar to Senators and Knights, and was not permitted to be worn by any other citizens. The prætext, or long white robe reaching down to the ancles, bordered with purple, which was worn by the principal magistrates, such as Consuls, Prætors, Censors and sometimes on solemn festivals, by Senators. The chairs of ivory; the Lictors; the rods; the axes; the crowns of gold; of ivory; of flours; of herbs; of laurel branches; and of oak-leaves; the civil and the mural crowns; their ovations; and their triumphs; every thing in religion, government and common life among the Romans was parade, representation and ceremony. Every thing was addressed to the emulation of the citizens, and every thing was calculated to attract the attention, to allure the consideration and excite the congratulations of the people; to attach their hearts to individual citizens according to their merit: and to their lawgivers, magistrates and judges, according to their ranks, stations and importance, in the State. And this was in the true spirit of republics, in which form of government there is no other consistent method of preserving order, or procuring submission to the laws. To such means as these, or to force, and a standing army, recourse must be had, for the guardianship of laws, and the protection of the people. It is universally true, that in all the republics now remaining in Europe, there is, as there ever has been a more constant and anxious attention to such forms and marks of distinctions, than there is in the monarchies.

The policy of Rome was exhibited in its highest perfection, in the triumph of Paulus Emilius over Perseus. It was a striking exemplification of congratulation and sympathy, contrasted with each other. Congratulation with the conqueror: sympathy with the captive: both suddenly changed into sympathy with the conqueror. The description of this triumph, is written with a pomp of language correspondent to its dazzling magnificence. The representation of the King, and his children must excite the pity of every reader, who is not animated with the ferocious sentiments of Roman insolence and pride. Never was there a more moving lesson of the melancholy lot of humanity, than the contrasted fortunes of the Macedonian and the Roman. The one divested of his crown and throne, led in chains with his children, before the chariot of the other, blazing in gold and purple, to the capitol. This instructive lesson is given us by the victor himself in a speech to the people. "My triumph, Romans, as if it had been in derision of all human felicity, has been interposed between the funerals of my children, and both have been exhibited, as spectacles, before you. Perseus, who, himself a captive, saw his children led with him in captivity, now enjoys them in safety. I, who triumphed over him, having ascended the capitol, from the funeral chariot of one of my sons, descended from that capitol, to see another expire. In the house of Paulus none remains but himself. But your felicity, Romans, and the prosperous fortune of the public, is a consolation to me under this destruction of my family."

It is easy to see how such a scene must operate on the hearts of a nation: how it must affect the passion for distinction: and how it must excite the ardor and virtuous emulation of the citizens.

\* Liv. 46. 39.

## PHYSIOGNOMATICAL ANECDOTE.

I REQUIRE nothing of thee, said a father to his innocent son, when bidding him farewell, but that thou shouldst bring me back this thy countenance.

An amiable and innocent young lady, who had been chiefly educated in the country, saw her face in the glass, as she passed it with a candle in her hand, returning from evening prayer, and having just laid down her bible. Her eyes were cast on the ground with inexpressible modesty, at the sight of her own image. She passed the winter in town, surrounded by adorers, hurried away by dissipation, and plunged in trifling amusements; she forgot her bible, and her devotion.—In the spring she returned again to the country, her chamber, and the table on which her bible lay. Again she had the candle in her hand, and again saw herself in the glass. She turned pale, put down the candle, retreated to her sofa, and fell on her knees.—"Oh God! I no longer know my face. How am I degraded! My follies and vanities are all written in my countenance. Wherefore have they been neglected, illegible, till this instant? Oh come and expel, come and utterly efface them, mild tranquillity, sweet devotion, and ye gentle cares of benevolent love!"

## CONGRESS.

On the 7th instant in the House of Representatives, when the bill for finally adjusting the claims of Baron Steuben was before the House, several Members having previously spoken to a motion for striking out the first clause of the bill, Mr. FANEU made the following reply.

S. I. R.

I AM against the motion for striking out the 2706 dollars, and inserting 1500, because it is incompatible with the preceding clauses of the bill, which states the sum (2706) as justly due to the Baron according to the report of the Secretary of the Treasury; and because it is derogatory to the honor and veracity of the members of the committee of Congress, on whose testimony the Baron's claim is founded.

Some gentlemen, sir, lay great stress on the want of proof, respecting what is called the contract with Baron Steuben; but, sir, I think we have had all the proof the nature of the case will admit of, and for my part I should want no other than Mr. Lee's letter to the Baron.

Sir, this illustrious veteran offered his services on such generous terms, and served us so essentially, that I shall blush for Congress should the ideas of some gentlemen now prevail. It is unworthy of Congress, after having so long enjoyed the benefit of those services, now to be thus coldly scrutinizing the terms on which he offered them, and speaking of them as of little importance. I weigh them not, sir, with the dollars proposed: they are far beyond any sum which we can give; and if the worthy member from North-Carolina (Mr. Bloodworth) who moved the motion, wishes to abandon the principles of the bill, and instead of paying to the Baron the debt there stated as due to him, means to give him a sum by way of compensation for his services, and has economy in view, I would advise him to withdraw his motion; for if we depart from the principles of the bill, they who value this great man's services as I do, will vote to give him much more than the bill proposes. If I should be at liberty to propose a compensation for the sacrifices he made by coming to America and serving in her war, and to recompense him for his great services, I am sure I shall propose a much larger sum than has yet been talked of.

Sir, had the Baron stipulated to receive but two percent. on the articles under his direction, or I may say on what he saved, he would be entitled to much more than is now proposed to be given him. The economy he introduced into the army was the occasion of an immense saving. Who can say now what was saved in arms, accoutrements and ammunition, and by the reduction of baggage and forage? I have been told that officers, who had loaded a waggon with their baggage, were soon reduced to a single pack horse.

Some gentlemen have made light of the discipline which has been attributed to the Baron, and told us of the affairs of Bunker's Hill, Trenton, Princeton, and Germantown. It was true these were brilliant actions; but the member from South-Carolina (Mr. Smith) and the member from Delaware, had replied fully to this observation. They well observed that, brilliant as those actions were, valour without discipline is often vain, and may lead only to destruction;—that the commander in chief did wonders without the Baron, and (they might have added) he was wonderful in resources, and "in himself an host"; but we should not now consider what the commander in chief did before he had the Baron's assistance, but what he did with his assistance, and what use he made of his services; and to this, as far as relates to the Baron, he has repeatedly and generously borne ample testimony.

Sir, the Baron, as Adjutant-General and Director General, was peculiarly adapted to the purpose of the American army. Having served 22 years in the Prussian army, which Americans had been taught to believe was the best disciplined in the world, his discipline was more readily embraced, and more confidence reposed in it, than would have been the case had almost any other man, of any other nation, undertaken that great task. The praise now given to the Baron is no disparagement, therefore, to other officers. The Commander in Chief stood in need of an adjutant like him, from the peculiar situation of our army, and has acknowledged his services; therefore it does not become us to speak of them as unimportant.

Sir, the importance of those services would have been displayed to your view by many officers now in this house, had they not, from that delicacy peculiar to American officers, who having laid by the name and dress of soldiers and mixed with their fellow-citizens in civil life, refrained from appearing to be more knowing in military matters than the other members of this house: I say, were it not for this delicacy, we should have had a full display of the Baron's services. One officer, indeed (Col. Bland) from the honest warmth of his heart, has not refrained from saying a few words in support of the Baron's claim. But, sir, I have asked officers, and some of them now in this house, whether I had misunderstood or over-rated the Baron's claim? and I have been constantly told that I did not. Though I had not the honor of being in the army, I was well informed by my correspondents