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[Whole No. 207.]

Discourses on Davila.—No. 31.

(CONCLUDED.)

NARROW and illiberal sentiments are not peculiar to the rich or the poor. If the vulgar have found a Machiavel to give countenance to their malignity, by his contracted and illiberal exclamations against illustrious families, as the curse of heaven: the rich and the noble have not unfrequently produced fordid instances of individuals among themselves, who have adopted and propagated an opinion that God hates the poor, and that poverty and misery on earth are inflicted by Providence in its wrath and displeasure. This noble philosophy is surely as shallow and as execrable as the other Plebeian philosophy of Machiavel; but it is countenanced by at least as many of the phenomena of the world. Let both be discarded as the reproach of human understanding, and a disgrace to human nature. Let the rich and the poor unite in the bands of mutual affection, be mutually sensible of each others ignorance, weakness and error, and unite in concerting measures for their mutual defence, against each other's views and follies, by supporting an impartial Mediator.

That ingenious Genevan, to whom the English nation is indebted for a more intelligible explanation of their own constitution than any that has been ever published by their own Acherly or Bacon, Bolingbroke or Blackstone, has quoted this passage of Machiavel, and applied it, like him, to the dishonour of republican governments. De Lolme, in his constitution of England, Book 2. c. 1. says—"I cannot avoid transcribing a part of the speech which a citizen of Florence addressed once to the Senate: the reader will find in it a kind of abridged story of all republics." He then quotes the passage before cited from Machiavel.

Why should so grave an accusation be brought against republics? If it were well founded, it would be a very serious argument against such forms of government: but it is not. The dissensions of families are not the effect of republican government, but of human nature. They are the unavoidable consequence of that emulation, which God and nature have implanted in the human heart, for the wisest and best purposes, and which the public good, instead of cooling or extinguishing, requires to be directed to honour and virtue, and then nourished, cherished, and cultivated. If such contentions appeared only in republican governments, there would be some color for charging them as a reproach to these forms: but they appear as frequent and as violent in despotisms and monarchies, as they do in commonwealths. In all the despotisms of Asia and Africa, in all the monarchies of Europe, there are constant successions of emulation and rivalry, and consequently of contests and dissensions among families. Despotism, which crushes and decapitates, sometimes interrupts their progress, and prevents some of their tragical effects. Monarchies, with their spies, lettres de cachet, dungeons and inquisitions, may do almost as well. But the balance of a free government is more effectual than either, without any of their injustice, caprice or cruelty. The foregoing examples from the History of France, and a thousand others equally striking which might be added, show that Bourbons and Montmorencis, Guises and Colignis, were as fatal families in that kingdom as the Buondelmenti and Huberti, the Donati and Cerchi, the Rici and Abbizzi, or Medici at Florence.

Instead of throwing false imputations on republican governments; instead of exciting or fomenting a vulgar malignity against the most respectable men and families—let us draw the proper inferences from history and experience—let us lay it down for a certain fact, first, that emulation between individuals, and rivalries among families, never can be prevented: second, let us adopt it as a certain principle that they ought not to be prevented, but directed to virtue, and then stimulated and encouraged by generous applause and honorable rewards. And from these premises let the conclusion be, as it ought to be, that an effectual controul be provided in the constitution, to check their excesses and balance their weights. If this conclusion is not drawn, another will follow of itself—the people will be the dupes, and the leaders will worry each other and the people too, till both are weary and ashamed, and from feeling, not from reasoning, set up a master and a despot for a Protector. What kind of a Protector he will be, may be learned hereafter from Stephen Boetius.

FOR THE GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES.

(CONCLUDED.)

CONGRESS has no armies—and if it had, our people might mock at force if that only was used to govern them. It must frame its laws on such principles as an enlightened public will approve: let the public then form its opinions calmly—lay facts and arguments before it. Those who do not chuse to be calm may give vent to their passions in the Gazettes; a free press is a sluice-way which lets off the torrent: But do not blind the public with authority; do not stop the useful progress of enquiry by telling it it is too late, the trial is over, the point is adjudged by the State legislature; is there not danger that this decision of a State will make right opinions too hasty and wrong ones too obstinate, so as to render the former despicable and the latter pernicious?

Every man may judge for himself whether State resolutions will crowd narrow local prejudices into Congress, or whether they will secure us an administration upon liberal national principles.

The public will judge too whether a State government is the most impartial judge of the conduct of Congress. It is best that a cause should not be carried for trial before a tribunal which is suspected to have an interest in giving judgment against the defendant.

I am proud of my country, because I know that the government of it is a free one, and I think it is well administered, but these blessings are lost to him whose mind is poisoned by suspicion. To vapourish women and hypochondriac men, even health is no blessing. If State resolutions and instructions convince him that he is governed by knaves in Congress who have bound liberty fast for slaughter, he is more to be pitied than a satisfied slave. He will even make a bad defender of that liberty which, though he values, he deems lost.

It cannot be denied that State resolutions may be used to pull down a government. When the national administration shall have become so corrupt and wicked as to be intolerable, this instrument of destruction may be employed with success. Perhaps some men in the State legislatures are of opinion that the proper time for beginning this work of destruction is already arrived.

AN ENQUIRER.

FOR THE GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES.

SONNET VI. TO EGWINA.

GO verse, soft-whispering, to EGWINA say—
'Tis not that rich complexion's lucent white,
Tinged with the Rose's fragrance-blushing light,
O'er all her lovely features loves to stray;
Nor yet, that Nature, with a fond display,
Hath spread her auburn tresses on the fight,
And fram'd her lips the seal of sweet delight,
And op'd her eyes resplendent on the day;
Tell her 'tis not, that o'er each motion, Grace
Sheds a soft lustre, as she deigns to move,
Giving new beauties to the ambient place;
That every tho't, and all my soul, is love.
But, that her mind, its radiant worth to prove,
Imprints the soul of Beauty on her Face. E L L A.

PHILADELPHIA, April 20.

Extract from the Minutes of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 1791.

THE Address to the National Assembly of France, read April 6th inst. was read the second time, and adopted unanimously, viz.

SIR,

THE Representatives of the People of Pennsylvania, have unanimously concurred in the desire of expressing to the National Assembly of France, their sympathetic feelings on the subject of their virtuous exertions in the cause of freedom: They sincerely offer their congratulations on the success that has attended them, which they have viewed, in its progress with the most pleasing and anxious sensations.

A nation which has been actuated by such magnanimous policy, which, with a noble enthusiasm, so generously interposed its power, so profusely poured forth its treasures, and mingled its blood with ours, in defence of the liberties of America, is entitled to a grateful return of our regard, and to the warmest wishes that sensibility or attachment can express.

It was under the operation of these feelings, that we have always lamented that a brave and gallant people, who have become the voluntary companions of our freedom, should not themselves be free; that after having assisted in erecting for us a temple of liberty, they should return to the house of bondage. Fortunately the scene is changed, and your present situation awakens the most amiable sympathies of the human heart.

We now view, with grateful exultation, your glorious triumph of reason over prejudice—of liberty and law, over slavery and despotism. You have nobly broke the fetters that bound you to your former government, and have, in the view of astonished Europe, undertaken a revolution, founded on that pure and elemen-

tary principle, that the people are the source of power, that in them it is naturally inherent, and from them can alone be derived.

The truth of this hallowed maxim, the pride and boast of our American constitutions, could not remain undiscovered, and unattended to, amidst the blaze of patriotism and philosophy which has long enlightened France.

We rejoice that your government, though differently organized, is established on such congenial principles, as to cement by stronger, because more kindred ties, the friendship that now connects us.

As an evidence of this disposition, we can assure you that the suffrages and sentiments of our citizens are all united in the warmest predilections for your cause, and your country. We anticipate the happiness and glory that will await you, when those various resources by which you are surrounded, and which nature has so profusely lavished on you, shall be put into energetic motion by the operation of a free government.

We fondly hope that no untoward or inauspicious circumstance may intervene to interrupt your glorious career, until you have effectually restored to the blessings of equal liberty, civil and religious, so many millions of our fellow-men; until you have abolished the odious and arrogant distinctions betwixt man and man—until you have implanted in the minds of the people, a generous and passionate enthusiasm for their country, instead of a confined, though romantic, attachment to the person of a King.

But whilst viewing with awe and admiration the principles you have established, and which we ardently wish may defy the efforts of time, tyranny and treachery to overthrow, we cannot but rejoice that you have been exposed in your progress to few of those convulsive struggles, that so strongly marked the various eras of the American Revolution.

If our solicitude for your success could be increased from the operation of extraneous motives, it would receive considerable force from the animating and philanthropic reflection, that other nations of Europe, from the influence of your example, will learn to value and vindicate the rights of man; and that such political institutions will be more generally established, as by experience are found to contain principles favorable to the happiness of our species, and suited to the dignity of our nature.

To the President of the National Assembly of France.

From the NEW-HAVEN GAZETTE.

I HAVE frequently observed, that those persons who are troubled with weak or defective eyes, endeavour to remedy the evil by using spectacles with coloured glasses. The prevalence of this practice is an indication of the inattention of man to subjects of the utmost importance; and will be some apology for the following remarks.

Every person who has removed suddenly from a very dark situation to a strong light; or the contrary, is conscious of having experienced a very painful sensation. The sudden dilation or contraction of the pupil of the eye, and the violent exertion which is required in the surrounding muscles, to enable us to perceive objects with distinctness, when the quantity of light has been much increased or diminished, strain and injure the *visive* faculty. Coloured spectacles operate in a similar manner; and consequently every time we put them on, or take them off, the eye suffers. Thus the weakness we designed to remove is perpetuated; and after having accustomed ourselves to the use of them for some time, the eye becomes so tender, that we are never after able to relinquish with facility the assistance they afford us.

If the light proves troublesome to the eye, nature has pointed out the manner in which the remedy should be applied. In a very strong light we always project our eyebrows to preserve our eyes. This should teach us that the proper mode of excluding all the superfluous rays of light, is to suspend a shade from our foreheads.—For this only diminishes the quantity of light, without altering its natural qualities by any interposing medium.

There are two methods by which we can determine, whether a particular pair of spectacles is injurious to the eye:—1. If it is evident that that organ has been strained or fatigued, we may conclude that the convexity or concavity of the glasses we have used, was not adapted to the situation of our eyes: This inconvenience is not confined to the colour, and can only be remedied by changing the form of the glass.—2. If after having used spectacles for some time, we should find upon removing them, that every surrounding object is tinged in a disagreeable manner, we may conclude that the eye has been forced into an unnatural state, and has consequently suffered: coloured glasses produce this effect.

Besides, green is not transparent—And if, by indulging ourselves in the practice of wearing coloured spectacles, we should become so much habituated to their use, as to be unable to forego their assistance without the greatest inconvenience; in the decline of life, when the decreasing convexity of the humours of the eye, renders it necessary that we should employ convex glasses, coloured ones will by no means answer the purpose for which they are designed.—The eyes of elderly persons are defective on two accounts; first, because the rays of light do not converge