

In general suspect those who boast, or affect to have any one virtue above all others, for they are commonly impostors.

CHESTERFIELD.

AT a time when party distinctions have been artfully introduced, and wrought to an extreme height, and the acrimony of party spirit displays itself on too many occasions: When jealousy and suspicion universally pervade the community: However interesting the subject; however necessary the duty, it will be a difficult task to arrest even for a moment the public attention by an impartial appeal to the understanding, and a dispassionate enquiry into the interests of our country. When the mind is heated it is not in a state to listen to the dictates of reason. In the paroxysms of such a moment violence is regarded as patriotism, patience and moderation as pusillanimity—the councils of the first, esteemed the oracles of wisdom; the advice of the last condemned as the dictates of cowardice—the rashness of a Varro, preferred to the caution of a Fabius. But as infinite efforts have been made to mislead and inflame the public mind: And as very great irritation has been actually produced thereby; however unsuccessful the attempt, it is time to unfold facts, and exhibit the true interests of Virginia to a generous people, who only wish to know their duty to perform it; and to understand their happiness to pursue it.

Men devoted to the laborious and honorable occupations of agriculture, at a distance from the seat of information, without the means of enquiring, or the leisure necessary to make deep researches and to investigate complex principles and obscure facts—however virtuous, (and in all nations they are to be regarded as the most virtuous part of the society) are too liable from these circumstances to be imposed on and misled by the artifices of the wicked and the ambitious. In all communities such men exist.—The pure republics have produced them. It cannot be expected therefore that our country should be wholly exempt from them. Indeed the history of the ancient democracies is the history of false patriots, except in a few luminous instances, who pretending to be friends to liberty, have kept their countries in perpetual foreign broils, or domestic agitations and convulsions to serve their avarice or ambition, and who have never failed to render themselves the tyrants of the people whenever an opportunity occurred. It is by bold censures of others, and by boasting of superior virtue, that such men open their way to power, by lulling the public suspicion as to themselves, and directing it to characters, whose generous minds feeling no sentiment which honor would disclaim, act, and speak with frankness and independence, worthy of republicans, conscious of their freedom and of their integrity. But to enable them to execute their plans, they must first discredit such men, who would otherwise prove an impregnable barrier against their designs. Look into the annals of mankind, particularly the Roman commonwealth, whose history contains the history of the old civilized world, does not every page furnish proofs of this truth. Does not every page exhibit the efforts of ambition to obtain power at the expense of every moral principle? Indeed Caesar's maxim is the maxim of all such men, *nam si violandum est jus regnandi gratia violandum est*, with such a principle in his heart, this celebrated usurper began with acting the friend to liberty, and assiduously courting the Roman people, till by their means he rendered himself their tyrant.

We must expect in our country as it happened in other nations, that ambition will assume every shape, even *propane religion and patriotism* to gratify his cupidity for power: If we mean not to be deceived, we must distrust the professions of men and look to their actions; try their professions by their conduct, and you will not unfrequently find those who make most noise about *danger of aristocracy, equality and liberty*, pompous in their dress and equipage, luxurious in their tables, fastidious in their deportment, and tyrants in every circumstance in which the laws have clothed them with "a little brief authority;" it is wise to distrust men who act contrary to their declared principles. They ought to be regarded as impostors endeavoring to conceal their real character, under a pompous pretension to virtues, which they never felt as they never practice. Avarice, ambition, envy, (the creature

* How often and how justly has our illustrious President been compared to this favour of Rome.

of ambition) or all combined will generally be found the true motives of their conduct.

It is not to be wondered at that men actuated by such principles should continually endeavor to destroy the respect due to those who neither assuming all virtue to themselves nor denying it to others, modestly practise those rules of liberty, equality and justice, which they owe to their fellow-citizens, and to the society of which they are members. If we were to regard the actions of men as the only just clue to their principles, we should esteem these the true; those the pretended friends of that precious liberty and equality, which ought to be and till of late was the possession of every citizen of our country. But now a new kind of arbitrary government is introduced amongst us, under which, freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and freedom of enquiry are proscribed. In some places societies styling themselves democratic without emanating from the choice of the people, or deriving any authority from that only pure fountain of power, have erected themselves into bodies corporate, acting as injudicial tribunals over the actions and opinions of men and nations; and in many instances usurping the station assigned to the representatives of their country constitutionally chosen.—In other places individuals have the effrontery to assume these high prerogatives, they undertake to dictate opinions to the community; and to measure out fame and infamy to their fellow-citizens.

They have the audacity to impute to men thoughts which their minds never felt—opinions which their lips never uttered, and designs which their souls abhor; and that by the magic force of a few imported words, inapplicable to the situation of our country, and the etymology and meaning of which, frequently those who use them, do not understand and cannot define. No sooner have the shackles of religious tyranny been broken, than these shameless usurpers of the rights of society seem determined to erect themselves into a new order of priesthood to tyrannize over the political opinions of their fellow-citizens. Let us for a moment enquire *what is our government?* is it not founded on this sound republican principle, that the people are able and have a right to govern themselves, either by themselves or by their representatives freely chosen. Has not every member of the Society equal rights and privileges? Has not therefore every citizen a right to think for himself, and to deliver his opinion without controul, on whatever involves the interests of his country, without being subject to these new and till now unheard of pains and penalties by which our more than papal tyrants endeavour to shackle our liberties. Who authorized them to call a fellow-citizen an aristocrat because he differed in opinion from them? Has he not a right to do so? Who authorized them to assume the title of friends to their country, and to the rights of men in exclusion of the rest of their fellow-citizens? Does the social compact give them greater privileges, or recognize in them a superior order? It does not—or has Heaven stamped them with its peculiar mark of favor, sent them as its inspired political Apostles; and clothed them with the insignia of an authority, before which every knee must bend, and to which every voice must pay adoration? From the intolerance of their principles, and the want of charity in their conduct, they cannot be regarded as the agents of a beneficent deity. Yet they could not act with a more dictatorial presumption, if they were conscious of being an acknowledged superior order in the society, and actually derived supernatural powers from the God of nature. But it is impossible, for their pretences, their affected zeal, their professions of patriotism, and illiberal censures of men, who have the reality and not the semblance of the virtues they boast of; who modestly act what they vociferously pretend to, long to veil their real character and designs from the community. They will soon be taught that a free people will not brook arrogance and dictation from any quarter or under any shape whatever. That their fellow-citizens are too enlightened, know too well the dignity and the rights of free men, to be duped by such shallow artifices, fitted only for times of ignorance; but can never impose on a people who understand and are possessed of the blessing of liberty. But if we may define an aristocrat to be proud, vain, imperious, opinionated, extravagant, idle, devoted to pleasure, and to luxury, or to use Sallust's emphatic expression, *sui profusus alieni appetens*, we shall generally find that those who are most ready to call others by the name, will answer the description best.

But what is aristocracy? As understood in the European world at this time, it never existed nor can exist in this country. There it is considered a body of men possessing a political rank, with peculiar powers and privileges, derived either from the express or tacit consent of the society, sometimes for life, sometimes in perpetuity def-

derable from father to son—no such order ever existed in America, unless the citizens of our Commonwealth may be regarded as such.† If aristocracy in this meaning does not exist, let those who so frequently use the terms *aristocrat and democrat*, define them. For as Mr. Locke very justly observes, nothing is so necessary to fair discussion as a definition of the terms we use. Do they mean by the term *aristocrat*, a rich man, contra distinguished from a poor man? If by the term *aristocrat*, they mean the rich, and by the term *democrat*, the poor; by vivifying the first and exalting the last, do they mean to censure industry, by which wealth is acquired, and commend idleness, which is the cause of poverty, and the fruitful source of every vice?

If they make it a crime to be rich, men will cease to make any efforts to better their condition, to provide for the education and comforts of their families, and add to their own wealth, as the riches of their country by an honest industry; and from a civilized society, we shall soon become a horde of Savages.—To this deplorable condition would their system gradually reduce us. But it cannot be expected, that such haughty dictators would wait the slow operation of time. They may attempt to reduce all property at once to a level, abolition of debts, agrarian laws and emancipation of slaves may be proposed among their first *coups de main*. For if by the term *democrat*, they mean the poor, who so poor as our slaves, who therefore so fit to participate in the spoils of the rich, and to direct the affairs of the nation?

But it may be said by these intolerant priests, that they have not any such intentions. If they have not, let them explain their views in plain and intelligible terms, which every man can understand—perhaps they only mean to make a noise till they wriggle themselves into lucrative offices? They wish perhaps to puff themselves into consequence, for the silly gratifications of vanity. They will pardon us if we should misapprehend their intentions, until they shall condescend to address us in a language which belongs to the vocabulary of our laws, and not in a foreign idiom unknown to our citizens. It is unbecoming a republican, and insulting a free people, thus to attempt to delude them by tricks that would disgrace the most common adept in the talismanic art. If they mean to denigrate by the word *aristocrat*, a man who wishes to introduce monarchy and privileged orders among us; let them point out the person and bring proofs of the accusation. Attempts of such a kind, are treason against our government, and such charges are of too serious a nature to be lightly made. It is the boast of our government, that every citizen shall have a fair trial, shall know his accusation, be confronted by his accuser, and shall be entitled to evidence in his behalf, such accusations then violate the pillars on which our constitution rests. Yet those who make them, call themselves patriots, friends to liberty, friends to equality, while in imitation of other despots they deny to their equals, liberty of thought, and by making their own changeable and uncertain will the criteria of the virtue of their fellow-citizens, arrogate a superiority as unauthorized by their own doctrines, as violative of every principle of our constitution, and inconsistent with the reason and nature of things.

If instead of meaning the poor by

† Without noticing our slaves (who in violation of the doctrine of equality, are deprived of every social right) there is a discrimination made between the free men of Virginia, only a particular description of whom having any agency in the affairs of government. Perhaps with such deviations from that equality, which in our bill of rights we say is the birth-right of every human being; our constitution ought to be regarded as strictly of the aristocratic kind; and therefore our citizens under this view, may be denominated all aristocrats. But this is a subject that would occupy a diffuse discussion of itself, and is particularly for the consideration of those who are so fond of the distinctions of aristocrat and democrat.—If they will begin by reforming the constitution, by equalizing representation, by subjecting lands to the payment of debts, and by emancipating slaves, and thus reduce our government and laws to their elementary principle equality; we should then think them sincere in their professions, and consistent in their conduct. But as long as they permit these abuses to exist, as long as they continue to hold their fellow-men in the most abject slavery, their declamations about liberty and equality must be regarded as the froth of madmen, or the pretences of hypocrites. How far such an attempt to reduce the theory of their principles into practice in this Commonwealth would be acceptable to the body of citizens, or conducive to the social order, harmony, and prosperity of our country, I leave them to determine. However ruinous, to be consistent with themselves, they ought to make it.

the term *democrat*, they denominate a friend to that kind of government in which each citizen in his individual capacity, exercises those functions, which in our society are delegated to representatives, such as were some of the petty tumultuous commonwealths of old, this would be a government so hostile to the habits and practice of the American people, that no man would deem it honorable to assume the name, as in this sense, it would only be regarded as another term for anarchy. But if by the term *democrat* is meant a friend to a well organized representative government, in which, liberty of thinking, liberty of speaking, liberty of acting, and the protection of property are intended to be maintained, it is an honorable appellation, which belongs to every citizen, who, instead of exciting resistance, obeys the laws, and faithfully performs every social duty; and no individual has a right to assume it to the exclusion of his fellows. If this be attempted by a single person, he may justly be called an impudent tyrant; if by an association, an oligarchical encroachment on the privileges of the nation. But perhaps we may come nearer the true meaning of the term *democrat*, as applied to those who most generally assume it, by defining him to be a man impatient of the controul of the laws, anxious to govern, and who cares not what blood he sheds, or misery he produces, provided by any means, he can obtain the indulgence of his devouring ambition. MARCELLUS.

Foreign Intelligence.

FRANCE.

NATIONAL CONVENTION,

15 Fructidor, September 1.

ROUSSEAU.

Citizens Lijeune presented to the Convention the original manuscript of the letters of the New Heloise.

Gregoire said there had been deposited lately in the National Library another manuscript of J. J. Rousseau, entitled, "Les Consolations des Miseres de ma Vie."—The Consolations of the Miseries of my Life. He was assured also that there had been at the commission of Arts, another manuscript of the same author, the superscription of which had these words—"Not to be opened till they are 1800." They were now employed in searching for it. He invited his Colleagues of Mont Blanc to make every possible enquiry in their department, for certainly other manuscripts of Jean Jacques Rousseau would be found. He was sure that some were still in existence at Chamberry.

Treillard informed the Convention that the Members of the Committee of Public Safety had drawn lots to know which three of their body should be replaced.—The lot had fallen on Carnot, Lindet, and Barrere. He added, that Collot and Billaud had given in their resignation.

Dubem.—"I move that in consequence of these two resignations there shall be only one new Member chosen." This proposition was decreed.

Cambon.—"I fear that if we accept the resignations that have been proposed, Aristocracy will turn it to advantage.—[No! no!] was exclaimed generally thro' the hall.] Legislators ought not only to be irreprouchable, but suspicion ought not to fall upon their heads.—I move therefore, that these resignations be refused."

The order of the day was called for and adopted.

Billaud.—"There can be nothing equivocal in the motives of a resignation which is voluntary."

Collot.—"It was not to day that we first thought of giving in our resignation. We formed the design from the moment that the Convention laid it down as a principle that a too long continuance in the same committee might be dangerous to public liberty. Several of our colleagues were apprized of our resolution. [Yes, yes, exclaimed several Members of the Committee.] There is nothing, therefore, particular in the thing. There was another motive of public interest which decided us. The new organization of the committees has conferred upon others than the committee of public safety that part of labor with which we were charged in such a way as to give us almost nothing to do. Our retreat will therefore give some employment to those who remain, and they will not have too much, considering the able seconds they have now received.

"These were our sentiments, and the Convention should do us justice in this respect."

Tallien.—"The principles that you have just approved of in accepting the resignation of Billaud and Collot, call upon me to say a few words. I have for many days carefully observed what has passed in this assembly, I have scrutinized the public interest and the safety of my country, and I have said to myself in common with all good citizens, "No man in a Republic ought to put himself in the place of principles. If his presence in a Commit-

tee should be a stumbling block, a sort of hindrance to Revolutionary success, he ought to condemn himself to a species of ostracism. It is time that men should disappear before principles, and that liberty, equality, and justice, should alone unite all our suffrages. It is round this fundamental basis of all good government that I wish to rally. Far is it from my idea to throw into the National Convention new seeds of dissention, which have already too much troubled our deliberations. I sacrifice, therefore, this instant all self-love, all particular enmities on the altar of my country, and I declare that I give in my resignation as a member of the committee of public safety. I re-enter the ranks; there to combat with the same energy all the enemies of the Revolution.—May the resolution that I take in this moment become the epoch of the union of all the true friends of the people, and of the overthrow of their enemies! I move, therefore, that the Convention accept my resignation." Accepted.

The Convention decreed that they would proceed forthwith to vote, by calling over the names, on the choice of four members of the committee of public safety.

The choice fell on Delmas, Fourcroy, Cochon, and Merlin de Douai.

Evening Sitting.

There was an extraordinary sitting in the evening for replacing the members going out of the committee of general life.

The lot fell on Elie Lacoite, Vouland, Vadier, and Moyse Bayle.

There were also wanting to this committee three members, Jagot, David, and Lavicomterie: the convention named as their successors, Bourdon de Oise, Colombel, Meaulle, Glauzel, Mathieu, Monmayau, and Lefage Senault.

Particulars of the new warlike invention proposed to the National Convention.

J. B. Cope a French Protestant Clergyman of Charlestown, made an offer to the Convention of a new machine for warlike purposes.—This was a bomb (carcase), which when once set on fire, nothing could extinguish. It could be sent 800 paces from a 24 pounder and farther with a greater force. A ship of 120 guns the inventor stated, would not be able to resist the attack of a seventy-four, if the latter were provided with these bombs; and six sail of the line so provided, would be able to attack the whole marine force of Europe in one day, and to destroy them in such a manner as not to permit even a single boat to return into the harbour.

With four pieces of this description it would be possible to prevent any squadron from getting into port; or to burn them if they persevered in the attempt.

The instrument could be easily perfected so as to cause even more terror to land forces, and particularly to cavalry. Its smell and flame could not but disorder the best disciplined squadrons and if thrown against a wall, it would continue to blaze for half an hour.

The inventor presented a bullet composed of the same materials. He red, that he would lose his life rather than disclose the secret of this constitution, if the Convention did not deem proper to convert it to their use.

Barillon observed that a composition, of a similar nature had been offered to Louis XI by that learned chymist Delile. It was an application of wild fire, which even that tyrant declined to use.

He moved that it should be referred to the committees of war and public safety, to determine whether they could avail themselves of the present offer, without danger to humanity.—Decreed.

UNITED STATES.

NEWBURYPORT, Oa. 29.

The 4th Regiment, 2d Brigade, 2d Division, under the command of Col. Evans, paraded near the meeting house in Salisbury, and after a pathetic address was offered to the Throne of Grace, by the Rev. Dr. Webber, they marched to the plain, and were reviewed and inspected by Major Coffin, accompanied by many gentlemen; the officers of several other Regiments were then requested by the officers of this Regiment, to repair with them to Col. Evans, where they had caused ample provision to be prepared; they here partook of an elegant and plentiful dinner, and every guest seemed fully to participate in the joys and pleasures of the day.

They were escorted to and from Col. Evans' by Captain Lurvey's company of Artillery, who were in complete uniform, and made a martial appearance.

The above Brigade is composed of likely robust young men, and appeared capable for any service they may be called to; it can with propriety be observed, that if every Brigade is equal to this, we need not fear any power will presume to attack us by land, and ef-