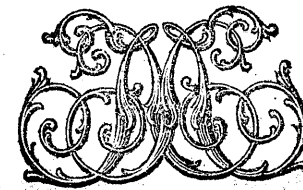


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THE
I D E A
OF A
PATRIOT CITIZEN;
OR,
TRUE REFORM.
IN A
L E T T E R
TO A
N O B L E L O R D.



L O N D O N :

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THE
I D E A
OF A
PATRIOT CITIZEN;
IN A
L E T T E R, &c.

MY LORD, JAN. 1, 1785.

YOUR last Letter, or rather, a single sentence in your last Letter, has so fully occupied my mind for some days, that, covetous as I am of time and study, and unwilling to give up either to undetermined pursuits, or desultory thoughts, I have of late employed myself in arranging them, and shall think that I have turn'd them to no small account, if the result of my investigation

4 THE IDEA OF

tigation tends to the more firmly establishing a great and solemn truth, which the habits of a vicious community, and the interests of a few great bad men, have conspired to disregard or to reject: such truth may, perhaps, be not very acceptable, in an age when profligate manners and public merit are, by the high-priest of faction, forced into an unnatural union; whilst the hymeneal is sung by the very numerous tribe, who would partake at once, of the pleasures of vice and of the meed of virtue. Of such I scarcely wish, and I cannot expect, the favourable construction of this essay; and the less so, when my first definition of a term is found analogous to the discriminating the claims of so many leading characters, and in general, the pretensions of so many adhering to them; or from servile hopes, or from disaffection to others, or from congenial affections with them. These, and various other descriptions of men, will scarcely be pleased in finding themselves excluded the pale of Patriotism, and driven at least to the mental acknowledgment of self-insufficiency, and of hypocrisy in others, on a point they have so long
been

A PATRIOT CITIZEN. 5

been taught to vaunt the merits of themselves and of their parties; that many may think they are well-founded in arrogating the name of Patriot, and in the bestowing it, too, on any one whom they may have chosen to adopt the lord of their political opinions: such servitude of opinion, is characteristic in the people of this country, and of the present age.—One popular tenet held forth, declaimed on with eloquence, and sustained with courage and perseverance, establishes a British demagogue; having taken up and echoed the Voice of the People, the Voice of the People rebellows to his own on each future occasion, and drowns in clamour the force of disquisition and sober argument; whilst prejudice, kept alive by officious or interested partizans, leads the multitude to think and speak, as speaks, and *seems* to think, the favourite who made such an harangue, who opposed such a measure, and who, in the reasoning from vulgar partialities, can never be wrong, because he has once been right; as if the inverse of the proposition was just; and as one notorious villainy in private life, fixes on the perpetrator an indelible stigma, so in political
conduct,

conduct, no demerit or malversation, however flagrant, was to efface the confidence one good action had inspired; though the motives thereof, or views therein, might be justly suspected from subsequent apostacy, or dereliction of principles on which that confidence was founded. Such is the spirit of the argument, however the letter of it may be sophistically construed and adapted, by those who have the management of an interest with the people: words they are prodigal of, and changes are rung upon the whole series of magic terms, which operate as a charm on the ears and senses of the commonalty; until a decisive and flagitious measure of conduct, calls forth some bold adventurer in the cause of virtue and his country, some knight-errant of truth and reason, who steps in to dissolve the spell, to shew the dæmon in his deformities, and divested of the glare which eluded the penetration of common eyes, or dimmed or fascinated by the false splendor, which self-arrogance, insidious practices, and incautious zeal had arrayed him with.

It is then that his designs lay open, and are exposed to the unprejudiced good sense of

of his countrymen; and I am satisfied, and pleased too, with the assertion, that when the good sense of Britons is once liberated from the mists an ill-placed partiality have too often involved it in, it not only readily distinguishes between public good and evil, but as readily applies to the support of the one, and to the redress of the other. One bad consequence, however, remains, from an ill-placed confidence in a public character: Words that should be sacred, and the inferences from which should be determinate, creep into derision or perversion when repeatedly prostituted to vile and selfish purposes; with the sense of words, we in some measure lose the sense of things;—in points where language loses its discriminating force, the minds of ordinary men are apt to adopt sentiments proportionally vague and undetermined; they are apt to muster true virtues with false pretensions, or to think lightly of qualities in abhorrence of those who have *seemed* to possess them, and who surely have proved deserved objects of their abhorrence;—at any rate good men lose the appellatives of distinction, which should separate them from bad men in the mouths of their countrymen,

trymen, and in the page of history. The best and first characters are interested in finding a remedy to this evil; and your Lordship will as much, or more than any of your coteremporaries be indebted to me, if I rescue the name of Patriot from the disrepute and ridicule, which the success of vain pretenders, and the sneers of disappointed malice, have equally reduced it to; and then affix the genuine import to an epithet, which in future histories may thus worthily designate the wisest and best men of this age and country.

We know that the word *Fur*, which in the more polished ages of the Roman empire bore the signification of Thief, in remoter times implied simply a servant; and that *Villain* in our feudal glossary is explained to be the menial vassal of a fief, though now, perhaps, fully as applicable within the purlieu of the capitol, as in a farm-yard: Does not the word *Patriot* seem liable to similar perversion? May it not, in some future English Dictionary, be construed into an idle or vicious sense, which the examples of those who have long borne, and have so often disgraced the appellation, may suggest to a learned humourist indulging

ing his spleen; or to a laborious critic affecting accuracy of English idiom, in distinction to ancient etymologies?—The authorities of many a pamphlet, which the contempt of its own age has rendered scarce, and its scarcity in another age shall render valuable, may puzzle some political antiquarian on the subject of this ill-fated word; and should his researches lead him to anecdotes of *Patriots* who have kindled, or who have fanned the flames of civil discord; of *Patriots* who speciously undertaking the interests of the commonwealth, not satisfied with basely deserting, have wickedly betrayed them; or of *Patriots*, who once insidious in the cause of public virtue, have assumed a more daring part in their avowed apostacy, and unequivocally have attacked, not only the well-being, but the very being of their country's constitution; at the same time have indulged in more partial depredations, and then, to the injury of usurpation, have added the insult of public pleas for private wrongs:—when I consider him adverted to this detail, I cannot but fancy my antiquarian hugging himself, and exulting in his discoveries, which render so perspi-

cuous the meaning of the term, and so conspicuous his knowledge of the history of our language, whilst he makes a marginal note to the date of his pamphlet, specifying at that epoch, "the sense of Patriot to have been,"—*à non colendo Patriam, sicut lucus, à non lucendo*. The levity of such conjecture may carry with it an air of ridicule, but the ridicule affects those, whose maxims and conduct give, as well as those who receive, a false or vague impression: At any rate we are turning their own weapons upon them; in cases when neither their assumption of public virtue, nor of the name of public virtue, has been deemed any longer admissible by the generality, how often have we known these pretenders veer from their first project of deception, and build their hopes on making proselytes to the derision of principles and titles, which they would persuade us are visionary and inconsequent, on no better argument, if we sift its true force and meaning, than that those principles and titles have been degraded and perverted in their own personal career of selfish designs, heretofore glossed over by plausible words, and such as in
common

common acceptation implied a sense most opposite to their real but secret motives and views. When the veil was so torn by the violence of abuse that worked under its holy cover, that something appeared to excite suspicion of what it then but partially hid; and when finally, by happy coincidence of virtue and occasion, it was snatched from the ill-suited office of concealment to wicked and ruinous purposes; I cannot but admire the address of these men, which, though discomfited in the general pursuit, still kept a vantage ground, by infusing a poison into the protecting cloak which they had long worn, and which none in future were to wear, but at the hazard of the pollutions they had stained it with: Having been treacherous under the plea of patriotism, to attach generally the ideas of treachery and patriotism, might be no proof of modesty; but it was a proof of art in the conduct of a faction; it was such, on the levelling principle of reducing the shape and colour of characters to their own standard, and thus retaining the plea for re-advancement, that if they were not as good as they should be, all others were as bad as themselves;

elves; and it was such, if considered alone as depriving their adversaries of a hold on the people through terms which they were used to revere, ere they were thus misapplied. These consequences were pressed on us in a manner which no man adverting to their tendency can excuse, and a good man can hardly at any rate pardon. A rejection of pretensions from the most independent and most worthy, an unqualified distrust of public characters, and thence a disregard of public principles, instilled first by malconduct, and then disseminated with all the sophistry and all the assertion which the wit and effrontery of artful speakers and artful writers could suggest, pervaded a large mass of the community. Thus the morals of the people, already depraved, were placed at a further distance from remedy and reform, whilst a derision of every set of men, who stood candidates for the general esteem, on the plea of disinterestedly contributing to the general welfare, became prevalent; and Government kept within the strict trammels of office, was (as far as pseudo-patriotic machinations could effect it) precluded those exertions, which alone can reinstate

a great kingdom, in the decline of its fortunes, or depresso of its spirit, and alone can accomplish it through the constitutional confidence and support of the people; whether its views are directed to finance, to commerce, to industry, or most of all, to that which is the basis of all,—Public Manners. I hope, and believe, these effects may not yet be so generally spread amongst us; but we cannot be too much on our guard against an evil, which in its nature is irresistible, if it once gains a firm footing.—And how calamitous! 'tis seriously affecting to every friend of his country, when considering, that,—Confidence is the bond of a free people; and its expansion from the central point of government, to the extreme verge of the national circle, most necessary to the consolidating it, and giving it that unity, which in times of peace may keep its parts and principles fixed and inviolate, and in wars may give it force and weight; thus, not liable at peace to fluctuations tending to anarchy and dissolution, or in wars to suffer from each shock which contention may expose it to. I am well aware, that estimates of manners are, and have been,

been, as often subjects of ridicule, as of controversy; I can no ways account for such fate of serious and necessary speculations, but in the supposition, that the criticism of these topics has generally been assumed by, or delivered over to, men of much conversation, and little thought (called, I think, men of the world); and who come from a good dinner and lively company, with a high sense of national opulence, and of united purity and elegance of manners. Were wise and good men to undertake the subject, it could not be treated with levity, however it might be treated with variety of sentiment and decision.—Brown may be termed, by quaint wits, a visionary student; but Lord Bolingbroke, surely, was a practical politician. And (whatever may be lay'd to his charge, as to the practice) in his political ethics, as no one was better informed, or of quicker insight into men and manners, or more acute in remounting to first principles, or in thence tracing the succession of effects, so no one was ever more explicit on this head, and, I will add, candid:—for his private conduct (and he feels and nobly acknowledges

ledges it) did not always tally with the maxims he lays down, and with the impulse of his reason or good genius, as himself expresses it. Morals are his favourite subject: morals, he ever considers as the basis of all government; these are his constant topic of declamation: in his periodical papers, and in their energetic dedication, his repeated and strongest objection to Walpole is, that he has “corrupted the morals of men.” And in another work, we find his fundamental principle of a Patriot King, to be—“the good Man.”—Leaving the more spacious field of ethics, this is the idea I mean to discuss, adapting it to a more diffusive sense and application; whilst I presume to lay down, what that man should be, who lays claim to a designation of private character, which has been the delight of every age and country: how worthily in our own country and age, the claims thereto may severally be advanced, remains for the touchstone of an enquiry, which may lead us back to the first principles and constitution of a *Patriot Citizen*.

When

When I said "private character," my Lord, it was not without design; under every government, of every form, that of the Man and Citizen (as in the course of this Letter will appear) is the same and indivisible; and as a constituent of that government, we are to consider him in his simple place as such; nor, at least in the first instance, advert to those brilliant exertions, by which an individual, from time to time, may break from his proper site, and become a public man. I allude not to ordinary successions in office, which are rather within the precinct and routine of civil duties, to some by the course of vocation, and to others, by the demands the state has on each Citizen, according to his relative importance, from original or acquired situation, in regard to property or rank: and I allude not to such men, *pares negotio neque supra*, as the Emperor Claudius called them who merely hold high public employments, because high public employments must be held; and are no ways deserving a particular designation of character, unless distinguished by extra-official conduct; for, I hope, not too satirically, and I am sure, not

not maliciously, I thus must term extraordinary exertions of virtue or wisdom. But I allude to such excentric, and almost inspired men, whose ethereal spirit, in various ages and countries, seems to have been sent into the world under the auspices of a special providence, as its immediate agent of revolution. Amongst a very corrupt and enervate people, haply, the contingent elevation of such a one, may serve to rouse the torpid sense of rights and duties, and to infuse a spirit of vigilance to detect, or of courage to resist, the workings of faction, or the encroachments of tyranny: but the effects of commotion, in times of national depravity, can rarely be within his reach and penetration, and to what account he may turn those effects, as rarely within the general estimate of the consequences of his ascendancy. Thus, unless in the most desperate crisis of the state-constitution, such remedy may prove more fatal than was the malady; inasmuch as, the *Amor Patriæ* may not be genuine; if genuine, is liable to be corrupted by success, or is yet subject to failure; if there is either wanting, knowledge to unfold, sense to discriminate, judgment,

ment, as well as virtue, in choice; or intrepidity in purpose and in execution, or proper instruments to work with, or found materials to work upon. A successful medicine, my Lord, is half a poison; at any rate, these qualities are the constituent virtues of a good man; and these instruments, and these materials, are the spirit and morals of men in general: here, then, we are yet to rest, and hence we are to assume the first principle of investigation; nor is it a trivial or useless point of argument, whilst so many partizans respectively venerate their political idol, without the sense of the poor Indian who worships his devil, not vainly hoping good, but merely, that he may do him no harm.—Leaving the foolish zealots who expect benefit, and knavish priesthood who ensure profit from this unprincipled state-religion, let us consider, what in its essence is true and good, ere we bestow our praise and confidence.

When the private virtues are, or, indeed, when any one of them is, deficient in the human composition, it surely cannot be denied, that the man so wanting, is subject to influences which may break in upon the
good

good order of society: to consider this in the most definite manner, it must be allowed, that a disregard of good faith, of domestic duties, of social and religious compact, or, in other words, of honest dealing and moral conduct, must in some measure discompose the arrangements of general intercourse, established from a sense of common happiness and security; whether by right reason, by religious canons, or by the laws of the country. And alone under this view of things, I would venture the assertion, that no one can be a thoroughly *good Patriot but the good Citizen, founded in the good Man.*

Have we no witty comments on this homely proposition?—Have we no resplendent characters, no soaring genius, who may deride this uncourtly axiom?—None; who scorning the virtues in detail, would yet be supposed dealers in the gross?—No wondrous men, who can equally befriend the disorders of the governed, and the good order of government?—None, who ever subordinate to self-gratification are declared enemies to self-interest?—None, who generously retain their vices for home consumption,

sumption, and bestow their virtues on their country?—or who can break through every private bond of union, every private tie of virtue, and leaving an undescribable chasm in the chain of social love, be a friend to self, and, presto! a friend to all?—Enough of paradoxes, and enough of the negative side. It is with pleasure I now leave the ungracious view of the subject, and give some respite to censure on such men, their parties, and their friends:—if you cavil at the word *friends*, as polluted by the application, Tacitus will afford the comment: “*Li, qui tanquam vetitta immiscuisent, speciem artæ amicitiae fecere.*” I will now trace to your view, lineaments of a fairer and more pleasing description; recalling you attention to my first and leading proposition, that *pure public principles cannot be surely founded but in the private virtues*. The virtues of the true Patriot duly radiate from the central point of self, to the great periphery of the commonwealth: his social affections expand on the uniform principle of relative situation, of reciprocal obligations, and of mutual benefits.

The

The Man, the Father, the Friend, the Neighbour, the Citizen, the Patriot, are the just climax of his attachment to society, and if at the latter he stops somewhat short, and pauses between the love of his country and indiscriminate philanthropy, it is not from vain prejudice, but from a just sense of the superior claims *his country* has on *him*, and every other member of it, in retribution for legal protection, constitutional rights, and civil liberty. Acknowledging a just sense of his obligation shall he forego the bounties it implies? Shall he ever yield up those rights or that liberty at a less price than life?—Certainly not. I am describing the character of a man, who on no consideration would disregard, much less betray a private trust, and thence will suppose him more probably than any other the safe guardian of a public deposit; for such are the rights and liberties of which each Citizen enjoys the usufruct entailed through him to successive posterity. But is not patriotism termed a sentiment? Have not its warmest and most able advocates given it birth in the more enthusiastic feelings, rather than in a decisive sense of right and wrong, and in the

accurate measurement of reciprocal obligation between a commonwealth and its constituents? I am no friend to systems, nor in this would set forth ingenuity at the expence of truth;—a truth written with the impetuous blood of the Decii, a truth signed by the scorched stump of Scævola.—These old Romans, my Lord, were neither logicians nor casuists. I allow then, on this head, human prejudices to have preceded speculation, as they in after-times have outstript reason; I allow the force of early habits, the adoption of social sympathy, or, as it were, the catching temper of national affections, generally, if not always, to have been the primary cause, and always to have been a co-efficient cause, of those zealous exertions, which have elevated a virtuous nation, by the force of its union or self-attachment, or, in other words, by its Patriotism: But such feelings, to be good and permanent, had, and must have, reason as well as probity for their basis. It is not enough to act worthily and greatly, but we should know that we do, and in what we do, act worthily and greatly; a knowledge of our principles therein will not only enhance the merit of our

our conduct, relative to the government we are attached to and support, but giving system, will give force and permanency to Patriotism, which, descending from its occasional and ardent career of flight, may thus find a resting-place, in reason as well as in conscience, whereon to recruit its strength for other courses of public weal and service. The mere instinct of Patriotism (if I am permitted the expression) may lead a free and generous people to feel for, and to serve, their country; as that of the parent directs him to the preservation and support of his offspring; yet, to fix domestic affections on a surer basis, hath been deemed no useless chapter in ethics, nor can the induction of a rational plea for public virtue be considered as an idle and supernumerary page in the book of political theories. Supposing, however, the amor patriæ most generally to originate in prepossessions, and to be confirmed by habit, yet, if aided by benevolence and probity, it will suffice to the constituting a Patriot Citizen of the inferior or ordinary rank of men, in our own or in any other free State.

After

After what has been already urged, the cavillers for Pseudo-patriotism can scarcely term the addition of benevolence and probity a *petitio principii*; the subject is however delightful and animating, and I shall not grudge them further argument or elucidation.

Tacitus, speaking of the marshes and wild forests of Germany, and (in his days) its inhospitable clime and unproductive soil, uses the emphatic distinction of *tristis et inculta, nisi quod patria sit*; and I have read of a Samojede who, deputed to Peter the Great, testified his astonishment to the Czar (as far as a Samojede could be astonished) that he did not fix the imperial residence in his *charming* provinces of Northern Lapland. This sort of attachment is to be placed to the account of local use, and the temperament of the body habituated to a peculiar temperature of the air, which render, what others term inconveniencies, the sources of comfort and even of pleasure; and I can little allow the term of Patriotism to this Samojede's predilection for his snow-mountains, as to his love of train oil. A distinction between the word country in its physical and in its political sense, is our proper
clue

clue of investigation, and will preclude that perplexity, which most often involves speculative enquiries, from terms not being accurately defined. Within a country and commonwealth of small extent; prejudices, founded in local considerations, may mix well with other ingredients of Patriotism, and assist in its general cement and force; but, in a more diffusive empire, wherein different soils and climates, and, as it were, a different nature, begets a variety of distinct affections and habits, they must rather dissolve the bands of society, and militate the effects of a general political union, which a pure and unadulterated regard for the same liberties and rights, for the same equitable laws and favourable government, should inspire, and inspire too with mutual regard, those, whose combination is necessary to ensure a perpetuity of those blessings, which as common citizens and subjects they partake of. The commonalty will, however, in some degree, be ever instigated by partial and arbitrary attachments; and when in motion, will be somewhat actuated by their impulse: but if, in any great degree, prepossessions of such unwarranted predilection to a restricted
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circle of place, of men, and of manners, become prevalent, those of provincial distastes and variance will follow; to the disgrace of the great nation's understanding, and derogatory equally to its virtue and to its interests. Happily, the ascendancy of more rational and prosperous motives, suggested by wise and free spirit of legislation, may, and will too, gain ground in every country and age, which are so far enlightened, that the choice of motives, and sense of consequences, lay within the compass of the ordinary ranks of citizen. Let us leave then a part, a principle which may serve in a small republic; but a principle so vague, that, whilst it attaches the savage to his native wood, may as well attach the slave to his native chains; as history proves, that it has attached the vassal to his fief, and whole nations to servitude, through every modification of dynasty, from the mere systems of qualified controul, to those of prescriptive oppression. It is in the political sense of country, that under a constitution of government, which breathes the spirit of civil liberty, and every where diffuses a sense of the security of property, and of the rights

of men, that we are to trace the sources of our country's love; as in the estimate of retribution for that security and freedom, we are to seek its duties, and in the moral constitution of men, to remark the sentiment of obligation, and the capacity of return. That strong attachments should support the fabric of state which shelters and protects, and which is the fortress, not the prison of the subject; and that reciprocal protection and care of the sacred building, are a most just and indispensable engagement, I may be permitted to assume for granted: but who, and what description of men; do, or can, fill up the measure of duties exacted from them under that great and general consideration, is a subject I may be expected further to discuss, whilst I attempt the wresting pretensions to Patriotism, and to the confidence of his fellow-citizens therein, from every vicious and immoral man; whether in the more menial post of life, or however great and distinguished by rank and ability. In regard to the ordinary class of citizens, an acquiescence in the dispensations of Providence; which has, in the first instance, allotted to each a relative place within the

community, and a strict regard to the private obligations which belong severally to each in his vocation, or in the gradations which industry and good fortune open to each individual career, are, doubtlessly, of the first public importance; whilst arrangements of society are necessary, equally to its establishment and its duration; and whilst an observance of order and place in each component part, can alone effect that intrinsic harmony of character, which makes a people happy and powerful; regular in domestic, therefore, respectable in foreign intercourse; friends at home, and therefore terrible to foes abroad. Far from encouraging, or giving a spur to excentricity of zeal in this quarter, rarely considerate of purpose, and as rarely content with accomplishment, ever dangerous to blessings possessed, and rarely productive of blessings in view: I hence can no ways inculcate to these orders of men, other duties of Patriotism in times of public peace, than the duties their place of citizen exacts. Let the citizen be moral in his life, and he gives his mite of support to the religion and police of his country; let him be industrious, and honest in his dealings, and he

he gives his mite of credit to national wealth and estimation; let him be rigidly conscientious in his discharge of public justice, and of other important trusts which the form of government reposes in him, and he gives his share of support and strength to the laws and constitution of his country: let him, in a word, be a good man, and he is a good Citizen, and a Patriot. In times of wars, or in times when the barriers of property or liberty are broken in upon, other requisites may be necessary to fill up the measure of character, that should constitute this Patriot Citizen; but these requisites follow of course. I need not go back to the Athenians in their first Persian war, or to the Romans during the Punic invasion; our own history will prove, that national virtue, will ever beget a sense of national glory, and will fight, and will pay too, for it. Invasions of legal possessions and legal rights, will rarely be attempted, and can never be carried with success, against a people so framed; too virtuous, and too united, to be soothed, or to be menaced, into a dereliction of claims which give elevation to their spirit, or comfort to their lives; and which they deem the hereditament of those, whom

whom the page of existence has unfolded to their blessings and endearment, and to their sons, sons. But, it is possible, they may be encroached upon by tyranny; and therefore, it is more than probable, they may be surprized into faction: the minds of men are ever restless, and the very best are prone to discontent and commotion. It was in the prime and most virtuous state of the Roman commonwealth, that Livy says, "the citizens began *postquam mala foris deerant, domi querere.*" Impracticable refinements, and imaginary grievances, are the attractive snares for virtue and public spirit; against these, therefore, they should be guarded. But supposing it necessary, that the momentum of the people be put in action (and such necessity has appeared), worthy and respectable as are the classes of men above alluded to, their honesty, their very Patriotism, subjects them to the danger of becoming the tools of an artful demagogue, and thus efficient of the very consequences they are most zealous to avert. Let us obviate this evil; let us set up some more bright and faithful luminary, to divert the vessel's course from pointing to the delusive beacons, which would allure it
into

into shoals, and to destruction. Let us find an adviser, not a plotter; a friend to his country, not the leader of a party to direct the natural and virtuous impulse of these free and honest hearts. This Patriot Citizen is to be sought out from a different order of men, (for the freest commonwealth must allow of different orders and ranks of men); he is to be sought out in places dangerous to private and to public virtue, in the halls of the noble and wealthy, and in the courts of princes!

—————Exeat aulâ

Qui vult esse pius, virtus & summa potestas
Non coeunt!

is an exclamation of the sententious Lucan, nor can it wholly be deemed a fiction of poetry; but I have proof before me, that it may be qualified by exceptions. I have already assumed the proposition, that private virtue is the only sure foundation of public virtue, and in the previous sketch of character have considered benevolence and integrity as forming the basis of popular Patriotism. I should require no other materials for the natural constitution of a Patriot Noble, or
even

even of a Patriot King. The sole distinction between the higher and lower classes arises from the advantages which hereditary opulence and local rank allow in the means of improving the heart and confirming the integrity, by enlightening the intellect; and in the means of more generally exercising the mind so educated, for the public safety and benefit. Our requisites lay on this side Utopia; the liberal information of a good understanding, and attentive cultivation of generous feelings, come within the province and ability of every parent of elevated rank in every country: Instruct the first, and repress not the latter; enliven the fancy, enrich the memory, correct the judgment; having added to, methodize the stores of knowledge; exercise and enlarge thereby the capacity of decision; talk of, read of, and show the busy scene of life, and, above all, inculcate every moral to every lesson, and then turn your pupil into the community. It will be told me, that this has been done; it will be instanced by every father within his own circle of progeny.—Too soon, alas!—he exclaims,—perverted and lost in the vicious practices of the world!—The fault, I should say, probably

probably lays not in your omissions of literary accomplishment, or of oral document; you have given your son the lesson of books, and you have repeated your moral precepts;—but has his lesson of example been equally correct?—Having learned what he should, has he never learned what he should not?—Hath he been witness in the pliant state of adolescence to no scenes of dissipation and depravity?—No scenes where the full cup of ebriety (that pandar to each other vice) has passed under the palliative appellation of a cheerful glass?—No scenes, where irreligious scoffs, and immodest ribaldry, have met the applause of wit?—Where calumny hath been the source of merriment?—Where prudence and philanthropy have been ridiculed by a pleasant story, and the history of true enjoyment has been ably and entertainingly transferred from the cardinal virtues to the carnal senses?—May not some little germ of each fashionable vice steal into the composition of your pupil, ready to bud forth and mature, as soon as fixed in the hot-bed of a corruptive worldly intercourse?—Even in the direct points of opinion and knowledge, has your son imbibed no share of domestic or party

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prejudices?—No ipse dixit from men or books?—No unwarranted predilections from hereditary principles, the chances of partial study, or the habits of restricted conversation? Under the contingencies of so many disqualifying circumstances, we cannot wonder that Patriots of the higher class are not very numerous in this delicate and licentious age: You will not wonder thereat if you adopt (and from both your principles and practice I am sure you do adopt) my ideas of the necessary basis of Patriotism, and of the requisite perfections of the materials.

I now, my Lord, on the premises of good inherent qualities, and a good education directly or negatively traced, introduce my Patriot of superior rank, of a rank well understood in this country: But to render my meaning definite, I more particularly point to those who possess, or are qualified to possess, a share in the supreme legislature—it matters not, with Lords or with Commons. Positively or by intimation I have endowed a character with the pre-eminence of virtue, and sagacity, and knowledge; let us accurately note the dependent or constituent qualities which, in a public view, may more
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immediately expand to public use. Consider then our Patriot as *benevolent*, thus assisting the poor and employing the laborious, thus cherishing industry and population, and thus attaching and strengthening every band of society: Consider him as *moral*, and enforcing by precept, authority, and example, what is due and fitting in every relation to man, to country, and to God, and thus serving his country; *for private manners are the basis of public felicity and force*: Consider him as *religious*, and temperately obviating the distractions of society from the intolerance of sectaries, and the corruption of the people from neglect of pious duties, and thus serving his country; *for the seeds of crime originate in vice*: Consider, him from prudence and moderation, *independent*, and therefore truly free, and the abettor of true freedom; not obnoxious to the laws, and therefore blushing not to enforce the laws; justly and duly possessing legal rights and privileges, and therefore holding them dear as that life which they cheer and they protect. Have we not here, my Lord, in the good man a good Citizen, and in the Citizen a Patriot? I have vulgar prejudice against me; vulgar preju-

dice allows not the appellation of Patriot, but to the man buffling in the circle of state, and estimates him by the notoriety of his interference in support of, or in opposition to, the men and measures of the day. Surely I have described the *Lover and Friend* of his country; but you will say, my portrait is not finished; other active and public obligations may indeed press on one in the higher class of Citizens; but in favour of a more pointed treatment of the subject, I will pass by the ordinary course of duties and service which might be expected from one good head and one good heart, amidst the numbers which form the legislative body, and in compliance with vulgar prejudice, I will take this *worthy* from the smaller circle of a neighbourhood, informed, improved, and fostered, by his manners, conduct, and beneficence, and I will place him a principal actor in the most turbulent scene that the shiftings of national misfortune and depravity may bring forward: To such arduous post we will suppose him called by the earnest voice of his country's wrongs and miseries, by the strong impulse of a noble heart and enlightened mind, and by the suffrage of the virtuous part of his

fellow-citizens. The last fiction is within the necessary data; if there is no virtue in a country, it were idle to attempt the rescuing from political servitude slaves by nature, as the Stagyrite, in his essays on government, justly marks them; some good and wise men are the indispensable agents, in the best public cause, of the public conflict, or it is not worth the hazard, for no good can come of it: Without the suffrage and support of such men our *Worthy* will not come forth; under other circumstances he will not—he cannot jostle on the stadia with the various proficient in modern policy, who so kindly press in emulation to our service; and who, foregoing homes they have never seen, families they have never regarded, and fortunes they have long dissipated or have never possessed, boldly hazard their all in the race of Patriotism: *He* is no ways equal to the contest; his old fashioned and stubborn rule of right is no match for that pliant goodness and condescension, which estimates at equal price the voice of the pauper and the felon, of the wicked and the weak, with that of men possessed of the dearest interests in the state, and of approved virtue and wisdom; such, if he is permitted

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the time and means, will prove his instruments in reforming bad men; but he will not trust them till reformed; and he will not, to gain profelytes to his own or even to the good cause of the people, support the people against sense and virtue. Shall not then the Vox Populi have its due weight? Doubtless it shall; it shall influence every true Patriot in proportion as it appears to be the genuine sense of the people, a virtuous people, and not a corrupt populace. Polybius is the only Author I at present recollect who has justly discriminated the *ὄχλοκρατία* and *Δήμοκρατία*: in the third chapter of his sixth book is the passage I allude to. The sophistry and pleas of the modern demagogue are at a stand, if we properly distinguish the refuse of the people from the people who deserve, as well as who possess the name of Citizen: The *ἀτίμος ἔσω* disfranchised many a Citizen in Athens for immoral conduct, nay, even for imprudence; for the loss of patrimony could not in every case imply the profligate dissipation. In another great and free state the denizens of the lower classes, and thence presumed to be the least impregnate with liberal sentiments and a capacity of de-

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cision, have had a collective suffrage, in common with other classes; but neither Servius Tullus, who originated, nor the Roman republic which adopted the comitia centuriata, estimated the individual voices of each century, but without consideration of numbers, weighed the least and richest against the poorest and most populous class; nay, in the first institution of the great Grecian democracy the *Θῆται*, or fourth and last tribe, though probably containing three-fourths of the citizens, were wholly incapacitated from holding public office or place of trust; nor in either republic did the census of estate and morals give way, but to the ruin of each commonwealth, a temporary licentiousness opening the path to perpetual servitude. In the most diffusive and liberal spirit of legislation, distinctions among men must be adopted; those of census of estate have ever been thought most necessary; those of judgment and virtue are still more indispensable, though more difficult to define; and under that difficulty, have been regulated by the former census, which, amidst the choice of uncertain and exceptionable rules, has been ever deemed the least exceptionable. Men of

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mean fortunes, and meaner talents, little interested in the public welfare, comparatively with their superiors in wealth, and cultivation of mind; and little able to discover that welfare, though, from weight of numbers, most able to promote it in times of civil commotion, ever will, and must be, and for their own good and happiness, ought to be, subservient to more exalted minds; and they may become virtuous and happy, in becoming subservient to virtuous minds and undertakings; but I would not have those lead who should follow; or rather, seem to lead, whilst following the footsteps of some artful minister of troubles, in his road to usurpation. To the *good* of all our *worthy* shall duly attend, if a Patriot Minister; to the *sense* of the good and wise, he shall duly attend, if a Patriot Opponent to the abettors of ruinous policy, indolent or corrupt administration of government, or to a despotic, or more subtle encroachment on the liberties of his country. He will then call forth the people to right themselves, not to support him; he will be the friend of their cause, not the master of their prejudices, or the slave to their passions. No officious dema-

demagogue, but mingling as a constituent of the public, his virtues will pervade and cement the mass; and men shall direct themselves by his example, not he lead them by his artifice: when he steps forth, it is to define the just limits of their requisition, or proper and constitutional means of attainment; to profess nothing, but to warn them against the professions of others; to bid them be wary of confiding power to one, (even to himself) in order to correct its abuse in others; to temperate their zeal, confirm their rightful pretensions, and exercising their reason and virtues by his own; then seem to go with a people, not to lead a populace. In his good work he is assisted and supported by kindred minds, not by a party, predeterminedly and indiscriminately faithful to every measure of the chiefs of its association. He has taught his best friends to leave him, if in any instance appearing less a friend to the system and principal of action he has declared for.—It were idle declamation, to expatiate on the full measure of conduct which might in every relative situation be expected from consummate virtue and wisdom, impregnate with the genuine and ardent glow of Patriot-

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ism: let fancy fill up the outline of character, and contrast it with those, who build their pretensions on looser principles than those of virtue! I have already said, and, I think, fully proved, that in every case of relation, as well to society, as more immediately to government, the man who is wanting in private conduct, thereby infringes some law, or golden rule, breaks some tie of union, or subverts some principle of good order, and of safe administration of particular justice, or of general policy; and thus is fundamentally the enemy, and cannot be the friend, of his country. But the casuists of faction would, perhaps, discriminate these propositions! Hence, and in compliance with the prejudices of the day, I will deign to examine, under the name of Patriot, the pretensions of those, who have so hardily taken upon them *that name*; they have nought else in common with the character I have described. On what principles is their Amor Patriæ founded? Under what idea can their exertions, however strenuous and able, be supposed to flow from the sincere attachment to a cause comprizing liberty without licentiousness, strict observance of

law,

law, and the good of all; licentious, lawless, and corruptive of all good, as are their daily lives and practice? The vanity of distinction, or ambition of pre-eminence, are, probably, the most unexceptionable motives of those, who quit the brothel or gaming-table to mount the rostrum, in favour of a ruined and oppressed people. That no safe dependence can be placed on these, is too obvious to require a moment's consideration; setting aside such, and equally palpable and ruinous motives, I will most candidly seek out, or rather fancifully suppose, the most plausible description of public men, who are not in private life irreproachable: I will even play the casuist for pseudopatriotism, and cite great luminaries of the church, great divines, whose history of the sacred writings, or whose comment on our holiest of prayers, have enlightened, or have led to piety, and who yet lived not any ways conformably to what they taught; I will cite philosophers, who have successfully arranged the purest system of ethics, displaying the lucid beauties of reason, have been the slaves of passion; and, having made others more than men, have themselves been worse than brutes: I will look

to the long compendious roll of those who exclaim,—

“ —video meliora proboque

“ Deteriora sequor.”—

And in the list, will claim a line for the signature of a speculative Patriot; of one, whose dissolute practice, and internal sentiment, are at variance, or distinct; and who ordinarily thinks well, though he often acts ill. Such a man, if versed and delighting in the literature of yore, the systems of antient policy, the history of ancient republics, and the revolutions in favour of liberty, that grace more modern annals, may, possibly, as well from study, as from the peculiar temper of his mind, adopt early some seeds of enthusiastic or rational approbation of that Patriotism, which the page of history unfolds to his enraptured imagination: haply, in maturer years, those seeds may fructify, and admiration take the zealous and emulative turn of wishing and meaning to be the character he espouses;—the Brutus or Timoleon of his country. I will allow him, on his outset, not only to be earnest and sincere, but fraught with every accomplishment of address, ability,

lity, and knowledge; he yet can neither conduct a bad people in a good cause, nor will a good people depend on him as their conductor in any cause; his morals must be correct, ere he can reform those of the people; and unless those are generally temperate and incorrupt, unless the first principle of human action is rectified and pure, the motion of a national body is like to prove a jar of chaos, rather than an efficient momentum to good designs; it is rather like to end in anarchy than in re-establishment, and to lose rather than to retrieve, producing consequences most opposite to those he anticipated in the more sanguine moments of hope and speculation; at other times, viewing the tumultuous and unprincipled agency he necessarily works with, he might say, for he surely must feel with Cicero, “ *Ipsam victoriam in-*
“ *horrerem! Quid Queris! nihil boni præter*
“ *causam!*” and the good cause must then be lost or give way in the dark and fortuitous course of revolution, amidst the various paths which sedition and treachery open on all sides. Nor can other be expected, whilst the multitude loose from every moral tie, and enchained by inordinate passions, tender
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the hold thereof to every rival pretender, who is bold enough to take, and artful enough to retain it for the vilest purposes of temporary interests, or more systematic usurpation. Such pretenders are better suited to the engaging followers vicious and irreclaimed, and by the very assumption of character, his example is not such as may reclaim them from dissoluteness and vice. He has no hold on the people, but what these other candidates may possess, or seem to possess, in common with him; and the temper of mind I have above described, should preclude his availing himself of modes of attachment which his antagonists may not so conscientiously forego. If in any instance we may in this apply the maxim of the younger Pliny,—*minor vis bonis quam malis inest, ac sicut ἀμαθία μὲν θράσος Λόγισμος δὲ ἄκρον φέρει, ita recta ingenia debilitat verecundia, perversa confirmat audacia*: Half-wisdom is ever indecisive, half-virtue ever at the blush! But let us presume, on the other hand, that the flux of depraved manners has not generally infected the mass of the people: If the many have, and act as if they had, a just sense of their duty in temperately enjoying, as well as in bravely asserting their rights,

rights, their freedom, and their laws; if, in a word, they are good men, will they not shrink from the tutelage of bad? Or, if amongst them there are wise men, will they not say,—“ a mind, however enlightened, “ vigorous, and well-intentioned, which is “ liable to yield to the influence of the pas- “ sions in each meaner instance of private “ vice, can never be exempt from those im- “ pulses to evil, which a public situation “ more forcibly urges, whilst the objects of “ sensuality, vanity, and avarice, show so fair “ and gigantic under the banners of power “ and usurpation.”—Such a people cannot rely on, cannot trust him to be their demagogue. The former description of men he will no ways be able to guide; the latter he will never be permitted to assume the direction of. Thus in every case the want of private virtues and imperfections in moral conduct will incapacitate this, the most specious of *pretenders* to Patriotism, in every endeavour to prove the agent of public reform or benefit; as long as idleness, rapaciousness, and general depravity render the one people, not only incapable of receiving or enjoying the good he has in view for them, but likewise

wife of affording his designs that unity and system which alone can effect the attainment; and as long as an incorrupt and enlightened people will hold in disregard, distrust, and abhorrence, a character so inconsistent, and so widely differing from that which the felicity of a pure conscience, the sentiment of virtuous habits, and a decisive sense of right and wrong, have taught them to consider as the sole warrantable subject of preferment and confidence.

I now draw towards the conclusion of this Letter, nor can its tenor be deemed trivial, if it hath added to the chapter of ethics an argument in proof, that the *Patriot is exclusively founded in the good Citizen, and the good Citizen in the good Man!* If it has thus added one further incentive to virtue; or if stinging one ambitious spirit in its dangerous path of blooming sweets and covert mischief, it shall force it back into the arduous but faithful road which leads to fame, through nations liberated from the tyranny of vice, thence subject to no other tyranny; reformed, therefore blest; virtuous, therefore free. At any rate I have not mispent a leisure hour; my very feelings, whilst I write on such a subject,

subject, amply repay me,—and the more so when I write to you, to you who furnish a practice to my theories;—*non in diversum te à naturâ tuâ ducimus; natus es ad ista quæ dicimus.* May you long live to be, as you have been, the faithful supporter of our laws and liberties! I fear that either are at stake! The vices of the times, and the calamities of our political crisis, render the event of administration doubtful, under the direction of the best and wisest:—Of the Pseudo-patriot certain and fatal! Let such harangue the passions of the populace, severally plead the consistency of their factions, (under whatever name but too consistent!) and by personal invective, invidious distinctions, and flagitious manners, irritate, disunite, and corrupt the people, in order to serve their country. Detestable paradox! Sober morals, attentive industry, and thence a general competency of the means of life, and temperance in enjoyment, alone render a people fit for mild laws and a free government, alone to possess, and alone to acquire or restore those first of human blessings.

Yet we look not to a reform in this quarter! But whilst the increasing perpetration of

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crimes crowds our courts of judicature, and whilst idleness impoverishes, and discontent depopulates our island, we are projecting schemes of amendment in the government; the result of which can only be further licentiousness, idleness, and discontent! Is then every principle of sound policy so wholly laid aside, that vice is to become a legitimate plea for rule, and that the people are to receive a further influence in government, in equal degree as they have become lawless and ungovernable? Montesquieu, were he to rise from the dead, would smile with scorn or pity on a debate, whether more men should be made public men, more subjects be crowded into action, and the state be made more democratic, in proportion as its morals and public virtue were on the decline! May Providence employ its best instruments, good and great men, to avert the mischiefs of anarchy and ruin, which must ensue such premature and visionary plans! and with its divine influence may it direct the conception and accomplishment of a fundamental and true reform that shall reach the very source of the evil, and render the people of Great-Britain virtuous, industrious, numerous, and happy, and
Patriot-

Patriot-Citizens! This subject animates, and would lead me too far; I have already exceeded the bounds I had prescribed myself in this Letter; it is high time to finish, and I cannot better do it, or more to my mind, or in a manner more suited to the times I write in, or to the friend I write to, than in the emphatic words of Tully to Curio:—" *Tu tamen sine habes aliquam spem de republica, sine desperas, ea para, meditare, et cogita, quæ esse in eo viro ac civè debent, qui sit rempublicam afflictam miseris temporibus et perditis moribus in veterem dignitatem et libertatem vindicaturus.*"

I am, &c. &c.

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