

raised private men to be fellows with kings. Without force, or opposition, subdued the fierceness of pride and power; it obliged sovereigns to submit to the soft collar of social esteem, compelled stern authority to submit to gentleness, and gave a domination vanquisher of laws, to be subdued by manners. But now all is to be changed. All the pleasing illusions, which made power gentle, and obedience liberal, which harmonized the different shades of interest, and which, by a bland assimilation, incorporated into politics the sentiments which beauty and soften private society, are to be dissolved by this conquering empire of light and reason. All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off. All the superadded ideas, furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns, and the understanding ratifies, as necessary to cover the defects of our naked shivering nature, and to raise the dignity in our own estimation, are to be exploded as a ridiculous, absurd, antiquated fashion.

On this scheme of things, a king is but a man; a queen is but a woman; a woman is but an animal; and an animal not of the highest order. All honours paid to the sex² in general as such, and without distinct views, is to be regarded as romance and folly. Regicide, and parricide, and sacrilege, and the fictions of superstition, corrupting jurisprudence by destroying its simplicity. The murder of a king, or a queen, or a bishop, or a father, are only common homicide; and if the people are by any chance, or in any way gathered by the sort of homicide much the most pardonable, and into which we ought not to make too severe a scrutiny.

On the scheme of this barbarous philosophy, which is the offspring of cold hearts and muddy understandings, and which is as void of solid wisdom, as it is destitute of all taste and elegance, laws are to be supported by their own terrors, and by the concern, which each individual may find in them, from his own private speculations, or can spare to them from his private interests. In the groves of *their* academy, at the end of every street you see nothing but the gallows. Nothing is left which engages the affections on the part of the commonwealth. On the principles of this method of philosophy, our institutions can never be embodied, if I may use the expression, in persons; so as to create in us love, veneration, admiration, or attachment. But that sort of reason which banishes the affections is incapable of filling their place. These public affections, combined with manners, required sometimes as supplements, sometimes as correctives, always as aids to law. The precept given by a wise man, as well as a great critic, for the construction of poems, is equally true as to states. *Non satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia sinito.*³ There ought to be a system of manners in every nation, which a well-formed mind would be disposed to relish. To make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.

But power, of some kind or other, will survive the shock in which manners and opinions perish; and it will find other and worse means for its support. The usurpation which, in order to subvert antient institutions, destroyed antient principles, will hold power by arts similar to those by which it has acquired it. When the old feudal and chivalrous spirit of *Fidelity*,⁴ which

antient opinions and rules of life are taken away, the loss cannot be estimated. From that moment we have no compass to govern us; we know distinctly to what port we steer. Europe undoubtedly, taken as she was in a flourishing condition the day on which your Revolution happened. How much of that prosperous state was owing to the spirit of manners and opinions is not easy to say; but as such causes cannot be different in their operation, we must presume, that, on the whole, their ruin was beneficial.

It is not too apt to consider things in the state in which we find them, as sufficiently adverting to the causes by which they have been produced, and possibly may be upheld. Nothing is more certain, than that our present civilization, and all the good things which are connected with it, and with civilization, have, in this European world of ours, depended upon two principles; and were indeed the result of both combined: I mean the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion. The nobility and the gentry, by profession, the other by patronage, kept learning in existence in the midst of arms and confusions, and whilst governments were in their causes than formed. Learning paid back what it received to the state, and to priesthood; and paid it with usury,⁵ by enlarging their ideas, and multiplying their minds. Happy if they had all continued to know their duty as gentlemen, and their proper place! Happy if learning, not debauched by dissipation, had been satisfied to continue the instructor, and not aspired to be the master! Along with its natural protectors and guardians, learning will continue to flourish, and trodden down under the hoofs of a swinish multitude.

In respect, modern letters owe more than they are always willing to acknowledge to ancient manners, so do other interests which we value full as much as we do letters. Even commerce, and trade, and manufacture, the gods of modern political politicians, are themselves perhaps but creatures; are themselves but effects, which, as first causes, we choose to worship. They certainly grow under the same shade in which learning flourished. They too may flourish with their natural protecting principles. With you, for the present at least, they all threaten to disappear together. Where trade and manufactures flourish to a people, and the spirit of nobility and religion remains, sentiments, and not always ill supplies their place; but if commerce and manufactures should be lost in an experiment to try how well a state may stand on those old fundamental principles, what sort of a thing must be a state of gross, stupid, ferocious, and at the same time, poor and sordid barbarism, the devotee of religion, honor, or manly pride, possessing nothing at all, and hoping for nothing hereafter?

It is not too apt to consider things in the state in which we find them, as sufficiently adverting to the causes by which they have been produced, and possibly may be upheld. Nothing is more certain, than that our present civilization, and all the good things which are connected with it, and with civilization, have, in this European world of ours, depended upon two principles; and were indeed the result of both combined: I mean the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion. The nobility and the gentry, by profession, the other by patronage, kept learning in existence in the midst of arms and confusions, and whilst governments were in their causes than formed. Learning paid back what it received to the state, and to priesthood; and paid it with usury, by enlarging their ideas, and multiplying their minds. Happy if they had all continued to know their duty as gentlemen, and their proper place! Happy if learning, not debauched by dissipation, had been satisfied to continue the instructor, and not aspired to be the master! Along with its natural protectors and guardians, learning will continue to flourish, and trodden down under the hoofs of a swinish multitude.

2. Homage paid to women.
3. It is not enough for poems to have beauty; they must be sweet, tender, affecting (Latin: Horace's *Ars Poetica* 99).
4. Fidelity of a vassal or feudal lord.
5. Interest.

1. The word *antient* is used in the sense of *antique* or *ancient*.
2. The word *antient* is used in the sense of *antique* or *ancient*.
3. The word *antient* is used in the sense of *antique* or *ancient*.
4. The word *antient* is used in the sense of *antique* or *ancient*.
5. The word *antient* is used in the sense of *antique* or *ancient*.