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In Four Volumes

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ry, as those illustrious matrons, who in the infancy of *Rome*, reconciled the *Romans* and the *Sabines*, and united the two contending parties under their new King.

N^o 5. *Friday, January 6.*

Omnium Societatum nulla est gravior, nulla carior, quam ea que cum republica est unicuique nostrum: Cari sunt parentes, cari liberi, propinqui, familiares: Sed omnes omnium caritates patria una complexa est: Pro qua quis bonus dubitet mortem oppetere, si ei sit profuturus? Cic.

THERE is no greater sign of a general decay of virtue in a nation, than a want of zeal in its inhabitants for the good of their country. This generous and publick-spirited passion has been observed of late years to languish and grow cold in this our Island; where a party of men have made it their business to represent it as chimerical and romantic, to destroy in the minds of the people the sense of national glory, and to turn into ridicule our natural and ancient Allies, who are united to us by the common interests both of religion and policy. It may not therefore be unseasonable to recommend to this present generation the practice of that virtue, for which their ancestors were particularly famous, and which is called *The love of one's country*. This love to our country, as a moral virtue, is a fixed disposition of mind to promote the safety, welfare, and reputation of the community in which we are born, and of the constitution under which we are protected. Our obligation to this great duty, may appear to us from several considerations.

In the first place we may observe, that we are directed to it by one of those secret suggestions of nature, which go under the name of *Instinct*, and which are never given in vain. As self-love is an instinct planted in us for the good and safety of each particular person, the love of our country is impressed on our minds for the happiness and preservation of

the community. This instinct is so remarkable, that we find examples of it in those who are born in the most uncomfortable climates, or the worst of governments. We read of an inhabitant of *Nova Zembla*, who, after having lived some time in *Denmark*, where he was clothed and treated with the utmost indulgence, took the first opportunity of making his escape, though with the hazard of his life, into his native regions of cold, poverty and nakedness. We have an instance of the same nature among the very *Hottentots*. One of these savages was brought into *England*, taught our language, and in a great measure polished out of his natural barbarity: but upon being carried back to the Cape of *Good Hope* (where it was thought he might have been of advantage to our *English* traders) he mixed in a kind of transport with his countrymen, brutalized with them in their habit and manners, and would never again return to his foreign acquaintance. I need not mention the common opinion of the *Negroes* in our plantations, who have no other notion of a future state of happiness, than that, after death, they shall be conveyed back to their native country. The *Swiss* are so remarkable for this passion, that it often turns to a disease among them; for which there is a particular name in the *German* language, and which the *French* call *The distemper of the country*: for nothing is more usual than for several of their common soldiers, who are lifted into a foreign service, to have such violent hankerings after their home, as to pine away even to death, unless they have a permission to return; which, on such an occasion, is generally granted them. I shall only add under this head, that since the love of one's country is natural to every man, any particular nation, who, by false politicks, shall endeavour to stifle or restrain it, will not be upon a level with others.

As this love of our country is natural to every man, so it is likewise very *reasonable*; and that, in the first place, because it inclines us to be beneficial to those, who are and ought to be dearer to us than any others. It takes in our families, relations, friends and acquaintance, and, in short, all whose welfare and security we are obliged to consult, more than that of those who are strangers to us. For this reason it is the most sublime and extensive of all social virtues: especially if we consider that it does not only promote the well-being of these who are our contemporaries, but likewise of their children and their posterity. Hence it is that all casuists are unanimous in determining, that when the good of the country interferes even with the life of the most beloved relation, dearest friend, or greatest benefactor, it is to be preferred without exception.

Farther,

Farther, though there is a benevolence due to all mankind, none can question but a superior degree of it is to be paid to a father, a wife, or child. In the same manner, though our love should reach to the whole species, a greater proportion of it should exert it self towards that community in which providence has placed us. This is our proper sphere of action, the province allotted to us for the exercise of our civil virtues, and in which alone we have opportunities of expressing our good-will to mankind. I could not but be pleased, in the accounts of the late *Persian* embassy into *France*, with a particular ceremony of the Embassador; who, every morning, before he went abroad, religiously saluted a turf of earth dug out of his own native soil, to remind him, that in all the transactions of the day he was to think of his country, and pursue its advantages. If, in the several districts and divisions of the world, men would thus study the welfare of those respective communities, to which their power of doing good is limited, the whole race of reasonable creatures would be happy, as far as the benefits of society can make them so. At least, we find so many blessings naturally flowing from this noble principle, that, in proportion as it prevails, every nation becomes a prosperous and flourishing people.

It may be yet a farther recommendation of this particular virtue, if we consider, that no nation was ever famous for its morals, which was not at the same time remarkable for its public spirit: Patriots naturally rise out of a *Spartan* or *Roman* virtue: and there is no remark more common among the antient historians, than that when the State was corrupted with avarice and luxury, it was in danger of being betrayed, or sold.

To the foregoing reasons for the love which every good man owes to his country, we may add, that the actions, which are most celebrated in history, and which are read with the greatest admiration, are such as proceed from this principle. The establishing of good laws, the detecting of conspiracies, the crushing of seditions and rebellions, the falling in battel, or the devoting of a man's self to certain death for the safety of fellow-citizens, are actions that always warm the Reader, and endear to him persons of the remotest ages, and the most distant countries.

And as actions, that proceed from the love of one's country, are more illustrious than any others in the records of time; so we find that those persons who have been eminent in other virtues, have been particularly distinguished by this. It would be endless to produce examples of this kind, out of *Greek* and *Roman* Authors. To confine my self therefore in so wide and beaten a field, I shall chuse some instances from Holy
Writ,

Writ, which abounds in accounts of this nature, as much as any other history whatsoever. And this I do the more willingly, because in some books lately written, I find it objected against revealed religion, that it does not inspire the love of one's country. Here I must premise, that as the sacred Author of our religion chiefly inculcated to the *Jews* those parts of their duty wherein they were most defective, so there was no need of insisting upon this: the *Jews* being remarkable for an attachment to their own country, even to the exclusion of all common humanity to strangers. We see in the behaviour of this divine person, the practice of this virtue in conjunction with all others. He deferred working a miracle in the behalf of a *Syro Phœnician* woman, until he had declared his superior good-will to his own nation; and was prevailed upon to heal the daughter of a *Roman* Centurion, by hearing from the *Jews*, that he was one who loved their nation, and had built them a Synagogue. But, to look out for no other instance, what was ever more moving, than his lamentation over *Jerusalem*, at his first approach to it, notwithstanding he had foretold the cruel and unjust treatment he was to meet with in that city! for he foresaw the destruction which in a few years was to fall upon that people; a destruction not to be paralleled in any nation from the beginning of the world to this day; and in the view of it melted into tears. His followers have in many places expressed the like sentiments of affection for their countrymen, among which none is more extraordinary than that of the great Convert, who wished he himself might be made a curse, provided it might turn to the happiness of his nation; or as he words it, *of his brethren and kinsmen, who are Israelites*. This instance naturally brings to mind the same heroic temper of soul in the great *Jewish* Law-giver, who would have devoted himself in the same manner, rather than see his people perish. It would indeed be difficult to find out any man of extraordinary piety in the sacred writings, in whom this virtue is not highly conspicuous. The Reader however will excuse me, if I take notice of one passage, because it is a very fine one, and wants only a place in some polite Author of *Greece* or *Rome*, to have been admired and celebrated. The King of *Syria* lying sick upon his bed, sent *Hasaël* one of his great officers to the Prophet *Elisha*, to enquire of him whether he should recover. The Prophet looked so attentively on this messenger, that it put him into some confusion; or to quote this beautiful circumstance, and the whole narrative, in the pathetick language of Scripture, *Elisha settled his countenance stedfastly upon him, until he was ashamed: and Hasaël said, Why weepeth my Lord? And he said, Because I know the*
evil

evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me, that thou shalt be King over Syria.

I might enforce these reasons for the love of our country, by considerations adapted to my Readers as they are *Englishmen*, and as by that means they enjoy a purer religion, and a more excellent form of government, than any other nation under Heaven. But being persuaded that every one must look upon himself as indispensably obliged to the practice of a duty, which is recommended to him by so many arguments and examples, I shall only desire the honest, well-meaning Reader, when he turns his thoughts towards the publick, rather to consider what opportunities he has of doing good to his native country, than to throw away his time in deciding the rights of Princes, or the like speculations, which are so far beyond his reach. Let us leave these great points to the wisdom of our Legislature, and to the determination of those, who are the proper judges of our Constitution. We shall otherwise be liable to the just reproach, which is cast upon such christians, as waste their lives in the subtle and intricate disputes of religion, when they should be practising the doctrine which it teaches. If there be any right upon earth, any relying on the judgment of our most eminent Lawyers and Divines, or indeed any certainty in human reason, our present Sovereign has an undoubted title to our duty and obedience. But supposing, for argument's sake, that this right were doubtful, and that an *Englishman* could be divided in his opinion, as to the person to whom he should pay his allegiance: in this case, there is no question, but the love of his country ought to cast the ballance, and to determine him on that side, which is most conducive to the welfare of his community. To bring this to our present case. A man must be destitute of common sense, who is capable of imagining that the Protestant religion could flourish under the government of a bigotted *Roman-catholick*, or that our civil rights could be protected by one who has been trained up in the politicks of the most arbitrary Prince in *Europe*, and who could not acknowledge his gratitude to his benefactor, by any remarkable instance, which would not be detrimental to the *British* nation. And are these such desirable blessings, that an honest man would endeavour to arrive at them, through the confusions of a civil war, and the blood of many thousands of his fellow-subjects? On the contrary,
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the arguments for our steady, loyal, and affectionate adherence to King George, are so evident from this single topic, that if every Briton, instead of aspiring after private wealth or power, would sincerely desire to make his country happy, his present Majesty would not have a single malecontent in his whole dominions.

N^o 6. Monday, January 9.

Fraus enim astringit, non dissolvit perjurium. Cic.

AT a time when so many of the King's subjects present themselves before their respective Magistrates to take the oaths required by law, it may not be improper to awaken in the minds of my Readers a due sense of the engagement under which they lay themselves. It is a melancholy consideration, that there should be several among us so hardened and deluded, as to think an oath a proper subject for a jest; and to make this, which is one of the most solemn acts of religion, an occasion of mirth. Yet such is the depravation of our manners at present, that nothing is more frequent than to hear profligate men ridiculing, to the best of their abilities, these sacred pledges of their duty and allegiance; and endeavouring to be witty upon themselves, for daring to prevaricate with God and man. A poor conceit of their own, or a quotation out of *Hudibras*, shall make them treat with levity an obligation wherein their safety and welfare are concerned both as to this world and the next. Rail- lery of this nature, is enough to make the hearer tremble. As these mis- creants seem to glory in the profession of their impiety, there is no man, who has any regard to his duty, or even to his reputation, that can appear in their defence. But if there are others of a more serious turn, who join with us deliberately in these religious professions of loyalty to our Sovereign, with any private salvo's or evasions, they would do well to consider those maxims, in which all casuists are agreed, who have gained any esteem for their learning, judgment, or morality. These have un- animously determined that an oath is always to be taken in the sense of that authority which imposes it: and that those, whose hearts do not con- cur