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government? The first and the last hold by the same tenure. I mention this the rather, because I have an imperfect remembrance, that some scribbler was employed, or employed himself, to assert the hereditary right of the present royal family. A task so unnecessary to any good purpose, that, I believe, a suspicion arose of its having been designed for a bad one. A Patriot King will never countenance such impertinent fallacies, nor deign to lean on broken reeds. He knows that his right is founded on the laws of God and man, that none can shake it but himself, and that his own virtue is sufficient to maintain it against all opposition.

I have dwelt the longer on the first and general principles of monarchical government, and have recurred to the other, because it seems to me that they are the seeds of patriotism, which must be sown as soon as possible in the mind of a prince, lest their growth should be checked by luxuriant weeds, which are apt to abound in such soils, and hinder which no crop of kindly virtues can ever flourish. A prince, who does not know the true principles, cannot propose to himself the true ends of government; and he who does not propose them will never direct his conduct steadily to them. There is not a deeper, nor a finer observation in all my Lord Bacon’s works, than one which I shall apply and paraphrase on this occasion. The most compositive, the most noble, and the most effectual remedy, which can be opposed to the uncertain and irregular motions of the human mind, agitated by various passions, allured by various temptations, inclining sometimes towards a state of moral perfection, and oftener, even in the best, towards a state of moral depravation, is this. We must choose betimes such virtuous objects as are proportioned to the means we have of pursuing them, and as belong particularly to the stations we are in, and to the duties of those stations. We must determine and fix our minds in such manner upon them, that the pursuit of them may become the business, and the attainment of them the end, of our whole lives. Thus

we shall imitate the great operations of nature, and not the feeble, slow, and imperfect operations of art. We must not proceed, in forming the moral character, as a stony proceeds in forming a statue, who works sometimes on the face, sometimes on one part, and sometimes on another: but we must proceed, and it is in our power to proceed, as nature does in forming a flower, an animal, or any other of her productions: rudimenta partium omnium simul pari et product. She throws out altogether, and at once, the whole system of every being, and the rudiments of all the parts. The vegetable or the animal grows in bulk and increases in strength; but is the same from the first. Just so our Patriot King must be a patriot from the first. He must be such in resolution, before he grows such as practice. He must fix at once the general principles and ends of all his actions, and determine that his whole conduct shall be regulated by them, and directed to them. When he has done this, he will have turned, by one great effort, the bent of his mind so strongly towards the perfection of a kindly character, that he will exercise with ease, and as it were by a natural determination, all the virtues of it, which will be suggested to him on every occasion by the principles wherewith his mind is imbued, and by those ends that are the constant objects of his attention.

* Let us then see in what manner and with what effect he will do this, upon the greatest occasion he can have of exercising these virtues, the maintenance of liberty, and the re-establishment of a free constitution.

The freedom of a constitution rests on two points. The orders of it are one: so Machiavel calls them, and I know not how to call them more significantly. He means not only the forms and customs, but the different classes and assemblies of men, with different powers and privileges attributed to them, which are established in the state. The spirit and character of the people are the other. On the mutual conformity and harmony of these the preservation of liberty

* government? The Government which... 1749

* himself, to himself, under a late great Patronage...[1749]

18 A counterblast to those Jacobites and Non-Jurors who refused to recognize the right of the Hanoverians to sit on the British throne (affirmed by the Act of Settlement in 1701) so long as any member of the Stuart family remained alive.


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* CHAP. VII. 1. What will be the Conduct of a Patriot King, in order to restore a Free Constitution. n. How by the contrary Conduct, a bad or weak Prince is capable of destroying one. in. That a good King is really sufficient to this Task. iv. The Ability of a Patriot King to restore a Free Constitution.

* then see then proceed to see

41 Bacon, De Augmentis Scientiarum, vii. 3, in Opera Omnia, i, 211.

46 Machiavelli, Discorsi, i. 18.
depends. To take away, or essentially to alter the former, cannot be brought to pass, whilst the latter remains in original purity and vigour: nor can liberty be destroyed by this method, unless the attempt be made with a military force sufficient to conquer the nation, which would not submit in this case till it was conquered, nor with much security to the conqueror even then. But these orders of the state may be essentially altered, and serve more effectually to the destruction of liberty, than the taking of them away would serve, if the spirit and character of the people are lost.

*Now this method of destroying liberty is the most dangerous on many accounts, particularly on this; that even the reign of the weakest prince, and the policy of the weakest ministry,* may effect the destruction, when circumstances are favourable to this method. If a people is growing corrupt, there is no need of capacity to contrive, nor of insinuation to gain, nor of plausibility to seduce, nor of eloquence to persuade, nor of authority to impose, nor of courage to attempt. The most incapable, awkward, ungracious, shocking, profligate, and timorous wretches, invested with power, and masters of the purse, will be sufficient for the work, when the people are accomplices in it. Luxury is rapacious; let them feed it: the more it is fed, the more profuse it will grow. Want is the consequence of profusion, venality of want, and dependence of venality. By this progression, the first men of a nation will become the pensioners of the last,* and he who has talents, the most implicit tool to him who has none. The distemper will soon descend, not indeed to make a deposit below, and to remain there, but to pervade the whole body.

It may seem a singular, but it is perhaps a true proposition, that such a king and such a ministry are more likely to begin, and to pursue with success, this method of destroying a free constitution of government, than a king and a ministry that were held in great esteem would be. This very esteem might put many on their guard against the latter; but the former may draw from contempt the advantage of not being feared: and an advantage this is in the beginning of corruption. Men are willing to excuse, not only to others but to themselves, the first steps they take in vice, and especially in vice that affects the public, and whereof the public has a right to

* n. [footnote 11. How by the contrary Conduct, a bad or weak Prince is capable of destroying one.] * the [a] * and the policy of the weakest ministry] 1749

* If When * last least

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complain. Those, therefore, who might withstand corruption in one case, from a persuasion that the consequence was too certain to leave them any excuse, may yield to it when they can flatter themselves, and endeavour to flatter others, that liberty cannot be destroyed, nor the constitution be demolished, by such hands as hold the sceptre, and guide the reins of the administration. But alas! the flattery is gross, and the excuse without colour. These men may ruin their country, but they cannot impose on any, unless it be on themselves. Nor will even this imposition on themselves be long necessary. Their consciences will be soon seared, by habit and by example: and they, who wanted an excuse to begin, will want none to continue and to complete, the tragedy of their country. Old men will outlive the shame of losing liberty, and young men will arise who know not that it ever existed. A spirit of slavery will oppose and oppress the spirit of liberty, and seem at least to be the genius of the nation. Such too it will become in time, when corruption has once grown to this height, unless the progress of it can be interrupted.

*How inestimable a blessing therefore must the succession of a Patriot King be esteemed in such circumstances as these, which would be a blessing, and a great one too, in any other? He, and he alone,* can save a country whose ruin is so far advanced. The utmost that private men can do, who remain untainted by the general contagion, is to keep the spirit of liberty alive in a few breasts; to protest against what they cannot hinder, and to claim on every occasion what they cannot by their own strength recover.

Machiavel has treated, in the discourses before cited, this question, 'whether, when the people are grown corrupt, a free government can be maintained, if they enjoy it; or established, if they enjoy it not?' And upon the whole matter he concludes for the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of succeeding in either case. It will be worth while to observe his way of reasoning. He asserts very truly, and proves by the example of the Roman Commonwealth, that those orders which are proper to maintain liberty, whilst a

* 11. [footnote 11. But that a good King is really sufficient to this Task.] * He, and he alone] He alone

* Machiavelli, Discorsi, I. x8, paraphrased in this paragraph.
people remain uncorrupt, become improper and hurtful to liberty, when a people is grown corrupt. To remedy this abuse, new laws alone will not be sufficient. These orders, therefore, must be changed, according to him, and the constitution must be adapted to the depraved manners of the people. He shows, that such a change in the orders, and constituent parts of the government, is impracticable, whether the attempt be made by gentle and slow, or by violent and precipitate measures: and from thence he concludes, that a free commonwealth can neither be maintained by a corrupt people, nor be established among them. But he adds, that 'if this can possibly be done, it must be done by drawing the constitution to the monarchical form of government', 'acciò chè quegli uomini i quali dalle leggi non possono essere corretti, fussero da una podestà, in qualche modo frenati'. 'That a corrupt people, whom law cannot correct, may be restrained and corrected by a kingly power.' Here is the hinge on which the whole turns.

Another advantage that a free monarchy has over all other forms of free government, besides the advantage of being more easily and more usefully tempered with aristocratical and democratical powers, which is mentioned above, is this. Those governments are made up of different parts, and are apt to be disjointed by the shocks to which they are exposed: but a free monarchical government is more compact, because there is a part the more that keeps, like the keystone of a vault, the whole building together. They cannot be mended in a state of corruption, they must be in effect constituted anew, and in that attempt they may be dissolved forever: but this is not the case of a free monarchy. To preserve liberty by new laws and new schemes of government, whilst the corruption of a people continues and grows, is absolutely impossible: but to restore and to preserve it under old laws, and an old constitution, by reinfusing into the minds of men the spirit of this constitution, is not only possible, but is, in a particular manner, easy to a king. A corrupt commonwealth remains without remedy, though all the orders and forms of it subsist: a free monarchical government cannot remain absolutely so, as long as the orders and forms of the constitution subsist. These, alone, are indeed nothing more than the dead letter of freedom, or masks of liberty. In the first character they serve to

no good purpose whatsoever: in the second they serve to a bad one; because tyranny, or government by will, becomes more severe, and more secure, under their disguise, than it would if it was barefaced and avowed. But a king can, easily to himself and without violence to his people, renew the spirit of liberty in their minds, quicken this dead letter, and pull off this mask.

* As soon as corruption ceases to be an expedient of government, and it will cease to be such as soon as a Patriot King is raised to the throne, the panacea is applied; the spirit of the constitution revives of course: and, as fast as it revives, the orders and forms of the constitution are restored to their primitive integrity, and become what they were intended to be, real barriers against arbitrary power, not blinds nor masks under which tyranny may lie concealed. Depravation of manners exposed the constitution to ruin: reformation will secure it. Men decline easily from virtue; for there is a devil too in the political system, a constant tempter at hand. A Patriot King will want neither power nor inclination to cast out this devil, to make the temptation cease, and to deliver his subjects, if not from the guilt, yet from the consequence, of their fall. Under him they will not only cease to do evil, but learn to do well; for, by rendering public virtue and real capacity the sole means of acquiring any degree of power or profit in the state, he will set the passions of their hearts on the side of liberty and good government. A Patriot King is the most powerful of all reformers; for he is himself a sort of standing miracle, so rarely seen and so little understood, that the sure effects of his appearance will be admiration and love in every honest breast, confusion and terror to every guilty conscience, but submission and resignation in all. A new people will seem to arise with a new king. Innumerable metamorphoses, like those which poets feign, will happen in very deed: and, while men are conscious that they are the same individuals, the difference of their sentiments will almost persuade them that they are changed into different beings.

*But, that we* may not expect more from such a king than even he can perform, it is necessary to premise another general observation, after which I shall descend into some that will be more particular.

* IV. [footnote IV. The Ability of a Patriot King to restore a Free Constitution.]  
* CHAP. VIII. 1. A previous Observation. 11. The Measures a Patriot King will take, 1. To purge his Court of the Bad. 2. To chase the Good and Able.*  
* we[2] you  
* another . . . observation] one general observation more
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Absolute stability is not to be expected in any thing human; for
that which exists immutably exists alone necessarily, and this attri-
but of the Supreme Being, can neither belong to man, nor to the
works of man. The best instituted governments, like the best con-
stituted animal bodies, carry in them the seeds of their destruc-
tion: and, though they grow and improve for a time, they will soon
tend visibly to their dissolution. Every hour they live is an hour the
less that they have to live. All that can be done, therefore, to pro-
long the duration of a good government, is to draw it back, on every
favourable occasion, to the first good principles on which it was
founded.\footnote{Machiavelli, Discorsi, iii. 1.}

When these occasions happen often, and are well improved, such governments are prosperous and durable. When
they happen seldom, or are ill improved, these political bodies live
in pain, or in languor, and die soon.

A Patriot King affords\footnote{\textit{affords} is a word formed by a
misprint.} one of the occasions I mention in a free
monarchical state, and the very best that can happen. It should be
improved, like snatches of fair weather at sea, to repair the damages
sustained in the last storm, and to prepare to resist the next. For such
a king cannot secure to his people a succession of princes like himself.
He will do all he can towards it, by his example and by his instruc-
tion. But after all, the royal mantle will not convey the spirit of patriotism
into another king, as the mantle of Elijah did the gift of prophecy into
another prophet.\footnote{\textit{II Kings} 2: 8–14.}

\textit{The utmost he can do, and that which deserves the utmost
gratitude from his subjects, is to restore good government, to
revive the spirit of it, and to maintain and confirm both, during the
whole course of his reign. The rest his people must do for themselves.
If they do not, they will have none but themselves to blame; if they
do, they will have the principal obligation to him. In all events, they
will have been free men one reign the longer by his means, and
perhaps more; since he will leave them much better prepared and dis-
pensed to defend their liberties, than he found them.}

\textit{This general observation being made, let us now descend, in
some detail, to the particular steps and measures that such a king
must pursue, to merit a much nobler title than all those which many
princes of the west, as well as the east, are so proud to accumulate.}

First, then, he must begin to govern as soon as he begins to
reign. For the very first steps he makes in government will give the
first impression, and as it were the presage of his reign; and may be
of great importance in many other respects besides that of opinion
and reputation. His first care will be, no doubt, to purge his court,
and to call into the administration such men as he can assure himself
will serve on the same principles on which he intends to govern.

As to the first point; if the precedent reign has been bad, we
know how he will find the court composed. The men in power will
be some of those adventurers, busy and bold, who thrust and crowd
themselves early into the intrigue of party and the management of
affairs of state, often without true ability, always without true
ambition, or even the appearances of virtue: who mean nothing
more than what is called making a fortune, the acquisition of wealth
to satisfy avarice, and of titles and ribands to satisfy vanity. Such
as these are sure to be employed by a weak, or a wicked king: they
impose on the first, and are chosen by the last. Nor is it marvellous
that they are so, since every other want is supplied in them by the
want of good principles and a good conscience; and since these
defects become ministerial perfections, in a reign when measures
are pursued and designs carried on that every honest man will dis-
approve. All the prostitutes who set themselves to sale, all the
locusts who devour the land, with crowds of spies, parasites, and
scorpions, will surround the throne under the patronage of such
ministers; and whole swarms of little, noisome, nameless insects will
hum and buzz\footnote{\textit{not} but not \textit{and} or} in every corner of the court. Such ministers will be
cast off, and such abettors of a ministry will be chased away
together, and at once, by a Patriot King.

Some of them perhaps, will be abandoned by him; not\footnote{\textit{First, to purge his Court of the Bad.}} to party
fury, but to national justice; not to sate private resentments, and
\textit{to serve particular interests, but to make satisfaction for wrongs
done to their country, and to stand as examples of terror to future
administrations. Clemency makes, no doubt, an amiable part of the
character I attempt to draw; but clemency, to be a virtue, must have

\footnote{\textit{little ... buzz}\footnote{\textit{not} but not \textit{and} or}}