

* *Specious*, but *small* at the beginning, they spread over the multitude in such a manner, as to touch individuals but slightly. † Thus they are disregarded. The power or profit that arises from these violations, *centering in few persons*, is to them considerable. For this reason the *governors* having in view their particular purposes, successively preserve an uniformity of conduct for attaining them. They regularly encrease the first injuries, till at length the inattentive people are compelled to perceive the heaviness of their burthens.----They begin to complain and enquire----but too late. They find their oppressors so strengthened by success, and themselves so entangled in examples of express authority on the part of their rulers, and of tacit recognition on their own part, that they are quite confounded: For millions entertain no other idea of the *legality* of power, than that it is founded on the *exercise* of power. They voluntarily fasten their chains, by adopting a pusillanimous *opinion*, “that there will be too much *danger* in attempting a remedy,”-----or another *opinion* no less fatal,-----“that the government has a *right* to treat them as it does.” They then seek a wretched relief for their minds, by persuading themselves, that to yield their *obedience*, is to discharge their *duty*. The deplorable *poverty of spirit*, that prostrates all the dignity bestowed by divine providence on our nature---of course succeeds.

FROM these reflections I conclude, that every free state should incessantly watch, and instantly take alarm on any addition being made to the power exercised over them. Innumerable instances might be produced to shew, from what slight beginnings the most extensive consequences have flowed: But I shall select two only from the history of *England*.

HENRY the Seventh was the *first* monarch of that kingdom, who established a STANDING BODY OF ARMED MEN. This was a band of *fifty* archers, called yeomen of the guard: And this institution, notwithstanding the smallness of the number, was, to prevent discontent, || “disguised under pretence of majesty and grandeur.” In 1684 the standing forces were so much augmented, that

* Omnia mala exempla ex bonis initiis orta sunt.

SALLUST. *Bell. Cat.* S. 50.

† “The *republic* is always attacked with greater vigor, than it is defended: For the *audacious* and *profligate*, prompted by their natural enmity to it, are easily impelled to act by the least nod of their leaders: Whereas the honest, I know not why, are generally *slow* and *unwilling* to stir; and *neglecting* always the *BEGINNINGS* of things, are never roused to exert themselves, but by the last necessity: So that through *IRRESOLUTION* and *DELAY*, when they would be glad to compound at last for their *QUIET*, at the expence even of their *HONOR*, they commonly lose them BOTH.” CICERO’S *Orat. for SEXTIUS*.

Such were the sentiments of this great and excellent man, whose vast abilities, and the calamities of his country during his time, enabled him, by mournful experience, to form a just judgment on the conduct of the friends and enemies of liberty.

|| *Rapin’s History of England*,